



The Role of Attitude in the Influence of Social Pressure, Product Features, and Brand Image on Android Brand Switching Decisions Among Gen-Z College Students

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Brand Switching, Attitude, Generation Z

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This study aims to examine the effects of social pressure, product features, and brand image on brand switching from Android to iPhone among Generation Z consumers, with attitude serving as a mediating variable. A quantitative research approach was employed using a survey method. Data were collected from 362 Generation Z university students who had previously used Android smartphones. The respondents were selected through purposive sampling, and the data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results indicate that social pressure, product features, and brand image have positive and significant effects on attitude. Furthermore, attitude has a positive and significant effect on brand switching from Android to iPhone. The mediation analysis reveals that attitude significantly mediates the relationships between social pressure, product features, and brand image with brand switching. These findings contribute to the consumer behavior literature by providing a deeper understanding of the factors influencing brand-switching decisions in the smartphone industry. The study also offers practical insights for smartphone marketers in developing strategies that strengthen consumer attitudes and enhance brand attractiveness to encourage switching behavior among Generation Z consumers.

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technology has fundamentally transformed how people communicate, access information, and perform daily

activities (Magsi et al., 2024; Jamalova & Constantinovits, 2020). Smartphones have become one of the most essential technological devices because they facilitate connectivity, entertainment, education, and business activities simultaneously (Lastovetskaia et al., 2025; Patel, 2024). Globally, smartphone adoption continues to grow, reflecting the increasing dependence of modern societies on digital ecosystems. In 2017, worldwide smartphone sales reached approximately 1.53 billion units, with Android accounting for 85.9% of the market and iOS holding approximately 14% (Anggreni & Arsana, 2022). This phenomenon demonstrates that smartphones are no longer merely communication tools but have evolved into strategic products that influence consumer lifestyles and identities. The importance of understanding smartphone consumption behavior extends beyond marketing interests because purchasing decisions increasingly reflect broader social, psychological, and technological dynamics. Consequently, investigating factors that influence consumers to switch smartphone brands is important for understanding how technological innovation, social interaction, and consumer perceptions shape behavioral decisions in contemporary society (Patel, 2024).

From a theoretical perspective, consumer decisions regarding smartphone adoption and brand switching can be understood through behavioral theories that explain how individual evaluations, social influences, and perceptions shape decision-making processes. One of the most widely applied frameworks in consumer behavior research is the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which provides a systematic explanation of the factors underlying behavioral intentions and actual behavior. TPB proposes that individual behavior is influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In this study, social pressure represents subjective norms because it reflects the influence of family, peers, and social groups on consumer evaluations and decisions (Benita et al., 2023). Product features are associated with consumers' cognitive assessments of functional benefits and technological superiority, which contribute to favorable evaluations of a brand. Brand image reflects consumers' perceptions and associations toward a brand, influencing emotional and symbolic evaluations (Mulyani & Hermina, 2023). Attitude serves as a central psychological mechanism that translates these external and internal influences into behavioral outcomes, including brand switching (Gandhi, 2022). Therefore, TPB provides a comprehensive framework for explaining how social, functional, and symbolic factors influence consumers' decisions to switch from Android smartphones to iPhones.

Despite the widespread adoption of smartphones, several challenges have emerged regarding consumer loyalty and brand sustainability. Ideally, consumers should select smartphones based on rational considerations such as

product quality, technical specifications, functional performance, and value for money (Wardhana, 2023). Consumer behavior theory suggests that purchasing decisions should primarily be driven by utility and product functionality rather than external influences. However, contemporary market conditions indicate a growing tendency among consumers, particularly younger generations, to switch brands based on non-functional motivations. Brand switching has become increasingly common among university students and Generation Z consumers who are highly exposed to digital trends and social influences (Wardhana, 2023; Weitzl & Hutzinger, 2025). This phenomenon creates a discrepancy between rational consumption expectations and actual consumer behavior. Such inconsistency raises concerns because excessive brand switching can weaken customer loyalty, increase marketing costs, and challenge firms' ability to maintain sustainable competitive advantages in the highly competitive smartphone industry (Patel, 2024).

