

Aam Mariyamah

GEN Z INFORMATION BEHAVIOR IN THE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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GEN Z INFORMATION BEHAVIOR IN THE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) ERA: THE WILSON THEORY APPROCH

Aam Mariyamah

Universitas Terbuka

E-mail: aam.mariyamah@ecampus.ut.ac.id

Majidah

Universitas Terbuka

E-mail: majidah@ecampus.ut.ac.id

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Abstract

Information behavior refers to all activities related to human interaction with information. Generation Z (Gen Z), the generation born in the technological era, is no stranger to the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in their daily lives. This study aims to examine Gen Z's information behavior in the AI era from the perspective of Wilson's Information Behavior Theory (1996). The variables examined include passive attention, passive search, active search, and ongoing search information behaviors. This study uses a descriptive quantitative method with data collection using questionnaires. There were 260 Gen Z respondents spread across the island of Java. Respondents came from diverse demographic backgrounds, such as freelancers, students, and housewives. The results showed that demographic differences did not significantly affect AI usage patterns,

as the majority of respondents (77.5%) chose AI personalization on social media as the most frequently used AI. Further findings show that the average values for information behavior are passive attention at 4.05, passive search at 3.91, active search at 4.04, and ongoing search at 3.97. This indicates that Gen Z in the AI era has a fairly balanced pattern of information behavior. They are not only passive in interacting with information that often comes by chance through social media algorithms, but also actively search for information when needed through search engines. Overall, this study shows that AI-based digital environment factors have a stronger influence than demographic factors in shaping Gen Z's information behavior. This also shows the relevance and expansion of the application of Wilson's Theory (1996) in the context of AI.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Gen Z, Information Behavior, Wilson's Theory (1996)

INTRODUCTION

Information behavior encompasses all human actions involving how individuals interact with information (Case, 2007). These actions can take the form of purposeful information seeking to fulfill specific needs, as well as incidental information exposure, whereby information is obtained by chance or without any intention to seek it out. Beth adds that information behavior also includes avoiding information and refusing to use information. Information behavior is not limited to actions such as needing, trusting, seeking, organizing, managing, evaluating, sharing, and using information; it also includes non-actions, such as when a person is in a situation where they do not need information, do not seek it, and do not use the information they obtain (St. Jean et al., 2021).

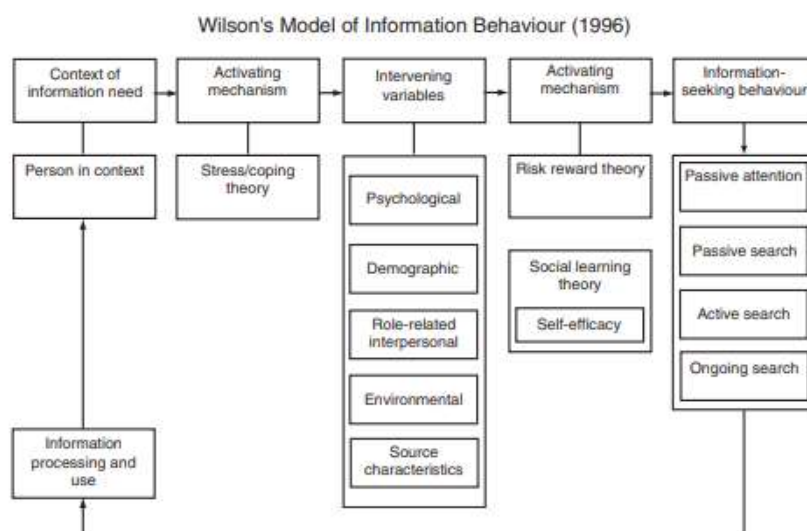
Moreover, today, we are faced with a flood of personalized information, which has often become part of our daily lives without us realizing it. For example, AI algorithms used in search engines, social media recommendation systems, and virtual assistants to personalize content. This directly affects what we see and access, changing previously known information behavior patterns. Behavioral patterns that developed before the AI era tended to be more centered on formal and structured sources. Deliberate information searches often involved more structured and systematic methods such as browsing library catalogs, consulting experts, or reading physical documents. Unintentional information discovery occurred on a smaller scale and was less automated, for example through casual conversation or accidentally finding a book on a shelf.

