available at http://ejournal.unp.ac.id/students/index.php/pek/index
ISSN 2654-8429 (Online)

EcoGen

Jurnal Ecogen
Universitas Negeri Padang

Vol. 9 No. 1 2026
Page 122-143

The Influence of Perceived Ease of Use, Benefits, and Financial Literacy on Digital Banking Adoption with Trust as a Mediating Variable

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ARTICLE INFO

Received 25 January 2026
Accepted 27 March 2026
Published 31 March 2026

Keywords: Perceived Ease, Perceived Usefulness, Financial Literacy, Trust, Digital Banking

DOI :
https://doi.org/10.24036/ecogen.v9.i1.63

ABSTRACT

Despite the high digital engagement of the younger generation, a research gap exists regarding how psychological perceptions and financial knowledge interact to drive actual banking behavior in specific regional contexts. This study aims to analyze the effect of perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and financial literacy on digital banking usage, with trust as a mediating variable among Generation Z students in Malang. This research employs a quantitative approach with an associative research design. Data were gathered via a 5-point Likert-scale survey administered to 100 participants from five prominent universities in Malang. Analysis employed Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) through SmartPLS software. The results indicate that perceived ease of transaction, usefulness, and financial literacy have a positive and significant effect on digital banking adoption. Furthermore, these variables also have a considerably positive influence on trust. Trust is confirmed to have a substantial positive impact on digital banking usage and significantly mediates the relationship between perceived ease of transaction, perceived benefits, financial literacy, and use of digital banking. In summary, the results indicate that perceived ease of use, benefits, and financial literacy either directly or via mediating power of trust as key drivers in promoting digital banking uptake among Generation Z students.

INTRODUCTION

Technological disruption has prompted industries in Indonesia to take adaptive and responsive measures quickly as banking is shifting towards a digital era. This shift is marked by the emergence of new innovations in digital banking services. In recent years, the financial technology (*FinTech*) industry, in collaboration with various other technologies, has become the main driver of innovation in digital banking services (Batubara & Anggraini, 2022). While the shift to digital platforms is clear, a significant gap remains concerning the specific drivers digital bankinng among Generation Z in regional hubs like Malang. While digital exposure is high, financial literacy levels vary, and the psychological mechanism that converts technical ease into actual trust is underexplored.

Based on data by Bank Indonesia (BI), the total value of digital banking transactions on May 2024 was recorded at Rp 5,570.49 trillion, with an annual increase of 10.82%. A study by Populix entitled "Analysis of the Ecosystem and Perception of Digital Banks in Indonesia" shows that the growth of digital banking is driven by various factors. Some of these reasons include data and transaction security, which is important to 31 percent of respondents, ease of access to the application (12 percent), the completeness of features in the application (12 percent), connectivity with other financial services (11 percent), and special promotions (10 percent), which are the things that people look for in a digital banking application. In OJK Policy No.12/POJK.03/2018, digital banking services are services provided through electronic media and designed to maximize the use of customer data (Didenko & Buckley, 2021).

Along with the increasing use of digital banks, there are several factors that influence user decisions, especially among Generation Z. According to Cecchetti & Schoenholtz (2023) digital banks can usually perform all banking activities such as opening accounts, making transfers, depositing money, and closing accounts using only a mobile phone or electronic devices, without having to come directly to the bank. Digital banking is advancing rapidly due to significant support from young people, who now constitute the largest demographic group in Indonesia. Gen Z, who have been familiar with the internet and technology since childhood, play a major role in shaping the digital economy (Rithmaya et al., 2024). One of the innovations that is widely applied in financial institutions today is the concept of digital banking, which potential for transactions to be carried out securely without having to be physically present at the bank. Digital banks that are commonly used today are Seabank, Bank Jago, Blue by BCA, and Bank NEO.

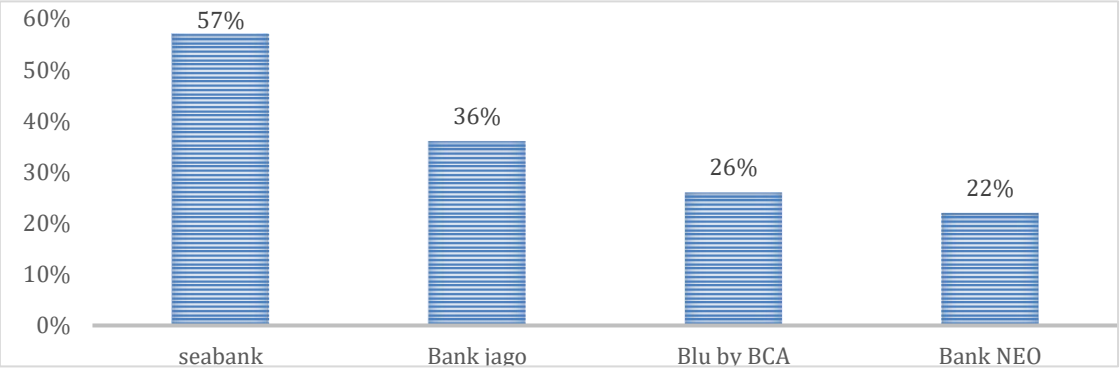

Figure 1. Use of Digital Banks

Source:Detikfinance (2024)

