

How Self-Control Mediates Fintech Ease of Use and Consumptive Lifestyle on Generation Z's Financial Behavior

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Abstract

The development of financial technology (fintech) provides convenience for Generation Z in conducting financial activities; however, this convenience needs to be balanced with the ability to control financial behavior in order to prevent excessive consumption. This study aims to analyze the effect of fintech ease of use and consumptive lifestyle on the financial management behavior of Generation Z in Cirebon City, with self-control as a mediating variable. This study employed a quantitative approach using a survey method involving Generation Z fintech users in Cirebon City. Data were collected from 100 respondents and analyzed using the Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method through SmartPLS 4. The results show that fintech ease of use has a positive and significant effect on self-control and financial management behavior, while consumptive lifestyle has a negative and significant effect on self-control and financial management behavior. Furthermore, self-control has a positive and significant effect on financial management behavior and is able to partially mediate the relationship between the independent variables and financial management behavior. This study indicates that fintech use supported by strong self-control can help Generation Z develop better and more planned financial management behavior.

Keywords: financial technology, consumptive lifestyle, self-control, financial management behavior, generation z

Introduction

Digital technology development has brought changes to community financial activities through the emergence of financial technology (fintech). Generation Z has become one of the groups that most widely use fintech services because they are accustomed to using digital technology in daily life. Based on the AFTECH Annual Member Survey (AMS) 2024 data presented by the Financial Services Authority (OJK, 2024) at the Indonesia Fintech Summit & Expo 2024, fintech service users in Indonesia are dominated by Generation Z and millennials, accounting for 68.7%. The high level of fintech use among Generation Z is influenced by ease of internet access, smartphone use, and ease of conducting digital transactions. This condition shows that fintech is not only used as a payment tool but also influences Generation Z's financial behavior, making it more practical, faster, and digitally based.

Generation Z is a group born between 1997 and 2012 and is known as the digital-native generation with a high level of adaptation to technology, including fintech. Ease of use of fintech is the main factor driving the increased intensity of its use among young people, since transactions can be carried out quickly, practically, and efficiently. Research shows that the higher the perceived ease of use of a technology, the more often individuals tend to use it

in their daily financial activities (Nuryanti & Hadi, 2025). However, this convenience also has a negative impact, namely the potential to encourage consumptive behavior, because transactions can be made without careful consideration.

This phenomenon is becoming increasingly important considering that, demographically, Generation Z represents a fairly large proportion of Cirebon City's population. Based on the publication of the Central Statistics Agency (Badan Pusat Statistik/BPS) of Cirebon City (2026) in Cirebon City in Figures 2026, the age group representing Generation Z in this study reaches approximately 108,680 people, or around 31.27% of Cirebon City's total population based on 2025 population data. This data illustrates the most recent demographic conditions available regarding the population composition of Cirebon City and is used as a basis for identifying the presence of the Generation Z age group as a relevant population for this study. The large proportion of this age group indicates that Generation Z is a significant population group, making it important to examine in the context of financial management behavior.

The selection of Generation Z in Cirebon City as the research object is based on several considerations. First, Generation Z is an age group with a high level of closeness to digital technology, making it a potential user of financial technology services in daily financial activities. Second, Cirebon City is an urban area experiencing growing digital economic activity, yet its characteristics differ from metropolitan cities such as Jakarta or Surabaya, which are more frequently used as research locations for digital financial behavior. Third, the age phase of Generation Z examined in this study is at an early stage toward financial independence, making the ability to manage money, control consumption, and utilize financial technology an important aspect to analyze.

Along with the high use of fintech, a consumptive lifestyle is becoming an increasingly strong phenomenon among Generation Z. Exposure to social media, digital trends, and easy access to various online shopping platforms encourage individuals to make impulsive purchases without careful planning. Research shows that lifestyle has a positive and significant effect on consumptive behavior, where the more consumptive a person's lifestyle, the higher their tendency to make uncontrolled expenditures (Fungky, 2021). In fact, the convenience of features such as pay-later and digital wallets can increase the tendency toward impulsive buying among young people because of the fast and practical transaction process. A consumptive lifestyle in this study is therefore treated as a behavioral tendency toward discretionary spending, trend-oriented consumption, and immediate gratification rather than being equated directly with the subjective norm component of the Theory of Planned Behavior. Such a lifestyle may weaken financial discipline by increasing the frequency and attractiveness of short-term consumption choices.