Previous studies have identified numerous factors associated with brand switching behavior. Research has shown that dissatisfaction, variety-seeking tendencies, and lifestyle considerations can significantly encourage consumers to switch brands (Nurogo & Susanti, 2024). Other studies emphasize the role of product-related factors, arguing that design quality, operating systems, device performance, and technological innovation influence consumer preferences and purchasing decisions (Benita et al., 2023). Similarly, social and psychological influences have received increasing scholarly attention, particularly among younger consumers who often evaluate products based on symbolic and social values. Although these studies provide valuable insights, the findings remain fragmented because they generally focus on isolated determinants of brand switching. Consequently, the interaction among social pressure, product features, brand image, and consumers' psychological evaluations remains insufficiently explored, particularly in the context of smartphone brand migration from Android to iPhone.

Another limitation in the existing literature concerns the inconsistent findings regarding the influence of brand image and social factors on consumer behavior. Several studies report that a strong brand image positively shapes consumer attitudes and purchase intentions (Mulyani & Hermina, 2023; Bidari & Kurniawan, 2023), whereas others suggest that brand image alone may not be sufficient to prevent switching behavior when consumers experience disappointment or brand-related embarrassment (Weitzl & Hutzinger, 2025). Likewise, studies examining social pressure reveal varying conclusions regarding its role in shaping consumer evaluations and behavioral outcomes (Pahlavie et al., 2020; Benita et al., 2023). Furthermore, most previous studies

have examined direct relationships between antecedent variables and behavioral outcomes while paying limited attention to the mediating mechanisms through which these factors influence brand switching. As a result, there remains a theoretical gap concerning the role of attitude as a psychological process that connects social, functional, and symbolic influences with actual switching behavior (Sunardi et al., 2023).

The novelty of this study lies in its integration of social pressure, product features, and brand image within a single conceptual framework while positioning attitude as a mediating variable that explains brand-switching behavior. Unlike previous studies that predominantly focused on direct effects, this research emphasizes the psychological process through which external influences are transformed into behavioral responses. This approach extends the application of TPB by examining how subjective norms, product evaluations, and brand perceptions jointly contribute to attitude formation and subsequently influence switching decisions. Furthermore, the study focuses on Generation Z consumers, a demographic group characterized by high technological adaptability, extensive social media exposure, and dynamic consumption patterns. Considering the growing popularity of iPhones among young consumers despite Android's dominant market share, investigating this phenomenon offers a contemporary and relevant contribution to consumer behavior and smartphone marketing literature.

Based on the identified issues and research gaps, this study examines how social pressure, product features, and brand image influence brand switching from Android to iPhone through attitude. It is proposed that stronger social influence, better product evaluations, and a more favorable brand image lead to positive attitudes toward iPhones, which in turn increase the likelihood of brand switching. Attitude is expected to serve as a mediating mechanism between these factors and switching behavior. Accordingly, the study proposes the following hypotheses: H1: Social pressure positively influences attitude; H2: Product features positively influence attitude; H3: Brand image positively influences attitude; H4: Attitude positively influences brand switching; H5a: Attitude mediates the relationship between social pressure and brand switching; H5b: Attitude mediates the relationship between product features and brand switching; and H5c: Attitude mediates the relationship between brand image and brand switching. This study contributes to the understanding of smartphone brand-switching behavior and provides practical insights for marketers in developing strategies to strengthen consumer attitudes and enhance brand attractiveness.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design using a cross-sectional survey to examine the effects of social pressure, product features, and brand image on brand switching, with attitude serving as a mediating variable. The explanatory design was selected because it enables the investigation of causal relationships among variables and the assessment of both direct and indirect effects within an integrated structural model. The study was conducted in Indonesia, where smartphone adoption among Generation Z is rapidly increasing and iPhone usage has become increasingly prevalent among university students. This context provides a relevant setting for examining brand-switching behavior from Android to iPhone. To test the proposed relationships, the study utilized Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), which is appropriate for predictive research involving latent constructs and mediation analysis in complex variance-based models (Cheah et al., 2025). Furthermore, PLS-SEM was chosen because of its ability to maximize the explained variance of endogenous constructs and its flexibility regarding data distribution assumptions (Hair et al., 2021).

