ANALYSIS OF THE FACTORS OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON CONSUMER'S BUYING INTENTION

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ABSTRACT

In a social media setting, it is critical to explore the constructs that drive consumers' reactions toward advertisements as the lack of understanding of these factors may lead to misplaced advertising for marketers online. This study creates a multifaceted advertising model that assesses the effect of informativeness, entertainment, irritability, and credibility on the valuableness of social media advertising and how these factors influence consumers' buying intentions. It adopted a covariance-based structural equation modelling approach where primary data was collected by administering questionnaires to a sample study of 364 selected participants, who were university students, employees, and entrepreneurs. The data gathered were analyzed using confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling method were used to examine the correlation between the identified predictors and purchase intention while validating the model constructed. The results established that a strong correlation exists between the perceived value of informativeness and credibility of social media advertising and customer buying intention. The findings, while frowning that advertisements with overly entertaining content may irritate potential buyers, posited that perceived value is critical in the conversion of advertising engagement into purchase habit. The study significantly highlighted that perceived value is the key mediator in the proposed model with a very strong correlation that impacts consumers' buying intention; that is, consumers who perceive value in the ads are far more likely to express their buying intention. The study recommended that advertisers should focus on making their social media ads more valuable to positively affect customer perceptions.

Keywords: Social media, Purchase intention, Structural equation model, Perceived value, Consumer behaviour, Social media advertising, Social media advertisement

INTRODUCTION

Consumer behavior, an interdisciplinary social science, draws from a variety of fields including sociology, psychology, behavioral economics, social anthropology, ethnography, and marketing. This discipline proves invaluable to marketing organizations, consumer groups, and governments alike, as a robust understanding of consumer behavior can significantly enhance sales for producers of goods and services (Lahiri, 2023; Williams, 2024). The complexity of consumer buying decisions arises from multiple influencing factors, which can be categorized into cultural, social, psychological, personal, and marketing factors (Cai, 2023; Pokhrel, 2023; Sharma, 2023).

In the present-day social networking landscape, social media has become an omnipresent term, and consumer behavior has been a subject of thorough investigation for more than 50 years (Cao, 2024). Research suggests that social media marketing utilizes a profound influence on end user's buying decisions and behaviors, with the potential to either significantly enhance or detract from an organization's sales performance (Antczak, 2024; Biasa et al., 2024; Cao, 2024). Although extensive studies have been conducted on the marketing of social media, a quick review of the literary work reveals that relatively few studies have delved into how social media advertising platforms affect consumer behavior. Despite the extensive discussion of social media marketing in terms of consumer behavior (Cai, 2023; Sharma, 2023; Antczak, 2024), much of the literature has predominantly focused on its broader marketing functions, with less emphasis on specific advertising strategies and their direct impact on consumer buying intentions. This gap in understanding serves as the primary motivation for the present study. The quality of advertisements significantly influences consumer behavior. In a digital environment, advertisements cater to consumers' hedonic needs by providing entertainment, information, and opportunities for social interaction, among other factors (Pokhrel, 2023). Therefore, it is imperative to narrow the research focus on the effect of social media ads on the purchasing behaviour of consumers to hypothesize the degree to which factors lead to actual consumer buying behaviour.

Wanting to explore the factors or constructs that enable online marketers to sustain a direct impact on consumer purchasing intent, it is crucial for marketers to enhance their understanding of the factors that shape customer attitudes and motivations, particularly in an era where consumers frequently create content about brands – an activity that was once solely controlled by companies. Thus, in the current networking space, where both consumers and marketers have embraced the use of social media, it is critical to explore the constructs that shape consumers' reactions toward advertisements. The lack of understanding or simplistic knowledge of these factors may lead to misplaced advertising and negative consequences for marketers. It is the purpose of this study to explore the possible impact that social media advertisements have on a consumer's purchase intention within the web space. More specifically, it attempts to look at the several factors driving consumers to react positively or negatively toward advertisements on social media sites and examine the degree to which social media advertising influences the buying behavior of consumers within the web space.