On the other hand, financial management behavior is an important indicator in maintaining individual financial well-being, especially for Generation Z, who are in the early stages of economic independence. However, the level of financial literacy and financial behavior among the Indonesian population is still relatively low. The National Survey of Financial Literacy and Inclusion shows that the financial literacy level of the Indonesian population has only reached 49.68% (OJK, 2022). This low literacy level affects individuals' suboptimal ability to plan, manage, and control their finances. As a result, the ease of use of financial technology, which should provide benefits, actually has the potential to cause financial problems if it is not balanced with good financial management ability and literacy (Maharani & Kusuma, 2025).

To understand this phenomenon more clearly, an approach is needed that considers not only external factors such as technological convenience and lifestyle, but also individual internal factors, one of which is self-control. Self-control is an individual's ability to control impulses and desires, including in financial decision-making. Individuals with high self-control tend to be able to restrain consumptive behavior and to be more rational in managing their finances. Research shows that self-control has a significant effect on financial management behavior and acts as a mediating variable in the relationship between lifestyle and financial behavior (Claudia Riska et al., 2025). Accordingly, self-control is positioned in this study as a behavioral-regulation mechanism that determines whether technological convenience and consumption tendencies are translated into disciplined or undisciplined financial behavior.

The theoretical framework is constructed by assigning distinct roles to the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), and Prospect Theory rather than treating their constructs as interchangeable. TAM (Davis, 1989) provides the primary basis for fintech ease of use by explaining that perceived ease reduces the effort required to use technology and can facilitate its integration into everyday financial activities. TPB (Ajzen, 1991) contributes a broader behavioral perspective by emphasizing the importance of perceived control in translating intentions and resources into actual behavior. In this study, self-control is not treated as identical to perceived behavioral control; instead, it is viewed as an individual regulatory capacity that can strengthen a person's ability to manage spending decisions and maintain planned financial behavior. Prospect Theory (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979) complements this explanation by showing how individuals may overweight immediate gains or satisfaction, which helps explain why a consumptive lifestyle can encourage short-term spending at the expense of longer-term financial goals. Together, these perspectives explain why fintech ease of use and consumptive lifestyle may exert direct effects on financial management behavior as well as indirect effects through self-control.

Previous studies provide evidence that fintech, lifestyle, self-control, and financial behavior are related, but the findings remain fragmented across separate relationships. Nuryanti and Hadi (2025) emphasize the role of fintech ease of use in financial behavior, while Maharani and Kusuma (2025) show that fintech and lifestyle are relevant to personal financial management. Claudia Riska et al. (2025) further demonstrate that self-control can function as a mediating mechanism between lifestyle and financial behavior. However, limited evidence simultaneously examines fintech ease of use and consumptive lifestyle as two contrasting antecedents of financial management behavior while positioning self-control as the psychological mechanism through which both effects operate. This gap is particularly relevant for Generation Z fintech users outside major metropolitan settings.

Therefore, this study examines seven theoretically anticipated relationships: the effects of fintech ease of use and consumptive lifestyle on self-control; the effect of self-control on financial management behavior; the direct effects of fintech ease of use and consumptive lifestyle on financial management behavior; and the two indirect effects through self-control. By testing these relationships simultaneously among Generation Z fintech users in Cirebon City, the study seeks to clarify whether self-control strengthens the beneficial role of fintech convenience while reducing the adverse implications of a consumptive lifestyle.

Fintech Ease of Use and Self-Control

Perceived ease of use reflects the extent to which individuals believe that using a technology requires relatively little effort (Davis, 1989). In fintech services, ease of access to balances, transaction histories, payment records, and financial information may improve users' ability to monitor their financial activities. When users can obtain financial information quickly and transparently, they may be better able to recognize spending patterns and regulate their financial decisions. Nevertheless, convenience can also facilitate spending, making the regulatory role of the user particularly important. On balance, this study expects fintech ease of use to support greater self-regulation when its features are used for monitoring and managing financial activities.

H1: Fintech ease of use has a positive effect on self-control among Generation Z fintech users in Cirebon City.

