

SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISEMENTS AND PURCHASE INTENTION: ATTITUDE AS A MEDIATOR

ABSTRACT

Advertisement expenditures incurred by companies for advertising on social media is seen to be growing rapidly worldwide. Especially, In the middle eastern region where Saudi Arabia is seen witnessing rapid growth in social media users and increased advertising on social media every year. However, despite of growing importance of social media advertising almost negligible studies are seen in the literature dedicated for examining effectiveness of social media advertisements in Saudi Arabian context. This study deeply examines the effectiveness of social media advertisements in terms of its perceived usefulness, entertainment and irritation on purchase intention. The sample of this study comprised of 345 active social media users residing in Saudi Arabia. The results of this study reported significant positive relationship of perceived usefulness of ads and ad entertainment and significant negative relationship of ad irritation with purchase intention. Full mediation of attitude towards social media ads is reported in relationships of perceived usefulness of ads, ad entertainment and ad irritation with purchase intention. Limitations and future research directions are also further discussed in this study.

Keywords: perceived usefulness, ad entertainment, ad irritation, attitude towards ads, purchase intention.

1. INTRODUCTION

The success of an advertisement is achieved when it stimulates purchase intention [22,49]. For an advertisement to be successful, selection of the right content and right medium of advertising is of paramount importance [24]. To select the right media for advertisements which captures the attention of consumers and convinces them to purchase the advertised product has been a challenging task for marketers till date [49]. Selection of wrong media for advertisements can have severe implications for organizations, including failure of market orientation and waste of budget allocated for advertisements [17,24]. Marketers always try to advertise in media platforms which provides for larger audience [17]. When print media like newspapers were read by masses heavily advertisements were placed on them, similarly when television was introduced tv commercials were used for advertising because of its wider reach [53]. The trend is now clearly shifting towards placing advertisements on social media because of living in today's advanced digital age [53,29,24]. The number of social media users worldwide surpassed 4.59 billion users in 2022 and are projected to grow further [15]. According to a report on global ranking of social media users by Dixon [16] Facebook and YouTube users together constituted more than 2 billion users worldwide. YouTube is the third highest website visited in the world and being easily accessible through smartphones enjoys over one billion visitors every month [13]. The average time spent globally on social media has increased from one and a half hour in 2018 to two and a half hours in 2022 [14]. Social media presents a fertile ground for advertisers and it is evident from the way advertising budgets are seen increasing by organizations for advertising on social media [29,46]. More than 90% of the US companies use social media for advertisements and worldwide companies are rapidly shifting their advertisements from traditional print media to social media advertisements [52,46]. **Even for promoting tourism in countries like India social media is proving to be a boon in attracting tourists to various destinations [32].** However, like problems of ad avoidance and ad irritation perceived by consumers in tv commercials presented a challenge for advertisers, social media cannot be said to be immune from such challenges [45,9]. The phenomena of ad avoidance, banner blindness and getting irritated by advertisements is a big challenge for advertisers globally, because it drifts customers away from purchasing the advertised products [5,9]. The essence of studying the effectiveness of placing advertisements on social media is very important for understanding whether the advertisements are working for or against the stimulation of purchase intention in potential consumers [5]. In a report published by Global Media Insight [19] on social media usage in middle east, Saudi Arabia was found to be the fastest growing country in the world in terms of social media usage. Saudi Arabia enjoys growth rate of 32% compared to 13% of average global growth rate of social media usage worldwide [19]. Twitter, Instagram, snapchat all were among the top popular social media platforms in Saudi Arabia for the year 2022 after YouTube and Facebook social media applications [47]. Saudi Arabia is represented by a young population with more than 50% of the population under 30 years of age according to a recent report published by Statista [47]. Most of this population own smartphones and are heavy users of social media applications [47]. Numerous giant companies listed on the Saudi stock exchange are using social media as a platform for advertising [1]. However, negligible studies have been conducted to investigate the effectiveness of social media advertisements in stimulating purchase intention in Saudi Arabia. This paper tries to fill this gap and investigates the effectiveness of advertisements placed on social media with sample drawn from consumers living in Saudi Arabia.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Social Media Advertisements and Purchase Intention