The study significantly contributes to the pool of research in the field, highlighting perceived value as the primary mediator influencing consumer buying intentions, with a strong correlation with informativeness and credibility. It exposes to social media marketers and advertisers that:

i. perceived value is critical in converting advertising engagement into purchasing behavior; that is, consumers who perceive value in an advertisement are more likely to express purchase intentions.

ii. social media adverts that are perceived as trustworthy are more likely to influence purchase decisions for consumers.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows: section 2 presents a review of literature in the context of background knowledge in advertising with the advent of social media and exposes some related works in the research domain; section 3 presents the methodology for the research, which entails the structural equation model-based and confirmatory factor analysis method; section 4 discussed the results obtained with emphasis on the constructs that could impact customers intention to buy an advertised product or service over the web while drawing significance on key findings and contribution; section 5 concludes the paper with recommendation and references.

Literature Review

Internet advertising enables two-way communication between advertisers and their audience, a feature that has gained prominence due to cultural and societal shifts with increased swiftness of transactions compared to old-style advertising methods (Sharma, 2023; Cao, 2024). One early form of online marketing, email marketing, involves sending promotional content to consumers' inboxes, often without their consent. This unsolicited approach frequently results in consumers being less receptive to promotional messages, undermining the primary objective of advertising and paving the way for more effective methods, such as social media marketing (Shi, 2023; Antczak, 2024). Social media marketing (SMM), in contrast, revolves around establishing a presence on social platforms and promoting a brand or product (Cai, 2023). It encompasses the use of influencers to endorse brands, building a dedicated audience, and utilizing paid advertisements targeted at specific demographics (Deepa et al., 2024; Fayvishenko et al., 2024). According to Deepa et al. (2024), this form of marketing is particularly effective when organic reach fails to adequately target the intended audience. Although paid social media advertising can be more costly than organic efforts, it is often the fastest way to achieve immediate results. In spite of the all-embracing conclusion of SMM in terms of consumer behavior (Cai, 2023; Sharma, 2023; Antczak, 2024), much of the literature has predominantly focused on its broader marketing functions, with less emphasis on specific advertising strategies and their direct impact on consumer's intention to actually make a purchase decision.

Many individuals perceive social media (SM) as simply a web space for sharing personal updates and images across networks like Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter (X), Instagram, Telegram, and TikTok. However, "it serves as a computer-mediated tool that enables its users to connect, create, share, and exchange information, ideas, and multimedia content within virtual communities and networks" according to Fayvishenko et al. (2024). From a broader perspective, SM has appeared as a cost-effective channel for information exchange, accessible to consumers, businesses, organizations, and governments alike. It offers a dynamic space for learning, educating, sharing, building, marketing, advertising, and improving upon ideas (Oliha, 2014; Akerele et al., 2023; Shi, 2023; Oliha & Usiobaifo, 2024). Social Media Advertising (SMA) has been specifically defined as "an online advertisement that incorporates user interactions, which the consumer has agreed to display and share. The advertisement showcases these interactions, along with the user's details (e.g., picture or name), as part of the ad content" (Biasa et al., 2024). In recent years, marketers have intensified their efforts to boost consumer engagement on social media platforms. While trying to capture consumer attention effectively, it is crucial to maintain a constant flow of fresh and engaging content (Deepa et al., 2024). Adding to this, a well-formulated strategy is essential for businesses entering the social media landscape, as those who have done so without a clear plan often experience disappointing results. Recent studies emphasize the profound influence of SM on customer purchasing choices, highlighting its importance as a tool for influencing buying behavior (Cao, 2024; Biasa et al., 2024; Deepa et al., 2024; Fayvishenko et al., 2024).

According to Ye et al. (2024), SM depicts a pivotal function in boosting customers' behaviour, specifically in influencing online purchases. The amount of time a consumer spends on social networking sites is directly correlated to the influence those sites have on their buying decisions. Over time, this influence tends to grow stronger (Mochammad et al., 2020). Purchasing intent, in this context, is described as "the likelihood of a consumer buying a product based on their need for it, their attitude towards it, and their perception of both the product and the company that produces it" according to Shanbhogue and Ranjith (2023). Continuous purchases from the same brand signal loyalty, which is the ultimate goal for marketers. SMA introduces new ways to foster and measure loyalty, as consumers who like a page or follow a brand on social media are less likely to unfollow, allowing companies to retain customers for an extended period.

