



The Influence of Interactive Social Media Advertising on Consumer Experience and Fashion-Product Brand Evaluation

Kyuree Kim, Te-Lin (Doreen) Chung, and Ann Marie Fiore
Iowa State University

Keywords: Interactivity, social media advertising, consumer experience, perceived value

Background and Hypotheses

Interactivity is a key element of online shopping experience (Fiore et al., 2005; Mollen & Wilson, 2010) and an important factor that leads to pleasant experiences in digital advertising (Belanche et al., 2017). In particular, social media has proven to be an attractive interactive advertising channel that allows for two-way communication between businesses and consumers as well as among consumers (Sreejesh et al., 2020). Interactive social media advertising enables consumers to perform actions (e.g., swiping, clicking, or typing) to interactively respond to the ad content. However, we have found no research that has examined the influence of interactivity within social media advertising on consumer experience from the experience economy perspective. The experience economy, proposed by Pine and Gilmore (1999), emphasizes the importance of offering the 4Es (i.e., entertainment, esthetic, educational, and escapist experiences) to fully engage consumers. The present study employed Pine and Gilmore's (1999) 4Es to examine the effect of interactive social media advertising on various aspects of consumer experience and brand evaluation. This study aims to understand the association between the interactivity within social media advertisement and the 4Es (H1) and further investigates the relationship between the 4Es and perceived value associated with a brand (H2 - H4). Similar to the 4Es from mall shopping (Sadachar & Fiore, 2018), the 4Es from viewing social media ads may enhance the brand's hedonic value (i.e., emotional and sensory values) and social value. In addition, utilitarian value may be impacted by sensory (esthetic) elements of the shopping environment (Dubé & Morin, 2001; Kim et al., 1996) and learning (i.e., educational) experience (Babin et al., 1994; Hall-Phillips et al., 2016) when viewing social media ads. See *Figure 1* for the proposed hypotheses.

Method

A 2 (fashion-product category) x 2 (level of interactivity) experimental design study was employed to examine the effect of interactive social media advertising across two fashion-product brands (apparel, jewelry), which were included to enhance internal validity. This study focused on Instagram, which is the most influential social media platform for fashion brands to publicize their products (Casaló et al., 2020). Mockup Instagram ads were developed as stimuli using commercial images and videos provided by one apparel brand and one jewelry brand confirmed as not well known by our respondents. Stimuli representing a high level of interactivity were designed in the Story format by using various interactive features (e.g., poll stickers); stimuli representing a low level of interactivity consisted of traditional ads with minimum interactive features (e.g., swiping). Other aspects of the ads were held constant, and

pretests ensured likability of the products presented and significant difference in level of interactivity among treatments. U.S. female consumers between the ages of 18 and 34 who used Instagram were recruited to participate in an online survey through Amazon Mechanical Turk. Participants were randomly assigned into one of four ad treatment groups. Reliable scales measuring the 4Es and perceived value constructs were adapted from previous studies.

Results

After screening out invalid responses, 807 usable responses were retained for data analysis. The sample's average age was 28, and over 60% identified as White (64.3%), followed by Black or African American (11.0%), and Asian (9.8%). Structural equation modeling (SEM) with Maximum Likelihood (ML) estimation was conducted, following the two-step approach recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). First, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to assess the measurement model. The model fit indices indicated an acceptable fit: $\chi^2(486) = 1960.39$, $p < .001$, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .04. Internal consistency and convergent validity for latent constructs were confirmed using Hu and Bentler's (1999) criteria. Next, the structural model was tested using SEM and yielded an acceptable fit: $\chi^2(496) = 2067.49$, $p < .001$, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .05. The results are presented in *Figure 1*.

