

A Study on Evaluating the Impact of Social Media Advertisements on Gen Z

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Abstract- *This study investigates the impact of social media advertising characteristics on the purchase responses of Generation Z consumers in India. Drawing on 200 survey responses, the research examines four key advertising dimensions—creativity and attention, informativeness, influencer credibility, and personalization and relevance—and their influence on consumer purchase behavior. Descriptive analysis revealed that Instagram is the dominant platform among respondents, with most spending between two and four hours daily on social media, while a significant proportion reported more than six hours of usage. Creativity and personalization emerged as the most valued advertising attributes, while influencer credibility showed mixed perceptions, and informativeness was rated moderately. Multiple regression analysis confirmed that personalization and relevance ($\beta = 0.478$, $p < 0.001$) was the strongest predictor of purchase response, followed by creativity ($\beta = 0.312$, $p < 0.001$) and influencer credibility ($\beta = 0.276$, $p < 0.001$). Informativeness, however, was not statistically significant ($p = 0.645$). The overall model was robust, with $R^2 = 0.702$, indicating that the selected advertising characteristics explained over 70% of the variance in purchase response. Hypothesis testing supported H1, H3, and H4, while H2 was not supported, highlighting that Generation Z values engagement, authenticity, and relevance more than raw information. The findings carry important managerial implications. Marketers must design campaigns that are creative, personalized, and credible, while recognizing that product quality and discounts remain decisive motivators. Heavy social media users are more susceptible to advertising influence, and gender differences suggest tailored strategies for male and female consumers. This study contributes to the literature by demonstrating that Generation Z's purchase responses are shaped less by informativeness and more by creativity, personalization, and credibility, offering actionable insights for digital marketing strategies in the Indian context.*

Keywords: *Generation Z, social media advertising, creativity, personalization, influencer credibility, purchase response, India*

I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of social media platforms has transformed the advertising landscape, particularly among younger generations. Generation Z, defined as individuals born between 1997 and 2012, represents a unique consumer segment characterized by digital nativity, high social media engagement, and distinct preferences in advertising content. In India, this demographic is especially significant due to its size, purchasing power, and influence on emerging consumption trends. Understanding how social media advertising affects their purchase responses is therefore critical for marketers and businesses seeking to engage this audience effectively. (Priporas et al., 2017)

Social media advertising encompasses diverse elements, including creativity, informativeness, influencer credibility, and personalization. Creativity and attention are essential in capturing consumer interest in a crowded digital environment. Informativeness provides consumers with product details and functional benefits, while influencer credibility leverages trust and relatability to shape purchase decisions. Personalization and relevance, driven by data analytics and targeted marketing, ensure that advertisements resonate with individual consumer preferences. Together, these dimensions form the foundation of modern advertising strategies. (Alalwan et al., 2017) (Alalwan et al., 2017; Chetioui et al., 2021)

Existing literature highlights the importance of creativity and personalization in driving consumer engagement, while influencer marketing has gained prominence as a tool for building trust and authenticity. However, the role of informativeness remains debated, with some studies suggesting its

importance and others indicating limited impact. This study seeks to address these gaps by empirically testing the influence of these four advertising characteristics on Generation Z's purchase response in the Indian context. (Chavadi et al., 2020; Arora et al., 2025) (Pittman & Haley, 2023)

The research employed a structured questionnaire distributed among 200 respondents, primarily students aged 18–27. Descriptive analysis provided insights into social media usage patterns, platform preferences, and advertising perceptions. Regression analysis and hypothesis testing were conducted to evaluate the significance of each advertising characteristic in predicting purchase response. By integrating descriptive and inferential analysis, this study contributes to both academic literature and managerial practice. It demonstrates that Generation Z's purchase responses are shaped more by creativity, personalization, and credibility than by informativeness. The findings provide actionable implications for marketers, emphasizing the need to design campaigns that are visually engaging, tailored to consumer interests, and supported by credible influencers. In doing so, businesses can strengthen their engagement with Generation Z, enhance brand loyalty, and drive purchase intentions in an increasingly digital marketplace. (Alalwan, 2018; Chen et al., 2023)

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Hazari and Sethna (2023) – Instagram advertising and Gen Z

Hazari and Sethna examined how different forms of Instagram advertising influence Generation Z consumers. The study compared lifestyle marketing advertisements and brand influencer advertisements, using the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework. The researchers focused on advertising attention, attitude and purchase intention, while also examining gender and personality as possible moderating factors. Using MANOVA and regression analysis, the study found that males and extroverted respondents showed higher levels of attention and more favourable attitudes towards advertisements. However, gender did not create significant differences in responses to brand influencer advertising. The study therefore suggests that marketers should not depend

only on demographic segmentation when targeting Gen Z. Personality characteristics can provide useful insights into how young consumers respond to advertising. The findings are particularly relevant to Instagram-based campaigns where lifestyle content and influencer communication are commonly used. The study supports the idea that advertising effectiveness among Gen Z depends not only on exposure but also on how consumers perceive and process the advertising content. (Hazari & Sethna, 2023)

2. Chen et al. (2023) – Advertising value, emotional appeal and credibility

Chen, Ling, and Chen investigated the factors that encourage consumers to click on social media advertisements and develop purchase intentions. The research extended the traditional web advertising value model by considering emotional appeal, advertising credibility, advertising clicks, product evaluation and incentives. Data were collected through an online questionnaire from 313 respondents who had previously viewed social media advertisements. The findings showed that advertising credibility and emotional appeal had stronger effects on advertising attitudes than informativeness and irritation. The study further established that clicking on advertisements could contribute to product evaluation, while advertising attitude and product evaluation were associated with purchase intention. An important implication of the research is that simply providing information may not be enough to make social media advertising effective. Consumers also need to perceive advertisements as credible and emotionally appealing. For Gen Z-focused marketing, this highlights the importance of creating advertising content that is trustworthy while still being engaging. The study provides a useful foundation for examining credibility and emotional appeal as factors affecting advertising effectiveness. (Chen et al., 2023; Chetioui et al., 2021)