The quality of advertisements significantly influences consumer behavior. In a digital environment, advertisements cater to consumers' hedonic needs by providing entertainment, information, and opportunities for social interaction, among other factors (Pokhrel, 2023). Several case studies have exposed some influencing constructs when considering the value of advertisements; Ye et al. (2024) emphasized the strong positive correlation between the construct of entertainment and perceived advertising value can possibly affect consumer buying intent. Other studies highlighted that factors such as entertainment, personal involvement, informativeness, and ongoing relationships play a crucial part in influencing consumer responses to ads (Hussain et al., 2022; Williams, 2024). Research conducted through a laboratory experiment involving 82 undergraduates revealed that informativeness, entertainment, and irritation influence consumer acceptance of advertisements (Karunarathne & Thilini, 2022). Similarly, a study of Vietnamese undergraduates by Hussain et al. (2022) found that "informativeness, entertainment, and credibility" were substantial predictors of the perceived value of SMA, which consequently influenced the intent to buy a product being advertised online.

Related Works

Ye et al. (2024) researched 231 respondents to find out the influence of ads on the buying habits of users and noted that advertising influenced the buying behaviour of consumers. They went further to espouse that "the necessity of advertisement, the pleasure of advertisement, dominance of advertisement, brand recall advertisement, and stimulation of advertisement influenced how the consumer reacts towards the brand or product of the advert". Furthermore, the impact of advertising on content community websites was found to be stronger than on social networking sites, particularly in terms of informativeness and entertainment. While their study was generally on advertisements and buying intention, the

present study is specifically targeted at social media ads. Sharma (2024), also noted that the antecedents of advertising value could have a positive relationship with personalization, while the flow theory, a concept that describes the immersive experience of users, is positively influenced by incentives, entertainment, and credibility. The work concluded that both advertising value and flow experience contribute positively to purchase intention. This conception forms the basis for hypothesizing that SMA can positively influence customers' buying decisions.

Hussain et al. (2022) in their study of 550 respondents concluded that SMAs should be entertaining, informative, credible, and have enticements committed to them; they further suggested that advertisers give the consumers the option of deciding whether or not to see an advert as this would reduce the Irritation and Intrusiveness of the social media ads. In the work of Cao (2024) where the concept of consumer behaviour was discussed extensively; they focused on the factors affecting consumer behaviour and their buying decision and outlined the different processes a consumer goes through before reaching a buying decision. However, not all social media advertisements are met with favorable responses from consumers.

A review of the literature reveals that several key factors shape consumer reactions and behaviors toward social media advertisements, including informativeness, entertainment, irritation, credibility, incentives, personalization, and the overall perceived advertising value (Sharma, 2023; Cai, 2024). These factors form the foundation for the argument that hypothesizes that social media advertisements (SMAs) may, in some cases, negatively influence consumers' buying intentions. This presents a critical area of investigation, highlighting the need for this study. Reiterating the primary scope of this research; to explore the factors driving consumer acceptance or rejection of social media advertisements. By adopting an exploratory approach, this study seeks to analyze constructs such as entertainment, credibility, irritation, informativeness, perceived value, and buying intentions of consumers, as outlined in the conceptual model illustrated in Figure 1.
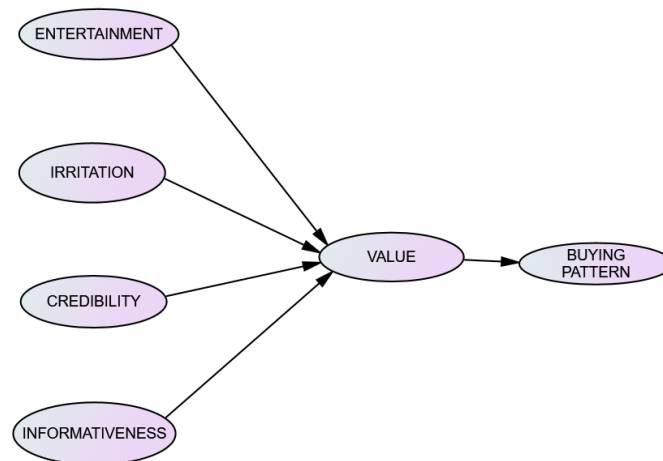

