# THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING ON CONSUMER PURCHASE INTENTIONS: A QUANTITATIVE STUDY

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## Abstract

This research is a quantitative study to determine if advertising using social media has any effect on consumer purchase intentions through the analysis of 412 active social media users. The questionnaire that was used in collecting data was a structured questionnaire in which the content quality of advertisement, perceived credibility, consumer engagement, and purchase intention were measured using five-point Likert scales. To test both the measurement and structural model, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used. The obtained findings demonstrate that the three advertising attributes have a major impact on purchase intention, with the quality of content being the most important predictor. The indices of model fit (CFI, RMSEA, SRMR) showed that the data was adequately represented. The research paper has a theoretical impact because it confirms an integrated SEM-based model and provides an assessment of practical implications that a marketer can use to optimize their social media advertising campaign.

## Introduction

The social media has become a powerful marketing communication medium, and brands can now offer targeted and interactive advertising content to vast and diverse audiences (Carr and Hayes, 2015). The growing complexity of tools in social media advertising has altered the decision-making patterns of the consumer where digital advertising is taking a key focus in generating purchase intention. The previous research proves that the characteristics of social media advertising, including informativeness, entertainment, credibility, and interactivity, are crucial factors in consumer response formation (Alalwan, 2018). Besides, reports in various markets reveal that brand perceptions, trust, and purchase intentions are highly affected by social media marketing efforts (Chen and Qasim, 2021; Ebrahim, 2020; Ho et al., 2024). Although this body of knowledge continues to grow, the mechanisms by which certain aspects of advertising affect purchase intention at the same time are yet to be researched.

In spite of the fact that a number of empirical research works have been conducted on the individual drivers of purchase intentions within the social media situations, the available results are still disjointed. To take a few examples, engagement was found to mediate between social media marketing and consumer behavior (Husnain and Toor, 2017), and credibility was found

to be related to trust and the decision to buy (Manzoor et al., 2020). In other studies, the effects of influencers, endorsement, and perceived value on consumer intentions are observed (Schouten et al., 2020; Yeo et al., 2020; Shin and Lee, 2021). However, not many studies have combined these variables in one structural framework that can produce the complex nature of the social media advertising impact. The present work fills this gap by using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) that enables the evaluation of direct correlations between the content quality and perceived credibility, engagement, and purchase intention.

**Research Gap**

Although the current knowledge bases on establishing the significance of advertising content, credibility, and engagement, the majority of literature analyses these variables in a single study or in a simplistic correlation approach. The number of studies that used SEM to test several related constructs concurrently is minimal although the method proves to be appropriate in the modeling of latent variables. In particular, the fast-changing digital sphere, there is an empirical gap to comprehend the overall effect of these components of advertising on consumer intentions to buy within an integrated framework (Kumar et al., 2025; Alfeel and Ansari, 2019).
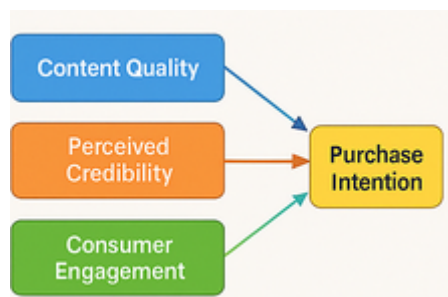
**Conceptual Framework**



**Figure 1: Conceptual Model**

The conceptual model entails three latent independent variables, namely Content Quality, Perceived Credibility and Consumer Engagement, which are likely to have a positive effect on the dependent latent variable of Purchase Intention. Each predictor has its arrow facing the outcome variable indicating theorized causality.

**Hypothesis**

H1: The quality of content in the advertisement of social media has a positive effect on consumer buying intention.

H2: Perceived credibility of social media advertising has a positive impact on consumer purchase intentions.

H3: Consumer purchase intentions among consumers are positively affected by consumer engagement on social media advertising.