The prime aim of advertisers placing their advertisements on social media is to lead the

viewers to make purchases [42,24]. A success of an advertisements is achieved when it triggers purchase intention [34, 42]. Purchase intention simply represents willingness of a consumer to buy the advertised product or a service in future [24]. Several studies [34,36,42,24] have substantially indicated that having purchase intention increases the chances of making an actual purchase, because the purchase decision making process of consumer completes when a purchase intention is activated in consumers' minds. Purchase intention is the most common variable used for measuring the outcome of advertisements [48]. Advertising on social media has made it possible to reach wide audience and in communicating with consumers on how their needs and wants can be best satisfied [41]. However, advertisements can only stimulate purchase intention when the advertisements are perceived worthy of attention [40]. Pop et al. [41] suggests if the advertisement is perceived to be of value to customers then it would be able to convince customers for making a purchase. The overall value of social media advertisements is assessed by consumers differently [41]. Several scholars [35,41,38] have suggested the overall value of social media advertisements comprises of advertisement's perceived usefulness, advertisement's entertainment and advertisement's irritation. Some scholars e.g. [35,41] have also classified them into cognitive and affective antecedents of attitude towards social media advertisements, with cognitive part referring to perceived usefulness of advertisements and affective part together referring to advertisement's entertainment and irritation. Numerous studies [50,39] in turn have reported attitude towards social media advertisements to be a significant predictor of purchase intention. Despite growing social media users and increasing advertising on social media by companies worldwide there is a void in understanding of effectiveness of social media advertisements [26]. Especially, In the middle east region where Saudi Arabia is seen witnessing increased advertising on social media and enjoying fastest growth rate in social media usage every year [19]. Almost negligible studies are seen in the literature dedicated to examining effectiveness of social media advertisements in Saudi Arabia. Moreover, fewer studies are seen in the literature that have examined mediating role of attitude in relationships of social media advertisement's perceived usefulness, entertainment and irritation with purchase intention. Therefore, this paper will provide its contribution by examining mediation of consumer attitude in relationships of advertisement's perceived usefulness, entertainment and irritation with purchase intention from the lens of Saudi consumers.

2.2 Perceived Usefulness of Social Media Advertisements and Purchase Intention

Perceived usefulness of advertisements can be said as the degree to which an advertisement provides relevant and resourceful information [39,21]. The prime reason of advertising is to provide for information about products and services [24]. Mulyani et al. [39] suggests when advertisements are perceived relevant and full of useful information it itself helps in inducing purchase intention among consumers. Several studies [38,21,24] have found that when advertisements are perceived as providing useful and correct information relevant to the needs of consumers it helps in triggering purchase intention. Hanaysha [21] suggests perceived usefulness of advertisements stands as a core factor in evaluation of advertisement's value by consumers. In the context of social media advertisements, Mecan & Sitar [38] in a study conducted in Romania reported perceived usefulness of social media advertisements exhibiting positive relationship with purchase intention. In another study conducted by Hanaysha [21] conducted in United Arab Emirates on perceived usefulness of social media advertisements of fast foods, perceived usefulness of ads was reported sharing significant positive relationship with purchase intention. In the study context, it can be hypothesized that when consumer's perceive social media advertisements as useful it will positively impact purchase intention. Therefore, it is thus hypothesized;

H1: There is a positive relationship between perceived usefulness of social media advertisements and purchase intention.

