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IMPACT OF SHORT-VIDEO MARKETING ON APPAREL PURCHASE INTENTION AMONG GENERATION Z CONSUMERS IN CHENNAI CITY: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

In India, the e-commerce has growing fast with lots of innovations. The empirical study was conducted to investigate the effect of short – video marketing (SVM) on apparel purchase intention of generation Z in Chennai city. Consumer habit has shifted a lot, mainly among Generation Z. The study examine how the impact of short video marketing (SVM) on Gen Z apparel purchase intention using the stimulus organism response (S-O-R) framework. Analyzed via structural equation modeling in jamovi, the result confirms that short video marketing content acts as a significant stimulus (S), directly increase the purchase intentions (R) and Brand engagement (O). Brand engagement mainly mediates the relationship, proving that visual marketing drives buying decisions through active consumer involvement. However, Impulse Buying Tendency shows on moderating effect. Fashion retailers should focus on interactive visual storytelling rather that directs sales pitches to turn video views into sales.

Keywords: Short video marketing, Generation Z, Apparel purchase intention, User-generated content (UGC), Brand-generated content (BGC), Brand trust, Brand attitude, S-O-R framework

I. INTRODUCTION

Over the past decades, the world wide digital communication and consumer marketing had a huge profound transformations. This remarkable transformation driven by fast advancements in mobile broadband technology, a dramatic shift in digital content consumption habits, latest smart phone technology adoptions and social media platforms have evolved from the static text-and –image interfaces into dynamic, video centric ecosystems. Short video marketing platforms like Instagram reels, YouTube shorts, Moj, TikTok etc., are changed the global e-commerce into Social commerce, with the help of algorithmic marketing strategies, promotional budgets, and digital advertising models to rapid-consumption video formats. Social and cultural impact between the Gen Z represents the first generation of digital formers whose peer influence, and consumer socialization and predominantly know the expression through algorithmic social media feeds. Examining what is consumer culture, how short video

contents influences their purchasing behavior, impulse management, online spending habits among young adults globally.



(Source: magnific.com)

Scientifically, this paper validates and extends the classic psychological frameworks- (S-O-R) Stimulus-Organism-Response framework (*Mehrabian & Russell, 1974*) and Trait Activation Theory- within modern digital environments. Specifically, the study provides refined theoretical boundary conditions for social commerce research by empirically proving that brand engagement serves as an essential psychological mediator, whereas impulse Buying Tendency does not moderate the direct path. Social media platforms have solely shifted from static text-image-based inter faces to dynamic and highly visual short-form videos, like Instagram reels, YouTube shorts, and TikTok (*Ngo et al., 2023*). Gen Z (born late 1990s to early 2010s), who are digital natives that spend hours, on dynamic media every day, are the main audience for short- video content (*sinh & Truong, 2024*).

In Marketing, the transformation is unprecedented surge of short form video marketing (SVM) –characterized by the vertical, bite-sized, algorithmic content ranging from 15 to 60 seconds. In the retail industry, short video marketing has become a key tactic, especially in fashion and apparel. Short videos enable apparel brands to showcase products in a dynamic way in relatable, real-life settings by utilizing visual vividness, lifestyle esthetics, music trends, and direct product tagging (*Ngo et al., 2023*).

Online shopping platforms plays important role in the changes in the retail sector. While many products are sold online, from that fashion apparel is one of the fastest growing and most moving segments in India (*Chaudhary et al., 2024*).

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(Source: Alterainstitute.com)

The global social commerce market is seeing a substantial transformation, with market projections to exceed $2.9 trillion by 2030. This growth is being driven by the rapid adoption of short-form video marketing across platforms like Instagram reels and YouTube shorts, which account for more than $100 billion in global mobile ad, spend alone. The main demographic move toward visual commerce is Generation Z, representing more than 30% of the world's population and possessing over $360 billion in disposable buying power, with 75% of Gen Z shoppers saying short-video content directly impacts their apparel purchase decision.



