



# Advertising Value a driver for Brand Resonance among black female Gen Z face care consumers in South Africa.



Dissertation submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree **Master of Arts in Creative Brand Leadership** at The Independent Institute of Education, Vega School.

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## ABSTRACT

In today's digital landscape, where short-form-video content prevails and countless brands compete for attention on social media, it is increasingly important to understand how advertising value contributes to building brand resonance, especially among generation Z (gen Z). This is particularly key for identifying how brands can distinguish themselves amid the overwhelming volume of content.

This study investigates the influence of advertising value elements: credibility, informativeness, entertainment, and irritation, on four dimensions of brand resonance: behavioural loyalty, attitudinal attachment, sense of community, and active engagement. Focusing on South African black-female gen-Z face-care consumers, the research responds to a gap in both localised consumer insight and representation in beauty-marketing discourse.

A quantitative survey was conducted to gain a nuanced understanding of how advertising value drives the most-desirable brand-resonance outcome that leads to successful brand-consumer relationships within the context of social-media short-video advertising. The analysis was conducted using the R statistical software based on 120 valid responses. The findings reveal that credibility is the most-influential driver, positively impacting all four brand-resonance dimensions. Informativeness plays a strong role, fostering loyalty, emotional attachment, and community, though it falls short in driving active engagement. Entertainment, while effective in promoting a sense of community, is the least-impactful overall. Irritation is found to have no positive effect on any dimension of brand resonance.

Theoretically, this study extends brand resonance and advertising value literature by demonstrating how specific advertising value elements function differently across relational brand outcomes in short-form video environments, particularly within an under-researched African Gen Z consumer segment. The study further advances understanding of brand–consumer relationships by highlighting credibility as a foundational mechanism for resonance in identity-driven categories such as face care.

From a managerial perspective, the findings offer actionable guidance for face care brands and digital marketers, suggesting that authentic, credible, and informative short-form video content is more effective in building trust-based, emotionally resonant brand relationships than superficial entertainment-led engagement tactics. The results

indicate that Gen Z consumers expect brands not only to entertain, but also to educate, represent, and respect them in an increasingly fragmented digital attention economy.

The study contributes an integrated framework for driving-advertising value through short-form video that can inform both academic models and industry practice. It highlights the need for face-care brands to prioritise authenticity, transparency, and informational value over superficial engagement tactics. The results suggest that gen-Z consumers expect brands not just to entertain, but to educate, represent, and respect them, particularly in identity-driven categories like face care.

This research provides actionable insights for marketers to build trust-based, emotionally-resonant relationships with gen-Z audiences in an increasingly attention-fragmented digital environment.

*Keywords:* Advertising value, brand resonance, Short-form-video advertising, consumer-brand relationships, social-media marketing.

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# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## 1.1 Introduction

### 1.1.1 Purpose of the study

This study investigates if advertising value, delivered through social-media short-video advertisements (ads), drives brand resonance among South African black-female gen-Z face-care consumers. The brand-resonance construct is assessed from the perspective of its four dimensions of loyalty, attachment, community, and engagement. This research provides valuable insights for marketing and advertising professionals, helping them create effective short-video advertisements. The study contributes to a better understanding of how brand resonance is established within the social-media landscape amongst South African black-female gen-Z face-care consumers.

There have been numerous angles from which researchers have studied brand resonance. Most research (Saputra, Tanesia and Ariningsih, 2021; Moustafa and Ghani, 2025) focuses on researching brand resonance in its totality and not on its four individual dimensions. For example, Oktavenia and Martini (2024) Investigate the impact of brand resonance on brand loyalty, finding that brand resonance exerts a positive and significant influence on brand loyalty. Rigby and Lee (2024) examine the interplay between language strategies in advertising and consumer identity, focusing on their combined effect on emotional resonance. The findings reveal that storytelling and metaphorical language significantly enhance emotional resonance, with advertisements employing these strategies evoking stronger emotional responses and higher engagement scores compared to informational ads.

Despite previous studies conducted in the areas of brand resonance and social-media advertising, not much relates to understanding the impact of each individual brand-resonance dimension on advertising value. The existing advertising literature offers limited empirical investigation into the influence of advertising value on the dimensions of brand resonance, particularly within the context of the face care industry.

This study bridges existing research gaps by exploring the impact of advertising value on the various aspects among South African face-care consumers. A review of past research reveals a clear need for studies focusing on enhancing brand resonance through short-form social-media advertisements, particularly within the face-care industry in emerging markets. As a result, this research contributes to the academic

discourse on brand resonance by providing insights specific to the South African context (Hassim, 2019; Dziba, Enslin and Ndzwayiba, 2022) and offering valuable perspectives on consumer engagement with face-care brands in a rapidly-evolving digital landscape.

### **1.1.2 Context of the study**

#### ***The gen-Z consumer***

In the last decade, a shift in terms of consumer segments on the rise has moved from millennials who were previously considered the most disruptive consumer segment to generation-Z (gen-Z) (Almomani, 2020). Gen-Z is a demographic cohort comprising individuals born between 1995 and 2010, who are considered digital natives. They have been born in an era of internet and technological advancement; their tech-savvy level of is unprecedented (Pillay, 2021).

Globally gen-Zs are known for maintaining connections on social networks and engaging with each other on various topics ranging from politics to brand-related topics (Willy, 2024). Globally they are a cohort with large buying power, influencing family decisions and those of peers (Thangave, Pathak and Chandra, 2022). This cohort places high value on *value for money* when purchasing products. This search for value results in high expectations from brands to deliver a product that is functional and meets emotional needs i.e., shared values and quality products (Khan and Belk, 2024).

To market effectively to gen-Zs, brands need to know their needs, motivations and usage behaviour. According to Olejniczak and Stadryniak (2022) and Khan and Belk (2024), a gen-Z consumer is a consumptive and impulsive buyer. Gen-Z consumers prefer online shopping for reasons of convenience, perceived lower prices, variety of products, and time efficiency (Sudirjo et al., 2023).

Gen-Z consumers in emerging markets tend to differ from those in developed markets. While both groups are highly digital, those in emerging markets often face more-constrained access to stable internet, devices, and disposable income, which shapes how they engage with brands and content (Citrawijaya et al., 2024; Nnyanzi, Kilimani and Oryema, 2024). They tend to be more price-sensitive, pragmatic, and community-oriented, often seeking value and utility alongside aspirational messages (Wandhe, 2024; Abdullah et al., 2025). In contrast, gen-Zs in developed markets generally have greater access to technology, higher purchasing power, and more

exposure to global trends, which fosters expectations of convenience, personalisation, and socially-conscious brand behaviour (Montobbio et al., 2024). South Africa represents one of the most rapidly expanding economies within the African continent (Grinin and Korotayev, 2023). It is a stable economy in which the well-devised democracy provides a suitable climate for international and local brands to thrive (Pillay, 2021; Peters, Pretorius and Marais, 2025). The young South African gen-Z is in a supportive environment to feed their love for all things digital as South Africa has high smart-phone penetration compared to other African countries. It boasts high access to social networks; it is ranked as being the second-largest e-commerce market in the continent (Ayuni, 2019; Census 2022; Miyajima, 2022).

Despite South Africa having the perception of a relatively reliable economy, South Africa has high levels of youth unemployment at 46% (StatsSA, 2025), negatively impacting the youth's access to disposable income and buying power. This is not the case for their counterparts in developed markets (Mseleku, 2022). The South African gen-Z consumer's understanding of value for money is driven by the need for value but also by the lack of access to money (Pillay, 2021). Deloitte (2021) concurs with this notion of the consumer's search for value for money adding that they possess a high level of cautiousness for brands.

These consumers are fickle and effortlessly switch to brands that provide value for money. This makes this cohort less brand loyal than its predecessors (Hanbury 2019, Pillay 2021). Despite being well known for brand switching, the South African gen-Z consumer prefers brands that align to their values, are authentic, and resonate with them (Pillay, 2021). Brand resonance increases the likelihood of emotional attachment among gen-Z consumers, which in turn promotes brand loyalty (Munsch, 2021).

The Zion Market Research report (2023) estimates the value of the global beauty and cosmetic industry to be USD 314.52 billion in 2023, expected to reach USD 1, 226.13 billion by 2032. This despite fluctuations in the economy, such as volatile exchange rates and limited consumer purchasing power in emerging markets; in developed markets they are often linked to global recessions, supply-chain disruptions, or financial crises (Tabash et al., 2024). The cosmetic industry has remained unaffected by these fluctuations. The beauty and cosmetic industry includes skin care, hair care, perfume, and make-up.

The South African cosmetics market generated revenues of USD 2,111.4 million in 2023, with forecasts indicating growth to USD 2,915.2 million by 2030, at a compound annual growth rate of 4.7% (Grandview Horizon Stats, 2023). The global beauty and cosmetics industry comprises skincare, hair care, perfumes or fragrances, and make-up. Within the South African market, skin care accounts for the largest share in 2023, with make-up and colour cosmetics forming a meaningful sub-segment (Grandview Horizon Stats, 2023).

Multinational corporations such as Estée Lauder and L'Oréal continue to dominate production and sales globally. Despite this dominance, local brands in South Africa such as Portia M are gaining traction and increasing local production, which contributes to greater saturation in the cosmetics industry (Happi, 2024).

A study by Jeffreys (2018) states that gen-Zs are spending more money on cosmetics than apparel; cosmetic spend was up by 20% compared to the previous year. Contrary to previous generations that used make-up as a corrector of beauty, gen-Zs believe that make-up is an enhancer of their beauty. They believe that make-up allows them to not hide their imperfections; it fosters the beauty-positivity agenda of loving yourself as you are. As a result, their expectations on make-up brands have increased as they search for brands that communicate a value-driven message rather than a message driven by unrealistic beauty standards (Jeffreys, 2018). They seek brands to drive the narrative of *authentic beauty* which refers to a form of beauty rooted in the genuine expression of self, where external appearance aligns with inner values, identity, and lived experience. It emphasises individuality, coherence, and self-acceptance rather than conformance to socially-constructed ideals of attractiveness (Moopi and Nyambi, 2024).

This idea of seeking authentic brands that speak to personal values yet provide a value-for-money offering requires brands to constantly keep up with the ever- and easy-changing consumer (Pillay, 2021). The results of the Sunday Times GenNext survey (2024) support the notion of a forever-changing consumer. According to Yellowwood Consulting (2024), the Sunday Times GenNext survey continues to serve as a key indicator of the trends and aspirations shaping South African youth culture; it delivers insights that are valuable for brands and advertising agencies (Yellowwood consulting, 2024).

The survey is divided into two sections i) brand preference: this section ranks the coolest brands voted by the youth and ii) youth behaviour: this is a youth segmentation focusing on various category engagements and associated behavioural drivers. The behavioural component of the study identifies three key drivers that brands can utilise to cultivate trust among young consumers and, in turn, enhance brand consideration and preference: accessibility, authenticity, and community. The 2024 survey collected responses from over 7,200 participants spanning four youth segments: tweens (8–13 years), teens (14–18 years), young adults (18–24 years), and young professionals (25–30 years). For this study, the categories of interest are the coolest skincare brand and the coolest advertising medium categories.

*Table 1.1: Coolest skincare brands*

| Rank | 2023       | 2024           |
|------|------------|----------------|
| 1    | Nivea      | Nivea          |
| 2    | Vaseline   | Dove           |
| 3    | Dove       | Vaseline       |
| 4    | Avon       | Avon           |
| 5    | Neutrogena | Oh So Heavenly |

*Table 1.2: Coolest advertising medium*

| Rank | 2023       | 2024         |
|------|------------|--------------|
| 1    | Google Ads | TikTok       |
| 2    | TikTok     | Tv           |
| 3    | Instagram  | YouTube      |
| 4    | YouTube    | Social media |
| 5    | Twitter    | Facebook     |

*Source: Sunday Times GenNext survey (2024)*

The results in table 1.1 and table 1.2 demonstrate the ever-changing consumer preference as brands easily change position or drop off every year. Brands have an equal chance of performing in the market and equally, brands must fight for to-of-mind awareness and resonance (Widyastuti, 2023). The communication medium used to target consumers has a positive role in yielding favourable results. Brands have to communicate authentically and must be present in those online platforms relevant to the consumer (Gabelaia, 2025).

### ***The relevance of social media in skincare-purchase decisions***

Social media has become an indispensable tool in shaping consumer behaviour, particularly in the face-care industry. Digital platforms such as Instagram, Pinterest, TikTok, and YouTube have revolutionised the ways in which consumers discover, assess, and purchase skincare products (Tauhit and Asmadi, 2024). The visual and interactive nature of social media makes it an ideal space for face-care brands to

showcase their products, educate consumers, and build trust (Qotrunnada and Marsasi, 2023). For example, Instagram and TikTok have become part of the face-care-buying process from start to end. To start the buying process, these platforms are used to check face-care trends via skincare gurus and influencers and the process ends with consumers posting insights about the purchase (Djafarova and Bowes, 2021).

Influencers, beauty bloggers, and dermatologists leverage these channels to share product experiences, tutorials, and expert advice, shaping consumer perceptions and trust (Moreno-Lopez et al., 2023). User-generated content, such as before-and-after photos, unboxing videos, and testimonials, enhances credibility and encourages engagement. Brands use social media to create interactive campaigns, personalised recommendations, and targeted advertising, driving purchase intent (Khan et al., 2021). With real-time feedback and community-driven discussions, social media enables consumers to make informed choices based on peer reviews and expert opinions. As a result, it has become a powerful tool in the face-care industry, influencing brand loyalty, product awareness, and ultimately, purchase behaviour (Yusiana et al., 2023).

One of the uses of social media is its role in facilitating product discovery. Influencers and content creators play a role in introducing new face-care products to their followers. Through tutorials, reviews, and before-and-after posts, influencers provide relatable and authentic insights that resonate with consumers (Yusiana et al., 2023).

Social media serves as a platform for education and transparency. Face-care brands use these platforms to explain product ingredients, benefits, and usage, helping consumers make informed decisions (Nurniati, Savitri and Faddila, 2023). The rise of *skinfluencers* and dermatologists on platforms like TikTok has democratised face-care knowledge, making it accessible to a broader audience. This educational content builds brand credibility and empowers consumers to choose products tailored to their specific needs (Kuncoro and Kusumawati, 2021).

Social media fosters a sense of community among face-care enthusiasts. Online forums, comment sections, and dedicated hashtags enable users to exchange their experiences, ask questions, and seek advice (Ruti and Muqarrabin, 2024). This communal aspect creates a feedback loop where consumers feel heard and valued,

strengthening their loyalty to brands that engage with them authentically (Ruti and Muqarrabin, 2024).

Social-media platforms have integrated shopping features, such as Instagram *Shops* and TikTok's "Shop Now" buttons facilitate direct product purchases by consumers directly from platform posts. This seamless integration of content and commerce has shortened the purchasing journey, turning inspiration into action almost instantly (Kristi and Aruan, 2023).

Social media is a powerful driver in the face-care industry, influencing how consumers discover, learn about, and purchase products. Its ability to combine education, community, and convenience has made it a relevant tool for both brands and consumers, reshaping the face-care market in the digital age (Nugraha et al., 2023).

### ***Black African women and skincare regimes***

Skincare appeals to black African women for both cultural and health reasons. Traditionally, natural ingredients like shea butter, aloe vera, and herbal infusions have been used for their nourishing properties and as a means to maintain a connection to ancestral wisdom and cultural identity (Nare, Moopi and Nyambi, 2024). Skincare routines have long been regarded as a form of self-care and empowerment, as they contribute to protecting the skin against environmental stressors, addressing individual skin concerns, and promoting overall well-being (Iqani, 2022).

With the advent of colonialism, European beauty standards and synthetic products began influencing local practices, leading to a gradual hybridisation of skincare regimes (Palladinetti, 2024). Despite these changes, many traditional practices persist, particularly in rural areas where access to indigenous knowledge remain strong (Montle, 2022).

Western beauty standards have influenced African women, often creating a complex interplay between indigenous aesthetics and externally-imposed ideals (Palladinetti, 2024). Historically, colonialism introduced European norms, such as lighter skin tones, straighter hair, and specific facial features that conflict with traditional African beauty practices (Kinuthia, Susanti and Kokonya, 2023). These standards have contributed to phenomena like colourism and altered perceptions of self-worth, impacting body image and consumer behaviour. In today's globalised world, media and advertising continue

to propagate these Western ideals, sometimes marginalising local beauty traditions (Kinuthia, Susanti and Kokonya, 2023).

Colourism has played a role in influencing the construction of beauty standards among Black women. Originating from the historical contexts of colonialism and slavery, it has reinforced a bias favouring lighter skin tones, thereby shaping self-esteem, media representation, and patterns of consumer behaviour (Moopi and Nyambi, 2024). This bias has influenced beauty practices, sometimes leading to the use of skin-lightening products and altered perceptions of what constitutes *ideal* beauty (Berthé, 2024). Today there is a growing movement that challenges these narrow standards by celebrating the diversity and richness of all skin tones, empowering black women to embrace their natural beauty and reclaim their cultural identity (Montle, 2023).

After independence, African women began reclaiming their cultural heritage while embracing modern skincare innovations. The late 20th century saw the rise of the global beauty industry, which often excluded or misrepresented black skin (Friedman, 2024). This led to a growing demand for products tailored to the unique needs of melanin-rich skin, such as addressing hyperpigmentation, dryness, and sensitivity (Gebashe et al., 2022).

Good skin is highly valued among African women as it symbolises health, vitality, and cultural pride. It reflects overall well-being and protection against environmental stressors and plays a role in self-care and confidence (Kaziga et al., 2021). Beyond its physical benefits, maintaining healthy skin connects many African women to traditional beauty practices and cultural heritage. In an era where global beauty standards often promote narrow ideals, good skin becomes an means of reclaiming and celebrating their natural beauty and individuality (Achempong, 2021).

In recent decades, there has been a resurgence of interest in natural and organic skincare, with many African women returning to traditional ingredients and practices (Lanto, 2021). The global natural-beauty movement has amplified the visibility of African skincare brands, such as those featuring shea butter, black soap, and marula oil. Social-media and digital platforms have empowered African women to share their skincare routines, celebrate their beauty, and challenge Eurocentric standards (Lanto, 2021).

This study investigates how brands in the South African face-care industry, a subset of the skincare category, can build brand resonance with the gen-Z consumer through

online advertising. This research assists brands in prioritising key brand-resonance dimensions in their communication to promote brand resonance with the gen-Z face-care consumer. The study contributes to the growing knowledge on brand resonance in emerging markets.

## 1.2 Rationale

The rise of digitalisation has brought benefits for brands. These benefits include access to more customers worldwide; in the same light, it has made it easier for more brands to enter the market (Wang, Cao and Cai, 2024). This means that the current consumer market is permeated with several brands, all aiming to attract and convert the same consumer (Wolf, 2020). Most brands are moving from bricks and mortar models to online stores or a hybrid model resulting in increased brand digital presence (Zekina, 2022).

The increase in digital presence from both the consumer and the brand has shifted the platform of interaction to online platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube (Febrian et al., 2022). Unlike the bricks and mortar environment that allowed for a controlled brand-interaction environment, the digital space provides consumers with the opportunity to simultaneously interact with multiple brands at a given time (Kujur and Singh, 2020).

The change in the dynamic of the brand-consumer relationship adds pressure to brands to effectively communicate with a consumer, who is simultaneously interacting with other brands. Brands must interact with the consumer in a way that closes out their interest in other brands around them and *rises above the noise* (Haung and Lee, 2019).

Considering the South African gen-Z consumer, who as a digital native, searches for value for money in products and easily switches brands, capturing this consumer's attention becomes a more-rigorous exercise (Pillay, 2021). Amidst this competitive environment, the key challenge for marketers lies in creating communication that solicits the right type of response and builds the correct brand knowledge in the consumer's mind (Varjonen, 2018).

For all brands, the main goal is to build a strong brand that resonates with consumers (Keller, 2009). Keller (2009:10) defines brand resonance as "the nature of the relationship customers have with the brand and the extent to which they feel 'in sync'

with the brand”. To explain this concept, the customer-based brand-equity (CBBE) model was developed with “the premise that the power of a brand lies in what the consumers have learned, felt, seen and heard about the brand” (Keller, 2009:5). The construct of brand resonance forms part of this model; it is assessed from the lens of its four dimensions of loyalty, attachment, community, and engagement.

Brand resonance relates to brand relationships which are built because of ongoing positive responses to brand stimuli. Brand advertising is one of the key stimuli brands use to drive all four dimensions of brand resonance (Cleff, Walter and Xie, 2018). There is a need to understand the key elements that drive brand resonance for the gen-Z consumer through online advertising. This understanding supports brands in targeting this consumer segment to better develop online advertising that drives brand resonance.

### **1.3 Problem statement**

The rapid rise of social-media advertising has led to an oversaturated digital environment where consumers are constantly bombarded with a high volume of ads (Dukes and Shua, 2022). This increasing clutter has diminished the individual impact of advertisements, as users experience advertising fatigue and begin to ignore content that blends into the background noise (Qutywa, 2020; Corret and Teisseire, 2025). Consequently, the effectiveness of marketing messages is reduced, resulting in lower consumer engagement, decreased brand recall, and ultimately, diminished return on investment for advertisers (Pahari, Bandyopadhyay and Manna, 2024).

Due to the competitive nature of the market, brands consistently navigate the space in hopes of attracting the consumer (Qadri, Moustafa and Ghani, 2025). As a result, brands must develop advertising stimuli that assist the consumer to navigate the crowded space and find brands that meet their functional desires and resonate with them (Çelik et al., 2024). According to Keller (2009), brands who succeed in building brand resonance are those who can stand out against the crowd and capture the consumer's attention. Businesses seeking to refine their digital-marketing strategies need to address and break through the clutter to connect meaningfully with their target audiences (Daniels 2022).

## **1.4 Research objectives**

This study investigates how advertising value, particularly through short-video adverts on social media, influences the development of positive brand resonance among gen-Z face-care consumers. By examining this relationship, the research uncovers insights into how brands can effectively engage this demographic and foster stronger emotional connections through targeted social-media strategies.

To achieve this overall goal, the research objective is to:

- Examine how different factors of advertising value influence the various factors of brand resonance among gen-Z face-care consumers.

## **1.5 Research questions**

This study answers the following research question and sub-questions:

Research question: Which dimensions of advertising value contribute to building brand resonance among black-female gen-Z face-care consumers in South Africa through short-form-video advertising?

- 1.1. Does informativeness as a sub-set of advertising value influence loyalty as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.2. Does informativeness as a sub-set of advertising value influence attachment as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.3. Does informativeness as a sub-set of advertising value influence community as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.4. Does informativeness as a sub-set of advertising value influence engagement as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.5. Does entertainment as a sub-set of advertising value influence loyalty as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.6. Does entertainment as a sub-set of advertising value influence attachment as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.7. Does entertainment as a sub-set of advertising value influence community as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.8. Does entertainment as a sub-set of advertising value influence engagement as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.9. Does irritation as a sub-set of advertising value influence loyalty as a sub-set of brand resonance?

- 1.10. Does irritation as a sub-set of advertising value influence attachment as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.11. Does irritation as a sub-set of advertising value influence community as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.12. Does irritation as a sub-set of advertising value influence engagement as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.13. Does credibility as a sub-set of advertising value influence loyalty as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.14. Does credibility as a sub-set of advertising value influence attachment as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.15. Does credibility as a sub-set of advertising value influence community as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.16. Does credibility as a sub-set of advertising value influence engagement as a sub-set of brand resonance?

## 1.6 Theoretical framework

### 1.6.1 Customer-based brand equity (brand resonance)

To understand brand resonance and its key drivers, this study adopts Keller's (2001) customer-based brand-equity (CBBE) model. This model defines the route to successful brand engagement. Brand resonance is the highest form of brand engagement. The CBBE model is centred on the key steps involved in building a strong brand (Keller, 2001).

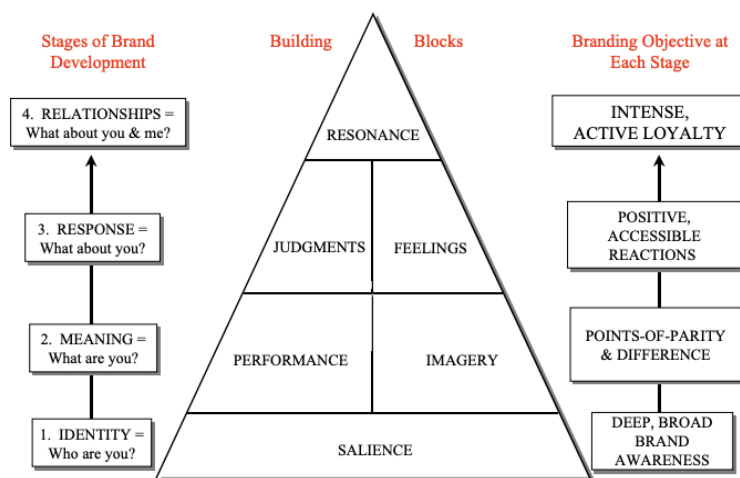


Figure 1.1: Customer-based brand-equity model pyramid

Source Keller (2009:144)

There are three parts to the CBBE model. The first part deals with the four stages of development. The second part relates to the six building blocks. The third part discusses branding objectives.

The four stages of development include:

1. *Identity*: establishment of proper brand identity accompanied with brand awareness.
2. *Meaning*: The cultivation of meaningful brand identity by establishing strong, positive, and distinctive brand associations.
3. *Response*: source positive customer brand responses.
4. *Relationships*: forging strong brand relationships with consumers (Keller 2001).

The six building blocks include:

1. *Salience*: *Brand salience* is related to awareness, i.e., how frequently and easily do consumers think about the brand in various circumstances.
2. *Brand performance*: *brand performance* is related to functional needs in terms of the extent to which a product or service fulfils the consumer's functional need. (Keller, 2009).
3. *Brand imagery*: *brand imagery* is related to the external attributes of a product or service that aim to meet the consumers emotional or social needs.
4. *Judgments*: *brand judgements* have to do with consumer views, opinions and thoughts about the product or service (Keller, 2009).
5. *Feelings*: *brand feelings*, is related to the consumer's emotional responses and reactions elicited by the brand in consumers.
6. *Resonance*: *brand resonance* has to do with brand relationship building. It refers "to the nature of the relationship customers have with their brands and the extent to which they feel 'in sync' with the brand". (Keller, 2009, p.139-142).

The four branding objectives include:

1. *Deep, broad brand awareness*: Is the consumers ability to both recognise and recall the brand easily in a wide range of situations (Keller, 2009).
2. *Points-of-parity and difference*: The ability to establish clear brand associations that differentiate the brand while ensuring it meets the basic expectations of the category (Keller, 2009).

3. *Positive accessible reactions*: The ability to elicit favourable consumer judgements and emotions about the brand that are easy to retrieve from memory (Keller, 2009).
4. *Intense active loyalty*: The ability to cultivate deep psychological bonds and engagement that go beyond repeat purchase (Keller, 2009).

For this research, the focus is on the six building blocks. According to this model, each of these blocks must be met in sequence for brands to achieve strong brand equity. Under each block there are subcategories that provide more direction on how to achieve the desired outcome in each level (Keller, 2009). Within this model, the pinnacle achievement for brands is brand resonance. When a brand has strong resonance, it allows it to thrive in the competitive and highly-saturated brand environment (Keller, 2009). For this research, the focus is on the final building block, brand resonance. Keller (2001, p.139-142) defines “it as the nature of the relationship customers have with the brand and the extent to which they feel ‘in sync’ with the brand”. Brand resonance is understood to represent the strength of the psychological connection consumers form with a brand and the extent to which this connection fosters active loyalty.

Brand resonance is measured using four dimensions. The first dimension is *behavioural loyalty* which is related to consumer purchase behaviour. Observations related to this initial dimension include the frequency recurring purchases and the percentage of the category’s total volume contributed by the brand (Keller, 2001). The second dimension is referred to as *attitudinal attachment* which can be described as the instance when consumers develop brand love and see the brand as distinctive or exceptional within a broader context. The third dimension is *sense of community* which is described as a state where consumers feel a sense of affiliation with other brand users (Keller, 2001). The fourth and final dimension, *active engagement*, refers to the willingness of consumers to devote personal resources such as time, effort, and financial investment toward the brand beyond what is required for its purchase or consumption (Keller, 2001).