The target population consisted of university students who had previously used Android smartphones and currently use iPhones as their primary devices. A purposive sampling technique was employed to ensure that respondents met the research objectives and possessed relevant experience related to brand-switching behavior. The inclusion criteria were: (1) active university students aged between 18 and 22 years, (2) individuals who had previously used Android smartphones, and (3) individuals who currently use iPhones as their primary smartphones. After data screening and validation procedures, a total of 362 responses were retained for analysis. This sample size was considered adequate for PLS-SEM analysis and satisfied the ten-times rule recommended for variance-based structural equation modeling, thereby ensuring stable and reliable parameter estimation (Hair et al., 2021).

Data were collected through an online questionnaire administered via Google Forms and distributed through digital platforms, including WhatsApp, Instagram, and Kudata.id. Participation was voluntary and anonymous, and respondents were provided with information regarding the study objectives and informed consent before completing the questionnaire. These procedures were implemented to comply with ethical research standards and reduce the potential for common method bias. All constructs, namely social pressure, product features, brand image, attitude, and brand switching, were measured using a five-point Likert scale. The measurement items were adapted from previously

validated studies and modified to fit the context of smartphone brand switching. Data analysis involved evaluating the measurement model through outer loadings, Composite Reliability, Cronbach's Alpha, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity using the Fornell–Larcker criterion. The structural model was assessed using path coefficients, coefficients of determination (R^2), and effect sizes (f^2). Hypothesis testing was conducted using a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 subsamples at a 5% significance level in the latest version of SmartPLS (Hair et al., 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Sample Profile

This study involved 362 respondents, all of whom met the inclusion criteria and were deemed valid for analysis. All respondents were between 18 and 22 years old and were active undergraduate (Bachelor's degree) students. Therefore, the sample characteristics were consistent with the target population of the study, namely Generation Z university students, a consumer group characterized by a high level of technology usage and digital engagement.

Furthermore, all respondents had prior experience using Android smartphones and were currently using iPhones, indicating that they had undergone a brand-switching process. This characteristic demonstrates that the respondents possessed direct experience with smartphone brand switching, making the sample highly relevant for examining the factors that influence brand-switching behavior among Generation Z consumers.

Measurement Model

The questionnaire consisted of 20 indicators used to measure the constructs in the research framework. All items were assessed using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree").

Table 1. Measurement Model

Construct	Measurement Items	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	AVE
Social Pressure (SP)	My decision to use an iPhone is influenced by my family's opinions.	0.890	0.896	0.927	0.761
	My friends recommend that I use an iPhone.	0.898			
	I feel encouraged to use an iPhone because it is a trend in my social environment.	0.833			

	I use an iPhone to meet the expectations of people around me.	0.867			
Product Features (PF)	The iPhone camera has better quality than Android smartphones.	0.786			
	I believe that the iPhone security system is more reliable.	0.776			
	The iPhone has good physical durability against impact and water.	0.749	0.776	0.856	0.598
	I find the iPhone easier to use than Android smartphones.	0.782			
	The design and appearance of the iPhone are attractive and premium.	0.845			
Brand Image (BI)	The iPhone has excellent product quality.	0.793			
	The iPhone's image is consistent with its functions and performance.	0.747	0.800	0.869	0.625
	The iPhone brand gives me a sense of prestige and increases my self-confidence.	0.774			
	Using an iPhone is the right decision after switching from Android.	0.855			
Attitude (AT)	Using an iPhone is a wiser choice than continuing to use Android.	0.812			
	Switching from Android to iPhone is a more beneficial decision for me.	0.750	0.823	0.883	0.655
	My decision to switch from Android to iPhone is more suitable for my needs.	0.817			
	I was dissatisfied with my Android experience, which led me to switch to an iPhone.	0.841			
Brand Switching (BS)	The quality of my previous Android smartphone was inadequate, so I decided to switch to an iPhone.	0.803	0.823	0.883	0.653
	The features and promotions offered by the iPhone were	0.776			

more attractive than those of my previous Android brand, leading me to switch.	
I became bored with using Android and wanted a new experience by using an iPhone.	0.813