Consumptive Lifestyle and Self-Control

A consumptive lifestyle emphasizes spending based on desires, trends, prestige, or immediate satisfaction rather than planned needs. Such tendencies increase exposure to consumption impulses and may make it more difficult for individuals to delay gratification. Fungky (2021) indicates that a stronger consumptive lifestyle is associated with a higher tendency toward uncontrolled expenditure. Accordingly, individuals with stronger consumptive tendencies are expected to experience greater difficulty maintaining financial self-control.

H2: Consumptive lifestyle has a negative effect on self-control among Generation Z fintech users in Cirebon City.

Self-Control and Financial Management Behavior

Self-control enables individuals to delay gratification, resist unnecessary expenditure, and maintain behavior consistent with longer-term financial goals. In financial contexts, strong self-control can support budgeting, saving, spending discipline, and more deliberate decision-making. Claudia Riska et al. (2025) show that self-control is relevant in explaining individual financial behavior. Therefore, greater self-control is expected to promote better financial management.

H3: Self-control has a positive effect on financial management behavior among Generation Z fintech users in Cirebon City.

Fintech Ease of Use and Financial Management Behavior

TAM suggests that technologies perceived as easy to use are more likely to be adopted and incorporated into everyday activities (Davis, 1989). In financial services, accessible fintech features can facilitate transaction monitoring, payments, fund transfers, and financial record keeping. When used appropriately, these functions may increase efficiency and support more organized financial management (Maharani & Kusuma, 2025; Nuryanti & Hadi, 2025).

H4: Fintech ease of use has a positive effect on financial management behavior among Generation Z fintech users in Cirebon City.

Consumptive Lifestyle and Financial Management Behavior

A lifestyle dominated by immediate consumption may conflict with financial management practices that require planning, saving, and prioritization of future needs. Prospect Theory helps explain why individuals may favor immediate perceived benefits even when doing so creates less favorable longer-term financial consequences (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979). Consequently, stronger consumptive tendencies are expected to undermine disciplined financial management.

H5: Consumptive lifestyle has a negative effect on financial management behavior among Generation Z fintech users in Cirebon City.

Mediating Role of Self-Control in the Relationship Between Fintech Ease of Use and Financial Management Behavior

Fintech ease of use may improve financial management not only directly but also by providing users with accessible information and monitoring tools that facilitate behavioral regulation. When technological convenience is accompanied by stronger self-control, individuals may be better able to use fintech for planned financial purposes rather than merely for faster consumption. Thus, self-control is expected to transmit part of the beneficial effect of fintech convenience to financial management behavior.

H6: Self-control mediates the effect of fintech ease of use on financial management behavior among Generation Z fintech users in Cirebon City.

Mediating Role of Self-Control in the Relationship Between Consumptive Lifestyle and Financial Management Behavior

A consumptive lifestyle may weaken financial management because repeated exposure to immediate consumption incentives reduces the ability to maintain disciplined spending. Self-control provides a psychological mechanism through which such tendencies can be restrained. Individuals with stronger self-control are more capable of resisting impulsive expenditure and maintaining financial priorities despite consumption pressures (Claudia Riska et al., 2025). Therefore, part of the negative influence of a consumptive lifestyle on financial management behavior is expected to operate through reduced self-control.

H7: Self-control mediates the effect of consumptive lifestyle on financial management behavior among Generation Z fintech users in Cirebon City.

Method

This study used a quantitative research method with a causal-associative approach. According to Sugiyono (2023), quantitative research is a research method used to examine a particular population or sample with the aim of testing predetermined hypotheses through the collection and analysis of numerical data. The causal-associative approach was used to determine the cause-and-effect relationship between the independent variables, namely fintech ease of use (X1) and consumptive lifestyle (X2); the mediating variable, namely self-control (Z); and the dependent variable, namely financial management behavior (Y).

This study was conducted in Cirebon City, with Generation Z fintech users as the research object. Based on the publication of the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) of Cirebon City in Cirebon City in Figures 2026, the population in the age group representing Generation Z reaches approximately 108,680 people based on 2025 population data. The sample size was

determined using the Slovin formula with an error tolerance of 10% (0.1). The calculation using the Slovin formula produced a result of 99.91, which was then rounded up to 100 respondents.