Keller’s (2001) CBBE model positions brand resonance as the apex of brand building, achieved through behavioural loyalty, attitudinal attachment, sense of community, and active engagement. These dimensions capture the depth of consumer-brand relationships and the extent to which consumers feel aligned with a brand. This framework provides the theoretical foundation for this study, which explores the priority

dimensions that drive brand resonance in relation to online advertising for gen-Z black-female face-care consumers.

### **1.6.2 Advertising value**

Advertising messages can be seen as communication exchanges between advertisers and consumers (Ducoffe, 1996; Sharma et al., 2022). Communication involves a two-way process that establishes common ground between the sender and the receiver (Hajian et al., 2024). In advertising, for a successful message exchange to occur, the advertisement must be processed with enough effort so that the receiver gains at least some level of appreciation for the sender's intended message, leading to a behavioural response. Advertisements that are ignored or dismissed are considered ineffective or failed message exchanges (Ducoffe, 1995; Chen et al., 2023).

To explore how consumers respond to advertisements, Ducoffe (1995) introduced the concept of *advertising value*, defined as a "representation of the perceived value of advertising to consumers" (Ducoffe, 2002, p.2). More specifically, it is described as "a subjective evaluation of the relative worth or utility of advertising to consumers" (Ducoffe, 2002:1). This model is based on uses and gratifications theory, which suggests that individuals select media that best fulfill their cognitive and emotional needs, encompassing both personal and gratification seeking desires (Blumler and Katz, 1974; Hamouda, 2018). The model investigates the influence of four key variables: informativeness, entertainment, irritation, and credibility on consumers' perception of advertisement value and how this perception relates to their attitude to advertisements (Dobrinic, 2020).

The value of an advertisement can be seen as an indicator of customer satisfaction with promotional communication; the higher the value, the more favourable the reactions, and vice versa (Ojha, 2022). According Karunarathne and Thilini (2022), this approach evaluates the impact of advertising on consumer aspects, as their perceptions of value and attitudes can predict their behaviour. Advertising that lacks value is likely to lead to negative consumer responses, hindering advertisers' efforts to build exchange relationships with consumers (Astini and Panigoro, 2020). On the other hand, effective advertisements result in positive consumer responses and attitudes (Warsame et al., 2021).

Overall, the advertising-value framework provides a useful theoretical lens for evaluating how short-form social-media advertising influences consumer-brand relationships, making it particularly relevant for studies of gen-Z face-care consumers.

## **1.7 Research design and methodology**

### **1.7.1 Research design**

This research study adopts a quantitative research design. The philosophical and epistemological choices that have shaped the methodological approach are positivism. The research question and problem statement play a role in determining the research design. This study investigates how online-video advertising affects brand resonance. It identifies which of the four dimensions of brand resonance are most effective amongst South African female gen-Z consumers.

Quantitative research entails gathering data in a way that allows it to be measured and analysed statistically, enabling researchers to validate or challenge alternative knowledge claims (Clark et al., 2021). This research approach allows the researcher to measure which elements of the brand-resonance model drive the highest level of brand resonance and loyalty for the study population through online advertising. The findings of the study must be generalised beyond the confines of this study (Ghanad, 2023). A quantitative approach allows for generalisation of results. The quantitative approach guards against researcher bias through replication. This successful replication is a measurement of the validity of the study findings (Clark et al., 2021).

Chen (2020) and Pina and Dias (2021) employ a similar research design to investigate variables akin to those in this study. Directed by the positivist philosophy adopted in this research study, a quantitative research approach is seen as most suitable to answer this study's research questions. Quantitative research involves gathering data that can be quantified and analysed statistically to either support or challenge "alternate knowledge claims" (Moises, 2020, p.80). Through this research approach, the researcher uses brand-resonance theory to measure which elements of the brand-resonance model drive the highest level of brand resonance for the study population through online-video advertising.

### **1.7.2 Research plan**

The worldview a researcher adopts influences which research methods to apply as part of their research methodology for providing reliable evidence about the studied

phenomenon of interest (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). For this research, a positivist paradigm is adopted. A positivist worldview adopts objectivity in its observations. It is selected as the preferred research paradigm, as it interprets observations through objective facts or measurable entities.

Research conducted within this paradigm is founded on deductive reasoning, involving the development and testing of hypotheses, the provision of operational definitions, and the use of mathematical formulations, calculations, and extrapolations to draw conclusions. It facilitates the explanation of phenomena and enables predictions based on quantifiable outcomes (Mweshi and Sakyi, 2022).

The positivist worldview is characterised by attributes such as reliability, replicability, procedural transparency, , and enhanced comprehensiveness, suggesting it is more objective. These attributes closely align with the principles of quantitative research. (Scharrer and Ramasubramanian, 2021). This approach enables the researcher to be accurate in the description of parameters and coefficients in the data that are gathered, analysed and interpreted, so as to understand relationships embedded in the analysed data (Curtis et al, 2021).

The generalisability assumption is that the findings from a research project conducted within the positivist paradigm in one context, should be applicable to other contexts by inductive inferences (Gannon, Taheri and Azer, 2021). “This means that the positivist researcher should be able to observe occurrences in the phenomenon they have studied and be able to generalise about what can be expected elsewhere in the world” (Clark et al., 2021, p.202).

### **1.7.3 Population and sampling**

The unit of analysis for this study is gen-Z black-female face-care consumers. These are consumers between the ages of 18 and 24 years who are frequent users of face-care products. Due to data-privacy regulations, research with respondents under the age of 18 requires parental consent (Strode and Slack, 2018). Hence, the age for this research is set at 18 to 24 years.

Since this was a quantitative study, random sampling was adopted to select participants. Random sampling ensures that each individual within a population has an equal and predetermined probability of selection (Clark et al., 2021). This method of sampling was selected to allow for the generalisation of results which is key for a

quantitative study. This sampling method allows for the use of statistical methods to study relationships and analyse data (Clark et al., 2021).

Consumers were recruited to the study via an online questionnaire distributed on Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. These are social-media platforms most frequented by the study population (Digital and Social Trends report, 2025). To guard against incorrect recruitment, a screener was placed at the start of the questionnaire. For consumers to be eligible participants they have to be females between the ages of 18 and 24 years and daily users of face-care products. They must be frequent users of at least one of the following social-media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube.

There is debate in the literature over the appropriate sample size for factor analysis; however there are suggested guidelines. While Sürücü, Sesen, and Malicki (2023) suggest a minimum of 200, Mundfrom, Shaw, and Luke (2020) argue that there is no fixed number required. They propose minimum sample sizes ranging from three to 20 times the number of variables and absolute ranges from 100 to over 1,000. This study follows the approach of Mundfrom, Shaw, and Luke (2020), calculating its desired sample size by multiplying three variables of brand resonance, advertising value, and brand experience by 40. This results in a sample size of 120. Initially the study had three variables brand experience, brand resonance, and advertising value. During the development of the research framework and questionnaire, it became evident that including three variables adds considerable complexity. The questionnaire became excessively lengthy, and the number of hypotheses to be tested was unmanageable, which complicated the framework design. As a result, shortly before data collection, the variables were reduced to two, while the original sample size was retained.

#### **1.7.4 Data collection and method**

The method of collecting data from the study respondents is through survey research. Survey research is a cross-sectional methodology in which data are primarily collected from multiple respondents at a single point in time using self-administered questionnaires or structured interviews. Its objective is to obtain quantitative or quantifiable information on two or more variables, which can subsequently be analysed to identify patterns or relationships among them (Arundel, 2023).

A survey research design provides a quantitative description of trends, attitudes, and opinions of a population. For this study a quantitative survey approach allows for the

understanding of opinions on brand resonance and how it can be built amongst the study population. Survey research uses cross-sectional or longitudinal approaches and questionnaire designs, allowing for generalisation of data from study sample to the greater population (Kusmaryono, Wijayanti and Maharani, 2022). The survey employs a five-point Likert scale, which serves as a multi-item instrument used to assess a range of attitudes toward a specific topic. Its purpose is to gauge the strength or intensity of respondents' feelings regarding the subject under investigation. (Kishore et al., 2021). Varjonen (2018) adopts a similar approach in understanding how brand resonance can be built through brand experience for the fashion consumer.

The survey was conducted online; participants were selected via online platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. This data-collection method was selected as it is the most-ideal method of accessing the study population (Digital and Social Trends report, 2025). Prior to launching the study, a pilot study was undertaken to assess the research questionnaire's functionality (Bryman, 2018). The pilot study obtained feedback from participants evaluating their comprehension of the questions and to identify any challenges encountered while completing the survey. The reliability and validity of the research measurement was assessed, as recommended by Bujang et al. (2024).

A pilot study is a small-scale preliminary investigation conducted prior to the main research, aimed at assessing the feasibility, reliability, and validity of the research design, instruments, and procedures, as well as identifying potential issues that could impact the larger study (Teresi, Stewart and Hays, 2022). In literature there are varying recommendations regarding the sample size for pilot studies (Andrade, 2020; Wadood, Akbar and Ullah, 2021; Muasya and Mulwa 2023). The main goal of pilot studies is not to test hypotheses, so sample size is typically not calculated. Some studies recommend having over 30 respondents per group, while others suggest two to five respondents. An appropriate sample size should be established not primarily to ensure adequate statistical power for hypothesis testing, but to evaluate the practicality of participant recruitment and the overall study design (Aziz and Khan, 2020; Ismail, Kinchin and Edwards, 2017). Considering the total study sample of 120, the pilot survey for this study was administered to a convenience sample of five respondents. The online questionnaire was sent to them using a secure link via Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. This allowed the researcher to assess if the link is easily accessible on all three data-collection platforms.

Researchers are required to comply with ethical considerations when conducting research. Respondents were asked for consent to participate in the study prior to answering the survey questions. They were informed about the purpose of the study, and all ethical protocols were shared with them (Recker, 2021). Participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality, with their responses used solely for academic purposes. They were made aware that participation is voluntary and that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any point without penalty. The research process ensures that no harm, deception, or coercion is involved, safeguarding the dignity, rights, and wellbeing of all participants (Recker, 2021).

### **1.7.5 Data analysis**

Descriptive analysis is applied to summarise data and present it in an easily-assimilated form. This means each characteristic or variable is described by means of a single value (Anderson, Williams and Cochran, 2020). The descriptive statistics are divided into two groups. group 1 deals with measures of central tendency or location: sample mean, median, mode. The minimum and maximum values in this group of summary statistics can identify unusual values or outliers (Cooksey, 2020). Group 2 deals with measures of dispersion or variability: sample standard deviation, mean deviation, and sample coefficient of variation. These measure data consistency. To highlight significant points visually under descriptive statistics, use is made of graphics such as circle or pie charts, histograms, and component bar charts (Cooksey, 2020).

The second step of data analysis is factor analysis. Factor analysis is applied to reduce a large number of variables into a smaller set of factors, based on the assumption that all variables are correlated to some extent (Kyriazos, 2018; Sürücü, Sesen and Maslakçı, 2023). "Factor analysis represents a complex array of structure-analysing procedures used to identify the interrelationships among large set of observed variables and then, through data reduction, to group a smaller set of variables into dimensions or factors that have common characteristics" (Shrestha, 2021:6). Factor analysis assists in determining key relationships between variables, directly answering all the research questions (Tavakol and Wetzel, 2020).

In this study, the construct is brand resonance; the four dimensions can be viewed as various factors making up this construct of brand resonance. Factor analysis can be categorised into two types: exploratory and confirmatory. Exploratory factor analysis

(EFA) is a statistical method employed to condense data into a smaller set of summary variables and to investigate the underlying theoretical framework of the phenomena. It identifies the structure of the relationship between variables and respondents (Beavers et al., 2019). This approach is employed when the researcher is uncertain about how many factors are needed to account for interrelationships among a given set of characteristics (Kyriazos, 2018). Thus, EFA determines the factor structure.

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) assesses the validity of the measurement model and how well the measured variables reflect the underlying construct (Kyriazos, 2018). It evaluates whether the collected data corresponds with the proposed measurement model. CFA is employed to determine how well the hypothesised set of identified factors fits the data (Sarmiento and Costa, 2019). CFA verifies the factor structure. This is by using the lavaan package in R. In this study both exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis are used for data analysis.

This approach is employed when the researcher is uncertain about which factors are required to account for the interrelationships among a set of characteristics, indicators, or items. To strengthen the understanding of relationships amongst factors, correlation analysis is undertaken. Correlation analysis addresses the association or relationship between two or more quantitative variables (Lorenzo-Seva, 2022). This allows the researcher to understand how strongly individual factors correlate with each other (Widaman and Helm, 2023). Analysis is conducted using R statistical software.

This study investigates if advertising value, delivered through social-media short-video advertisements, drives brand resonance among South African black-female gen-Z face-care consumers. Consequently the researcher applies this technique of factor analysis to investigate the underlying dimensions of the construct of interest (Tavakol and Wetzel, 2020).

## **1.8 Significance of the study**

Brand resonance is widely explored in the context of social media; however, much of the existing research examines the concept holistically rather than focusing on its individual dimensions (Rigby and Lee, 2024; Qadri, Ahmed and Ghani, 2025). As social-media platforms increasingly influence consumer interactions, brands are leveraging these channels to foster emotional connections and strengthen loyalty (Rana and Arora, 2022). This study investigates if advertising value, delivered through social-media short-video advertisements, drives brand resonance among South

African black-female gen-Z face-care consumers. In doing so, it offers valuable insights into effective marketing strategies by identifying which dimensions of brand resonance and advertising value are most impactful for this audience.

These insights provide brands with the opportunity to tailor campaigns more precisely to engage gen-Z consumers in the face-care category. The research highlights the evolving preferences of digitally-savvy consumers, particularly gen-Zs, who are influenced by social media. Ultimately, the study empowers brands to build meaningful, impactful, and sustainable connections with their audiences, enhancing brand equity, improving consumer retention, and supporting long-term success in an increasingly-competitive market.

## **1.9 Delimitations of the study**

According to Coker (2022), delimitations refer to the boundaries intentionally set by the researcher to narrow the scope of a study. They are decisions made about what to include and exclude, shaping the focus, feasibility, and clarity of the research design. Unlike limitations, which are beyond the researcher's control, delimitations are purposeful choices that reflect the researcher's priorities and the intended contribution of the study.

This study is defined by four key delimitations, each of which constrains the breadth of the findings but simultaneously enhances the depth and manageability of the research.

### **1.9.1 Delimitation 1: Use of the brand-resonance element of Keller's (2001) CBBE model**

From a theoretical perspective, this study applies only the brand-resonance element of Keller's (2001) CBBE model. While the broader model encompasses other layers such as brand salience, brand performance, and brand imagery, the focus on brand resonance is deliberate. Brand resonance is deemed the most-relevant construct for capturing the depth of consumer-brand relationships in the context of gen-Zs and social-media short-form-video advertising (Sastrina et al., 2024). This decision means the study does not account for how the other CBBE dimensions interact with advertising value to influence overall brand equity.

### **1.9.2 Delimitation 2: Exclusion of brand experience as a framework variable**

The brand experience component of the CBBE model was initially included in the scope of this study, however, during the process of developing the hypotheses, it was determined that inclusion of three major constructs of brand resonance, advertising value, and brand experience, make the framework unnecessarily complex and extend it beyond the appropriate scope of a master's dissertation. Consequently, the model was deliberately streamlined to enable more-rigorous examination of the advertising value and brand-resonance dimensions most relevant to gen-Z short-form-video advertising.

### **1.9.3 Delimitation 3: Focus on short-form-video advertising**

This study concentrates exclusively on short-form-video advertising on social-media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube shorts, and excludes long-form-video advertising. Long-form-video advertising refers to advertisements that are longer in duration, often ranging from one to several minutes. These ads are usually designed to provide detailed brand storytelling, product demonstrations, or emotional narratives that require more time to develop (Dubal and Bhatia, 2022). Short-form-video advertising consists of much-briefer content, generally lasting from a few seconds to one minute. Popularised by platforms like Instagram reels, TikTok, and YouTube shorts, short-form ads are designed to capture attention quickly and deliver a concise message (Xiao and Mou, 2024). Other forms of digital advertising including long-form video, static imagery, or display ads are not considered. This delimitation is intentional, as short-form video represents one of the most-dominant and culturally-influential modes of digital engagement among gen-Zs. By restricting the focus, the study's findings cannot be generalised to other advertising formats that function differently in terms of consumer engagement and brand resonance.

### **1.9.4 Delimitation 4: Choice of consumer segment of black-female gen-Z face-care consumers**

The study sample is restricted to black-female gen-Z consumers in South Africa within the face-care category. This group was chosen because of its growing influence in shaping beauty and face-care trends, and its active participation in digital and social-media culture (Childs, 2022). This delimitation means that the findings may not

be directly applicable to other consumer segments, e.g., male consumers, other racial groups, or older generations, or to other product categories outside of facecare, e.g., fashion, food, or electronics.

Overall, these delimitations reflect deliberate choices made to ensure the study remains focused, feasible, and methodologically rigorous. While they narrow the scope and reduce generalisability of the findings, they allow for a deeper and more-contextually-relevant exploration of how advertising value influences brand resonance among South African black-female gen-Z face-care consumers. Future research can expand beyond these boundaries to test additional model elements, other consumer segments, and different advertising formats, broadening the applicability of the insights generated in this study.

## 1.10 Definitions of terms

| Term              | Evidence in literature                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Brand resonance   | The “extent to which customers feel that they are ‘in sync’ with the brand” (Keller, 2009;144). It is defined by the strength and depth of the psychological connection between customers and the brand, as well as the degree of behaviour and engagement motivated by this loyalty (Keller, 2009). |
| Advertising value | Is the representation of the perceived value of advertising to consumers, described as “a subjective evaluation of the relative worth or utility of advertising to consumers” (Ducoffe, 1995:3).                                                                                                     |

## 1.11 Report chapter outline

### ***Chapter 1: Introduction and background***

This section begins with an overview of the background and the contextualisation of the research study. This is followed by the rationale, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, and the theoretical framework.

### ***Chapter 2: Literature review***

This chapter of the research-study report reviews previously-conducted research. The review begins with a discussion on brand-resonance theory as it is the key theoretical foundation of this study.

### ***Chapter 3: Research design and methodology***

This chapter starts by discussing the research design, positivist research paradigm, design approach, and population. Explanation is given of the sampling method used, and the data-collection process through survey methodology. The data-analysis methods and ethical considerations applied to this study are discussed.

### ***Chapter 4: Data analysis and results***

This chapter outlines the research findings and discussion of responses obtained via the survey. The results are discussed in the context of the statistical analysis conducted.

### ***Chapter 5: Conclusions, limitations, and implications for future research***

In this chapter the conclusions and recommendations, both theoretical and practical of this study are presented in relation to each research objective. This section discusses this study's anticipated contribution and limitations and concludes with suggestions for future research.

### ***Bibliography***

The bibliography for the research study is included.

## **1.12 Ethical considerations**

For this study, ethical considerations are considered; the researcher did not encounter any challenges. The following ethical principles are upheld (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019):

- Ethical clearance from the ethics committee was obtained by the researcher before conducting the research.
- All respondents provided consent before participating in the study. Respondents were informed that participation is voluntary, and that they can opt out of the study at any given point. Respondents were assured of their identity protection.
- This study is not considered to be of high risk to the researcher. All data was collected using an online platform; there was no direct contact with respondents.
- Throughout the research process and data analysis, the researcher maintained an objective posture, shying away from bias that might impact the validity and reliability of the research results.

- The researcher ensures that the findings are presented with integrity and are beneficial to the branding field and free from any plagiarism.
- Data is only authorised for use in this study and will not be used for any other purposes. Once the study is completed all information collected will be destroyed.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Chapter overview**

This section is divided into several parts, each contributing to the exploration of the this study's research questions. The first section focuses on the primary demographic group, gen-Zs, to set the context and provide a backdrop for understanding the research findings. The following two sections cover content marketing and social-media-video platforms. These sections explore how content marketing on various social-media platforms influences consumer-brand relationships and engagement with brand content. They examine which types of video advertising resonate with gen-Z consumers on each social-media platform.

Given the research focuses on video advertising, it is relevant to examine the literature on communicating value through advertising. This section primarily examines literature on advertising value, exploring what drives value in advertising and factors that lead to positive or negative consumer responses. The subsequent section addresses the theoretical framework, which is closely linked to the main concept of this research: brand resonance. It examines the concept of brand resonance by exploring its dimensions, to highlight the significance of brand resonance in consumer-brand relationships.

Together, these sections create a structured foundation for the literature review, moving from an understanding of the target demographic to the broader marketing context, and finally to the theoretical constructs underpinning the study. This progression ensures that the review situates the research within existing scholarship and clarifies how each component contributes to addressing the central research questions. By integrating insights on gen-Z, content marketing, social-media-video platforms, advertising value, and brand resonance, the literature review establishes a comprehensive framework for examining how short-form-video advertising influences consumer-brand relationships in the South African context.

### **2.2 Gen-Z consumer**

In the last decade, a shift in terms of consumer segments on the rise has moved from millennials who were previously considered the most-disruptive consumer segment to generation-Z (gen-Z) (Almomani, 2020; Gabrielova and Buchko, 2021). Gen-Z is a demographic cohort comprising of individuals born between 1995 and 2010,

considered digital natives, and have been born in an era of internet and technological advancement; their tech-savvy level is unprecedented (Pillay, 2021).

Globally gen-Zs are known for maintaining connections on social networks and engaging with each other on various topics ranging from politics to brand-related topics (William, 2022). Globally they are a cohort with large buying power, influencing family decisions and those of peers (Aina and Ezeuduji, 2021). This cohort places high value in receiving *value for money* when they purchase products. This search for value results in high expectations from brands to offer a product that delivers functionality, and that meets emotional needs i.e., shared values and quality products (Pamikatsih et al., 2022).

In emerging markets, the gen-Z-cohort characteristics are not the same as those of global gen-Z youth. South Africa is one of the fastest-growing economies on the continent. It is a stable economy in which democracy has provided a suitable climate for international and local brands to thrive (Masipa 2018, Pillay 2021). The young South African gen-Z is in an environment to feed their love for all things digital as South Africa has a high smart-phone penetration compared to other African countries. It boasts high access to social networks; it is ranked as the second-largest e-commerce market in the African continent (Ayuni, 2019; Census 2022; Miyajima, 2022).

Despite South Africa being perceived as a relatively-reliable economy, the young South African gen-Z is faced with a high unemployment rate concentrated among the youth which negatively impacts their access to money and buying power compared to the global gen-Z consumer (Mseleku, 2022). As a result, the South African gen-Z consumer's perception of value for money is influenced by the desire for value and by limited financial access (Pillay, 2021). Deloitte (2021) supports this view, noting that these consumers are cautious when it comes to brands.

These consumers are often indecisive and readily shift to brands that offer good value for their money. As a result, this group tends to exhibit less brand loyalty compared to previous generations (Hanbury 2019; Pillay 2021). Despite their reputation for frequently switching brands, South African gen-Z consumers favour brands that reflect their values, are authentic, and resonate with them (Pillay, 2021). When brand resonance is present, it enhances the likelihood of these consumers developing an emotional attachment to the brand, fostering loyalty in the process (Munsch, 2021).

The beauty and personal-care industry is experiencing significant growth, ranking among the fastest-growing consumer sectors, driven mainly by the cosmetics and skin-care segments. A major contributor to this swift expansion is the influx of younger consumers into the market (Euromonitor World Market for Beauty and Personal Care Report, 2024; Statistica Market Insights, 2024). This growth is amplified by social media, globalisation, and e-commerce, which influence purchasing habits for beauty products. Global trends are spreading, reshaping daily beauty and personal-care routines (Euromonitor World Market for Beauty and Personal Care Report, 2024; Statistica Market Insights, 2024).

Statistica Market Research (2024) estimates the value of the beauty and personal care industry to reach US\$646.20 bn in 2024, with the South African market estimated to generate US\$4.33 bn, with skincare driving the largest growth within the industry. Despite economic fluctuations, the skincare industry has remained resilient (Statistica Market Research, 2024). The broader beauty and cosmetic sector, which includes skincare, hair care, perfumes, and make-up, has been largely dominated by multinational companies like Estee Lauder and L'Oréal since the 20th century, controlling much of the beauty-product market (Statistica Market Research, 2024). There has been a rise in smaller local brands, like Red Dot cosmetics and Sorbet, that are boosting local production, which in turn is contributing to market saturation within this industry (Gebashe et al., 2022).

A 2018 study by Jeffreys (2018) states that gen-Zs are spending more money on cosmetics than apparel; cosmetic spend was up by 20% compared to the previous year. Contrary to previous generations that use make-up as a corrector of beauty, gen-Zs believe that make-up is an enhancer of their beauty. They believe that make-up allows them to not hide their imperfections and that it fosters the beauty-positivity agenda of loving yourself as you are (Dalziel, 2024). As a result, their expectations of make-up brands have increased as they search for brands that communicate a value-driven message rather than a message driven by unrealistic beauty standards. They seek brands to drive the narrative of *authentic beauty* (Jeffreys, 2018).

This idea of seeking authentic brands that speak to personal values yet provide a value-for-money offering requires brands to constantly keep up with the ever- and easy-changing consumer (Pillay, 2021). The results of the Sunday Times GenNext survey (2020) support the notion of a forever-changing consumer. In South Africa the Sunday Times GenNext survey remains the leading barometer of what South Africa's

youth find on-trend and aspirational delivering insights that are valuable for brands and advertising agencies.

The survey is divided into two sections i) brand preference: this section ranks the coolest brands voted by the youth, and ii) youth behaviour: this section focuses on various category engagements and associated behavioural drivers. The behavioural section emphasises three key factors that brands can leverage to establish trust with young consumers and enhance their consideration and preference: accessibility, authenticity, and community. The 2021 survey gathered responses from over 6,000 individuals in different age groups: eight to 13 years (tweens), 14 to 18 years (teens), 18 to 24 years (young adults), and 25 to 30 years (young professionals). For this proposed study, the categories of interest are the make-up and advertising-medium categories.

*Table 2.1: Coolest skincare brands*

| <b>Rank</b> | <b>2023</b> | <b>2024</b>    |
|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| 1           | Nivea       | Nivea          |
| 2           | Vaseline    | Dove           |
| 3           | Dove        | Vaseline       |
| 4           | Avon        | Avon           |
| 5           | Neutrogena  | Oh So Heavenly |

*Table 2.2: Coolest advertising medium*

| <b>Rank</b> | <b>2023</b> | <b>2024</b>  |
|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1           | Google Ads  | TikTok       |
| 2           | TikTok      | Tv           |
| 3           | Instagram   | YouTube      |
| 4           | YouTube     | Social media |
| 5           | Twitter     | Facebook     |

Gen-Zs' love for digital presence is clearly seen in their brand-engagement behaviour online. For instance, Instagram plays a role throughout the entire face-care purchasing journey. Consumers begin by using Instagram to explore face-care trends shared by influencers and face-care experts and conclude the process by posting their own experiences and feedback about their purchases (Djafarova and Bowes, 2021). The need for digital interaction in the buying process is not limited to online stores, but also to bricks and mortar stores. For instance, the beauty brand Glossier has designed a fully-pink store to promote social-media engagement while customers shop in-person (Glossier, 2020). The consumer within this category is highly dependent on online platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, to navigate this category, searching for tutorials and reviews to assist them in making informed decisions and having a better brand experience (Kigundu-Touré, 2020). A basic Google search for

make-up tutorials yields 9,970,000,000 views/impressions. This speaks to how connected this industry is to online advertising and the highly-saturated market.

## **2.3 Content marketing**

The emergence of social media has influenced brand advertising. Today's consumers rely on information to meet their needs and turn to social media as a key resource for gathering information and interacting with brands (Lopes and Casais, 2022). Modern consumers are more discerning when making purchases, often comparing products across brands to ensure they obtain high-value items (Vedula et al., 2023). The digital landscape has expanded their ability to make these comparisons (Vedula et al., 2023). As a result, social media has become an ideal platform for engaging with consumers, making it easier for them to find valuable brand-related information (Khairan and Fachira, 2021).