Table 1 presents the results of the measurement model evaluation, including factor loadings, Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for all constructs. All indicator loadings are above 0.70. The factor loadings range from 0.833 to 0.898 for Social Pressure, 0.749 to 0.786 for Product Features, 0.747 to 0.845 for Brand Image, 0.750 to 0.855 for Attitude, and 0.776 to 0.841 for Brand Switching.

The AVE values range from 0.598 to 0.761 for all constructs. Cronbach's Alpha values range from 0.776 to 0.896, while Composite Reliability values range from 0.856 to 0.927. All measurement model results are presented in Table 1 and were used for the subsequent structural model analysis.

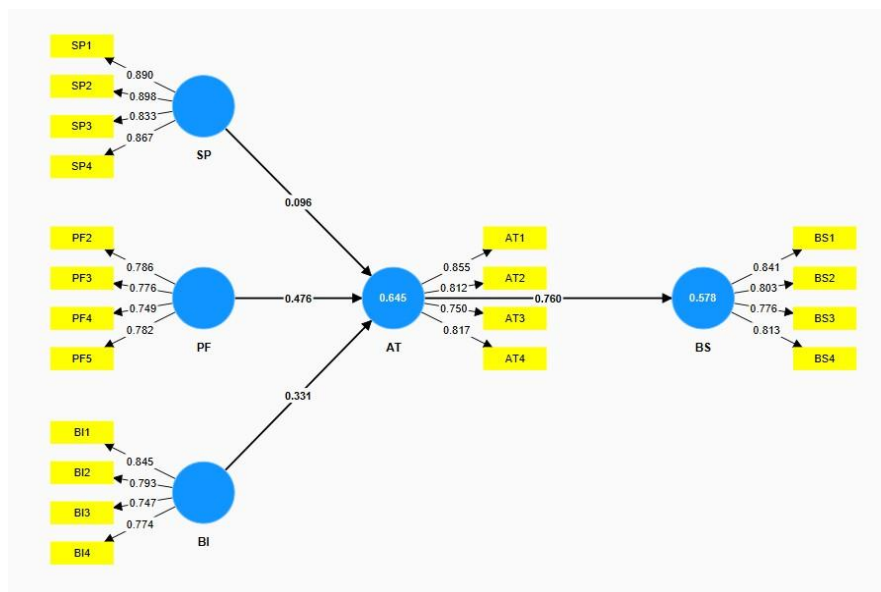


Figure 1. PLS-SEM Results

Figure 1 presents the results of the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis. The model illustrates the relationships among Social Pressure (SP), Product Features (PF), Brand Image (BI), Attitude (AT), and Brand Switching (BS). The coefficient of determination (R^2) for Attitude is 0.645, indicating that Social Pressure, Product Features, and Brand Image collectively explain 64.5% of the variance in Attitude. Meanwhile, the R^2 value for Brand Switching is 0.576, suggesting that Attitude explains 57.6% of

the variance in Brand Switching.

Among the antecedent variables, Product Features demonstrate the strongest effect on Attitude ($\beta = 0.476$), followed by Brand Image ($\beta = 0.331$) and Social Pressure ($\beta = 0.096$). These findings indicate that consumers' evaluations of iPhone features play a more prominent role in shaping positive attitudes toward switching than social influence or brand image. Furthermore, Attitude exhibits a substantial positive effect on Brand Switching ($\beta = 0.759$), indicating that favorable attitudes toward iPhones significantly increase the likelihood of switching from Android to iPhone.