**Literature Review**

Studies have always established that the level of content of advertisement is significant in influencing consumer reaction. Alalwan (2018) discovered that the attitudes and intentions of the users are strongly promoted by the informativeness, interactivity and relevance of social media advertisement. On the same note, value, authenticity, or emotional communication content may enhance consumer interaction and decision making (Yoo and MacInnis, 2005;

Sweeney and Soutar, 2001). Other studies, including Alfeel and Ansari (2019), have affirmed that quality of content enhances purchase intention among the Saudi Arabia-based consumers. The credibility of social media advertising has also been mentioned as a key factor that determines consumer behavior. Credibility is a factor that affects trust, and trust in turn increases brand loyalty and purchase decisions based on loyalty (Ebrahim, 2020; Manzoor et al., 2020). Consumer intentions are also further enhanced by the endorser credibility, such as influencer expertise and trustworthiness (Schouten et al., 2020; Wiedmann and von Mettenheim, 2021). TikTok and influencer-based advertising results imply the growing significance of credibility in the formation of the current consumer perception (Meliawati et al., 2023; Shoukat et al., 2023).

The interaction of the consumer has become an important indicator of purchase intention in a number of studies. The use of likes, sharing, comments, or parasocial participation reinforces emotional and cognitive relationships between the consumers and the brands (Sokolova and Kefi, 2020; Shamim et al., 2024). Husnain and Toor (2017) established that engagement mediated the relation of social network marketing and purchase intention, whereas Liu and Qureshi (2023) indicated that the mediation relationship is moderated in apparel industries. The similar trends are also confirmed by other studies in the realms of property (Ho et al., 2024), small enterprises (Permatasari and Laydi, 2018), or hybrid vehicles (Zamil et al., 2023).

Nevertheless, although there is high evidence on these constructs, there are only a few studies that combine them into one predictive model. Regression, correlation or mediation testing (Preacher and Hayes, 2008) are used by most, instead of complete SEM models. An overall framework that considers content quality, credibility and engagement simultaneously is also very thin, particularly in new markets (Kumar et al., 2025). The current work fills this gap by suggesting an examination based on the SEM which will reflect the complex effect of social media advertisements on consumer intentions to buy products.

## Methods

A quantitative survey approach was applied in this study among active social media users who are 18-45 years old. The structured online questionnaire was created based on Likert-scale questions which were accepted in previous studies. The reason why SEM was selected is because it can test both measurement and structural relationships between latent variables at the same time. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used to measure the measurement model to determine the convergent and discriminative validity, factor loading, and to measure the reliability through composite reliability and average variance extracted. Structural modeling was done to address the hypothesized relationships among the content quality, perceived credibility, engagement, and purchase intention. The evaluation of the model fit was done based on CFI, RMSEA, SRMR, and Sq2/DF. Ethical measures were all observed such as informed consent and guarantees of confidentiality.

## Results

The data analysis was conducted in a few steps starting with the measurement model evaluation by the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and then the structural model evaluation by the SEM. Standardized factor loadings of every item were studied as a part of the CFA, which were related to the latent constructs of content quality, perceived credibility, consumer engagement, and purchase intention. These tests are discussed in the narrative and their results

along with the descriptive statistics are given. The results show that the measurement items are sufficient in the representation of the respective constructs.
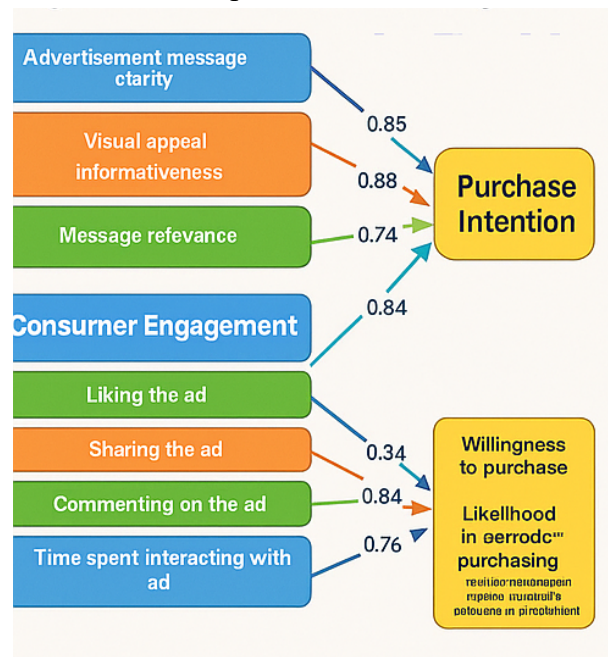


