Advertisements on TV or Online: Which makes customers more likely to buy? With the mediating role of length of the video

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ABSTRACT
This research investigates the intricate dynamics influencing consumer behavior in the context of television (TV) advertising, online advertisements, video length, and purchase intentions. With the primary objectives of assessing the impact of TV advertising and online advertisements on consumer behavior, the study formulates and tests hypotheses related to these relationships. Utilizing a quantitative approach and the sample survey method, the study employs Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to analyze the interrelationships between the selected variables within a sample of 400 participants in Sri Lanka. Acceptance of hypotheses H_1 and H_2 underscores the substantial impact of TV advertising and online advertisements on consumer behavior. Standardized regression coefficients indicate significant positive relationships between TV advertising and both consumer purchase intention and video length. Similarly, a distinct influence of online advertisements is highlighted, demonstrating a substantial positive relationship with consumer purchase intention.
Examining direct paths from TV advertising and online advertisements to consumer purchase intention, with video length as a mediating variable, suggests partial mediation. These findings provide actionable insights for marketers, emphasizing the intricate relationships among advertising mediums, content characteristics, and consumer decision-making.
Keywords: TV Advertisement, Online Advertisement, Length of video and Consumer purchase intention.

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1.0. Introduction

Advertisements play a vital role in shaping consumer behavior and influencing purchase decisions. The evolution of technology has expanded the advertising landscape from traditional television (TV) commercials to encompass online platforms (Halley et al., 2022). This transformation prompts inquiries into the effectiveness of TV versus online advertisements in persuading customers to make purchases. Additionally, the duration of video advertisements has emerged as a potential factor influencing consumer behavior (Mishra & Vashiath, 2017).

In today's digital age, businesses continually seek effective advertising strategies to capture potential customers' attention and influence their purchasing decisions (Ismail & Yousuf, 2020; Mishra & Vashiath, 2017). The surge of television and online platforms poses the challenge of determining which medium is more effective in steering consumer behavior (Pongiannan & Chinnasamy, 2014).

According to Yamini Sequeira (2023), there is a noticeable shift in advertising expenditure from traditional to digital media. However, this transition is not absolute, as businesses and advertising agencies need to evaluate each marketing communications medium's ecosystem to ensure their messages reach the intended audiences. Television maintains a prominent position with an impressive 75% reach, affirming its continued dominance as a primary source of entertainment and information. Radio closely follows with a 37% audience reach, emphasizing its enduring popularity and accessibility, especially in regions with lower TV penetration. Print media sustains a noteworthy presence with a 21% reach, highlighting traditional newspapers and magazines' significant role in disseminating news and advertising content. The digital realm has rapidly gained ground, capturing 48% of the audience, indicating the increasing reliance on online platforms for information and entertainment. Despite the proliferation of digital media, cinema retains a niche but dedicated audience, securing a 2% reach. This comprehensive distribution of media reach in Sri Lanka indicates a nuanced and adaptable advertising landscape where advertisers strategically diversify their channels to connect with a broad and varied audience across traditional and digital platforms (LMD, 2023). In the rapidly evolving advertising landscape, businesses face the critical decision of choosing between traditional television (TV) and online platforms to maximize the impact of their advertisements on customers' purchasing behavior (Rai, 2013).

As of 2023, the advertising industry is undergoing a paradigm shift, with digital ad spending projected to surpass traditional TV advertising expenditures (Statista, 2023). The prevalence of online streaming platforms, social media, and video-sharing websites has reshaped the advertising landscape, challenging the dominance of traditional TV advertising. With the increasing use of smartphones, consumer behaviors have further shifted towards online channels, intensifying the competition between TV and online advertising (Ahamed, 2017). Businesses grapple with the need to allocate their advertising budgets effectively to reach their target audience in a market where attention spans are shorter, and the digital space is crowded with diverse content (Jain et al., 2018).

Past studies offer conflicting perspectives on the effectiveness of TV and online advertising in influencing consumer purchasing decisions. While some research suggests that TV advertisements, with their ability to reach a broad audience, continue to be influential (Dirin et al., 2019; Anjum et al., 2015), others argue that the interactive and personalized nature of online advertising provides a more direct and engaging pathway to consumer action (Aslam et al., 2021; Belanche et al., 2020). Furthermore, existing literature may present diverse viewpoints on the mediating role of video length, with some scholars asserting its significance in capturing consumer attention, while others downplay its impact (Bellman et al., 2020; Chungviwatanant & Chungviwatanant, 2017). This research aims to investigate whether advertisements on TV or online have a greater impact on customers' likelihood to make a purchase, considering the mediating role of the video length.