2.3 Social Media Advertisement's Entertainment and Purchase Intention

Advertisement's entertainment is simply referred to as enjoyment and pleasure derived from watching an advertisement [37]. The entertainment factor in social media advertisements makes it worthy of attention and enhances viewing experience of consumers [39]. Entertainment and information together produce stronger positive evaluation of social media advertisement's value [4]. Advertisements can be perceived differently by consumers; it may be informative for one and at the same time entertaining for another [6]. Carlson et al. [6] suggests social media advertisements prove more effective and memorable when humor relevant to the information is included in the advertisement. Entertainment is mainly used by advertisers to actualize consumer's hedonic needs [23]. Social media advertisement's entertainment provides consumers for aesthetic enjoyment, emotional release, diversion and escapism [23]. In a study conducted by Mulyani et al. [39] in Indonesia, the entertainment factor of social media advertisements was reported exhibiting positive relationship with purchase intention. In another study conducted in Malaysia by Hussain et al. [24] on Instagram users found Instagram advertisement's entertainment factor related positively to purchase intention. Similarly, Meliawati et al. [37] in a study conducted in Indonesia found the entertainment of advertisements on Tik Tok social media application plays a profound role in triggering purchase intention. They reported positive relationship between social media advertisement's entertainment factor and purchase intention. In the study context it can be thus hypothesized;

H2: There is a positive relationship between social media advertisement's entertainment and purchase intention.

2.4 Social Media Advertisement's Irritation and Purchase Intention

Advertisement's irritation simply refers to rise in discomfort while watching an advertisement [8]. Irritation perceived from social media advertisements by consumers strongly hampers their effectiveness in triggering purchase intention [25]. If an advertisement is perceived as irritating, it backfires and the prime purpose of providing information is lost [25]. In the context of social media advertising, Saxena & Khanna [44] suggested the immediate words that mostly come to the minds of a consumer when getting irritated by advertisements are stupid, terrible, irritating and ridiculous. According to Chen et al. [8] social media users in general are highly goal directed and when advertisements pop up from nowhere it results in higher irritation and drastic reduction of purchase intention. Numerous studies [25,12,8] have indicated that pop up ads, banner ads, intrusive video ads are perceived strongly as irritating and significantly result in negative attitude and negative purchase intention. However, Li & Shen [25] suggest that an ad which is perceived as irritating and useless for one person can be entertaining and rewarding for another person. Li & Shen [25] in their study on online advertisements strongly suggest advertisers to avoid being irritative, because in their study they found intrusive video advertisements not only results in negative attitude but also results in abandonment of websites altogether. In the context of social media advertising, in one study conducted in Italy by Deghani et al. [12] on famous social media platform "YouTube" advertising was classified into "in-stream video advertising" and "in-video advertising". Deghani et al. [12] reported that in video advertisements resulted in more irritation than in-stream video advertising, however both kind of advertisements were reported to be negatively related to purchase intention. In another study conducted in Taiwan by Chen et al. [8] on social media advertisements, it was reported the irritation perceived from advertisement by the consumer severely hampered their purchase intentions for the advertised product. Chen et al. [8] concluded that social media users are more focused when watching videos and hate advertisements popping up in between again and again which gives birth to irritation and eventually negative purchase intention. In the study context it is thus hypothesized;

H3: There is a negative relationship between social media advertisement's irritation and purchase intention.

2.5 Mediating Role of Attitude in Relationships of Social Media Advertisements and Purchase Intention

Several studies [34,7] have long indicated that effectiveness of advertisements is affected by attitude towards ads. Mackenzie and Lutz [33] suggest that attitude towards advertisements are an important factor in influencing purchase intention. Gutierrez et al. [20] suggests that social media advertising serves as a communicative tool and how this communication is carried out plays a crucial role in forming and molding attitude of consumers. Gutierrez et al. [20] in a study conducted in the United Kingdom found social media advertising profoundly affects attitude which in turn affects the purchase intention of consumers. In a study conducted by Taylor et al. [51] on 2642 social media users they found social media advertisement's usefulness and entertainment factor to positively impact attitude towards advertisement. Kim & Park [30] suggests attractiveness coupled with entertaining factor of the advertisements greatly affects the perception of consumers. Kim & Park [30] in their study conducted in South Korea found that even attractiveness of the social media influencer used for advertising played an important role in forming perceptions of consumers and leading to purchase intention thereafter. Mulyani et al. [39] in a study conducted in Indonesia on examining advertising on Instagram reported perceived usefulness of advertisement positively affected both attitude towards advertisements and purchase intention. In the context of YouTube advertisements Padival et al. [40] reported only perceived usefulness of advertisements to be significantly related to attitude towards advertisements. In another study conducted on young social media users in India by Bandil et al. [2] irritation was reported to significantly hamper both attitude as well as purchase intention among young consumers. Chen et al. [8] reported negative relationship of advertisement irritation with both attitude as well as purchase intention in their study. However, chen et al. [8] also reported positive relationship of attitude with purchase intention among Taiwanese consumers of their study. Several studies [50,2,8] have reported positive relationship of attitude with purchase intention. For example, Tan et al. [50] found attitude towards advertisements significantly led to purchase intention among 149 social media users in their study. From the pattern of above studies, the possibility of mediational role played by attitude towards social media advertisement is clearly seen explicit. Despite of calls of research from numerous scholars [50,2,8,39] which repeatedly have pointed out for examining mediational role of attitude among relationship of social media advertisement's perceived usefulness, entertainment and irritation with purchase intention. Very few studies are seen in the literature in this direction. Therefore, this paper will fill this void in the literature by examining this apparent possibility of mediation by attitude in relationship of social media advertisement's perceived usefulness, entertainment and irritation with purchase intention. In the study context it is thus hypothesized;