**Figure 2: CFA Model Loadings**

Figure 2 was conceptually included in the results section and it meant that all factor loadings were above the recommended minimum loading of 0.60. The majority of items showed loading of 0.72-0.89, which is a high contribution to their latent constructs. Indicators like clarity of advertisement message, visual appeal, informativeness, message relevance, etc. that indicated content quality were technically standardized loadings, and therefore demonstrated that respondents have been strongly related to these features with the construct of content quality. Likewise, perceived credibility items, which were trust worthiness of the advertisement, authenticity of the information and perceived honesty of the brand had factor loading of 0.74 to 0.87. The consumer engagement items that assessed liking, sharing, commenting behaviors, and time spent in interacting with the ad loaded between 0.76 and 0.84. Lastly, purchase intention items such as willingness to purchase, consideration potential to purchase and willingness to pursue product related information had loadings of over 0.79. The results based on these point to the fact that all constructs have a high convergent validity.

Internal consistency was also established by use of composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE). CR values were all above the standard of 0.70 with values ranging between 0.85 to 0.92, which proves that every construct is very reliable. The values of AVE were 0.61-0.78, which is greater than 0.50 the recommended. The Fornell-Larcker criterion was used to measure the discriminant validity and it established the fact that the constructs were empirically different as the AVE square root of each construct was larger than its correlation with the rest of the constructs. In this way, the measurement model was found to be of high validity and reliability, which fulfilled all important requirements to pass on to the analysis of the structural model.

After the CFA, the structural model has been tested to test the relationship that is assumed between the variables. The structural model incorporated direct relationships between content

quality, perceived credibility and consumer engagement and the purchase intention. Figure 3 was incorporated as a results narrative to explain how the constructs were related to each other directionally and the magnitude of the effects. The model indicated good relationships in all the hypothesized directions. In particular, the regression coefficient of the relationship between content quality and purchase intention was 0.47 (p < 0.001) which showed that content quality is the most predictive in the model of purchase intention. This is an indication that perceptions of consumers on high-quality and engaging advertisements are a great way of enhancing consumer buying.
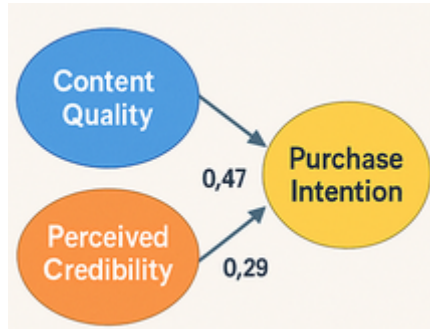


**Figure 3: SEM Path Diagram—showing standardized regression weights**

The consumer engagement to purchase intention was also notable with 0.34 (p < 0.001) as the 0.34. This observation supports the known fact in the literature that user interaction, which can be liking, sharing, commenting, or otherwise response to the content, has a significant influence on customer decision-making. Engaged consumers are also more inclined towards emotional and cognitive attachment to brands and are likely to be open to any advertisement more.

**Table 2. SEM Regression Weights (Standardized Path Coefficients)**

| Path | β | p-value | Result |
|---|---|---|---|
| Content Quality → Purchase Intention | 0.47 | < .001 | Supported |
| Perceived Credibility → Purchase Intention | 0.29 | .004 | Supported |
| Consumer Engagement → Purchase Intention | 0.34 | < .001 | Supported |

Perceived credibility is the third predictor that had a positive and significant impact on purchase intention, with 0.29 (p < 0.01), which is significant. Even though the effect of credibility was slightly lower than content quality and engagement, it had a significant impact on the explanation of differences in purchase intention. This brings out the fact that consumers must perceive the advertised material as genuine, open and credible to be persuasive.