Engaging with consumers on social media has led to a new phenomenon in marketing strategies, facilitating interactive communication between companies and consumers (Rosário and Dias, 2023). This shift has driven brands to create social-media advertising content specifically designed to foster this interaction, contributing to the rise of digital-content marketing aimed at enhancing consumer brand engagement (Hollebeek and Macky, 2019; Zaman et al., 2022). Brands use their social-media pages to share product insights, often employing videos and images to capture the attention of their target audience (Ansari et al., 2019). For consumers, digital-content marketing (DCM) enhances access to content that aligns with their specific needs by providing opportunities for brand-related learning, entertainment, or increased convenience (Hollebeek and Macky, 2019). According to Du Plessis (2022:2), "Content marketing has become a leading technique in digital marketing communication, leveraging the consumer's perspective to build relationships by creating and sharing engaging content on social media that enriches their daily lives". In today's environment, traditional marketing alone is inadequate for brands to stay competitive; the landscape has changed, necessitating adjustments to strategies (Balio, 2021). Within the social-media context, consumers are becoming sceptical of traditional advertising, creating an opportunity for content marketing to thrive (Dabbous and Barakat, 2020).

Content marketing is a key component of digital marketing that focuses on creating and distributing valuable, customer-centric information to engage target audiences

(Izogo and Mpinganjira, 2024). Hollebeek and Macky (2019:1) define content marketing as “the creation and dissemination of relevant, valuable brand -related content to current and prospective customers on digital platforms to develop favourable brand engagement, trust and relationships”.

The Content Marketing Institute (2017:1) defines it “as marketing strategy by businesses to create and disperse valuable, consistent, and pertinent information to grab maximum market shares and escalate profits”. Leung, Gu, and Palmatier (2022) defines content marketing as a marketing technique that involves sharing purposeful content in digital spaces, encompassing formation, interaction, and consequences. According to Ansari et al. (2019), content marketing is a strategy that companies use to regularly share valuable information to capture market share and drive profitable customer engagement. Weerasinghe (2019:217), defines content marketing as “a strategy of publishing content on websites and social media. Content including videos, blogs, white papers, or articles...”. Despite growing interest and discussion on this subject, academic research remains limited (Koob, 2021).

Content marketing is rapidly emerging as a key component of a company’s marketing strategy. It is relevant for businesses looking to update their marketing initiatives through digitalisation to enhance their online visibility (Ho, Pang and Choy, 2020). Unlike traditional advertising, which focuses on driving sales and encouraging purchases, content marketing emphasises building relationships with consumers through storytelling to strengthen brand messaging and positioning (Balio, 2021). The goals of content marketing include increasing brand awareness, attracting new customers, developing consumer relationships, and enhancing loyalty (Balio, 2021). It is driven by a genuine intent to add value to consumers’ lives in various ways to boost engagement (Balio, 2021). Content marketing seeks to attract attention, engage communities, and provide value that aligns with the audience’s expectations (Kędzierska-Szczepaniak and Minga, 2022). It remains relevant by focusing on consumer needs, preferences, emotions, and behaviour (Khairan and Fachira, 2021; Li, 2021).

A limitation of content marketing is that it can be seen as intrusive, interrupting the social-media experience for users (Ho, Pang and Choy, 2020). However, Hollebeek and Macky (2019) contend that traditional marketing disrupts consumer activities, while DCM is based on the principle of consent, permission, or opt-in. DCM is actively sought by consumers, who engage with it on their own terms. When consumers willingly

interact with brand content, it facilitates more-effective two-way communication with them. The concept of consent in the social-media context is not always straightforward (Sahli and Zhai, 2025). Some platforms, like YouTube, feature ads that cannot be skipped, limiting users' ability to opt out of content. DCM attracts its audience by providing valuable content. Since consumers actively search for specific DCM content, they are seen as an *earned audience*, which is typically more appreciative and engaged with both the content and the brand (Hollebeek and Macky, 2019).

Bill Gates wrote a famous essay in 1996 titled *Content Is King*, which talks about the future of the internet. In this essay he predicted that content creation is where much of the real money will be made (Gates, 1996). Despite this essay being close to 20 years old, his predictions about the internet remain relevant today. Companies need to understand which elements of content marketing are driving the most-desired brand responses to enhance their interactions with their online community and to pinpoint factors that influence consumer engagement (Balio, 2021).

Jacob and Johnson (2021) speak of six DCM characteristics that can be considered as motives for consumer engagement.

1. *Valuable content* is informative or educational material that enhances consumers' understanding. It addresses specific needs or helps solve problems for consumers. This type of content can be categorised as informative content, which provides clear and concrete information about a company's products and services to facilitate potential customers' understanding of its offerings (Wang and McCarthy, 2020).

Burbano-Gómez and Sinisterra-Rodríguez (2023) describe informative content as material that delivers useful details about products or services. While this type of content is necessary, their study finds that it typically generates lower engagement on its own, but engagement increases when paired with brand personality. Khairan and Fachira (2021) support the notion that informative content tends to have low engagement when presented alone. These authors examine how various types of digital-content marketing impact consumer engagement in the tourism industry. The study reports that informative content that is coupled with persuasive attributes results in higher engagement (Khairan and Fachira, 2021).

2. *Relevant content* is created with the intention of addressing current and future needs of the target audience. For prospective consumers relevant content is an attractor and for current consumers it enhances the brand relationship. Radu,

Constantinescu, and Olteanu (2023) emphasise the importance of aligning content with consumer interests, needs, and preferences. They argue that content that is relevant, timely, and personalised is more likely to capture attention and encourage engagement. Koob (2021) affirms that a deep understanding of the target audience is needed. Successful content marketing requires insights into audience needs, preferences, and behaviour, enabling the creation of relevant and personalised content that resonates with consumers. Weerasinghe (2018) studied the impact of content marketing towards customer online engagement. This study reports a positive correlation between relevant content that provides solutions to consumer needs and high customer online engagement.

3. *Reliable content* refers to the content being honest, unbiased, genuine, and precise. Consumers need to have confidence that the information they are accessing originates from a reputable source. Lou et al. (2019) argue that there is a positive correlation between reliable and relational content. Relational content is designed to promote social interactions among community members on social media, encouraging them to engage with the content. According to Dolan (2019) and Lou et al. (2019), relational content includes posts that pose questions or organise quizzes, prompting users to respond and fulfilling their desire for social integration and interaction on the brand's page. When consumers trust the content, they can connect with it more easily (Akrami, and Hajialiakbari, 2021).
4. *Consistent content* is defined as the brand voice being consistent with the brand producing the content and in harmony with the brand's previously-published materials. Hollebeek and Macky (2019) add that DCM focuses on long-term brand equity and brand-purpose-led content. Consistency is a pillar of content marketing that drives brand resonance e.g., Dove's Real Beauty Sketches campaign aims to educate female consumers and foster appreciation for their bodies, while demonstrating a clear sales benefit. Self-esteem has been Doves overarching, consistent brand-purpose messaging.
5. *Interactive content* refers to responsiveness and the capacity to effortlessly replicate and distribute the content across various platforms. Radu, Constantinescu, and Olteanu (2023) argue that content that evokes a strong emotional response is especially effective in fostering engagement. Posts that evoke positive emotions like joy, surprise, or inspiration, and those that address

social issues or shared values, are more likely to be shared and commented on by users.

The article “How social-media advertising features influence consumption and sharing intentions: the mediation of customer engagement” by Ji, Mieiro, and Huang (2022) examines the connection between advertisement content and consumer engagement on social-media platforms. The research reveals that social-media ads featuring brand-personality traits such as humour and emotion tend to result in greater consumer engagement. Balio (2021) analysed factors that contribute to customer engagement on social media. The study reports message interactivity to be the most-relevant factor on Facebook and Instagram messaging presented in an entertaining way is more appealing, driving consumer engagement with branded content. Emotional content appeals to users’ feelings and experiences (Balio, 2021). Ads that evoke strong emotions, whether positive or negative, tend to generate more likes, comments, and shares. The emotional-content impact can vary depending on the context and nature of the brand. This studied reports that persuasive content has the most impact on customer engagement (Sandoval and García-Madariaga 2024).

6. *Entertaining content*: Entertainment refers to how exciting the brand content is, including humour (Putri, 2021). Entertainment content comprises posts that entertain or engage users through humour, stories, or visually-appealing imagery. This type of content is found to be highly effective in capturing attention and fostering emotional connections with the audience. Entertainment content leads to increased brand awareness and can positively impact consumer attitudes to the brand (Oruc and Aydin, 2022). Wang and McCarthy (2020) argue that entertainment content has the most power to influence and increase engagement. The entertainment and social value of commercial videos positively influences the likelihood of sharing them online (Radu, Constantinescu and Olteanu, 2023). The tendency to share videos has a beneficial effect on brand attachment and brand equity. Ultimately, brand attachment contributes positively to brand equity (Souki, Chinelato and Filho, 2021).

This perspective is echoed in the study by Lou et al. (2019), titled “The Effectiveness of Non-Hard-Sell Content”, which finds that content designed to provide value through entertainment boosts brand building. This strategy fosters a deeper emotional connection with consumers, positively affecting their attitudes to

the brand and increasing purchase intentions. Non-hard-sell content tends to generate higher consumer engagement because it resonates more with audiences, leading to greater sharing, interaction, and overall visibility for the brand. It is associated with enhanced brand credibility and trust, as it is viewed as less intrusive and more customer-centric. Entertainment posts have high engagement on Instagram and TikTok. Across both platforms, relational content is found to drive high engagement (Lou et al., 2019; Radu, Constantinescu and Olteanu, 2023).

When examining the literature on content marketing, it is relevant to consider the impact of content type and format within the discussion. There are ongoing debates about the most-suitable format depending on the platform where the content is published. Sapre and Longani (2024) align with Jacob and Johnson's (2021) steps to success but add that relevant and relatable content only succeeds if the correct format and quality are used. High-quality and relevant content that connects with the intended audience must be produced. By using diverse-content formats like blogs, videos, infographics, and social-media posts, brands can engage various segments of their audience. High-quality content attracts consumers to the brand's offerings, encouraging them to spend time on the page and explore additional brand content (Rahimah et al., 2025). Ho, Pang, and Choy (2020) support this by demonstrating that content creation aligned with brand values and tailored for the audience delivers value to consumers.

The article "Using the Right Content on Social Media to Enhance Consumer Engagement" by Radu, Constantinescu, and Olteanu (2023) examines how various types of social-media content can be strategically used to increase consumer engagement. It finds that visual content, especially videos and images, often leads to higher engagement due to its immediacy and appeal. Branded video content is highlighted as one of the most-effective formats. Dewai (2021) investigated the impact of TikTok-marketing-based content on customer engagement and value, noting that TikTok videos lasting between 15 and 60 seconds affect users. Unlike other social-media platforms, TikTok demands higher levels of creativity and entertainment to drive engagement. Consequently, engaging brand content attracts consumers, enhances product value, and fosters positive brand attitudes (Dewai, 2021). Olmsted (2020) and Wang and McCarthy (2020) find that shorter, visually-appealing videos with clear messaging tend to perform better in terms of viewer retention and engagement. Content that is entertaining, emotionally engaging, or provides clear value to the

audience generally receives the highest levels of engagement. This is relevant across most social-media platforms (Xie and Lou, 2020). Kędzierska-Szczepaniak and Minga (2022) suggest that incorporating a mix of content formats can help maintain audience interest and enhance engagement.

## **2.4 Social-media platforms**

In the modern era, social media serves as a platform for fostering global connections, with the average user dedicating around two hours, 23 minutes each day to these platforms (Dataportal, 2024). WhatsApp ranks as the most-widely used social-media platform, followed by Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok. From a marketing standpoint, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube offer the most-relevant advertising opportunities (Kemp, 2023). It has become key for branding due to its ability to engage with consumers in a more-interactive and personalised way (Du Plessis, 2023). This research study determines whether there are differences between social-media platforms in how the four brand-resonance dimensions influence personalisation and interactivity.

Beyond being a social space for sharing content with others, social media acts as a resource hub ultimately changing the way consumers interact with brands (Ngangom, 2020; Ansari et al., 2020). Social-media platforms foster consumer relationships by providing a channel for ongoing engagement, personalised communication, and customer service, all of which enhance relationship equity (Zahoor, 2022). 49.9% of gen-Z consumers report social networks as their main channel for brand-related online research (Dataportal global digital report, 2024). Changes in the business landscape have transformed social media into a key tool for marketing strategies, particularly in maintaining and developing brand health (Li, Larimo and Leonidou, 2021).

Social media has rapidly transitioned from being primarily text- and image-based to a video-centric platform. In the current mobile era, video emerges as a popular medium for content consumption (Kim and Yoo, 2021; Pei et al., 2023). This change presents brands with both fresh opportunities and challenges, as consumer purchasing decisions are now affected by interactions on social media. (Ngangom, 2020). The use of short videos in marketing has seen rapid growth, particularly on social-media platforms. According to Data Portal (2024), the average person spends 92% of their weekly social-media time watching video content, with South Africans spending 84.9% of their time in this way. Among different age groups, gen-Z consumers lead, dedicating

94.4% of their weekly social-media time to video content. Consequently, many organisations and brands have adopted short-video advertising as a key marketing tool.

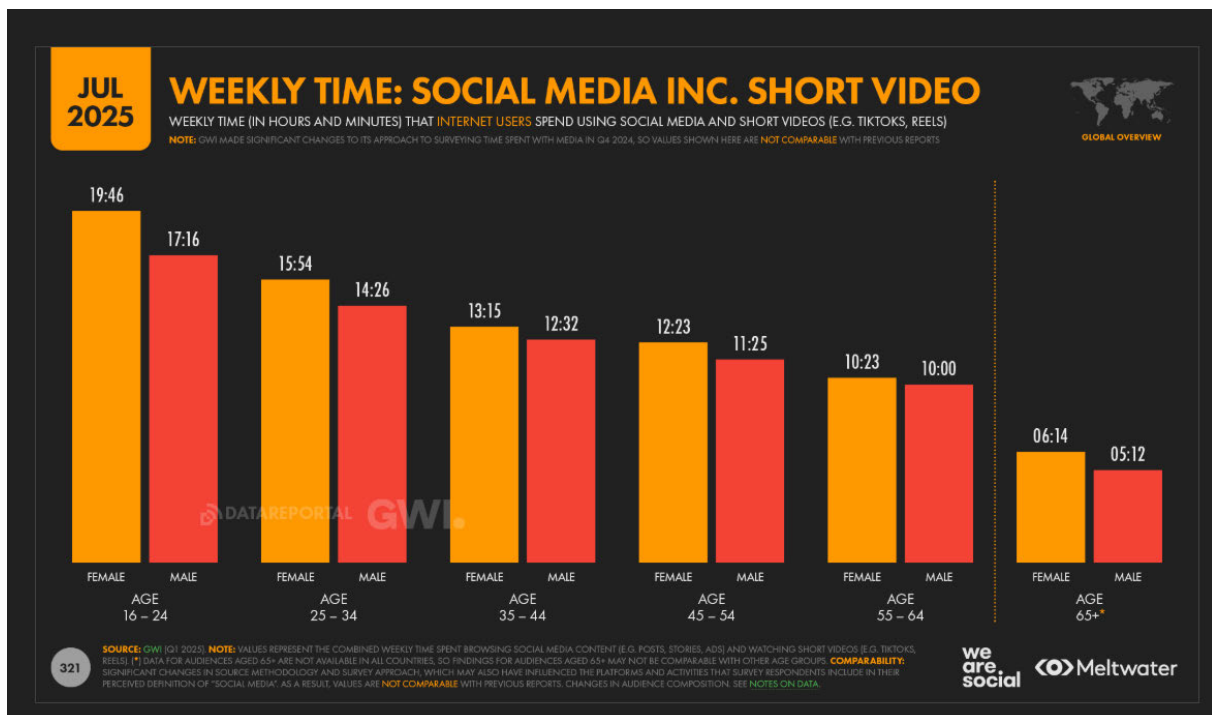
Advertising through video content is a highly-effective way for companies to stand out, whether by using humour, educational material, or inspiring and motivational messages (Ngangom, 2020; Liu et al., 2023). Videos have the unique ability to personalise content, capture attention, and connect with users in ways that other formats cannot (Kim and Yoo, 2021). Studies indicate that video content increases engagement rates more than text- and image-based content (Wang, 2022; Dong et al., 2023; Shi et al., 2023). Videos are more likely to be shared on social media, which enhances reach and visibility. Videos can convey emotions and tell stories, creating a stronger emotional bond with the audience. This emotional connection leads to greater retention and brand loyalty (Wang, 2020; Addo et al., 2022; Apasrawirote et al., 2022; Wang, 2022; Dong et al., 2023; Shi et al., 2023).

The digital age has contributed to shorter attention spans among consumers, leading to a preference for short-form videos over longer ones. This shift in behaviour has fuelled the growth of platforms like Instagram and TikTok. The trend became especially prominent during the coronavirus pandemic, where content quality, compelling storytelling, and easy accessibility were key factors in the popularity of short videos (Statista, 2021b). Short videos can engage multiple sensory-marketing techniques, such as dynamic visuals, sounds, and music (Krishna et al., 2019; Knoeferle and Spence, 2021). Krishna et al. (2019) finds that marketing that stimulates multiple senses generates more-positive sensory responses, leading to better attitudes and greater appeal to consumers. Knoeferle and Spence (2021) emphasise that an individual's senses do not function in isolation but constantly interact and influence each other. As visual marketing content continues to rise in popularity, brands face the challenge of creating content that genuinely resonates with consumers and captures their attention (Gao et al., 2020).

Balaskas and Rigou (2023) note that static visuals can become viral content, but they generally lack the emotional and widespread impact that videos achieve. This highlights the potential of videos to reach larger audiences and create more-meaningful connections. This observation supports the decision to focus this study on video advertising, as it is the most-effective format for engaging consumers and enhancing brand resonance. The study identifies which elements, within the

context of the brand-resonance model, are most relevant for driving engagement and resonance with gen-Z face-care consumers on social media through short-form videos. The study applies Ducoffe's (1995) sensory brand-experience model to determine which sensory elements are most effective for the target audience in this research.

The following section of this review examines video advertising within the context of key social-media platforms relevant to the study's target group: Instagram and TikTok. According to the DataPortal Global Digital Report (2024), Instagram and TikTok are the leading social-media platforms among gen-Z females (figure 2.2). Gen-Zs are particularly drawn to video content, with entertainment being a primary factor driving their content consumption. They prioritise honesty and authenticity in the content with which they engage (Ngangom, 2020). Video remains the central format for both Instagram and TikTok.



*Figure 2.1: Weekly time: social media including short video*  
 Source: Data Portal, Global digital report (2025)

Figure 2.1 highlights global patterns in weekly time spent on social-media and short-form-video platforms, e.g., TikTok, Reels, as of July 2025. The data reveals that younger consumers, particularly those aged 16 to 24, devote the most time to these platforms, with females averaging nearly 20 hours per week. Time spent declines steadily with age, with users aged 65+ spending fewer than seven hours weekly. Females consistently spend more time than males across nearly all age categories.

These findings underscore the centrality of short-form video to gen-Zs’ digital engagement reinforcing the relevance of focusing on this demographic for examining the relationship between advertising value and brand resonance.

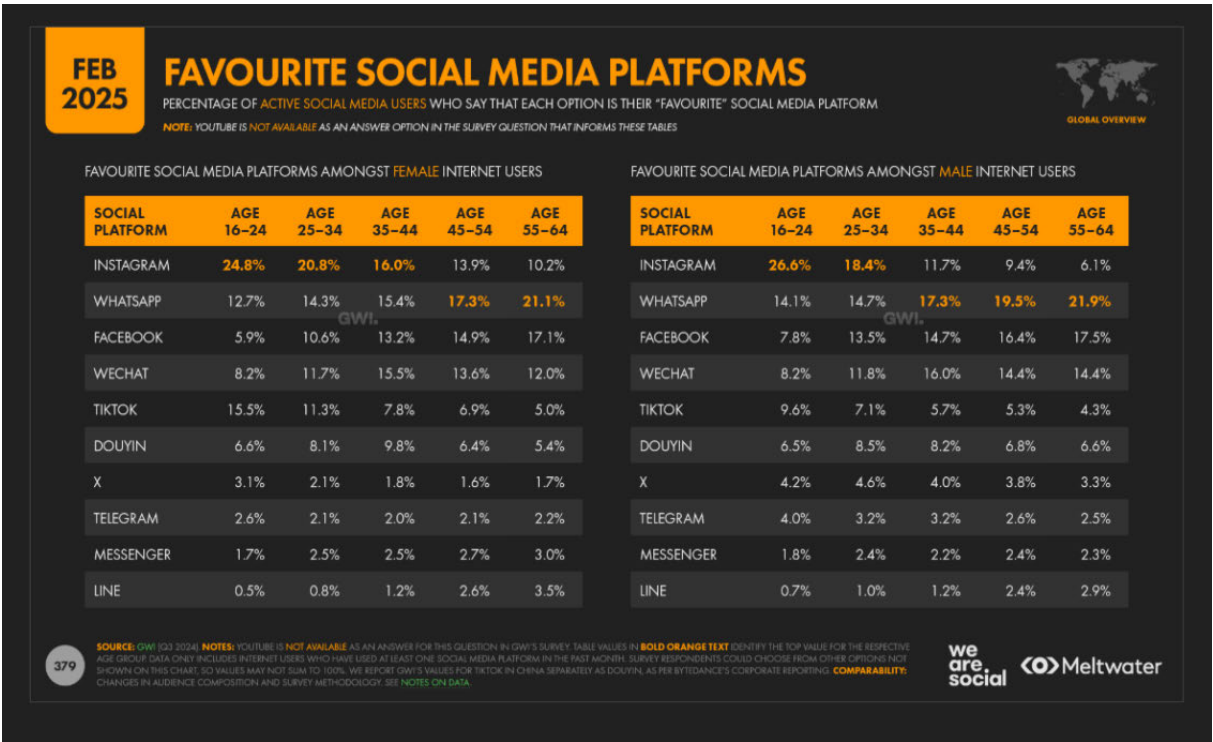


Figure 2.2: Favourite social-media platforms  
Source: Data Portal, Global digital report (2025)

Figure 2.2 presents the favourite social-media platforms of global internet users as of February 2025, segmented by gender and age group. Instagram emerges as the leading platform among younger cohorts, particularly those aged 16 to 24, where 24.8% of active users are in this age group, are female, and favour Instagram with 26.6% of active users being in this age group and male, favouring Instagram. Preference for Instagram declines steadily with age, while WhatsApp and Facebook gain prominence among older groups. For example, WhatsApp is the top choice among active users aged 55 to 64, with 21.1% being female and 21.9% male, and Facebook records strong preference among adults over 35. TikTok holds appeal among younger users but shows reduced favourability with age, suggesting its resonance is strongest within gen-Zs. These patterns illustrate the generational and gendered differences in platform preferences, reinforcing the need to consider age and platform-specific contexts when examining short-form-video advertising and its influence on brand resonance.

### **2.4.1 TikTok**

TikTok is rapidly becoming one of the fastest-growing social-media platforms, holding the position of the third-most-downloaded app worldwide on both the Apple Store and Google Play in the second quarter of 2024, with 117.7 million downloads (Backlinko, 2024). TikTok is estimated to have 23.4 million users aged 18 and above in South Africa in early 2025. TikTok's figures indicate that its ads reached 52.5% of all adults aged 18 and above in South Africa at the start of 2025 (Data Portal, 2025). TikTok's ad reach in South Africa is equivalent to 46.1% of the local internet-user base at the beginning of the year, regardless of age. In early 2025, 40.1% of TikTok's adult ad audience in South Africa is female, with 59.9% male. Data published in TikTok's ad-planning tools show that TikTok's potential ad reach in South Africa increased by 5.93 million, or 34.0%, between the beginning of 2024 and early 2025 (Data Portal, 2025).

TikTok specialises in short-form mobile videos centred around creative expression, offering users tools to create entertaining and joyful content (TikTok for Business, 2020). Initially launched in 2014 as Musical.ly, it was acquired by Chinese company ByteDance in 2017 and rebranded as TikTok (Meola, 2020). Due to Chinese censorship laws, the app operates as Douyin in China, which is essentially the same as the global TikTok app (Kopone, 2020). TikTok allows users to search for music and sounds to enhance their videos, interact with others through responses or duets, and engage in challenges, dance memes, or humorous content (Ngangom, 2020). The platform offers audio-visual features for producing looping videos that last between 15 and 60 seconds. These features consist of in-camera speed adjustments, image-tracking composites, collaborative split screens, and an organised video timeline (Bresnikc, 2019). Its intuitive design plays a role in boosting user engagement, allowing individuals to create content that is both entertaining and captivating (Sharabati et al., 2022).

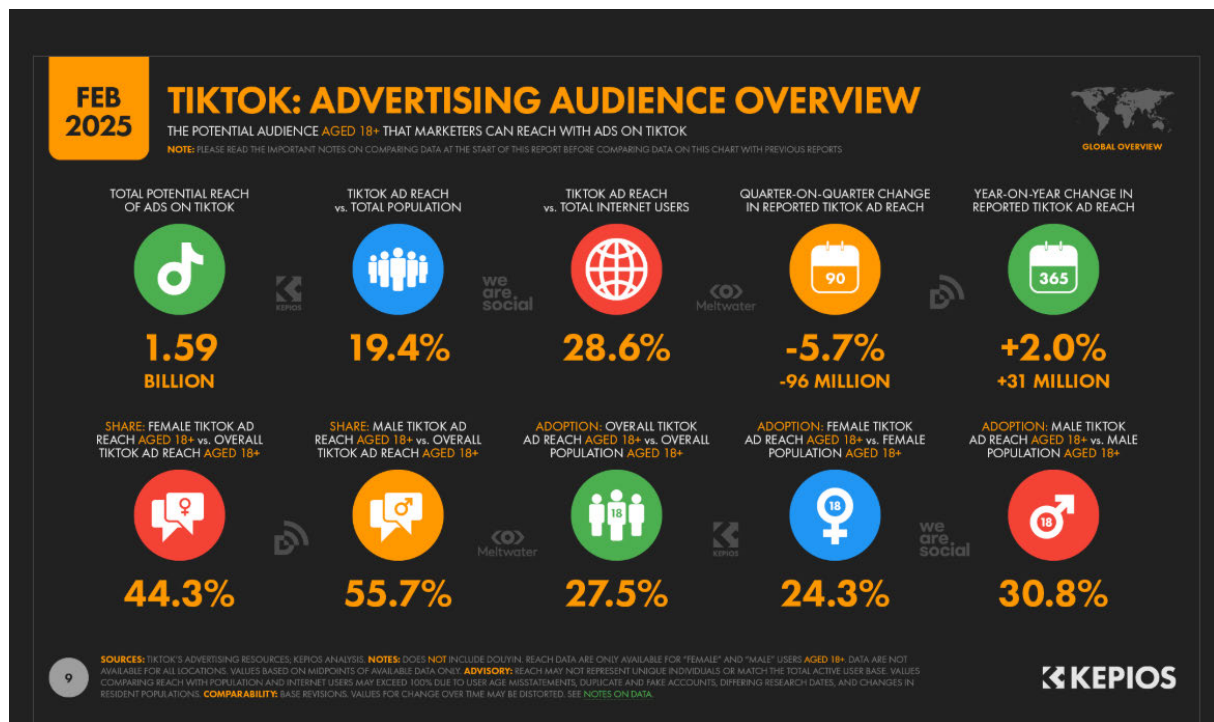
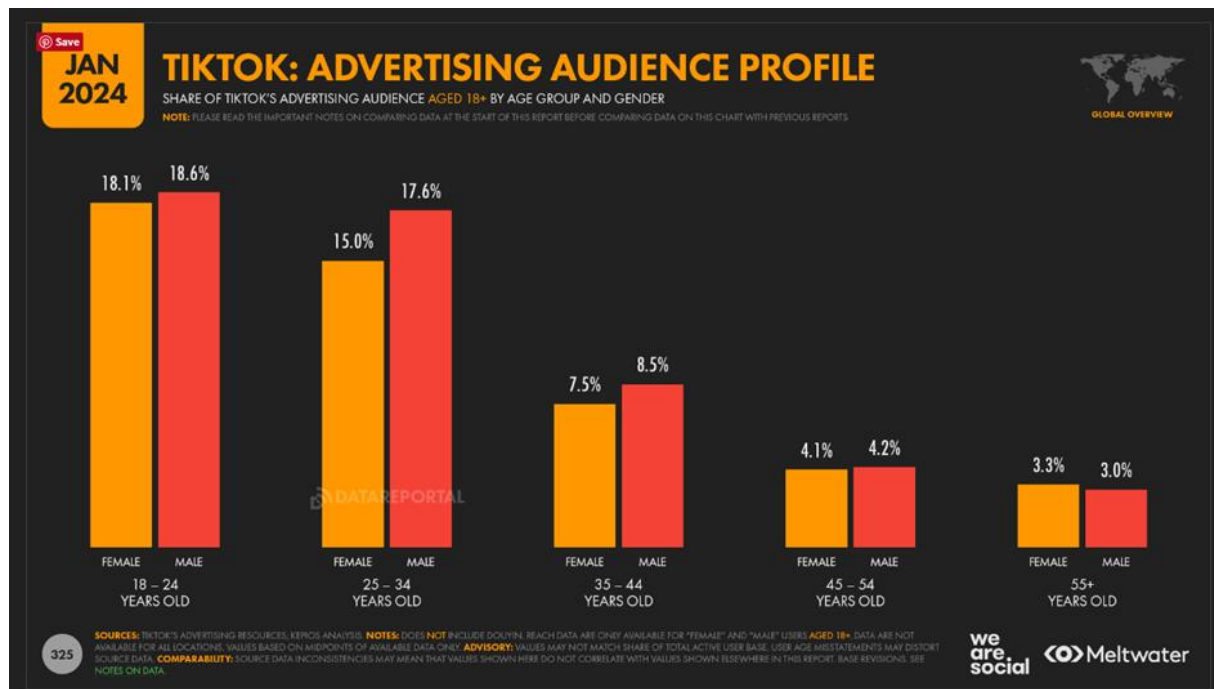


Figure 2.3: TikTok: advertising-audience overview  
Source: Data Portal, Global digital report (2025)

Figure 2.3 illustrates TikTok's global advertising-audience potential as of February 2025. The platform's ad reach extends to 1.59 billion users, representing 19.4% of the global population aged 18+ and 28.6% of total internet users. Although TikTok experienced a quarter-on-quarter decline in ad reach of 5.7%, equating to 96 million users, its audience still grew year-on-year by 2%, adding 31 million users. Gender distribution shows a slightly-higher male ad reach at 55.7% compared to female at 44.3%, with adoption rates indicating that 30.8% of the global male population aged 18+ and 24.3% of the female population aged 18+ can be reached through ads on the platform. These statistics highlight TikTok's vast global advertising capacity, particularly its ability to engage younger audiences through short-form-video content, making it a key platform for marketers to build resonance with gen-Z consumers.