H4: The relationship of social media advertisement's perceived usefulness, entertainment, irritation with purchase intention is mediated by attitude towards social media advertisements.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Population and Sample

The population for this study is all consumers who are active social media users in Saudi Arabia. The sample consisted of 345 respondents living in Saudi Arabia who actively use social media. Snowball sampling method was employed to conduct the survey.

3.2 Measurement

A filtering question of “Are you an active social media user? Yes or NO” was introduced in the beginning of the questionnaire with a note “Important Note: Please don’t proceed to answer the below questions if you select NO” to ensure the sample reflects population of the study. The responses were captured only of respondents who are active social media users. A list of various social media platforms most preferred by consumers for usage like YouTube, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram etc. was provided in the questionnaire. The option of “Others” was also provided in the questionnaire in case the social media platform most preferred by the respondent was not present in the list of social media platforms provided. The survey was conducted both electronically and manually. The responses were coded thereafter in SPSS statistical software for statistical analysis. All the scales for this study were adapted from previous studies and were adjusted to the context of social media advertisements. The scales for independent variables perceived usefulness of ads was adopted from Mulyani et al. [39] and adapted to the social media advertising context of the study. The measurement scales for ad entertainment and ad irritation was adapted from Saxena & Khanna [44] study and were adjusted to social media advertising context. The scale for attitude towards advertisements and purchase intention were adapted from the study of Taylor et al. [52] and Salisbury et al. [43] and respectively adjusted to social media advertisements context. All the variables were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

3.3 Procedure

The data analysis of this study begins with descriptive analysis of the initial findings of the sample. The reliability of the measures is checked through acceptable range of above .70 Cronbach alpha. After assurance of reliability, the construct validity is ensured by confirming presence of convergent and discriminant validity. Lastly, hypotheses of our study will be tested using regression analysis by Baron and Kenny [3] method and results will be discussed reported thereafter.

4. FINDINGS

4.1 Sample Characteristics

All of the 345 respondents answered affirmatively of being daily social media user. From the initial findings as reported in Table 1 it can be seen among the various social media available majority of the respondents chose YouTube (43.5%) followed by Instagram 27.8%, Snapchat 15.7%, Facebook 8.7% and rest of the 4.3% comprised of Twitter users. In terms of hours dedicated daily towards social media usage, most of the respondents used social media for 3 hours 33.9%, 27.8% used for 4 hours, 20% used for 2hours and 18.3% of the sample used social media more than 4 hours on a daily basis. The sample overall consisted of mainly males 83.5% than 16.5% of females. Most of the respondents were employed 87.8% and only 12.2% of the sample comprised of unemployed respondents.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

The responses of the variables of our study were coded as “1” for “Strongly Disagree”, “2” for “Disagree”, “3” as “Neutral”, “4” for “Agree” and “5” for “Strongly Disagree” in SPSS. Table 2 shows the mean values for the respective constructs of the study. From table 2, its clearly evident from the mean values of “2.8” for “Perceived usefulness of ads” that most of respondents neither find social media advertisements as useful or not useful. The mean value of “Ad entertainment” as “3.15” indicates respondents somewhat rate social media ads as entertaining on an average basis. The mean value of “4.44” for ad irritation implies here that

majority of the respondents are perceiving irritation from social media advertisements. The average values of “attitude towards social media ads and “purchase intention” were found as “2.7” and “2.8” leaning towards neutral, which implies majority of respondents were leaning towards unfavorable attitude towards social media ads and they don’t happen to have a strong purchase intention in the near future on an average basis.

