
**THE EFFECT OF CHANGES IN GENERATION Z PREFERENCES AND
PRODUCT QUALITY ON CUSTOMER LOYALTY TO WESTERN FOODS IN
MATARAM CITY, LOMBOK, INDONESIA**



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Abstract

This study aims to examine how changes in Generation Z preferences and product quality affect customer loyalty at Western Foods in Mataram City. Understanding the requirements and preferences of Generation Z is crucial for culinary businesses because this group is known to have dynamic and rapidly altered tastes. Furthermore, one of the elements that is thought to have a major role in fostering client loyalty is product quality. This study aims to provide actual data on how much these two factors affect the development of consumer loyalty. This study uses a survey approach in addition to a quantitative methodology. 200 Western Foods patrons in the Generation Z age group participated in the survey. Multiple linear regression analysis, validity and reliability testing, and traditional assumption tests were among the data analysis methods employed. The results of the study demonstrate that the Generation Z Preference variable has a positive and significant influence on customer loyalty, with significance and a t-value higher than the t-table below 0.05. The Product Quality variable has a positive and large impact on customer loyalty, and the coefficient supports this link. In all, this study demonstrates that product quality and Generation Z tastes are significant elements that can boost Mataram City customers' commitment to Western Foods. These findings imply that businesses need to pay attention to the dynamics of Generation Z preferences and maintain consistent product quality in order to retain customers in the long term.

Keywords: Generation Z Preferences, Product Quality, Customer Loyalty, Western Foods, Consumer Behavior

INTRODUCTION

People Generation Z is defined as those born between 1997 and 2012. They have grown up and acclimated to a modern lifestyle that is greatly impacted by social media, digital technological advancements, and the quick dynamics of globalization. Their familiarity with these technologies has shaped their way of thinking, lifestyle, and consumption patterns, which differ from those of previous generations (Dimock, 2019). In Indonesia, Generation Z is a sizeable age group, accounting for around 27.94% of the total population, or 74.93 million individuals, giving them a very important role in influencing market direction and dynamics, including in the culinary sector (BPS, 2025). One of the prominent phenomena in this generation is the increasing interest in Western foods such as steak, burgers, and pasta, which are not only seen as a consumption need but also as part of a modern lifestyle and a means of expressing one's identity. The city of Mataram, as the center of economic, educational, and social activities in West Nusa Tenggara Province, has also experienced rapid growth in the Western food culinary sector. Data from the West Nusa Tenggara Province Tourism and Creative Economy Agency (2025) shows an increase in the number of Western food restaurants in Mataram City in line with Generation Z's high interest in international cuisine. This situation opens up huge opportunities for businesses, but at the same time poses challenges because Generation Z is known for having rapidly changing preferences, being critical, and being heavily influenced by digital trends and their consumption experiences. In addition to changes in consumer preferences, the success of a restaurant in keeping its patrons is also significantly influenced by the quality of its offerings. Product quality is not only related to the taste and appearance of food, but also includes aspects of hygiene, speed of service, comfort of the venue, and consistency in the quality standards provided to consumers. Customer loyalty tends to form when consumers have a consistently satisfying experience, which then encourages repeat purchases and positive recommendations to others, thereby strengthening the competitiveness of the culinary business. According to Handoko (2011), customer loyalty is influenced by several key factors, such as price, cost, emotional aspects, product quality, and service quality. Garvin (2015) also emphasizes that product quality is reflected in the product's ability to present distinctive characteristics that can be recognized and appreciated by consumers. Therefore, in the context of Western food consumption by Generation Z in Mataram City, changes in consumer preferences and product quality are expected to be two important factors that play a role in shaping customer loyalty. Given this context, the purpose of this study is to examine how customer loyalty at Western Foods restaurants in Mataram City, Lombok, Indonesia, is impacted by the shifting preferences and product quality of Generation Z. The study's findings should theoretically advance research on young consumers' behavior while also helping culinary companies create marketing plans, innovative products, and higher-quality services that align with Generation Z's traits.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty refers to a customer's long-term commitment to consistently repurchase and favor a particular product or service despite the availability of alternative offerings in the market (Andika, 2024). Loyalty reflects a stable behavioral pattern that emerges when customers perceive that a product or service continuously meets their needs

and expectations. Rather than occurring instantaneously, loyalty develops through repeated interactions that generate positive evaluations of the company and its offerings.

