

THE MODERATING ROLE OF CONSUMER INVOLVEMENT ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING AND PURCHASE INTENTIONS

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Abstract:

Purpose: This paper investigates the moderating role of consumer involvement in the relationship between social media advertising and purchase intentions.

Design/methodology/approach: A quantitative research design was employed, using survey data collected from 384 social media users aged 18 and above in Tamale, Ghana, who were exposed to social media advertising. Regression-based moderation analysis was conducted to examine the moderating effect of consumer involvement on the relationship between social media advertising and purchase intentions.

Findings: The results indicate that social media advertising has a significant positive effect on purchase intentions. More importantly, consumer involvement significantly moderates this relationship, such that the influence of social media advertising on purchase intentions is stronger among highly involved consumers than among those with lower levels of involvement.

Research limitations/implications: Although social media users in Ghana are numerous and diverse, the study was limited by its cross-sectional design, which prevents the establishment of causal relationships. Data were collected only in Tamale and relied on self-reported responses, which may affect accuracy. Therefore, generalizing the findings should be done with caution.

Practical implications: The findings suggest that marketers should tailor social media advertising strategies to consumer involvement levels to enhance effectiveness. Highly informative and engaging content is particularly important for involved consumers.

Originality/value: This study contributes to strategy and consumer behavior literature by empirically demonstrating the boundary condition of consumer involvement in explaining the effectiveness of social media advertising on purchase intentions.

Keywords: *Social media advertising; Consumer involvement; Purchase intentions; Digital marketing; Consumer behavior.*

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Introduction

Social media's explosive growth has drastically changed consumer-business relationships and strategies for marketing in several types of businesses. Through interactive, tailored, and content-driven communication, social media advertising has become a vital strategic tool for businesses (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Ashley & Tuten, 2015). Social media, in contrast to traditional advertising methods, enables customers to actively engage in brand discussions, share material, and impact others' opinions and purchasing decisions (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). From a strategic marketing perspective, purchase intention is a key indicator of consumer response and a strong predictor of actual buying behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010).

Purchase intention (PI) refers to the likelihood or readiness of a consumer to purchase a product or service and is widely

recognized as a critical predictor of consumer behavior (Stewart & Perren, 2023). Across digital platforms, particularly on social media platforms, PI is influenced by the perceived value, trustworthiness, and relevance of advertisements (Koay, Mohd-Any, & Ignatius, 2023). Emotionally engaging and informative social media content enhances consumers' cognitive and affective responses, increasing their willingness to make purchases (Aslam, Rashid, & Chaudhary, 2021). Consumers are more likely to act when advertisements align with their personal needs, values, and lifestyles, highlighting the importance of understanding PI for companies seeking to increase conversion rates in highly competitive online markets (Mehta & Kulkarni, 2020; Stewart & Perren, 2023).

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Social media advertising (SMA) has become one of the most powerful tools for influencing consumer behavior in the digital economy (Moslehpour et al., 2017). Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok allow brands to engage consumers in real time while targeting specific audience segments (Aslam et al., 2021). Features such as clickable ads, interactive posts, influencer collaborations, and personalized content enhance exposure, engagement, and emotional connections between consumers and brands (Koay et al., 2023; Mehta & Kulkarni, 2020). When advertisements are perceived as relevant and meet user preferences, they capture attention and can significantly influence purchase decisions, positioning SMA as a crucial mechanism for stimulating consumer interest and guiding purchasing behavior (Moslehpour et al., 2017; Stewart & Perren, 2023).

Consumer involvement, defined as the degree of interest and personal engagement a consumer demonstrates toward a product or purchase decision, plays a critical role in the processing of advertising messages (Haloho & Parahyanti, 2020). Highly involved consumers tend to evaluate advertisement content more critically, seeking detailed information and making thoughtful decisions (Lim et al., 2020). In contrast, low-involvement consumers respond more superficially, often guided by visual appeal, brand recognition, or entertainment value rather than detailed product information (Haloho & Parahyanti, 2020). Consequently, consumer involvement serves as a key moderating factor in the effectiveness of social media advertising, influencing how advertising translates into purchase intention (Lim et al., 2020; Koay et al., 2023).

Research suggests that SMA is more effective for highly involved consumers, who are responsive to vivid, informative, and emotionally engaging content, while low-involvement consumers are more influenced by heuristic cues such as ad attractiveness or familiarity (Aslam et al., 2021; Haloho & Parahyanti, 2020; Koay et al., 2023; Mehta & Kulkarni, 2020). This underscores the need for marketers to develop SMA strategies tailored to varying levels of consumer involvement, enhancing engagement and improving marketing outcomes in digitally transforming markets (Lim et al., 2020; Moslehpour et al., 2017).

Despite the recognized influence of SMA on consumer behavior, the relationship is not uniform across all consumers, suggesting that involvement and other psychological factors may moderate its effectiveness (Koay et al., 2023). Although SMA is assumed to enhance consumer involvement through personalization and interactive features, empirical evidence supporting this effect remains limited and inconsistent (Mehta & Kulkarni, 2020). The extent to which SMA fosters genuine engagement and deeper cognitive processing is not well established, leaving the involvement-SMA relationship theoretically underdeveloped. Furthermore, most existing research has focused on developed economies, leaving a contextual gap in understanding how SMA, consumer involvement, and purchase intention interact in developing countries, such as Ghana (Drossos et al., 2021).

This study aims to address these gaps by examining the relationships among social media advertising, consumer involvement, and purchase intention within the Ghanaian business context. Specifically, the study seeks to evaluate the relationship between social media advertising and purchase intention, examine

the association between SMA and consumer involvement, ascertain the link between consumer involvement and purchase intention, and assess the moderating role of consumer involvement in the relationship between SMA and purchase intention. By doing so, the research contributes to both academic knowledge and practical marketing insights, particularly in emerging markets with growing digital engagement.

The study provides significant implications for marketers and brand managers. Understanding how consumer involvement influences responses to SMA allows businesses to design content that resonates with highly engaged consumers seeking detailed, informative material, as well as low-involvement consumers who respond to visually appealing and entertaining messages (Aslam et al., 2021; Mehta & Kulkarni, 2020). Additionally, insights from this research can guide companies in emerging markets, such as Ghana, in optimizing digital marketing strategies, allocating resources effectively, and enhancing conversion rates by leveraging consumer engagement levels.

