

Exploring The Relationship Between Social Media Advertising Characteristics and Purchase Intention Towards Cosmetics and Personal Care Industry in Egypt

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Abstract

This study examines how various social media advertising characteristics affect the intention to buy in Egypt's cosmetic and personal care industry, with online customer engagement as a mediating variable. The research focuses on four main advertising characteristics: entertainment, interactivity, vividness, and informativeness. The main goal is to see how these elements shape customer engagement and, in turn, the desire to purchase. The study uses data from 396 valid survey respondents. The questionnaire respondents were from Egypt, used social media actively, and had seen advertisements on social media platforms. The primary objective of this study is to ascertain which factor, whether it be entertainment, interactivity, vividness, or informativeness, shows greater influence on online customer

engagement and purchase intention. The research draws from the answers of 396 respondents who live in Egypt, are active on social media, and have seen advertisements on these platforms. Data was collected through an online questionnaire and was distributed through various social media platforms.

By employing structural equation modeling (SEM), the study examines the direct and indirect effects of these advertising characteristics on customer engagement and purchase intention. The results indicate that entertainment, interactivity, and informativeness positively contribute to customer engagement, with interactivity demonstrating the strongest influence. Vividness, conversely, exhibits a relatively weaker effect on engagement. Notably, customer engagement emerged as a significant driver of purchase intention, demonstrating a strong direct positive impact and underscoring its critical role in shaping consumer purchasing behavior.

The findings of testing the direct relationship between social media advertising characteristics and purchase intention were mixed. Interactivity demonstrated a significant negative impact on purchase intention, suggesting that excessively interactive advertisements may hinder consumers's purchase intent. Conversely, entertainment, vividness, and informativeness exhibited no direct influence on purchase intention. However, customer engagement served as an effective mediator, transforming interactivity, entertainment, vividness, and informativeness into

indirect drivers of purchase intention. The research concludes that online customer engagement plays a crucial role in altering social media advertisement attributes to purchase intent.

However, although interactivity has a direct negative effect on purchase intention, its effect through customer engagement is high. This shows the need for the creation of social media advertisements that not only attract attention but also induce participation from consumers. In this case, for marketing practitioners, it is vital to encourage customer engagement so that the advertisement over social media can be effective and enhance the possibilities of purchase intention. These findings suggest that a strategic focus on engagement-driven campaigns is essential for optimizing purchase outcomes in an increasingly digital marketplace.

Keywords:

Social media advertising, Social media advertising characteristics, online customer engagement , Purchase intention

1. Introduction

During the contemporary digital revolution and the escalating interconnection of the global economy, the domain of marketing and consumer behavior has experienced noteworthy transformations. The widespread impact of social media platforms has been the primary driving force behind this transformation. The rise of social media as a powerful marketing tool has fundamentally changed how businesses interact and

communicate with their target audiences. (Sharma,2024). Cosmetics brands leverage social media channels as a platform for product advertising and customer engagement. Such tools provide a remarkable chance for companies and various brands to create and disseminate attractive advertisementss that affect the purchasing decisions of customers (Rijitha, 2021).

Social media advertisements have enabled marketers to reach a wide range of their target audience more efficiently and effectively. These advertisements have also assisted many marketers in achieving their marketing objectives, such as creating customer awareness, building customer knowledge, shaping customer perceptions, and motivating customers to purchase products (Alalwan et al., 2017; Kapoor et al., 2017; Shareef et al., 2017). It is noteworthy that the impact of social media advertising had been steadily increasing before the COVID-19 outbreak. However, it was only after the pandemic that there was an unprecedented surge in the number of advertisements. (Zanner, 2020)

However, the effectiveness of social media advertising is not only determined by the amount of their utilization but rather that which targets the particular characteristics and strategies employed in these advertisements. Influencer collaborations, emotional appeals, personalized advertisements, interactive and entertainment content have all created a new frontier in social media promotion. (KV, 2021). This evolution necessitates a comprehensive

examination of how other advertising characteristics influence consumers in Egypt's vigorously changing cosmetic and personal care industry. In today's crowded digital marketplace, advertising often overwhelms consumers, especially on social media. As a result, many businesses are eager to determine the types of content that can cut through the noise, capture consumers' attention, and generate a significant impact (Gallaga, 2023). Research highlights the need for marketers to seek reliable insights to guide the selection of content that can create compelling and engaging advertisements (Gaber et al., 2019). To ensure the success of online advertising, marketers are now emphasizing the importance of content factors such as design, format, and characteristics, all of which play a crucial role in attracting consumer attention (Lee et al., 2018). (Kim and Kim, 2018)

The appropriate content for digital marketing often differs from that used in traditional marketing, requiring further research to identify the best strategies for digital advertising (Jan et al., 2019). Additionally, studies suggest that digital marketing takes on various forms, and content that is effective in one form may not necessarily guarantee success in another. This calls for more research into the nuances of advertising content across different types of digital marketing platforms (Minculete & Olar, 2018).

Research has shown that high levels of customer engagement can enhance the effectiveness of digital marketing by fostering stronger brand relationships and influencing purchase decisions

(Malthouse et al., 2013). However, most existing studies focus on Western markets, and there is a notable lack of empirical research examining the unique characteristics of the Egyptian cosmetic and personal care industry. Moreover, while studies have addressed the relationship between social media marketing and purchase intention in global markets (Dehghani and Tumer, 2015), there is limited research focused specifically on the Egyptian cosmetics and personal care industry.

Hence, the primary objective of this study is to examine the specific advertising characteristics that influence consumer purchase intention and to assess the influence customer engagement has on the relationship between social media advertising characteristics and purchase intention. This investigation is focused particularly on the cosmetics and personal care industry in Egypt, where understanding these dynamics is crucial for optimizing digital marketing strategies and enhancing brand-consumer interactions.

2. Litreature Review

2.1 Social Media Advertising

The marketing scene has experienced a revolutionary transformation with the emergence of social media advertising. Social media advertising offers businesses distinctive opportunities to connect with customers and promote their offerings. Its proven potency and efficacy have made it a vital

instrument for companies looking to market their products or services. (SocialSellinator, 2023)

Users actively engage with social media advertisements, interacting by leaving comments, liking them, and responding to others' comments. This functionality allows businesses to gain insights into their audience's preferences and interests, enabling the marketers to tailor their advertising strategies accordingly. Additionally, social media users can observe each other's preferences, initiate conversations, and update their perceptions of advertisements and brands, as highlighted by (Geng et al., 2021). As businesses aim to leverage social media advertising to impact consumer intention, it is vital to understand the role of ad characteristics and their effect on purchasing decisions. To achieve optimal results in online advertising, marketers must prioritize crafting advertisements that consider the content, design strategy, format, and attributes that effectively engage consumers. By skillfully incorporating relevant content into advertisements, marketers can sway consumer behavior and spark a desire to purchase the promoted product. (Turban et al., 2017)

2.2 Social Media Advertising Characteristics

Social Media advertisements have different characteristics such as Format, Size, Content type, and design. These elements significantly affect advertisement competence, which is crucial to advertisers to guarantee that the advertisements have influenced their intended interest group. (Manchanda et. al., 2006)

(Palanisamy, 2004). Social media advertising characteristics encompass the specific attributes that define advertisements created and displayed on social media platforms. These platforms have unique features and requirements that distinguish them from other advertising formats. (El-Naga et al., 2022).