On TikTok, video marketing is largely driven by hashtag challenges. These challenges are a community-focused strategy that creators and brands use to engage their audience through user-generated-content campaigns (Walsh et al., 2024). They involve encouraging TikTok users to create videos performing specific actions such as dancing, lip-syncing, or using a particular filter, and share them with a designated hashtag to increase visibility. Branded challenges are specific campaigns initiated by brands, often in collaboration with TikTok creators, to boost awareness of both the campaign's hashtag and the challenge itself. These challenge ads tend to generate

higher consumer interaction compared to other advertising methods on the platform (Kim and Yoo, 2021). According to the DataPortal Global Digital Report (2024), the TikTok-advertising audience is predominantly gen-Z users. This makes TikTok a valuable focus for this study, as it provides insights from a platform that is widely used by gen-Zs and where advertising is specifically targeted at this demographic.



*Figure 2.4: TikTok: advertising-audience profile*  
 Source: Data Portal, Global Digital Report (2025)

Figure 2.4 presents TikTok's global advertising audience profile by age and gender as of January 2024. The largest segment of ad reach is concentrated among users aged 18 to 24, 18.1% female and 18.6% male. The second-largest group comprises those aged 25 to 34, with slightly higher representation among males, 17.6% of the audience, than females, at 15.0% of the audience. Audience share declines progressively with age, with 4.1% to 4.2% of users in the 45 to 54 bracket and 3% among those aged 55+. These trends underscore TikTok's dominance among younger cohorts, particularly gen-Zs and young millennials, confirming its central role as a short-form-video platform for reaching digitally-active consumers. The demographic skew towards younger users positions TikTok as a channel for research examining advertising value and brand resonance within gen-Z markets.

TikTok challenges can be either sponsored or organic, generally combining text, sound, and movement. Influencers with large followings or brands investing in TikTok advertising usually lead these challenges (Paul, 2020). According to Kim and Yoo

(2021) these challenges allow users to actively engage with advertisements rather than just passively consuming them, which helps bridge the gap between users and ads and reduces resistance to advertising. This interactive approach enables consumers to like and participate, creating a sense of familiarity with the advertisement and increasing empathy, curiosity, and connection with the promoted products (Kim and Yoo, 2021). It improves the authenticity of the advertisement, a feature that gen-Z consumers particularly appreciate. Lee (2020) points out that TikTok challenges are an effective marketing tactic for overcoming viewer resistance by integrating entertainment with brand messaging. Considering TikTok's short-video format and the light-hearted character of its content, brands must seize consumer attention swiftly, within the initial few seconds (Meola, 2020).

Some examples of brands that achieved notable success with TikTok challenges are: *Guess*: The brand launched the #InMyDenim challenge, which attracted 10.5 million views, achieved a 14.3% engagement rate, generated over 5,550 user-created videos, and gained 12,000 new followers for Guess's official account during a six-day campaign (TikTok for Business, 2020). *Mac Cosmetics*: Mac collaborated with three TikTok influencers for the #YouOwnIt challenge. Over the course of six days, the campaign resulted in 635,000 videos and approximately 1.6 billion video views (Meola, 2020). *e.l.f. Cosmetics*: The #eyeslipsface challenge by e.l.f. Cosmetics received 1.7 billion views in just over seven days, breaking several TikTok records, including the record for the most user participation in a branded hashtag challenge (Liffreing, 2020). *Too Faced*: The #TFDamnGirl challenge by Too Faced generated 821 million views and led to a substantial increase in sales after going viral. This challenge was primarily driven by gen-Z TikTok users. Ahlse, Nilsson, and Sandstrom (2020) and other scholars (Roth et al., 2021; Falgoust et al., 2022) investigate what motivates gen-Zs to engage in TikTok challenges finding that entertainment is the primary factor driving their participation in hashtag challenges. TikTok is a platform focused on entertainment; users, including gen-Zs, engage in challenges for the sheer enjoyment of creating and sharing content. Brand challenges often feature catchy music, fun trends, or creative prompts, making them appealing to users looking for fun experiences. These successful campaigns demonstrate that consumers are eager to interact with brands, investing their time and effort when it meets their needs on the platform (Falgoust et al., 2022). This study investigates factors that motivate

consumers to engage with brands at this level, using the CBBE framework and content marketing as a lens of analysis.

Many scholars (Mengand Leung, 2021; Salasac and Lobo, 2022) argue that no other social-media platform offers the same level of reach and engagement for brands as TikTok. The platform's advantage lies in its algorithm, which tailors content to users' interests and their frequently-watched videos (Dwinanda et al., 2022; Maghfirah and Aruman, 2024). Advertising Age (2019) argues that TikTok's reach may be limited, but it excels in effectiveness and relevance with younger audiences, making it appealing for brands aiming to connect with younger consumers. Despite concerns about reach, TikTok has surpassed 2 billion downloads and has grown larger than Instagram (SensorTower, 2020).

Several studies explore how TikTok's short videos affect consumer responses, such as purchase intention (Martini, Suardhika and Dewi, 2022; Plötz et al., 2023). Kim and Yoo (2021) investigate how hashtag challenges influence brand recognition and purchase intention, finding that these challenges have a measurable impact on product purchases. This finding is supported by Dwinanda et al. (2022), who examine how the advertising-value model affects purchase intention from TikTok short videos. Their results indicate that all aspects of advertising value, except for informativeness and irritation, contribute to purchase intention, with entertainment, credibility, and personalisation being key drivers. Among these, personalisation has the strongest effect. Dwinanda et al. (2022) note that in the digital age, both personalisation and the capacity for interaction are likely to enhance advertising value, leading to greater acceptance of TikTok videos. Consumers appreciate personalised messages that provide emotional or functional value; TikTok's algorithms effectively deliver content based on user interactions (Ngangom, 2020; Bradey, 2019; Herman, 2019). Adyantari (2023) examines elements influencing the impulsive-buying behaviour of young consumers, particularly gen-Y and Z, in the context of online-video advertisements on TikTok. The study reveals that factors such as informativeness, entertainment, personalisation, and credibility have a positive impact on consumers' attitudes to them. A more favourable attitude to online-video ads correlates with an increased likelihood of making impulsive purchases of the promoted products. This study evaluates the impact of video content through the lens of the advertising-value model, identifying which elements of the model contribute to the four dimensions of brand resonance for the gen-Z face-care consumer.

Araujo et al. (2022) support the findings by focusing on gen-Z. Their research examines how TikTok video advertising affects gen-Z behaviour and purchase intention, identifying how emotional, entertaining, and informative TikTok ads influence user behaviour and perceptions. In the beauty and cosmetics sector, Lontoh, Suyuthi, and Sagala (2022) find that gen-Z TikTok users rely on TikTok ads for their final purchase decisions. This finding is corroborated by Darmatama and Erdiansyah (2021), who establish that both TikTok advertising and the brand image affect purchase intentions for beauty products. Fadillah and Kusumawati (2021) report that TikTok advertising influences impulsive-buying behaviour of make-up products among gen-Z consumers. Their study reveals that, for gen-Zs, only the emotional aspect of advertising has an impact on purchase intention (Araujo et al., 2021). Dirir (2022) adds that TikTok affects gen-Zs' purchase intentions and influences their brand choices. Other researchers who have investigated the impact of TikTok advertising on purchase intention include Martini, Suardhika and Dewi (2021), Gesmundo et al. (2022), and Pramono and Pradana (2022).

#### **2.4.2 Instagram**

Instagram has become a major force in marketing, communication, and digital engagement. As of Q2 2024, it was the most-downloaded app worldwide, with 182.8 million downloads on the Apple Store and Google Play (Dataportal, 2024). Founded by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger, and acquired by Facebook in 2012, Instagram is a social-networking service for sharing photos and videos. Its visually-focused interface has made it a popular choice for both personal expression and commercial promotion. By 2023, Instagram boasts over 1.3 billion monthly active users aged 13 and older (Ibrahim and Aljarah, 2022), solidifying its role as a key element in digital-marketing strategies. Instagram's main features include image and video sharing, stories, reels, and IGTV, which allow users to share content in various formats, making it a versatile platform for visual storytelling (Towner and Muñoz, 2022).

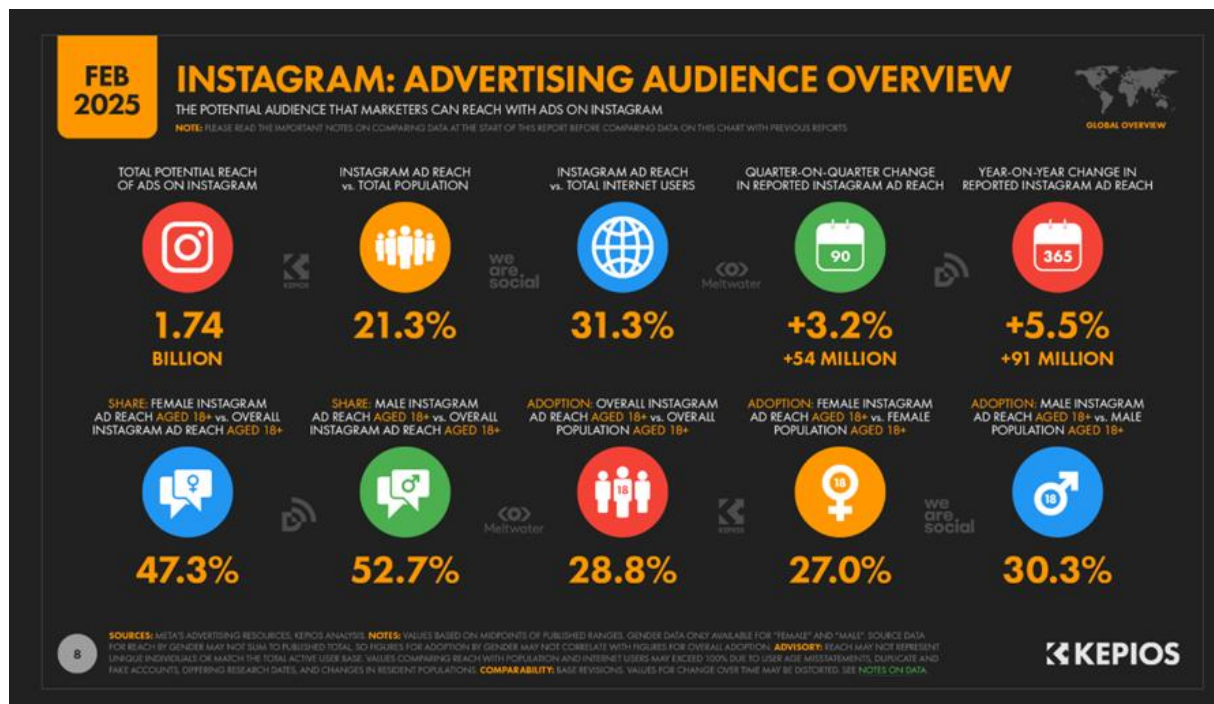


Figure 2.5: Instagram: advertising-audience overview  
Source: Data Portal, Global Digital Report (2025)

Figure 2.5 outlines Instagram's global advertising audience as of February 2025. The platform's potential ad reach stands at 1.74 billion users, representing 21.3% of the global population aged 18+ and 31.3% of total internet users. Unlike TikTok, Instagram continues to demonstrate growth momentum, with a quarter-on-quarter increase of 3.2% or 54 million users, and a year-on-year rise of 5.5% or 91 million users. Gender distribution shows a slight dominance of male reach at 52.7% compared to female at 47.3%, although adoption levels remain strong for both groups, with 30.3% of the global male population and 27.0% of the female population aged 18+ reachable via ads. Overall, Instagram maintains one of the widest advertising audiences among social platforms, consolidating its position as a key channel for brands to build engagement through short-form-visual content. Its sustained growth emphasises its relevance for examining advertising value and brand resonance, particularly in contexts where visual identity and lifestyle branding are central to consumer-brand relationships.

On Instagram, users can engage with four types of video content: *Reels*, *Stories*, *IG Live*, and *Instagram videos* (Sehl, 2022). The ideal length for Reels is between 15 and 60 seconds, Stories are best at 15 seconds, and feed posts should be about one-minute long (Hughes, 2022). It is often noted that it takes only about three seconds to capture viewers' attention before they scroll away and focus on something else

(Business Instagram, 2020), reflecting the growing trend of short attention spans among consumers (Menon, 2022). Viewers need to be engaged quickly and given a compelling reason to continue watching. This research study provides insights into the most-effective ways for brands to engage with gen-Z face-care consumers on Instagram. It examines the hierarchy of different types of video content available on the platform and their impact on consumer engagement with brands.

According to Data portal (2022), most advertising on Instagram is through reels and stories with most of the targeted-audience profile reach being 18 to 24 year-olds. Brands recognise that Instagram's technological features are distinctive, focusing on images and videos that enable users to tell stories and connect with their audience (Sehl, 2020). For example, Hurley (2019) highlights that Instagram users are attracted to its unique tools for visually sharing their stories. Shane-Simpson et al. (2018) discovered that college students favour Instagram over Facebook and X because of its visual elements. Rizki, Ananda, and Halim (2022) investigate how Reels affect customers' purchase intentions, revealing that entertaining and enjoyable Reels increase interest in the featured products. Humour, creativity, and audience relevance are key factors in enhancing entertainment value. Reels that offer clear, concise, and useful information about a product or service boost purchase intentions by helping customers make informed decisions through highlights of product features, benefits, and usage (Ananda and Wisudawati, 2022).

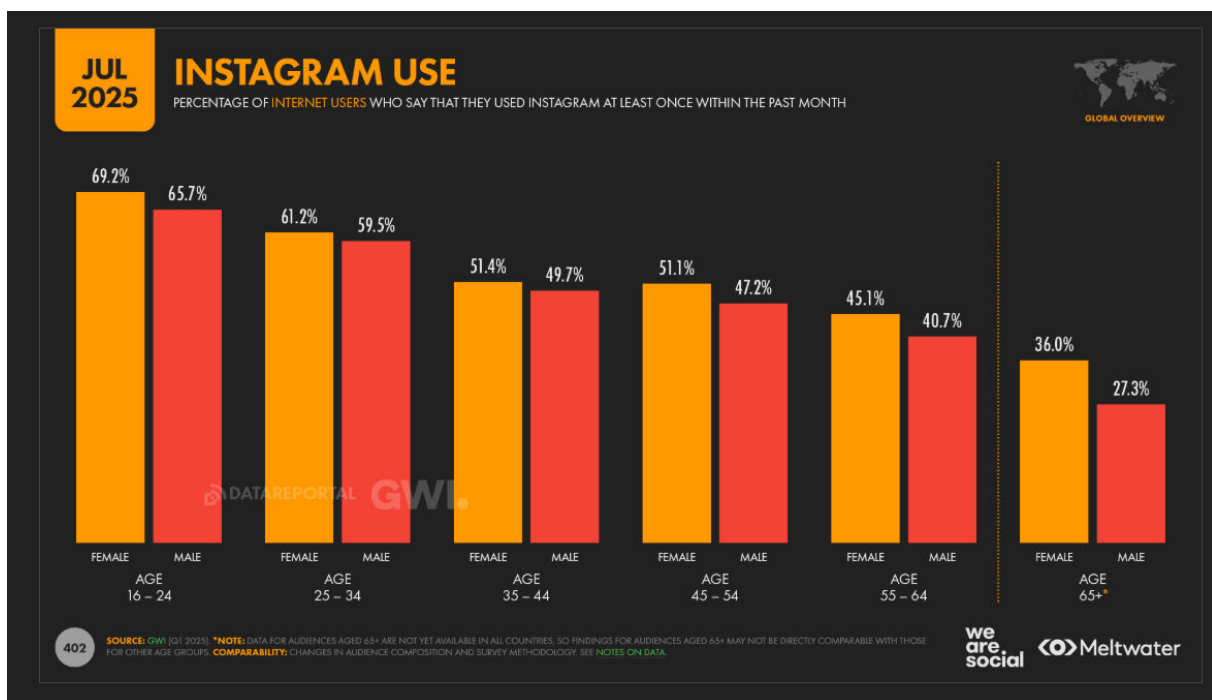


Figure 2.6: Instagram use

*Source: Data Portal, Global digital report (2025)*

Figure 2.6 shows global Instagram use by age and gender as of July 2025, measured by the percentage of internet users who report using the platform at least once in the previous month. The data highlights Instagram's strong penetration among younger cohorts, with 69.2% of females and 65.7% of males aged 16 to 24 reporting usage. Usage declines gradually with age, falling to 36.0% of females and 27.3% of males among users aged 65+. Across nearly all age groups, female usage is slightly higher than male usage, with the gender gap most pronounced in the 65+ segment. These findings reinforce Instagram's relevance among gen-Z and millennial audiences, positioning it as a key platform for short-form-video advertising and brand engagement. The generational decline in usage underscores the need for marketers to adopt age-sensitive strategies, particularly when targeting younger demographics that drive the platform's cultural relevance and consumer-brand interactions.

Emotional appeal in Reels, such as storytelling or content that aligns with viewers' values and aspirations, strengthens the likelihood of purchase by creating a connection between the brand and the consumer. These conclusions are supported by Bahtar (2023) and Menon (2022). Challa and Anute (2021) contribute to this discussion by emphasising that successful Instagram videos are driven by several key factors: 1) visual appeal and creativity: high-quality, visually-appealing content captures users' attention and differentiates a brand from its competitors. 2) consistency and frequency: regular posting and maintaining a consistent brand voice across content reinforce brand identity and keep the audience engaged. 3) user engagement: encouraging interactions such as likes, comments, and shares enhance visibility through Instagram's algorithm and strengthens the connection between the brand and its audience. These findings are supported by Alessandro (2021) and Jenifer and Nawangpalupi (2022).

Brands leverage Instagram to run immersive-marketing campaigns by using features like hashtags, geotags, and interactive content such as polls and quizzes to boost engagement (Smith and Williams, 2021; Johnson, and Lee, 2022; Baker, 2023). They often create branded hashtags to promote campaign interaction, driving engagement around their products and initiatives (Akhil and Samuel, 2024). Successful Instagram campaigns typically combine reels and stories with specific campaign hashtags.

For example, Dove is renowned for its viral hashtag campaigns that align with its brand purpose of empowering women, such as #ShowUs, #PassTheCROWN, and #DetoxYourFeed. Coca-Cola's #ShareACoke campaign was a groundbreaking initiative that personalised consumption moments to increase brand relevance. MAC Cosmetics launched the #SeniorArtistsSlayHalloween campaign, where their senior make-up artists encouraged the make-up community and fans to showcase their skills globally. Adidas achieved substantial audience engagement with its #ORIGINALis campaign, while Starbucks' #RedCupContest invited customers to share photos with their red coffee cups for a chance to win a gift card. Big brands like these have effectively used Instagram's features to connect with their audiences (Meltwater, 2024). Reels and stories offer dynamic, short-form content that captures attention quickly. Gen-Zs appreciate the fast-paced, visually-engaging nature of these formats, making them more likely to interact with and enjoy the campaign. Hashtags allow them to participate in broader conversations and discover related content. By combining reels and stories with hashtags, campaigns create an interactive experience where users can engage with the content, join challenges, and connect with a community (Swanson, 2022).

Despite its advantages, Instagram faces several challenges. The platform has been criticised for promoting unrealistic beauty standards and contributing to issues such as body-image concerns and social comparison. The rise of sponsored content has led to concerns about transparency and authenticity, with users sometimes struggling to distinguish between organic content and advertisements. Instagram's algorithm changes have impacted organic reach, making it increasingly difficult for brands to connect with their audience without investing in paid promotions (Fouquaer and Mechant, 2022).

### **2.4.3 Facebook**

Facebook remains one of the most-influential social-media platforms for advertising, offering marketers opportunities to reach diverse global audiences. Research consistently highlights that while the platform provides extensive reach, the effectiveness of advertisements, particularly video content, is shaped by multiple factors including cultural context, generational cohort, advertising format, and message appeal (Cheung et al., 2023; Khanom, 2023).

Meta (2025) reports that Facebook had approximately 26.7 million users in South Africa at the beginning of 2025. The platform's potential advertising reach expanded by 700,000 users, representing a 2.7% increase between January 2024 and January 2025. At the start of 2025, Facebook's advertising reach was estimated to account for 41.5% of the national population. Company data indicates that 59.9% of South African adults aged 18 years and older were active on Facebook during this period (Data Portal, 2025). Facebook's advertising reach represented 52.6% of the total internet-user base in the country, irrespective of age. With respect to demographic composition, the advertising audience in early 2025 was almost evenly distributed by gender, comprising 49.9% female and 50.1% male users (Data Portal, 2025).

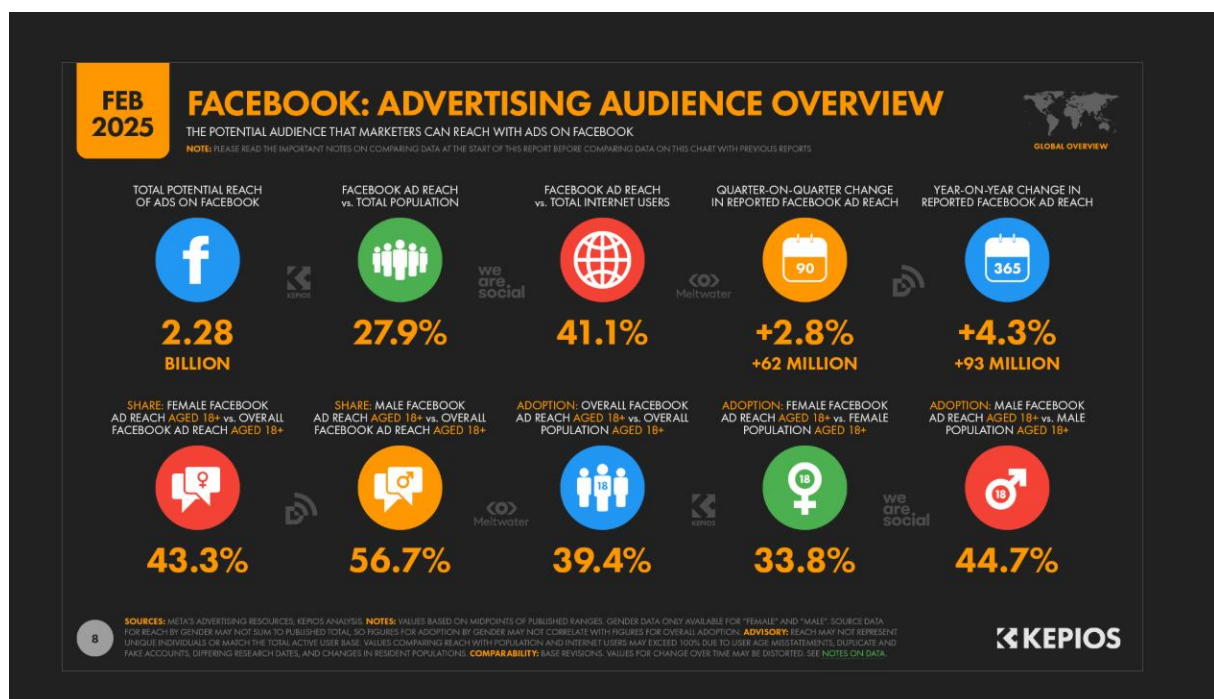


Figure 2.7: Facebook: advertising audience  
Source: Data Portal, Global digital report (2025)

Figure 2.7 presents Facebook's global advertising audience as of February 2025. With a total potential ad reach of 2.28 billion users, the platform covers 27.9% of the global population aged 18+ and 41.1% of internet users, making it one of the largest advertising channels worldwide. Facebook has shown steady growth, with a quarter-on-quarter increase of 2.8% or 62 million users, and a year-on-year gain of 4.3% or 93 million users). Gender distribution indicates a higher male ad reach at 56.7% compared to female at 43.3%, with adoption rates showing that 44.7% of the global male population aged 18+ and 33.8% of the female population can be reached through ads. Despite facing strong competition from platforms such as Instagram and

TikTok, Facebook's broad- and mature-audience base underscores its ongoing relevance, particularly for reaching older demographics. For this study, these trends highlight Facebook's role as a complementary channel to short-form-video platforms, expanding the scope of brand engagement across diverse age groups.

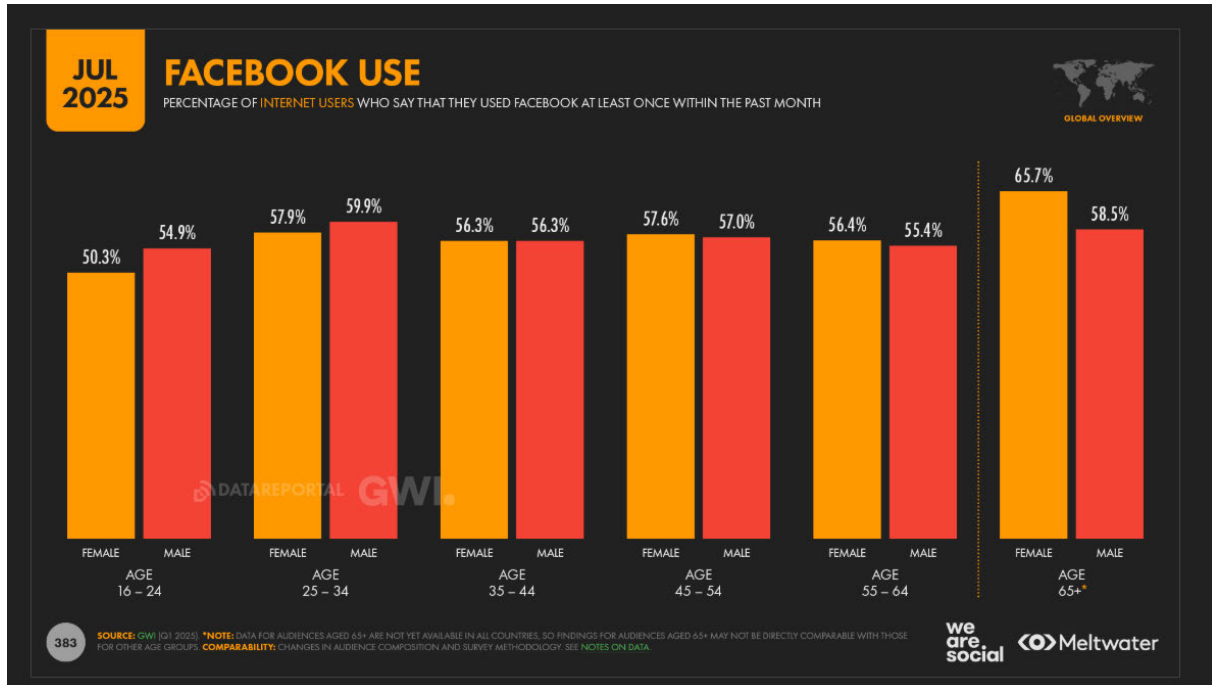


Figure 2.8: Facebook use  
 Source: Data Portal, Global digital report (2025)

Figure 2.8 illustrates global Facebook usage by age and gender as of July 2025, based on the percentage of internet users who report using the platform at least once in the previous month. Unlike Instagram and TikTok, Facebook demonstrates relatively-balanced engagement across age groups, with usage consistently above 50% in nearly all segments. Among younger users aged 16 to 24, usage is slightly lower at 50.3% for females and 54.9% for males, but increases among adults aged 25 to 34, where males peak at 59.9%. Facebook maintains high engagement even among older cohorts, with 65.7% of females and 58.5% of males aged 65+ actively using the platform. These trends highlight Facebook's broad cross-generational appeal and its strength in engaging older demographics who are less active on platforms such as TikTok. For marketers, Facebook's consistent usage across age segments positions it as a complementary platform to short-form-video apps, enabling brands to extend resonance and reach beyond gen-Z to include millennials, gen-X, and older audiences.