Finally, the study concentrates on those who live in Tamale, the capital of Ghana's Northern Region, where social media engagement has surged due to rising internet penetration and mobile phone usage. In order to investigate how SMA affects purchase intention, the study focuses on those who use social media regularly and have either made or expressed interest in making purchases online. By focusing on this urban setting, the study not only offers data relevant to Tamale but also advances more general discussions about the effectiveness of digital marketing and consumer behavior in other growing urban settings.

Literature Review

Theoretical underpinnings

In digital marketing, the relationship between social media advertising, consumer involvement, and purchase intention continues to increase in significance. The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) is a well-known theoretical framework that explains the relationship between these variables. If the level of involvement is low, persuasive messages are regarded as processed through a central or peripheral route brought about by Petty and Cacioppo (1986). People with high involvement tend to analyze the information presented in the social media ads more carefully using the central route resulting in greater purchase intentions. Conversely, the low-involvement consumers do not base their judgments on central cues but resort to peripheral ones like celebrity involvement or images (Cacioppo & Petty, 1986). Therefore, consumer involvement might significantly moderate the effect of social media advertising (SMA) on purchase intentions and hence, involves a crucial moderating role (Chatterjee & Kar, 2020).

In addition, purchase intentions are also directly affected by consumer involvement itself.

Also, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by Ajzen (1991) proposes, attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control determine behavioral intentions. In this regard, consumers with high involvement stand a high chance of developing positive attitudes on advertised products, which increases their probability of buying the products (Ajzen, 1991). Such attitudes can be promoted with the help of social media advertisements that are informative, engaging, or entertaining, which activate more confident behavioral tendencies (Shareef et

al., 2019). Consumer involvement therefore, does not just moderate purchase intentions, but it directly stimulates purchase intentions hence, it is a central construct to the effectiveness of digital marketing (Ebrahim, 2020).

Lavidge and Steiner (1961) support the relationship explored in this study between social media advertising, consumer involvement, and purchase intentions through their Hierarchy of Effects Model. This paradigm states that consumers are impacted by advertising in three stages: cognitive (awareness and knowledge), emotional (liking and preference), and conative (conviction and purchase). The cognitive stage of social media advertising frequently creates awareness, which in turn stimulates consumer participation during the emotive stage and, at the conative level, leads to purchase intentions (Barry, 1987). This model therefore strengthens the premise that advertisement should be given in such a way that it does more than win attention but gets consumers to a level of indulging them emotionally as well as cognitive level so as to decide their eventual behavior of getting to make the purchase.

The Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) provide further understanding into why and how users interact with social media material. According to UGT, viewers actively look for media that satisfies their requirements, which could include social fulfillment, amusement, or information (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1973). Customers get more interested in a social media marketing when they believe it satisfies these needs. Increased purchase intentions and improved advertising efficacy follow from higher levels of engagement (Whiting & Williams, 2013). Accordingly, customer involvement and purchasing behavior are significantly influenced by the level of satisfaction gained through social media usage (Chi, Yeh, & Yang, 2009).

A strong framework for comprehending how social media advertising can influence purchase intentions, especially through the moderating or mediating role of consumer involvement, is provided by the combination of the Elaboration Likelihood Model, the Theory of Planned Behavior, the Hierarchy of Effects Model, and the Uses and Gratifications Theory. Purchase intention is significantly influenced by social media advertising, just like it is by traditional marketing channels. However, the degree to which the customer is involved in processing the advertising message greatly influences the strength of this influence. While minimal involvement can lessen the impact of persuasive advertising, high levels of involvement increase its effectiveness, underscoring the

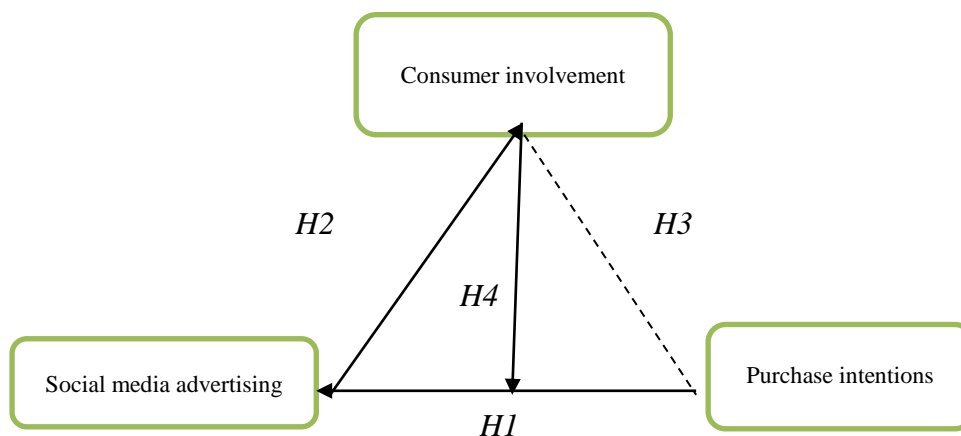
significance of creating efforts that are compelling, useful, and value-oriented (Dabbous & Barakat, 2020). The four proposed relationships in the study are supported by this theoretical framework, which also offers a strong platform for empirical research.

Hypothesis development

This study's conceptual framework, which links social media advertising, customer involvement, and purchase intention, is based on well-established marketing and consumer behavior theories. Since compelling and tailored content can raise awareness, pique interest, and encourage consumers to make a purchase, it is predicted that social media advertising (SMA) directly influences purchase intention (H1) (Moslehpour et al., 2017; Stewart & Perren, 2023). According to Lim et al. (2020) and Koay et al. (2023), interactive and personalized marketing stimulates consumers to participate with the information, enhancing cognitive and emotive processing. This is reflected in H2, which captures the relationship between SMA and consumer engagement.