Figure 1: The Conceptual Model

Thus, the comprehension from the literature review and based on the proposed model, the questions hypothesizing this study are defined as follows:

H_0: SMA does not correlate with advertising value and Consumer Buying Intention

H_1: The perceived value of SMAs has a positive value on consumer buying intention

H_2: The perceived value of Social Media Adverts has a negative value on Consumer Buying Intention.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
Research Design
The research method conveyed the covariance-based structural equation modelling (SEM) approach. It employed a primary method of data gathering with a structured survey tool to establish the effects of SM advertisements on customer purchasing choices. A Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was utilized on the gathered data to critically examine the audience's general perception of social media adverts and determine if the audience viewed social media ads as valuable, whether or not they are favorably disposed to it; and also establish if their perceptions of social media ads affect their willingness to buying products or services.

The study did not restrict its population to a specific demographic, instead employing a randomized sampling approach with 364 participants. Data were gathered through a structured survey tool: a questionnaire designed by the researcher and validated prior to its administration. The survey comprised 28 items distributed across five sections, with data collection facilitated via Google Forms. Links to the questionnaire were disseminated through various social media channels and groups. The data gathered were analyzed using CFA within the SEM framework, employing the Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) tool. AMOS, a module within IBM SPSS, was selected due to its robust support for SEM, path analysis, and CFA, making it well-suited for exploring the relationships between factors influencing consumer buying behavior on social media platforms (Cai, 2023; Lahiri, 2023).

Descriptive Analysis for Respondent Profile
Out of the total data collected, 20 responses were invalidated due to incomplete or missing data, leaving a final sample of 364 valid respondents. A significant proportion of the respondents comprised students and workers, which added to the robustness and validity of the data collection tool, as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1: Profile Analysis

Attributes	Value	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	179	49.2
	Female	185	50.8
	Total	**364**	**100**
Age	16-20	54	14.84
	21-30	286	78.57
	31-40	17	4.67
	41-50	7	1.92
	Total	**364**	**100**
Category	Students	340	93.41
	Working Class	24	6.59
	Total	**364**	**100**
Usage	Use social media (SM)	364	100
	Do not use SM	0	0
	Total	**364**	**100**
SMA awareness	Yes	364	100
	No	0	0
	Total	**364**	**100**
Purchase via SMA	Yes	297	81.59
	No	67	18.41
	Total	**364**	**100**

The demographic breakdown of the survey respondents provides a comprehensive overview of the participant group involved in the study, consisting of 364 individuals. The analysis of gender, age, occupation, and social media usage presents valuable insights into the characteristics of the respondents, which can significantly influence their perception and interaction with SMAs.

The sample consists of a nearly equal gender split, with 49.2% of respondents being male (179 participants) and 50.8% being female (185 participants). This balanced gender representation is crucial for ensuring that the findings of the study account for potential gender differences in consumer behavior and responses to social media advertisements. Both genders show significant engagement with social media platforms, which enhances the reliability of the data in terms of generalization across a broader audience. The largest proportion of respondents, 78.57% (286 participants), falls within the 21-30 age range, indicating a predominantly young adult demographic. This group is typically highly active on social media platforms and is often targeted by marketers due to their high level of engagement with digital content. The 16-20 age group represents 14.84% (54 respondents) of the sample, further emphasizing the youthful nature of the respondent pool. A smaller percentage of the respondents are aged 31-40 (4.67%, 17 respondents) and 41-50 (1.92%, 7 respondents), indicating lower representation among older demographics. The dominance of younger respondents suggests that the study's insights into SMAs may primarily reflect the behaviors and preferences of younger generations. The majority of respondents, 93.41% (340 participants), identify as students, while 6.59% (24 respondents) are from the working class. This imbalance in occupation suggests that the findings will largely reflect the perceptions and behaviors of students, who may have distinct social media usage patterns and consumer behaviors compared to working professionals. Students are often a key target audience for social media advertisers due to their higher engagement rates and openness to new trends and products. All participants in the survey are active social media users, with 100% (364 respondents) indicating they use social media platforms. This confirms that the respondent pool is highly relevant for a study focused on SM advertising. The widespread use of SM among the examined participants highlights the importance of digital marketing strategies, as it suggests that SM has emerged as an integral part of their daily lives, shaping their purchasing behaviors.