The concept of information behavior itself has become an important focus in information science studies. Donald O. Case (2007) in his book *Looking for Information* explains that theories in this field continue to evolve alongside developments in the times and technology. In the early days of information behavior studies, researchers mostly used theories and frameworks from classical psychology and sociology. Their approach was based on the understanding that human behavior in seeking, using, and understanding information can be explained through concepts derived from the fields of psychology and sociology. For example, in psychology, theories about motivation, cognition, and decision-making processes are used to understand how individuals interact with information. Meanwhile, in sociology, theories about social structure, norms, and social dynamics help explain how social context influences information search and use behavior (Case, 2007).

One of the most influential information behavior theories is Wilson's Information Behavior Theory (Widiyastuti, 2016). This theory was developed in the 1980s and is considered one of the main theoretical frameworks underlying the study of information behavior (Al-Suqri & Al-Aufi, 2015).

Wilson Second Model (1996)

In his book *Looking for Information*, Donald O. Case explains the evolution of T.D. Wilson's information search behavior model. Case specifically discusses Wilson's "second model" (often referred to as the 1996 or 1999 Wilson model) as an improvement on the previous version. This model is more complex and attempts to describe the information search process in a broader context, emphasizing the role of intervening variables that influence the information search process.



Gambar 1. Wilson's model of Information Behaviour (1996)

The following are the important parts of Wilson's Second Model according to Case (2002:153) based on the diagram in Figure 1:

(1) Context of Information Need: This context refers to the broader environment or situation in which there is a need for information. This environment influences how individuals recognize their information needs and how they engage in the information search. To fulfill their information needs, each individual will make efforts or search for information in various unique and diverse ways, or using the same methods (Izzati, 2025). The context of information needs can include various factors, including: (a) the physical environment in which a person is located (e.g., at work, in a library, or at home), (b) the social environment (e.g., prevailing culture, community networks, interpersonal relationships), (c) the institutional environment (e.g., organizational rules, policies), (d) the psychological environment (individual emotional or cognitive state). These contexts also influence how they find information, understand the information obtained, and what resources are used in obtaining information.

(2) Activating Mechanisms: these are essentially the driving factors that motivate a person to start searching for information. These mechanisms answer the question: What causes a person to feel the need to search for information?

(3) Intervening Variables: These activation mechanisms are influenced by various intervening variables that affect the likelihood, manner, and intensity of information seeking. These include: (a) psychological factors, (b) demographic factors such as age or education, (c) social roles, (d) environment (external conditions, such as resources and opportunities available to individuals), and (e) the nature of the information source (whether the information is easily accessible or not).

(4) Information Seeking Behavior: This is an important element of Wilson's new model of information behavior, particularly the recognition of different types of seeking behaviors and the role of information use in the feedback process. Wilson identifies four distinct types of seeking behaviors that people engage in when faced with an information need:

Variabel	Definition
Passive Attention	This occurs when someone has no intention of seeking information or no need to seek information, but happens to be exposed to information that they do not need. For example, seeing advertisements when opening a feed on Instagram.
Passive Search	More deliberate than Passive Attention, this involves someone who is not actively searching. There is a need for information, but it is not urgent. For example, finding information from search algorithm recommendations on Instagram.
Active Search	Here, a person deliberately searches for specific information to meet a predetermined need. For example, using a search engine by typing in the required topic, using a library catalog, or asking an expert for help to find specific information.
On-Going Search	A continuous or repetitive search process due to complex or evolving information needs. For example, a researcher monitoring developments in a field for months or years.

(5) Information Processing and Use: Wilson's model also emphasizes the importance of what happens after information is found. Once someone has obtained information, does it meet their initial needs? Is it useful or sufficient? If the information obtained is adequate to meet their needs, the search process can end. If not, the person may start the search process again, this time based on what they have learned or a new understanding of their needs. Thus, this model understands information search as a dynamic and iterative process, rather than a one-time event. The feedback loop ensures that the search process is responsive to the effectiveness of the information obtained.

Although Wilson's theory is a classic theory in information science studies, it is still considered relevant and is used in current information behavior research. This theory provides a comprehensive framework by integrating various factors that influence information seeking. In addition to the individual context, Wilson also emphasizes the social context in information behavior. This theory also helps to understand increasingly complex information behavior in the era of information technology, including the presence of AI in our daily lives.

Stuart Russell and Peter Norvig in *Artificial Intelligence: A Modern Approach* define AI functionally as the computational part of the ability to achieve goals in the world (Russell & Norvig, 2022). This shows that AI has now become one of the components in systems that perform calculations to assist humans, furthermore in terms of achievement and information. Spiegeleire (2017) states that AI is the ability of machines to perform cognitive tasks in an intelligent manner. This ability performs tasks that would normally require human intelligence to complete (De Spiegeleire et al., 2017). AI has become the latest technological innovation that provides information and does everything that humans want. AI has created a "rich ecology" between humans and electronic devices (Norman, 2013).