The sampling technique used in this study was probability sampling with the simple random sampling method. Data were collected online through the distribution of a questionnaire using Google Forms to respondents included in the study population. Before respondents were confirmed as part of the sample, a screening process was conducted to ensure that they met the following criteria: Generation Z aged 14–29 years, domiciled in Cirebon City, and active users of financial technology in their daily financial transactions.

The primary data used consisted of respondents' answers to 32 questionnaire statement items measured using a 5-point Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree). The operational definitions of the variables were established to clarify how each construct was interpreted within the context of Generation Z fintech users. Fintech ease of use (X1) refers to the extent to which respondents perceive fintech services as easy to learn, understand, access, and operate with minimal effort in carrying out their daily financial activities. This construct reflects the perceived simplicity, convenience, accessibility, and efficiency of using digital financial services. Recent fintech research indicates that perceived ease and convenience remain important characteristics underlying users' acceptance and adoption of digital financial services (Al-Qudah et al., 2024; Zhao et al., 2024). In this study, a higher score on fintech ease of use indicates a stronger perception that fintech facilitates financial transactions and makes everyday financial activities easier to perform. Zhao et al. explicitly include perceived ease of use in their fintech acceptance model, while Al-Qudah et al. examine perceived convenience in digital-payment adoption among Generation Z.

Consumptive lifestyle (X2) refers to an individual's pattern of consumption that places relatively greater emphasis on desires, trends, prestige, enjoyment, and immediate satisfaction than on planned and prioritized needs. In the context of Generation Z, this lifestyle can be reflected in a tendency to follow consumption trends, purchase discretionary products, prioritize enjoyment-oriented spending, and make expenditures that are not always based on financial planning. Recent studies involving Generation Z have positioned hedonic or consumptive lifestyle as an important behavioral factor associated with financial behavior and consumption patterns (Nirmala et al., 2024; Utami & Isbanah, 2023). Accordingly, a higher score on this construct indicates a stronger tendency toward consumption-oriented and desire-driven lifestyle patterns. Both cited studies are open access and specifically examine lifestyle/hedonic lifestyle in Generation Z financial contexts.

Self-control (Z) refers to an individual's capacity to regulate impulses, delay immediate gratification, restrain unnecessary spending, and maintain financial decisions that are consistent with longer-term goals. In this study, self-control represents the psychological ability of Generation Z respondents to resist consumption impulses and regulate their use of money despite the convenience of digital financial transactions. Barrafreem et al. (2024) emphasize self-control as an important regulatory capacity for delaying immediate gratification in favor of longer-term financial goals and show that higher self-control is associated with stronger saving outcomes. Similarly, recent evidence indicates that self-control is relevant to consumers' ability to regulate potentially excessive online purchasing behavior (Erzincanlı et al., 2024). Thus, a higher self-control score indicates a stronger ability to regulate spending impulses and maintain goal-oriented financial decisions.

Financial management behavior (Y) refers to the manner in which individuals organize, monitor, and make decisions regarding their personal financial resources. Operationally, the construct represents behaviors related to planning expenditures, controlling spending, managing available funds, saving, monitoring financial conditions, and making financial decisions in a responsible manner. Ahamed and Limbu (2025) conceptualize financial management behavior as the way individuals manage and make financial decisions, while Nabila et al. (2023) demonstrate the relevance of financial management practices to the financial outcomes of Indonesian young adults. In the present study, a higher financial management behavior score indicates more disciplined, planned, and responsible personal financial practices among Generation Z fintech users.

Data were analyzed using the Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method with SmartPLS software version 4.0. Data testing included the outer model test (validity test with loading factor > 0.70 , AVE > 0.50 ; discriminant validity test using HTMT, Fornell-Larcker, and Cross Loadings; and reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability > 0.70). This was followed by the inner model test, which included the coefficient of determination (R-Square) test, multicollinearity (VIF) test, path coefficient test (T-Statistics > 1.96 and P-Values < 0.05), F-Square test, and mediation test through the bootstrapping procedure.

Results and Discussion

Respondent Characteristics

The characteristics of the respondents in this study ($n = 100$) were grouped by age. Respondents aged 14–16 years numbered 2 people (2%), those aged 17–20 years numbered 25 people (25%), those aged 21–24 years dominated the sample with 66 people (66%), and those aged 25–29 years numbered 7 people (7%). Based on the domicile criterion, all respondents (100%) stated that they were domiciled in Cirebon City. In addition, all respondents (100%) stated that they used financial technology services (such as e-wallets, mobile banking, QRIS, and pay-later) and had used them for daily financial transactions.