The formation of customer loyalty is closely linked to the firm's ability to maintain consistent product and service performance, as well as to establish emotional bonds with customers. Positive consumption experiences reinforce trust and satisfaction, which in turn encourage repeat purchasing behavior and voluntary recommendations to others (Kotler, 2021). Consequently, customer loyalty can be understood as the cumulative outcome of sustained satisfaction, trust, and relationship quality that are nurtured over time (Swastha, 2020).

Changes in Generation Z Preferences

Generation Z comprises individuals born between 1997 and 2012 who have grown up in an environment shaped by rapid digitalization, widespread internet access, and intensive use of social media. This context has significantly influenced their consumption behavior, making their preferences highly responsive to digital information, online interactions, and real-time social feedback (Lesmana et al., 2025). As a result, Generation Z has become a strategically important consumer segment, particularly in the food and beverage industry, due to both its growing purchasing power and its strong influence on market trends.

In comparison to previous generations, Generation Z consumers tend to demonstrate a more critical and selective attitude toward products and brands. They place considerable importance on authenticity, transparency, and experiential value, while also prioritizing convenience and flexibility through digital platforms and omnichannel purchasing options (Ayuningtyas, 2024). In Mataram City, this generation dominates urban and educational settings, where consumption decisions are often shaped by online reviews, influencer endorsements, and social commerce activities. These characteristics indicate that Generation Z preferences are dynamic, experience-oriented, and strongly influenced by digital ecosystems.

Product Quality

Product quality refers to a product's ability to fulfill customer expectations in terms of functionality, reliability, durability, and perceived value (Matondang, 2020). In the context of the food industry, product quality is commonly assessed through tangible attributes such as freshness, taste, presentation, and consistency, all of which play a decisive role in shaping customer perceptions and satisfaction levels (Razak, 2017).

Beyond technical specifications, high product quality contributes to positive sensory and emotional experiences that enhance customers' overall evaluation of a brand. Consistency in delivering quality is particularly critical, as customers expect uniform standards across repeated purchases. When product quality aligns with consumer expectations, it strengthens perceived value and fosters favorable attitudes toward the brand, which can support the development of long-term customer relationships.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a causal-associative quantitative approach aimed at determining the causal relationship between leadership, organizational culture, organizational commitment, and employee performance at CV. Terus Jaya, East Lombok. The causal-associative method is appropriate for identifying cause-and-effect relationships and measuring the magnitude of influence among variables using quantitative data. The research

was conducted at CV. Terus Jaya, located on Jl. TGH. Zainuddin Abdul Majid No. 3, Dasan Lekong, Sukamulia, East Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara. The site was selected because the company operates in the basic commodities sector and exhibits observable variations in leadership, culture, commitment, and performance that align with the study's objectives.

The population of this study consists of 134 employees of CV. Terus Jaya, including warehouse, sales, and administrative staff. Due to accessibility and the manageable size of the company, the entire population was considered for sampling, and 59 valid responses were collected through purposive sampling, ensuring proportional representation of each division.

Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The instrument was adapted from established constructs in organizational behavior literature. Leadership was measured using indicators of decision-making, motivation, communication, and supervision. Organizational culture included self-awareness, aggressiveness, personality, performance, and team orientation Edison et al. (2016). Organizational commitment was measured using affective, normative, and continuance commitment dimensions (Meyer & Allen, 1991a). Employee performance was measured through quality, quantity, timeliness, effectiveness, and independence (Robbins et al., 2009).