3. Shetu (2023) – User-generated content, micro-celebrities and sponsored advertising

Shetu investigated how user-generated content (UGC) and micro-celebrity posts influence Generation Z's online purchasing behaviour on social networking sites. The study also examined whether consumers' search intention acts as a mediator and whether sponsored advertisements influence these

relationships. Primary data were collected from 565 Generation Z university students in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The findings showed that UGC had significant direct, indirect and mediated relationships with online purchasing behaviour. Micro-celebrity posts also demonstrated significant direct and indirect relationships, although the mediation relationship was not significant. The study additionally found a strong relationship between consumers' search intention and online purchasing behaviour. Sponsored advertisements were therefore considered important in understanding the movement from social-media search to purchase behaviour. The research demonstrates that Gen Z consumers may not depend exclusively on traditional advertisements when making purchase decisions. Instead, UGC, social interaction, influencers and sponsored content can work together in the consumer decision-making process. This makes the study highly relevant to research examining the broader impact of social media advertising on Gen Z. (Shetu, 2023)

4. Voorveld, Meppelink, and Boerman (2024) – Algorithmic advertising and consumer awareness
Voorveld, Meppelink, and Boerman studied how consumers understand and respond to algorithm-driven social media advertising. The research was grounded in the Persuasion Knowledge Model, which considers consumers' awareness of persuasive attempts and their ability to cope with them. An online survey involving 450 respondents in the Netherlands was analysed using cluster analysis. The researchers identified four distinct consumer groups based on their awareness, critical evaluation and ability to deal with algorithmic persuasion. These groups included consumers who were fatigued, uninformed but critical, skilled and critical, and a larger control-paradox group. Differences were also associated with factors such as age, education, internet skills, privacy concerns and perceived personalization. The findings indicate that consumers do not respond to algorithmically personalised advertising in the same way. This is important for Gen Z because their high exposure to personalised digital content does not necessarily mean they accept advertising without questioning it. The study therefore highlights the importance of understanding advertising awareness, privacy concerns and consumer resistance when

evaluating social media advertising effectiveness. (Voorveld et al., 2024)

5. Gupta et al. (2024) – Online advertising and digital natives in India

Gupta, Paul, Stoner, and Aggarwal examined the relationship between digital transformation, online advertising and consumer behaviour, with particular relevance to consumers in emerging markets such as India. The researchers focused on digital natives and investigated the factors influencing their attitudes towards online advertising and subsequent purchase intentions. Structural equation modelling was used to examine relationships among the variables. The study is particularly useful for a Gen Z research project because Gen Z represents consumers who have grown up in an increasingly digital environment. The research demonstrates that online advertising should be considered in relation to consumers' attitudes rather than merely their exposure to advertisements. It also connects advertising attitudes with subsequent purchase intentions. The Indian context makes this study especially valuable for an MBA research paper conducted among Indian respondents. The findings suggest that marketers need to understand how digital consumers interpret advertising messages before expecting advertising exposure to translate into purchase behaviour. Thus, the study provides a strong foundation for examining the relationship between social media advertising and Gen Z consumer responses in India. (Gupta et al., 2024)

6. Gupta and Parmar (2024/2025) – Digital rhetoric and Gen Z purchase intention

Gupta and Parmar investigated the effectiveness of digital rhetoric as a persuasive mechanism in social media advertisements and its influence on Gen Z purchasing decisions. The study is particularly relevant because it examines how persuasive communication within social media advertisements can affect consumer reasoning and purchase intention. The researchers used logistic regression through a threshold model to examine the relationship between digital rhetoric and purchase intention. They also compared the effects across different generations to examine whether generation cohort moderated the relationship. The findings showed that digital rhetoric delivered through social media advertisements had a positive and significant influence on Gen Z purchase

intention. The effect was not similarly observed among older generations in the comparison. The study is especially relevant to the Indian context because it examines Gen Z consumers within an emerging-market environment. It indicates that the way an advertising message is constructed and communicated can be as important as the product information itself. For marketers, the findings suggest that persuasive storytelling and rhetorical elements can be incorporated into social media advertisements to improve their effectiveness among younger consumers. (Gupta & Parmar, 2024)

7. Saha, Sengupta, and Gupta (2024) – Personalised advertising and Gen Z

Saha, Sengupta, and Gupta examined how personality traits influence Generation Z consumers' responses to personalised social media advertisements. The study focused on Facebook advertising and investigated perceived personalisation, perceived usefulness, privacy concerns and click-through intention. The researchers used a mixed-method design, first collecting responses from 324 Gen Z consumers and then conducting interviews with 15 selected participants. Their findings indicated that personality characteristics influenced how Gen Z consumers perceived personalised advertisements. Consumers with dominant extraversion, conscientiousness and neuroticism traits responded more positively, whereas openness and agreeableness were associated with less favourable perceptions. Positive perceptions of personalised advertising increased perceived usefulness, which subsequently improved click-through intentions. However, privacy concerns reduced consumers' intention to click on personalised advertisements. The study therefore demonstrates that personalisation can have both positive and negative implications for advertising effectiveness. For marketers targeting Gen Z, the findings suggest that personalisation should provide relevance without creating excessive privacy concerns. This makes the study particularly useful for examining personalisation as an independent variable in a Gen Z social-media advertising study. (Saha et al., 2024)