Descriptive Analysis of Variables

Based on the questionnaire responses, the mean values for the Fintech Ease of Use variable (X1) ranged from 4.18 to 4.29 (High category). For the Consumptive Lifestyle variable (X2), the mean value ranged from 3.44 to 3.59 (Neutral category). The Self-Control variable (Z) had a mean between 4.04 and 4.23 (High category). The Financial Management Behavior variable (Y) had a mean range of 4.06 to 4.29 (High category). This indicates that, in general, Generation Z in Cirebon City has a positive perception of fintech convenience, a neutral level of consumptive lifestyle, good self-control, and good financial behavior.

Outer Model Analysis (Validity and Reliability)

The outer model test was used to determine whether the indicators for each research variable were appropriate and consistent. In the first stage of evaluation, two indicators were found to have outer loading values below 0.70, namely KD3 (0.634) on the self-control variable and KP2 (0.606) on the financial management behavior variable. Both indicators were subsequently eliminated. After removal, a second-stage evaluation showed that all remaining indicators met the convergent validity criterion (outer loading > 0.70).

Table 1. Discriminant Validity Test Results (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio / HTMT)

Variable	Consumptive Lifestyle	Fintech Ease of Use	Self-Control	Financial Mgmt. Behavior
Consumptive Lifestyle	—			
Fintech Ease of Use	0.158	—		
Self-Control	0.320	0.507	—	
Financial Management Behavior	0.373	0.495	0.700	—

Based on the HTMT test in Table 1, all inter-variable relationship values fall below the 0.90 threshold. The highest value is found in the relationship between Self-Control and Financial Management Behavior at 0.700. This result confirms that there is no excessive conceptual overlap between variables, so the discriminant validity criterion is fulfilled.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity Test Results (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)

Variable	Consumptive Lifestyle	Fintech Ease of Use	Self-Control	Financial Mgmt. Behavior
Consumptive Lifestyle	0.802			
Fintech Ease of Use	0.101	0.807		
Self-Control	-0.317	0.470	0.806	
Financial Management Behavior	-0.362	0.459	0.648	0.814

Based on Table 2, the square root of the AVE (diagonal values) for each variable is greater than its correlation with other variables, indicating that each variable has a stronger relationship with its own indicators than with other constructs. The Cross Loadings test results (full table not attached) likewise show that each indicator has its highest loading value on the variable it is intended to measure, compared with other variables.

Table 3. Reliability and Construct Validity Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_a	rho_c	AVE
Consumptive Lifestyle	0.922	0.939	0.935	0.644
Fintech Ease of Use	0.910	0.916	0.929	0.651
Self-Control	0.910	0.915	0.929	0.650
Financial Management Behavior	0.927	0.928	0.940	0.662

In Table 3, all variables obtained Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values above 0.70, as well as AVE values above 0.50. This confirms a very good level of internal consistency and validity for the instrument used.

Model Fit Test

The model fit test showed a Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) value of 0.067. This value is below the 0.10 threshold, so the research model is declared to be a very good fit with the empirical data.

Inner Model Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

The coefficient of determination (R-Square) test showed a value of 0.355 for Self-Control, meaning that fintech ease of use and consumptive lifestyle are able to explain 35.5% of the variance in self-control. Meanwhile, the R-Square for financial management behavior was 0.502, meaning that the three independent and mediating variables are able to explain 50.2% of the change in the dependent variable. The multicollinearity test (VIF) showed that all values were below 5 (a maximum of 1.551 for self-control), confirming that the model does not suffer from multicollinearity problems.

Table 4. Path Coefficient Test Results (Direct Effects)

Relationship / Hypothesis	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics	P Values
Consumptive Lifestyle → Self-Control	-0.369	4.350	0.000
Consumptive Lifestyle → Financial Mgmt. Behavior	-0.252	3.100	0.001
Fintech Ease of Use → Self-Control	0.507	6.614	0.000
Fintech Ease of Use → Financial Mgmt. Behavior	0.279	3.100	0.001
Self-Control → Financial Mgmt. Behavior	0.436	4.578	0.000

The F-Square effect size test showed that the effect of fintech ease of use on self-control was 0.395 (large category). The effect of lifestyle on self-control (0.209) and of self-control on financial management behavior (0.246) fell into the medium category. The remaining effects were categorized as small.