2.0. Literature review

2.1. The Rise of TV Advertisements.

Many consumers don't simply opt for whatever is available or inexpensive; they seek good value for their money. Advertising plays a crucial role in illustrating the quality and worth of a product to consumers. According to Sama (2019), television emerges as a superior medium for advertising a product compared to others. Furthermore, research by Rai (2013) indicates that an emotional response establishes a strong connection between consumer buying behavior and the emotional impact generated by television ads.

Television has maintained its dominance as an advertising medium since its inception. TV advertisements possess the advantage of reaching a broad audience and have traditionally been considered a potent tool for influencing consumer behavior. Advertisers allocate substantial resources to craft captivating and compelling TV commercials that grab viewers' attention (Ramzan, 2019). The visual and auditory elements of TV ads, combined with their capacity to evoke emotions and convey narratives, contribute to their effectiveness in shaping customer purchasing decisions. TV advertisements often utilize storytelling techniques to engross viewers and establish an emotional link with the promoted brand or product (You & Joshi, 2020). These narratives can elicit positive emotions, such as happiness, nostalgia, or excitement, influencing consumers' attitudes and intentions towards the advertised product. Additionally, the repetition of TV advertisements can reinforce brand recall and recognition, thereby increasing the likelihood of purchase (Frade et al., 2021).

2.2. The Emergence of Online Advertisements.

In recent times, online platforms have witnessed a substantial surge in popularity as a prominent advertising medium. The emergence of the internet and the widespread use of smartphones have induced a transformation in consumer behavior, with individuals dedicating more time to online activities. This transition has opened up novel opportunities for advertisers to connect with their target audience through online advertising channels (Ahamed, 2017; Dirin et al., 2019).

According to Karimi et al. (2013), online advertisements present several advantages compared to TV commercials. Firstly, online platforms facilitate precise targeting, empowering advertisers to reach specific demographics and tailor their messages accordingly. This targeted approach enhances the relevance of advertisements, increasing the likelihood of resonating with viewers and influencing their purchasing intentions. Furthermore, online advertisements often incorporate interactive elements, such as clickable links or videos, which can actively engage viewers and provide additional information about the promoted product (Halley et al., 2022).

2.3. Role of Video Length.

While both television (TV) and online advertising offer distinct advantages, the duration of a video advertisement emerges as a critical factor in determining its effectiveness. The length of an advertisement can significantly influence consumers' attention, engagement, and their overall perception of the conveyed message (Ismail & Yusof, 2020). Therefore, it is imperative to explore the mediating role of video length in understanding how both TV and online advertisements impact customers' purchasing intentions (Ramzan, 2019).

Shorter advertisements, often labeled as "snackable content," have become increasingly popular in recent times. These concise ads, typically lasting only a few seconds, aim to capture viewers' attention in the brisk digital environment (You & Joshi, 2020; Aslam et al., 2021). Shorter ads are commonly employed on online platforms, catering to users with shorter attention spans who are more likely to skip or disregard longer advertisements. The brevity of these ads necessitates advertisers to convey their message succinctly and creatively, recognizing the significance of each second (Belanche et al., 2020).

In contrast, TV advertisements tend to have longer durations, ranging from a few seconds to several minutes. The extended length allows for more intricate storytelling and the inclusion of additional information about the product (Bellman, 2020). Longer TV commercials can construct a narrative arc, fostering suspense and emotional connections with viewers. However, the drawback of lengthier advertisements lies in the potential loss of viewers' attention or the perception of intrusiveness, leading to diminished effectiveness (Arif et al., 2021).

2.4. Purchase Intention

As highlighted by Aslam et al. (2021), the key indicator of advertising effectiveness is deemed to be the intention to purchase. Almaki et al. (2019) observe that scholars with various perspectives on consumer decision-making are likely to converge over time. According to Anjum et al. (2015), an individual's purchase intention is described as "the decision to act or a physiological action that reflects how a person behaves toward a product." Gilaninia et al. (2013) support these definitions, asserting that a consumer's online purchase intention refers to "the extent to which he or she is willing to buy a product through an online store." Hence, a consumer's purchase intention represents the probability of their actual purchase (Park, 2000).