Additionally, it is hypothesized that consumer involvement will positively impact purchase intention (H3), since highly engaged consumers are more likely to critically analyze advertising messages, recognize the advantages of products, and make well-informed purchasing decisions (Haloho & Parahyanti, 2020; Aslam, Rashid, & Chaudhary, 2021). Lastly, it is suggested that the association between SMA and purchase intention is moderated by customer involvement (H4). According to Lim et al. (2020), Mehta and Kulkarni (2020), and Koay et al. (2023), the impact of social media advertising on purchase intention is anticipated to be greater for highly involved consumers, who explore the content in greater detail, while it may be weaker for low-involvement consumers, who mainly depend on merely superficial indicators like ad attractiveness or entertainment value.

As a result, the framework combines all four theories into a coherent model that shows both direct and mediated linkages. A theoretical and empirical foundation for examining how engagement affects the effectiveness of social media advertising in influencing consumer behavior is provided by using SMA as the independent variable, purchase intention as the dependent variable, and consumer involvement as both a direct predictor and a moderating factor.



Source: Authors own construct (2025)

The speed of the growth of digital resources has considerably changed any advertising approaches, and social media advertising (SMA) has become an efficient method of attracting consumers and affecting their behaviors aimed at buying products or services. Advertising on social media involves such platforms as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc., through which it is possible to share promotional messages targeted at the relevant audience (Alalwan, 2018). The participatory and interactive character of the platforms enables more interaction with the consumers hence the content becomes more persuasive and effective. Various research studies have established that SMA positively and directly influences consumer buying intentions in leading to improved brand visibility, trust, and credibility (Duffett, 2017; Shareef et al., 2019). The Theory of Reasoned action developed by Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) is of the view that behavior intentions are merely subject to influence by attitudes and subjective norms which an intervening role is played by persuasive advertising. Whenever consumers set their eyes on attractive and meaningful content on the social media, their positive product or brand attitude score up, consequently enhancing their purchase intentions. This led to the hypothesis

- *H1: Social media advertisement has a positive relationship to purchase intentions*

In addition, it is considered that social media advertising is vital to the consumer engagement. Consumer involvement means that personal consideration or interest a consumer has to a product, brand name or advertisement message (Zaichkowsky, 1985). Engagement With involvement often comes into play when a product or advertisement is deemed as personally important or emotionally active. It has been found that customization and interaction applied to the advertisements, like usually occurs with the social media, make consumers engaged with the brand or the product (Cho et al., 2020). In the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) the more personal a consumer is the more likely he or she will be to use deep processing of the information being given to them which is commonly triggered in informative and well-structured ads. The involvement of consumers can therefore be increased through social media by providing a rich multimedia and personalized communications. This provided the hypothesis

- *H2: Social media advertising has a significantly positive effect on Consumer involvement*

Consumer involvement, per se, is a good indicator of purchase intention. The greater the involvement of the consumer to a product or service, the higher the attitude that is developed in favor of the purchase decision. The motivation to process product related information, alternatives evaluation as well as purchase behavior, are influenced by the factor of involvement (Lim et al., 2020). The trait that accompanies high involvement is improvement in recall of advertising messages and the emotional attachment to the brand. In the meaning of Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), people who are too engaged can develop more effective behavioral intentions in accordance with their attitude and perceived behavioral control. The substantiation of prior research empirically validates that the level of consumer involvement noticeably impacts the cognitive component of purchase decisions, as well as an affective component (Zhang et al., 2021). Therefore, the third hypothesis is developed as:

- *H3: Involvement of consumers has a significant positive relationship on purchase intentions.*

Lastly, there are postulations that consumer involvement can act as a moderator between the relationship between social media advertisement and purchase intentions. The above recommendations are supported by the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) according to which high involvement consumers face more petite likelihood of the central messages route which results in the creation of stronger and more enduring attitudes. On the contrary, low-involvement consumers are reached through the peripheral route by depending on superficial appeals like images or celebrity portrayal. It is an indication that advertising of social media has the potential to work or not based on the degree of consumer participation. The advertisements dazzling the high involved consumers have higher chances to result in actual purchase intentions since they engage intensively in processing and evaluation (Alalwan et al., 2017). In such a way, the role of consumer involvement in strengthening or weakening the effects of social media advertising to purchase decisions may be promoted or deemphasized. In line with this the fourth hypothesis is:

- *H4: consumer involvement significantly moderates the relationship between social media advertising and purchase intentions*

Research Methodology

This study focuses on Ghanaian social media users, namely those who are at least eighteen years old who frequently interact with digital marketing content on sites like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) and Ashley and Tuten (2015), social media advertising has emerged as an imperative tool for influencing customer behavior. However, not every user finds these ads to be equally effective. A crucial moderating factor in evaluating how social media advertising affects purchase intentions is the involvement of consumers, which is defined as the level of interest, engagement, and personal relevance a consumer attaches to a product or commercial (Lim et al., 2020; Koay et al., 2023).

The Ghana Statistical Service (2021) estimates that there are approximately 374,744 people living in Tamale Metropolis. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) advocate a minimum sample size of 384 respondents determined by this population size in order to ensure the statistical reliability and generalizability of the results. A random sample of this size is adequate given the size of the population since, at a certain point, disparities in estimates become insignificant.

In urban areas like Tamale, social media usage is becoming increasingly prevalent, which has made it possible to study these patterns. Viewing sponsored posts, like company pages, following influencers, and making online purchases are just a few of the ways users engage with content. The level of consumer involvement varies greatly, with highly engaged users critically analyzing information, considering the advantages of products, and developing well-informed purchase intentions (Aslam, Rashid, & Chaudhary, 2021). Low-involvement users, on the other hand, may react less successfully to in-depth advertising messages and are more likely to rely on surface cues like entertainment or visual attractiveness (Haloho & Parahyanti, 2020).

In an age of digitization dominated by information overload, short attention spans, and quickly evolving trends, it is especially important to comprehend the moderating effect of consumer involvement. According to Mehta and Kulkarni (2020) and Stewart and Perren (2023), social media advertising can raise awareness and draw attention, but how much a customer engages with the message determines whether these impacts translate into purchasing behavior. While low involvement may lessen the impact of advertising, high involvement increases the efficacy of persuasive advertising and results in increased buy intentions, highlighting the necessity for marketers to customize content based on user engagement levels (Lim et al., 2020).