Table 5. Mediation Test Results (Specific Indirect Effects)

Mediation Path	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics	P Values
Consumptive Lifestyle → Self-Control → Financial Mgmt. Behavior	-0.161	2.899	0.002
Fintech Ease of Use → Self-Control → Financial Mgmt. Behavior	0.221	3.716	0.000

Discussion

The Effect of Fintech Ease of Use on Self-Control (H1)

The findings indicate that fintech ease of use is positively associated with self-control among Generation Z fintech users in Cirebon City. This result suggests that technological convenience does not necessarily weaken financial discipline. Instead, when fintech applications are perceived as easy to understand and operate, users may be better able to access financial information, monitor transactions, check balances, and review their spending activities. From the perspective of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), perceived ease of use reduces the effort required to interact with technology (Davis, 1989). In a financial context, this reduced operational burden may allow users to devote greater attention to evaluating their financial decisions rather than struggling with the technology itself.

An important interpretation of this finding is that fintech convenience can operate through two competing mechanisms. On the one hand, frictionless payments, instant transactions, and easy access to digital purchasing can reduce the psychological barriers to spending and potentially encourage consumption. Sulistiyani et al. (2023), for example, found that financial technology could contribute to consumptive behavior among Generation Z, illustrating that technological convenience is not automatically associated with financial discipline. On the other hand, fintech also provides digital records and information that can support monitoring and financial awareness. The present finding suggests that, among the respondents in this study, this latter function may be more prominent: fintech convenience appears to facilitate rather than replace individual financial regulation.

This interpretation is also relevant when compared with Utami and Isbanah (2023), who found that financial technology itself did not determine Generation Z's financial behavior, whereas self-control was an important positive predictor. The difference indicates that merely having or using fintech may not be sufficient to improve financial discipline. What may matter is how users experience and utilize the convenience provided by fintech. Recent evidence from Generation Z in Cirebon also shows that fintech payment behavior and financial self-control are closely connected to healthier financial management behavior (Putri & Maiyaliza, 2026). Therefore, the positive relationship found in this study should not be interpreted as meaning that easier transactions inherently create greater self-control, but rather that technological convenience can support control when users employ fintech as a tool for monitoring and organizing their financial activities.

The Effect of Consumptive Lifestyle on Self-Control (H2)

The findings indicate that a stronger consumptive lifestyle is associated with lower self-control. A consumptive lifestyle tends to emphasize immediate satisfaction, trend-following, prestige-oriented consumption, and spending based more on desires than prioritized needs. Repeated exposure to such consumption motives may make it increasingly difficult for individuals to delay gratification and resist unnecessary purchases. For Generation Z, this issue is particularly relevant because consumption decisions frequently occur in digital environments where social media trends, online promotions, and convenient payment systems are simultaneously available.

From a behavioral perspective, self-control functions as an internal regulatory mechanism that enables individuals to compare immediate consumption desires with longer-term financial priorities. When consumption becomes an important expression of lifestyle, the psychological reward associated with obtaining desired products can compete with

saving, budgeting, or other delayed financial objectives. Thus, the negative relationship found in this study indicates that self-control is not merely a general personality characteristic but is directly relevant to the way Generation Z responds to consumption pressures.

The finding provides a somewhat different perspective from studies that conceptualize lifestyle more broadly. Suryani and Sudarno (2026), for instance, found that lifestyle was related to financial management behavior and that self-control played an intervening role. By contrast, Utami and Isbanah (2023) reported that a hedonic lifestyle did not significantly explain financial behavior among Generation Z. These differences may arise because the present study specifically conceptualizes consumptive lifestyle as a tendency toward desire-driven and less planned consumption. A general lifestyle construct may contain both productive and consumptive dimensions, whereas a consumptive lifestyle more directly captures behavioral tendencies that can conflict with self-regulation.