Different social media advertising characteristics prompt varying responses from consumers. The study highlights the importance of social media content characteristics as customers react to informative social media posts differently than entertaining social media posts. (Rishika et al., 2013).

2.2.1 Entertainment

According to a study by (Cheung et al.,2020), companies can provide their customers with remarkable experiences by designing playful and fun content on social media networks. As (Bazi et al.,2020) suggest, Entertainment is a critical advertising element that prompts positive emotions in consumers, increases their involvement behavior, and creates an intention to make regular purchases. Participating in contests, games, and online videos are entertainment activities on social media channels.

Al-Gasawneh (2023) conducted a Questionnaire with 250 respondents to study the impact of Visual social media marketing (informative, entertainment, and remunerative content) on Jordanian real state enterprises. It was concluded that according to the results, the Effective use of visual social media tools enhances consumers' desire to purchase.

Consumers using social media to satisfy their needs prefer a more entertainment-oriented approach to their leisure time in the era of advanced information. (Chen et al.,2023) found that entertainment is the second Favorite predictor factor of advertising attitude and Ad clicks. This indicates that entertaining advertising could satisfy consumer desires for enjoyment, therefore positively impacting consumers' advertising attitude and willingness to engage in advertising which is consistent with the results of (Zhang and Mao,2016). (Hanaysha,2022) Studied the effect of four Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) on purchase intention, where data was collected through a survey. The outcome suggests that marketers should engage in Social media marketing activities to create value for customers influencing their purchase behavior. Results confirmed the significance of the impact of SMMA's including Entertainment on Purchase Intention (PI).

(Aji et al., 2020) have also investigated how social media marketing activities affect consumers' purchase propensity. The study's findings suggest that social media marketing initiatives have a significant role in influencing consumers' inclinations to make purchases. The study's findings suggest that marketing initiatives on social media, such as those including entertainment and interaction, have the potential to impact Indonesian consumers' purchasing intentions.

The research conducted by (Dolan et al., 2019) revealed that engaging content positively impacts user engagement, particularly in terms of consumption. Additionally, the study by (Luarn et al., 2015) indicated that entertaining content generates high levels of commenting and sharing within online customer engagement. These results comply with (Menon et al., 2019) as the study findings reveal that entertaining content is the most significant factor in stimulating customer engagement. (Liu et al., 2021) examined the impact of luxury brand's social media marketing on customer engagement. The findings discussed in the study show that entertainment and interaction characteristics have the highest impact on customer engagement.

Based on the studies related to entertainment, the following hypothesis can be posited:

H1a: Entertainment has a significant positive relationship with online customer engagement.

H2a: Entertainment has a significant positive relationship with purchase intention.

2.2.2 Interactivity

Interactivity is the extent of two-way communication between the company and the customer as it affects consumer's opinions and attitudes. (Fortin and Dholakia, 2005) Moreover, interactivity in social media advertising differs, as text-only advertisements are not interactive. However, adding a site link is interactive.

Interactivity through Social Media Networking sites (SNS) provides consumers valuable insights about various products and services. Hence, these interactions are changing the communications dynamics and encouraging the creation of user-generated marketing content. (Muntinga et al., 2011)

According to (De Vries et al., 2012), interactive cues include requesting feedback, a voting mechanism, a Call to action (CTA), or contests. The higher degree of interactivity in a brand post triggers consumer engagement behavior. A study by (Agarwal, 2020) showed that consumers find interactive content more appealing as it could generate advertising value among them and becomes enjoyable when they take part in information sharing and receiving.

(Jamil et al., 2021) investigated the impact of Social media ad characteristics on Users' intentions, results showed that Social media ad characteristics have a significant effect on users' intentions in Pakistan. Increasing interactivity helps in boosting users' intentions. This result is consistent with a study by (Liu et al., 2021) indicating that interaction Impacts consumer engagement in the Luxury brands industry. Although (Tafesse, 2015) and (Usmani et al., 2019) stated that interactivity has negatively impacted customer engagement, especially likes and shares. However, numerous studies investigated the significance of interactivity on customer engagement. The findings of the previous

studies proved the significance of this relationship (Oh and Sundar. 2015). Paul. (2019) mentioned that interaction influences customers to be more involved on social media platforms.

Hence the following could be Hypothesized:

H1b: Interactivity has a significant positive relationship with online customer engagement.

H2b: Interactivity has a significant positive relationship with purchase intention.

2.2.3 Vividness

Vividness is a measure of how well a medium can capture the attention of the audience senses. There are two components to this: breadth and depth. Breadth refers to the variety of senses that a medium can stimulate, as depth refers to the level of sensory engagement visual elements, such as aesthetics, imagery, and creativity, have been found to capture consumer attention and evoke emotions. Visually engaging advertisements are more likely to generate interest and encourage engagement (Steuer, 1992). Online content vividness includes videos, images, statuses, and links (Cvijikj, Michahelles, 2013, De Vries et al., 2012, Sabate et al., 2014). Vividness can be achieved by incorporating dynamic animation, contrasting colors, or pictures (Fortin and Dholakia, 2005; Goldfarb and Tucker, 2011). These mechanisms were found to prompt different senses that increase the user's inclination to view the message of the content created

by the firm and hence, influence the consumers' online participation. Higher message vividness with high interactive content results in higher engagement. (Yousaf et al., 2021)

(Chu and Banerjee, 2015) studied the impact of the vividness of content on user engagement, they suggest that social media posts with no vividness will have lower likes.

Vividness has an impact on purchase intention which is agreed upon by (Vasquez et al., 2023) (Haji et al., 2023) highlighted that content vividness enhances purchase intentions through social media engagement as a mediating factor, while a study by (El-Naga et al., 2022) showed that vividness failed to impact social ad effectiveness as perceived by Egyptians.

The following hypotheses can thus be postulated:

H1c: Vividness has a significant positive relationship with online customer engagement.

H2c: Vividness has a significant positive relationship with purchase intention.