In line with the focus of the study, all respondents (100%, 364 participants) reported being aware of SMAs, highlighting the pervasiveness of advertising on social media platforms. This widespread awareness further validates the significance of exploring the influence of SMA on client purchasing choices. It also demonstrates that the respondents are well-positioned to provide meaningful insights into their interactions with SMAs. A significant portion of respondents, 81.59% (297 participants), indicated that they have made a purchase through SMAs. This high percentage reflects the effectiveness of SMA in steering consumer actions and transforming online engagement into tangible buying decisions. However, 18.41% (67 respondents) reported that they have not made a purchase through SMAs, which may offer insights into potential barriers or negative perceptions of social media advertisements. The respondent profile highlights a predominantly young, student-based population that is highly active on social media and aware of SM advertising.

Factor Analysis

Variable constructs were defined with the intention of validating the reliability of the model and determining how well they would fit. Such constructs identified were: Informativeness (INF); Entertainment (ENT); Credibility (CRE); Irritability (IRR); Value (VAL); and Buying intention (BUY). The variables were latent to the model with their respective observed variables as indicators for measurement. Factor analysis was performed with the factor loading for each construct presented with the model depicted in Figure 2. Each latent variable is measured by multiple indicators (e.g., INF1, INF2, INF3).
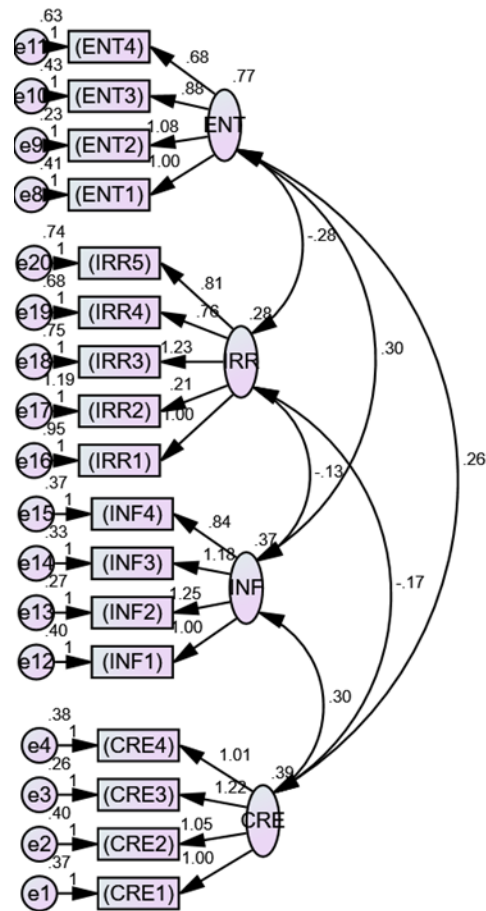
Figure 2: The Conceptual Structural Equation Model with Factor Loadings

Using Cronbach's Alpha, the internal consistency for each construct was measured for the model's reliability. The reliability of the model's construct is presented in Table 2. positing that the ENT was 0.847; INF was 0.846; CRE = 0.836; IRR = 0.734; VAL = 0.861, and BUY = 0.835. with all the values greater than the threshold of 0.7, it is indicated that the internal consistency across all the constructs is strong and good (Antczak, 2024). This further shows that the model's reliability is strong.