8. Kim and Jeong (2024) – Influencer advertising, disclosure and perceived similarity

Kim and Jeong examined how social media influencer-driven advertising affects Generation Z

consumers, focusing specifically on sponsorship disclosure and perceived similarity between influencers and audiences. The research concentrated on CSR advertising communicated through social media influencers. Two experiments were conducted to investigate how disclosure prominence, endorsement type and perceived similarity influence behavioural intentions. The study found that the effectiveness of sponsorship disclosure differed depending on whether the influencer was promoting a brand or CSR-related content. Perceived manipulateness emerged as an important psychological mechanism explaining consumer responses to influencer advertising. The findings also showed that the relationship between disclosure and advertising response could change depending on how similar consumers perceived themselves to the influencer. This suggests that Gen Z responses to influencer advertisements cannot be understood simply by asking whether an advertisement is sponsored. The credibility and perceived relationship between the influencer and audience also matter. For marketers, the study highlights the importance of selecting influencers whose identity and values are perceived as compatible with the target audience. (Kim & Jeong, 2024)

9. Ahn and Haley (2025) – Personalised “myselfie” advertising among Gen Z

Ahn and Haley explored an emerging form of personalised advertising in which consumers' own photographs or likenesses can be incorporated into advertising content. The study specifically examined how Gen Z consumers perceive this type of personalised “myselfie” advertising. The researchers used in-depth interviews with 24 participants and a qualitative projective technique involving 96 personalised advertisements. Their analysis identified themes including self-brand connection, social recognition, authenticity and influencer avoidance. Consumers also identified potential benefits of highly personalised advertisements, including an “ego boost” and stronger personal relevance. However, the study simultaneously identified concerns relating to privacy, anxiety about social-media impressions and reduced brand trust. This finding is particularly important because it demonstrates that greater personalisation does not automatically lead to greater advertising effectiveness. While Gen Z may appreciate

advertisements that feel personally relevant, excessive personalisation can create discomfort or concerns about privacy. The study therefore provides a more balanced understanding of personalised social media advertising. It suggests that marketers need to maintain a balance between relevance and consumer privacy when designing personalised campaigns for Gen Z. (Ahn & Haley, 2025)

10. Duffett and Charles (2025) – Advertising antecedents among Gen Z

Duffett and Charles investigated the factors influencing purchase intention in response to Google Shopping advertisements, comparing Generation Y and Generation Z. The study is relevant to social-media advertising research because it examines how digital advertising characteristics and targeting influence younger consumers' purchase intentions. The researchers used a quantitative questionnaire-based approach and obtained a very large sample of 5,808 responses from Generation Y and Z participants. The research is particularly significant because digital platforms increasingly use targeting and customisation to reach younger audiences. The authors argue that despite the growth of these advertising technologies, further research is needed to understand why consumers respond differently to digital advertisements. Comparing generations also provides insight into whether Gen Z responds differently from older consumer groups. The study contributes to understanding purchase intention as an outcome of digital advertising exposure. For an MBA marketing study, it supports the argument that advertising effectiveness should be measured beyond awareness and should include behavioural outcomes such as purchase intention. (Duffett & Charles, 2025)

III. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The rapid growth of social media has changed the way brands communicate with consumers. For Generation Z, social media platforms have become an important source of entertainment, information, product discovery and interaction with brands. As a result, businesses are increasingly using social media advertisements, sponsored content, influencer promotions and personalised advertising to reach this

consumer segment. However, the increasing presence of advertisements on social media does not necessarily mean that consumers will pay attention to them, trust them or develop an intention to purchase the advertised products.

One of the major challenges faced by marketers is understanding what makes a social media advertisement effective for Generation Z. Gen Z consumers are exposed to a large amount of digital content every day, making it difficult for brands to capture and retain their attention. At the same time, consumers may respond differently depending on whether an advertisement is informative, entertaining, credible, personalised or supported by influencers. While some forms of advertising may improve engagement and purchase intention, excessive advertising, irrelevant content or concerns about privacy may lead to negative perceptions.

Previous research has examined several of these factors individually, including advertising credibility, personalisation, influencer marketing, user-generated content and digital persuasion. However, there is still a need to understand how these factors collectively relate to Gen Z consumers' attitudes, engagement and purchase intention, particularly within the Indian consumer context.

Therefore, the problem addressed by this study is the lack of an integrated understanding of the factors that influence the effectiveness of social media advertisements among Generation Z consumers. The study seeks to examine how selected characteristics of social media advertising influence Gen Z's perceptions and engagement and whether these responses are associated with their purchase intention. The findings are expected to help marketers understand how social media advertisements can be designed to be more relevant, credible, engaging and persuasive for Generation Z.

IV. RESEARCH GAP

The existing literature indicates that social media advertising has become an important area of research, particularly because of its growing influence on younger consumers. Recent studies have examined different aspects of social media advertising, including

influencer marketing, user-generated content, personalisation, advertising credibility, emotional appeal, digital rhetoric, interaction and advertising engagement. However, the literature also reveals several areas that require further investigation, particularly in relation to Generation Z consumers.

First, many existing studies focus on one specific characteristic of social media advertising rather than examining multiple characteristics together. For example, Hazari and Sethna (2023) examined lifestyle marketing and influencer advertising among Gen Z Instagram users, while Saha et al. (2024) focused primarily on personalised advertising and click-through intentions. Similarly, studies by Kim and Jeong (2024) concentrated on sponsorship disclosure and perceived similarity in influencer advertising. These studies provide valuable insights into individual advertising mechanisms, but they do not provide a comprehensive understanding of how multiple advertising characteristics collectively influence Gen Z consumer responses.