This inclination is associated with demographic factors like age, gender, profession, and education (Lu, 2007; Daneshvary & Schwer, 2000) and is influenced by variables such as product features, consumers' perceptions of them, and their perspectives on the product's country of origin (Gakobo & Jere, 2016).

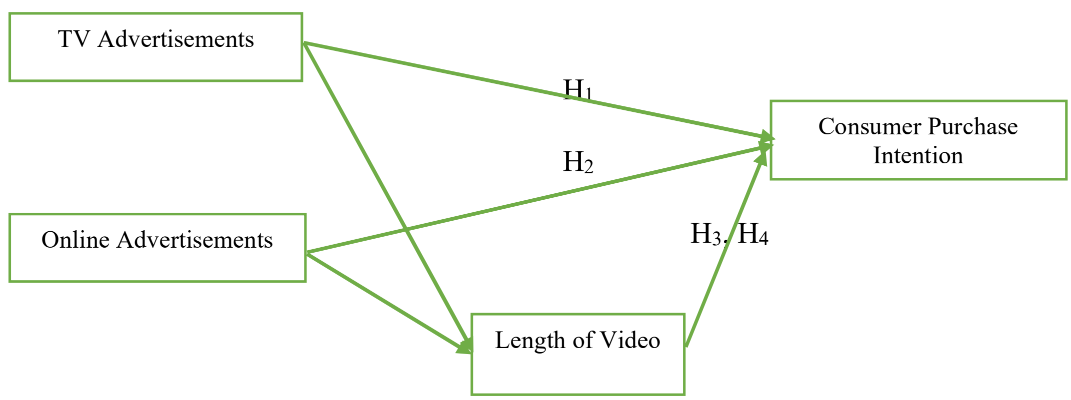
3.0. Methodology

This research employed a quantitative approach and utilized the sample survey method, aligning with the research objective of examining the interrelationships among selected variables within a sample and extrapolating the findings to the broader population in Sri Lanka. To gain a deeper understanding of the issue, explanatory research was conducted, as limited studies had explored the relationship between TV and online advertisements and consumer purchase intent. Sekaran & Bougue (2013) support this approach, highlighting that studies involving hypothesis testing often aim to elucidate the nature of specific relationships or establish differences among groups or the independence of factors in a given context.

The random sampling technique, a form of probability sampling, was chosen due to its appropriateness for known populations and ease of data collection. This method was preferred as it is cost-effective, simpler to set up, and offers sufficient representativeness within the research's defined scope. The sample size was determined to be 400 consumers.

This study relied on both primary and secondary data, collected through various sources and methods. Primary data, obtained directly from those who will use it, was gathered through questionnaires. Secondary data, already used for purposes other than the original collection, was sourced from existing information available on websites, books, and journals.

3.1. Conceptual Framework and hypotheses development



Source: Adopted and Modified from Bushra et al., (2015); Ahmed, (2017)

Based on the above literature and conceptual framework, the following hypotheses have been developed

H_1: There is a positive relationship TV Advertisements and consumer purchase intent

H_2: There is a positive relationship between Online advertisements and consumer purchase intent

H_3: Length of video mediates the relationship between TV advertisements and consumer purchase intent

H_4: Length of video mediates the relationship between Online advertisements and consumer purchase intent

4.0. Data Analysis

The gathered data underwent analysis through SPSS 23.0 and AMOS, incorporating Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The analytical approach encompasses various techniques, including descriptive analysis, multivariate analysis, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), correlation and regression analysis, as well as path analysis. These methodologies are employed to assess hypotheses, gauge model fit, and conduct tests on the mediation effect.

4.1. Sample Description

This study utilized an online survey to distribute questionnaires to 400 participants, with 40 questionnaires excluded from the final sample due to incompleteness or non-serious response behavior. A total of 360 valid and complete responses were gathered for subsequent analysis.

In terms of gender distribution, 48% of the participants identified as male, while 52% identified as female. Age-wise, 34% of the respondents fell between the ages of 25 and 38, 12% were between 45 and 54, and 20% and 16%, respectively, were in the age groups of 35-54 and over 55. Notably, the sample demonstrates a robust representation of age groups older than 35.