Table 2: Reliability of Constructs

Latent Variables	Observed Variables	Mean Value	Standard Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha (for Reliability)
Entertainment	ENT1			
	ENT2			
	ENT3			
	ENT4	11.810	3.464	0.847
Informativeness	INF1			
	INF2			
	INF3			
	INF4	15.28	2.863	0.846
Credibility	RE1			
	CRE2			
	CRE3			
	CRE4	12.27	2.945	0.836
Irritability	IRR1			
	IRR2			
	IRR3			
	IRR4			
	IRR5	16.381	3.0057	0.734

Value	VAL1			
	VAL2			
	VAL3	11.408	1.9647	0.861
Buying Intention	BUY1			
	BUY2			
	BUY3			
	BUY4	12.993	2.8237	0.835

The normality test usually meant to assess the level of skewness and kurtosis revealed that the indicators of VAL2, VAL3, and INF4 with respective values (-1.191, -1.046, & -1.006) are not within the acceptable range of skewness for normal distribution, while VAL2 and VAL3 exceeded the normal range with an indication of benign deviation from normality. However, other constructs were within the normal range of distribution.

Model Measurement
The model comprises latent variables, and each encompasses measurable indicators as depicted in Figure 2. The indices adopted for measurement were the "Chi-square Minimum Discrepancy/Degrees of Freedom (CMIN/DF), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)". Thus, the "Fit Indices and Values" are:

i. **CMIN/DF** indices had a model measurement value of 2.708. The value of 2.708 is acceptable and below the threshold (≤ 3.00), representing a good model fit.
ii. **GFI** indices had a model measurement value of 0.871. The value of 0.871 is slightly below the cut-off (≥ 0.90), suggesting a marginal fit.

iii. **AGFI** indices had a model measurement value of 0.839. The value of 0.839 meets the cut-off (≥ 0.80), indicating an acceptable fit.
iv. **NFI** indices had a model measurement value of 0.902. The value of 0.902 exceeds the cut-off (≥ 0.90), indicating a good fit.
v. **CFI** indices had a model measurement value of 0.901. The value of 0.901 meets the cut-off (≥ 0.90), indicating a good fit.
vi. **RMSEA** indices had a model measurement value of 0.069. This is acceptable and below the cut-off (≤ 0.08), representing a good model fit.

Overall, most indices suggest that the measurement model fits the data well. The model shows good fitness with acceptable values for CMIN/DF, NFI, CFI, and RMSEA with only the GFI not conforming to the ideal limit. However, AGFI is slightly below the ideal threshold, which suggests that there is an overfitting since AGFI is lower than GFI. Thus, further model adjustments might be beneficial.

Figure 3 is the adjusted SEM model with regression weights and paths between the variables. The additional constructs of value (VAL) and buyers' intention (BUY) have been added to adjust the model.
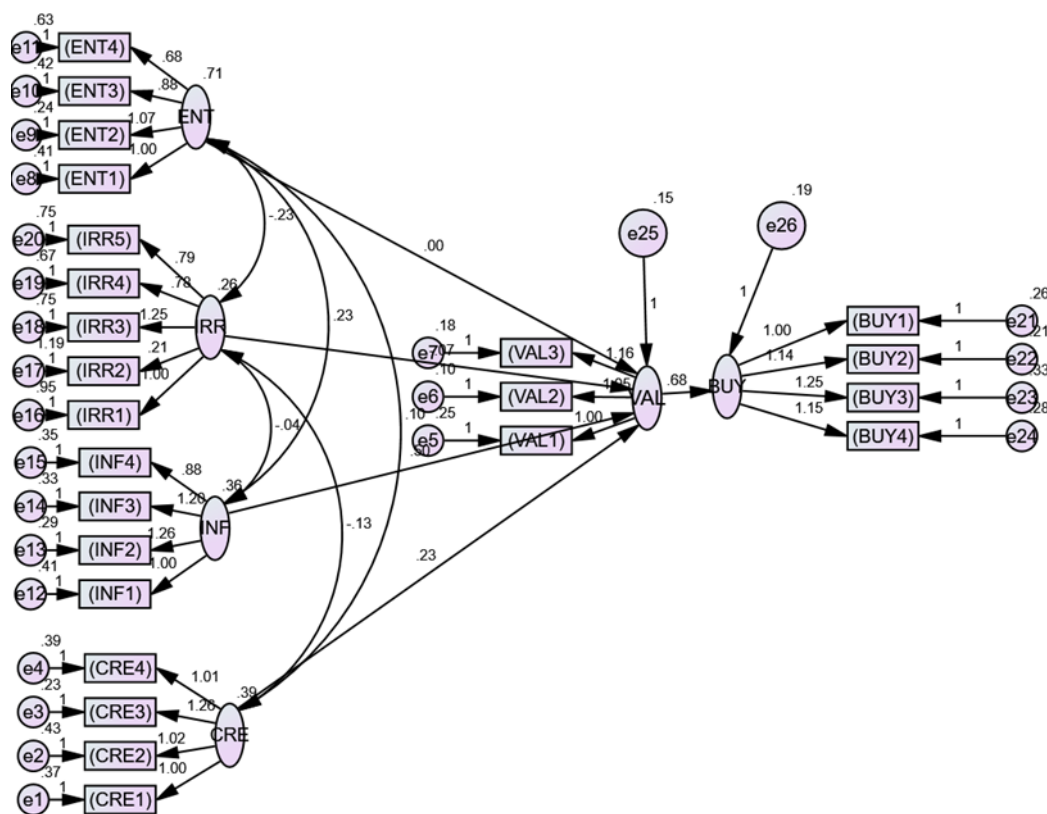