The graph of digital bank usage shows that Seabank ranks first with a percentage of 57 percent, followed by Bank Jago with 36 percent, Blue by BCA with 26 percent, and Bank Neo with 22 percent, indicating differences in user preferences for digital banking services. Seabank's dominance is mainly driven by ease of transactions, promotional programs and cashback, as well as strong integration with e-commerce platforms, which encourages higher transaction intensity, especially among Generation Z and Millennials as the most active user groups with a transaction frequency of 1–10 times per month (Dio Prasasti, 2025). This study focuses on students from the five largest universities in Malang City, namely Brawijaya University, Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University Malang, Malang State University, Malang State Polytechnic, and Muhammadiyah University Malang, with a total population of 192,754 students, showing that preferences for using digital banks are influenced by perceptions of convenience, perceived benefits, and trust factors.

This phenomenon can be explained through several main theoretical frameworks. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) highlights impact of perceived practicality of utilization and perceived usefulness on technology acceptance. The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) describe how individual attitudes, subjective norms, and control of attitudes obtained shape adoption intentions. Meanwhile, the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) underscores function performance expectations, effort expectations, and supporting facilities in encouraging technology use behavior. Therefore, adoption of digital banking across generations Z is not only determined by technological elements, but also by the interaction of psychological and behavioral factors that are integrated in influencing the choice of digital banking services.

Previous studies have shown obtained ease, the benefits obtained, financial literacy, and trust are among the core aspects of utilization of digital financial services, but the empirical results obtained are still inconsistent. A number of studies have found

that perceived practicality and assumed usefulness have a positive and significant impact interest in and use of digital financial services (Mawardani & Dwijayanti, 2021; Munari & Susanti, 2021; A. Ramadhan & Tamba, 2022), while other studies show that these two variables do not have a significant effect, especially when users prioritize security and credibility (Aisyiah et al., 2023; Cupian et al., 2022). Diverse results occur in financial literacy, where some studies prove significant impact on the use of digital banking services (Puteri et al., 2024; Rudakova & Markova, 2020), but other studies show the opposite results (Gustantio et al., 2024; Zakiyyah et al., 2020).

Results on the variable confidence in several studies have proven to produce a significant impact whether directly or indirectly as a mediating variable (Kantika et al., 2022; Prayudi et al., 2022), but this is not supported by other studies that found no effect of trust significant on the decision to use digital services (Naufaldi & Tjokrosaputro, 2020; W. Ramadhan et al., 2023). Besides, a large number of studies remain focused on the direct influence between variables, so that studies that integrate perceptions of convenience, perceptions of benefits, and financial literacy simultaneously trust is a mediating variable, especially in Generation Z as digital natives in the context of digital banking, are still relatively limited.

This condition indicates a research gap that's a must further explored to obtain a increasingly intense knowledge regarding attitudes towards implementing digital banking. according to the incident, the following questions arise: Do perceived ease, the benefits obtained, as well as the impact of financial literacy the use of digital banks? Do perceived ease, the benefits obtained, as well as the impact of financial literacy trust? And does trust mediate the perceived ease, perceived benefits, and financial literacy of Generation Z students?

This study addresses the gap by integrating cognitive factors, financial literacy, with perception-based factors from the Teachnology Acceptance Model. It aims to empirically evaluate and examine in detail correlation of perceptions of convenience, perceived benefits, as well as financial literacy related to implementation digital banks, test and analyze view of comfort, usefulness obtained, as well financial literacy on trust. It also aims to test and analyze whether trust mediate perceptions of comfort, usefulness obtained, as well financial literacy among students Generation Z, in regional student-centric markets. Furthertmore, this research contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence from an emerging urban context in 2026, offering a more nuanced understanding of how trust mediates the relationship between user perceptions and adoption.

METHODOLOGY

This study choose quantitative methods according to associative design, which focuses on testing the causal relationship between perceptions of transaction ease, perceived benefits, and financial literacy with the level of digital bank usage, while also

exploring the function of trust as a mediator in this dynamic. The population in this study is divided into: Generation Z students who have applied and were currently using digital banking services and were studying at the five largest universities in Malang, with a total population of 192,754 students. The chosen sampling technique is proportional stratified random sampling, making each university received a balanced sample proportion. Total sample used in this research was 100 respondents, which was determined according to the Slovin formula calculation margin of error of 10%. The data analysis process applied the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach from the SmartPLS application 3 software. The evaluation stage included testing external models to measure validity and reliability construct through outer loadings indicators, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Cronbach's Alpha, and Composite Reliability, followed by testing the inner model to examine correlation of variables based on R^2, F^2, Q^2, and path coefficients, as well as hypothesis verification. The variables used for testing include three independent variables, namely Perceived Ease of Use (X1), Perceived Benefit (X2), and Financial Literacy (X3), one mediating variable, namely Trust (Z), and one dependent variable, namely Use of Digital Banking (Y). Each variable in the research conducted can be measured using Likert scale parameters through a score of 1–5. The conceptual framework in this research is:

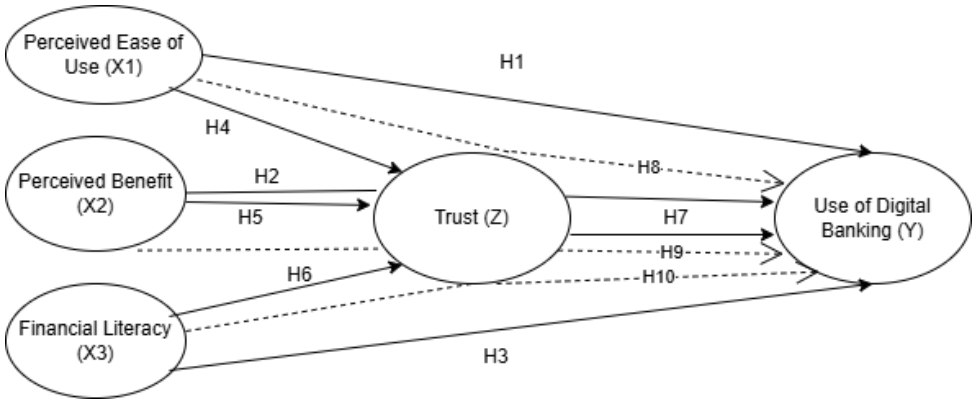

Figure 2. Conceptual Framework

Source: Data processed by researcher (2026)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

In the outer model evaluation stage, the first step is to examine the outer loading value of each indicator. A high outer loading value indicates that the indicator possesses strong compatibility with the construct it measures. The results of the outer loading test in this study are presented as the following:

Measurement Model Test (Outer Model) Table

Table 1. Reliability Indicators (outer loading)

Variable	Indicator	*Outer loading*	Description
Use of Digital Banks Digital (Y)	Y01.01	0,837	Valid
	Y01.02	0,831	Valid
	Y01.03	0,806	Valid
	Y01.04	0,808	Valid
	Y01.05	0,774	Valid
	Y01.06	0,821	Valid
Perceived Ease (X1)	X01.01	0,811	Valid
	X01.02	0,820	Valid
	X01.03	0,768	Valid
	X01.04	0,791	Valid
	X01.05	0,741	Valid
	X01.06	0,787	Valid
Perceived Benefits (X2)	X02.01	0,746	Valid
	X02.02	0,758	Valid
	X02.03	0,754	Valid
	X02.04	0,746	Valid
	X02.05	0,785	Valid
	X02.06	0,759	Valid
	X02.07	0,753	Valid
	X02.08	0,793	Valid
Financial Literacy (X3)	X03.01	0,756	Valid
	X03.02	0,789	Valid
	X03.03	0,752	Valid
	X03.04	0,730	Valid
	X03.05	0,820	Valid
	X03.06	0,764	Valid
	X03.07	0,746	Valid
	X03.08	0,761	Valid
	X03.09	0,790	Valid
	X03.10	0,834	Valid
	X03.11	0,780	Valid
	X03.12	0,768	Valid
Confidence (Z)	Z01.01	0,811	Valid
	Z01.02	0,778	Valid
	Z01.03	0,779	Valid
	Z01.04	0,785	Valid
	Z01.05	0,811	Valid
	Z01.06	0,815	Valid
	Z01.07	0,793	Valid
	Z01.08	0,804	Valid

Source: Data processed by researcher (2026)

The table indicates each indicator in each variable achieved an outer loading score exceeding 0.7. Based on Hair (2014) standard, the constructs used in this study are declared valid as a whole.

Table 2. Internal Consistency Reliabilit

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Description
Use of Digital Banking (Y)	0,897	0,898	0,921	Reliable
Perceived Ease (X1)	0,877	0,879	0,907	Reliable
Perceived Benefits (X2)	0,897	0,897	0,917	Reliable
Financial Literacy (X3)	0,939	0,941	0,947	Reliable
Trust (Z)	0,918	0,919	0,933	Reliable

Source: Data processed by researcher (2026)

The evaluation the findings in the table confirm these are each latent variable meet the reliability requirements. This is evident from Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability scores for each construct, all of which exceed the 0.6 threshold. Thus, each latent variable in this study, namely declared reliable because they have passed all the specified testing measures.