Gen Z grew up alongside technological developments, especially the internet and social media (Sekar Arum et al., 2023). Everything Gen Z does is usually related to the digital world (A'yun, 2025). This indirectly influences their personality and characteristics. One example is how they interact with information.

Studies on Gen Z's information behavior have also been conducted extensively. Some of these include "*Gen Z Information Behavior Through Culinary Autotbase Accounts on Social Media X*" by Elvin Edsa (Caesarani & Suharso, 2024) and "*Understanding Gen-Z Information Behavior and Strategies to Combat Disinformation: A Literature Review of Social Media Use*" by Diemas Arya Komara (Komara & Widjaya, 2024). These studies have specifically discussed how Gen Z interacts with information. How they find, analyze, and use the information they obtain on digital platforms. However, both studies focus only on active searching. In fact, information behavior also includes passive behavior.

Seeing this gap, researchers tried to understand information behavior from the perspective of Wilson's Theory, which categorizes information behavior not only as active behavior but also passive behavior, which is divided into 4 dimensions, namely passive attention, passive search, active search, and ongoing search. Given the dominance of AI technology in the daily lives of Gen Z, it is important to understand descriptively how they interact with information influenced by the digital environment such as AI. Researchers also hope that the results of this study can contribute theoretically to the understanding of the information behavior of the younger generation and serve as a practical reference for the development of technology-based information services.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a descriptive quantitative method. This method is a systematic study that uses numerical data and statistical techniques to describe the characteristics of a population or phenomenon, relying on valid and reliable variable measurements and measurement levels to summarize and interpret data without focusing primarily on causal explanations (Babbie, 2021). The research instrument used a questionnaire distributed to respondents.

The population in this study is Gen Z. According to data from the Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) in 2020, to date, the Gen Z population in Indonesia has reached more than 74 million people, with an estimated 35 million Gen Zet is living on the island of Java alone (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2020). The sampling method used was non-probability sampling with purposive sampling. This method was chosen based on considerations of time and budget efficiency, as well as the need to obtain respondents with specific characteristics relevant to the research objectives. The criteria determined for respondents are as follows: 1. Residing on the island of Java. 2. Aged 18 to 27 years. 3. Active users of AI technology.

After considering practical criteria and feasibility, this study determined a sample size of 260 respondents from Generation Z living on the island of Java. The margin of error is $\pm 6.1\%$.

With this sample size, the study does not intend to make statistical generalizations about the entire Gen Z population in Indonesia. The generalizations made are analytical in nature, namely to strengthen the understanding and application of Wilson's Theory in the context of Gen Z's information behavior.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Respondent demographics

Karakteristik	Frekuensi	Persen (%)
Age		
18 - 21	92	35
22 - 27	168	65
Gender		
Man	123	47
Women	137	53
Education		
SMA/Sederajat	104	40
S1	147	57
S2	9	3
Occupational Category		
Karyawan & Profesional	122	46.9
Mahasiswa	70	26.9
Pekerja Mandiri & Kreator	47	18.1
Ibu Rumah Tangga	11	4.2
Belum/Mencari Kerja	10	3.8
Total	260	

Below are Gen Zs who use AI daily by occupational category:

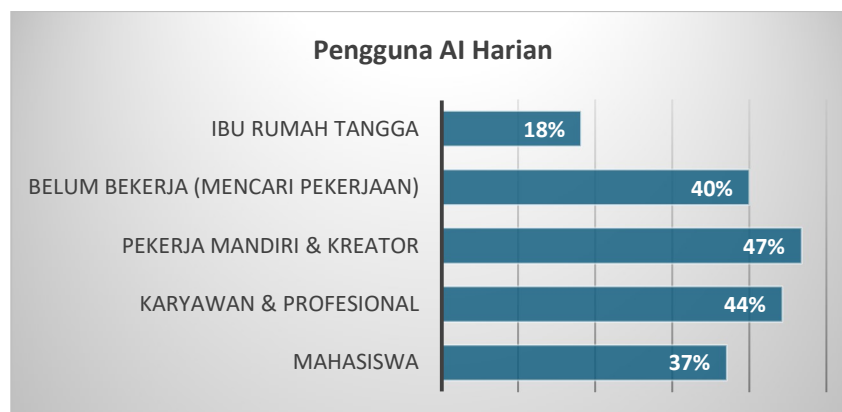


Figure 1. Occupational category of respondents (Gen Z)

From Figure 1 above, it can be seen that daily active AI users are mainly freelancers and content creators, accounting for 47%. This is followed by employees and professionals at 44%, the unemployed (including fresh graduates) at 40%, and students at 37%. The least frequent users are housewives (18%).