The Effect of Self-Control on Financial Management Behavior (H3)

The findings demonstrate that self-control contributes positively to financial management behavior. Generation Z individuals who are better able to regulate impulses, delay gratification, and distinguish needs from short-term desires are more likely to engage in disciplined financial practices. Self-control enables individuals to remain consistent with financial plans even when attractive consumption opportunities are readily available. This makes self-control particularly relevant in a digital financial environment where spending decisions can be completed quickly and with relatively little transactional friction.

The result is consistent with Utami and Isbanah (2023), who found that self-control positively influenced the financial behavior of Generation Z. Their findings suggest that individuals with stronger self-regulation are better able to avoid impulsive actions and maintain more responsible financial behavior. Similarly, Hafizha and Arifin (2025) showed that self-control positively contributes to Generation Z's financial behavior, emphasizing that personal discipline can be more influential for financial decision-making than financial knowledge alone.

The present findings therefore reinforce the view that responsible financial management is not solely a matter of possessing financial information or having access to appropriate technology. Knowledge and technological facilities still require behavioral regulation to be translated into consistent practices. In practical terms, a person may understand the importance of budgeting or saving but still fail to implement these principles when immediate consumption impulses dominate decision-making. Self-control bridges this knowledge-behavior gap by helping individuals maintain decisions that are consistent with their longer-term financial priorities.

The Effect of Fintech Ease of Use on Financial Management Behavior (H4)

The findings indicate that fintech ease of use supports better financial management behavior. When financial applications are perceived as practical, understandable, and accessible, users may find it easier to conduct and monitor financial activities. Digital transaction records, accessible balance information, and convenient financial services can reduce the effort associated with organizing personal finances and may therefore support more systematic financial management.

This result is consistent with Rachmatulloh et al. (2024), who found that financial technology positively contributes to financial management behavior among Generation Z.

Their study highlights the capacity of digital financial technology to facilitate financial activities and support individual financial management. Recent evidence from Cirebon similarly indicates that fintech payment behavior is relevant to healthy financial management among Generation Z (Putri & Maiyaliza, 2026).

Nevertheless, this finding is not entirely consistent with Utami and Isbanah (2023), who reported that financial technology did not directly influence financial behavior. One possible explanation lies in the different conceptualization of fintech. The present study emphasizes fintech ease of use, rather than fintech ownership or general usage. An individual may frequently use fintech without necessarily using it for responsible financial management. In contrast, when technology is perceived as easy to navigate and useful for organizing transactions, its practical functionality may contribute more directly to financial management. Therefore, technological adoption alone should not be equated with improved financial behavior; how users experience and employ fintech remains important.

The Effect of Consumptive Lifestyle on Financial Management Behavior (H5)

The findings show that a consumptive lifestyle is negatively associated with financial management behavior. This relationship can be explained by the incompatibility between desire-oriented consumption and the basic principles of personal financial management. Effective financial management generally requires individuals to prioritize needs, allocate resources, control expenditures, maintain savings, and consider future financial consequences. A consumptive lifestyle, in contrast, tends to emphasize immediate enjoyment and current consumption.

Prospect Theory provides additional insight into this behavior because individuals do not always evaluate financial decisions solely on the basis of long-term rational outcomes (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979). Immediate emotional benefits from purchasing desired products may be perceived as more salient than less visible future benefits such as savings or financial security. As a result, repeated preference for immediate consumption can interfere with budgeting discipline and long-term financial planning.

Previous empirical evidence, however, is not completely uniform. Utami and Isbanah (2023) found that hedonic lifestyle did not significantly determine Generation Z's financial behavior. In contrast, research examining Generation Z in Surakarta identified lifestyle as relevant to financial management behavior (Suryani & Sudarno, 2026). The present study contributes to this debate by showing that when lifestyle is specifically framed as consumptive lifestyle, its implications become more clearly unfavorable for financial management. This suggests that future studies should distinguish between lifestyle as a broad pattern of living and specifically consumption-oriented lifestyles that prioritize spending and immediate gratification.

The Mediating Role of Self-Control in the Relationship Between Fintech Ease of Use and Financial Management Behavior (H6)

The findings indicate that self-control serves as a mediating mechanism through which fintech ease of use contributes to financial management behavior. This means that the benefits of convenient financial technology are not limited to making transactions easier. Ease of use may also create conditions in which individuals can access and process financial information more efficiently, while self-control determines whether those technological advantages are subsequently used to support disciplined financial decisions.