Table 3. Convergent Validity (AVE)

Variable	Ave	Description
Use of Digital Banking (Y)	0,619	Valid
Perceived Ease (X1)	0,581	Valid
Perceived Benefits (X2)	0,600	Valid
Financial Literacy (X3)	0,661	Valid
Trust (Z)	0,636	Valid

Source: Data processed by researcher (2026)

The AVE evaluation indicates if every research variables have met the minimum standard of 0.500. The Digital Banking Usage variable achieved the highest value of 0.661, accompanied by Trust (0.636), Perceived Ease (0.619), Financial Literacy (0.600), and Perceived Benefits (0.581). Therefore, every construct in this model is sufficient convergent validity requirement, as they capture beyond some of the variance in their supporting indicators.

Table 4. Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Lacker Criterion)

Variable	Perceived Ease (X1)	Perceived Benefits (X2)	*Financial Literacy* (X3)	Use of Digital Banking (Y)	Trust (Z)
Perceived Ease (X1)	0,787				
Perceived Benefits (X2)	0,551	0,762			
Financial Literacy (X3)	0,528	0,579	0,775		
Use of Digital Banking (Y)	0,706	0,698	0,663	0,813	
Trust (Z)	0,546	0,548	0,550	0,696	0,797

Source: Data processed by researcher (2026)

Discriminant validity testing using the Fornell-Larcker criteria satisfied, because the square root on AVE (diagonal matrix) in entire construct exceeded the correlation with other constructs from it model. For example, Digital Bank Usage recorded root AVE 0.813, which is beyond its maximum correlation with Perceived Ease of Use, which is 0.706. This proves that each variable, including Perceived Benefits, Financial Literacy, and Trust, is empirically different from one another and has passed the test.

Table 5. Discriminant Validity Cross Loading

	Perceived Ease (X1)	Perceived Benefits (X2)	Financial Literacy (X3)	Use of Digital Banking (Y)	Trust (Z)
X01.01	0,811	0,469	0,469	0,588	0,461
X01.02	0,820	0,496	0,437	0,614	0,465
X01.03	0,768	0,407	0,414	0,533	0,407
X01.04	0,791	0,429	0,386	0,526	0,447
X01.05	0,741	0,395	0,372	0,514	0,395
X01.06	0,787	0,397	0,410	0,549	0,399
X02.01	0,391	0,746	0,392	0,551	0,394
X02.02	0,408	0,758	0,502	0,517	0,475
X02.03	0,389	0,754	0,459	0,521	0,435
X02.04	0,370	0,746	0,440	0,498	0,366
X02.05	0,461	0,785	0,400	0,540	0,410
X02.06	0,463	0,759	0,445	0,546	0,438
X02.07	0,457	0,753	0,434	0,515	0,418

	Perceived Ease (X1)	Perceived Benefits (X2)	Financial Literacy (X3)	Use of Digital Banking (Y)	Trust (Z)
X02.08	0,419	0,793	0,455	0,564	0,395
X03.01	0,289	0,446	0,756	0,444	0,401
X03.02	0,444	0,492	0,789	0,544	0,394
X03.03	0,451	0,519	0,752	0,574	0,519
X03.04	0,346	0,388	0,730	0,444	0,425
X03.05	0,453	0,441	0,820	0,536	0,406
X03.06	0,394	0,386	0,764	0,533	0,387
X03.07	0,437	0,439	0,746	0,528	0,410
X03.08	0,430	0,493	0,761	0,559	0,462
X03.09	0,441	0,460	0,790	0,540	0,432
X03.10	0,483	0,515	0,834	0,567	0,485
X03.11	0,348	0,413	0,780	0,390	0,363
X03.12	0,339	0,343	0,768	0,442	0,379
Y01.01	0,621	0,588	0,525	0,837	0,545
Y01.02	0,586	0,607	0,624	0,831	0,560
Y01.03	0,567	0,590	0,537	0,806	0,567
Y01.04	0,618	0,584	0,533	0,808	0,566
Y01.05	0,526	0,500	0,463	0,774	0,619
Y01.06	0,519	0,528	0,547	0,821	0,541
Z01.01	0,459	0,425	0,402	0,561	0,811
Z01.02	0,396	0,428	0,413	0,533	0,778
Z01.03	0,430	0,397	0,425	0,525	0,779
Z01.04	0,409	0,465	0,444	0,541	0,785
Z01.05	0,414	0,403	0,418	0,573	0,811
Z01.06	0,518	0,437	0,489	0,575	0,815
Z01.07	0,408	0,486	0,475	0,590	0,793
Z01.08	0,444	0,448	0,432	0,535	0,804

Source: Data processed by researcher (2026)

According to cross loading data, It appears that all indicators produce results highest loading value for the variable assessed differentiated by loading for other variables. Indicator X01.01 has a score by 0.811 for the Perception of Ease variable which is much greater than its score on the variables of Trust or Financial Literacy. This consistency occurs in all indicators for the variables of Perception of Benefits and Use of Digital Banking, so that this model passes the discriminant validity test because each measurement item only focuses on its own construct.