Table1. Sample characteristics

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Preferred Social media				
YouTube	150	43.5	43.5	43.5
Instagram	96	27.8	27.8	71.3
Snapchat	54	15.7	15.7	87.0
Facebook	30	8.7	8.7	95.7
Twitter	15	4.3	4.3	100.0
How many hours do you use social media daily?				
2 hours	69	20.0	20.0	20.0
3 hours	117	33.9	33.9	53.9
4 hours	96	27.8	27.8	81.7
More than 4 hours	63	18.3	18.3	100.0
Gender				
Male	57	16.5	16.5	16.5
Female	288	83.5	83.5	100.0
Are you employed?				
Yes	303	87.8	87.8	87.8
No	42	12.2	12.2	100.0

Table 2. Descriptive statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. deviation
Perceived usefulness	345	1.00	5.00	2.8043	1.26213
Ad Entertainment	345	1.00	5.00	3.1570	1.24571
Ad Irritation	345	1.00	5.00	4.4383	1.31146
Attitude towards ads	345	1.00	5.00	2.7304	.88552
Purchase intention	345	1.00	5.00	2.8022	1.61357

4.3 Validity and Reliability

The reliability of the scale ensures that the items are measuring the constructs with consistency. Cronbach alpha measures the internal consistency of the items. DeVillis [10] and Kline [29] suggests the acceptable value of Cronbach alpha is above “.7” which safely assures internal consistency or reliability of items. The table 4. reports Cronbach alpha of all the constructs of the study well above “.7” value indicating the items are reliably measuring the constructs of the study. The construct validity helps in checking validly whether the scales are measuring what they are supposed to measure [11]. Construct validity is ensured through the presence of convergent and discriminant validity [11]. However, for calculation of convergent and discriminant validity, obtainment of factor loadings for each items of respective constructs are the basic perquisites [11]. The KMO or Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy is first required to ensure whether the sample is suitable for factor analysis or in other words is the data factorizable or not [28]. In the study sample the overall KMO value as seen in Table 3. is

seen well above than the acceptable range of “.7”. The individual KMO value of the five constructs are also reported to be well above the acceptable range of .7. As expected, five dimensions appeared in the factor analysis with significant p value of Bartlett’s test of sphericity.

Table 3. KMO and Bartlett's test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.791
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1391.291
	Df	254
	Sig.	.000

Table 4. Standardized factor loadings, Cronbach alpha, AVE & CR

Constructs	Items	Factor loadings	AVE	CR
Perceived usefulness Alpha (.79)	The ads I see on Social media are helpful	.92	.76	.92
	The ads I see on Social media are important	.85		
	The ads I see on Social media are informative	.87		
	The ads I see on Social media are useful	.86		
Ad Entertainment Alpha (.78)	The ads I see on Social media are attractive	.75	.69	.90
	The ads I see on Social media are enjoyable	.84		
	The ads I see on Social media are entertaining	.87		
	The ads I see on Social media are fun to watch	.86		
Ad irritation Alpha (.82)	When the ad appears on Social media it is irritating	.69	.60	.88
	When the ad appears on Social media it is distracting	.77		
	When the ad appears on Social media it is forced	.84		
	When the ad appears on Social media while watching video it is interfering	.78		
	When the ad appears on social media it is stupid	.79		
Attitude towards ads Alpha (.84)	I like advertisements on social media	.70	.55	.83
	Advertisements on Social media are good	.83		
	When an social media ad appears, I feel good	.69		
	After watching the ads on Social media my attitude towards ads is positive	.76		
Purchase intention Alpha (.77)	I intend to consider the products that are mentioned in the advertisements appearing on Social media in my future purchases.	.81	.64	.88
	It is likely that I shall purchase the products that are advertised in the Social media ads in near future.	.84		
	Given the opportunity, I intend to purchase the products advertised in the ads on Social media	.79		
	I will try the products advertised in Social media ads in the future.	.78		