Figure 3: Weighted Structural Model

There seems to be evidence of direct and indirect associations between variables indicated by the flow of arrows in Figure 3. Also, the weighted values are evidence of positive and negative values among variables. The correlation and path coefficients determine the impact or effects with respect to the hypothesis being validated. Thus, a path analysis is paramount to determine such correlation and impact.

Correlation and Path Analysis
Table 3 and Table 4 presented the correlation values. The correlations between independent variables are presented in Table 3. The correlation values were assessed for variances among variables via the common method bias to check for multicollinearity existence. The relationship showed that some correlations such as `ENT ↔ IRR` and `CRE ↔ IRR`, show extremely negative values, which may point to method bias or indicate multicollinearity.

Table 3: Correlation of Independent Variables

Path	Correlation Value	P-Value
ENT < ---> IRR	-5.92	***
ENT < ---> INF	.560	***
CRE < --->ENT	.475	***
INF < ---> IRR	-4.04	***
CRE < ---> IRR	-4.96	***
CRE < ---> INF	.792	***

These correlations suggest significant relationships between variables, particularly those with high correlations like `CRE ↔ INF` with a .792 indicating a strong relationship while the negative values posit an inverse association among variables constructs. Table 4 presented the estimated path weights and correlation in terms of positive/negative impact on latent variables.

Table 4: Regression weights

	Path		Estimate	CR	P-value	Significant?
VAL	<---	ENT	-.002	-.033	.974	No
VAL	<---	IRR	-.072	-.756	.450	No
VAL	<---	INF	.538	4.957	***	Yes
VAL	<---	CRE	.133	1.374	.169	No
BUY	<---	VAL	.680	10.266	***	Yes

From Table 4 and Figure 3, the strongest associations were evident between 'INF and VAL' and 'VAL and BUY'. This indicates a strong correlation between buying intention and valuableness in the proposed model. Also, the indirect impact of INF on BUY indicates that while informativeness may enhance perceived value, it actually does not drive the intention to buy directly; it insignificantly drives buying intentions for consumers. Credibility portrays a direct impact on the value perceived and an indirect positive correlation on the intent to buy, making it a strong indicator for both the intention to buy and perceived value.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS
The respondent profile highlights a predominantly young, student-based population that is highly active on social media and aware of social media advertising. With a significant proportion of respondents indicating they have made purchases via SMAs, this demographic is key for understanding the impact of SM advertising on consumer buying behavior. The balanced gender representation and high awareness of SMAs among respondents suggest that the study's findings can offer treasured insights into how diverse constructs like informativeness, entertainment, irritability, and credibility affect consumer reactions to SMAs.