Second, existing research has frequently examined purchase intention, click-through intention or advertising attitude as separate outcomes. Chen et al. (2023), for instance, examined advertising value, emotional appeal and credibility in relation to advertising clicks and purchase intention. Other studies have examined engagement or online search behaviour. There is therefore scope to connect these stages of consumer response more systematically—from exposure and perception to engagement and purchase intention.

Third, although personalisation is increasingly important in social media advertising, the literature shows that it has both positive and negative consequences. Saha et al. (2024) found that personalisation can increase perceived usefulness and click-through intention, while privacy concerns can reduce consumers' willingness to interact with advertisements. Ahn and Haley (2025) similarly highlighted the tension between personal relevance, authenticity, privacy and trust. This indicates a need to examine personalisation alongside other advertising characteristics rather than treating it as an isolated factor.

Fourth, several existing studies have been conducted in specific contexts, including Bangladesh, the Netherlands and other international markets. Although research such as Gupta et al. (2024) and Gupta and Parmar (2024) provides useful evidence in an Indian or emerging-market context, there remains scope for further empirical research on Gen Z consumers in India. Differences in culture, social-media usage patterns, consumer expectations and digital advertising exposure may influence how Gen Z responds to advertisements.

Finally, much of the existing research concentrates on particular platforms or advertising formats, such as Instagram influencer advertising, Facebook personalised advertisements or Google Shopping advertisements. The rapidly changing social media environment creates a need for research that considers social media advertising from a broader consumer perspective.

Therefore, the present study attempts to address these gaps by examining informativeness, entertainment, credibility, personalisation and advertising engagement together, and by investigating their relationship with Gen Z consumers' attitudes and purchase intention. The study aims to provide a more integrated understanding of social media advertising effectiveness among Generation Z and generate practical insights for marketers developing digital advertising strategies.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study focuses on evaluating the impact of social media advertisements on Generation Z consumer behaviour, with particular emphasis on how different characteristics of social media advertising influence their attitudes, engagement and purchase intentions. Generation Z represents an important consumer segment for marketers because of its high level of interaction with digital and social media platforms. The study primarily considers social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, Snapchat and other commonly used digital platforms where consumers are exposed to brand

advertisements, sponsored content, influencer promotions and personalised advertising.

The scope of the study includes examining key characteristics of social media advertisements such as informativeness, entertainment, credibility, personalisation, influencer influence and advertising engagement. These factors are considered in order to understand what makes social media advertisements attractive, relevant and persuasive to Gen Z consumers. The study also examines consumers' attitudes towards social media advertising and whether their interaction with advertisements is associated with their intention to purchase advertised products or services.

The study is intended to cover Gen Z respondents who actively use social media and have experience with viewing advertisements or promotional content on these platforms. Primary data may be collected through a structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale. The responses can subsequently be analysed using descriptive statistics and appropriate inferential techniques such as correlation, regression, chi-square or other statistical methods depending on the nature of the collected data. (Hazari & Sethna, 2023)

From a marketing perspective, the study aims to provide insights that can help marketers understand how Gen Z responds to different forms of social media advertising. The findings may assist businesses in designing advertising messages that are more relevant, credible, engaging and personalised for younger consumers. The study also provides scope for understanding the balance between effective personalisation and consumer concerns such as advertising intrusiveness and privacy.

The study is primarily focused on consumer perceptions and purchase intentions rather than measuring actual sales generated by individual advertising campaigns. Therefore, the findings will provide insights into perceived advertising effectiveness and consumer behaviour within the selected sample rather than establishing universal causal relationships for the entire Gen Z population.

VI. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the influence of social media advertisements on the attitudes and perceptions of Generation Z consumers.
2. To identify the key factors of social media advertisements, such as informativeness, entertainment, credibility and personalisation, that influence Gen Z consumers.
3. To analyse the relationship between engagement with social media advertisements and purchase intention among Generation Z consumers.
4. To evaluate the effectiveness of social media advertising in influencing the purchase intention and consumer behaviour of Generation Z.

VII. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The present study, titled “A Study on Evaluating the Impact of Social Media Advertisements on Gen Z,” is significant because social media has become an important environment for communication between brands and consumers. Generation Z is particularly relevant to marketers as this generation has grown up with digital technologies and regularly encounters brand-related content through social media platforms. As businesses increasingly allocate resources to digital advertising, understanding how Gen Z perceives, engages with and responds to social media advertisements can help marketers develop more effective communication strategies.

From a marketing perspective, the study provides insights into the factors that make social media advertisements more effective among Gen Z consumers. The study considers factors such as informativeness, entertainment, credibility and personalisation. Understanding these factors can help marketers design advertisements that are not only visible to consumers but also relevant and engaging. For example, an advertisement that provides useful information while presenting it in an interesting and credible manner may be more likely to attract attention and encourage further consideration of the product.

The study is also significant in understanding consumer attitudes and engagement. Social media advertising is different from traditional advertising because consumers can actively interact with advertising content through likes, comments, shares,

saves and clicks. Studying these forms of engagement can help businesses understand whether Gen Z consumers are merely exposed to advertisements or are actively responding to them. This distinction is important for marketers when evaluating the effectiveness of their digital campaigns. (Liu & Zheng, 2024; Herrando & Martín-De Hoyos, 2022)

Another important significance of the study is its focus on purchase intention and consumer behaviour. Advertising effectiveness cannot be evaluated only through views or impressions. Understanding whether exposure and engagement with social media advertisements are associated with consumers' intention to purchase provides a more meaningful perspective for marketers. The findings may therefore help businesses identify which advertising characteristics are more closely associated with favourable consumer responses.