Table 6. Heterotrait Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

Variable	Perceived Ease (X1)	Perceived Benefits (X2)	Financial Literacy (X3)	Use of Digital Banking (Y)	Trust (Z)
Perceived Ease (X1)					
Perceived Benefits (X2)	0,619				
Financial Literacy (X3)	0,575	0,625			
Use of Digital Banking (Y)	0,793	0,776	0,714		
Trust (Z)	0,607	0,602	0,586	0,767	

Source: Data processed by researcher (2026)

All values in the Heterotrait-monotrait Ratio (HTMT) table show figures less than the threshold 0.900, indicating that there are no problems with discriminant validity between constructs. The highest ratio value was found on the correlation of Perceived Ease and Digital Bank Usage at 0.793, while the lowest value was in the correlation of Financial Literacy and Perceived Ease at 0.575. Since all ratios are within the permissible limits, all variables passed HTMT discriminant validity test approach.

Table 7. Collinearity Test

	VIF
X01.01	2,078
X01.02	2,152
X01.03	1,905
X01.04	2,016
X01.05	1,750
X01.06	1,970
X02.01	1,891
X02.02	1,945
X02.03	1,849
X02.04	1,900
X02.05	2,080
X02.06	1,875
X02.07	1,829
X02.08	2,102
X03.01	2,145

	VIF
X03.02	2,411
X03.03	2,146
X03.04	2,001
X03.05	2,770
X03.06	2,088
X03.07	2,046
X03.08	2,048
X03.09	2,395
X03.10	2,793
X03.11	2,344
X03.12	2,142
Y01.01	2,466
Y01.02	2,354
Y01.03	2,122
Y01.04	2,289
Y01.05	1,932
Y01.06	2,366
Z01.01	2,427
Z01.02	2,159
Z01.03	2,110
Z01.04	2,184
Z01.05	2,402
Z01.06	2,387
Z01.07	2,108
Z01.08	2,273

Source: Data processed by researcher (2026)

According to table above, can be reviewed if VIF values for everyone research variables are below the specified limit, which is less than 5. The results of testing this inner model show that the model constructed generally meets the criteria for a good model.

Table 8. Evaluation of Path Coefficient (Direct Effect)

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
X1 Perception of Ease -> Y1 Use of Digital Banking	0,305	0,301	0,086	3,552	0,000

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
X1 Perception of Ease -> Z1 Trust	0,272	0,276	0,106	2,566	0,011
X2 Perception of Benefits -> Y1 Use of Digital Banking	0,264	0,264	0,066	4,005	0,000
X2 Perception of Benefits -> Z1 Trust	0,245	0,243	0,077	3,197	0,001
X3 Financial Literacy -> Y1 Use of Digital Banking	0,198	0,202	0,071	2,771	0,006
X3 Financial Literacy -> Z1 Trust	0,264	0,262	0,087	3,044	0,002
Z1 Trust -> Y1 Use of Digital Banking	0,276	0,272	0,067	4,120	0,000

Source: Data processed by researcher (2026)

Direct effect testing reveals that perceived transaction ease, perceived benefits, and financial literacy positively and with a significant impact use of digital banking. These three factors are also proven to positively and significantly shape trust. On the other hand, trust itself contributes positively and significantly to the adoption of digital banking. Overall, practicality access, obtained added value, and financial literacy emerge as key drivers in increasing the use of these services, both through direct channels and mediated by trust.

Table 9. Path Coefficient Evaluation (Indirect Effect)

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV)	P Values
X1 Perception of Ease -> Z1 Trust -> Y1 Use of Digital Banking	0,075	0,076	0,036	2,054	0,040
X2 Perception of Benefits -> Z1 Trust -> Y1 Use of Digital Banking	0,067	0,067	0,028	2,377	0,018

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV)	P Values
X3 Financial Literacy -> Z1 Trust -> Y1 Use of Digital Banking	0,073	0,071	0,029	2,531	0,012

Source: Data processed by researcher (2026)

The indirect effect test confirmed the positive and significant mediating function of trust in the correlation of perceived smooth use as well digital banking utilization (coefficient 0.075; t- statistic 2.054; p-value 0.040). Trust also mediate the correlation of the obtained benefits and digital banking utilization on a positive and significant manner (coefficient 0.067; t-statistic 2.377; p-value 0.018). Similarly, the mediation of trust was proven to be positive and significant between financial literacy and digital bank adoption (coefficient 0.073; t-statistic 2.531; p-value 0.012). These findings confirm that strengthening perceptions of convenience, benefits, and financial literacy can build user trust, which ultimately enriches the level of digital banking service usage.

Structural Model Test (Inner Model)

Table 10. R-Square Test

	R Square	Adjusted R Square
Y1 Digital Banking Usage	0.723	0.715
Z1 Trust	0.428	0.416

Source: Data processed by researcher (2026)

The Digital Bank Usage variable has an R Squared score ie 0.723, which means that the ability of the variables of Perceived Ease, Perceived Benefits, Financial Literacy, and confident about it explain the variance in digital bank usage is 72.3% or falls into the strong category. Meanwhile, the Trust variable produces an R Square score of a number 0.428, which indicates that 42.8% of the variance in trust is influenced by the independent variables in the model independent variables in the model. These results pass the test because the model produces sufficient explanatory power for the endogenous variables.