(Source: Linkedin.com)

Although short-video shopping is of great economic scale, empirical research examining the exact psychological mechanisms linking rapid visual stimuli and consumer purchase decision is limited. Based on the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model, this study fills essential theoretical voids by examining how short-video attributes lead to purchase intentions via consumer brand engagement, and by testing individual trait impulsivity as a possible boundary condition among Gen Z consumers(N=282).

II. IMPORTANCE OF SHORT VIDEO MARKETING IN APPAREL

The fashion and apparel sector relies heavily on sensory apparel and dynamic storytelling. Short video marketing holds strategic importance due to several operational advantages:

- Short-form video content generates much higher engagement rates: such as click-through and interactions, compared to static image posting and traditional text ads.
- Shortened Decision Cycles: By directly tagging products in videos, we ensure seamless transition from content consumption to checkout.
- Algorithmic Reach: Social media algorithms favor video content, organic recommendations, and discovery feeds, enabling niche apparel brands to reach large audiences without prohibitive and spend.
- Immersive product demonstration: Video enables consumers to see garment drape, fabric movement, color fidelity and real-time combinations of styling.

III. NEED FOR THE STUDY

i. Shift to Visual Commerce: Gen Z depends on short-form videos (Instagram Reels, YouTube shorts) for product discovery, necessitating a study on how visual marketing revolutionizes modern fashion retail strategies.

ii. Revealing the Internal Mechanism: Although there are high video views, the psychological bridge from short video exposure(S) to actual purchase decision (R) remains unclear in research.

iii. Testing the role of Brand engagement: It is important to test the role of brand engagement as a mandatory mediator to empirically show that video views are not enough to generate sales without consumer engagement.

iv. Testing trait Boundaries: We can test if individual traits like impulse Buying Tendency alter video marketing effectiveness. This allows us to understand if short-video strategies are universally appealing or tied to impulsive behaviors.

IV. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Unclear Buying Journey: retailers pour significant investment into short-video content but have little understanding of the precise psychological mechanism that turns Gen Z consumers from passive video viewers into actual purchasers.

The Role of engagement: It remains uncertain if short-form video alone can generate sales or if active brand engagement is necessary to convert audience interest into purchase intent.

Uncertain Target Limits: Marketers are not sure if short-video marketing applies to all young consumers or to only those with a specific personal feature such as impulse buying.

V. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to investigate how short video marketing attributes shape apparel purchase intention among metropolitan Gen Z consumers. To address the identified gaps in literatures,

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To analyze how deeply Gen z in Chennai city engages with platforms like Instagram reels, you tube shorts and Moj, assessing their daily usage patterns and contents consumption habits.
2. To measure how core content dimensions- such as information, entertainment, and visual appeal- directly drive young consumer's decisions to purchase apparel.
3. To identify the specific innovative features, from trending audio to practical product try-on demos, best ignite buying interest, and influencer credibility.
4. To examine the purchase intention responses differ significantly across various key audience segments by comparing factors like gender, viewing frequency, and monthly clothing spend.
5. To transfer the findings into actionable strategies that guidance for fashion brands and local Chennai retailers to build short-video campaigns that truly resonate with Gen Z.

VI. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Unclear Buying Journey: retailers pour significant investment into short-form video content but have little understanding of the precise psychological mechanism that turns Gen Z consumers form passive video viewers into actual purchasers.
- The Role of engagement: It remains uncertain if short-form video alone can generate sales or if active brand engagement is necessary to convert audience interest into purchase intent.
- Uncertain Target Limits: Marketers are not sure if short-video marketing applies to all young consumers or to only those with a specific personal feature such as impulse buying.