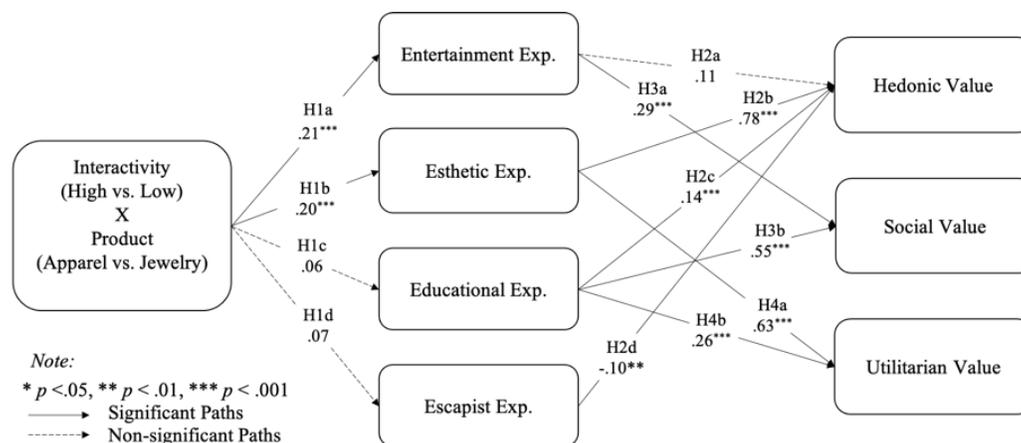


Figure 1. Hypothesis Testing Results

Discussion and Conclusion

The results indicated that social media ad interactivity enhances entertainment and aesthetic experiences, whereas educational and escapist experiences were non-significant. The four realms of experience, except for escapist experience, contributed to the perceived value associated with the brand. Esthetic experience had the highest level of positive association with both hedonic value and utilitarian value, supporting the idea that for fashion products, using aesthetically pleasing visual content on Instagram is crucial for fostering pleasure as well as conveying commercial information (Kusumasondjaja, 2020). The significant effect of educational experience on social value suggests that knowledge acquisition and information sharing on social media generates social support (Hajli, 2014). Although we expected no effect

of product category, it did moderate the relationship between interactivity and escapist experience ($\beta = .09, p = .02$), which may be attributed to the differences in the imagery provided by the two brands presented in the ad content.

This study extends interactive marketing and social media communication research by examining experience economy aspects of consumer experience generated by social media advertising. The findings provide insight regarding the impact of social media advertising interactivity on experiences and consequent perceptions among young female consumers, the main Instagram users, which informs the strategic use of interactive features in social media advertising design. The results suggest that small and medium businesses with limited resources and technological competence may gain an advantage through using interactive features offered in Instagram Stories to create fun, visually inspiring, and educational experiences. A caveat – the experimental setting and compensation may have limited the creation of higher-order experiences, particularly escapist experience, affecting the study's results. Future studies may consider replicating the study with consumers who participated in an actual brand campaign that involves interactive social media advertising.

References

- Anderson, J. C., & Gerbing, D. W. (1988). Structural equation modeling in practice: A review and recommended two-step approach. *Psychological Bulletin, 103*(3), 411-423.
- Babin, B. J., Darden, W. R., & Griffin, M. (1994). Work and/or fun: Measuring hedonic and utilitarian shopping value. *Journal of Consumer Research, 20*(4), 644-656.
- Belanche, D., Cenjor, I., & Pérez-Rueda, A. (2019). Instagram Stories versus Facebook Wall: An advertising effectiveness analysis. *Spanish Journal of Marketing-ESIC, 23*(1), 69-94.
- Casaló, L. V., Flavián, C., & Ibáñez-Sánchez, S. (2020). Be creative, my friend! Engaging users on Instagram by promoting positive emotions. *Journal of Business Research, ahead-of-print*(ahead-of-print).
- Dubé, L., & Morin, S. (2001). Background music pleasure and store evaluation: Intensity effects and psychological mechanisms. *Journal of Business Research, 54*(2), 107-113.
- Fiore, A. M., Kim, J., & Lee, H. H. (2005). Effect of image interactivity technology on consumer responses toward the online retailer. *Journal of Interactive Marketing, 19*(3), 38-53.
- Hajli, M. N. (2014). A study of the impact of social media on consumers. *International Journal of Market Research, 56*(3), 387-404.
- Hall-Phillips, A., Park, J., Chung, T. L., Anaza, N. A., & Rathod, S. R. (2016). I (heart) social ventures: Identification and social media engagement. *Journal of Business Research, 69*(2), 484-491.
- Hu, L. T., & Bentler, P. M. (1999). Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal, 6*(1), 1-55.
- Kim, J., Allen, C. T., & Kardes, F. R. (1996). An investigation of the mediational mechanisms underlying attitudinal conditioning. *Journal of Marketing Research, 33*(3), 318-328.

- Kusumasondjaja, S. (2020). Exploring the role of visual aesthetics and presentation modality in luxury fashion brand communication on Instagram. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 24(1), 15-31.
- Mollen, A., & Wilson, H. (2010). Engagement, telepresence and interactivity in online consumer experience: Reconciling scholastic and managerial perspectives. *Journal of Business Research*, 63(9-10), 919-925.
- Pashkevich, M., Dorai-Raj, S., Kellar, M. & Zigmond, D. (2012). Empowering online advertisements by empowering viewers with the right to choose: The relative effectiveness of skippable video advertisements on YouTube. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 52(4), 451-457.
- Pine, B. J., & Gilmore, J.H. (1999). *The experience economy*. Harvard Business School Press.
- Sadachar, A., & Fiore, A. M. (2018). The path to mall patronage intentions is paved with 4E-based experiential value for Indian consumers. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 46(5), 442-465.
- Sreejesh, S., Paul, J., Strong, C., & Pius, J. (2020). Consumer response towards social media advertising: Effect of media interactivity, its conditions and the underlying mechanism. *International Journal of Information Management*, 54, 102155.