The collected data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 3.3.9 software (Hair et al., 2021). This analytical technique is suitable for examining complex models with mediation effects and relatively small samples. The analysis consisted of two main stages: (1) testing the outer model to assess convergent and discriminant validity, and (2) testing the inner model to evaluate structural relationships, path coefficients, and mediation effects. Reliability was verified through Cronbach's Alpha (> 0.60) and Composite Reliability (> 0.70), while the predictive power of the model was determined by R^2 and Q^2 values.

Research Hypothesis

This study employs an explanatory research design aimed at examining causal relationships between variables through hypothesis testing. Explanatory research is considered appropriate because it seeks to explain the influence of changes in Generation Z preferences and product quality on customer loyalty (Singarimbun, 2011). The research adopts a quantitative approach, in which numerical data are analyzed using statistical techniques to test the proposed hypotheses objectively (Sugiyono, 2009). Data collection was conducted using a survey method, which allows for systematic data gathering from respondents to represent the population accurately (Bougie, 2013). This study focuses on consumers of Western food restaurants in Mataram City, Lombok, Indonesia.

The population of this study consists of Generation Z individuals residing in Mataram City who have experience consuming Western food products. The sample was selected using purposive sampling based on specific criteria, including year of birth, domicile, and experience purchasing Western food either through direct visits or online ordering platforms. A total of 200 respondents participated in the main survey, which is considered sufficient for multiple linear regression analysis (Hair, 2010). Prior to the main data collection, a pilot test involving 45 respondents was conducted to ensure the validity and reliability of the research instrument.

Primary data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed to

respondents who met the predetermined criteria. The questionnaire was designed using a Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree to ensure consistent measurement of respondents' perceptions. The research instrument covered three main variables, namely changes in Generation Z preferences as the first independent variable, product quality as the second independent variable, and customer loyalty as the dependent variable. Each variable was operationalized using reflective indicators that capture respondents' perceptions of consumption pattern changes, perceived quality of Western food products, and their level of loyalty toward Western food restaurants in Mataram City.

Based on the theoretical framework and findings from previous empirical studies, the hypotheses of this study are formulated as follows:

H1 : Changes in Generation Z preferences have a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty toward Western food restaurants in Mataram City.

H2 : Product quality has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty toward Western food restaurants in Mataram City.

Data analysis was conducted using multiple linear regression to examine the effect of changes in Generation Z preferences and product quality on customer loyalty. Statistical software was utilized to ensure accuracy and consistency in data processing. The analysis procedure began with validity and reliability testing to confirm the quality of the research instruments. Classical assumption tests, including normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity tests, were subsequently conducted to ensure that the regression model met statistical requirements. Hypothesis testing was performed using partial tests (t-test) and simultaneous tests (F-test), while the coefficient of determination was used to assess the explanatory power of the independent variables. The results of the analysis were then interpreted to determine the direction and level of significance of the relationships among the variables.

Research Model

The conceptual framework of this study illustrates the causal relationship between changes in Generation Z preferences (X1) and product quality (X2) as independent variables, and customer loyalty (Y) as the dependent variable. The research model can be described as follows:

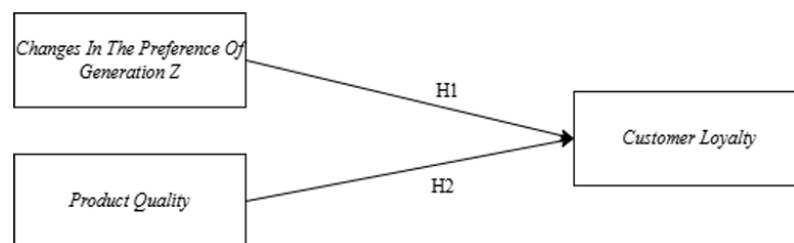


Figure 1.
Conceptual Framework

The model shows that changes in Generation Z preferences and product quality are expected to influence customer loyalty directly. Changes in Generation Z preferences reflect dynamic consumption patterns influenced by digital trends and experiential values, while product quality represents consumers' perceptions of taste, freshness, presentation, and consistency of Western food products. This framework is tested using a multiple linear

regression approach to determine the direct effects of each independent variable on customer loyalty.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1.
Validity Test