This mechanism is important because fintech convenience alone is behaviorally neutral. The same technology can help one user monitor expenses and organize finances while allowing another user to make frequent and unnecessary transactions. Self-control helps explain why technological convenience may generate different behavioral outcomes across individuals. Users with stronger regulatory capacity may be more likely to transform fintech convenience into purposeful financial practices rather than impulsive spending.

This interpretation closely corresponds with Putri and Maiyaliza (2026), who found that financial self-control plays a mediating role in the relationship involving fintech payment behavior and healthy financial management behavior among Generation Z in Cirebon. The similarity is particularly relevant because both studies examine Generation Z within the Cirebon context. Taken together, the evidence suggests that the effectiveness of digital financial services depends not simply on access or technological convenience but also on users' ability to regulate their behavior. The mediation finding therefore extends TAM by showing that technology acceptance and convenience may require a psychological regulatory mechanism before they are fully translated into responsible financial outcomes.

The Mediating Role of Self-Control in the Relationship Between Consumptive Lifestyle and Financial Management Behavior (H7)

The findings further indicate that self-control mediates the relationship between consumptive lifestyle and financial management behavior. A consumptive lifestyle can undermine financial management directly, but part of this relationship operates through its tendency to weaken individuals' ability to regulate spending impulses. In other words, individuals who are strongly oriented toward immediate consumption may experience greater difficulty maintaining self-discipline, which subsequently reduces the consistency of their financial management practices.

This result highlights self-control as a psychological buffer between consumption pressure and financial behavior. Strong self-control does not necessarily eliminate consumptive desires, but it can influence whether those desires are translated into actual financial decisions. An individual may still be attracted to trends, promotions, or lifestyle-related products but can postpone or reject the purchase when it conflicts with budgetary priorities. Thus, strengthening self-control can mitigate some of the adverse financial consequences associated with a consumptive lifestyle.

The finding is broadly consistent with Suryani and Sudarno (2026), who demonstrated that self-control operates as an intervening mechanism between lifestyle and financial management behavior among Generation Z. However, it differs from Septiansa et al. (2025), who did not find self-control to mediate the relationship between lifestyle and impulsive buying behavior. Their study suggests that Generation Z's consumption behavior may also depend strongly on emotional and digital-contextual factors. The contrasting evidence reinforces the importance of distinguishing the dependent outcomes being investigated: impulsive buying represents a specific purchasing response, whereas financial management behavior encompasses broader and more sustained practices such as planning, expenditure control, saving, and monitoring finances.

Research Implications

Theoretically, this study successfully integrates the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) within the domain of behavioral

finance, confirming that self-control acts as a vital psychological mechanism. Practically, Generation Z youth are strongly encouraged to combine the convenience of digital wallet technology with automatic budget-tracking applications. On the provider side, fintech companies are encouraged to expand features such as "spending limit reminders" to consciously stimulate users' self-control.

Conclusion

This study shows that financial management behavior among Generation Z fintech users in Cirebon City is shaped by the interaction between technological convenience, consumption tendencies, and individual self-regulation. Fintech can support more effective financial management when its convenience is accompanied by the ability to monitor and control financial decisions, whereas a consumptive lifestyle may weaken financial discipline by increasing the tendency toward short-term and desire-driven spending. Self-control emerges as the central psychological mechanism in this relationship, as it helps individuals translate the benefits of fintech into more responsible financial practices while reducing the adverse influence of consumptive tendencies.

These findings indicate that improving Generation Z's financial well-being should not rely solely on expanding access to digital financial services. Greater attention is also needed to strengthening self-regulation, spending awareness, and the ability to prioritize long-term financial goals. Accordingly, fintech providers and financial education programs should complement technological convenience with features and interventions that encourage budgeting, expenditure monitoring, spending limits, and more deliberate financial decision-making. In this way, fintech can function not merely as a tool for faster transactions but as a supportive instrument for healthier financial management among Generation Z.

The main limitation of this study is its scope, which focuses on Cirebon City with a sample of 100 respondents. Other control variables, such as specific digital financial literacy or influencer exposure, have not been accommodated. Future researchers are advised to add these variables, expand the regional scope, and consider moderation testing.

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