Examining this moderating relationship offers both practical and theoretical perspectives given the growing investment in social media marketing and the variety of user interactions. In addition to advancing knowledge of digital consumer behavior in developing nations like Ghana, the study helps construct focused, engagement-driven strategies that optimize the influence of social media advertising on purchase intentions. This study clarifies how marketers can maximize marketing strategies in order to turn knowledge and involvement into actual purchasing behavior by examining the relationship between social media advertising and consumer involvement (Koay et al., 2023; Whiting & Williams, 2013).

Research Design and Data Collection

This study adopted an explanatory research design to examine the moderating role of consumer involvement in the relationship between social media advertising and purchase intentions. An explanatory design is appropriate when the objective is to test theoretical relationships and assess how variations in one variable influence another (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Hair et al., 2019). Given the focus on identifying causal linkages and interaction effects among variables, this approach provided a systematic and analytically rigorous framework.

A quantitative survey method was employed, as it allows efficient collection of data from a large number of respondents and supports the application of inferential statistical techniques (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Primary data were collected using structured questionnaires developed based on established literature on social media advertising, consumer involvement, and purchase intentions (Hair et al., 2019; Zikmund et al., 2013). The questionnaire included four sections covering demographic characteristics, exposure to and perceptions of social media advertising, levels of consumer involvement, and purchase intentions. All items were closed-ended and measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = "Strongly disagree" to 5 = "Strongly agree," allowing for consistency and ease of analysis.

Adopting the study of Krejcie and Morgan (1970), a recommended minimum sample of 384 respondents is required to ensure statistically reliable and generalizable results. Given the large population, using a random sample of this size is sufficient, as differences in estimates become negligible beyond a certain point.

A total of 384 respondents were selected for the study, consistent with previous research examining relationships among advertising, consumer involvement, and purchase intentions (Hair et al., 2019; Zikmund et al., 2013). Questionnaires were administered both in person and online via WhatsApp, Facebook,

and email to reach active users effectively. Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity, and participation was voluntary, with follow-up reminders sent to improve response rates.

A pilot study involving 30 respondents was conducted prior to the main survey to test the clarity and consistency of the instrument. Feedback from the pilot was used to refine the questionnaire, and these respondents were excluded from the final analysis (Bryman, 2016). Data collection was conducted over a four-week period, after which completed questionnaires were screened for accuracy and completeness before being coded and entered into SPSS for analysis.

Reliability and validity of the measurement scales were assessed using Cronbach's alpha to ensure internal consistency, with a coefficient of 0.70 or higher considered acceptable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed using SPSS version 26, and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) along with structural equation modeling (SEM) were conducted using Stata version 17 to validate the measurement and structural models. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test confirmed sampling adequacy, with a KMO value greater than 0.5 supporting the suitability of the data for multivariate analysis.

All completed questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS version 26. The data were first cleaned and coded to ensure accuracy, consistency, and completeness, with incomplete or improperly filled responses excluded in line with Hair et al. (2019). Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, summarized respondents' demographics and their perceptions of social media advertising, consumer involvement, and purchase intentions, providing an overview of general patterns in the data (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019).

Inferential analyses were conducted to test the study's hypotheses and examine relationships among variables. Linear regression was used to assess the magnitude and direction of the effect of social media advertising on purchase intentions (Field, 2018). To explore the moderating role of consumer involvement, moderation analysis was performed using Hayes' PROCESS Macro Version 4.0, which allowed the study to examine how the effect of social media advertising on purchase intention varied across different levels of consumer involvement (Hayes, 2018).

The reliability of the measurement scales was confirmed using Cronbach's alpha, with coefficients of 0.70 or higher considered acceptable, ensuring the internal consistency of the data (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Overall, these analytical techniques enabled a robust examination of the relationships among social media advertising, consumer involvement, and purchase intentions.

A total of 384 questionnaires were distributed, and all were completed and deemed usable, resulting in a 100% response rate. This indicates full participation from the sampled respondents and ensures the reliability and representativeness of the collected data. The demographic breakdown indicated that respondents comprised 54.4% males (n = 209) and 45.6% females (n = 175), indicating a fairly balanced gender distribution. Most participants (56.8%) were aged 41–50 years, followed by 31–40 years (26.8%) and above 50 years (16.4%), with no respondents in the 18–30 age group. In terms of education, 47.4% held a Master's degree, 30.2% a Bachelor's degree, 12.5% an HND, and 9.9% a PhD, suggesting a

generally well-educated sample capable of critically engaging with social media advertising and purchase decisions. The sample size allowed for robust application of inferential statistical techniques, including regression and moderation analysis, to examine the relationships among social media advertising, consumer involvement, and purchase intentions.

Measurement of Construct

A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data from the target population, providing convenience, cost-effectiveness, and reduced interviewer bias (Manfreda et al., 2002). The questionnaire had two sections: the first captured socio-demographic information (age, gender, education) using nominal and ordinal scales, while the second focused on the core constructs—social media advertising, consumer involvement, and purchase intention—measured on a five-point Likert scale (Joshi et al., 2015).

Social media advertising was assessed with an eight-item scale adapted from Duffett (2017) and Logan et al. (2012), evaluating perceptions of ads as informative, entertaining, interactive, and reliable. Consumer involvement was measured using a seven-item scale from Zaichkowsky (1994) and Mittal (1995), capturing cognitive and emotional engagement with brand content. Purchase intention was measured using an eight-item scale adapted from Spears and Singh (2004) and Dodds et al. (1991), assessing likelihood of purchase, recommendation, and product preference. Reliability and validity were confirmed through Cronbach's alpha and factor analysis, ensuring rigorous measurement of all constructs

Analytical Approach

The analytical approach of this study was designed to transform collected data into meaningful insights aligned with the research objectives. All completed questionnaire responses were processed and analyzed using IBM SPSS version 26. Initial steps involved cleaning and coding the data to ensure accuracy, consistency, and completeness, with incomplete or improperly filled questionnaires excluded following established guidelines (Hair et al., 2019).