In line with Wilson's Theory, which argues that a person's information-seeking behavior does not just appear out of nowhere, but is triggered by the context and needs they face in their daily lives. From Figure 1, it can be seen that the frequency of AI use is highly dependent on the nature of the job. The "self-employed and creators" group of Gen Z, which includes freelancers and entrepreneurs, are the highest daily users of AI at 47%. This shows that AI is an important tool in their daily routines in a professional environment.

Their roles and environment require them to constantly process information, complete tasks, and work under time pressure. This need is the main trigger for seeking help, and they find the solution in AI. Meanwhile, the lowest daily users are housewives, whose use of AI appears to be merely a functional necessity to support their personal and household lives, rather than a tool for daily productivity.

Below are the reasons why Gen Z use AI:

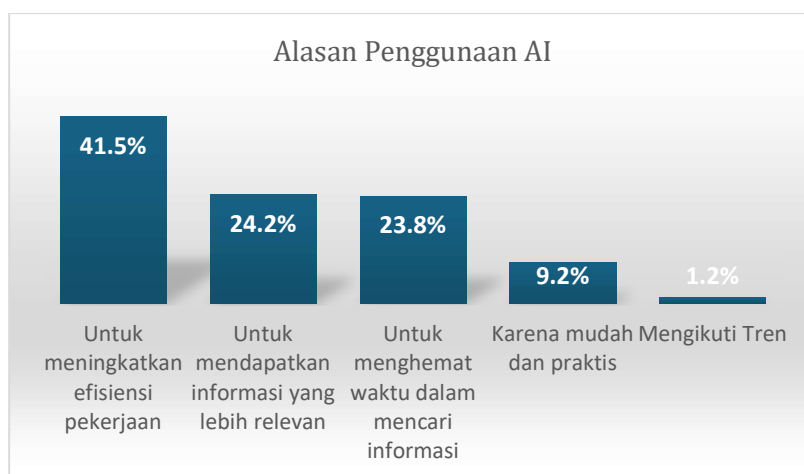


Figure 2. The reasons why Gen Z use AI

The daily use of AI and reasons for work efficiency (41.5%) are clear evidence of information-seeking behavior as a response to individual information needs influenced by context (role and environment). AI has become not only a source of information, but also an 'assistant' that helps them fulfill their social and professional roles.

The second reason for using AI is "to obtain more relevant information" (24.2%), which is in line with AI's ability to provide recommendations and personalize information. As shown in Figure 3, social media algorithms are the most frequently used category of AI by Gen Z respondents, followed by AI search engines and product or movie recommendations on e-commerce sites. Below are the types of AI that Gen Z often uses:

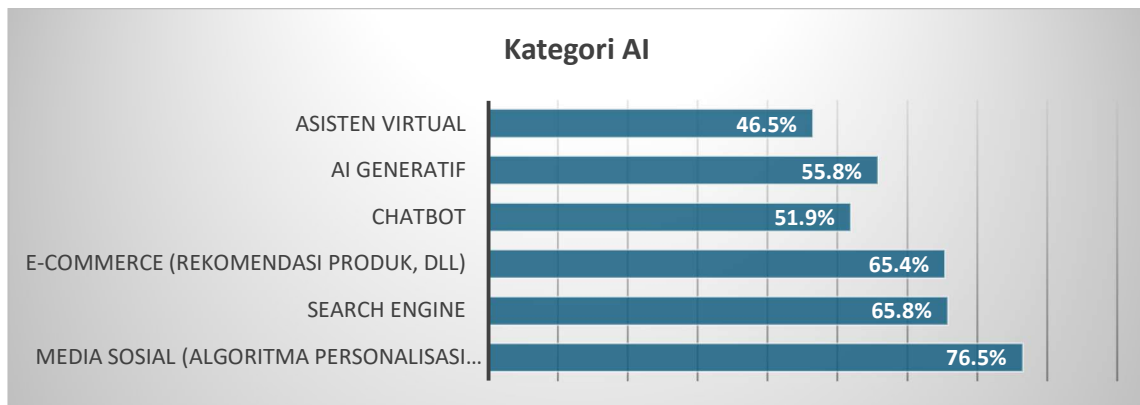


Figure 3. Most frequently used AI categories

Interestingly, even though daily AI users are mostly “freelancers and creators,” personalization on social media remains the most frequently used AI (see Figure 3). This cannot be separated from the fact that Indonesia is known as the country with the most social media users in the world. In 2025, the number of active social media users will reach 143 million. This is equivalent to 50.2% of Indonesia's population at the beginning of 2025 (Kemp, 2025).