The study can also be useful for advertising and brand managers in developing appropriate targeting and communication strategies for Gen Z. Personalised advertising may improve relevance, but excessive personalisation can also create concerns about privacy or intrusiveness. Therefore, the study can help marketers understand the importance of maintaining a balance between personalisation and consumer comfort. (Arora et al., 2025)

From an academic perspective, the study contributes to the growing body of research on social media advertising and Generation Z consumer behaviour. It brings together multiple advertising characteristics rather than examining only one aspect of digital advertising. The findings may also provide a basis for future researchers to conduct similar studies across different age groups, industries, geographical locations and social media platforms.

Overall, the study is significant because it seeks to connect social media advertising characteristics with consumer attitudes, engagement and purchase intention, thereby providing practical insights into how brands can communicate more effectively with Generation Z.

VIII. POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population of the present study consists of Generation Z consumers who actively use social media platforms and are exposed to social media advertisements. Generation Z is the primary focus of the study because this generation has grown up in a highly digital environment and frequently interacts with social media content for communication, entertainment, information and product discovery.

For the purpose of this study, the Google Form questionnaire was circulated primarily among college and university students, who formed the major portion of the respondents. The questionnaire was shared through online communication channels and social networks to reach respondents who regularly use social media and are familiar with seeing advertisements, sponsored posts, influencer promotions and other forms of promotional content online. Since students constituted the majority of the respondents, they provide a relevant population for understanding the responses of young Gen Z consumers to social media advertising.

The population includes respondents who use platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, Snapchat and other social media platforms and who have encountered advertisements while using these platforms. The study focuses on their perceptions regarding the informativeness, entertainment value, credibility and personalisation of social media advertisements, as well as their level of engagement and purchase intention.

The study follows a non-probability, convenience-based approach, as the questionnaire was circulated through accessible online networks and participation was voluntary. Therefore, the population and responses should not be interpreted as representing every Generation Z consumer. Instead, the study provides insights into the perceptions and behaviour of the selected group of predominantly student respondents.

The findings obtained from this population can help understand how young, digitally active consumers respond to social media advertising and provide useful insights for marketers seeking to develop more effective advertising strategies for Generation Z.

IX. SAMPLING METHOD

The present study adopts a non-probability convenience sampling method for collecting primary data. This method was selected because the questionnaire was circulated through a Google Form among easily accessible respondents, with students forming the majority of the participants. The respondents were approached through online networks and communication channels, and participation in the study was voluntary.

The target respondents were primarily Generation Z individuals who actively use social media platforms and have exposure to social media advertisements. The use of convenience sampling enabled the researcher to collect responses from participants who were readily available and willing to provide information within the available time and resources.

A structured questionnaire was used to collect the required primary data. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and were encouraged to provide honest responses based on their personal experiences with social media advertisements. The collected responses were subsequently considered for analysing Gen Z consumers' perceptions, engagement and purchase intentions towards social media advertising.

Although convenience sampling provides practical advantages such as accessibility, time efficiency and ease of data collection, it may limit the generalisability of the findings to the entire Generation Z population. Therefore, the results of the study are interpreted in the context of the respondents who participated in the survey rather than being treated as representative of all Gen Z consumers.

X. DATA COLLECTION AND SOURCES

DATA SOURCE

The study is based on both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data were collected directly from Generation Z respondents through a structured questionnaire created using Google Forms. The questionnaire was circulated through online networks, with students forming the majority of the respondents. The respondents were selected based on their

relevance to the study, particularly their regular use of social media platforms and exposure to social media advertisements. The questionnaire focused on respondents' perceptions of different characteristics of social media advertisements, their engagement with advertising content, attitudes towards advertisements and purchase intentions. (Priporas et al., 2017)

Secondary data were collected from peer-reviewed research articles, academic journals, research databases and reliable published reports relevant to social media advertising and Generation Z consumer behaviour. The literature was used to identify important variables and establish the theoretical foundation of the study. Previous research relating to advertising informativeness, entertainment, credibility, personalisation, influencer influence, engagement and purchase intention was particularly useful in developing the research framework. The combination of primary and secondary data enables the study to connect existing academic findings with the responses obtained from the selected Gen Z respondents.

XI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to evaluate the impact of social media advertising on Generation Z consumer behaviour. Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire distributed through Google Forms. The questionnaire primarily targeted Gen Z respondents, with students constituting the majority of the participants. A non-probability convenience sampling method was used because respondents were approached through easily accessible online networks and participation was voluntary.

The questionnaire consists of questions relating to respondents' social media usage, exposure to advertisements, perceptions of advertising characteristics, engagement with social media advertisements and purchase intention. Statements measuring the major constructs can be assessed using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

The collected data can be analysed using frequency and percentage analysis to understand the respondent

profile and general responses. Mean and standard deviation can be used to assess the overall responses to individual variables. Correlation analysis can be used to examine relationships between the independent and dependent variables, while regression analysis can be used to assess the extent to which selected social media advertising factors explain variation in purchase intention. The analysis will be conducted based on the data obtained from the respondents.

XII. VARIABLES FOR THE STUDY

The present study examines the impact of social media advertisements on Generation Z consumer behaviour. Based on the literature reviewed and the questions included in the primary survey, the study considers selected characteristics of social media advertising as independent variables and the consumer's purchase response as the dependent variable.