2.2.4 Informativeness

Informativeness is when the consumer accepts the advertisement content and finds the advertisement provides exhaustive and evident information regarding the advertised product (Ducoffe, 1995)

Information is the ability of an advertisement to present up-to-date, timely, and readily available information. The information characteristics of advertisements affect customer satisfaction and purchase decisions and are considered the main factors for customers to accept advertisements. (Ünal et al., 2011). In a study by (Disastra et al., 2019), Informativeness was discussed as a dimension in an advertisement used to inform new products launched by the company or inform how to use the products or others. Informative advertising can provide added value for consumers. The research findings suggest that informativeness has a significant impact on advertising value and Purchase intention.

(Shakariza et al., 2021) Investigated the impact of Ad information, Ad Credibility, and Ad Entertainment on Purchase Intention with an attitude toward advertising as a mediator. Research results revealed that Ad informativness, Ad credibility, and Ad entertainment affect the attitude towards advertising positively, thus bringing positive purchase intention among the consumers. (Nguyen et al., 2022) Studied the impact of Facebook advertising characteristics on purchase intention to identify and test the key factors that directly impact online customer purchase intention toward the Vietnamese market. The research results concluded that marketers should pay attention to increasing the informativeness of advertising. Results also concluded that

emerging markets should focus on generating consumers' positive attitudes toward advertisements.

Informativeness and credibility of advertisement were found to have a significant relationship with customer perceived value of advertising. Findings also revealed that customer perceived value of advertising partially mediated the relationship between the informativeness and credibility of advertisement toward customer engagement. (Tee et al., 2022). Customers' perception of the quality of the information posted by a company on its brand page is deemed high, according to Zhang and Mao. (2016). The company, its brands, or any product specifications may be the subject of the information (Wu et al., 2020). Compared to other types of content, informative content has higher levels of engagement (Soares et al., 2022).

Informativeness, trendiness, and WoM are essential for driving customer engagement in Saudi-based OFDA (Abbasi et al., 2023). (Lee et al., 2021) study reveals that informative richness impacts customer engagement in the tourism sector. Social media users view social media content that is timely, relevant, and helpful as valuable. Hence, informativeness is a crucial factor that significantly impacts customer engagement. (Galib et al., 2023)

Thus this study proposes the following hypothesis about informativeness

H1d: Informativeness has a significant positive relationship with online customer engagement.

H2d: Informativeness has a significant positive relationship with purchase intention.

2.3 Purchase Intention

(Ostrom, 1969) explained Purchase intentions as personal actions towards the brand. While (Pavlou,2003) defined Purchase intention as the degree to which a consumer is willing to buy a product. The concept of purchase intention pertains to a consumer's inclination to invest in a particular product or service. It essentially denotes the probability of a consumer purchasing a thorough evaluation. Several factors influence the purchase intention of a consumer. However, their final decision will depend on their intentions and external factors beyond their control. (Keller,2001)

Purchase intention refers to an individual's conscious motivation and willingness to make an effort to engage in a particular behavior, such as buying a product or service.(Eagly and Chaiken 1993, p. 168). Purchase intentions are an individual's conscious plan to make an effort to purchase a brand. (Spears and Singh,2004). Intentions are a crucial predictor of actual behavior (Montano and Kasprzyk, 2015). The occurrence of a behavior is determined by the corresponding behavioral intention, which is the intention to perform it. (Ajzen, 1985).

In the study by Liu et al. (2021), the concept of purchase intention (PI) is described as the likelihood of a customer buying a specific product. A high probability indicates a strong willingness to make a purchase. Previous research has recognized PI as a significant predictor of consumer behavior, alongside the subjective likelihood of purchases. Consumers are increasingly seeking information about product features before making a purchase. This trend underscores the significant role of social media marketing and consumer engagement in providing information to users and shaping their preferences and purchase decisions (Ahmed & Zahid, 2014). Businesses invest millions of dollars in marketing to promptly recognize consumer purchasing behaviors (Amos et al., 2014). According to (Martin-Consuegra et al., 2019), positive brand interactions on social media result in consumer satisfaction and a subsequent intention to purchase the associated brand.

2.4 Online Customer Engagement

Online customer engagement (OCE) facilitates communication between consumers and producers, which helps companies enhance their brand, gain competitive advantage, and improve overall performance. The customer engagement process involves integrating cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects (Brodie et al., 2013)

Consumer-brand engagement is the positive brand-related cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses exhibited by

consumers toward the brand. Hence, this encompasses a wide range of consumer behaviors and attitudes influenced by their interactions with a brand, including their thoughts, feelings, and actions toward the brand (Hollebeek et al.,2014, p.154). The level of customer engagement on Facebook is a valuable indicator of customer sentiment towards the campaign. Kim and Yang's (2017) research underscores three primary modes of interaction - likes, comments, and shares that users employ to engage with the content.

In a study conducted by Chwialkowska (2019), the impact of content-type strategies on engagement, Focusing on likes, comments, and shares was examined. The content types were categorized into two sections: customer-centric and brand-centric. The Results proved that customer-based content strategies, particularly informative content, wielded the most substantial influence in stimulating customer engagement. Social brand engagement is a vital factor in explaining purchase intention in the context of cosmetic firms. Moreover, Firms should engage customers to increase their emotional attachment to the brand, which increases purchase intention (Choedon and Lee, 2020) studied the effect of SMMA on purchase intentions in Korean cosmetic firms. Results suggest an inevitable relationship between social brand engagement and purchase intention.

The literature explores the correlation between social network marketing, consumer engagement, and consumer purchase intention. It suggests that interactions between shoppers and

retailers on social networking sites can foster lasting emotional connections when managed effectively. Engaged consumers are satisfied, loyal, and emotionally attached to the brand, potentially leading to increased sales (Saputro and Hidayat, 2020). According to (Chen and Xu., 2020) highly engaged customers are more willing to continue their purchase behavior. Furthermore, results indicated that high behavior engagement has promoting effects on continued purchase intention. Social media involvement provides a sense of control over social media activities. (Yadav and Rahman, 2017) suggest that marketers should strengthen customer engagement to increase buy intention. Companies that can develop strong consumer involvement will have higher purchase intentions than those that do not. (Bismo et al., 2019).

Therefore the following hypothesis can be concluded:

H3: Online Customer engagement has a positive relationship with purchase intention.

H4: Online customer engagement mediates the relationship between social media advertising characteristics and purchase intention.