Regarding education levels, participants exhibited diversity, with 20% holding NVQ qualifications, 16% having a Higher National Diploma, and 32% possessing a bachelor's degree. Additionally, 18% had completed G.C.E. (A/L), and 7% held a master's degree. This composition highlights a well-educated respondent base capable of critically evaluating advertisements on television and online platforms.

Income distribution showed an approximately equal division among the first two income brackets, with 32% falling below Rs. 50,000 and 40% within the range of Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 99,000, while 22% reported an income of Rs. 100,000 and above. Marital status revealed that 44% of participants were single, 30% were in a relationship, and 20% were married with children.

When questioned about their concerns related to advertising, 48% of respondents expressed high levels of concern, while 25% reported no worries about the environmental impact. Lastly, a significant 72% of participants indicated that they follow celebrities from various fields on social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, and others. This underscores the notable influence of celebrities (influencers) in advertising.

4.2. Validity and Reliability Analysis

Before its application to structural equation modeling, the measurement model underwent validation using the two-stage approach devised by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). The measurement model provided fitting statistics ($\chi^2/df = 4.5$; GFI=0.93; AGFI=0.91; TLI=0.92; CFI=0.94; RMSEA=0.04), as detailed in the table below.

Table 1: Analysis of Reliability and Validity

Variable	Item Code	Factor Loadings	Cronbachs Alpha	CR Value	AVE Value
TVA	TVA1	0.860	0.884	0.910	0.771
	TVA2	0.865			
	TVA3	0.816			
	TVA4	0.861			
	TVA5	0.966			
	TVA6	0.987			
OnA	OnA1	0.827	0.906	0.921	0.852
	OnA2	0.856			
	OnA3	0.837			
	OnA4	0.924			
	OnA5	0.934			
	OnA6	0.897			
LoV	LoV1	0.872	0.924	0.826	0.866
	LoV2	0.896			
	LoV3	0.974			
	LoV4	0.975			
	LoV5	0.902			
	LoV6	0.892			
CPI	CPI1	0.825	0.894	0.951	0.804
	CPI2	0.823			
	CPI3	0.956			
	CPI4	0.930			
	CPI5	0.932			
	CPI6	0.852			

The term "reliability" refers to how consistently a particular measurement reflects a concept, and Cronbach's alpha is a method used to assess this consistency. Typically, a Cronbach's alpha of 0.70 or higher is considered good, 0.80 or higher is deemed better, and 0.90 or higher is regarded as the best (Sekeran & Bougue, 2013). The reliability study indicated that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each of the 24 items exceeded 0.8, suggesting a high level of internal consistency among the items for each variable. Specifically, TV advertisement scored 0.884, online advertisement 0.906, the length of the video 0.924, and consumer purchase intention 0.894.

The factor loading values for TV advertisement ranged from 0.816 to 0.987, for online advertisement from 0.827 to 0.934, for the length of the video from 0.872 to 0.975, and for consumer purchase intention from 0.823 to 0.956. Simultaneously, composite reliabilities for all variables ranged from 0.826 to 0.951, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values were between 0.771 and 0.866. These findings indicate that the measurement model adheres to the convergent validity criterion outlined by Fornell and Larcker (1981), where standard factor loadings should be statistically significant and exceed the minimum value of 0.60, composite reliabilities should exceed 0.80, and AVE values for all measurement items should be greater than 0.50.

4.3. Correlation Analysis

To assess the strength of the linear relationship between independent and dependent variables in this study, a correlation test was conducted. The strength of the relationship between two variables, whether strong, moderate, or weak, is influenced by the context of the variables and is measured by a correlation coefficient. According to

Cohen (1988), values such as r = ±0.5 indicate a strong relationship, r = ±0.3 indicates a moderate relationship, and r = ±0.1 indicates a weak relationship.

As outlined in Table 2, the results indicated strong positive relationships between the variables—specifically, TV advertisement, online advertisement, the length of the video, and consumer purchase intention—with consumer behavior.