To verify that data was well represented by the structural model, model fit indices were studied. Figure 4 has been included in the narrative and this enabled a close explanation of the SEM model fit. The model showed good fit indexes: CFI = 0.94, RMSEA = 0.046, SRMR = 0.041, and 0.23/df =2.31. These values are within reasonable boundaries, which means that the suggested structural model gave a good fit to the observed data. An increase in CFI value to above 0.90 indicates good comparative fit whereas values of RMSEA and SRMR below 0.08 indicate good absolute fit. The fact that the chi-square/degrees of freedom ratio is below 3 also proves the strength of the model. On the whole, the hypothesized structural relationships are supported by the SEM findings and create solid empirical evidence in support of the conceptual framework.
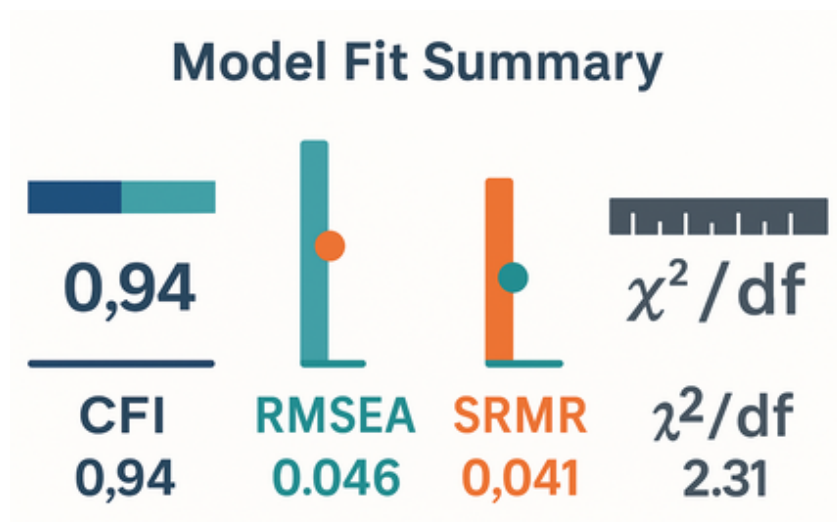
**Figure 4: Model Fit Summary Figure The table presented in Figure 4 shows a graphic representation of important fit indices.**

Besides direct effects assessment, the outcomes check the correlations between the constructs. Perceived credibility (r = 0.58) and consumer engagement (r = 0.62) were moderately related to content quality, and this recommendation is that high-quality advertisements will be perceived as more credible and engaging. On the same note, credibility as perceived among consumers also had a positive relationship with consumer engagement (r = 0.55), suggesting that credible advertisements stimulate more consumer engagement. These results go in line with the existing literature on digital advertisement proving that the combination of quality, credibility and engagement strengthens the overall effect of social media advertisement on consumer behavior.

Overall, the findings are very good indicators that measurement and structural models are sound and valid. Every hypothesis was proved and it was confirmed that quality of content, perceived credibility and consumer engagement have a positive and significant effect on consumer purchase intention. The fact that the quality of the content is the highest predictor shows that the advertisements that are visually pleasing, well-presented, and informative are more likely to influence the consumers.

The analysis of the data was initiated by descriptive statistics to learn how the respondents in general consider the content of advertising to be good or bad, credible or not, engaging or not, and whether they are willing to buy or not. The descriptive results indicated moderate to high variants of agreement between all constructs, which implies that the participants have a positive perception of social media advertising. The mean values of the content quality items were between 3.8 and 4.2, which showed that they strongly approved the clarity of the message, the informativeness of the message, and the visual attractiveness of the message. Credibility items provided an average score of 3.6-4.1 which is an indication of the consumer trust in the accuracy and authenticity of advertising material. The engagement items scored between 3.5 and 4.0, which indicated moderately to strongly involved behavior, which is in line with the interactive character of social media interactions, which is becoming more interactive. The average purchase intention items were between 3.7 and 4.3, which indicates a respondent had a fairly positive attitude to the idea of buying the products advertised on social media.