The outer loadings shown in Figure 1 further confirm the adequacy of the measurement model, as all indicators load strongly on their respective constructs. Overall, the model demonstrates satisfactory explanatory power and provides empirical support for the proposed relationships among social pressure, product features, brand image, attitude, and brand-switching behavior.

Discriminant Validity

After establishing convergent validity and reliability, discriminant validity was assessed to determine whether each construct was empirically distinct from the other constructs in the model. Discriminant validity was evaluated using two approaches: cross-loadings and the Fornell–Larcker criterion. The cross-loading assessment examines whether each indicator loads more strongly on its assigned construct than on other constructs, while the Fornell–Larcker criterion compares the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) with the correlations among constructs. The results of these assessments are presented in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity – Cross Loadings

<i>Indikator</i>	<i>AT</i>	<i>BI</i>	<i>BS</i>	<i>PF</i>	<i>SP</i>
AT1	0.855	0.633	0.649	0.670	0.294
AT2	0.812	0.576	0.639	0.605	0.409
AT3	0.750	0.593	0.563	0.604	0.283
AT4	0.817	0.563	0.605	0.607	0.253
BI1	0.600	0.845	0.539	0.602	0.234
BI2	0.564	0.793	0.520	0.648	0.227
BI3	0.513	0.747	0.456	0.596	0.207
BI4	0.625	0.774	0.571	0.602	0.358
BS1	0.645	0.516	0.841	0.525	0.414
BS2	0.574	0.512	0.803	0.548	0.306
BS3	0.606	0.565	0.776	0.623	0.255
BS4	0.628	0.549	0.813	0.541	0.419
PF2	0.600	0.587	0.552	0.786	0.289
PF3	0.580	0.613	0.506	0.776	0.212
PF4	0.605	0.600	0.539	0.749	0.350

PF5	0.592	0.593	0.539	0.782	0.306
SP1	0.392	0.336	0.423	0.394	0.890
SP2	0.342	0.310	0.383	0.344	0.898
SP3	0.305	0.264	0.367	0.296	0.833
SP4	0.280	0.216	0.325	0.249	0.867

Table 2 presents the cross-loading results used to assess discriminant validity. All indicators show higher loadings on their respective constructs than on other constructs. The loadings for Attitude range from 0.750 to 0.855, Brand Image from 0.747 to 0.845, Brand Switching from 0.776 to 0.841, Product Features from 0.749 to 0.786, and Social Pressure from 0.833 to 0.898. These results indicate that each indicator adequately represents its intended construct and demonstrates satisfactory discriminant validity.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity – Fornell–Larcker Criterion

	AT	BI	BS	PF	SP
Attitude	0.809				
Brand Image	0.731	0.791			
Brand Switching	0.760	0.663	0.808		
Product Features	0.768	0.774	0.691	0.773	
Social Pressure	0.384	0.328	0.434	0.375	0.872

Table 3 presents the discriminant validity assessment using the Fornell–Larcker criterion. The diagonal values represent the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct. The square root of AVE values are 0.809 for Attitude, 0.791 for Brand Image, 0.808 for Brand Switching, 0.773 for Product Features, and 0.872 for Social Pressure. Overall, the results indicate acceptable discriminant validity among the constructs.

Table 4. R-Square Values

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Attitude	0.645	0.644

Table 4 presents the coefficient of determination (R^2) for the endogenous constructs. The R^2 value of Attitude is 0.645, indicating that 64.5% of the variance in Attitude is explained by Social Pressure, Product Features, and Brand Image. Meanwhile, the R^2 value of Brand Switching is 0.578, indicating that 57.8% of the

variance in Brand Switching is explained by the variables included in the model. The adjusted R² values are very close to the corresponding R² values, suggesting the stability of the model.