This condition may explain why social media equipped with AI and various features such as feed personalization, content recommendations, and interaction algorithms have become the main source for Gen Z in their interaction with information. In other words, even though the main purpose of using AI is directed towards productive activities, social media remains the dominant environment in shaping Gen Z's information behavior due to its ease of use, affordability, and the appeal of personalized content.

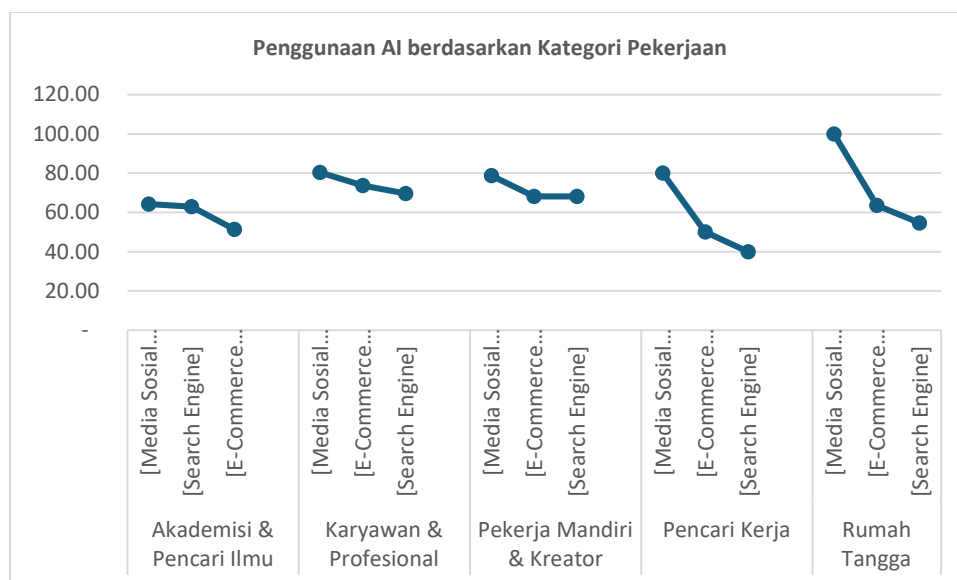


Figure 4. AI Usage by Job Category

AI is widely used to generate personalized recommendations and tailor information for social media users. By analyzing user behavior, preferences, and interactions, AI systems can suggest content, friends, groups, or advertisements that match each user's interests. This personalization enhances the user experience by making social media feeds more engaging and relevant to each user. AI enables social media platforms to better understand users and provide personalized, timely, and relevant information.

In this digital age, the line between personal and professional social media use has become very blurred. Many jobs, such as content creators, freelancers, and even private employees, rely heavily on social media for marketing, branding, networking, trend research, and communicating with customers/consumers. Therefore, in this context, AI algorithms that personalize content on social media indirectly help their work. The 'frequent' or 'constant' use of AI on social media may be an integral part of their work, even though they consciously consider the main reason for using AI to be for general "work efficiency."

When asked "Why use AI?", respondents are more likely to answer with conscious and structured motivations, such as "work efficiency" or "saving time". However, the use of AI on social media (such as recommendation algorithms) is often automatic and passive. Respondents may not consciously think they are using AI when opening Instagram or TikTok, even though AI algorithms are working hard to personalize their feeds. Due to its automatic nature, this use can be the most frequent, even surpassing the use of AI tools that they deliberately use for work, such as search engines and generative AI.

These findings strongly support Wilson's theory that information-seeking behavior is often passive and automatic, especially in the context of AI use. This data not only shows that information-seeking behavior can be passive, but also that in the modern digital ecosystem, this passive behavior has become one of the most common and frequent forms of behavior.

Information seeking behavior

The following are the results of a questionnaire regarding the experiences of respondents (Gen Z) with AI usage.