Table 2: Correlation between Variables

	TVA	OnA	LoV
CPI	r = 0.827 Sig = 0.000**	r = 0.836 Sig = 0.000**	r = 0.860 Sig = 0.000**

4.4. Structural Equation Model and Hypotheses Testing

4.4.1. Hypotheses Testing: Direct Effect

This section delves into the outcomes derived from the structural model, constructed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), and presents the findings from the hypothesis testing. The exploratory capability of the regression model is combined with the results obtained through SEM. Table 3 encapsulates the conclusions, serving as a visual representation of the linkage between exogenous and endogenous variables. Further clarification of the standardized regression coefficients pertaining to the path relationship between exogenous and endogenous variables can be found in this section.

Table 3: Relationship between Variables

		Path	Unstd. estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Std. Estimate
CPI.	<---	TVA.	.278	.061	3.274	***	.334
CPI.	<---	OnA.	.495	.124	3.316	***	.347
LoV.	<---	TVA.	.053	.079	3.313	***	.241
LoV	<---	OnA.	.181	.032	6.320	***	.315
CIP.	<---	LoV.	.238	.084	3.136	.013	.129

As indicated in Table 3, both TV advertisement and online advertisement exhibit significant direct impacts on the length of the video and consumer purchase intention. Furthermore, the length of the video demonstrates a significant direct effect on consumer purchase intention.

In line with the findings, H1 and H2 are affirmed, as the standardized regression coefficients of the path relationships are statistically significant for greenwashing and consumer behavior (Regression Coefficient r= 0.278, significant level p= 0.000 <0.01). This implies that TV advertising has a significant positive relationship with consumer purchase intention. Similarly, the standardized regression coefficient of the path relationship is statistically significant between TV advertisement and the length of the video (Regression Coefficient r= 0.053, significant level p= 0.000 <0.01), suggesting that TV advertisement has a significant positive relationship with the length of the video. Simultaneously, the standardized regression coefficient of the path relationship is statistically significant between online advertisement and consumer purchase intention (Regression Coefficient r= 0.495, significant level p= 0.000 < 0.05), indicating that online advertisement has a significant positive relationship with consumer purchase intention.

4.4.2. Hypotheses Testing: Indirect Effect

The indirect and direct effects were *computed* using AMOS. Detailed results are shown in following.

Table 4: Unstandardized indirect effect

	TVA	LoV	CIP
LoV	.000	.000	.000
CIP	.069	.000	.000

Table 5: Indirect Effects Analysis using 1000 bootstraps

	95% Lower Bound			95% Upper Bound			P-value		
	TVA	LoV	CIP	TVA	LoV	CIP	TVA	LoV	CIP
LoV	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	…	…	….
CIP	.005	.000	.000	.061	.000	.000	.004	….	….

The mediating effect of length of video is presented in the above table. The mediating effect of LoV is 0.069. The 95% confidence interval for the indirect effect of LoV on CIP is (lower bound= 0.005, upper bound= 0.061). The value of 0 does not fall within this interval. The direct path from TVA on CIP is also significant. Direct Effect without mediation indicates that TV advertisement is positively (0.278) and significantly ($p < 0.05$) related to consumer purchase intention when LoV is included as a mediating variable, the regression weights has been substantially reduced (0.278 to 0.162) but were highly significant. If the regression weight is reduced, but it is still significant, it provides evidence of partial mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Hence, LoV is a partial mediator to TVA and CIP. Hence, LoV partially mediates the relationship between TV advertisement and CIP.

Table 6: Unstandardized indirect effect

	OnA	LoV	CIP
LoV	.000	.000	.000
CIP	.072	.000	.000

Table 7: Indirect Effects Analysis using 1000 bootstraps

	95% Lower Bound			95% Upper Bound			P-value		
	OnA	LoV	CIP	OnA	LoV	CIP	TVA	LoV	CIP
LoV	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	…	…	….
CIP	.045	.000	.000	.052	.000	.000	.037	….	….

The mediating effect of length of video between online advertisement and CIP is presented in the above table. The mediating effect of LoV is 0.072. The 95% confidence interval for the indirect effect of LoV on CIP is (lower bound= 0.045, upper bound= 0.051). The value of 0 does not fall within this interval. The direct path from OnA on CIP is also significant. Direct Effect without mediation indicates that OnA is positively (0.495) and significantly ($p < 0.05$) related to consumer purchase intention when LoV is included as a mediating variable, the regression weights has been substantially reduced (0.495 to 0.241) but were highly significant. If the regression weight is reduced, but it is still significant, it provides evidence of partial mediation . Hence, LoV is a partial mediator to OnA and CIP. Hence, LoV partially mediates the relationship between OnA and CIP.