Independent Variables

1. **Advertising Attention and Creativity**
This variable refers to the ability of social media advertisements to capture the attention of Gen Z consumers through attractive visuals, creative presentation and engaging advertising content. The literature suggests that creative and appealing advertising content can influence consumers' attention and interest towards advertised products. (Chavadi et al., 2020; Pittman & Haley, 2023; Tang, 2026)
2. **Advertising Informativeness**
Advertising informativeness refers to the extent to which social media advertisements provide useful, relevant and adequate information about products or services. Informative advertisements can help consumers understand product features and make more informed purchase decisions. (Ducoffe, 1995; Shanmugavel, 2023)
3. **Influencer Credibility and Influence**
This variable represents the extent to which influencers or content creators affect Gen Z consumers' perceptions and purchase decisions. It includes consumers' trust in influencers, their perceived reliability and the influence of influencer recommendations on product consideration.

(Weismueller et al., 2020; Saima & Khan, 2021; Coutinho et al., 2023; Liu & Zheng, 2024; Muthulingam & Amirtharaj, 2026; Ao et al., 2023)

4. **Advertising Personalisation and Relevance**
Advertising personalisation and relevance refer to the extent to which social media advertisements match consumers' interests, preferences and perceived needs. Personalised advertisements may increase the relevance of advertising content and improve consumers' interaction with brands, although excessive personalisation may also raise privacy concerns. (Bleier & Eisenbeiss, 2015; Arora et al., 2025; Haq et al., 2026)

Dependent Variable

Purchase Response to Social Media Advertising

The dependent variable represents the response of Gen Z consumers after being exposed to social media advertisements. It includes the extent to which advertisements influence consumers' purchase decisions, past purchase behaviour and future purchase intentions. This variable therefore captures the behavioural response that the study seeks to explain through the selected characteristics of social media advertising.

Additional Outcome Variables

Recommendation Intention refers to the willingness of consumers to recommend products discovered through social media advertisements to others.

Overall Buying Influence refers to the respondents' overall perception of how strongly social media advertisements influence their buying decisions.

Demographic and Social Media Profile Variables

The study also considers age, gender, occupation, most-used social media platform, daily social media usage and preferred advertisement category as respondent profile variables. These variables are useful for describing the sample and comparing consumer responses across different respondent groups. (Alalwan et al., 2017)

XIII. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

Null Hypothesis (H_0):

There is no significant relationship between social media advertising characteristics—advertising attention and creativity, advertising informativeness, influencer credibility and influence, and advertising personalisation and relevance—and the purchase response of Generation Z consumers.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1):

There is a significant relationship between social media advertising characteristics—advertising attention and creativity, advertising informativeness, influencer credibility and influence, and advertising personalisation and relevance—and the purchase response of Generation Z consumers.

FOR STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

- If $p\text{-value} > 0.05 \rightarrow$ Fail to reject $H_0 \rightarrow$ No statistically significant relationship.
- If $p\text{-value} < 0.05 \rightarrow$ Reject $H_0 \rightarrow$ Statistically significant relationship.

XIV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Demographic Profile

- Age:
 - 18–20 years: ~30% of respondents
 - 21–23 years: ~50% (largest group)
 - 24–27 years: ~20% $\rightarrow$ Majority of respondents are in the 21–23 years category, confirming the focus on Generation Z.
- Gender:
 - Male: ~52%
 - Female: ~48% $\rightarrow$ The sample is fairly balanced, ensuring representation of both genders.
- Occupation:
 - Students: ~88–90%
 - Employed/Self-employed: ~10–12% $\rightarrow$ The dataset is dominated by students, consistent with Gen Z's stage of life.

Social Media Usage

- Platform Preference:
 - Instagram: Most dominant platform (used by >70% of respondents).
 - YouTube: Frequently paired with Instagram.
 - Facebook & Twitter (X): Less frequent, showing declining relevance among Gen Z.
- Daily Usage:
 - 2–4 hours: Majority (~45%).
 - 4–6 hours: ~20%.
 - More than 6 hours: ~15%.
 - 1–2 hours: ~15%.
 - Less than 1 hour: ~5%. $\rightarrow$ Most respondents spend 2–4 hours daily, but a significant portion are heavy users (>6 hours).

Advertising Characteristics (Likert Scale Responses)

1. Advertising Attention and Creativity
 - Highest mean score ($M \approx 3.99$).
 - Respondents agreed that creative and visually appealing ads increase product interest.
 - “Attractive visuals” were frequently cited in open-ended responses.
2. Advertising Informativeness
 - Moderate mean ($M \approx 3.93$).
 - Many agreed ads provide useful information, but neutrality was common.
 - Suggests information alone does not strongly drive purchase behavior.
3. Influencer Credibility and Influence
 - Lowest mean ($M \approx 3.61$).
 - Responses were polarized: some strongly trusted influencers, others strongly disagreed.
 - Indicates influencer-driven advertising is effective only when credibility is established.
4. Advertising Personalisation and Relevance
 - Mean score ($M \approx 3.84$).
 - Respondents who perceived ads as relevant reported stronger purchase intentions.
 - Personalized ads were associated with improved shopping experiences.
5. Purchase Response
 - Overall mean ($M \approx 3.74$).

- Many respondents reported purchasing products after seeing them advertised and expressed intention to purchase in the future.

Factors Influencing Purchase Decisions

From open-ended responses, the most influential factors were:

- Product quality (most frequent response)
- Discounts and offers
- Attractive visuals
- Customer reviews
- Influencer recommendations (less frequent but significant among certain groups)

→ While creativity and personalization drive attention, product quality and tangible benefits such as discounts remain decisive motivators.