Table 11. F-Square Test

Variable	Digital Bank Usage (Y)	Trust (Z)
Perceived Ease (X1)	0,196	0,081
Perceived Benefits (X2)	0,138	0,061
Financial Literacy (X3)	0,079	0,073
Use of Digital Banking (Y)		

Trust (Z)	0,157

Source: Data processed by researcher (2026)

f^2 scores of 0.02, 0.15, etc 0.35 reflect small, moderate, and large effect sizes, every one. The test revealed that Perceived Ease (X1) had a moderate effect on Digital Bank Usage (Y) with an f^2 of 0.196, and small impact on Trust (Z) of 0.081. Perceived Benefits (X2) and Financial Literacy (X3) only had a small effect on Digital Bank Usage and Trust, as their f^2 values were both less than 0.15. Trust (Z), on the other hand, produced a moderate effect on Digital Bank Usage (Y) with an f^2 of 0.157, reinforcing its essence as the main driver of digital bank adoption.

Table 12. Q-Square Test

	SSO	**SSE**	**Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)**
X1 Perceived Ease	942,000	942,000	
X2 Perceived Benefits	1256,000	1256,000	
X3 Financial Literacy	1884,000	1884,000	
Y1 Use of Digital Banking	942,000	524,933	0,443
Z1 Trust	1256,000	935,639	0,255

Source: Data processed by researcher (2026)

The predictive relevance evaluation confirms a Q^2 value of 0.443 for Digital Bank Usage and 0.255 for Trust. Since both are positive, this model shows adequate predictive power on endogenous variables. The Q^2 test was not applied to Perceived Ease, Perceived Benefits, and Financial Literacy as exogenous variables.

Table 13. SRMR

	Saturated Model	***Estimated Model***
SRMR	0,052	0,052
d_ULS	2,240	2,240
d_G	1,110	1,110
Chi-Square	896,105	896,105
NFI	0,803	0,803

Source: Data processed by researcher (2026)

This research model obtains Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR)value of 0.052. Based in terms of model similarity, an The SRMR score is a number less than 0.080 that indicates if the model produces good quality level of fit between the observed data and the hypothesized model. Thus, this model support the validity of the structural

anaysis and strengthen the credibility of the study's conlusions, passing the goodness of fit test and perfect for in-depth interpretation in path analysis.

Table 14. Hypothesis Testing

Variable Relationships	Path Coefficient	T - Statistic	p - value	Conclusion
Perception of Ease (X1) Towards the Use of Digital Banking (Y)	0,305	3,552	0,000	Positive & significant
Perception of Benefits (X2) Towards the Use of Digital Banking (Y)	0,264	4,005	0,000	Positive & significant
Financial Literacy (X3) Towards the Use of Digital Banking (Y)	0,198	2,771	0,006	Positive & significant
Perception of Ease (X1) Towards Trust (Z)	0,272	2,566	0,011	Positive & significant
Perceived Benefits (X2) Towards Trust (Z)	0,245	3,197	0,001	Positive & significant
Financial Literacy (X3) Towards Trust (Z)	0,264	3,044	0,002	Positive & significant
Trust (Z) Towards Digital Banking (Y)	0,276	4,120	0,000	Positive & significant
Perceived Ease (X1) Towards Digital Banking (Y) Through Trust (Z)	0,075	2,054	0,040	Positive & significant
Perceived benefits (X2) on the use of digital banking (Y) through trust (Z)	0,067	2,377	0,018	Positive & significant
Financial literacy (X3) on the use of digital banking (Y) through trust (Z)	0,073	2,531	0,012	Positive & significant

Source: Data processed by researcher (2026)

Hypothesis verification indicates positive and significant impact obtained ease, perceived utility, and financial literacy related to digital banking adoption. These variables also positively and significantly shape trust. Trust, in turn, produce a positive and significant impact on digital usage banking. Further testing of indirect effects proves if confidence mediates the correlation of practicality obtained, perceived benefits, and financial literacy with digital bank utilization in a positive and significant manner. Thus, digital bank adoption is driven by elements of ease of access, added value, and financial understanding, both through direct channels and through the mediation of trust.

DISCUSSION

Perceived Ease (X1) on Digital Banking Usage (Y)

Path analysis confirms the positive as well as the significant impacts obtained ease on the adoption of digital banking, with a coefficient of 0.305, a t-statistic of 3.552

(>1.65), and p score 0.000 (<0.05). This aspect indicates that it is getting higher perception of ease, the more optimal the individual's personal financial management, including in the aspects of planning, monitoring, and executing daily financial routines. Perceived ease of use refers to the degree to which an individual believes that using a particular system requires minimal effort (Adrianto & Rahmidani, 2024). In the context of digital banking services, a higher level of perceived ease reflects users' confidence in operating the system efficiently without experiencing complexity or technical difficulties. These empirical findings are consistent with Wildan (2019) study, which concluded if practicality is considered use positively and significantly affects individuals' top interest FinTech services. Similarly, research by Mawardani & Dwijayanti (2021) proves that the level of ease of access to the payment system significantly impacts the decision to use it in daily financial transactions. All of this evidence underscores the crucial The function of assuming practicality of use is the core trigger of digital finance service utilization.