2.5 Theoretical Framework Diagram

The following Figure Shows the proposed theoretical framework

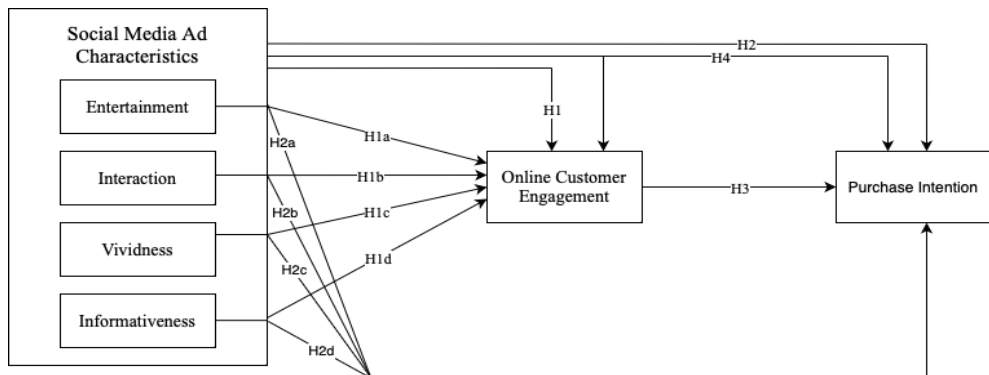


Figure 1 The Proposed Theoretical Framework Diagram

According to the diagram the following can be hypothesized:

H1: Social Media advertising characteristics has a significant positive relationship with online customer engagement.

H1a: Entertainment has a significant positive relationship with online customer engagement.

H1b: Interactivity has a significant positive relationship with online customer engagement.

H1c: Vividness has a significant positive relationship with online customer engagement.

H1d: Informativeness has a significant positive relationship with online customer engagement.

H2: Social Media advertising characteristics has a significant positive relationship with purchase intention.

H2a: Entertainment has a significant positive relationship with purchase intention.

H2b: Interactivity has a significant positive relationship with purchase intention.

H2c: Vividness has a significant positive relationship with purchase intention.

H2d: Informativeness has a significant positive relationship with purchase intention.

H3: Online customer engagement has positive relationship with purchase intention.

H4: Online customer engagement mediates the relationship between social media advertising characteristics and purchase intention.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Type and Design

This study follows a deductive research approach as it begins with formulating hypotheses based on existing theories and literature, Followed by testing these hypotheses through empirical data collection and analysis. This approach is appropriate for testing the relationships between variables (social media ad characteristics, online customer engagement, and purchase intention) and

determining the extent to which the theoretical framework applies to the specific context of Egypt's cosmetic industry.

A multi-method research design is used with either a qualitative or quantitative method in the same study. On the other hand, (mixed method) refers to using several approaches to collect data to answer a research issue, or combining qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques.

A cross-sectional survey design is employed where data is collected at a single point in time to analyze the variables of interest. A survey-based approach will be implemented, where data is collected through a structured questionnaire. This design is appropriate because it allows for the measurement and analysis of the relationships between variables in a large sample, providing generalizable results.

3.2 Population and Sampling Desgin

3.2.1 Population

The target population for this study comprises active social media users in Egypt who are potential consumers of cosmetic and personal care products. The population includes both male and female respondents across various age groups, education levels, and socioeconomic backgrounds, as long as they have been exposed to social media ads related to cosmetic and personal care products. According to (Satista, 2024) there are 45.4 active social media users in Egypt by February 2024.

3.2.2 Sampling Technique

The non-probability sampling technique, namely convenience sampling, is used in this investigation. This strategy was chosen because it is practical for reaching out to respondents who are active social media users and have been exposed to cosmetic and personal care marketing.

3.2.3 Sample Size

The sample size will be determined using **Cochran's formula** for an infinite population.

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

Where Z is the critical value of the Normal distribution, p is the fraction of the population (as percentage) that displays the attribute in question, and q is equal to 1 - p. e stands for the desired level of precision (also known as the margin of error). Hence, with a confidence level of 95% and an error margin of 5%, the sample size was determined to be 385 users of social media platforms in Egypt.

3.3 Data Collection method

3.3.1 Data collection instrument

Primary data is collected through an online **structured questionnaire with close ended questions** to collect primary data that will be analyzed to fulfill the research objectives. The questionnaire is divided into several sections, including demographic information, social media ad characteristics, online customer engagement, and purchase intention. The questions are primarily based on previously validated scales from the literature, with adjustments made to suit the context of the study. The survey will be in English and questions are direct and easy to understand.

3.3.2 Questionnaire design

The questionnaire is divided into 3 sections as follow:

- **Section 1: Demographic Information :** Captures data on age, gender, education level, and social media usage patterns.
- **Section 2: Social Media Ad Characteristics:** Measures entertainment, interactivity, vividness, and informativeness of social media ads.
- **Section 3: Online Customer Engagement and Purchase Intention:** Assesses the level of engagement with social media ads, evaluates the likelihood of purchasing cosmetic products after exposure to social media ads and testing the mediating effect of online customer engagement

A **5-point Likert scale** is used for all items in Sections 2 and 3, where 1 represents "Strongly Disagree" and 5 represents "Strongly Agree."

3.3.3 Data collection procedure

The questionnaire will be administered through **online survey platform** such as Google Forms and social media channels. A link to the questionnaire will be shared via email, social media groups, and direct messaging allowing for broad reach and convenience for respondents.

3.4 Data Analysis Methods

Statistical package for social sciences software SPSS will be used to analyze the main survey responses and carry out the analysis needed to develop the empirical insights. SPSS is used as the primary tool, along with additional techniques for reliability, validity, and hypothesis testing.

- **Descriptive Statistics:** SPSS will be used to generate descriptive statistics, including frequencies, means, and standard deviations, to summarize the demographic characteristics of the respondents and the main variables in the study.
- **Reliability Analysis:** To ensure the internal consistency of the scales used for measuring social media ad characteristics, online customer engagement, and purchase intention, Cronbach's Alpha will be calculated using SPSS. A value of 0.70 or higher will indicate acceptable reliability.

- **Factor Analysis:** SPSS will also be used to perform **Confirmator Factor Analysis (CFA)** to identify the underlying structure of the variables related to social media ad characteristics. This will help in confirming that the survey items accurately represent the intended constructs.
- **Regression Analysis:** Multiple regression analysis will be conducted using SPSS to examine the direct effects of social media ad characteristics (e.g., entertainment, interactivity, vividness, informativeness) on consumer purchase intention and online customer engagement.
- **Mediation Analysis:** To test the mediating role of online customer engagement in the relationship between social media ad characteristics and consumer purchase intention, the study will employ the regression-based approach and validated through **AMOS** technique to ensure the robustness of the mediation effect.