The analysis of this study involved several stages to ensure a comprehensive examination of the moderating role of consumer involvement on the relationship between social media advertising and purchase intentions. A quantitative research approach was adopted, allowing for the collection of numerical data suitable for statistical analysis.

The primary data collection instrument utilized was a structured questionnaire, crafted to capture significant insights across three key constructs: social media advertising, consumer involvement, and purchase intentions. The questionnaire items were designed on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = "Strongly Disagree" to 5 = "Strongly Agree," enabling respondents to express their levels of agreement effectively.

Both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were employed. Descriptive statistics—including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations—were used to summarize respondents' demographic characteristics and their perceptions of social media advertising, consumer involvement, and purchase intentions. This approach provided an overview of

data distribution and revealed general patterns within the sample (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019).

For inferential analysis, linear regression was conducted to examine the strength and direction of the relationship between social media advertising and purchase intentions. Simple linear regression allowed for a direct assessment of the influence of social media advertising on consumer purchase behaviour, a method widely used in quantitative research to explore relationships among variables (Field, 2018).

To test the moderating role of consumer involvement on this relationship, moderation analysis was performed using PROCESS Macro Version 4.0 (Hayes, 2018). This analysis evaluated whether the impact of social media advertising, as the independent variable, on purchase intentions, as the dependent variable, varied across different levels of consumer involvement, offering insights into how these variables jointly influence outcomes.

Finally, the reliability of the measurement scales was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha to confirm internal consistency. A coefficient of 0.70 or higher was considered acceptable, consistent with recommended standards (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994), ensuring that the data were suitable for robust statistical analysis.

Reliability Analysis

Nunnally & Bernstein (1994) suggest that a Cronbach alpha of 0.70 and above is considered to be acceptable in a research. Nonetheless, as proposed by Hair et al. (2019), the values of 0.7 to 0.9 represent good internal consistency, and any value below 0.6 indicates that the constructs offer poor reliability. Table 2 results show that all the constructs used in the study have acceptable amounts of reliability. The alpha of social media advertisement is 0.773, which implies that the items employed in the measurement of this construct have good internal consistency. This means that the respondents gave similar answers when it comes to the impact of the social media advertising on their buying behavior.

In the same manner, the consumer involvement had a Cronbach alpha of 0.726, which indicates that the items used to measure the construct are sufficiently reliable. It implies that the participants were consistent in their answers to such questions as their engagement, interest and participation in the purchasing process. The purchase intentions construct recorded the best Cronbach alpha, which is 0.778, indicating that the scale items employed to measure the willingness and probability of consumers to purchase were very agreeable.

The CFA results indicate that all items for social media advertising, consumer involvement, and purchase intentions exceed the recommended 0.70 loading, showing strong representation of their constructs. Composite reliability values of 0.958, 0.955, and 0.964 confirm high internal consistency. AVE values of 0.619, 0.633, and 0.682 demonstrate satisfactory convergent validity, meaning each construct accounts for over 50% of the variance of its indicators (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

These findings confirm that the measurement model is reliable and valid, with high factor loadings, composite reliability, and AVE values demonstrating that the constructs are consistently and meaningfully measured (Hair et al., 2019; Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). Consequently, the model provides a

robust basis for further hypothesis testing, including assessing the mediating role of consumer involvement in the relationship between social media advertising and purchase intentions.

According to Kaiser (1974), values above 0.90 are excellent, 0.80–0.89 are very good, 0.70–0.79 are good, 0.60–0.69 are mediocre, and below 0.50 are unacceptable. In this study, the KMO value of 0.729 indicates that the sample and data are suitable for factor analysis, reflecting adequate correlations among variables. Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity examines whether the correlation matrix is an identity matrix, where a significant result indicates that the variables are sufficiently related to justify factor analysis (Pallant, 2020). The test in this study produced a chi-square of 4798.283 with 253 degrees of freedom and a significance level of 0.000, confirming that the null hypothesis of an identity matrix is rejected and the correlations among variables are adequate for factor analysis.

Correlation Matrix

Table 6 presents the correlations among demographic variables (gender, age, education), social media advertising, consumer involvement, and purchase intentions. Overall, correlation coefficients indicate weak to moderate relationships,

suggesting no multicollinearity or conceptual overlap among the variables.

Demographic variables show minimal influence on the key constructs. Gender correlates weakly with social media advertising ($r = 0.106$), consumer involvement ($r = 0.021$), and purchase intentions ($r = 0.208$). Education similarly shows low correlations with social media advertising ($r = 0.024$), consumer involvement ($r = 0.011$), and purchase intentions ($r = 0.127$). Age exhibits a slightly stronger but still modest correlation with social media advertising ($r = 0.276$), indicating some influence on responses to advertising content.

Among the primary variables, consumer involvement shows a moderate positive correlation with social media advertising ($r = 0.368$), suggesting that engagement with advertised products is influenced by exposure to and quality of social media advertising. Purchase intentions correlate positively with social media advertising ($r = 0.278$) and more strongly with consumer involvement ($r = 0.487$), highlighting the critical role of consumer involvement in shaping purchase decisions.

These results support the hypothesized relationships, indicating that both social media advertising and consumer involvement are significant predictors of purchase intentions.

Table 6. Correlation matrix

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Gender	1					
2. Age	.175	1				
3. Education	.124	.004	1			
4. Social media advertising	.106	.276	.024	1		
5. Consumer involvement	.021	.120	.011	.368	1	
6. Purchase intentions	.208	.077	.127	.278	.487	1

Source(s): Authors’ own work

Regression Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

The study used linear regression analysis to test the main hypotheses of the study, as well as the investigation of the direct links between social media advertising, consumer involvement, and purchase intentions. This was done through this statistical approach to establish the strength, direction, and significance of the relationships between these variables. The moderating role of consumer involvement on the relationship amid social media advertising and purchase intention was also evaluated in the analysis, as shown in the following tables.

The results indicate that social media advertising is positively and statistically sufficiently effective in influencing the purchase intentions of the consumers with a beta coefficient of 0.278 and a p-value of 0.000, which is lower than the 0.01 level of significance. This implies that the more the effectiveness or the

strength of social media advertising, the higher the intention of purchase among consumers.