5.0. Findings and Conclusions

The outcomes of this research shed light on the intricate dynamics among television (TV) advertising, online advertisements, video length, and consumer purchase intention. The affirmation of hypotheses H1 and H2 underscores the significant influence of both TV advertising and online advertisement on consumer behavior. The standardized regression coefficients indicate statistically significant positive relationships between TV advertising and both consumer purchase intention (Mishra & Vashiath, 2017) and the length of the video (Bellman, 2020). These findings emphasize the pivotal role of TV advertising in shaping consumer purchase intention.

Moreover, the research underscores the distinct impact of online advertisement, revealing a substantial positive relationship between online advertisement and consumer purchase intention (Belanche, 2020). This highlights the increasing significance of online platforms in shaping consumer behavior and purchase intentions. The interplay of these variables emphasizes the multifaceted nature of advertising strategies in the contemporary landscape.

Examining the direct path from TV advertising to consumer purchase intention, even when considering the length of the video as a mediating variable, reveals a notable observation. The original regression weight of 0.278 significantly diminishes to 0.162 but remains highly significant ($p < 0.05$). According to Baron and Kenny's criteria (1986), this suggests partial mediation. Thus, the evidence supports the conclusion that the length of the video (LoV) acts as a partial mediator in the relationship between TV advertisement and consumer purchase intention.

Similarly, exploring the direct path from online advertisement to consumer purchase intention, with the length of the video as a mediating variable, presents a noteworthy finding. The original regression weight of 0.495 significantly reduces to 0.241, but it remains highly significant ($p < 0.05$). According to established criteria for mediation analysis, this indicates partial mediation. Hence, the evidence suggests that the length of the video (LoV) acts as a partial mediator in the relationship between online advertisement and consumer purchase intention.

In navigating the evolving landscape of consumer engagement, these findings offer actionable insights for marketers. Understanding the connections among TV advertising, online advertisement, video length, and consumer behavior enables more informed decision-making in crafting effective advertising campaigns. This research contributes to the ongoing discourse on the roles of different advertising mediums and content characteristics in influencing consumer choices, providing a foundation for future studies and strategic marketing endeavors.

The recognition of the mediating role of the length of the video underscores the complexity of the pathways through which advertising impacts consumer behavior. As businesses refine their advertising strategies, acknowledging the partial mediation effect of the length of the video offers valuable insights for optimizing the influence of TV advertisements on consumer purchase intentions. The acknowledgment of the influence of the length of the video in the context of online advertising provides marketers with valuable insights. As businesses refine their online advertising strategies, recognizing the partial mediation effect of the length of the video can inform efforts to optimize the impact of online advertisements on consumer purchase intentions. These findings contribute to a broader understanding of the interplay between content characteristics, advertising mediums, and consumer decision-making in contemporary marketing contexts.

6.0. Limitations and Directions for Future Research

The findings of this study are contingent on specific sampling techniques within the context of TV and online advertising. Caution should be exercised when generalizing these results to a broader population or different market conditions. Cultural variations may significantly influence consumer behavior, and the study might not have accounted for the diverse cultural backgrounds that could impact the applicability of the findings universally. It's crucial to acknowledge the evolving nature of advertising platforms and consumer behaviors, potentially limiting the temporal relevance of the study. Technological advancements or shifts in consumer trends post-research could affect the validity of the findings over time.

The study relies on self-reported data and survey instruments, introducing the possibility of response bias or inaccuracies in participants' perceptions. Additionally, variables like consumer purchase intention or the length of the video may be subjective and open to interpretation. The study might not have considered all potential variables influencing the examined relationships, and unexplored factors could contribute to or confound the observed effects.

While the study identifies partial mediation effects, the intricate nature of mediating variables and their interplay with other factors may not have been fully captured. Future research could explore these relationships in more depth. The exclusive focus on TV and online advertisements might overlook the impact of other advertising mediums (e.g., print, radio), hindering a comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior.

Furthermore, the demographic characteristics of the sample may be limited, potentially affecting the generalizability of the findings. Future studies could enhance their validity by including a more diverse and representative sample.

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