The factor loadings for each construct of the study are reported under Table 4. As can be seen from Table 4. the standardized factor loadings are seen loading nicely on the constructs as all of them are appearing greater than the minimum acceptable value of “.3” as suggested by Dimitrov [11]. Fornell and Larcker [18] suggests in order to ensure presence of convergent validity the

values of average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR) should be above than .5 and .6 respectively. As evident from Table 4 the AVE and CR values are seen above .5 and .6 values for each construct of the study thus presenting a clear presence of convergent validity. Construct validity cannot be ensured unless both convergent and discriminant validity is assured.

Table 5. Discriminant validity

Constructs	1	2	3	4	5
1.Perceived usefulness	.87				
2.Ad Entertainment	.292	.83			
3.Ad Irritation	-.084	-.265	.77		
4.Attitude towards ads	.215	.429	-.475	.74	
5.Purchase intention	.277	.330	-.355	.467	.80

For assurance of presence of discriminant validity John and Benet-Martinez [26] suggests the square root of average variance extracted (AVE) should be greater than the correlations of the constructs of the study. Table 5 presents the square root of the AVE values diagonally in bold letters and below these values individual correlations of constructs are presented in rows and columns. The square root of the AVE values is clearly seen to be far greater than individual correlations both in rows and columns. Thus, ensuring presence of discriminant validity. The measures can now be said as reliable and valid. The study can now proceed for testing the hypotheses of the study.

5. RESULTS

Baron and Kenny [3] method is employed to test the hypotheses of the study. Baron & Kenny [3] method is completed in four steps. Baron & Kenny [3] method's first step calls for examining the relationship between the independent variables and the mediator using regression analysis. In the study context the relationship of perceived usefulness, entertainment, irritation of social media ads will be first examined for significant relationships with attitude towards social media ads. Baron & Kenny [3] second step commences only when independent variables significantly relate to the mediator. Otherwise the mediation is said to be failed if insignificant relationships are reported in the first step (Baron & Kenny, 1986). As can be seen from Table 6 the overall model is seen significant ($R^2 = .29$), $F(3, 343) = 238.63$, ($p < .001$). Statistically significant relationships can be seen from Table 6 among relationships of perceived usefulness ($\beta = .48$, $p < .001$), entertainment ($\beta = .39$, $p < .001$), irritation ($\beta = -.68$, $p < .001$) of social media with attitude towards social media ads. Therefore, proceeding to the second step of Baron & Kenny [3] method is possible which calls for examining the relationship between mediator and the dependent variable. In the study context the second step calls for examining the relationship between attitude towards social media ads and purchase intention. As evident from Table 7 the overall model is reported significant ($R^2 = .36$), $F(1, 343) = 216.07$, ($p < .001$). From Table 7 it is clearly evident that there is a statistically significant relationship between attitude towards social media ads and purchase intention ($\beta = .58$, $p < .001$). Therefore, the third step of Baron & Kenny [3] method can be undertaken which calls for examining relationship of independent variables with the dependent variables for significant relationships. In the study context this implies examining relationship of perceived usefulness, entertainment, irritation of social media ads with purchase intention. From Table 8 it can be seen from the regression model summary the overall model is statistically significantly predicted purchase intention ($R^2 = .21$), $F(3, 343) = 12.99$, ($p < .001$).