The t-test of 5.651 also confirms that the relationship is significant and indicates that social media advertisement has a significant contribution to purchase intention prediction. The value of F-statistic of 31.937 shows that the overall regression model is statistically significant, which means that the model is very accurate and the social media advertising is a suitable predictor of purchase intention. The R-squared of 0.075 would imply that the advertising on the social media would account about 7.5 percent of variance in the purchase intentions of consumers. Though this is a rather low figure, it suggests that as much as social media advertising has a positive impact on the purchase intention, some other factors like consumer involvement, brand perception or personal preferences might also play a role in the determination of consumer buying decisions.

Table 8. The relationship between social media advertising and purchase intention

Variable	β	Stand. Error	t-test	F	R Square	P-value
Social media advertising	0.278	.051	5.651	31.937	.075	.000

Dependent variable: Purchase intention

The result is shown in Table 9. Findings indicate that customer involvement is positively and statistically significant under the impact of social media advertising with a beta coefficient (0.392) and p-value of 0.000. This reveals that the quality, creativity, and frequency of the social media advertising events that are done, will increase the customer involvement as well. That is, once customers develop interest, participation and interaction towards a brand when companies successfully utilize social media channels to advertise their products or services, then an increase in customer participation is expected.

The significance of the t-test of 7.728 at the 0.000 level is that the social media advertising is a significant predictor of customer involvement. Likewise, the value of F-statistic 59.716 indicates that the overall regression model is statistically significant, i.e. social media advertising has a significant contribution to the variations in the customer involvement. The R-square of 0.133 suggests that social media advertising explains a value of 13.3 percent of the variance of customer involvement. This implies that social media advertising is as well as significant in capturing the customers but other variables like product quality, brand image, and customer motivation could also alter the levels of customer involvement.

Table 9. The relationship between social media advertising and customer involvement

Variable	β	Stand. Error	t-test	F	R Square	P-value
Social media advertising	0.392	.051	7.728	59.716	.133	.000

Dependent variable: Customer involvement

The result is shown in Table 10. The results indicate a positive, statistically significant correlation between customer involvement and intention to purchase by the consumers. The value of beta coefficient (0.487) demonstrates that customer involvement is found to have a positive predictive power on purchase intention, that is the more customers are engaged in a brand or its products, the more they are likely to buy the product. The statistical significance of this relationship can be proven by the p-value of 0.000, which is lower than the standard level of significance of 0.05.

The t-test of 10.901 also proves the strength and reliability of this positive link, and the F-test of 118.625 indicates that the regression model is significant in general. The R-squared values at 0.235 do indicate that the customer involvement can explain approximately 23.5 percent of the change in purchase intention. Such a large share is an indication that, involvement significantly contributes to shaping the purchase decisions by the consumers though other factors like product quality, price and promotional strategies may also be a factor.

Table 10. The relationship between customer involvement and purchase intention

Variable	β	Stand. Error	t-test	F	R Square	P-value
Customer involvement	0.487	.044	10.901	118.625	.235	.000

Dependent variable: Purchase intention

The moderating role of consumer involvement on the relationship between social media advertising and purchase intention

In relation to the moderating role of consumer involvement, the analysis assesses how it influences the relationship between social media advertising and purchase intention, as shown in Table 11. The findings show that the main effects as well as the interaction term are both significant which implies that consumer involvement plays a great role in moderating the relationship between social media advertising and purchase intention.

The social media advertising beta is 0.834 and t= 2.280 indicating that there is a positive and significant direct relationship between social media advertising and purchase intention. This

implies that a good advertisement through the social media platform will increase the willingness to consume products by consumers. Likewise, consumer involvement beta stands at 0.587 at t-value of 3.476 indicating that consumer involvement has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention. This means that more engaged and interested consumers in a product or brand would tend to develop better purchase intentions.

Most significantly, the interaction term (social media advertising × consumer involvement) possesses a beta = 1.531 and a t-value = 2.614 and is statistically significant (p < 0.05) of the interaction between social media advertising and consumer involvement. This supports the fact that consumer participation mediates the association between social media advertisement and purchase intention. This practically implies that the stronger the

consumer involvement, the stronger the effect of social media advertising on the purchase intention. The more consumers are engaged the higher the attention they give to the advertisements, the deeper they process brand messages and therefore have a better chance of being convinced to purchase. The R value of 0.512 and the R-square value of 0.262 show that there is a moderate positive relationship between the variables and a proportion of the purchase intention is covered by the synergistic influence of social media

advertising, consumer involvement, and their interaction is about 26.2 percent. The adjusted R-squared 0.256 is an indication that the model fits well and the incremental ($\Delta F = 44.919$, Sig. = 0.000) shows that the moderating variable has a good contribution to the predictive capacity of the model. Generally, the discussion shows that consumer involvement is a significant moderating influence in enhancing the impact of the social media advertising on purchase intention.

Table 11. The moderating role of consumer involvement on the relationship between social media advertising and purchase intention

Variables	Purchase Intention
	Model 3
	Beta (t-value)
(Constant)	
<i>Main effect</i>	
Social media advertising	.834(2.280)
<i>Moderator variable</i>	
Consumer involvement	.587 (3.476)
<i>Interactive effect</i>	
Social media advertising x Consumer involvement	1.531 (2.614)
Model Indicators	
R	.512
R Square	.262
Adjusted R Square	.256
ΔF	44.919
Sig.	.000

Source(s): Authors' own work

Discussion of Findings

This section interprets the study's empirical findings in relation to existing literature, highlighting areas of convergence and divergence while demonstrating the study's theoretical and contextual contributions to social media advertising and consumer behaviour research.

Addressing the first objective, the findings confirm that social media advertising has a positive and statistically significant effect on purchase intention. This indicates that increased exposure to effective social media advertising enhances consumers' willingness to purchase, supporting the view that digital advertising is a meaningful driver of consumer decision-making. Although the explanatory power is modest, the model remains statistically robust, suggesting that social media advertising contributes to purchase intention alongside other behavioural factors.