Table 4.1 Variable Description of Gen Z's Experience of AI Use (X)

Indikator	Jawaban Responden					Total	Rata-Rata
	STS	TS	CS	S	SS		
X1.1	14	6	29	81	130	260	4.18
X1.2	12	8	23	83	134	260	4.23
X1.3	10	11	43	89	107	260	4.05
X1.4	10	17	42	94	97	260	3.97
X1.5	15	20	62	85	78	260	3.73
Total	61	62	199	432	546	1300	
Percentage	4.69%	4.77%	15.31%	33.23%	42.00%	100.00%	4.03

Table 4.1 above shows Gen Z's experience of using AI (X) which consists of 5 indicators, including: AI helps in finding the information needed more quickly (X1.1), AI makes finding information easier (X1.2), AI makes it easier to find the right information (X1.3), ask AI if you have problems and feel stressed in finding information (X1.4), The living and working environment makes respondents have to use AI at every opportunity (X1.5).

The average value of this variable is 4.03. This shows that Gen Z has a very positive experience with AI. The highest average score (4.23) shows that they feel AI greatly facilitates the information search process. In addition, they also feel that AI makes searching for information faster, and more accurate. This also indicates that for them, AI is not an alien technology, but rather has become part of the environment that shapes the way they interact with information. Even in times of stress, Gen Z seeks solutions by asking AI. This shows that AI has gone beyond its function as an information retrieval tool. AI is now something that can be perceived as helping with psychological states such as stress or frustration, which are strong triggers in Wilson's information behavior model.

In addition, the perception that they have to use AI because of the environment (3.73) is the lowest, indicating that although AI is widely used for work (see Figure 2 results), Gen Z seems to judge the use of AI based on personal ones, such as wanting to be more efficient, save time, or understand the material faster, not because of the demands from their environment. Intrinsic motivation is more dominant than the external environment. This is in accordance with the characteristics of Gen Z which is more self-directed learning, including in using technology (Wardi et al., 2025). AI becomes a part of Gen Z's coping mechanism or digital problem-solving strategy, reflecting a deeper and more complex relationship between humans and technology.

Information Behavior Variable

The following are the results of the questionnaire distribution related to passive attention. Information behavior in which a person gets information without any element of intent or no intention in seeking certain information.

Table 4.2 Description of Passive Attention Variable (Y1)

Indikator	Jawaban Responden					Total	Rata-Rata
	STS	TS	CS	S	SS		
Y1.1	9	7	44	100	100	260	4.06
Y1.2	5	14	37	114	90	260	4.04
Y1.3	6	14	35	107	98	260	4.07
Total	20	35	116	321	288	780	
Percentag e	2.56%	4.49%	14.87%	41.15%	36.92%	100.00 %	4.05

Table 4.2 is an indicator of the Passive Attention variable. There are three indicators consisting of: Respondents often find information relevant to my tasks or work accidentally when using AI-based applications (e.g. recommendations from YouTube, personalized feeds on Instagram or TikTok) (Y1.1), absorb information from the surrounding environment such as conversations, advertisements (without the intention of looking for specific information) (Y1.2), and respondents feel AI helps to stay up-to-date with the latest information, even though they are not actively looking for it (Y1.3).

The results show that the highest mean score is on indicator Y1.3 (AI helps respondents to stay up-to-date with the latest information without the need for effort in searching for it), indicating that Gen Z greatly benefits from the presence of AI in keeping information up-to-date. The algorithmic system proved to be an important channel for Gen Z to be exposed to information that was not intentionally sought (passive attention).

Variabel Passive Search

The following are the results of the questionnaire distribution related to passive search. Information behavior where when someone has been exposed to information unintentionally, then someone is "interested" in the information and then continues the information search action.

Table 4.3 Description of Passive Search Variable (Y2)

Indikator	Jawaban Responden					Total	Rata-Rata
	STS	TS	CS	S	SS		
Y2.1	9	14	56	89	92	260	3.93
Y2.2	9	28	48	96	79	260	3.80

Indikator	Jawaban Responden					Total	Rata-Rata
	STS	TS	CS	S	SS		
Y2.3	8	16	39	110	87	260	3.97
Y2.4	9	11	43	110	87	260	3.98
Y2.5	11	16	50	93	90	260	3.90
Y2.6	6	23	48	100	83	260	3.89
Total	52	108	284	598	518	1560	3.91
Percentage	3.33%	6.92%	18.21%	38.33%	33.21%	100.00%	

Table 4.3 above shows that the questionnaire statement in the Passive Search indicator variable (Y2) consists of 6 indicators: Respondents rely on the auto-complete feature or search suggestions in search engines to find information needed for tasks or work (Y2.1). Respondents often rely on information provided by AI rather than other sources of information such as books and newspapers (Y2.2). Respondents rely on AI (e.g., on websites, or virtual assistants) to get initial information before looking for other sources (Y2.3). Respondents use AI-generated information predictions and recommendations to personalize their search activities (Y2.4). Respondents turn on notifications from apps, websites, or devices (e.g., message, email, news notifications) to get new information without having to search for it (Y2.5). While searching for information on the internet, respondents are easily distracted by recommendations provided by AI (e.g., video recommendations on YouTube, product recommendations on Tokopedia, news recommendations on Google News) (Y2.6).