4. Research Findings and analysis

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

4.1.1 Demographic characteristics

This part will tackle the research sample socio-demographic characteristics of the selected sample. The following table is an overview of the characteristics of the respondents in terms of frequency and percentage.

Table 1 Description of Demographic Characteristics among survey respondents (n=396)

		FREQUENCY	%
AGE	Less than 25	246	62.1%
	25 to less than 35	92	23.2%
	35 to less than 45	43	10.9%
	45 to less than 55	11	2.8%
	55+	4	1.0%
GENDER	Female	332	83.8%
	Male	64	16.2%
EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	Undergraduate Degree	187	47.2%
	High School	117	29.5%
	Master's Degree	69	17.4%
	Doctorate Degree	23	5.8%
INCOME	10,000 to less than 20,000 EGP	80	20.2%
	20,000 to less than 30,000 EGP	41	10.4%
	5,000 to less than 10,000 EGP	250	63.1%
	More than 30,000 EGP	25	6.3%
HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS SUCH AS: FACEBOOK, TWITTER, INSTAGRAM, TIKTOK ETC.?	Never	6	1.5%
	Rarely	16	4.0%
	Daily	321	81.1%
	4 to 5 times per Week	43	10.9%
	Once a Month	10	2.5%
HAVE YOU SEEN AN ADVERTISEMENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS DURING THE LAST 2 WEEKS?	Yes	327	82.6%
DURING THE PAST 2 WEEKS, HAVE YOU SEEN AN ADVERTISEMENT FOR A COSMETIC PRODUCT (SUCH AS: MAKE-UP, NAILS, NATURAL AND HAIR STYLING PRODUCTS)?	Yes	325	82.1%
DURING THE PAST 2 WEEKS, HAVE YOU SEEN AN ADVERTISEMENT FOR A PERSONAL CARE PRODUCT (SUCH AS: SKIN, SUN AND HAIR CARE, DEODORANTS, PERFUMES, MEN'S GROOMING PRODUCTS, BABY CARE AND ORAL CARE)?	Yes	322	81.3%
HAS A SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISEMENT INFLUENCED YOU TO PURCHASE THE ADVERTISED PRODUCT?	Yes	263	66.4%
HAS A SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISEMENT INFLUENCED YOU TO PURCHASE A COSMETIC PRODUCT?	Yes	246	62.1%
HAS A SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISEMENT INFLUENCED YOU TO PURCHASE A PERSONAL CARE PRODUCT?	Yes	265	66.9%
HOW OFTEN DO YOU PURCHASE COSMETIC AND PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA?	Never	51	12.9%
	Rarely	156	39.4%
	Daily	39	9.8%
	Weekly	33	8.3%
	Monthly	117	29.5%

4.2 Creating Indicators

The indicators created using equal weights methos are presented in the row form of Table (). These indicators will be used to answer the previously stated hypotheses. In this research, 9 main indicators will be created.

4.3 Reliability and Validity Analysis

Cronbach's Alpha reflects a good reliability of the research statements as its values range from 0.828 to 0.961 for the constructs which exceeded the threshold of 0.70. Also, the composite reliability varies from 0.508 to 0.925 which is above the preferred value of 0.50 and this proves that the model is internally consistent. Furthermore, the results of the CFA show that all items are loaded in their constructs as suggested in the proposed model, as the loadings of all items are greater than 0.50. On the other hand, AVE values are above the recommended threshold of 0.50 which indicates that the constructs could explain more than 50% of the statements and these values reflect a high internal validity.

Moreover, KMO values for all variables are greater than 0.5 and Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant for all variables which indicates adequacy of the sample.

Table 2 Reliability and Validity of the questionnaire in each category by using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient

Constructs	Number of Statements	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	KMO	Bartlett's Test	AVE	Item	Loading
Social media ad characteristics	19	0.907	0.508	0.871	7766.141 (0.000)	0.554	SMC1	0.75
							SMC 2	0.82
							SMC 3	0.73
							SMC 4	0.54
							SMC 5	0.56
							SMC 6	0.52
							SMC 7	0.64
							SMC 8	0.79
							SMC9	0.81
							SMC 10	0.7
							SMC 11	0.75
							SMC 12	0.65
							SMC 13	0.66
							SMC 14	0.63
							SMC 15	0.63
							SMC 16	0.74
							SMC 17	0.69
							SMC 18	0.72
							SMC 19	0.72
Entertainment	5	0.806	0.654	0.800	642.6 (0.000)	56.9 %	ENT1	0.75
							ENT2	0.82
							ENT3	0.73
							ENT4	0.54
							ENT5	0.56
Interactivity	5	0.817	0.672	0.816	664.05 (0.000)	58.03 9	INT1	0.52
							INT 2	0.64
							INT 3	0.79
							INT 4	0.81
							INT5	0.7
Vividness	5	0.795	0.637	0.800	548.85 (0.000)	55.38 %	VIV1	0.75
							VIV 2	0.65
							VIV 3	0.66
							VIV 4	0.63
							VIV5	0.63

Informativeness	4	0.804	0.707	0.792	481.8 (0.000)	63.12 %	INF1	0.74
							INF 2	0.69
							INF 3	0.72
							INF4	0.72
Customer engagement	9	0.897	0.691	0.919	1665.28 (0.000)	65.08 %	CE1	0.51
							CE 2	0.54
							CE 3	0.61
							CE 4	0.64
							CE5	0.56
							CE6	0.69
							CE7	0.64
							CE8	0.64
							CE9	0.64
Purchase intention	5	0.858	0.748	0.852	821.473 (0.000)	63.94 %	PI1	0.63
							PI2	0.65
							PI3	0.66
							PI4	0.63
							PI5	0.66

4.4 Answering Hypotheses

In this part, the researcher uses the path analysis to estimate the coefficients and significance of each path to test the theoretical model with the presence of a mediator.

4.4.1 First SE Model

The first SE model included the sub dimension of social media ad characteristics as the independent variables, the purchase intention as the dependent variable where online customer engagement as the mediator variable.