Ad engagement on Facebook has emerged as a central concept in evaluating advertising effectiveness. Ad engagement is defined as a behavioural experience manifested when users interact with ad stimuli, whether by reacting, clicking links, commenting, or sharing content (Chetioui, Butt and Lebdaoui, 2021). A study by Sharma and Lulandala (2024) provides insights into cultural differences in ad engagement, drawing on Hofstede's model and the theory of planned behaviour. Their research, comparing users in India and Tanzania, demonstrates cultural convergence for individualism and masculinity, yet marked differences in indulgence and uncertainty avoidance. The study finds that attitudes to advertising, subjective norms, and perceived herd behaviour positively influences ad engagement, whereas perceived intrusiveness negatively impacts engagement. These findings emphasise the role of cultural values in shaping responses to Facebook advertising, reinforcing the need for advertisers to tailor video campaigns across cultural contexts. Studies conducted by Chetioui, Butt, and Lebdaoui (2021), Zeqiri et al. (2021), and Ferrer-Conill et al. (2023) converge in highlighting the influence of cultural and societal contexts on advertising engagement.

Similarly, Ben Aicha and Bouzaabia (2023) examine digital storytelling in Facebook video advertising finding cross-cultural variation between Tunisian and French consumers. While Tunisian consumers exhibit stronger cognitive reactions to story plots and characters, French consumers demonstrate more-affective responses, with behavioural engagement linked to narrative elements such as verisimilitude. These results underscore the cultural sensitivity of video-storytelling strategies, where the same content elicits different cognitive, emotional, or behavioural outcomes across audiences.

The effectiveness of Facebook advertising appears contingent on both format and message appeal. Northcott et al. (2023), in a controlled experiment promoting a health application, find that image-based advertisements generate higher reach, click-through rates, and app downloads compared to video ads, while benefit-focused appeals outperform attribute-focused appeals. Similarly, Tavares, Remondes, and Lima (2024) report that video ads tend to perform better on broad metrics such as reach, visibility, and interaction volume, whereas image ads foster deeper user engagement through comments, saves, and shares. These findings suggest that while video enables wide exposure and interaction, image formats may be a more-effective format for Facebook

compared to other social-media platforms in eliciting meaningful consumer engagement (Northcott et al., 2023; Tavares, Remondes and Lima, 2024).

Generational dynamics shape responses to Facebook advertising. Hazari's (2024) study on multi-generational Facebook finds that millennial users report the highest relevance of Facebook ads, while baby boomers are more active in reading posts rather than interacting with ads. Millennials and gen-Zs appear especially responsive to short, entertaining, and influencer-driven video formats. Munsch (2021) demonstrates that digital advertising designed with brevity, humour, music, and social-media influencers enhances engagement among these cohorts. These findings suggest that advertisers targeting younger audiences should prioritise video formats that combine entertainment with authenticity, while campaigns targeting older cohorts may benefit from informative and text-driven appeals.

Beyond engagement metrics, research highlights how video advertising influences consumer -purchase intentions (Nasir et al., 2021; Nguyen et al., 2022). Al Kurdi and Alshurideh (2020) identify advertisement quality and repetitiveness as key drivers of cosmetic-purchasing behaviour among female consumers exposed to Facebook ads. Similarly, Chrisniyanti and Fah (2021) show that social-media-marketing activities impacted skincare-purchase intentions among Indonesian young adults, mediated by brand awareness, social engagement, and perceived behavioural control. Tauhit and Asmadi (2024) reveal that persuasive, interactive, and informative content is more effective than purely-visual content in stimulating attentiveness and purchase intentions. In the Vietnamese context, Vuong (2022) confirms that interactivity and perceived relevance within Facebook advertising influences purchase intention, reinforcing two-way communication in building consumer relationships.

These studies demonstrate that Facebook video advertising is not a one-size-fits-all strategy. While video enables storytelling and emotional resonance, its effectiveness is mediated by cultural values, generational preferences, and the balance between entertainment and informativeness (Samuels and Fiato, 2023). Cultural factors influence whether audiences respond cognitively, affectively, or behaviourally to video ads, while generational cohorts differ in how they perceive relevance and authenticity (Elesi, Dike and Joe, 2024). Despite the immersive potential of video, image-based and benefit-oriented advertisements can sometimes achieve higher engagement and cost-effectiveness. Advertisers must align content format, message appeal, and

cultural sensitivity to maximise the impact of Facebook video advertising on consumer engagement and purchase intentions (Abell and Biswas, 2023; Khanom, 2023).

## 2.4.4 YouTube

YouTube has evolved into one of the most-significant advertising platforms worldwide, serving over two billion users and reaching more than 95% of the global internet population (Moutinho et al., 2022; Mortensen, 2024). Its extensive reach, coupled with high daily video consumption, makes YouTube an attractive medium for advertisers to engage consumers through video content. Despite its dominance, questions remain about factors that drive or hinder advertising effectiveness, particularly given users' increasing control over exposure to ads (Gregor and Olejniczak, 2023).

According to Google's advertising data (2025), YouTube had approximately 25.3 million users in South Africa at the beginning of 2025. This equated to an ad reach of 39.3% of the national population. In relation to internet users, YouTube advertising reached 49.8% of South Africa's online population in January 2025. At that time, the platform's adult advertising audience was 51.1% females and 48.9% males (Data Portal, 2025).

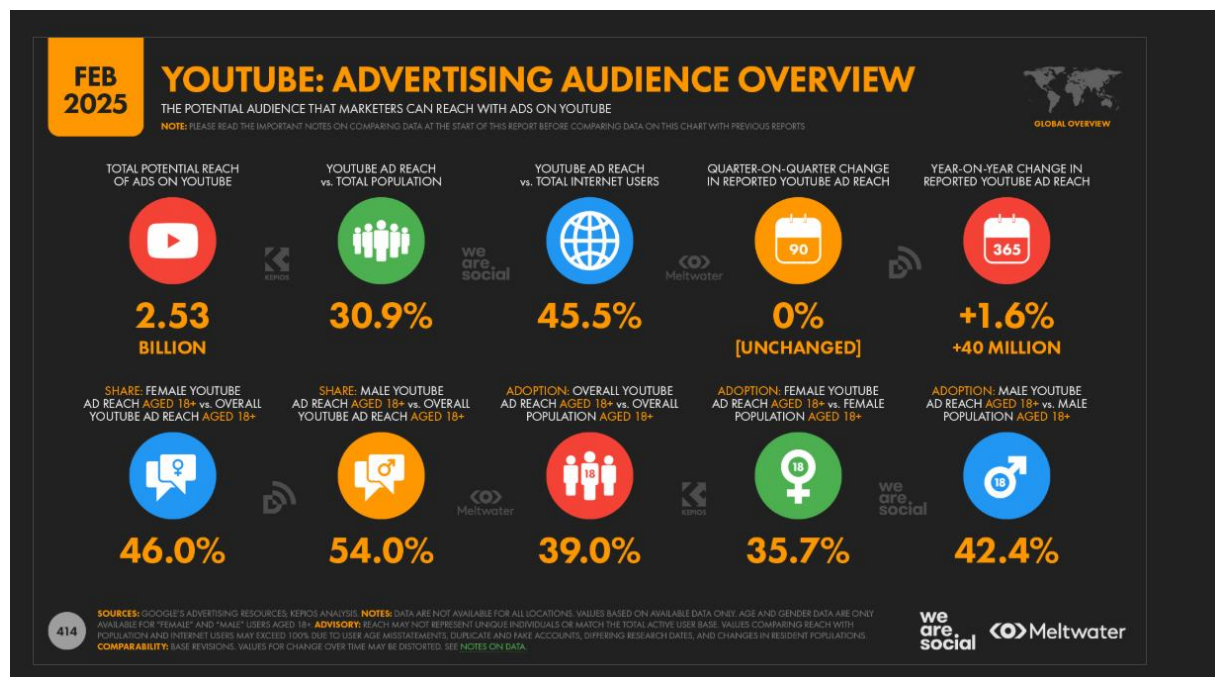


Figure 2.9: YouTube: advertising-audience overview  
Source: Data Portal, Global Digital Report (2025)

Figure 2.9 presents YouTube's global advertising audience as of February 2025. The platform records a potential ad reach of 2.53 billion users, equivalent to 30.9% of the

global adult population and 45.5% of total internet users. Unlike Instagram and TikTok, YouTube's reach remained stable quarter-on-quarter (0% change), but grew modestly year-on-year by 1.6%, adding 40 million users. Gender distribution indicates a slightly higher male ad reach at 54.0% compared to female at 46.0%, with adoption rates showing that 42.4% of the global male population and 35.7% of the female population aged 18+ can be reached through advertising. These findings confirm YouTube's continued dominance as one of the most-extensive video platforms globally, with broad appeal across demographics. Its vast audience base and integration of both long-form and short-form content positions it as a key space for marketers to build resonance through diverse advertising formats, particularly in contexts of storytelling and sustained engagement.

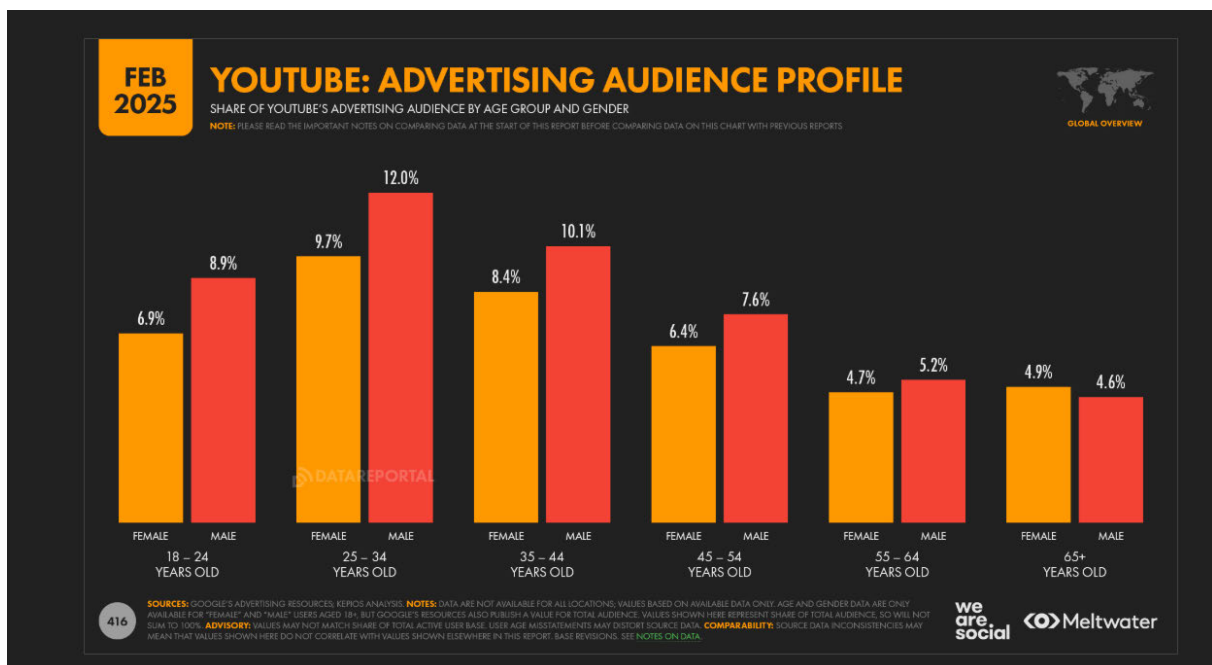


Figure 2.10: YouTube: advertising-audience profile  
 Source: Data Portal, Global Digital Report (2025)

Figure 2.10 illustrates YouTube's global advertising-audience profile by age and gender as of February 2025. The data shows that the platform's ad reach is more-evenly distributed across age groups compared to Instagram or TikTok, though it skews slightly towards adults rather than younger users. The largest audience segment is males aged 25 to 34 at 12.0%, followed by males aged 35 to 44 at 10.1%. Females in these same age groups account for 9.7% and 8.4% respectively, reflecting balanced yet slightly male-dominant engagement. Younger users aged 18 to 24 represent a smaller share of YouTube's advertising audience at 6.9% females and 8.9% males, while older cohorts remain active, with 4.7% to 5.2% of users aged 55 to

64 and around 5% among those aged 65+. This distribution highlights YouTube's broad cross-generational appeal, distinguishing it from platforms such as TikTok, which are gen-Z-driven. For advertisers, this makes YouTube a versatile platform for campaigns targeting both younger and older demographics, reinforcing its role in shaping brand resonance across diverse audience segments.

A major challenge in YouTube advertising lies in consumer avoidance of skippable formats. Napontun and Senachai (2023) examine determinants of skipping TrueView ads, drawing on uses and gratifications theory and the theory of planned behaviour. They find that negative attitudes to advertising value increased skipping intentions, highlighting concerns about intrusiveness. Similarly, Banerjee and Pal (2021) qualitatively explore user perceptions of skippable ads, noting habitual and emotional skipping as common behaviour. Users tend to skip ads due to repetition, lack of personalisation, or time constraints, while ads perceived as captivating, personalised, or aligned with a relaxing viewing mood are less likely to be skipped. These findings underscore the delicate balance advertisers must achieve: creating ads that capture attention quickly while minimising irritation and ad fatigue (Senarathna and Wijetunga, 2024).

Another strand of research emphasises the growing role of influencers in shaping YouTube-advertising outcomes. Acikgoz and Burnaz (2021) demonstrate that entertainment and informativeness determine the perceived value of sponsored content, which in turn shapes attitudes to influencers. Similarly, Sun (2023) finds that the credibility of influencers plays a role in fostering consumer trust and purchase intentions. Credibility, rooted in perceived authenticity and expertise, makes influencer-driven video marketing particularly persuasive. Complementing these findings, Chen, Li, and Sun (2023) analyse the discourse of influencer videos and reveal that directive-speech acts and personal storytelling enhance audience responses, offering practical guidance for crafting more-engaging influencer campaigns.

The characteristics of video ads are equally key to engagement. Wang, Yang, and Haught (2023) explore the interplay between product type, creative strategy, and music, revealing complex relationships between content features and user responses. Smartphone-related ads, for instance, receive more views and likes but attract higher levels of disliking. Ads employing ego-driven strategies generate higher engagement, whereas music is negatively associated with both views and likes. These findings

indicate that while creative strategies can stimulate attention, they may polarise responses, making careful alignment with target audiences relevant. Rathee, Rajain, and Tejaswini (2021) highlight that memorable music and popular actors increase desirability of YouTube ads, reinforcing the role of entertainment features in capturing user interest.

The relationship between advertising value and purchase intentions has been widely studied in the YouTube context. Research conducted in Sri Lanka by Paramitha et al. (2022) confirms that entertainment, informativeness, and credibility positively influence purchase intentions, while irritation has a negative effect. These results align with Ducoffe's (1995) advertising-value model, highlighting maximising perceived value while reducing intrusiveness. Similarly, Chan, Zi, and Dan (2025) find that emotional appeal and celebrity endorsement predict purchase intentions among gen-Z beauty consumers, while rational and inclusivity appeals are less effective. Chan, Silva, and Lampo (2022) show that perceived usefulness, credibility, and consumer attitudes to beauty-related videos positively influence female consumers' purchase intentions in Macao, with video characteristics such as visuals playing a secondary role. These studies suggest that emotional resonance, informativeness, and credibility are the most-powerful levers for driving purchase intentions on YouTube.

Generational differences shape responses to YouTube video advertising. Gen-Z, the largest digital-native cohort, is shown to favour emotionally-charged and influencer-driven appeals. Chan et al. (2025) demonstrate that emotional content and celebrity endorsements resonate with gen-Zs, while inclusivity and rational messaging are less influential. Comparisons with other platforms reveal nuanced differences: Gregor and Olejniczak (2023) find that YouTube users in the beauty category prefer make-up-related product reviews, while Instagram users lean toward facial-care content, suggesting platform-specific preferences even within the same demographic.

The literature reveals that YouTube-advertising effectiveness is influenced by a complex interplay of avoidance behaviour, influencer credibility, ad-content features, and consumer characteristics. Skippable ads highlight the risk of advertising avoidance, yet carefully-designed and personalised ads can reduce skipping (Napontun and Senachai, 2023). Influencer-driven content emerges as a particularly-powerful form of persuasion, with credibility and authenticity driving consumer trust and purchase intentions. Emotional and entertainment-focused strategies, particularly those aligned with gen-Z preferences, appear most effective in

leveraging YouTube's global reach (Smith et al., 2023). Advertisers must balance creativity with relevance and informativeness, ensuring that video content delivers value without generating irritation or fatigue. As YouTube continues to expand its user base, understanding these factors contributes to maximising engagement and shaping consumer-purchase behaviour (Kerkhof, 2024).

## **2.5 Advertising value**

Advertising value is a key construct in understanding how consumers evaluate and respond to advertising messages (Karunaratne and Thilini, 2022). It represents the overall utility or worth that individuals perceive in advertisements, shaped by the balance of positive attributes such as informativeness, entertainment, and credibility, against negative perceptions such as irritation (Ducoffe, 1995; Hussain, Ting and Mazhar, 2022). Within digital and social-media contexts, where audiences are constantly exposed to a high volume of content, the perceived value of advertising becomes a decisive factor in determining whether consumers engage with or dismiss brand communication (Chen, Ling and Chen, 2023). By unpacking the dimensions of advertising value, this study can assess how short-form-video advertising is received, and how it contributes to building stronger brand-consumer relationships among gen-Z face-care consumers.

### **2.5.1 Entertainment**

Ducoffe (1995:3) defines entertainment in advertising as “the ability of an advertisement to fulfil consumer needs for escapism, diversion, aesthetic enjoyment, or emotional release”. Hamouda (2018:428) expands on this definition, describing it as “the likeability of an advertisement, as well as the pleasure and enjoyment consumers derive from it”. In the context of social media, seeking enjoyment, relaxation, and simply passing the time are primary motivations for consumers using these platforms. Consumers anticipate that social-media content will entertain them, which is influenced by the ad's execution style, including aspects like interactivity, message appeals, and immersive experiences prevalent on social media (Ao and Nguyen, 2020, Darmatama and Erdiansyah, 2021). Advertisers strive to create entertainment through advertising to enhance the effectiveness of their messaging (Arya and Kerti, 2020).

Several researchers have examined the impact of entertainment on advertising value finding a significant correlation between the two constructs. A study by Yang and Ha (2021) finds that entertainment pleasure and a high para-social relationship with the

influencer make TikTok users want to buy the product. Genoveva (2022) finds that attractive entertaining content on TikTok can increase consumers' positive responses and brand awareness. Other studies investigating the influence of entertainment on advertising value include those by Wang and Lan (2018), Arora and Agarwal (2019), Shareef et al. (2019), and Lin and Bautista (2020).

Building on this discussion, the following hypotheses are proposed:

A) H<sub>0</sub>: Behavioural loyalty is not positively influenced by entertainment

H<sub>1</sub>: Behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by entertainment

B) H<sub>0</sub>: Attitudinal attachment is not positively influenced by entertainment

H<sub>2</sub>: Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by entertainment

C) H<sub>0</sub>: Sense of community is not positively influenced by entertainment

H<sub>3</sub>: Sense of community is positively influenced by entertainment

D) H<sub>0</sub>: Active engagement is not positively influenced by entertainment

H<sub>4</sub>: Active engagement is positively influenced by entertainment

### **2.5.2 Informativeness**

Advertising informativeness is defined as the capacity of advertising to provide users with alternative-product information (Ducoffe, 1996). On social media, a major motivation for use is seeking and exchanging information, making advertisements a key source of information on these platforms (Martins et al., 2019). Consumers turn to social-media ads because they offer a suitable format that includes personal contacts and additional product information often accompanied by images and videos (Hamouda, 2018). Advertising information tends to go viral, allowing consumers to scan, share, and learn about others' experiences with the product or service through comments posted below ads (Hamouda, 2018; Sharma et al., 2021). This suggests that social-media users are more receptive to informative ads on these sites (Malafe, Fereydoni and Chashmi, 2023). The more detailed the information about product benefits, the greater the impact of the ad on advertising value (Adeline et al. 2023; Abbasi et al., 2023). According to Jebarajakirthy et al. (2021), the more information an online ad provides, the more credible and engaging it becomes, making informativeness a contributing factor in enhancing ad value.

The role of advertising informativeness as a cognitive factor (Ducoffe, 1995) influences how ad value is perceived. Several studies highlight a connection between informativeness and ad value. For example, Sinulinga et al. (2022) find that informativeness has a positive influence on video advertising and purchasing decisions, supported by Ramadhani, Suroso, and Ratono (2020), Cho (2021), and Inanç, Gökaliler, and Gülay (2020).

Building on this discussion, the following hypotheses are proposed:

A) H<sub>0</sub>: Behavioural loyalty is not positively influenced by informativeness.

H<sub>1</sub>: Behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by informativeness

B) H<sub>0</sub>: Attitudinal attachment is not positively influenced by informativeness

H<sub>2</sub>: Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by informativeness

C) H<sub>0</sub>: Sense of community is not positively influenced by informativeness

H<sub>3</sub>: Sense of community is positively influenced by informativeness

D) H<sub>0</sub>: Active engagement is not positively influenced by informativeness

H<sub>4</sub>: Active engagement is positively influenced by informativeness

### **2.5.3 Irritation**

Ducoffe (1995) identifies irritability as a key factor affecting advertising value when assessing its effectiveness. If an advertisement is not perceived as irritating by the recipient, it positively influences their perception of the ad's value and their overall attitude to it (Martins et al., 2019; Dobrinic, 2022). Ducoffe (1995, cited in Dobrinic, 2022:132) explains that irritation stems from ads that are seen as disturbing, offensive, insulting, or manipulative. A high frequency of ads or excessive repetition can lead to irritation and ad avoidance (Dobric, 2022). Research by Disastra et al. (2018) indicates that mobile advertising causes the highest levels of irritation compared to other channels. This is attributed to the ease with which ads are disseminated and the large volume of ads sent to consumers, which tends to increase irritation levels.

Sharma et al. (2022) investigated the effect of advertising irritation on digital advertising effectiveness, finding that both irritation and entertainment impact the assessment of ad value. Key factors in evaluating an advertisement's value involve whether the consumer finds the ad enjoyable as entertainment or irritating. Research indicates that,

regardless of the advertising channel, irritation generally has a negative effect on ad value (Arora and Agarwal, 2019; Kang, He and am, 2022).

Building on this discussion, the following hypotheses are proposed:

A) H<sub>0</sub>: Behavioural loyalty is not positively influenced by irritation

H<sub>1</sub>: Behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by irritation

B) H<sub>0</sub>: Attitudinal attachment is not positively influenced by irritation

H<sub>2</sub>: Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by irritation

C) H<sub>0</sub>: Sense of community is not positively influenced by irritation

H<sub>3</sub>: Sense of community is positively influenced by irritation

D) H<sub>0</sub>: Active engagement is not positively influenced by irritation

H<sub>4</sub>: Active engagement is positively influenced by irritation

#### **2.5.4 Credibility**

Advertising credibility refers to how honest, believable, and truthful consumers perceive the content of an advertisement to be (Hamouda, 2018). It reflects consumer expectations about the fairness and accuracy of advertising (Logan, 2021). This perception is formed at the mental level and manifests as either trust or distrust in the message, making it a key factor in developing a positive attitude to advertising. It affects consumer attitudes and behaviour (Disastra et al., 2019).

In the context of social media, credibility is particularly important because the reliability and trustworthiness of content are reinforced by visible and shareable comments. The credibility of social-media ads is intuitively assessed by the community, impacting the perceived value of the ad and consumer attitudes to it (Hamouda, 2018). The general perception of an ad's truthfulness and believability affects its credibility, influencing advertising value and consumer attitudes (Paramitha, Yatigammana and Gunathunge 2021).

The importance of different dimensions in determining ad value varies according to different studies. Dobrinic (2020) indicates that informativeness, entertainment, and credibility are equally important predictors of ad value in the context of catalogues and store flyers. In contrast, Mustafi and Hosain (2020) identify credibility as the primary predictor of ad value in online advertising. Disastra et al. (2018) explores consumer

perceptions of mobile advertising reporting low levels of entertainment, moderate informativeness, and high levels of irritation, concluding that entertainment does not significantly influence ad value. Fraut (2019) studied YouTube advertising finding that informativeness and entertainment positively affect ad value, while Irritation has a negative impact. It is relevant to consider that factors such as geography, demographics, and channel type can affect advertising-value outcomes.

Given that gen-Zs tends to be sceptical of traditional advertising, often seeing it as biased or misleading, they gravitate towards ads that feel authentic and trustworthy. This authenticity needs to be balanced with entertainment, especially since social-media platforms, where gen-Zs spend much of their time, are driven by engaging content (Loureiro et al., 2023). While entertainment is key, the gen-Z face-care consumer relies on these platforms for reviews and product insights before making purchases, and for interacting with brands about which they care (Cho, 2021).

Building on this discussion, the following hypotheses are proposed:

A) H<sub>0</sub>: Behavioural loyalty is not positively influenced by credibility

H<sub>1</sub>: Behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by credibility

B) H<sub>0</sub>: Attitudinal attachment is not positively influenced by credibility

H<sub>2</sub>: Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by credibility

C) H<sub>0</sub>: Sense of community is not positively influenced by credibility

H<sub>3</sub>: Sense of community is positively influenced by credibility

D) H<sub>0</sub>: Active engagement is not positively influenced by credibility

H<sub>4</sub>: Active engagement is positively influenced by credibility

The literature review reveals that factors influencing advertising value are closely related to those that determine the success of content-marketing videos. This study investigates if advertising value, delivered through social-media short-video advertisements, drives brand resonance among South African black-female gen-Z face-care consumers.

The next section examines the four key variables of brand resonance.

## 2.6 Brand resonance

Branding is a strategy to foster long-term relationships by emphasising trust, consistency, and, importantly, loyalty (Qadri et al., 2025). According to Joshi and Garg (2019:1), “Consumer-brand relationships are witnessing a tremendous upheaval from the past few years, with emotions becoming a predictor of a brand’s fate. Thus, forming a connection with consumers is increasingly driven by emotional rather than functional benefits” (Joshi and Garg, 2019; Aaker, 1992; Keller, 2009). When brands engage with consumers on an emotional level, they can build enduring relationships that remain strong despite market fluctuations, including competition, price increases, and economic instability (Panjaitan, Afendi and Ardyan, 2023).

An emotional connection with brands encourages consumers to make repeat purchases and enhances their loyalty. A brand’s market success ultimately hinges on how well consumers feel connected to it, as these emotional ties positively impact the firm’s performance (Rigby and Lee, 2024). Keller defines this concept of brand connection as *brand resonance* which is described as the “extent to which customers feel that they are ‘in sync’ with the brand” (Keller, 2013, p.120). He adds that resonance is characterised by the intensity or depth of the psychological bond between customers and the brand, and the extent of activity driven by this loyalty (Keller, 2013). A strong brand is one that achieves high levels of brand resonance (Keller, 2009). Resonance reflects both the strength of the psychological connection consumers have with the brand and the degree to which this connection fosters active loyalty (Keller, 2009).