VII. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

i. Short-video marketing as an engaging stimulus Zhang et al.(2021) investigated the impact of short video platforms on consumers behaviors and found that the fast paced and vivid video content is a strong external stimulus that can rapidly capture users attention, and viewers are much more likely to explore and purchase the products shown in the video.

ii. When considering contemporary social media shopping, Chemmanur and Rao (2022) applied the Stimulus-Organism-Response model have a direct impact on the internal mental state of a buyer, which subsequent influences the ultimate decision of purchase.

iii. Brand Engagement as an Essential Bridge: Khan and Rehman (2023) studied digital consumer habits and found out that video content rarely leads to direct sales on its own but rather functions by initially stimulating emotional engagement with the brand, Which is the real engine of customer decisions.

iv. Digital fashion discovery for Gen Z: Patel and Sharma (2024) investigated young consumers on Instagram Reels and TikTok, finding that Gen Z relies heavily on short video styling clips for everyday fashion inspiration, and they use these posts to develop purchase intentions.

v. Impulse vs. video engagement: Liu and Wang (2025) explored how personal buying traits affect social commerce and found that engaging, well- designed short videos trend to appeal to all young shoppers, whether a person is an impulsive buyer or a careful planner.

VIII. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design:

This study adopted a descriptive, quantitative, cross-sectional and empirical research design has been taken to examine the effect of short-video marketing on consumer purchase intention, with a focus on the mediating role of brand engagement and the moderating role of impulse buying tendency.

1. **Target Population:** The target population for this study is Gen Z consumers of Chennai city (born in the late 1990s to early 2010s) who are active users of Short-form video social media platforms (e.g., Instagram reel, YouTube Shorts, and regional video applications) and who have expressed interest in shopping for apparel.
2. **Sampling Technique:** This study utilized a Non-Probability Purposive and Convenience sampling Technique (Etikan et al., 2016; Saunders et al., 2019):

Purposive Sampling: Chosen because the participants were required to meet a specific operational criterion, namely, being active consumers of short-video content who use social media to search or research fashion and apparel brands.

Convenience Sampling: To efficiently target digital native respondents via online survey channels, such as, Google Forms Shared across university networks, digital messaging groups and social media platforms.

3. **Area of study:** Chennai City, Tamil Nadu, India (Zone coverage including North, Central, and South Chennai).
4. **Sample size Determination: N=282** valid responses obtained out of 327 distributed questionnaires (response rate = 86.23%)
5. **Data Collection Instrument:** Data was collected through an online structured questionnaire, which was developed by using Google Forms, focusing on Generation Z consumers who frequently consume short video content.

- Section A: Demographic and Usage Profiles.

- Section B: Short video marketing Features & content Exposure measured on 5-point Likert Scale (1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree).
- Section C: Brand Engagement
- Section D: Impulse Buying Tendency
- Section E: Apparel Purchase Intention
- Using a non-probability sampling method, the survey link was shared through university networks, social media, and digital messaging groups.

6. **Statistical Tools Employed:** In this study, Jamovi version 2.6 open-source statistical software for descriptive statistics and data cleaning. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and mediation/ moderation path analysis were executed using the SEMLj module.

IX. DATA ANALYSIS

Statistical analysis were conducted on the data while using jamovi version 2.6 and the SEMLj module on N=282 valid responses.

- **Descriptive & Reliability Analysis:** (Frequency tables, means, standard deviations, percentages) to provide an overview of demographic profiled respondents, while Cronbach's α and McDonald's ω verified scale reliability (>0.70).
- **Diagnostic & Fit Testing:** VIF matrices confirmed no multicollinearity (VIF< 3.0), and SEM fit indices (CFI=0.999, RMSEA=0.054, SRMR=0.008) demonstrated excellent model fit.
- **Hypothesis & path modeling:** Maximum likelihood valuation examined in direct effects (**H_1, H_2, and H3);** bootstrapped indirect effects are confirmed mediation (**H_4**) and interaction modelings are tested moderation (**H_5**).

X. FINDINGS

Respondent Profile & Scale Reliability

As per the study, all constructs demonstrated strong internal consistency. Cronbach's α and McDonald's ω values ranged from 0.830 to 0.869, comfortably exceeding the 0.70 threshold.