The average value of close to 4.00 shows that respondents rely on AI for the initial stage of search or it can be said that AI has become the main 'gateway' to information channels for Gen Z. Here we see a transformation in information seeking behavior. In indicator Y2.2, Gen Z no longer only sees AI as a supplement, but as the main source of information that replaces traditional media such as books and newspapers. The role of AI is no longer just as an "information seeker" but a source of information itself. This phenomenon reflects how Gen Z, as 'digital natives', has a very different pattern of interaction with information than previous generations.

In indicator Y2.4, Gen Z shows that they actively utilize the ability to personalize their information search. This is in line with their motivation for using AI, which is to get more relevant information and save time. However, there is a distraction effect caused by AI (see indicator Y2.6). This challenges Gen Z's skills in conducting purposeful and independent information seeking.

Variabel Active Search

Below are the results of the distribution of active search-related questionnaires. Information behavior where someone does have the intention to seek information because it is based on need.

Table 4.4 Description of Active Search Variable (Y3)

Indikator	Jawaban Responden					Total	Rata-Rata
	STS	TS	CS	S	SS		
Y3.1	5	17	33	101	104	260	4.08
Y3.2	4	20	37	91	108	260	4.07
Y3.3	8	9	44	95	104	260	4.07
Y3.4	10	14	34	95	107	260	4.06
Y3.5	9	14	41	103	93	260	3.99
Y3.6	5	19	46	103	87	260	3.95

Total	41	93	235	588	603	1560	
Percentag e	2.63%	5.96%	15.06%	37.69%	38.65%	100.00 %	4.04

Table 4.4 above shows that the questionnaire statement in the Active Search indicator variable (Y2) consists of 6 indicators: (Y3.1) Respondents use AI to search for various sources of information needed. (Y3.2) Respondents do not rely on just one search engine, but also explore various online platforms and databases equipped with AI to find the information needed. (Y3.3) Respondents use advanced search filters in search engines or online databases (e.g., filter by date, file type, source) to find the most relevant information. (Y3.4) Respondents compare search results from different search engines or AI platforms to obtain comprehensive information. (Y3.5) Respondents utilize AI features to validate information to check the credibility of the sources found. (Y3.6) Respondents actively interact with AI tools, for example by providing feedback or changing search parameters, to get results that better suit their needs.

The results showed that active search behavior was in the high category with an overall average value of 4.04. The indicators with the highest scores are indicator Y3.1 (4.08), Y3.2 (4.07), Y3.3 (4.07), and Y3.4 (4.06) which indicates that respondents tend to use various AI-based platforms, including using advanced search features, to obtain the information needed. This reflects exploratory information behavior, and information literacy because there is a tendency to compare search results between the sources of information obtained. However, indicators Y3.5 and Y3.6 with an average score of 3.99 and 3.95 show that although Gen Z has actively tried to compare information obtained from various sources, they pay less attention to the credibility of these sources and tend to accept the information presented by AI source results.

Variabel Ongoing Search

Below are the results of the distribution of questionnaires related to ongoing search. Information behavior where someone with the intention to seek information because it is based on needs and continues to search continuously.

Table 4.5 Description of the Ongoing Search Variable (Y4)

Indikator	Jawaban Responden					Total	Rata-Rata
	STS	TS	CS	S	SS		
Y4.1	11	11	48	109	81	260	3.92
Y4.2	5	16	50	112	77	260	3.92
Y4.3	7	16	32	104	101	260	4.06
Total	23	43	130	325	259	780	
Percentag e	2.95%	5.51%	16.67%	41.67%	33.21%	100.00 %	3.97

Table 4.5 above shows that the questionnaire statements for the On-Going Search indicator variable (Y4) consist of 3 indicators, namely (1) having high curiosity and always looking for new information by setting alerts or notifications on search engines or academic platforms equipped with AI to get the latest information related to topics that interest me (for example, the latest research, industry trends, current issues) (Y4.1) and using AI-powered content aggregators or news readers that can filter and recommend articles, news, and other relevant information based on preferences and search history (Y4.2). (2) Keeping up with the latest developments in the field or topic of interest by saving or bookmarking AI-recommended articles, websites, or digital information sources for easy access in the future. (Y4.3).