Brand resonance is a key element in Keller’s CBBE model, discussed as a theoretical framework. Keller (2001) suggests that the first step in building a strong brand relationship is creating brand awareness in consumers’ minds. The second step involves fulfilling consumers’ social and psychological needs, which can be achieved through brand performance. When consumers are satisfied, they form a brand image, which plays a role in their decision-making process (Husain, Paul and Koles, 2022). The third stage is to evoke positive consumer responses by evaluating the brand based on its performance and the image established in their minds (Raut, Brito, and Pawa, 2020). These judgments and feelings towards the brand reflect the impact of the brand relationship and the level of brand identification consumers have, which they often share with others.

The final stage is brand resonance, which develops when the previous stages are successfully achieved (Keller, 2001; Habib, Hamadneh and Khan, 2021). Brand resonance comprises several elements, including brand awareness, performance, image, feelings, judgment, loyalty, attachment, community, and engagement. These dimensions build upon each other in a step-by-step process (Jiménez-Marín, Sanz-Marcos and Tobar-Pesantez, 2021). Brand resonance is closely related to various branding aspects, such as brand loyalty, brand equity (Aaker, 1995; Nizarikhutama and Murwanti, 2023), consumer–brand relationships (Kim, Nobu, and Kim, 2020), brand attachment (Hall et al., 2022), and brand experience (Sharma and Jasrotia, 2017).

Brand resonance is measured using four dimensions. The first dimension is *behavioural loyalty* which is related to consumer-purchase behaviour. The number of repeat purchases and the amount or share of the category volume that is attributed to the brand, are some of the observations made in respect of the first dimension (Wei, Huat and Thurasamy, 2023). The second dimension is *attitudinal attachment* which can be described as the instance when consumers develop brand love and see the brand as something special in the broader context (Kumaresan and Chandramohan, 2024). The third dimension is *sense of community* which is described as a state where consumers feel a sense of affiliation with other brand users (Zhao et al., 2021). The fourth and last dimension is *active engagement* which is when consumers are willing to invest personal resources on the brand such as time, energy, and money, beyond the investment made during purchase or consumption of the brand (Chen, Chun and Shyh-ming, 2021).

In the literature reviewed, it is apparent that what drives brand resonance is different for each industry and context. Kang et al. (2022) resonate with this as they state that structural relationships among the brand-resonance dimensions may vary when different countries and brands are compared. This observation aligns with this study as the focus is on which dimensions are key in driving brand resonance within the skin-care context. According to Sharma and Josratia (2017), the most-important dimensions for successful brand resonance are active loyalty and brand attachment, with loyalty being the key driver of these two as it opens the path to certain marketing advantages and outcomes which are closely linked to brand equity. Active loyalty lays the foundation for the on-going process of maintaining valued and important consumer-brand relationships that have been built on trust.

Brand resonance can build deep brand attachments and evoke strong emotions (Saputra et al., 2021). The work of Sharma and Josratia (2017) evaluates relationships between brand experience and customer-perceived experiential value and their effect on brand resonance in the context of smart phones. This study concludes that brand experience has a significant positive effect on customer experiential value and brand resonance. The results of this study are supported by Brakus, Schmitt and Zarantonello (2017), who report that brand experience enhances brand resonance. Habib, Hamadneh, and Khan (2021) support that brand relationship-building through resonance is highly achieved through brand attachment. Their study examines the influence of electronic word of mouth and relationship marketing on brand resonance in the context of Indian lifestyle products. This work reports that relationship marketing significantly affects brand resonance. Relationship marketing is grounded in trust and satisfaction, elements that directly influence brand attachment. Taghipourian and Noormohammad (2017) highlight a different brand-resonance dimension. Their work in the insurance industry highlights active engagement as the key dimension driving resonance within this context, which is driven by perceived brand quality and the willingness to pay a premium for the insurance policy. These works reveal that context influences brand resonance.

The literature review indicates that existing studies on brand resonance predominantly examine it as an overall concept, rather than exploring, testing, or analysing its individual dimensions. This displays an opportunity for this study to add to the growing literature that examines the individual dimensions of brand resonance.

### **2.6.1 Theoretical framework**

There is reason to believe that brand resonance can be built through the value presented in advertising. Advertising value plays a role in shaping brand resonance by enhancing consumer perceptions of a brand's relevance, credibility, and emotional appeal( Qadri, Moustafa and Ghani, 2025). According to Ducoffe's (1995) advertising-value model, advertising is deemed valuable when it is informative, entertaining, and credible, ultimately influencing consumer attitudes and engagement. High advertising value fosters positive brand associations, strengthens consumer trust, and enhances emotional connections, key components of brand resonance as outlined in Keller's (2001) brand-equity model (Rigby and Lee, 2024). When consumers

perceive an advertisement as meaningful and beneficial, they are more likely to develop strong brand attachment, loyalty, and advocacy (Rigby and Lee, 2024).

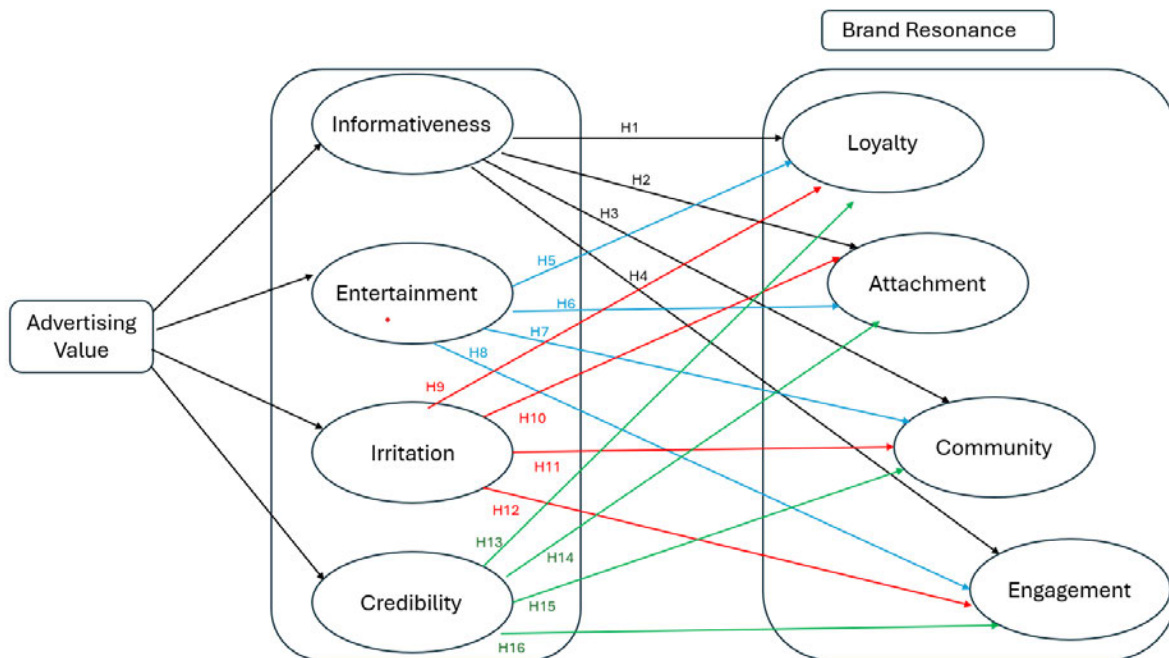
Advertising value contributes to brand resonance by reinforcing brand identity and positioning. Consistent and high-quality advertising that aligns with the brand's core values and messaging builds a coherent brand image in the minds of consumers (Saputra, Tanesia and Ariningsih, 2021). When advertisements are informative and relevant, they provide consumers with clear reasons to choose the brand over competitors, enhancing their understanding and appreciation of the brand's unique value proposition (Qader et al., 2022). Over time, this consistent reinforcement of brand identity through valuable advertising cultivates trust and loyalty, key components of brand resonance (Qader et al., 2022).

The credibility of advertising plays a role in shaping brand resonance. Consumers are more likely to resonate with brands that demonstrate authenticity and transparency in their messaging (Hussain et al., 2020). When advertisements are perceived as credible, free from exaggerated claims or misleading information, they enhance the brand's reputation and foster a sense of reliability. This credibility, combined with the emotional and cognitive connections established through valuable advertising, creates a strong foundation for brand resonance (Sesar, Martincevic and Boguszewicz, 2022). Advertising value acts as a bridge between the brand and the consumer, transforming passive viewers into active advocates who feel a deep, enduring connection to the brand (Hussain et al., 2020). In the context of branded social-media short videos, engaging and valuable advertising content can create immersive brand experiences that deepen consumer-brand relationships, driving brand resonance through sustained interaction and emotional affinity (Yang, Li and Ji, 2023).

This study builds on existing literature by developing a comprehensive theoretical framework to investigate how different aspects of brand resonance are influenced by various components of advertising value. While prior research (Spencer, 2020; Husain et al., 2022) examines brand resonance and advertising value separately, no theory specifically maps their interconnections. Since this study conceptualises brand resonance holistically, it assumes that all aspects of brand resonance, behavioural loyalty, attitudinal attachment, sense of community, and active engagement, are collectively influenced by all dimensions of advertising value. This approach is supported by previous studies (Hussain et al., 2020; Saputra et al., 2021), which demonstrate a positive relationship between advertising value and brand resonance.

Research measuring brand resonance consistently incorporates elements from all four dimensions, suggesting that positive brand experiences contribute to the enhancement of each resonance aspect (Qutywa, 2020; Lusianti, Widodo and Mulyana, 2024; Kwarteng-Amaniampong, Potgieter and Tait, 2025).

This study adopts Keller's (2009) theoretical framework, which defines brand resonance through four interconnected dimensions that collectively determine a company's overall brand resonance. To effectively manage, build, and enhance strong brand resonance, all four aspects must be understood. Ducoffe's (1996) advertising-value model is selected for this study as it provides the best framework for evaluating advertising value within the face-care market. The primary reason for choosing Ducoffe's (1996) model over others is its recognition that consumers seek different forms of value in advertising based on their individual needs. This perspective aligns with the face-care industry, where social-media-driven brand content influences consumer-purchase decisions (Chrisniyanti and Fah, 2022). Given the widespread use of social-media platforms, advertising value plays a role in shaping consumer perceptions and engagement. The figure 2.11 framework summarises this discussion (Chrisniyanti and Fah, 2022).



*Figure 2.11: Theoretical framework  
Author's construct*

To guide this research, a conceptual framework (figure 2.11) illustrates the proposed relationships between the dimensions of advertising value and brand resonance. This

framework integrates theoretical insights and prior literature to formulate the hypotheses that are empirically tested in this study. By mapping the expected connections, the framework provides a structure for examining how specific aspects of advertising value influence different facets of brand-consumer relationships.

## **2.7 Conclusion**

The literature review explores the interconnected themes of brand resonance, brand experience, content marketing, advertising value, and social-media video advertising and gen-Zs, highlighting their importance in contemporary marketing strategies.

The review begins by unpacking the characteristics of the gen-Z cohort, highlighting a complex yet interconnected landscape that requires brands to adapt to meet the shifting expectations of this emerging generation of consumers. The literature reveals this cohort to be a diverse, digitally-native generation that values authenticity, inclusivity, and social responsibility (Pillay, 2021; Almomani, 2022). They are the first true digital natives, having grown up with the internet, smartphones, and social media, which shape their purchasing decisions and behaviour. Gen-Z consumers are highly informed, relying on online reviews, social media, and influencers to guide their choices. They prioritise brands that align with their values, such as sustainability, diversity, and ethical practices (Djafarova and Bowes, 2021).

Gen-Zs prefer personalised, seamless, and engaging brand experiences, often blending online and offline channels. Gen-Z consumers are characterised by a strong desire for individuality and self-expression, seeking brands that allow them to express their unique identities. They are budget-conscious but willing to spend on brands that offer quality (Pillay, 2021). Gen-Z consumer expects brands to be transparent, share engaging content that is relevant to them, entertaining, and informative. Brand resonance and experience are at the heart of successful engagement with gen-Zs, emphasising the need for meaningful connections that go beyond mere transactions. Brands that foster strong emotional bonds and provide consistent, personalised experiences are more likely to resonate with gen-Zs, driving loyalty and advocacy in a competitive marketplace. Content marketing plays a role in this ecosystem, serving as the bridge that connects brands with their audiences through valuable and relevant content (Dabbous and Barakat, 2020; Hollebeek and Macky, 2021).

The literature-review findings underline that brand resonance, characterised by strong emotional connections and consumer loyalty, contributes to long-term brand success

and is closely tied to the overall brand experience. A positive brand experience, built on consistency, personalisation, and value alignment, enhances consumer engagement, and fosters deeper connections with the brand (Keller, 2013; Varjonen, 2018).

Content marketing emerges as a key tool in establishing meaningful relationships with audiences, providing valuable and relevant content that informs and engages (Ansari et al., 2019; Balio, 2021). Effective content-marketing strategies drive brand resonance as they align with the audience's needs and preferences across various platforms. In the realm of advertising, the value perceived by consumers plays a role in determining the effectiveness of advertisements (Ho, Pang and Choy, 2020; Du Plessis, 2023). Advertising that delivers clear value, whether through information, entertainment, or emotional appeal, enhances brand perception and resonance (Sharma et al., 2022; Chen et al., 2023). Social-media video advertising has become a powerful medium due to its ability to captivate and engage audiences in dynamic and visually-compelling ways. Videos on social-media platforms offer a unique opportunity for brands to convey their messages in a format that is easily consumable and highly shareable, amplifying their reach and impact. The literature emphasises the need for authenticity and relevance in social-media-video content to avoid being perceived as intrusive or insincere (Ngangom, 2020; Kemp, 2023).

The literature highlights that synergy between brand resonance, brand experience, content marketing, advertising value, and social-media video advertising builds strong, enduring brands in the digital age. Brands that effectively integrate these elements into their strategies are better positioned to resonate with their audiences, enhance their market presence, and achieve sustainable competitive advantages.

### **2.7.1 Answering the research question**

The research question is: Which dimensions of advertising value contribute to building brand resonance among black-female gen-Z face-care consumers in South Africa through short-form-video advertising?

The literature suggests that the influence of advertising value on brand resonance is a key aspect of modern marketing, especially as brands increasingly rely on social-media platforms to engage with consumers. Advertising value, which encompasses elements like informativeness, entertainment, credibility, and irritation, directly shapes how consumers perceive and interact with brands (Sharma et al.,

2022). High advertising value fosters positive brand associations, which build strong brand resonance. When advertisements are seen as valuable, they grab attention and create lasting impressions that deepen consumer connections with the brand (Chen et al., 2023). For example, entertaining and informative ads tend to evoke stronger emotional responses, enhancing the likelihood of consumer loyalty and long-term engagement with the brand (Dobrinic, 2020).

In the context of short-video advertising through social media, the influence of advertising value becomes even-more pronounced. Social-media platforms, particularly those with video-based content like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, offer brands a unique opportunity to connect with consumers in quick, engaging formats (Kang, He and am, 2022). Short-video ads, when crafted with the right balance of entertainment, informativeness, and credibility, can resonate deeply with consumers, leading to stronger brand attachment and engagement (Ao and Nguyen, 2020). These platforms allow brands to communicate messages more dynamically, appealing to consumers' emotions, delivering information in a digestible format, and establishing credibility through influencers or user-generated content. As a result, short videos on social media can enhance the emotional and cognitive elements of brand resonance, leading to increased brand loyalty and a stronger sense of community among consumers (Darmatama and Erdiansyah, 2021).

The effect of irritation cannot be overlooked. While entertainment and informativeness are positive drivers of advertising value, excessive or intrusive ads can lead to irritation, which may negatively impact brand resonance (Loureiro et al., 2023). Consumers, especially on social media, are quick to skip ads that they find irrelevant or annoying. Brands must carefully balance the elements of entertainment and informativeness without overwhelming the audience (Cho, 2021). When advertising value is aligned with consumer preferences and delivered in a non-intrusive, engaging manner, it can enhance all aspects of brand resonance, creating an environment where consumers feel more connected to the brand (Kang et al., 2022).

The strategic use of short-video advertising on social media, when aligned with high advertising value, has the potential to drive brand resonance by fostering deeper emotional connections and encouraging ongoing consumer engagement (Adeline et al., 2023).

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

A review of the literature reveals that many studies have been conducted on the topic of brand resonance and the role of online advertising in driving brand resonance (Dash, Kiefer and Paul, 2021; Jiménez-Marín, 2021; Joshi and Garg, 2021). In these studies, brand resonance is researched from various perspectives and in conjunction with key concepts such as brand experience, advertising value, and brand love. The four dimensions of brand resonance are examined but not many studies tackle understanding which of these brand-resonance dimensions are the most effective in driving brand resonance. The key objective of this research is to examine how different factors of advertising value influence brand-resonance factors among South African, black-female gen-Z face-care consumers.

A quantitative research approach was considered the most appropriate to address the research questions, which are both descriptive and exploratory in nature. According to Moises Jr (2020:80), "Quantitative research makes use of empirical data expressed numerically to represent the perception or experience of the respondents". Taherdoost (2022) notes that this method employs numerical data from observations to explain and describe the phenomena these observations reflect. This study investigates how brand perceptions and experiences contribute to building brand resonance through online-video advertising. This method has been employed by Raut, Brito, and Pawar (2020) and Saputra et al. (2021) in their studies on brand resonance using the customer-based brand-equity theory (CBBE).

The survey is the most-frequently used data-collection method in quantitative research. It requires participants to provide personal responses to a structured questionnaire designed by the researcher. The collected responses are then coded and analysed to generate statistical data, which is presented in the form of graphs or tables (Torrentira, 2020). This study used a structured survey for data collection. The survey questionnaire probes the interaction of gen-Z consumers with face-care brands to understand the motivations and drivers behind experiences that result in brand resonance. This study aims to understand online-video advertising in the context of driving brand resonance. The study investigates which aspects of the CBBE model exert the greatest influence on brand resonance among the target consumers in the study.

Another set of advantages of quantitative research stems from its focus on measurement (Ghanad, 2023). First, measurement enables the researcher to distinguish subtle differences among individuals regarding the specific characteristics being examined (Clark et al., 2021). The study population is black-female, face-care, and social-media users. By means of measurement, the study investigates subtle differences among participants with similar usage patterns. It offers a reliable tool for making these distinctions (Clark et al., 2021). Data was collected online via social-media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp using Google forms. The results were transferred and analysed using R statistical software (non-commercial package). This software is used in studies by Garver and Williams (2020) and Onjewu et al. (2022).

This chapter discusses the processes involved in answering the research questions using a cross-sectional design. According to literature (Kesmodel, 2018; Weng and Cheng, 2020; Akoglu and Ozbek, 2021) the cross-sectional design has some limitations. Clark et al. (2021: 43) state that “Cross-sectional research design produces associations rather than findings from which causal inferences can be unambiguously made”, weakening internal validity. This is not a concern for this study as this study investigates associations between variables.

This chapter consists of four parts. First, the research philosophy and approach are outlined and justified. Next, a comprehensive overview of the data-collection method is provided, including a discussion on sampling and preparation for data collection. Following that, the steps involved in data analysis are detailed. Finally, the ethical considerations adhered to in this study are discussed.

### **3.2 Research philosophy and approach**

In this study, brands are viewed as independent entities with their own inherent reality, unaffected by individuals interacting with them. These brands generate experiences they convey to consumers in the form of brand resonance. Brands within the same category can adopt similar strategies to establish and maintain brand resonance, as this resonance is transferable and not impacted by external factors such as people’s beliefs and attitudes (Clark et al., 2021). The study objectively assesses the influence and function of brand resonance, making the findings applicable to similar contexts.

The perspective a researcher holds affects the choice of research methods incorporated into their methodology to deliver reliable evidence regarding the

phenomenon being studied (Clark et al., 2021). It is widely acknowledged that researchers' perceptions of the world and reality shape every element of the research process. (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2020). Research philosophy pertains to the development and nature of the knowledge acquired (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2020).

Various philosophical perspectives consider knowledge valid when guided by values and a research paradigm (Hoefle, 2022). The most-prevalent classification distinguishes between objective and subjective approaches, referred to as realist and nominalist perspectives. An objective approach regards the social world as existing independently of individual cognition, viewing it as something external (Hoefle, 2022). Conversely, a subjective approach suggests that individuals construct their own social realities through their cognitive processes (Mauthner, 2020). Whether a researcher adopts an objectivist or subjectivist stance indicates whether they perceive reality as an independent construct that is unaffected by perception, or as something that is shaped by individual perceptions varying among different people (Gannon, Taheri and Azer, 2021). This study adopts an objective approach, aligning with a positivist paradigm.

A positivist worldview adopts objectivity in its observations. Positivism, derived from the natural sciences, entails formulating predictions in the form of hypotheses and subsequently collecting data to empirically test them. This approach is inherently deductive, as it starts with a generalised principle and then uses specific data to evaluate its validity (Scharrer and Ramasubramanian, 2021). "Positivism traditionally imagines a single, measurable reality that sound research design can reveal, and it detaches the researcher from what and who is studied. In other words, under assumptions of positivism, different researchers will come to just about the same conclusions if they use similar approaches to observe the world around them" (Scharrer and Ramasubramanian, 2021, p.5-6). A quantitative methodological approach is predominantly influenced by positivism from an epistemological standpoint (Curtis et al., 2021). This approach supports research that interprets observations in terms of verifiable facts or measurable entities. Positivist ideology is associated with traits such as reliability, replicability, transparent procedures, and comprehensive analysis, suggesting a higher level of objectivity. These characteristics align closely with those of quantitative research (Clark et al., 2021).

A positivist research philosophy enables the researcher to accurately describe the parameters and coefficients of the collected data, allowing for analysis and

interpretation to uncover relationships within the analysed data (Gannon, Taheri and Azer, 2021). The assumption of generalisability suggests that results from a research project conducted within the positivist framework in one context should be applicable to other contexts through inductive reasoning. This means that a positivist researcher should observe events related to the phenomenon being studied and extrapolate their findings to anticipate similar occurrences in different settings around the world (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2020).

A positivistic worldview relies on deductive reasoning. Deductive theory outlines the connection between theory and social research. Based on existing knowledge in a specific area and theoretical considerations related to that area, the researcher formulates hypotheses (Park, Konge and Artino Jr, 2020). This research study investigates key relationships between the CBBE theory and consumer brand responses and behaviour, which illuminate factors driving the most-effective consumer reactions, such as brand resonance. Within the positivist worldview, theory and observations are interdependently linked. Although theories can be developed through reasoning, they are only considered valid if they can be confirmed through empirical observations (Saliya, 2023). This study aims to do this to answer the research questions.

The epistemological position of this study is rooted in positivism. “Epistemology involves knowledge and embodies a certain understanding of what is entailed in knowing, that represents how we know what we know” (Al-Ababneh, 2020, p.78) and clarifies the type of relationship the researcher maintains with the research (Al-Ababneh, 2020). Similar to philosophical approaches, epistemology includes two primary stances: positivism and anti-positivism, referred to as the etic-emic approach. From a positivist perspective, the researcher acts as an external observer, without influencing the research itself. In contrast, the anti-positivist perspective holds that the social environment can only be fully comprehended if the researcher is part of the reality being studied, as phenomena are best understood from the perspective of those involved (Erciyes, 2020).

Since this research aligns with an objective philosophical approach, it adopts a positivist epistemological perspective. This implies that the researcher observes the phenomena from a distance, without impacting its underlying causes (Daka, Chipindi and Chipindi, 2020). The researcher strives for maximum objectivity, minimising the role of subjective interpretation (Saliya, 2023). This perspective is appropriate for this

study as brand resonance is driven by social realities and consumer perceptions. The positivist view is based on the idea that observations can be conducted in a manner that is not influenced by pre-existing ideas; the researcher is objective in the process of research (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2020)

This research study investigates key relationships between the CBBE theory and consumer brand responses and behaviour. With a positivist view, the researcher is able to look at distinct factors such as brand resonance, advertising value, and content marketing to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena. After careful review of literature key research questions were developed. Through the process of answering the research questions it is possible to identify which factors influence the development of brand resonance in the context of online advertising, aligning with previous research and findings (Okoli, 2023).

### **3.3 Research design**

Research design is a strategy outlining how a researcher tackles the research questions. It serves as a systematic framework the researcher employs to answer these questions in an accurate, fair, objective, and economic manner (Mweshi and Sakyi, 2022). As indicated by Rezigalla (2020:1) a research design is the “set up to decide on, among other issues, how to collect further data, analyse and interpret them, and finally, to provide an answer to the question. The primary objective of a research design is to guarantee that the collected evidence allows the answering of the initial question(s) as clearly as possible”.

The research design has two main functions. Firstly, it entails identifying and/or creating logistical procedures. Second, it emphasises the significance of quality while ensuring validity, objectivity, and accuracy (Clark et al., 2021). Through the research design, conceptual and operational plans are outlined to facilitate the completion of the study and ensure that these procedures are sufficient for obtaining valid, objective, and accurate responses to the research questions.

There are three primary types of research designs: quantitative research, qualitative research, and mixed-methods research (Clark et al., 2021). Quantitative research focuses on quantifying data collection and analysis, using a deductive approach to investigate the relationship between theory and research. In contrast, qualitative research emphasises the use of words rather than numerical data. Mixed-methods research design integrates techniques from both quantitative and qualitative research,

employing an inductive approach to examine the relationship between theory and research (Clark et al., 2021).

This research study adopts a quantitative research design. The philosophical and epistemological choices have shaped the methodological approach. The research question and problem statement play a role in determining the research design. This study explores how advertising value affects brand resonance. It identifies which of the four dimensions of brand resonance foster brand resonance within the target population.

Chen (2020) and Pina and Dias (2021) employ a similar research design to investigate variables akin to those in this study. Directed by the research philosophy adopted in this research study, a quantitative research approach is seen as most suitable to answer this study's research questions. Quantitative research entails gathering data that can be quantified and analysed statistically to either support or challenge alternate knowledge claims (Moises, 2020). This research approach allows the researcher to use brand-resonance theory to measure which elements of the brand-resonance model drive the highest level of brand resonance for the study population through online-video advertising.

The research question and hypothesis are outlined:

*Research question: Which dimensions of advertising value contribute to building brand resonance among black female gen Z face care consumers in South Africa through short-form-video advertising?*

- 1.1 Does informativeness as a sub-set of advertising value influence loyalty as a sub-set of brand resonance*
- 1.2 Does informativeness as a sub-set of advertising value influence attachment as a sub-set of brand resonance?*
- 1.3 Does informativeness as a sub-set of advertising value influence community as a sub-set of brand resonance?*
- 1.4 Does informativeness as a sub-set of advertising value influence engagement as a sub-set of brand resonance?*
- 1.5 Does entertainment as a sub-set of advertising value influence loyalty as a sub-set of brand resonance?*

- 1.6 Does entertainment as a sub-set of advertising value influence attachment as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.7 Does entertainment as a sub-set of advertising value influence community as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.8 Does entertainment as a sub-set of advertising value influence engagement as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.9 Does irritation as a sub-set of advertising value influence loyalty as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.10 Does irritation as a sub-set of advertising value influence attachment as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.11 Does irritation as a sub-set of advertising value influence community as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.12 Does irritation as a sub-set of advertising value influence engagement as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.13 Does credibility as a sub-set of advertising value influence loyalty as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.14 Does credibility as a sub-set of advertising value influence attachment as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.15 Does credibility as a sub-set of advertising value influence community as a sub-set of brand resonance?
- 1.16 Does credibility as a sub-set of advertising value influence engagement as a sub-set of brand resonance?

Testable hypotheses from this research question are:

A)  $H_0$ : Behavioural loyalty is not positively influenced by informativeness.