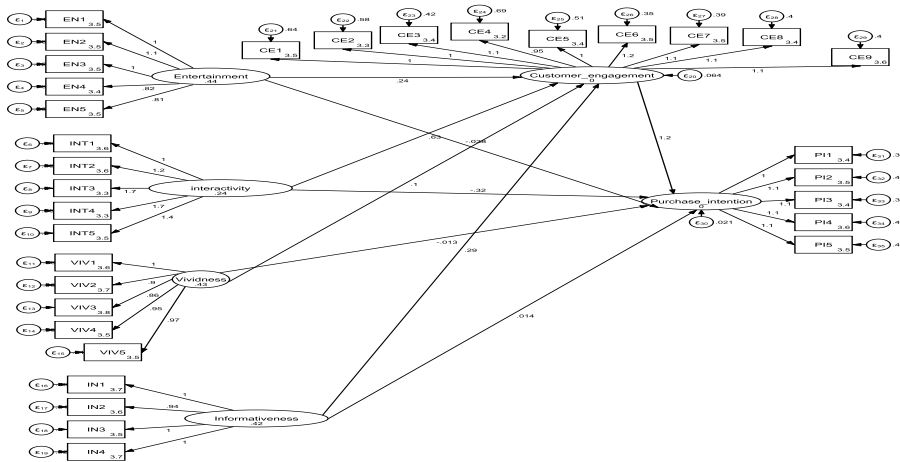


Figure 2: First Path Diagram

The following tables shows the estimates of the above model which can be interpreted as follows:

Table 3 Path coefficients and significances

	Coefficient	std. err.	z	P>z
Customer Engagement				
Entertainment	0.243319	0.048892	4.98	0.000
interactivity	0.630987	0.092	6.86	0.000
Vividness	0.099833	0.051006	1.96	0.049
Informativeness	0.291115	0.055765	5.22	0.000
Purchase intention				
Customer Engagement	1.209591	0.16118	7.5	0.000
Entertainment	-0.03841	0.058149	-0.66	0.509
interactivity	-0.32489	0.120388	-2.7	0.007
Vividness	-0.01274	0.055109	-0.23	0.817
Informativeness	0.014182	0.065435	0.22	0.828

Table 4 Direct, indirect, and total effects

Model	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	Interpretation
Purchase intention \leftarrow Entertainment	-	0.294	0.294	Full Mediation
Purchase intention \leftarrow Interactivity	-0.325	0.763	0.438	Partial mediation
Purchase intention \leftarrow Vividness	-	0.121	0.121	Full Mediation
Purchase intention \leftarrow Informativeness	-	0.352	0.352	Full Mediation

The overall model fit was assessed using a number of measures. The following table shows that the Chi-square value of 1782.38 with 528 degrees of freedom is statistically significant at 0.05 level which indicates that the model is not good fit, however Chi-Square test is very sensitive to the sample size. The results further exhibit that all fit indices obtained are satisfactory and within the suggested boundaries. Accordingly, the results confirm an acceptable fit of the proposed model.

Table 5 Goodness to fit indices

Indices	Abbreviation	Recommended Criteria	Results	Conclusion
Chi-Square	χ^2	P-value > 0.05	1782.38	Not Good Fit
Degree of Freedom			528	
Level of Significance			0.000	
Normed Chi-Square	$\frac{\chi^2}{DF}$	$1 < \frac{\chi^2}{DF} < 5$	1.493	Good Fit
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation	< 0.05 Good Fit < 0.08 Acceptable Fit	0.038	Good Fit
NFI	Normed Fit Index	> 0.90	0.956	Good Fit
RFI	Relative Fit Index	> 0.90	0.935	Good Fit
IFI	Incremental Fit Index	> 0.90	0.997	Good Fit
TLI	Tucker-Lewis Index	> 0.90	0.999	Good Fit
CFI	Comparative Fit Index	> 0.90	0.954	Good Fit

4.4.2 Second SE Model

The Second SE model included the social media ad characteristics as the independent variable, the purchase intention as the dependent variable where online customer engagement as the mediator variable.

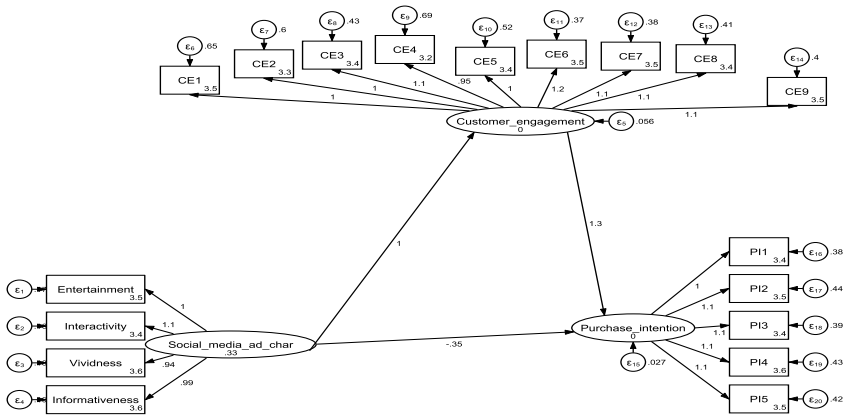


Figure 3: Second Path Diagram

The following tables shows the estimates of the above model which can be interpreted as follows:

Table 6 Path coefficients and significances (2)

	Coefficient	std. err.	z	P>z
Customer engagement				
Social media ad characteristics	1.045049	0.082139	12.72	0.000
Purchase intention				
Customer engagement	1.268582	0.188929	6.71	0.000
Social media ad charcteristics	-0.35035	0.183492	-1.91	0.056

Table 7 Direct, indirect and total effects (2)

Model	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	Interpretation
Purchase intention \leftarrow Social media ad characteristics	-	1.325	1.325	Full Mediation

The overall model fit was assessed using a number of measures. The following table shows that the Chi-square value of 13.803 with 3 degrees of freedom is statistically significant at 0.05 level which indicates that the model is not good fit, however Chi-Square test is very sensitive to the sample size. The results further exhibit that all fit indices obtained are satisfactory and within the suggested boundaries. Accordingly, the results confirm an acceptable fit of the proposed model.

Table 8 Goodness to fit indices (2)

Indices	Abbreviation	Recommended Criteria	Results	Conclusion
Chi-Square	χ^2	P-value > 0.05	370.68	Not Good Fit
Degree of Freedom			132	
Level of Significance			0.000	
Normed Chi-Square	$\frac{\chi^2}{DF}$	$1 < \frac{\chi^2}{DF} < 5$	2.81	Good Fit
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation	< 0.05 Good Fit < 0.08 Acceptable Fit	0.028	Good Fit
NFI	Normed Fit Index	> 0.90	0.946	Good Fit
RFI	Relative Fit Index	> 0.90	0.937	Good Fit
IFI	Incremental Fit Index	> 0.90	0.939	Good Fit
TLI	Tucker-Lewis Index	> 0.90	0.941	Good Fit
CFI	Comparative Fit Index	> 0.90	0.968	Good Fit

The results provide significant insights into the dynamics between social media advertising characteristics, customer engagement, and purchase intention. The key findings and their implications are analyzed below:

1. Entertainment's Impact on Customer Engagement (0.243, 95% Confidence):

Entertainment exerts a significant positive influence on customer engagement. This suggests that engaging and entertaining content in social media ads effectively captures consumers' attention, driving their active participation. The moderate effect size of 0.243 implies that while entertainment is important, its impact on engagement is not overwhelmingly strong, indicating that other factors also play a role in driving engagement.