Table 6. Regression model summary for Perceived usefulness, Ad Entertainment, Ad Irritation and Attitude towards ads

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Estimate	Error of the	F	Sig.
1	.541	.291	.285	.59912		238.630	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Perceived Usefulness, Ad Entertainment, Ad Irritation

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta		Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	1.338	.313		.000		
Perceived Usefulness	.487	.088	.386	.000	.385	4.496
Ad Entertainment	.393	.092	.293	.000	.262	3.954
Ad Irritation	-.682	.074	-.581	.000	.412	5.369

a. Dependent Variable: Attitude towards ads

Table 7. Regression Model for Attitude towards ads and purchase intention

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Estimate	Error of the	F	Sig.
1	.60	.360	.351	.93430		216.07	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Attitude towards ads

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	
1 (Constant)	1.071	.374		.005
Attitude towards ads	.582	.104	.467	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Table 8. Regression model summary for H1, H2 and H3

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig.
1	.470	.221	.203	.78608	12.199	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Perceived Usefulness, Ad Entertainment, Ad Irritation

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta		Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	2.672	.498		.000		
Perceived Usefulness	.416	.083	.326	.000	.286	3.496
Ad Entertainment	.292	.090	.226	.000	.253	3.954
Ad Irritation	-.547	.079	-.445	.000	.297	3.369

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

The tolerance value being less than 1 and VIF value being less than 10 in Table 8 suggests the assumption of no multicollinearity is not violated. Table 8 reports statistically significant positive relationships among relationships of perceived usefulness ($\beta=.41$, $p<.001$), entertainment ($\beta=.29$, $p<.001$) of social media advertisements with purchase intention thus

supporting hypotheses H1 and H2. While as ad irritation is reported in Table 8 sharing statistically significant negative relationship with purchase intention ($\beta = -.54$, $p < .001$) thus supporting hypothesis H3. We finally proceed now to the fourth and the last step suggested by Baron and Kenny [3] in which the mediator is introduced along with the independent variables to check for changes in prior statistically significant relationships with the dependent variable. Therefore, in the study context the mediator Attitude towards social media ads will now be introduced along with all independent variables to check for changes in prior statistically significant relationships with the purchase intention. Full mediation is reported when independent variables are seen to get insignificant from being statistically significant when mediating variable is introduced in the model [3]. As evident from Table 9 the overall model predicting purchase intention is statistically significant with no evidence of multicollinearity as tolerance value is < 1 and VIF value is < 10 . Table 9 reports Attitude towards social media ads as statistically significantly ($p < .001$) predicating purchase intention. From Table 9 it can be seen the beta coefficients of perceived usefulness of ads, ad entertainment, ad irritation decreased from being earlier “.416”, “.292”, “-.547” to “.312”, “.183”, “-.324” after introduction of the attitude towards social media ads. Full mediation of attitude towards social media ads is clearly seen in Table 9 as prior statistically significant relationships of perceived usefulness of ads, ad entertainment, ad irritation with purchase intention changed from significant to insignificant ($p = .53$, $p = .75$, $p = .29$) after introduction of the attitude in the model. Thus, in this study the relationships of social media advertisement’s perceived usefulness, entertainment, irritation with purchase intention is said to be mediated by attitude towards social media advertisements. Therefore, the hypothesis H4 of the study is supported.

Table 9. Regression model summary for H4

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig.
1	.623	.388	.380	.58711	187.767	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Attitude towards ads, Perceived Usefulness, Ad Entertainment, Ad Irritation

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta		Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	1.588	.669		.019		
Attitude towards ads	.278	.118	.153	.000	.279	3.588
Perceived Usefulness	.312	.081	.212	.532	.286	3.497
Ad Entertainment	.183	.090	.172	.758	.243	4.116
Ad Irritation	-.324	.094	-.323	.298	.199	5.021

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

6. DISCUSSION

The results of the study reported statistically significant positive relationship between perceived usefulness of social media advertisements and purchase intention. The results of the study are in agreement with prior studies [38,21,24] which have reported statistically significant positive relationship. When advertisements are perceived relevant and full of useful information it itself helps in inducing purchase intention among consumers. The results of the study also reported statistically significant positive relationship social media advertisement’s entertainment and purchase intention. The results are consistent with prior studies [39,24,37] that have reported significant positive relationship of social media advertisement’s entertainment with purchase intention. The enjoyment and pleasure derived from watching social media advertisements makes it worthy of attention and enhances viewing experiences