The results show that the indicator with the highest score is Y4.3 (44.06) which shows that Gen Z tends to manage digital information sustainably because they store and categorize information recommended by AI so that it can be accessed easily in the future. Meanwhile, indicators Y4.1 (3.92) and Y4.2 (3.92) show that respondents are quite curious by setting notifications to obtain information that is always up to date and using information filters so that the information obtained continues to be relevant to their needs.

This finding shows that on-going search behavior is not only influenced by momentary needs, but there is a motivation to stay connected to the latest developments. In Wilson's Theory, this reflects how digital environmental factors such as AI drive on-going information behavior.

After measuring all four variables, below is a comparison of the average scores between passive attention, passive search, active search, and on-going search information behaviors.

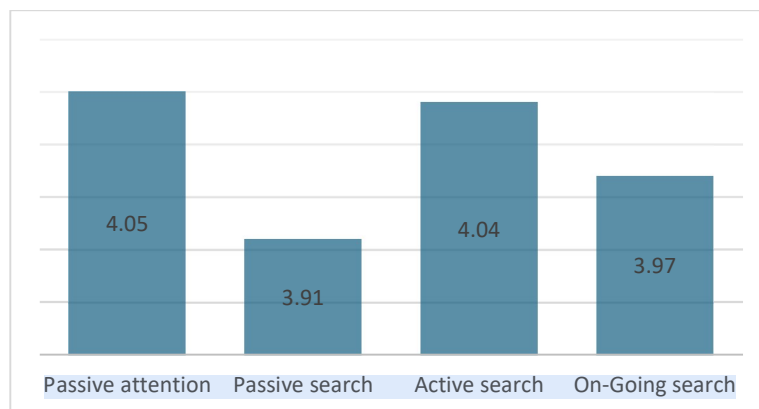


Figure 5: Comparison of Gen Z information behavior patterns

From Figure 5 above, it can be seen that passive attention information behavior is the type of information behavior with the highest average value of 4.05. This shows that the strong influence of AI-based recommendation systems in shaping the flow of information to Gen Z so that they receive more information indirectly or passively. Especially from social media algorithms, because based on previous results, Gen Z is a very active social media user. Personal contexts such as entertainment and habits of using social media play a big role in shaping Gen Z's interaction experience with information.

However, the average value of active search is also a high type of information behavior with an average of 4.04. This indicates the complexity of Gen Z's information behavior in the AI era. In this era, the line between deliberately seeking information and accidentally being exposed to information is blurred. The recommendation system on social media presents content that seems to be searched for, even though users only open the application. As a result, Gen Z feels that their information needs have been met without doing an active search. Even the passive act of attention "feels" like an active act because it becomes as efficient as active search. AI meets the information needs without much effort from the user.

On Going search is a type of behavior that occurs after active search (average percentage of 3.59). This could be due to curiosity so as to deepen the information that has been obtained or it could be due to the need to keep updated following emerging trends. The last type of information behavior is passive search (average of 3.91). This shows that the accidental search process when looking for other sources of information is not very significant. AI has been so efficient in presenting the information needed (personalization) that passive search actions are less necessary and rarely distracted by information outside of their main purpose of searching.

Conclusion

Based on the research results discussed above, several conclusions can be drawn, including: (1) Digital environmental factors such as AI have more influence on information

seeking behavior than demographic factors such as occupation, gender, and age. This can be seen from how respondents from various demographic backgrounds choose social media as a platform source supported by AI by providing personalization and content recommendations (2) Looking at the average value of 4 information behaviors based on Wilson's Theory (1996) consisting of passive attention (4.05), passive search (3.91), active search (4.04), and on-going search (3.97) shows that Gen Z's information behavior tends to have a fairly balanced pattern between passive and active behavior. AI with its personalization capabilities (especially on social media) makes Gen Z unwittingly show passive behavior because they are exposed to information that they have no intention of seeking. However, on the other hand, they are also actively searching because AI makes it easier for them to get the information they want quickly. In addition, the need to stay up-to-date makes Gen Z have an on-going behavior in searching for information. (3) Wilson's (1996) theory is still relevant to show how Gen Z's tendency to shape information behavior patterns in the AI era. Judging from the factors that influence why Gen Z interacts with information, to how Gen Z interacts with information both passively and actively, as well as sustainably, Wilson's theory is still relevant.

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