Perceived Benefits (X2) on the Use of Digital Banking (Y)

The analysis confirms the positive and significant effect of perceived benefits at the digital level banking usage. This evidence is reflected in the path coefficient of 0.264, where the t-statistic reaches 4.005, exceeding critical score by 1.65 at a significance level of 10%, as well as p score of 0.000, which is less than the threshold 0.10. This indication confirms that the greater the benefits individuals perceive from digital banking services, the more intensively they use them in their daily financial routines.

The results of this study are in line with the study Keni (2020) studies that indicate a positive and significant impact that the perceived benefits of digital financial technology provide real advantages for its users, especially the younger generation who are accustomed to digital innovation. In addition, Rizkyla et al. (2024) found that perceived benefits are the factor that contributes most strongly to shaping user trust. In line with this, Evitasari et al. (2023) emphasized that trust is proven to be an essential mediator that amplifies the impact obtained benefits on individuals' decisions to adopt digital financial services.

Financial Literacy (X3) on the Use of Digital Banking (Y)

Its use of digital banking services was found to be closely related to individuals' financial literacy. Through statistical testing, number of path coefficients 0.073 was obtained in a way t-value of 2.531 ($p < 0.05$), confirming that financial literacy contributes significantly to the adoption of this banking technology. This data indicates that the more financially literate a person is, the more likely they are to integrate digital banking instruments into their routine transactions. This is because someone with effective

reading and writing skills is inclined have more effective evaluation and acceptance skills towards modern financial service innovations.

This data in line with a number of previous studies according to Rudakova & Markova (2020) which found that financial literacy significantly impacts adoption of e-banking. These results are consistent with a previous study of Munari & Susanti (2021) which also concluded the level of financial literacy significantly influences implementation of e-banking. Recent studies of Chanafaro & Sari (2024) reinforces that digital financial literacy is not only significant but also a major factor in increasing Generation Z's interest in transacting using digital payment services.

Perceived ease of use (X1) on trust (Z)

Hypothesis testing reveals a positive and significant effect of practicality of use obtained trust levels. This aspect is tested from a number of path coefficients 0.272, a t-statistic of 2.566 (which goes beyond the critical value o f 1.65 at a significance level of 10%), as well as the p score by 0.011 (< 0.10). This empirical evidence indicates if greater the ease obtained by users when interacting with digital banks, the stronger their trust in the service.

These findings are in line with previous findings empirical findings. Based on research by Wasana & Telagawathi (2023) practicality of use obtained directly and significantly increases consumers' level of confidence in a system or platform. Meanwhile, research by Mawardani & Dwijayanti (2021) reveals that the level of practical use of play a greater function on encouraging adoption decisions and the use of the system in daily routines.

Perceived Benefits (X2) on Trust (Z)

The empirical analysis confirms the positive and significant impact on trust. The path coefficient of 0.245, supported by The t-statistic is 3.197 and the p-value is a number 0.001 (below the specified significance threshold), forms the basis of this finding. The study confirms it's getting bigger the perceived utility of digital banking, the greater the individual's trust in such services.

the findings of these studies align together a previous study by Keni (2020) which indicates existence digital financial technology provides a positive contribution that can be felt directly by users, including the younger generation. This finding is further explored by Rizkyla et al. (2024) who identify if this is assumed to be useful is the strongest predictor in shaping user trust. The consistency of these results is reaffirmed in the study of Evitasari et al. (2023) which explains if belief functions as a mediating variable, it has an impact perceived benefits on the decision to adopt digital services is further strengthened through the formation and channeling of influence via user trust.

Financial Literacy (X3) on Trust (Z)

Empirical testing shows positive and significant impact financial literacy on trust. The supporting data includes a path coefficient of 0.264, a t-statistic of 3.044 (exceeds the critical score), as well as a number of p scores 0.002 (< significance level). These findings indicate that an increase in individual financial literacy correlates with higher trust in the financial system, particularly its digital services.

These findings suggest that individuals with higher financial literacy tend to have greater trust in digital banking services. This result is Islamiah & Ningtyas (2024), who states that financial literacy enhances individuals' ability to make rational financial decisions, thereby strengthening confidence in financial services.These results are in line with studies from Kantika et al. (2022) which confirms the the positive impact of financial literacy on trust in digital banks. This consistent pattern of relationships suggests that increased financial literacy tends to strengthen trust, and in turn, boost the adoption rate of digital banking services, although its statistical significance is not always explicitly stated.