Examination of the Inner Model (Structural Model)

The structural model was evaluated to examine the direct and indirect relationships among the constructs proposed in the research framework. The analysis was conducted using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS 4 to estimate path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values. The results of hypothesis testing are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Path	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O /STDEV)	P Values	Result
Product Features → Attitude	0.476	0.71	0.075	6.371	0.000	Supported
Brand Image → Attitude	0.331	0.335	0.063	5.278	0.000	Supported
Social Pressure → Attitude	0.096	0.097	0.044	2.211	0.027	Supported
Attitude → Brand Switching	0.760	0.758	0.054	13.984	0.000	Supported
Product Features → Attitude → Brand Switching	0.362	0.358	0.064	5.646	0.000	Supported
Brand Image → Attitude → Brand Switching	0.251	0.254	0.051	4.963	0.000	Supported
Social Pressure → Attitude → Brand Switching	0.073	0.074	0.034	2.145	0.032	Supported

Table 5 shows that all direct relationships are positive and statistically significant. Product Features have a positive effect on Attitude ($\beta = 0.476$, $t = 6.371$, $p = 0.000$). Brand Image also has a positive effect on Attitude ($\beta = 0.331$, $t = 5.278$, $p = 0.000$), while Social Pressure positively influences Attitude ($\beta = 0.096$, $t = 2.211$, $p = 0.027$). In addition, Attitude has a positive and significant effect on Brand Switching ($\beta = 0.760$, $t = 13.984$, $p = 0.000$).

The indirect effect analysis further indicates that Product Features positively influence Brand Switching through Attitude ($\beta = 0.362$, $t = 5.646$, $p = 0.000$). Similarly, Brand Image has a positive indirect effect on Brand Switching through Attitude ($\beta = 0.251$, $t = 4.963$, $p = 0.000$). Social Pressure also demonstrates a positive indirect effect on Brand Switching through Attitude ($\beta = 0.073$, $t = 2.145$, $p = 0.032$). These results confirm that Attitude functions as a mediating variable in the relationships between Product Features, Brand Image, Social Pressure, and Brand Switching.

Discussion

The findings reveal that product features have a positive and significant effect on attitude toward iPhones. This result confirms that consumers evaluate smartphone brands largely through their perceptions of functional attributes, including camera quality, security systems, durability, and ease of use. Product features create consumer value and contribute to favorable product evaluations, while smartphone attributes significantly influence consumers' perceptions and attitudes toward a brand (Jamalova & Constantinovits, 2020; Benita et al., 2023). However, the present study extends prior research by demonstrating that among Generation Z consumers, product features are not merely evaluated from a utilitarian perspective but are also associated with technology-driven experiences and lifestyle preferences. Theoretically, this finding supports the argument that favorable evaluations of product attributes contribute to the formation of positive attitudes. Practically, smartphone manufacturers should continuously innovate and enhance product features to strengthen consumer attitudes and increase brand attractiveness in highly competitive markets (Gupta et al., 2025; Gao, Jiang & Guo, 2025).

The results further indicate that brand image positively and significantly influences attitude. The strong image of the iPhone as a premium, innovative, and globally recognized brand appears to generate favorable perceptions among Generation Z consumers. This finding is consistent with previous studies showing that a positive brand image strengthens consumers' evaluations and preferences toward a product (Mulyani & Hermina, 2023). While previous studies primarily focused on the direct influence of brand image on purchase intention, the current study demonstrates that brand image first shapes consumer attitudes, which subsequently influence behavioral outcomes. This finding contributes to the branding literature by highlighting the psychological mechanism through which brand image affects consumer behavior. From a practical perspective, smartphone companies should invest in brand-building activities that communicate not only functional benefits but also symbolic values, prestige, and identity-related meanings that resonate with younger consumers. These efforts can strengthen consumers' emotional attachment to the brand and foster more positive attitudes toward adoption and switching behavior.

The study also found that social pressure has a positive and significant effect on attitude. Social norms and interpersonal influences play an important role in shaping individual attitudes and behaviors, while peer influence and social environments significantly affect consumers' evaluations of technological products (Benita et al., 2023; Pahlavie et al., 2020). Nevertheless, the present study highlights the growing importance of social influence in the context of Generation Z, a cohort characterized by intensive social media engagement and continuous exposure to online communities. Unlike earlier studies that focused mainly on traditional interpersonal influences, this research suggests that social pressure in the digital era extends beyond family and friends to include online trends, influencers, and virtual social networks. This finding implies that consumer attitudes toward smartphones are shaped not only by product-related considerations but also by the desire for social acceptance, identity expression, and group affiliation.