The proposed structural model explored the correlation between SMAs and consumer buying intention, with mediating factors such as informativeness, entertainment, credibility, irritability, perceived value, and buying intention. The primary purpose was to find the factors that exert the strongest positive influence on consumer purchase decisions. Structurally, the model consists of latent variable constructs: Entertainment (measured by ENT1, ..., ENT4), Irritability (measured by IRR1, ... IRR5), Informativeness (measured by INF1, ..., INF4), Credibility (measured by CRE1, ..., CRE4), Value Perception (measured by VAL1, ..., VAL3), and Buying Intentions (measured by BUY1, ..., BUY4), as depicted in Figure 3. These constructs were validated by previous research in related fields, serving as key indicators for measurement (Hussain et al., 2022; Pokhrel, 2023; Sharma, 2023; Biasi et al., 2024; Ye et al., 2024).

To assess the impact of these variables, their relationships were first evaluated, yielding evidence of both positive and negative influences. Path analysis revealed direct and indirect relationships, indicating that Entertainment and Irritability negatively affect perceived value, which in turn influences buying intention. This finding invalidates the null hypothesis (H_0), suggesting that "there is no significant relationship between SMAs and consumer buying intentions". Entertainment, in particular, exhibited a moderate loading, implying that while it contributes to the perceived value, overly entertaining content may detract from the value of a product or service being perceived. Irritability, although strongly loaded from its indicators, showed a weak negative impact on value perception, suggesting that irritation does not significantly influence perceived value in relation to consumer buying intentions. The negative coefficients highlight that ads perceived as irritating are less likely to be viewed as either entertaining or informative. This aligns with Hussain et al. (2022), who posited that overly entertaining ads could lead to consumer annoyance, thus diminishing their effectiveness.

In contrast, positive correlations were found among Entertainment, Informativeness, and Credibility. This implies that purchasers are more liable to perceive SMAs as

informative when they also find them entertaining or credible. The strong positive impact of these constructs on perceived value, with loadings above 0.8, suggests that both informativeness and credibility play a critical role in enhancing consumer perceptions of value. The model further demonstrates that higher perceived value leads to increased purchase intentions, establishing a highly significant and positive relationship connecting value perception and buying intention. The importance of providing meaningful and relevant information in SMAs is highlighted by this finding, as both credibility and informativeness significantly enhance customer's perceived value towards their buying decisions as substantiated in Ye et al. (2024). Another finding shows that higher levels of entertainment and irritation negatively impact perceived value, although the effect of irritation is relatively marginal. Neither of these constructs appears to be the primary drivers of consumer value perceptions in SMAs.

A notable finding from the study that significantly contributes to the pool of research in the field, highlights perceived value as the primary mediator influencing consumer buying intentions, with a strong correlation with informativeness and credibility. More so, credibility indirectly emerged as a significant factor, as ads that are perceived as trustworthy are more likely to influence purchase decisions. As such, credibility is not only positively correlated with buying intention but also reinforces perceived value. Thus, confirming that consumers who perceive value in an advertisement are more likely to express purchase intentions. This supports the hypothesis (H_1), which posits that "the perceived value of SMAs has a positive effect on consumer buying intentions." This finding aligns with the work of Karunarathne and Thilini (2022) and Ye et al. (2024), who argued that perceived value is critical in converting advertising engagement into purchasing behavior.

On the contrary, irritability weakens the structural model, as ads perceived as irritating tend to reduce consumer buying intentions. This suggests that stakeholders need to carefully manage the irritability factor in SMAs to avoid undermining their effectiveness. Ads that are both informative and credible, but low in irritation, are more likely to result in positive buying intentions. Advertisers should focus on crafting valuable, credible, and informative SMAs to enhance customer perceptions and increase purchase intentions while minimizing irritation to optimize ad effectiveness.

CONCLUSION

This study has proposed a structural equation model that explored how different dimensions of social media advertising can influence consumer's perception of purchasing an advertised product or service. Multiple constructs representing the latent variables and their respective indicators representing the observed variables were evaluated for the proposed model and the result was evidence of correlation and relationships that suggest that SMAs with positive perceived value on credibility and informativeness are strong predictors of actual buying intentions of online consumers. The findings substantiated the position of literary works in existing studies and confirmed the hypothesis that SMAs can affect consumer's buying intentions via their perceived value of informativeness and credibility. It recommended that advertisers should focus on making their social media ads more valuable to positively affect customer perceptions.

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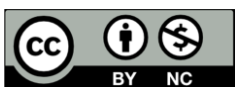
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