$H_1$ : Behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by Informativeness

B)  $H_0$ : Behavioural loyalty is not positively influenced by entertainment

$H_1$ : Behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by entertainment

C)  $H_0$ : Behavioural loyalty is not positively influenced by irritation

H<sub>1</sub>: Behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by irritation

D) H<sub>0</sub>: Active engagement is not positively influenced by credibility

H<sub>1</sub>: Active engagement is positively influenced by credibility

A) H<sub>0</sub>: Attitudinal attachment is not positively influenced by informativeness

H<sub>2</sub>: Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by informativeness

B) H<sub>0</sub>: Attitudinal attachment is not positively influenced by entertainment

H<sub>2</sub>: Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by entertainment

C) H<sub>0</sub>: Attitudinal attachment is not positively influenced by irritation

H<sub>2</sub>: Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by irritation

D) H<sub>0</sub>: Attitudinal attachment is not positively influenced by credibility

H<sub>2</sub>: Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by credibility

E) H<sub>0</sub>: Sense of community is not positively influenced by informativeness

H<sub>3</sub>: Sense of community is positively influenced by informativeness

A) H<sub>0</sub>: Sense of community is not positively influenced by entertainment

H<sub>3</sub>: Sense of community is positively influenced by entertainment

B) H<sub>0</sub>: Sense of community is not positively influenced by irritation

H<sub>3</sub>: Sense of community is positively influenced by irritation

C) H<sub>0</sub>: Sense of community is not positively influenced by credibility

H<sub>3</sub>: Sense of community is positively influenced by credibility

F) H<sub>0</sub>: Active engagement is not positively influenced by informativeness

H<sub>4</sub>: Active engagement is positively influenced by informativeness

A) H<sub>0</sub>: Active engagement is not positively influenced by entertainment

H<sub>4</sub>: Active engagement is positively influenced by entertainment

B) H<sub>0</sub>: Active engagement is not positively influenced by irritation

H4: Active engagement is positively influenced by irritation

C) H0: Active engagement is not positively influenced by credibility

H4: Active engagement is positively influenced by credibility

A quantitative approach concerns generalisation. The findings of a study need to be generalisable beyond the confinements of that study. The quantitative approach guards against researcher bias through replication. Successful replication is a measure of the validity of the study findings (Sürücü and Maslakçı, 2020). It is the best approach to use to test theory or an explanation. In the context of this study, it provides explanations to the research questions posed. It is a strategy that values breadth, statistical descriptions, and generalisation (Kittur, 2023).

In this study the causal relationships, associations, and correlations between the four dimensions of brand resonance, advertising value, and the study population are examined. This supports the selection of a quantitative approach (Thom, 2023). This approach allows for the quantification of the research data so that the various descriptive statistics can be conducted. It paves the way for generalisation of the study findings to the greater population.

A quantitative approach focuses on achieving objectivity, control, and accurate measurement. Methodologically, these approaches depend on deductive designs intended to either disprove or provide support for theories and hypotheses, representing a more-top-down approach to research. (Casula, Rangarajan and Shields 2020; Okoli, 2023). It is used as a framework to ensure priority to variables key for the research process.

The process of carrying out primary research begins with determining whether the research question requires descriptive, exploratory, or causal research (Casula, Rangarajan and Shields 2020). This research study explores a combination of possible outcomes using CBBE theory to drive brand resonance amongst the study population through advertising value found in online-video advertising. The study explains brand resonance and the impact of advertising value on brand resonance. To accomplish these objectives, a quantitative design is incorporated including both exploratory and descriptive approaches. The exploratory approach allows for open-ended questions in the survey, facilitating insights into the relevant topic for the research. A key benefit of this design is its flexibility and adaptability to change (Taherdoost, 2022). The

explanatory aspects assist in developing themes for data analysis and establishing causal relationships between variables. The focus is on examining the situation or problem to explain the relationships among the variables (Taherdoost, 2022).

The aim of this research is to comprehend connections between theory and research. Clearly defining variables facilitates their statistical measurement. This research examines the theoretical constructs of brand resonance and advertising value which are well-defined and easily-identifiable concepts. The process involves reviewing the theory, formulating research questions, and testing these questions to obtain answers, ultimately linking the results to the main theories, CBBE and advertising value (Kittur, 2023). This method is often referred to as a deductive-theory-testing approach and is frequently used in quantitative research. It reflects the most-common viewpoint regarding the relationship between theory and research (Casula et al., 2020). This study adopts a positivist approach, implying that research subjects should be observed externally without influencing the research context; a quantitative approach allows the researcher to achieve this. (Barroga et al., 2023). This quantitative study evaluates which dimensions of advertising value can be applied to establish brand resonance within the target population. It exhibits explanatory characteristics as it explains and clarifies the relationship between variables, particularly how brand resonance is influenced by advertising value (Anderson and Lightfoot, 2023).

### **3.4 Data-collection methods**

To achieve the desired outcome for the study, a quantitative survey design is adopted. "Survey research is a cross-sectional design in relation to which data are collected predominantly by self-completion questionnaire or by structured interview on more than one case at a single point in time to collect quantitative or quantify data in connection with two or more variables which are then examined to detect a pattern of relationship between variables" (Bryman 2018:717). The survey includes both open-ended and closed-ended questions. Open-ended questions feature inquiries such as "what", "when", "where", and "how much". Closed-ended questions consist of rating-scale and Likert-scale items (Bryman 2018).

Since this study centres on addressing research questions that begin with "how" and "what" to explain the phenomena, a survey design is the most-suitable approach (Creswell, 2021). Survey research design is frequently employed in deductive research, to which this study adheres. Surveys are an effective strategy for

understanding and quantifying relationships between variables. This approach is suited to this study because it assists in understanding the relationship between the brand-resonance dimensions and how these drive brand resonance for the study population through online-video advertising (Mellinger and Hanson 2020). The survey design is a widely recognised approach that allows for the collection of standardised information from a large population in an efficient manner, facilitating straightforward analysis (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). Data gathered through a survey strategy can be employed to propose possible explanations for specific relationships between variables and to create models representing these associations. Using a survey strategy increases control over the research process (Saunders et.al, 2019).

A survey research design provides a quantitative description of a population's trends, attitudes, and opinions (Asenahabi, 2019). For this study a quantitative survey approach allows for understanding of opinions on brand resonance and how it can be built amongst the study population. It aims to comprehend how consumers perceive online-video advertising and the consequent influence of these perceptions on advertising value. Survey research employs either cross-sectional or longitudinal methodologies along with various questionnaire designs, facilitating the extrapolation of data from the study sample to the broader population (Asenahabi, 2019). Another reason for choosing a quantitative survey research design is that the research questions are mainly descriptive. This type of design is advantageous for conducting descriptive analysis and provides a degree of accuracy (Aithal and Aithal, 2020). It is "likely the best method available" for researchers aiming to "describe a population too large to observe directly" (Aithal and Aithal, 2020, p.235).

The target population for this study is defined as females, ages 18 to 24 years who are frequent users of face-care products and users of social media. Quantitative surveys are suitable vehicles for this study, which is to measure brand resonance and its associations in a large population (Ghanad, 20236). Surveys are structured, allowing the researcher to maintain a considerable degree of control over the data collection process; the responses are easily quantifiable (Lund, 2023). Another advantage of selecting this type of design is that it facilitates easy replication, provided the research process is adequately detailed (Surucu and Maslakci 2020). This allows the study to be replicated in a different context, with a different population.

Survey design typically follows a six-step process, which is implemented in this research. The first step involves formulating the problem, which guides the aims and

objectives of the study. Next, hypotheses are established, and survey questions are developed. In the second step, the data-collection method is designed, and a survey instrument is created (Johansson and Hiltula, 2021). The third step involves determining the sample size. In the fourth step, the questionnaire is distributed to respondents through various channels. The fifth step is data analysis; in the sixth step, the findings and methodologies are compiled into a report that includes the study's results and limitations (Johansson and Hiltula, 2021).

The survey was designed using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5: strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree, strongly agree). The Likert scale is "essentially a multiple-indicator or multiple-item measure of a set of attitudes relating to a particular area. The goal of the Likert scale is to measure intensity of feelings about the area in question". (Bryman 2018, p.166). Varjonen (2018) adopts a similar approach in understanding how brand resonance can be built through brand experience for the fashion consumer. The standardised phrasing of each question guarantees that all respondents are exposed to the same stimulus (Creswell, 2021). Standardisation ensures that the test results are dependable. While the questionnaire is mainly structured, it includes both closed and open questions. Closed questions facilitate the processing of responses and improve comparability of the answers (Kouam, 2024)

The survey was conducted online, with participants chosen through platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. The study cohort consists of digital natives, individuals who predominantly engage with social-media platforms. Reaching out to participants through these platforms was deemed the most-optimal method (Digital and Social Trends report, 2020). Using online questionnaires to gather data offers several advantages, as they can be administered quickly within a limited timeframe and require minimal costs and resources, allowing a single person to manage the process. (Verma et al., 2021).

Respondents can complete the survey online without needing the data collector to be present. It is straightforward to reach participants via the internet, making it a convenient option for them since they can access and complete the survey at any time and from any location or device that works for them (Zanchetta et al., 2022). Self-administrated surveys mean that the respondent need not complete the survey in the presence of the data collector. Various authors and scholars indicate that the interviewer's characteristics can adversely influence respondents' answers (Andrade, 2020; Rubenstein and Furnier, 2021; Hühne, 2023). Respondents tend to provide

more-honest answers when the data collector is not present (Wu, Zhao and Fils-Aime 2022).

To collect the data to answer the research questions, the survey was created using Google forms and the link was shared on all relevant social-media platforms. The collected data was exported to a Microsoft-Excel file, cleaned, and imported into the R statistical package, a splinter non-commercial package from S-Plus program, for statistical analysis.

The selected research methodology has limitations, in particular, the survey researcher's inability to develop a comprehensive understanding of the entire-life context in which respondents are thinking and acting, as effectively as a participant observer can (Andrade, 2020, Zanchetta et al., 2022). Respondents do not have the opportunity to seek help in comprehending the questions. To work around this limitation, when the questionnaire was delivered to the respondents, the researcher's email was shared in case they needed assistance (Newman et al., 2021). Self-administered online surveys can render a high rate of non-response. It is easy for respondents to skip answering the survey when they are not accountable to the data collector. Holtom et al. (2022) have observed a steady increase in response rates over the years. Their analysis of 1,014 surveys shows that response rates have risen from 48% in 1995 to 68% in 2022. Despite these encouraging statistics, low-response rates posed a potential challenge during the fieldwork phase of this study. To improve the response rate, the questionnaire was distributed daily over a seven-day period on Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp, which resulted in meeting the targeted sample with seven days.

Another limitation associated with self-administered surveys is incomplete responses. This is when respondents do not answer all the questions in a survey questionnaire. To prevent non-completion, the survey follows a simple structure and uses easy-to-understand language. Measures in the measurement scale allow for a neutral answer, enhancing the response rate as much as possible (Mirzaei et al., 2022). This approach proved to be successful as there is a low rate of non-completion.

### **3.4.1 Measurement Instrument**

To understand the relationships between the variables of this study, brand resonance and advertising value, it was necessary to construct measurement items. This involves quantifying each attribute being measured through a set of questions (Aithal and Aithal,

2020). In this study, it entailed devising a questionnaire covering all aspects of brand resonance and advertising value outlined in the theoretical framework. While there are some measurement items empirically tested for all variables, employing established scales is often considered a reliable method for quantifying theoretical concepts. These concepts, as applied in this study, are investigated without assessing their individual aspects, necessitating some adjustments to better suit the purposes of the study.

Keller's (2009) theoretical framework, which employs a four-aspect approach, offers guidance in formulating questions and designing the measurement tool for brand resonance. To understand advertising value, Ducoffe's (1995) advertising value framework is applied. To formulate the questions, a thorough review of literature identifies papers containing suitable measures for all phenomena. Of the reviewed literature, 12 academic papers are deemed most relevant, considering their application of pertinent theories and research methodologies. Among these, six articles play a role in creating measurement items for brand resonance and advertising value.

With regards to brand resonance, no scale exists to individually measure the four aspects of brand resonance, as previous research concentrates on brand resonance as a unified construct. Past studies ask questions related to each brand-resonance dimension, which collectively contribute to the overall brand-resonance score (Saputra, Ardyan and Tanesia, 2021; Husain, Paul and Koles, 2022; Kim, Nobu and Kim, 2022; Yağız and Özer, 2023). To create the measurement items for this study, studies examining resonance are gathered, and questions measuring specific dimensions of brand resonance are identified and categorised accordingly. These questions are then cross-referenced with the examined theories and modified as needed to ensure alignment with the study's objectives.

The formulation of advertising-value questions is guided by the Ducoffe's (1995) advertising-value framework, which offers structured-measurement questions. The number of questions for each factor varies across studies, usually due to their research objectives (Milkovic, Hammes and Bakhtina, 2020; Ho 2022; Hasbullah et al., 2023). For this study, both the questions themselves and their quantity are adjusted to align with the study's objectives. All questions are gathered and organised under the corresponding brand-resonance and advertising-value factor they measure. Subsequently, a thorough review was conducted to eliminate redundant questions. The final questionnaire comprises four sections and a total of 32 questions. Section A contains three demographic questions. Section B contains 10 questions on

social-media behaviour. Section C contains 10 questions on advertising value. Section D contains nine questions on brand resonance.

The demographic questions are set out to ascertain the respondent's background: race, age, and employment status. Respondents were then asked about their social-media behaviour. Thereafter, respondents were prompted to specify a face-care brand they use frequently. This approach mirrors that of other studies, albeit except for providing a predefined list of brands (Su and Chang, 2018; Sannya et al., 2020; Yang, Pusaksrikit and Buavaraporn, 2020). The decision not to limit the brand selection is based on the notion that allowing consumers to choose a brand enables them to name one with which they actively engage. The first four questions gather information about respondents' demographic profiles and act as an introduction to the following, more-intricate questions (Clark et al., 2021).

The remaining 19 questions concerning advertising value and brand resonance follow a consistent structure. Each section is made up of a set of statements, answered using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1, strongly disagree, to 5, strongly agree. The rationale behind choosing a five-point Likert-type scale is that it ensures the precision of the collected data, as reducing the number of items below seven or five can compromise accuracy (Tay, Jebb and Scotney, 2021). Table 3.1 lists the questions chosen for the questionnaire.

*Table 3.1: Measurement Instrument Items*

| Item            | Definition                                                                              | Questions                                                                              | Source                                   | Research question   |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Informativeness | The ability of advertising to inform users of alternative product information           | I believe branded social-media video adverts supply relevant information on products   | Ducoffe (1995).                          | Research question 2 |
|                 |                                                                                         | I believe branded social-media video adverts are a good source of up-to-date products. | Cheng and Liu (2018).                    |                     |
| Entertainment   | The ability of advertisement to fulfil consumer needs of enjoyment or emotional release | I find branded social-media video adverts enjoyable                                    | Ducoffe (1995).                          | Research question 2 |
|                 |                                                                                         | I find branded social-media video adverts are interesting                              | Cheng and Liu (2018).                    |                     |
| Irritation      | The advertisement's capability to avoid eliciting negative emotions                     | I believe branded social-media video adverts are irritating                            | Ducoffe (1995).<br>Cheng and Liu (2018). | Research question 2 |

| Item                          | Definition                                                                                                                                    | Questions                                                                              | Source                                                                                                                                               | Research question          |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Credibility</b>            | This is related to the honesty, believability and truthfulness of the given content of advertising as perceived by consumers                  | I believe branded social-media adverts from face-care brands are convincing            | Ducoffe (1995).<br>Cheng and Liu (2018).                                                                                                             | Research question 2        |
|                               |                                                                                                                                               | I believe branded social-media adverts from face-care brands are credible              |                                                                                                                                                      |                            |
|                               |                                                                                                                                               | Social-media video adverts from this face-care brand inspire me to purchase the brand. |                                                                                                                                                      |                            |
|                               |                                                                                                                                               | Video adverts from this face-care brand intrigue me and stimulate my imagination.      |                                                                                                                                                      |                            |
|                               |                                                                                                                                               | I always share video adverts from this brand with my friends.                          |                                                                                                                                                      |                            |
| <b>Behavioural loyalty</b>    | Repeated purchases made by the customer in terms of volume (how much he/she buys) or frequency (how often he or she buys)                     | This brand is the only brand in the category of face-care that I need.                 | Çifci et al. (2016)<br>Ong and Ramayah (2018)<br>Imran and Mobin (2017)<br>Su and Chang (2018)<br>Sharma and Jasrotia (2016)<br>Huang et al., (2015) | Research questions 1 and 3 |
|                               |                                                                                                                                               | In the future, I will continue being loyal to this face-care brand.                    |                                                                                                                                                      |                            |
| <b>Attitudinal attachment</b> | Strong attachment towards the brand, which goes beyond just having positive attitude to the brand.                                            | The brand and I have shared values (i.e., Its more than just a brand)                  | Imran and Mobin (2017)<br>Ong and Ramayah (2018)<br>Sharma and Jasrotia (2016)<br>Huang et al. (2015)                                                | Research questions 1 and 3 |
|                               |                                                                                                                                               | Like continuing to buy this face-care brand even if its prices are going higher.       |                                                                                                                                                      |                            |
| <b>Sense of community</b>     | Feel of kindship or connection with other consumers of the brand, employees representing the brand or other people associated with the brand. | Like joining a social-media group created by those using the same face-care brand      | Sharma and Jasrotia (2016)                                                                                                                           | Research questions 1 and 3 |
|                               |                                                                                                                                               | Like joining social-media platforms created by the brand                               | Huang et al. (2014)                                                                                                                                  |                            |

| Item              | Definition                                                                                                              | Questions                                                                                                   | Source                                     | Research question          |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Active engagement | Consumer willingness to invest time, money and other resources over the amount required to buy and consume the product. | I want to participate in social-media brand challenges                                                      | Çifci et al. (2016) Ong and Ramayah (2018) | Research questions 1 and 3 |
|                   |                                                                                                                         | I want to invite others to participate in brand social-media challenges (TikTok challenges/Instagram reels) | Sharma and Jasrotia (2016)                 |                            |
|                   |                                                                                                                         | I will comment on the brands social-media posts                                                             | Huang et al. (2014)                        |                            |

### 3.5 Pilot study

Prior to launching the research study, a pilot study was conducted to assess the functionality of the research questionnaire (Bryman, 2018). The aim of pilot study is to practically assess research methods and procedures. It is a “process of collecting data that a researcher needs to master to improve and enhance reliability and validity of data collected in the main study” (Muasya and Mulwa, 2023, p.115-116). The pilot study gathers feedback from participants about their comprehension of the questions and to identify any challenges they encounter while completing the survey. It assesses whether the questionnaire is clear, minimising response errors related to the questionnaire (Bryman, 2018; Pearson et al., 2020).

In literature there are varying recommendations regarding the sample size for pilot studies (Andrade, 2020; Wadood, Akbar and Ullah, 2021; Muasya and Mulwa, 2023). The main goal of pilot studies is not to test hypotheses, so sample size is typically not calculated. Some studies recommend having over 30 samples per group, while others suggest two to five respondents. An appropriate sample size should be determined not to ensure sufficient power for hypothesis testing, but rather to assess the feasibility of participant recruitment or the study design (Ismail, Kinchin, and Edwards, 2017; Aziz and Khan, 2020). Considering the total study sample size of 120, the pilot survey for this study was administered to a convenience sample of five respondents. The online questionnaire was sent to the selected sample using a secure link via Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. This allowed the researcher to assess if the link is easily accessible on all-three data-collection platforms. Respondents were asked to consent to participate in the study prior to answering the survey; they were informed about the purpose of the study, and all ethical protocols were shared with them.

The results of the pilot reveal no challenges with questionnaire comprehension. No changes were made; the study was launched using the original survey.

### **3.6 Population**

The unit of analysis for this study is gen-Z, female, face-care consumers. This segment is selected due to the shift in consumer segments on the rise over the past decade, from millennials who were previously considered as the most-disruptive consumer segment before gen-Zs (Almomani, 2020). Gen-Z is a demographic cohort comprising individuals born between 1995 and 2010, who are considered digital natives. They have been born in an era of internet and technological advancement; their tech-savvy level is unprecedented (Pillay, 2021). Due to data-collection regulations, research with respondents under the age of 18 requires parental consent. Hence, the age for this research was set at 18 to 24 years (Donnelly and Thaldar, 2023).

### **3.7 Sampling**

As this is a quantitative study, random sampling was adopted to select the participants. Random sampling ensures that each individual has an equal and known chance of being selected from the population (Creswell, 2018). This method of sampling allows for generalisation of the results which is key for a quantitative study. This sampling method allows for the use of statistical methods to study relationships and analyse data (Clark et al., 2021).

Consumers were recruited to the study via an online questionnaire that was distributed on Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. These are social-media platforms most frequented by the study population (Digital and Social Trends report, 2020). To be considered valid, a questionnaire must adhere to the demographic criteria outlined in the study, as determined by the responses provided in the demographic section. The questionnaire must be completed in its entirety. Failure to meet either of these requirements renders the questionnaire ineligible for analysis. For consumers to be eligible participants they have to be females between the ages of 18 and 24 years, and daily users of any face-care product. They must be frequent users of at least one of the following social-media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube.

There is debate over the appropriate sample size for factor analysis Recommendations and guidelines are followed. While Sürücü, Sesen, and Maslakçı (2023) suggest a minimum of 200; Mundfrom, Shaw, and Luke (2020) argue that there is no fixed

number required. They propose suggested minimums ranging from three to 20 times the number of variables and absolute ranges from 100 to over 1,000. This study follows the approach of Mundfrom, Shaw, and Luke (2020), calculating its desired sample size by multiplying the number of variables, brand resonance and advertising value, by 40. This results in a total of one 120 or three times 40. Initially the study had three variables brand, resonance, and advertising value. Closer to data collection the variables were reduced to two. The original sample size was retained.

### 3.8 Data analysis

Descriptive analysis is applied to summarise data and present it in an easily-assimilated form. This means each characteristic or variable is described by means of a single value (Anderson, Williams and Cochran, 2020). The descriptive statistics are divided into two groups. Group 1 deals with measures of central tendency or location and are: sample mean, median, and mode. The minimum and maximum values in this group of summary statistics can be used to identify unusual values or outliers (Cooksey, 2020). Group 2 deals with measures of dispersion or variability: Sample standard deviation, mean deviation, and coefficient of variation. These measure data consistency. To highlight points visually under descriptive statistics, use is made of graphics such as circle charts or pie-charts, histograms, and component bar charts (Cooksey, 2020).

Table 3.2 shows an example of the summary or descriptive statistics from the R package for the Likert-measured items or variables.

*Table 3.2: Summary statistics example*

| ITEM | n | mean | sd | median | trimmed | mad | min | max | range | skew | kurtosis | se |
|------|---|------|----|--------|---------|-----|-----|-----|-------|------|----------|----|
| 1    |   |      |    |        |         |     |     |     |       |      |          |    |
| 2    |   |      |    |        |         |     |     |     |       |      |          |    |
| .    |   |      |    |        |         |     |     |     |       |      |          |    |
| .    |   |      |    |        |         |     |     |     |       |      |          |    |
| .    |   |      |    |        |         |     |     |     |       |      |          |    |
| k    |   |      |    |        |         |     |     |     |       |      |          |    |

The second step of data analysis is factor analysis. Factor analysis is conducted to reduce a large number of variables to a smaller set of factors, based on the assumption

that all variables are correlated to some extent (Kyriazos, 2018; Sürücü, Sesen and Maslakçı, 2023). “Factor analysis represents a complex array of structure-analysing procedures used to identify interrelationships among large sets of observed variables and then, through data reduction, to group a smaller set of variables into dimensions or factors that have common characteristics” (Shrestha, 2021, p.6). Factor analysis assists in determining key relationships between variables, directly answering the research questions (Tavakol and Wetzel, 2020).

There are two main types of factor analysis: exploratory and confirmatory. Exploratory factor analysis is employed to condense data into a smaller set of summary variables and to investigate the underlying theoretical framework of the phenomena. It helps identify the structure of the relationship between variables and respondents (Beavers et al., 2019). This approach is employed when the researcher is uncertain about how many factors are needed to account for interrelationships among a given set of characteristics (Kyriazos, 2018). Exploratory factor analysis determines the factor structure.

Exploratory factor analysis using the `fa()` function from `psych` package in R and principal component analysis is performed to assess the quality of all measurement items and to simplify the dataset (Shrestha, 2021). Principal components analysis is a technique for reducing the number of variables within factor analysis, condensing them into a smaller set of variables known as principal components (Greenacre et al., 2022). This smaller set of variables, referred to as factors, accounts for as much variance in the original dataset as possible using fewer components (Greenacre et al., 2022).

Confirmatory factor analysis assesses the validity of the measurement model and how well measured variables reflect the underlying construct (Kyriazos, 2018). It is used to evaluate whether the collected data corresponds with the proposed measurement model. Confirmatory factor analysis is employed to determine how well the hypothesised set of identified factors fits the data (Sarmiento and Costa, 2019). Confirmatory factor analysis verifies the factor structure. This is done using the `lavaan` package in R.

Before undertaking factor analysis, the factorability of the data should be evaluated. “Are there meaningful latent factors to be found within the data?” Two things can be checked. (1) If there is evidence of unequal variances between the factors being compared. This is done using Bartlett’s test of sphericity. This tests the null hypothesis

assessing if the correlation matrix is an identity matrix. An identity correlation matrix means variables are unrelated and not ideal for factor analysis (Shrestha, 2021). (2) If the sample size is adequate to conduct factor analysis. This assessment is done using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) or measure of sampling adequacy. The test measures sampling adequacy for each variable in the model and for the complete model (Shrestha, 2021). After exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis using R is conducted to confirm the model fit of the modified measurement model (Costa and Sarmiento, 2019).

The need to conduct exploratory factor analysis or principal component analysis and confirmatory factor analysis in this study arises from the development of the theoretical model and measurement tool. Initially, the measurement tool for advertising value, and brand resonance was either restructured or fully developed for this research. It is suggested that measurement items be tested with exploratory factor analysis whenever they are new or have undergone changes (Taherdoost, Sahibuddin and Jalaliyoon, 2022). Subsequently, confirmatory factor analysis is used to verify the validity and accuracy of the final model and the reduced set of questions measuring various factors. Exploratory factor analysis cannot be used to evaluate model fit or the overall validity of the theoretical model. Since exploratory factor analysis serves as a preliminary exploration of the data while confirmatory factor analysis assesses how well the collected data corresponds with the theoretical model, this two-step approach is considered beneficial for the research (Goretzko, Pham and Bühner, 2021).

The next stage is to determine which factors to retain or extract. This is done through the  $>1$  eigenvalue method. This test suggests that all factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 should be retained (Tavakol and Wetzel, 2022). The logic contends that factors worthy of retaining should, at a minimum, have more variance than any of the original measured variables in the factor (Zopluoglu and Davenport Jr, 2017). A correlation analysis of each variable with the factor is undertaken. Correlation analysis addresses the association or relationship between two or more quantitative variables. This allows the researcher to understand how strongly individual factors correlate with each other (Lorenzo-Seva and Ferrando, 2021). Nizarikhutama and Murwanti (2023) follow a similar approach in testing the effects of brand resonance and brand trust on brand loyalty.

For each dimension a multiple linear-regression analysis is done using R. Multiple linear regression is a statistical technique that uses two or more independent variables

to predict the outcome of a dependent variable (James et al., 2023). In the context of this study, this analysis examines which independent variable is a good predictor of brand resonance. The predictor variable is advertising value. This method is selected because it is commonly employed to analyse the influence of multiple factors on a single construct (James et al., 2023). Each of the four aspects of brand resonance: behavioural loyalty, attitudinal attachment, sense of community, and active engagement are assessed separately as dependent variables.

### **3.9 Validity and reliability**

In quantitative research, the primary quality criteria focus on whether and how effectively the measurement instrument captures the intended constructs. This indicates that the model should be evaluated for its validity (Ahmed and Ishtiaq, 2021). Another key quality measure is assessing the replicability and repeatability of the research. Can another researcher obtain the same results using the same methods? This concept is referred to as research reliability (Kouam, 2024). The researcher needs to maintain a high quality of analysis by verifying the data and model fit before conducting primary analysis.

The reliability and validity of the research measurement must be assessed, as recommended by Ahmed and Ishtiaq (2021). Evaluating internal validity concerning the survey questions involves determining whether the questions effectively measure their intended constructs. Reliability refers to the consistency of the data collected (Saunders et al., 2019). It addresses the robustness of the questionnaire and whether it consistently yields similar results over time (Saunders et al., 2019). The questionnaire design includes both open and closed-ended questions, with closed-ended items featuring a Likert scale and multiple-choice options. The survey questions were structured to accurately address the research questions after further analysis.