These findings are consistent with Bilgin (2018), Shareef et al. (2019), and Duffett (2017), who demonstrate that interactive and personalized social media advertisements enhance emotional connections, brand recall, and purchase intentions. Similarly, Godey et al. (2016) argue that social media advertising strengthens consumer-brand relationships, thereby encouraging buying behaviour. Within the Ghanaian context, the results align with Boateng and Okoe (2015), reinforcing the relevance of social media platforms in shaping consumer decisions in emerging markets.

However, the results also support earlier cautionary findings that advertising effectiveness depends on content credibility and relevance. Logan et al. (2012) and Abzari et al. (2014) suggest that intrusive or untrustworthy advertisements may weaken purchase intentions, indicating that effectiveness is contingent upon consumer perceptions of authenticity and value.

In line with the second objective, the findings show that social media advertising significantly enhances customer involvement. This suggests that creative, interactive, and relevant advertising content increases consumers' cognitive and emotional engagement with brands. The results highlight the participatory nature of social media as a key mechanism for fostering consumer involvement.

This outcome supports prior studies by Hollebeek, Glynn and Brodie (2014) and Habibi et al. (2016), who emphasize that interactive digital content encourages emotional investment and value co-creation. Schivinski and Dabrowski (2016) further confirm that authentic social media advertising stimulates engagement behaviours such as liking, sharing, and commenting. Consistent with Dwivedi et al. (2021), the findings also underscore the growing influence of user-generated and influencer-based content in enhancing involvement through perceived authenticity.

Nevertheless, the findings acknowledge concerns raised by De Vries and Carlson (2014), who caution that excessive advertising frequency may result in advertising fatigue, thereby reducing consumer engagement. This suggests that the

effectiveness of social media advertising in driving involvement depends on balanced and consumer-oriented content strategies.

Addressing the third objective, the study finds a strong positive relationship between customer involvement and purchase intention, confirming involvement as a key psychological driver of consumer behaviour. Highly involved consumers are more likely to develop favourable attitudes and translate engagement into purchase decisions.

This finding is consistent with involvement theory (Zaichkowsky, 1985) and elaborated by Celsi and Olson (1988), who argue that higher involvement leads to deeper information processing and stronger behavioural intentions. Empirical support is further provided by Hollebeek et al. (2021), Dwivedi et al. (2021), and Rather (2020), who demonstrate that emotional and cognitive engagement strengthens consumer-brand relationships and purchase intentions. Evidence from Ghana (Boateng & Okoe, 2015) similarly confirms the role of involvement in shaping purchase decisions and brand loyalty.

While Laurent and Kapferer (1985) suggest that high involvement may delay purchases in high-risk contexts, the dominant evidence supports involvement as a critical antecedent of purchase intention.

In relation to the fourth objective, the findings confirm that customer involvement significantly moderates the relationship between social media advertising and purchase intention. Specifically, social media advertising is more effective in influencing purchase intentions when consumers exhibit higher levels of involvement.

This result aligns with Duffett (2017) and Chandra et al. (2022), who report stronger advertising effects among engaged consumers due to enhanced emotional and cognitive responses. Tafesse and Wien (2018) further explain that involved consumers are more sensitive to advertising messages, leading to deeper message processing (Zaichkowsky, 1985; Hollebeek et al., 2019). The significant interaction effect supports Zafar et al. (2019) and Lee and Hong (2016), who demonstrate that high involvement amplifies the persuasive impact of social media advertising.

Although Yadav and Rahman (2017) caution that involvement effects may weaken under conditions of information overload or advertising fatigue, the present findings confirm that consumer involvement strengthens the predictive power of social media advertising models in explaining purchase intention (Hair et al., 2019).

Theoretical Implications

This study makes important theoretical contributions to the literature on social media marketing, consumer behaviour, and digital advertising effectiveness by extending advertising theory, consumer involvement theory, and engagement-based perspectives in explaining how social media advertising influences purchase intentions. While prior research has acknowledged the persuasive role of social media advertising, the mechanisms through which advertising effectiveness is strengthened or weakened by consumer involvement remain insufficiently theorized. This study addresses this gap by demonstrating that social media advertising alone is not sufficient to drive strong purchase intentions; rather, its effectiveness is contingent on the level of consumer involvement, which acts as a critical boundary condition.

First, the study advances advertising effectiveness theory by empirically confirming that social media advertising positively influences purchase intention, while simultaneously demonstrating that this relationship is not uniform across consumers. Traditional advertising models often assume a direct and linear relationship between advertising exposure and behavioural outcomes (Duffett, 2017; Bilgin, 2018). By introducing consumer involvement as a moderator, this study challenges the assumption of advertising homogeneity and extends advertising theory by showing that consumers' psychological engagement determines how advertising stimuli are processed and translated into purchase decisions. This contribution reinforces the notion that advertising effectiveness is not solely message-driven but also audience-contingent.

Second, the study contributes to consumer involvement theory by empirically validating involvement as both an outcome of social media advertising and a strategic amplifier of advertising effects. Building on Zaichkowsky's (1985) involvement theory and subsequent refinements (Celsi & Olson, 1988), the findings demonstrate that social media advertising enhances consumer involvement by fostering interaction, interest, and emotional attachment. More importantly, the study extends involvement theory by positioning consumer involvement not merely as an individual psychological state but as a dynamic mechanism through which advertising messages gain persuasive power. This advances theoretical understanding by linking involvement directly to advertising effectiveness in interactive digital environments.

Third, the study strengthens customer engagement theory by empirically demonstrating that involvement plays a moderating role in transforming advertising exposure into behavioural intention. Prior engagement literature (Brodie et al., 2011; Hollebeek et al., 2014) largely focuses on engagement as a direct predictor of loyalty or behavioural outcomes. This study extends that perspective by showing that engagement-related constructs such as involvement magnify the impact of marketing stimuli, thereby functioning as a catalyst rather than merely an outcome. This contribution highlights involvement as a key mechanism that converts passive advertising exposure into active purchase-oriented responses.