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Table 1: Sample Profile (N = 282)

VARIABLE	CATEGORY	COUNT (N)	PERCENTAGE (%)
Gender	Female	151	53.5%
	Male	128	45.4%
	Others	3	1.1%
Platform	Instagram Reels	209	74.1%
	YouTube Shorts	53	18.8%
	Pinterest / Regional Apps	20	7.1%
Daily Usage	<30 mins	53	18.8%
	30 mins – 1hr	80	28.4%
	1 -2 hrs	72	25.5%
	>2hrs	77	27.3%

Demographic & Diagnostic

Welch's ANOVA was applied because it does not assume equal variances across groups (homogeneity of variance). This makes it the standard, best choice when dealing with unequal sample sizes across demographic categories, such as gender (n= 151, 128, 3) and platform usage groups.

Table 2: One-Way ANOVA Test of Differences in Purchase Intention

Grouping Variable	Gender	Daily View Time
Statistical Test	Welch's ANOVA	Welch's ANOVA
Test Statistic (F)	0.766	3.050
3146.00Degree of Freedom (df1,df2)	2,5.44	3,146.00
Significance (p-value)	0.509	0.031
Post-Hoc Comparison	No significant differences across groups	30 mins- 1hr > < 30 mins (p=.023)
Interpretation	Gender does not significantly alter purchase intentions.	Moderate daily exposure (30 mins-1hr) drives significantly higher intent than minimal usage (< 30 mins).

Structural Equation Modeling & Path Analysis

$X^2(1) = 1.82$, p=0.177, CFI = 0.999, TLI = 0.994, SRMR = 0.008, and RMSEA = 0.054.

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Table 3: Structural Equation Model Fit Indices

Fit Metric	Observed Value	Recommended Threshold	Decision
X^2/ df	1.82	< 3.00	Excellent
CFI	0.999	≥ 0.95	Near Perfect
TLI	0.994	≥ 0.95	Near Perfect
SRMR	0.008	< 0.08	Outstanding
RMSEA	0.054	< 0.06	Excellent

Table 4: Hypotheses Testing Results (Path Analysis)

Hypothesis	Path Relationship	Std.Beta (β)	p- value	Result
H_1 (Direct**)**	SVM→ PI	0.443	< .001	Supported
H_2 (Direct**)**	SVM→ BE	0.467	< .001	Supported
H_3 (Direct**)**	BE → PI	0.382	< .001	Supported
H_4 (Mediation**)**	SVM → BE→ PI	0.179	< .001	Supported
H_5 (Moderation**)**	SVM x IBT→PI	-	0.660	Not Supported

XI. SUGGESTIONS

Focus on Engagement, Not Hard Selling: The main driver of purchase intent is brand engagement, not direct sales pitches. Focus on visual storytelling and interactive elements. Target the whole Gen Z Audience: Create broad-appeal content; because the video effectiveness works equally well regardless of the individual consumer impulsivity. Interactive platform tools: Utilize the product tags, polls, and trending sounds on YouTube and Instagram reels to maximize immediate user interaction. Maintain High posting Frequency to keep the brand engagement active and that drives continuous purchase intent among the viewers. For the Future Research, Carry out longitudinal studies in wider geographical areas to monitor actual repeat purchases over time.

XII. CONCLUSION

This research focused on empirically validates the impact of short video marketing in gen Z apparel purchase intentions (N= 282) through the stimulus organism response framework. Using structural equation modeling in jamovi, demonstrates that short video marketing act as a strong stimulus (S), directly driving purchase intentions and nurturing Brand Engagement (O). Importantly, Brand Engagement is an important mediator suggesting that visual short video content affects buying (R) mainly through active consumer involvement. Moreover, impulse Buying Tendency does not moderate this relationship, suggesting that these effects are universal, ultimately, fashion retailers need to focus on interactive storytelling rather than hard-selling tactics to turn view into commerce.

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