Variable	Item	Rvalue	Rtable	Status
Changes in Generation Z Preferences	1	0,886	0,140	Valid
	2	0,890	0,140	Valid
	3	0,895	0,140	Valid
	4	0,901	0,140	Valid
	5	0,898	0,140	Valid
Product Quality	1	0,896	0,140	Valid
	2	0,900	0,140	Valid
	3	0,861	0,140	Valid
	4	0,880	0,140	Valid
	5	0,887	0,140	Valid
	6	0,894	0,140	Valid
	7	0,878	0,140	Valid
	8	0,886	0,140	Valid
Customer Loyalty	1	0,882	0,140	Valid
	2	0,919	0,140	Valid
	3	0,901	0,140	Valid
	4	0,916	0,140	Valid
	5	0,883	0,140	Valid

Source: Processed research data (2025)

Table 2.
Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Standard	Description
Changes in Generation Z Preferences	0.937	0,70	Reliable
Product Quality	0.960	0,70	Reliable

Customer Loyalty	0.941	0,70	Reliable
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Source: Processed research data (2025)

Table 3.
Normality Test
One-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Unstandardized Residual
N	Mean	200.0000000
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Std.deviation	2.58541893
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.037
	Positive	.036
	Negative	-.037
Test Statistic		.037
Asymp.Sig.(2-tailed)		.200 ^{c,d}

- a. Test distribution is Normal
 - b. Calculated from data
 - c. Lilliefors Significance Correction
 - d. This is a lower bound of the true significance
- Source: SmartPLS 4.0 output, 2025

Figure 2.
Multicollinearity Test Results

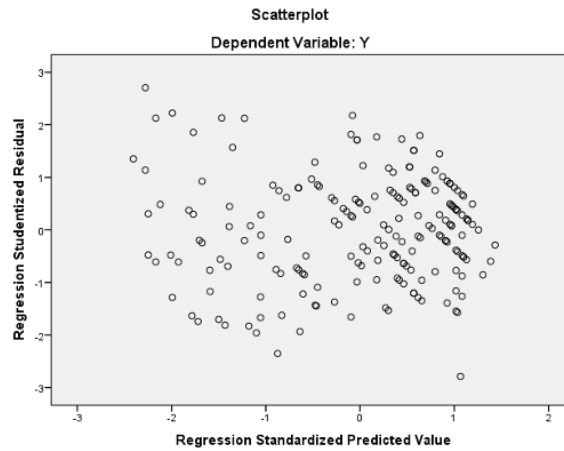
Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.772	.720		2.462	.015		
	X1	.468	.056	.476	8.395	.000	.431	2.322
	X2	.270	.035	.434	7.647	.000	.431	2.322

a. Dependent Variable: Y

Source: Processed research data (2025)

Figure 3.
Heteroscedasticity Test Results



Source: Processed research data (2025)

Figure 4.
Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results
Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.772	.720		2.462	.015		
	X1	.468	.056	.476	8.395	.000	.431	2.322
	X2	.270	.035	.434	7.647	.000	.431	2.322

a. Dependent Variable: Y

Source: Processed research data (2025)

Figure 5.
T-test results
Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.772	.720		2.462	.015		
	X1	.468	.056	.476	8.395	.000	.431	2.322
	X2	.270	.035	.434	7.647	.000	.431	2.322

a. Dependent Variable: Y

Source: Processed research data (2025)

Figure 6.
F-test results
ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3539.806	2	1769.903	262.120	.000 ^b
	Residual	1330.194	197	6.752		
	Total	4870.000	199			

a. Dependent Variable: Y

b. Predictors: (Constant), X2, X1

Source: Processed research data (2025)

Figure 6.
F-test results
Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.853 ^a	.727	.724	2.599

a. Predictors: (Constant), X2, X1

b. Dependent Variable: Y

Source: Processed research data (2025)