Fourth, by integrating social media advertising, consumer involvement, and purchase intention into a single moderated framework, this study bridges advertising theory and relationship marketing literature. The findings support the argument that contemporary marketing effectiveness is grounded in interactive, relationship-based processes rather than one-way promotional communication. This integration reinforces the view that marketing outcomes increasingly depend on consumers' cognitive and emotional participation, particularly in social media environments where dialogue, co-creation, and personalization dominate (Dwivedi et al., 2021).

In addition, the study contributes to resource-based theory (Barney, 1991) by conceptualizing consumer involvement as an intangible relational resource that enhances the effectiveness of marketing efforts. From this perspective, firms that successfully stimulate and sustain consumer involvement through social media advertising develop a valuable, rare, and difficult-to-imitate capability that strengthens competitive advantage. This theoretical extension positions involvement not merely as a behavioural outcome but as a strategic marketing asset that improves advertising returns.

Finally, the study offers a contextual contribution by extending social media marketing theory to an emerging market setting. Much of the existing literature on social media advertising is dominated by evidence from developed economies. By focusing on Ghana, the study demonstrates that while the core theoretical relationships hold, consumer involvement plays an especially critical role in environments characterized by information overload, credibility concerns, and heterogeneous digital literacy levels. This insight enriches marketing theory by emphasizing the importance of contextual sensitivity when explaining advertising effectiveness across different markets.

Managerial and Practical Implications

This study provides important managerial and practical insights for marketing managers, business owners, and advertisers operating in increasingly digital and competitive markets. The findings confirm that social media advertising has a significant influence on consumers' purchase intentions, underscoring the need for firms to approach social media promotion as a strategic investment rather than a routine marketing activity. Companies must therefore prioritize the careful design of creative, engaging, and targeted social media campaigns that resonate with consumers' emotions, values, and lifestyles. Advertising content that is visually appealing, relatable, and aligned with consumer aspirations strengthens brand associations and positively shapes buying behaviour.

Beyond advertising content alone, the study highlights the central role of consumer involvement in enhancing the effectiveness of social media advertising. The strong moderating effect of consumer involvement suggests that firms should move beyond one-way promotional messaging and focus on building meaningful interactions with their audiences. Businesses can achieve this by leveraging interactive social media features such as live sessions, polls, user-generated content, and comment-based feedback mechanisms. These interactive tools foster deeper engagement, make consumers feel valued within the brand community, and significantly amplify the impact of advertising on purchase decisions.

The findings further indicate that consumer involvement should be strategically used as a basis for audience segmentation and message customization. Marketing practitioners should design differentiated communication strategies that reflect varying levels of consumer engagement. Highly involved consumers are more likely to seek detailed information regarding product attributes, quality, and performance, while less involved consumers may respond more positively to emotionally appealing, entertaining, or lifestyle-oriented messages. Aligning advertising content with consumers' involvement levels enhances message relevance and improves advertising effectiveness.

In addition, the dynamic nature of social media platforms requires firms to adopt a continuous learning and adaptation approach. Companies must regularly monitor engagement metrics and consumer reactions, including likes, shares, comments, and click-through rates, to assess the effectiveness of their advertising strategies. By systematically analyzing these insights, firms can refine their content, adjust communication strategies, and respond proactively to changing consumer preferences.

Overall, the study emphasizes that integrating consumer involvement into social media advertising strategies is essential for

achieving sustained marketing success. Firms that combine creative advertising, interactive engagement, involvement-based segmentation, and continuous performance monitoring are more likely to strengthen brand loyalty, enhance purchase intentions, and achieve long-term growth in increasingly digital marketplaces.

Limitations and Future Research

Despite the study's insightful findings, a number of limitations should be taken into account. First, it is more difficult to establish a causal relationship between social media advertising, customer involvement, and purchase intention when a cross-sectional design is employed. A deeper comprehension of how these relationships change over time may be possible with longitudinal study. Second, because the study was limited to Ghana, its conclusions might not be as applicable to other cultural or economic circumstances. To take into consideration variations in social media advertising strategies and consumer behavior, future studies should investigate cross-national or cross-industry contexts. Third, the use of self-reported surveys may lead to response biases, and concentrating on only three variables leaves out other potentially significant elements, including message credibility, perceived value, and brand trust. Lastly, social media advertising was viewed as a general concept without making any distinctions between content types or platforms, which may have different effects on consumer involvement and purchase intention. Future studies that address these issues can improve the validity and relevance of findings for social media marketing strategies.

Conclusion

By highlighting how consumer involvement influences the effectiveness of social media advertising, this study adds to the expanding corpus of research on social media marketing and consumer behavior. This study offers fresh perspectives on how active customer involvement either amplifies or mitigates the effect of social media campaigns on purchase intention, whereas prior research has mostly concentrated on marketing exposure and message reach.

One important finding of this study is that the effectiveness of social media advertising depends not only on the quality of the advertisements but also on how emotionally and psychologically involved clients are. Businesses frequently prioritize message frequency and reach in fiercely competitive social media environments, but this study shows that involvement-driven strategies—such as interactive content, user-generated content, and personalized messaging—significantly increase purchase intentions. This implies that in order to attain the intended marketing results, companies should use customer-focused strategies rather than depending just on promotional messages.

The results offer robust empirical proof that customer involvement is a crucial factor in determining purchase intention and that its moderating effect heightens the impact of social media advertising. In actuality, companies are better positioned to promote brand loyalty, strengthen consumer-brand connections, and influence purchasing behavior when they nurture higher levels of involvement through interactive, creative, and practical campaigns. This study emphasizes the need for strategic involvement to convert exposure into significant behavioral results, in contrast to conventional advertising strategies that presume a passive customer.

The study shows that social media advertising effectiveness is a dynamic, context-dependent process that depends on consumer involvement, providing significant theoretical and managerial knowledge. These results emphasize the significance of reconsidering social media marketing strategies in modern marketplaces, especially in developing nations where consumers' psychological involvement and interactive participation are crucial in shaping their purchasing decisions. Future research may build on this foundation to explore additional moderating and mediating factors, cross-cultural differences, and platform-specific involvement strategies that further shape the relationship between social media advertising and consumer behavior.

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