2. Interactivity's Impact on Customer Engagement (0.631, 95% Confidence):

Interactivity has a much stronger positive effect on customer engagement compared to entertainment, with a coefficient of 0.631. This highlights that interactive features in social media ads, such as polls, quizzes, or comment sections, are powerful tools for encouraging users to engage. The large impact suggests that interactive elements are crucial for fostering active customer participation, which marketers should prioritize in their ad designs.

3. Vividness' Impact on Customer Engagement (0.0998, 95% Confidence):

Vividness also has a positive but much weaker effect on customer engagement. A coefficient of 0.0998 implies that while visual appeal and sensory richness of ads can contribute to engagement, their influence is limited. This result suggests that vividness alone is not a major driver of engagement, and should be complemented by other content features like interactivity or entertainment.

4. Informativeness' Impact on Customer Engagement (0.291, 95% Confidence):

Informativeness shows a significant positive impact on engagement, with a coefficient of 0.291. This means that ads that provide valuable, relevant information can enhance customer involvement. Consumers may be more likely to engage with content that offers useful insights or detailed product information, making informativeness a critical element for effective advertising.

5. Customer Engagement's Impact on Purchase Intention (1.21, 95% Confidence):

Customer engagement has a strong, significant direct impact on purchase intention, with a coefficient of 1.21. This indicates that when consumers are actively engaged with social media ads, they are more likely to convert their interest into purchasing behavior. The large effect size underscores the importance of

engagement as a key driver of purchase intention, making it a vital mediating factor in the relationship between advertising content and consumer actions.

6. Interactivity's Negative Impact on Purchase Intention (-0.325, 95% Confidence):

Interestingly, while interactivity positively influences customer engagement, it has a significant negative impact on purchase intention, with a coefficient of -0.325. This suggests that although interactive elements may increase engagement, they may not always translate into purchases. In fact, excessive interactivity may distract or overwhelm users, leading to lower purchase intentions. Marketers should be cautious about the type and intensity of interactive features to avoid negatively affecting conversions.

7. Entertainment, Vividness, and Informativeness' Insignificant Direct Impact on Purchase Intention (95% Confidence):

None of these three ad characteristics (entertainment, vividness, informativeness) has a significant direct effect on purchase intention. This means that while these elements contribute to engagement, they do not directly drive consumers to make a purchase. Their impact on purchase intention is likely indirect and mediated through customer engagement.

8. Social Media Advertising Characteristics' Positive Impact on Customer Engagement (1.045, 95% Confidence):

The combined characteristics of social media ads (entertainment, vividness, informativeness, interactivity) have a

strong positive impact on customer engagement, with a coefficient of 1.045. This reinforces the idea that well-rounded, dynamic ads are effective in encouraging engagement. Marketers should focus on integrating various ad features to maximize their influence on consumer engagement.

9. Social Media Advertising Characteristics' Insignificant Direct Impact on Purchase Intention (95% Confidence):

Similar to individual ad characteristics, the overall social media ad characteristics do not have a direct significant impact on purchase intention. This suggests that while these features are key to engaging customers, they need to be coupled with strong engagement to drive actual purchases.

10. Customer Engagement as a Mediator Between Social Media Ad Characteristics and Purchase Intention (Indirect Impact = 1.325, 95% Confidence):

Customer engagement fully mediates the relationship between social media advertising characteristics and purchase intention, with a significant indirect impact of 1.325. This implies that social media ad characteristics influence purchase intention only when they lead to customer engagement. Thus, engaging ads are essential for converting viewer interest into purchase behavior.

11.Customer Engagement as a Mediator Between Entertainment and Purchase Intention (Indirect Impact = 0.294, 95% Confidence):

Entertainment affects purchase intention indirectly through customer engagement. The indirect impact of 0.294 suggests that entertaining content in ads contributes to purchase intention primarily by increasing engagement. Without engagement, the entertainment factor alone does not directly drive purchase decisions.

12.Customer Engagement as a Mediator Between Interactivity and Purchase Intention (Indirect Impact = 0.763, 95% Confidence):

While interactivity has a negative direct impact on purchase intention, its indirect effect through customer engagement is positive, with a significant impact of 0.763. This indicates that interactivity can still contribute to purchase intentions if it effectively engages the audience, but when used excessively or inappropriately, it may lead to negative outcomes.

13.Customer Engagement as a Mediator Between Vividness and Purchase Intention (Indirect Impact = 0.763, 95% Confidence):

Vividness also impacts purchase intention indirectly through customer engagement, with an indirect effect of 0.763. This shows that visually appealing and immersive content can enhance purchase intentions when it successfully engages customers.

14.Customer Engagement as a Mediator Between Informativeness and Purchase Intention (Indirect Impact = 0.35, 95% Confidence):

Informativeness influences purchase intention indirectly via customer engagement, with an indirect effect of 0.35. This implies that providing useful information in ads can lead to purchases, but only when it increases customer engagement.

5.5 Result Discussion

The following table summarizes the results findings:

Table 9 Results findings summary

Hypothesis	Description	Results	Relationship
H1	All SMMAS has a significant positive direct impact on online customer engagement	Fully Supported	Significant
H1a	Entertainment has a significant direct positive impact on online customer engagement	Fully Supported	Significant
H1b	Interactivity has a significant direct positive impact on online customer engagement	Fully Supported	Significant
H1c	Vividness has a significant direct positive impact on online customer engagement	Fully Supported	Significant
H1d	Informativeness has a significant direct positive impact on online customer engagement	Fully Supported	Significant
H2	All Social Media Advertising characteristics has a postive direct impact on purchase intention	Not Supported	Insignificant
H2a	Entertainment has a positive direct impact on purchase intetion	Not Supported	Insignificant
H2b	Interactivity has a positive direct impact on purchase intention	Not Supported	Significant negative impact
H2c	Vividness has a positive direct impact on purchase intention	Not Supported	Insignificant
H2d	Informativeness has a Postive direct impact on purchase intention	Not Supported	Insignificant
H3	Online Customer engagement has a significant direct positive impact on purchase intetion	Fully Supported	Significant
H4	Online customer engagement fully mediates the relationship between social media advertising characteristics and purchase intention	Supported	Full Mediation with entertainment, vividness and informativeness and Partial Mediation with interactivity.