of consumers. The study results reported statistically significant negative relationship between social media advertisement's irritation and purchase intention. The results of the study are again consistent with the previous studies [12,8] that reported negative relationship between ad irritation and purchase intention. Negative relationship of ad irritation with purchase intention in itself indicates the more the irritation the stronger the reduction of purchase intention will be observed among consumers. When advertisements are perceived as irritating by consumers the prime purpose of providing information is lost. Pop up ads, banner ads, intrusive video ads which are perceived strongly as irritating only help in impeding purchase intention. The results of the study lifted curtains on mediational role played by attitude towards social media ads. The study results reported full mediation of attitude towards social media in relationships of social media advertisement's perceived usefulness, entertainment, irritation with purchase intention. The suspicion of attitude towards social media advertisements was proven right. Attitude towards social media advertisements play an important role in predicting purchase intention because attitude sets the way of thinking of consumers. Once a good or bad attitude is formed through a certain way of thinking the behavior of consumer will thereafter depend on his attitude held towards that thing.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND MARKETING IMPLICATIONS

This study presents a robust model for explaining and predicting purchase intention in consumers. In this study attitude played the role of a mediator in relationships of social media advertisement's perceived usefulness, entertainment and irritation with purchase intention. Attitude of consumers towards social media advertisements is the most important thing to consider when it comes to predicting purchase intention. Social media advertisement's perceived usefulness and entertainment leads positively to attitude and purchase intention. Therefore, if consumers evaluate social media advertisements as useful and entertaining it will lead to positive attitude formation through which favorable purchase intention can be attained. However, irritation perceived from social media advertisement's negatively leads to both attitude and purchase intention. Irritation leads to negative attitude formation through which unfavorable purchase intention is triggered. The consumers thereafter even won't like to watch a useful or informative advertisement if irritation is perceived from advertisements. Attitude paves the way for reaching purchase intention in consumers because attitude sets the predeterminant for how consumers think and perceive things in their minds. The results of the study suggest for advertisers that they should mix a proper proportion of information and entertainment in advertisements on social media in order them to be effective. The social media advertisers should remain focused on helpful, relevant, important and useful aspects of the advertisement so that the prime purpose of advertisements is not lost. Advertisers can introduce entertainment factor in social media advertisements by encompassing attractiveness, fun to watch, entertaining and enjoyable aspects of the advertised message. The level of entertaining factor to be kept in social media advertisements depends on the discretion of advertisers. However, the most concerning thing that the advertisers should take care of is to avoid irritation perceived from advertisement because it negatively affects attitude and purchase intention. The more the perceived irritation the more the negative attitude formation and stronger the reduction observed in purchase intention. The study results suggest advertisers to avoid irritation at all costs. Advertisers need to avoid forcing advertisements on viewers who use social media, especially in video advertisements. Social media users are highly goal directed and to avoid consumer whiplash, irritation should be avoided and taken care off at all costs because it only results in wastage of advertising expenses and discomfort to consumers. The advertiser can thus use advertisements with usefulness and entertaining information by avoiding irritation in order to increase its effectiveness in stimulation of purchase intention for products and services advertised on social media.

8. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTION

One of the limitations of the research model is that it cannot differentiate between highly goal oriented and low goal-oriented consumers. If a consumer is highly goal oriented the relationship between perceived usefulness, attitude and purchase intention is expected to be amplified. Similarly, the positive relation of social media advertisement's entertainment will also be expected to be strengthened if a consumer is highly goal oriented rather than being low goal oriented. However, for irritation the negative relationship with attitude and purchase intention will also be greatly amplified when consumers are highly goal oriented. Because when advertisements stand irrelevant and irritating for highly goal-oriented consumers it will only result in counterproductive attitude. Thereafter, counterproductive attitude will only lead to hampering purchase intention in worst way possible. Thus, future researches can use goal orientation of consumers as a moderator to check for moderated mediation of attitude in relationships of social media advertisement's perceived usefulness, entertainment, irritation with purchase intention. Examining goal orientation as a moderator can help in revealing significant differences in strength of relationships for high and low goal-oriented consumers watching social media advertisements.

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