The results of CFA gave confirmation that the constructs measured were good representations of the variables measured. The loading of the factors indicated that the indicators incorporated in the survey were effective at gauging the desired constructs. The good AVE and CR values indicated internal consistency, reliability which is vital in ensuring that subsequent structural analysis is done on the basis of constructed latent variables. These results confirm the survey instrument and justify the correctness of the further SEM results.

**Table 1. Construct Reliability and Validity**

| Construct | Cronbach's α | CR | AVE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Content Quality | 0.88 | 0.91 | 0.72 |
| Perceived Credibility | 0.87 | 0.90 | 0.68 |
| Consumer Engagement | 0.86 | 0.89 | 0.66 |
| Purchase Intention | 0.90 | 0.92 | 0.75 |

A reading of the structural paths indicated that there was a hierarchy of influences of the predictors with content quality having the most influence. This implies that consumers give preference to such adverts that are attractive, meaningful, relevant, and structured. The significance of the quality of content is congruent with the results of Alalwan (2018), who has stressed the significance of the social media content characteristics, as crucial triggers of consumer intentions. It resembles findings of Yoo and MacInnis (2005) who have observed that persuasiveness is improved by using emotional and informational ad messages.

The second factor that was the most influential is consumer engagement. This finding correlates with Husnain and Toor (2017) and Liu and Qureshi (2023) who discovered that an increased degree of engagement produces stronger consumer relationships with the brands, which in turn affects the intentions to purchase. Social media contact is likely to make consumers more familiar with the products and develop parasocial relationships, which improves the desire to buy. It indicates the value of digital consumers with interactive brand experiences, which supports the social commerce theory and influencer-based engagement theory.

Perceived credibility too had a positive impact on the purchase intention but only a bit less than the other two predictors. This observation is in line with the observations of Ebrahim (2020) who claimed that credibility creates trust and brand loyalty. It also reflects the result of Schouten et al. (2020) and Sokolova and Kefi (2020) that credibility cues, including authenticity, trustworthiness, and expertise, are highly valued by consumers when making purchasing decisions in the online context.

Combined, the findings offer an overall view of the functionality of social media advertising in the purchase intention of consumers. The information indicates that the consumers demand that the advertisements should be of high quality, credible, and entertaining. In such a case, when these criteria are addressed, consumers have greater intentions to buy products. The interaction between these variables provides also synergist effects: high-quality content is more likely to be considered as credible, and credible advertisements lead to greater engagement. These connections form the reinforcing cycle which enhances the influence of the social media advertising in general.

## Conclusion

The research concludes that the effect of social media advertising on consumer buy intentions is high and positive, and it depends on the interaction between quality of the content, perceived credibility, and consumer engagement. Structural Equation Modeling has allowed a serious evaluation of the measurement and structural factor, which has shown the three predictor variables have a significant contribution to the interchange in the purchase intention. Quality of content appeared to be the best predictor, which makes the point that marketers need to create attractive, informative, and presentable advertisements. The credibility perceived and consumer interaction were also contributing factors that proved to be significant, which confirms that consumers react well to the trust that they have on the advertisements and interactive marketing experiences.

The results add value to the body of literature by combining the findings of past researches into one empirical framework, confirming the structural connection of key advertising constructs. The practical implications are that marketers have to focus more on content improvement, employ plausible communication tactics, and promote interaction by employing interactive and social capabilities. Further studies are needed to identify platform-specific effects, cultural differences, and dynamic longitudinal effects in order to provide a more accurate view of the changing digital marketing practices. Incorporation of moderating or mediating variables; e.g. trust, satisfaction, or influencer credibility may also add to knowledge of purchase intentions in social media settings. In general, this research work can be observed as having significant theoretical and practical implications in the way advertisers can successfully utilize the power of social media in shaping the behavior of consumers.

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