Another important finding is that attitude has a positive and significant effect on brand switching from Android to iPhone. This result is consistent with previous theoretical and empirical studies suggesting that attitude is a key determinant of behavioral intentions and actual behavior, and that favorable attitudes increase the likelihood of adopting new products and switching brands. Compared with previous research that primarily examined direct antecedents of brand switching, the present study demonstrates that attitude serves as a critical psychological driver connecting consumers' evaluations with their switching decisions (Becan, 2025). This suggests that consumers do not switch brands solely because of objective product superiority but because they develop favorable attitudes toward the alternative brand. From a managerial perspective, companies seeking to attract customers from competing brands should focus on cultivating positive consumer attitudes through effective communication strategies, superior customer experiences, and consistent brand positioning (Yusuf & Zulfitri, 2021; Alalwan, 2023).

The mediation analysis provides further evidence that attitude serves as a significant mechanism linking product features, brand image, and social pressure with brand switching behavior. While previous studies generally examined the direct effects of these variables on consumer behavior, the present study demonstrates that their influence operates indirectly through attitude. This finding represents an important theoretical contribution because it clarifies the psychological process through which external factors shape switching decisions. The result suggests that favorable product evaluations, strong brand perceptions, and positive social influences do not automatically lead consumers to switch brands; rather, they first create positive attitudes that subsequently motivate switching behavior. This finding enriches the application of the Theory of Planned Behavior by integrating functional, symbolic, and social determinants within a single explanatory framework. Consequently, the study offers a more comprehensive understanding of smartphone brand-switching behavior among

Generation Z consumers (Ringle et al., 2023; Wang, 2025).

The novelty of this research lies in the integration of social pressure, product features, and brand image as antecedents of brand switching through the mediating role of attitude in the smartphone context (Baba et al., 2025). Unlike prior studies that typically examined these factors separately or focused only on direct effects, this study proposes and empirically validates a comprehensive model that explains how social, functional, and symbolic factors jointly influence switching behavior (Debi et al., 2021; Winit et al., 2025). The study contributes to the consumer behavior and branding literature by extending understanding of the mechanisms underlying brand switching among Generation Z consumers. Furthermore, it provides practical insights for smartphone companies seeking to attract and retain younger consumers (Prabhu et al., 2025; Rahman, 2023). The findings suggest that successful marketing strategies should simultaneously emphasize product innovation, strengthen brand image, and leverage social influence to build favorable consumer attitudes that ultimately encourage brand-switching decisions. This integrated perspective represents the state-of-the-art contribution of the study and offers a more holistic explanation of smartphone brand-switching behavior in the contemporary digital environment.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that brand-switching behavior from Android to iPhone among Generation Z students is driven not only by functional product considerations but also by social influence and symbolic brand perceptions, with attitude serving as the key psychological mechanism that transforms these factors into switching decisions. The most important insight from this research is that consumers are more likely to switch brands when they develop favorable attitudes toward the alternative brand, highlighting the central role of attitude in shaping technology consumption behavior. From an academic perspective, this study contributes to the consumer behavior and smartphone marketing literature by integrating social pressure, product features, and brand image within a single framework and empirically confirming the mediating role of attitude based on the Theory of Planned Behavior. This integrated approach provides a more comprehensive explanation of smartphone brand-switching behavior, particularly among Generation Z consumers. However, the study is limited to Indonesian Generation Z university students and focuses on a specific smartphone migration context, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Future research is therefore encouraged to examine different demographic groups, geographical settings, and product categories, as well as to incorporate additional variables such as perceived value, brand loyalty, social

media influence, and consumer innovativeness to develop a broader understanding of brand-switching behavior.

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