5.5.1 The impact of social media advertising characteristics on online Customer engagement

The first research hypothesis examines the relationship between social media advertising characteristics and online customer engagement. The findings shows that social media advertising characteristics has a significant direct positive impact on online customer engagement with coefficient equals to 1.045 which accepts hypothesis (H1). Entertainment, Interactivity, Vividness and informativeness all have a significant positive impact on online customer engagement with coefficient equals to 0.243, 0.631, 0.0998 and 0.291 respectively this confirms hypotheses (H1a, H1b, H1c and H1d).

Previous research examining the impact of various social media advertising characteristics on online customer engagement revealed the significance of the relationship indicating that entertainment, interactivity, vividness and informativeness are key drivers of online customer engagement which is suggested by (Saputro and Hidayat, 2021; Moran et al., 2020). In addition, regarding the impact of entertainment and informativeness on online customer engagement, this study found a positive significant relationship between informativeness ,entertainment on online customer engagement this was also backed up by (Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2011 and De Vries et al., 2012) However these results contrasts with (Sabate et al., 2014)

5.5.2 The impact of social advertising characteristics on Purchase intention

The second research hypothesis examines the relationship between social media advertising characteristics and Purchase intention.

H2: Social Media advertising characteristics has a significant positive relationship with purchase intention.

H2a: Entertainment has a significant positive relationship with purchase intention.

H2b: Interactivity has a significant positive relationship with purchase intention.

H2c: Vividness has a significant positive relationship with purchase intention.

H2d: Informativeness has a significant positive relationship with purchase intention.

The results showcased that social media advertising characteristics has insignificant direct impact on purchase intention this is with confident 95%. Each of entertainment, vividness, and informativeness have insignificant direct impact on purchase intention this with confident 95%, while Interactivity has significant direct negative impact on purchase intention this is with confident 95% and coefficient equals to -0.325. This fails to validate Hypotheses H2, H2a, H2b, H2c and H2d. This means that social media advertisements that are entertaining, vivid and

informativne does not increase the consumers purchase intent. Excessive interactivity may distract or overwhelm users, leading to lower purchase intentions. These results are in line with (Tuluk, 2021) however, these results are not consistent with previous literature which showed that including elements such as entertainment, interactivity, vividness and informativeness in a social media advertisements increases consumers intent to purchase (Kim and Ko, 2010; Gautam and Sharma 2017; Alalwan et al., 2018; Moslehpour et al., 2019; Choedon and Chan Lee, 2020; Vasquez et al., 2023)

5.5.3 The impact of online customer engagement on Purchase intention

H3: Online Customer engagement has positive relationship with purchase intention.

The third research hypothesis examines the relationship customer engagement and purchase intention. The findings of this research suggest that online customer engagement has a significant direct positive impact on Purchase intention with coefficient equals to 1.27. This validates Hypothesis (H3). This results highlight the importance of businesses cultivating a strong and engaging online presence on social media platforms, as it can have a significant impact on consumers' willingness to buy. The results are in-line with the findings of (Bismo et al., 2019; Chen and Xu., 2020; Zheng et al., 2022)

5.5.4 Online customer engagement mediates the relationship between social media advertising characteristics on purchase intention

The Fourth research hypothesis examines the mediating relationship between customer engagement and purchase intention

Finally, Online Customer engagement was found to mediate the relationship between social media advertising characteristics entertainment, Interactivity, Vividness and informativeness with coefficient equals to 0.294, 0.763, 0.763 and 0.35 respectively. However, online customer engagement fully mediates the relationship between Entertainment, Vividness and informativeness while, it shows partial mediation for the relationship between Interactivity and purchase intention. Hence, this supports hypothesis (H4). These results are inline with (Saputro and Hidyat, 2020; Supoththamjaree, and Srinaruewan, 2021) however the results contrast this research findings as it shows partial mediation between interactivity and purchase intention

5.5 Conclusion

The findings of the study demonstrate that customer engagement is a mediating factor between social media advertisements characteristics and purchase intention. Each of the components such as entertainment, interactivity, vividness and informativeness contribute towards engagement but it is the engagement which is the driver of the purchase decision. Advertisers should aim at creating advertisements that not only grab attention but encourages participation from the customers as

that is the most effective way of increasing purchase intention. They, however, should also be mindful of how certain social media advertising characteristics, particularly interactivity, may negatively affect purchase intentions if not balanced appropriately.

5.6 Limitations

Sample Representativeness: The findings of this study are drawn from a specific demographic group within the cosmetic and personal care industry in Egypt, which may restrict the generalizability of the results to other regions or industries. As the sample focuses primarily on consumers from Cairo, the results may not be reflective of other governorates in Egypt or broader markets within the MENA region.

Measurement Constraints: The study relies on self-reported measures of customer engagement and purchase intention, which can introduce potential biases, such as social desirability bias or inaccuracies in respondents' self-perception.

Focus on Specific Ad Characteristics: The research examines only four social media advertising characteristics—entertainment, interactivity, vividness, and informativeness. Other relevant factors, such as credibility, trustworthiness, or emotional appeal, were not included but may also influence customer engagement and purchase intention.

5.7 Recommendations

For Academia:

- **Expand Sample Size and Scope:** Future studies should broaden the sample size and extend the geographic scope to enhance the generalizability of the findings across diverse cultural and market contexts. Given that this study was conducted on Egyptian consumers in Cairo, it may not fully capture behaviors in other parts of Egypt or in other countries within the MENA region.
- **Examine Additional Ad Characteristics:** Further research should investigate other social media ad characteristics, such as emotional appeal, trust, and authenticity, to offer a more holistic understanding of the factors that drive customer engagement and purchase intention.
- **Incorporate Additional Mediating Factors:** Future studies should explore other mediating variables, such as brand trust or brand image, to deepen insights into how social media ad characteristics influence purchase intentions.
- **Consider Longitudinal Studies:** Researchers should conduct longitudinal studies to observe how customer engagement evolves over time and how it impacts long-term purchase behavior.

For Practitioners:

- **Enhance Engagement Through Interactivity:** Marketers should leverage interactive features in social media ads to foster customer engagement but must ensure these features do not overwhelm or confuse consumers, as excessive interactivity may negatively affect purchase intention.
- **Prioritize Entertainment and Informativeness:** While entertainment and informativeness may not directly lead to purchase intentions, they are crucial for fostering customer engagement. Ads should be designed to be both engaging and informative, as increased engagement enhances the likelihood of purchase.
- **Utilize Engagement as a Mediating Strategy:** Practitioners should focus on strategies that boost customer engagement, as this is the strongest driver of purchase intention. Engagement-centered campaigns can mitigate negative effects or neutral perceptions of certain ad features, such as interactivity, and convert them into positive purchase outcomes.

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