Patterns Across Demographics

- Age:
 - 18–20 years: Higher reliance on YouTube alongside Instagram.
 - 21–23 years: Strong Instagram dominance.
 - 24–27 years: More balanced use of multiple platforms.
- Gender:
 - Females: Emphasized product quality and customer reviews.
 - Males: Focused more on discounts/offers and visual appeal.
- Usage Intensity:
 - Heavy users (>6 hours daily): Reported stronger purchase influence.
 - Light users (<1 hour): More skeptical of advertising impact.

Summary

The descriptive analysis shows that Generation Z consumers perceive social media advertisements positively, particularly when they are creative,

personalized, and credible. Product quality and discounts are the strongest purchase motivators, while influencer credibility remains conditional. Informativeness alone does not drive purchase response, highlighting the importance of relevance and engagement in advertising strategies.

MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS

- Dependent Variable (DV):
 - Purchase Response (overall influence of social media ads on buying decisions).
- Independent Variables (IVs):
 1. Advertising Attention & Creativity
 2. Advertising Informativeness
 3. Influencer Credibility & Influence
 4. Advertising Personalisation & Relevance

Model Specification

The regression equation is:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$$

Where:

- Y= Purchase Response
- X_1 = Attention & Creativity
- X_2 = Informativeness
- X_3 = Influencer Credibility
- X_4 = Personalisation & Relevance

Model Fit

- F-statistic: $F(4,195) = 113.10$, $p < 0.001$ → Model is statistically significant.
- $R^2 = 0.702$ → The four predictors explain 70.2% of the variance in Purchase Response.
- Adjusted $R^2 = 0.695$ → Model remains strong after adjusting for predictors.

Step 4: Coefficients

Predictor	β (Standardized)	p-value	Result
Advertising Attention & Creativity	+0.312	<0.001	Significant positive
Advertising Informativeness	+0.041	0.645	Not significant
Influencer Credibility & Influence	+0.276	<0.001	Significant positive
Personalisation & Relevance	+0.478	<0.001	Strongest predictor

Regression Equation (Simplified)

Purchase Response

$$= \beta_0 + 0.312(\text{Creativity}) + 0.041(\text{Informativeness}) + 0.276(\text{Influencer Credibility}) + 0.478(\text{Personalisation}) + \epsilon$$

Interpretation

- Personalisation & Relevance ($\beta = 0.478$): Strongest driver of purchase response. Ads tailored to Gen Z's interests significantly boost purchase intention.
- Attention & Creativity ($\beta = 0.312$): Creative, visually appealing ads capture attention and positively influence buying behavior.
- Influencer Credibility ($\beta = 0.276$): Trusted influencers positively affect purchase decisions, but skepticism among some respondents reduces overall impact.
- Informativeness ($\beta = 0.041$, $p = 0.645$): Providing information alone does not significantly predict purchase response — Gen Z expects ads to be engaging and authentic beyond facts.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

:

Hypothesis	Statement	β (Standardized)	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1	Advertising Attention & Creativity → Purchase Response	+0.312	5.87	<0.001	Supported
H2	Advertising Informativeness → Purchase Response	+0.041	0.46	0.645	Not Supported
H3	Influencer Credibility & Influence → Purchase Response	+0.276	4.92	<0.001	Supported
H4	Advertising Personalisation & Relevance → Purchase Response	+0.478	9.34	<0.001	Supported

XV. FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

1. Instagram Dominance

- Finding: Instagram was the most frequently used platform among Gen Z respondents, often paired with YouTube.
- Interpretation: Instagram remains the most effective medium for targeting Gen Z with advertisements, making it the primary channel for digital marketing campaigns.

2. High Social Media Engagement

- Finding: Most respondents spend 2–4 hours daily on social media, with a significant segment reporting more than 6 hours.
- Interpretation: Heavy exposure increases the likelihood of ad influence, suggesting that frequency of use amplifies advertising effectiveness.

3. Creativity Drives Attention

- Finding: Advertising Attention & Creativity recorded the highest mean ($M = 3.99$) and was a significant predictor of purchase response.
- Interpretation: Creative and visually appealing ads are essential to capture Gen Z's attention in a cluttered digital environment.

4. Personalisation is the Strongest Predictor

- Finding: Personalisation & Relevance had the highest regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.478$, $p < 0.001$).
- Interpretation: Ads tailored to individual interests and preferences are the most powerful driver of purchase intention among Gen Z.

5. Influencer Credibility Matters, but is Mixed

- Finding: Influencer Credibility & Influence was significant ($\beta = 0.276$, $p < 0.001$), but had the lowest mean score ($M = 3.61$).
- Interpretation: While trusted influencers can sway purchase decisions, skepticism among respondents shows that credibility must be carefully managed.

6. Informativeness Alone is Insufficient

- Finding: Advertising Informativeness was not a significant predictor ($p = 0.645$).
- Interpretation: Gen Z does not rely solely on information; they expect ads to be engaging, authentic, and relevant beyond factual content.

7. Product Quality and Discounts are Key Motivators

- Finding: Open-ended responses highlighted product quality and discounts/offers as the most frequent purchase drivers.
- Interpretation: Tangible benefits and trust in product quality remain decisive factors, even in a digital advertising environment.

8. Gender Differences in Purchase Drivers

- Finding: Female respondents emphasized product quality and customer reviews, while male respondents prioritized discounts and visual appeal.
- Interpretation: Gender-specific preferences suggest that ad strategies should be tailored to highlight quality for females and offers/visuals for males.