This study examines the effect of changes in Generation Z preferences and product quality on customer loyalty toward Western food restaurants in Mataram City, Lombok, Indonesia. Data were collected from 200 Generation Z consumers using a structured questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale and analyzed using multiple linear regression with SPSS software. The respondent profile indicates that Generation Z consumers dominate urban and educational areas in Mataram City, reflecting a consumer segment that is digitally literate, experience-oriented, and highly exposed to social media influences. These characteristics are relevant given the dynamic nature of consumption behavior among Generation Z in the food and beverage sector.

The measurement results demonstrate that all research instruments meet the required validity and reliability standards. The corrected item-total correlation values for all indicators exceed the minimum threshold, while Cronbach's Alpha values for changes in Generation Z preferences, product quality, and customer loyalty are all above 0.70. These results confirm that the indicators consistently and accurately measure the intended constructs, allowing further analysis to be conducted with confidence. Changes in Generation Z preferences are represented by indicators related to lifestyle trends, digital influence, and experiential consumption, while product quality is reflected through perceptions of taste, freshness, presentation, and consistency. Customer loyalty is measured through repeat purchase intention, preference consistency, and willingness to recommend.

The regression analysis results show that changes in Generation Z preferences and product quality both have positive and significant effects on customer loyalty. The regression coefficient for changes in Generation Z preferences is higher than that of product quality, indicating that preference dynamics play a more dominant role in shaping loyalty behavior among Generation Z consumers. The coefficient of determination (Adjusted R Square) shows that a substantial proportion of variation in customer loyalty can be explained jointly by changes in Generation Z preferences and product quality, while the remaining variation is influenced by other factors not included in the research model.

The positive and significant effect of changes in Generation Z preferences on customer loyalty indicates that alignment between restaurant offerings and the evolving preferences of Generation Z consumers is critical. Generation Z tends to value experiential consumption, digital accessibility, and social validation through online reviews and social media exposure. When Western food restaurants are able to adapt to these preference shifts—such as by offering trendy menus, engaging digital content, and convenient ordering systems—customers are more likely to develop a sustained attachment to the brand. This finding supports consumer behavior theory, which emphasizes that congruence between consumer preferences and product offerings strengthens long-term loyalty.

Product quality is also found to have a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty, underscoring the importance of maintaining consistent standards in taste, freshness, presentation, and overall value. Although Generation Z consumers are known for their dynamic preferences, they remain highly sensitive to product performance. Consistent product quality contributes to satisfaction and trust, which are essential foundations of loyalty in the food and beverage industry. This result is consistent with previous studies that identify product quality as a key determinant of repeat purchase behavior and customer retention.

The simultaneous effect of changes in Generation Z preferences and product quality further indicates that customer loyalty is formed through a combination of adaptive market orientation and operational consistency. Preference alignment without adequate product quality may fail to sustain loyalty, just as high-quality products without responsiveness to changing preferences may lose relevance among Generation Z consumers. Therefore, Western food businesses in Mataram City need to balance innovation driven by consumer trends with the maintenance of stable quality standards.

Overall, the findings of this study suggest that customer loyalty among Generation Z consumers is not solely driven by traditional quality considerations but is strongly influenced by the ability of businesses to respond to rapidly changing consumption preferences. By continuously monitoring preference trends and ensuring consistent product quality, Western food restaurants can enhance customer loyalty and remain competitive in an increasingly dynamic culinary market.

CONCLUSION

According to the study's findings, Western Foods' Customer Loyalty in Mataram City is positively and significantly impacted by Generation Z Preferences and Product Quality. Generation Z Preferences show a significant influence, meaning that the more the products, services, and restaurant experience match the characteristics and trends of Generation Z, the more customer loyalty will increase. Good taste, cleanliness, presentation, and product

consistency can boost consumer satisfaction and promote repeat purchases, which in turn strengthen customer loyalty to Western Foods.

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