Trust (Z) in the Use of Digital Banks (Y)

The analysis conducted proves if belief has a positive and significant impact on usage digital banks. The path coefficient value of 0.276, t-statistic of 4.120, and p-score of 0.000 reflect very high significance. This evidence confirms that the greater a person's confidence in it financial system, the more optimal personal financial management will be. The finding's of the study by Kantika et al. (2022) confirm the role of trust as a significant mediating variable in the adoption of digital banking, reinforcing its position as a key foundation on customer selection decisions process. The consistency of these findings is evident in the study of Prayudi et al. (2022) which identifies trust as a mediator that strengthens the causal correlation of perceived practicality of use as well the intention to reuse a service. Thus, both studies collectively reinforce the proposition that trust acts as a positive and significantly influential mediator.

Perceived ease (X1) of using digital banking (Y) through trust (Z)

This study proves the significant mediating function of trust in the correlation of perceived practicality as well digital banking usage. The path coefficient of 0.075, t-statistic of 2.054, and p- score of 0.040 prove its statistical significance. This positive coefficient indicates that the indirect effect perceived practicality of implementing digital banking via trust is reinforcing, where greater ease of use increases trust and subsequently increases adoption of the service.

Based on the research by Wasana & Telagawathi (2023) the perception of Practicality of use has been tested positively and with a significant impact formation of consumer

trust. This is reinforced by Mawardani & Dwijayanti (2021) who state that the level of ease in operating a payment system is a determining factors in the choice to implement it for daily activities. These findings are further reinforced by Agustino & Yousida (2021) who reveal if you assume ease has a direct effect and builds desire to apply e-wallets through significant mediation of trust. In other words, trust effectively bridges the relationship from perceived practicality and the decision to adopt e-wallet.

Perceived benefits (X2) on the use of digital banks (Y) through trust (Z)

Data analysis confirms the significant mediating function of belief in the correlation of the obtained benefits and digital bank usage. This evidence was obtained from an indirect effect test, which recorded number of path coefficients 0.067, a t-statistic of 2.377, and a p-value of 0.018, indicating strongly indicating statistical significance. The findings of this study are in line with Keni (2020) who emphasizes that perceived benefits arise from the capacity of digital financial services to provide practical and appropriate value for users, especially young people who are adaptive to technological innovations.

The findings indicate positive and significant impact on the assumption of usefulness on trust. The higher the users' perception uses of digital banking services, such as time efficiency, transaction speed, and access flexibility, the stronger the trust built in these services. These gains are in harmony with the results of Rizkyla et al. (2024) who gets it if it gets it benefits contribute most strongly to building trust compared to other variables. Thus, perceived benefits perform core functions on supporting the formation of user trust in digital financial services.

Financial literacy (X3) on the use of digital banking (Y) through trust (Z)

The research data analysis proves if there are significant aspects indirect effect of financial literacy on the use of digital banks, with trust as a mediator. This test produced a path coefficient of 0.073, a t-statistic of 2.531, as well as the p score by 0.018, which clearly confirms the mediating role of trust in this mechanism.

These gains are in harmony together previous study of Selfianti et al. (2025) who states if strong trust increases usage intensity. Rudakova & Markova (2020)added that Financial literacy has a significant impact on the application of e-banking. In addition, trust not only accepts this influence, but also strengthens indirect correlation of financial literacy as well the adoption of digital payments through its mediating role.

Support for this is reinforced by Kantika et al. (2022)who found if financial literacy has a positive impact on confidence digital banks. Overall, although the statistical significance is not always detailed, consistent patterns show that increased financial literacy tends to build trust, which ultimately encourages wider adoption of digital banking services.

CONCLUSION

According to the findings of the study carried out, it can be stated that if perceptions of convenience, perceived benefits, and financial literacy have a positive and significant influence on the use of digital banks among Generation Z students in Malang City. These findings indicate the practicality transaction and perceived benefits from services Digital banks and effective financial level literacy can encourage students to be utilized digital banking services more intensively. Empirical findings confirm that trust functions as a positive and significant mediator on the correlation of practicality gained, gained benefits, and financial literacy in the use of digital banking. Thus, the practical impact, benefits, and financial literacy is not limited to direct effects but is also mediated by the development of user trust, which in turn reinforces the decision in choosing this service.

However, this study has a number of limitations that should be noted. Data collection was limited to Generation Z students from five universities in Malang, so the findings cannot be generalized to other age groups or regions. The cross-sectional approach with data collection within a single time frame also limits the study's ability to detect changes in user behavior over a long period of time. according to this gain and limitations, This study produces practical implications for digital banks to continue improving ease of use, strengthening service benefits, implement digital bank strategy and enhancing financial literacy education in order to build and strengthen user trust. Future studies are recommended to increase the scope respondents, add other variables such as risk perception, security, or technological innovation, and use a *longitudinal* approach to provide a more comprehensive picture of digital bank usage behavior.

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