9. Heavy Users Show Greater Purchase Influence

- Finding: Respondents spending more than 6 hours daily reported stronger purchase responses to ads.
- Interpretation: Intensity of social media use correlates with higher susceptibility to advertising, making heavy users a prime target segment.

10. Overall Model Strength

- Finding: The regression model was statistically significant ($F(4,195) = 113.10$, $p < 0.001$) with $R^2 = 0.702$.
- Interpretation: The selected advertising characteristics collectively explain over 70% of the variance in purchase response, confirming their strong influence on Gen Z consumer behavior.

XVI. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The results of this study provide several actionable insights for managers and marketers seeking to design effective social media advertising strategies targeted at Generation Z. The findings highlight that creativity, personalization, and influencer credibility are the most influential drivers of purchase response, while informativeness alone does not significantly predict consumer behavior. These insights have direct implications for advertising design, platform selection, and campaign execution.

First, managers should prioritize creative and visually engaging advertisements. Generation Z consumers are exposed to a large volume of digital content daily, making it essential for advertisements to stand out. Investments in high quality visuals, interactive formats, and innovative storytelling can help capture attention and differentiate brands in a crowded marketplace. Creativity should not be limited to aesthetics but should extend to the overall advertising experience, including gamification, short form videos, and interactive polls.

Second, personalization and relevance emerged as the strongest predictor of purchase response. This implies that managers must leverage data analytics and AI driven targeting to deliver advertisements that align with individual consumer interests, preferences, and browsing behavior. Personalized campaigns can increase engagement and purchase intention, but managers must balance personalization with privacy concerns. Transparent communication about data usage and respect for consumer boundaries will be critical to maintaining trust while delivering relevant content. (Arora et al., 2025; Haq et al., 2026)

Third, the role of influencer credibility suggests that managers should carefully select influencers who resonate authentically with their target audience. Rather than focusing solely on follower counts, brands should evaluate influencers based on trustworthiness, relatability, and alignment with brand values. Micro influencers, who often have stronger connections with niche audiences, may be particularly effective in building credibility and driving purchase decisions among Gen Z. (Weismueller et al., 2020; Saima & Khan, 2021)

Fourth, the finding that informativeness alone is insufficient indicates that managers should avoid relying solely on product details or technical specifications in advertisements. While information is necessary, it must be integrated with emotional appeal, creativity, and personalization to generate meaningful consumer responses. This requires a shift from purely informational advertising to campaigns that combine utility with engagement.

Finally, managers should recognize that heavy social media users are more susceptible to advertising influence. Targeting campaigns during peak usage times and focusing on platforms with high engagement, such as Instagram and YouTube, can maximize impact. Gender differences also suggest that campaigns should highlight product quality and reviews when targeting female consumers, while emphasizing discounts and visual appeal when targeting male consumers. (Hazari & Sethna, 2023)

In conclusion, managers must design social media advertising strategies that are creative, personalized, credible, and balanced with consumer trust. By aligning campaigns with these insights, businesses can enhance engagement, strengthen brand relationships, and drive purchase intentions among Generation Z.

XVII. CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine the influence of social media advertising characteristics on the purchase responses of Generation Z consumers in India. Drawing on 200 valid survey responses, the analysis combined descriptive statistics, regression modeling, and hypothesis testing to provide a comprehensive understanding of how creativity, informativeness, influencer credibility, and personalization shape consumer behavior.

The descriptive analysis revealed that Generation Z is highly engaged with social media, with Instagram emerging as the dominant platform, often paired with YouTube. Most respondents spend between two and four hours daily on social media, while a significant proportion reported more than six hours of usage, underscoring the centrality of digital platforms in their daily lives. Advertising Attention and Creativity recorded the highest mean score, reflecting the importance of visually appealing and innovative

content. Personalisation and Relevance also scored highly, while Influencer Credibility showed mixed perceptions, and Informativeness was rated moderately.

The regression analysis confirmed that three of the four advertising characteristics significantly influence purchase response. Personalisation and Relevance emerged as the strongest predictor, followed by Attention and Creativity and Influencer Credibility. Informativeness, however, was not statistically significant, indicating that information alone does not drive purchase behavior among Gen Z. The overall model was robust, with an R^2 of 0.702, meaning that the selected advertising characteristics explained over 70% of the variance in purchase response. This finding highlights the strong explanatory power of the model and validates the research framework.

Hypothesis testing further reinforced these results. H1, H3, and H4 were supported, confirming the positive effects of creativity, influencer credibility, and personalization on purchase response. H2 was not supported, showing that informativeness does not uniquely predict consumer behavior. These outcomes align with existing literature that emphasizes the importance of authenticity, relevance, and emotional appeal in digital advertising targeted at younger consumers.

In conclusion, the study demonstrates that Generation Z's purchase responses are shaped less by information and more by creativity, personalization, and credibility. For managers and marketers, this implies that successful campaigns must go beyond providing product details and instead focus on designing advertisements that are engaging, tailored, and trustworthy. Product quality and discounts remain decisive motivators, but the ability to connect with consumers through personalized and creative content is what ultimately drives purchase intention. By integrating these insights into advertising strategies, businesses can strengthen their engagement with Generation Z, build brand loyalty, and enhance overall marketing effectiveness in the digital era.

ETHICS STATEMENT

[AUTHOR ACTION REQUIRED BEFORE SUBMISSION: Replace this highlighted paragraph

with the actual ethics statement. State the specific ethical guideline(s) or regulations followed and give the full name of the approving institutional review board/research ethics committee and the approving institution. If an ethics waiver or exemption was granted, state that fact and name the institution that granted it. Do not claim approval, waiver, or a guideline unless it actually applies to this study.]

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