#### **3.9.1 Validity**

To ensure the validity of the research, a series of preliminary analyses are performed before the regression analysis to maintain high-quality results. A key measure of validity in quantitative research is construct validity, which indicates how effectively the theoretical model, along with the measurement tool developed to assess the scientific concepts, captures the intended concept (Medina-Díaz and Verdejo-Carrión, 2020). In this study, Cronbach's alpha is applied to evaluate the reliability and validity of the

measurement scales. This coefficient examines the internal consistency of items within a construct by determining the degree to which they are interrelated, reflecting whether they measure the same underlying concept. The alpha statistic ranges from 0 to 1, with values above 0.70 typically indicating satisfactory reliability, whereas values exceeding 0.90 may suggest item redundancy (Ronkko and Cho, 2022). Confirmatory factor analysis, a widely-accepted method for demonstrating research validity, was applied to assess the theoretical model following exploratory factor analysis (Tavakol and Wetzel, 2022).

### **3.9.2 Reliability and generalisability**

Generalisability is a key quality criterion in quantitative research, closely linked to reliability (Mohajan, 2020). It examines the degree to which the findings can be applied beyond the specific context in which the study is conducted. The research sample plays a role in determining the generalisability of the study. Generalisability relies on how well the selected sample represents the broader population relevant to the phenomenon being investigated. (Mohajan, 2020). In this research study random sampling was used, paving the way for the generalisability of the research findings.

Reliability pertains to the consistency and quality of the measures used to assess the concepts. It indicates how accurately the measurement tool created by the researcher captures the phenomenon being studied. (Ahmed and Ishtiaq, 2021; Johansson and Hiltula, 2021). In this study, reliability is tested using Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha serves as an indicator of internal consistency, indicating how closely a set of items are interconnected. It is regarded as a measure of scale reliability and is commonly used to assess the internal reliability of studies (Clifton, 2022). It gauges the degree of relatedness among a set of items. This test is employed to ensure the reliability of this study.

### **3.10 Ethical considerations**

When conducting academic research, the researcher has the right to seek the truth, but not at the cost of infringing upon the rights of other individuals in society (Mirza, Mirza and Bellalem, 2023; Eisend and Kuss, 2019). These rights encompass various aspects including: 1) voluntary participation, recognising that research may intrude into individuals' lives, requiring their time and engagement, whether online or physically (Mirza, Mirza and Bellalem, 2023); 2) ensuring no harm to respondents, as research should never cause physical or emotional injury to individuals; 3) upholding anonymity

and confidentiality, safeguarding respondents' interests, and well-being, including the protection of their identity and any shared confidential information (Mirza, Mirza and Bellalem, 2023; Eisend and Kuss, 2019).

There are several reasons why ethical norms in research are required. Ethical standards promote research aims such as knowledge, truth, and avoidance of error. Values such as confidentiality, mutual trust, and accountability are core to a researcher and are critical to the success of the research (Eisend and Kuss, 2019).

To prevent any ethical violations, specific measures were implemented before and throughout the study. Prior to initiating data collection, an application was submitted to the IIE-VEGA ethics committee. The documents accompanying the application are: Literature-review chapter, research-methodology chapter and data-collection instrument. Data collection commenced after approval was obtained from the IIE-Vega ethics committee. The questionnaire was distributed on social-media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. Respondents were required to provide digital consent before participating in the study.

Before completing the questionnaire, respondents were informed of the voluntary nature of their participation and that they can opt out of the study at any given point. Respondents were assured of their identity protection. This research does not involve asking respondents to engage in activities, physical or psychological, that can potentially cause harm. For instance, participants were not required to disclose deviant behaviour, unpopular attitudes, or sensitive personal attributes like low income or receipt of welfare (Eisend and Kuss, 2019). Consequently, the research study is categorised as low-risk.

All data collection was undertaken via an online platform, with no direct contact with respondents. This is a similar process followed by Varjonen (2018), conducting research on building brand resonance through brand experience. Throughout the research process and analysis of data, the researcher maintains an objective posture and avoid bias that can impact the validity and reliability of the research results. The researcher ensures that the research study is free from plagiarism and bias. The data collected is only used for this study and for no other purposes. Once the study is completed all information collected will be destroyed (Varjonen, 2018).

### **3.11 Conclusion**

Chapter 3 details the research paradigm, philosophical assumptions, and research design employed in addressing this study's research questions. The chapter provides an overview of the quantitative research design chosen as the most-suitable method for this investigation. This approach aligns well with the study's objectives of identifying which dimensions of advertising value contribute to establishing brand resonance, and determining CBBE dimensions most relevant for driving effective resonance within the study population.

A positivism paradigm is adopted in this study. It allows the researcher to objectively examine social perceptions of brand resonance and advertising value to understand its key drivers within the study's theoretical framework. The data-collection and analysis techniques to ensure trustworthiness and reliability are discussed. This chapter explains how the researcher used random sampling to select from the study population of black-female gen-Z face-care users. The population was reached through a survey, which is considered most suitable for accessing participants on social media. The chapter outlines the quantitative approach and data-analysis methods the researcher applies to uncover deep insights into the drivers and variable relationships impacting brand resonance. The chapter concludes with an outline of how the researcher adheres to ethical codes in conducting the research.

## CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH RESULTS

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings obtained from this quantitative research study. The data is analysed using packages in R software to assess whether the items align with their intended constructs. R is an open-source statistical-software environment for data analysis offering a wide range of statistical packages (R Core Team, 2023). The results are organised as: first, the demographic profile of the respondents is outlined, covering general information such as gender, race, and occupation, along with insights related to social-media usage and face-care behaviour.

The chapter reports on the reliability and validity of the measurement scales, as measured by the Cronbach's alpha scores for the identified factors. This section discusses the results for each hypothesis, indicating whether the findings support or reject the stated null hypotheses. A path-analysis model is included to illustrate relationships and variation among the variables examined.

The conceptual framework is tested through both exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. Oblique (promax) rotation is applied to extract the factor structure and determine the dimensionality of the items. Based on the 121 valid survey responses, the following five factors are identified: sense of community and active engagement, entertainment and credibility, behavioural loyalty and attitudinal attachment, informativeness and sense of community, and irritation.

To ensure the appropriateness of the dataset for factor analysis, preliminary statistical tests assess sampling adequacy and the suitability of the correlation structure. Only factors with eigenvalues greater than one are retained, using scree plot, while those with lower eigenvalues are excluded. The suitability of the data for factor analysis is assessed using Bartlett's test of sphericity and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy. For this study, a KMO value of 0.5, the minimum-acceptable value, or higher is recommended (Hair, Hansen and Kim, 2019). The KMO value calculated is 0.80, indicating that the sample size is sufficient for factor analysis (Robert, 2021). The Bartlett's test produces highly-significant results, confirming that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix; meaningful relationships exist among the variables. An identity matrix would indicate no correlation, rendering factor analysis unsuitable. A correlation matrix summarises the strength and direction of relationships

between variables; in factor analysis, these correlations support identifying latent constructs (Nie, 2021).

Data for the empirical analysis was collected through a structured online questionnaire. The survey link was generated using Google Sheets and distributed via social-media platforms. Respondents were informed that participation is voluntary. A qualifying question is included in the demographic section to ensure that only respondents who met the sample criteria of being black females can complete the survey. In total, 125 responses were received, of which 121 are valid and used in the final analysis.

To contextualise the subsequent hypothesis testing and inferential analyses, the results begin with a presentation of the descriptive profile of respondents and their social-media behaviour. This provides an overview of the sample characteristics and key variables, offering a foundation for interpreting patterns, relationships, and trends observed in the data.

## 4.2 Descriptive profile of respondents

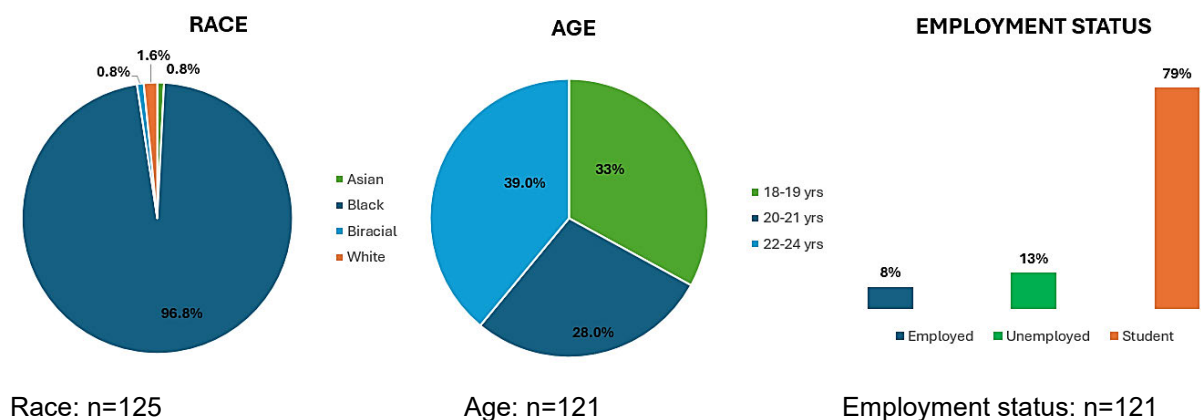


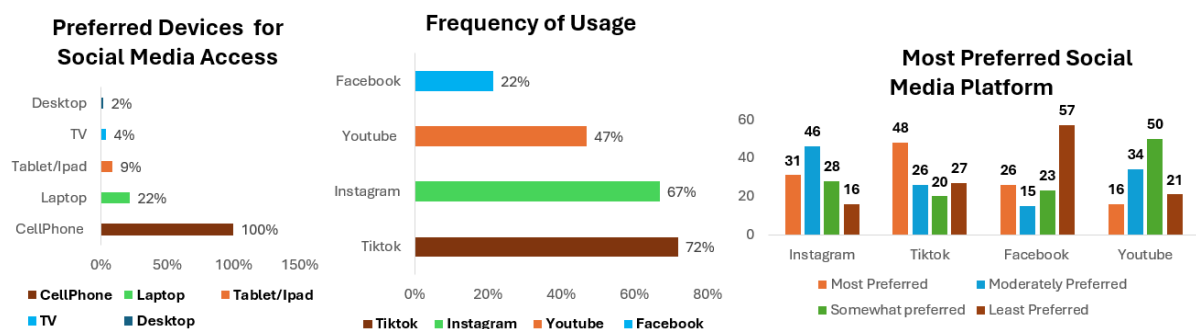
Figure 4.1: Frequency distribution by race, age and employment

Figure 4.1 presents the sample distribution across key demographic variables, race, age, and employment status. A total of 125 respondents entered the survey; however, four responses were excluded from the final demographic analysis due to incorrectly stated race information. The final sample consists of 121 valid responses. The demographic profile shows that the valid sample is predominantly black at 96.8%, with very small proportions identifying as Asian at 0.8%, white at 0.8%, and biracial at 1.6%. This racial composition reflects the majority demographic context relevant to the study's target population.

Regarding age, respondents are primarily within the late-teenage to early-young-adult age range. The largest age group is aged between 22 and 24 years at 39%, followed by 18 and 19 years at 33% and 20 and 21 years at 28%. This indicates that the sample consists mainly of young adults within gen-Z, aligning with the study's focus.

In terms of employment status, most respondents at 79% identify as students. A smaller proportion at 13% are unemployed, while 8% report being employed. This distribution is consistent with the age profile, highlighting that most participants are unemployed students.

These demographics suggest that the study sample is mainly young, black students, providing relevant context for interpreting insights related to social-media use and face-care consumption among gen-Z consumers.



N=121

Figure 4.2: Social-media behaviour

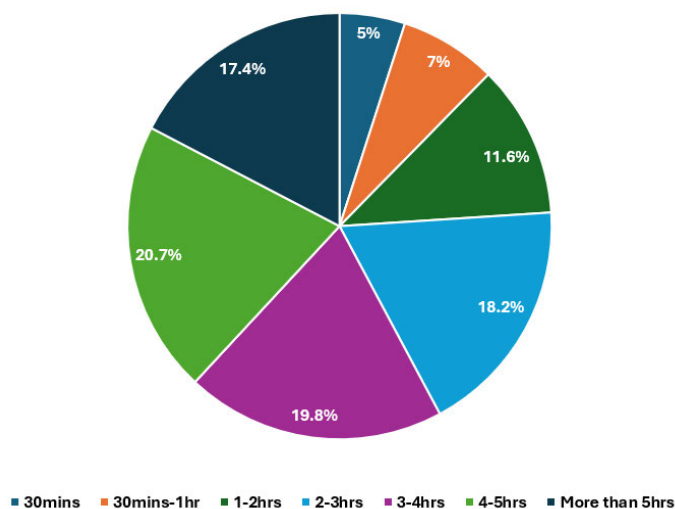
Figure 4.2 presents social-media behaviour. The demographic findings indicate distinct patterns in respondents' preferred devices, frequency of social-media usage, and platform preferences. All respondents access social media primarily via their cell phones, while laptops at 22%, tablets/iPads at 9%, televisions at 4%, and desktops at 2% are used to a much-lesser extent. These findings highlight the dominance of mobile devices in social-media engagement, underscoring the need for mobile-first strategies when designing and delivering digital brand content to this audience.

An analysis of platform-usage frequency and preference provides insight into respondents' social-media-engagement patterns. In terms of usage frequency, TikTok emerges as the most-frequently used platform, with 72% of respondents indicating they use it often, followed by Instagram at 67%, YouTube at 47%, and Facebook at 22%. Regarding platform preference, TikTok at 77% and Instagram at 74% are the most favoured, while Facebook ranks lowest at 57%. YouTube displays a

balanced-preference profile, with 50% of respondents placing it in their top two boxes and 50% considering it moderately preferred. These findings highlight the dominance of TikTok and Instagram in both frequency and preference, signalling that these platforms are the most-strategic channels for targeting this audience. Engaging with this audience on Facebook may be limited, while YouTube can serve as a platform for targeted or complementary engagement.

The results of respondents' social-media behaviour reveal a distinctly mobile-first audience, with all respondents accessing platforms primarily via their smartphones and other devices playing a minimal role. TikTok and Instagram dominate both in terms of usage frequency and preference, making them the most-strategically-valuable channels for engagement. YouTube holds moderate appeal, suggesting potential for targeted or supplementary content, while Facebook's comparatively-low usage and preference indicate a limited role in reaching this audience. Overall, these patterns underscore the importance of mobile-optimised, platform-specific strategies that prioritise TikTok and Instagram to maximise reach and relevance.

**Daily Average Hours Spent On Social Media**

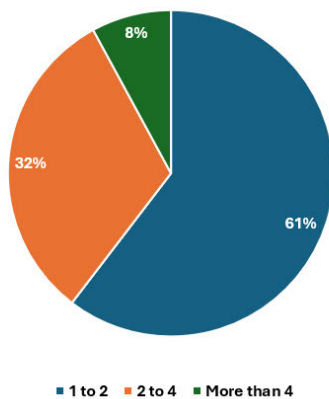


*Figure 4.3: Daily-average hours spent on social media*

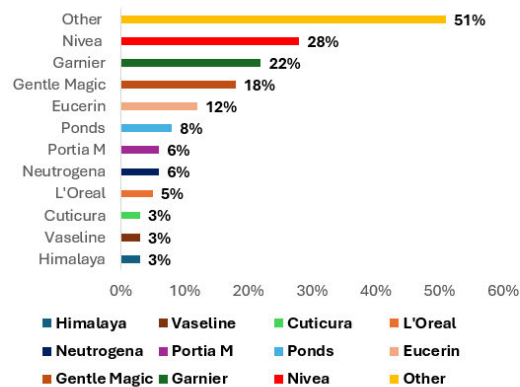
Figure 4.3 shows the distribution of daily-average hours spent on social media among respondents. The results indicate that most respondents spend a considerable amount of time on social media each day. The largest proportion at 20.7% report spending four to five hours daily, followed closely by those spending three to four hours at 19.8% and two to three hours at 18.2%. In contrast, a small percentage at 5% spend 30 minutes, and 7.4% spend between 30 and 60 minutes. This suggests that most respondents

are highly engaged with social media, with a large portion dedicating more than two hours each day to these platforms. This substantial daily time investment in social media, with most spending over two hours per day, reinforces its role as a primary channel for sustained brand exposure and engagement, offering multiple opportunities for brands to deliver targeted, high-frequency content that aligns with consumers' daily routines.

**Number of Face Care Products Used Daily**



**Top Face Care Brands Among Gen Z Consumers**



N=121

Figure 4.4: Face-care usage

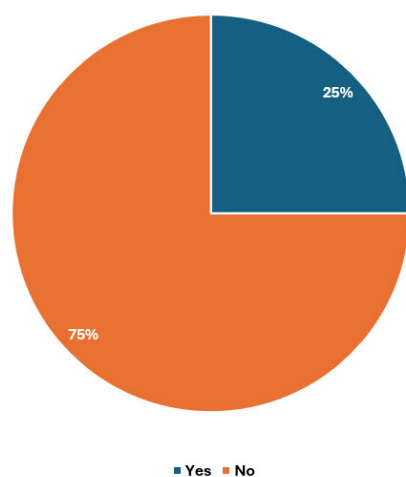
Figure 4.4 presents the number of brands used by respondents, along with their brand names. The findings reveal insights into the daily face-care routines and brand preferences of gen-Z consumers. Most respondents at 61% report using between one and two face-care products daily, while 32% use between two and four products. A small proportion at 8% use more than four face-care products each day, indicating that most respondents maintain relatively-simple face-care routines. These results suggest that while face-care is an established part of gen-Z consumers' routines, their relatively-minimal product usage presents both a challenge and an opportunity for brands. These findings highlight the need to position products as essential, with multi-benefit solutions to encourage broader adoption within existing routines.

Brand-preference patterns indicate a fragmented market, reflecting diverse consumer choices and the presence of both mainstream and niche competitors. Over half of respondents at 51% report using brands classified as *other*, suggesting a diverse range of niche or less-mainstream brands outside dominant players. Among the identified brands, Nivea emerges as the most popular at 28%, followed by Garnier at 22%, and Gentle Magic at 18%. Others include Eucerin at 12%, Ponds at 8%, Portia

M at 6%, Neutrogena at 6%, and L'Oréal at 5%. Smaller shares are observed for Cuticura, Vaseline, and Himalaya, each with 3% of respondents. The fragmented nature of the market, with substantial uptake of niche brands alongside established players, indicates that brand loyalty is widely dispersed. This creates a competitive environment where differentiation, targeted positioning, and consistent brand engagement contribute to securing and maintaining consumer preference.

These findings suggest that while daily face-care routines are generally minimal, brand loyalty is dispersed across a wide range of options, with competition from niche brands. This underscores the need for both established and emerging players to strengthen differentiation and maintain brand salience to capture and retain gen-Z consumers' attention in a crowded market.

**Brand Page Followership on Social Media**



*N=121*

*Figure 4.5: Brand-page followership*

Figure 4.5 illustrates the proportion of consumers who follow the social-media pages of their chosen face-care brands. The results indicate that a minority of respondents actively follow their face-care brands on social media. 25% of respondents report that they follow the brands they use, while most at 75% state that they do not. This low level of direct brand-page following highlights a missed opportunity for fostering deeper brand-consumer connections online. To increase engagement, brands may need to leverage alternative strategies such as influencer partnerships, user-generated content, and platform-specific trends that reach gen-Zs organically rather than relying on direct brand-page interactions.

This section presents the qualitative findings of the study, derived from respondents' responses to the open-ended questions included in the survey. These responses are analysed using thematic analysis, a widely-used method for identifying, analysing, and interpreting patterns of meaning within qualitative data (Bryman et al., 2018). Thematic analysis involves a systematic process of coding the data, grouping similar codes into broader themes, and refining these themes to ensure they accurately reflect underlying narratives and perspectives expressed by respondents. This approach enables the extraction of rich, nuanced insights that complement the quantitative findings, providing a deeper understanding of respondents' experiences, perceptions, and behaviour in relation to the research topic (Bryman et al., 2018).

*Table 4.1: Reasons for brand-page followership*

| <b>Theme</b>                                          | <b>Supporting verbatim quotations</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>New-product information</b>                        | <p><i>"It's a great way to stay updated on the latest developments regarding the products I use, and it also helps in discovering different ways in which I can modify my skincare routine."</i></p> <p><i>"So, I'm up to date with their products or any news about the product."</i></p> <p><i>"It keeps me posted on the new stuff regarding the brand."</i></p>                                    |
| <b>Tutorial or information of how to use products</b> | <p><i>"Directions on how to use the products of that certain brand. Upcoming events of the brands."</i></p> <p><i>"I need motivation to maintain the skincare routine so their videos keep me hopeful that the products will eventually work for me. Other people's testimonials keep me going."</i></p> <p><i>"Helps to stay updated to the latest skincare trends, ingredients and routine."</i></p> |

#### *Author's construct*

Table 4.1 summarises the key reasons respondents report for following the social-media pages of their preferred brands. The responses show that among the minority at 25% who follow face-care brands on social media, two key motivations emerge. Firstly, respondents value access to information about new products, updates, and innovations, which helps them stay informed and adapt their face-care routines. Secondly, they appreciate tutorials and guidance on product usage, including directions, demonstrations, and user testimonials, which provide motivation and build confidence in maintaining their routines. These insights suggest that brand-page followership is primarily driven by a desire for product information, promotions, and brand updates, indicating that content strategies focusing on exclusive offers, timely

information, and engaging product-related content may be most effective in sustaining and increasing follower engagement.

Table 4.2: Reasons for lack of brand-page followership

| Theme                                                                 | Supporting verbatim quotations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Frequent change in product use</b>                                 | <p><i>"I have never thought of doing so because I change brands quite often apart from my face moisturiser which is the Johnson's baby lotion"</i></p> <p><i>"I am constantly trying new products to improve my skin."</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Comfortable in their product usage</b>                             | <p><i>"I've been using gentle magic products for years and I don't need to see advertisements telling me to buy there products because the products are already apart of my skin care routine. With regards to Nivea, sunscreen is imperative. I don't need to follow Nivea's Instagram to remember to buy sunscreen."</i></p> <p><i>"I don't think it's necessary, I already know what to use."</i></p>                                 |
| <b>Lack of awareness of social-media pages</b>                        | <p><i>"I don't even know they have social-media pages."</i></p> <p><i>"I don't think they have social-media pages."</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Rely on influencers and word of mouth to share product reviews</b> | <p><i>"I only got introduced to the brand by a YouTuber who had the same skin type as mine. I needed honest reviews without the brand marketing all the positive impacts of the product without stating the negative side effects."</i></p> <p><i>"I need motivation to maintain the skincare routine so their videos keep me hopeful that the products will eventually work for me. Other people's testimonials keep me going."</i></p> |
| <b>Brand pages do not have valuable information</b>                   | <p><i>"I do not take an interest in following their page since i can easily access specific information pertaining to the brand through other means e.g., google or first hand experience of the product."</i></p> <p><i>"Their pages are not interesting enough."</i></p> <p><i>"I do not see a need to, or any value that it would add to me."</i></p> <p><i>"Irrelevant content."</i></p>                                             |

Author's construct

Table 4.2 summarises the key reasons respondents report for not following the social-media pages of their preferred brands. The qualitative findings highlight several reasons why most respondents do not follow their face-care brands on social media. Many report frequently-changing products, which reduces the need to stay connected to any single brand. Others express confidence in their existing routines, feeling no need for updates or reminders from brand pages. Some respondents are simply unaware that these brands have social-media accounts, while others prefer to rely on influencers or word-of-mouth for authentic product reviews. Several respondents feel

that brand pages do not offer valuable or engaging content, noting that the information they need is easily accessible elsewhere.

These findings indicate that low followership is not solely a matter of platform presence, but of perceived value and relevance. To convert non-followers into engaged audiences, brands must offer distinctive, value-driven content that goes beyond basic product information. They need to build awareness of their social-media presence, and leverage authentic voices such as influencers to bridge the trust gap.

*Table 4.3: What constitutes interesting and captivating face-care social-media content*

| Theme                                                                | Supporting verbatim quotations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Vlogs or Reels that show authentic real life before and after</b> | <p><i>"I'm most drawn to content that shows real before-and-after results or skincare routines with clear explanations. I also enjoy short, informative videos where experts or influencers explain the benefits of ingredients in face-care products. Tutorials, product reviews, and 'day in the life' skincare routines feel personal and help me connect with the brand."</i></p> <p><i>"Peoples skin care journeys. Especially those who previously had blemished skin like mine or those who have acne prone skin."</i></p> <p><i>"The content with influencers/content creators that shows how they incorporate it into their everyday lives."</i></p> |
| <b>Educational content</b>                                           | <p><i>"Product demonstrations and tutorials Skincare routines and tips."</i></p> <p><i>"I'm most engaged by face-care content that's educational, visually appealing, and feels authentic. Including content that involves real life people with different skin types and conditions. I like when brands break down ingredients and routines in simple terms, show real before-and-after results, and share dermatologist tips."</i></p> <p><i>"Content on how to use the products and when they are used"</i></p> <p><i>"Engaging face-care content often combines informative educational materials with visually appealing presentations"</i></p>          |

#### *Author's construct*

Table 4.3 summarises respondents' perspectives on the elements that make face-care content engaging and appealing on social-media platforms. The findings show that respondents are most engaged by content that feels authentic, relatable, and informative. Vlogs or short videos, such as reels, that feature real-life before-and-after results, personal skincare journeys, and everyday routines help build trust and connection with the brand. Educational content is equally valued, with respondents highlighting tutorials, product demonstrations, ingredient breakdowns, and expert tips as especially useful. This combination of authentic storytelling and practical guidance

makes the content more compelling and relevant to their face-care needs. These insights highlight the relevance of blending authenticity with education in face-care content. Brands that combine relatable storytelling with practical, expert-led guidance are more likely to capture attention, foster trust, and sustain long-term engagement with their audiences.

The demographic profile provides context for interpreting the findings, highlighting respondents' social-media usage, and their interaction with face-care brands. Understanding these behavioural patterns contributes to making sense of the views and behaviour shared in the subsequent sections.

Building on this foundation, the next section presents the results of the factor analysis, which investigates underlying dimensions that shape respondents' attitudes and perceptions related to face-care short-video advertising on social media.

### 4.3 Exploratory factor analysis

To uncover the underlying factor structure of the measurement items and to verify whether they formed the expected constructs, an exploratory factor analysis is conducted. This analysis reveals patterns within the data by analysing how items group together, ensuring that each cluster of items consistently represents a specific aspect of the conceptual framework. Through this process, the reliability of the scales used in the study is established.

*Table 4.4: Table of descriptive statistics for items*

| Item                                                                                                              | n   | mean | sd   | median | trimmed | mad  | min | max | range | skew  | kurtosis | SE   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------|------|--------|---------|------|-----|-----|-------|-------|----------|------|
| 1. <b>informativeness:</b> believe branded social-media video adverts supply relevant information on products.    | 121 | 3.22 | 1.09 | 3      | 3.30    | 1.48 | 1   | 5   | 4     | -0.52 | -0.56    | 0.10 |
| 2. <b>informativeness:</b> I believe branded social-media video adverts are a good source of up-to-date products. | 121 | 1.72 | 1.34 | 1      | 1.44    | 0.00 | 1   | 5   | 4     | 1.46  | 0.42     | 0.12 |
| 3. <b>Entertainment:</b> I find branded social-media video adverts enjoyable.                                     | 121 | 3.25 | 1.25 | 3      | 3.31    | 1.48 | 1   | 5   | 4     | -0.24 | -0.98    | 0.11 |

| Item                                                                                                                    | n   | mean | sd   | median | trimmed | mad  | min | max | range | skew  | kurtosis | SE   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------|------|--------|---------|------|-----|-----|-------|-------|----------|------|
| 4. <b>Entertainment:</b> I believe branded social-media video adverts are irritating.                                   | 121 | 3.36 | 1.24 | 4      | 3.44    | 1.48 | 1   | 5   | 4     | -0.37 | -0.91    | 0.11 |
| 5. <b>Irritation:</b> I believe branded social-media video adverts are irritating.                                      | 121 | 2.57 | 1.13 | 2      | 2.52    | 1.48 | 1   | 5   | 4     | 0.44  | -0.69    | 0.10 |
| 6. <b>Irritation:</b> I skip majority of social-media video adverts from face-care brands.                              | 121 | 3.16 | 1.33 | 3      | 3.20    | 1.48 | 1   | 5   | 4     | -0.03 | -1.29    | 0.12 |
| 7. <b>Credibility:</b> I believe branded social-media adverts from face-care brands are convincing.                     | 121 | 3.24 | 1.16 | 3      | 3.27    | 1.48 | 1   | 5   | 4     | -0.25 | -0.92    | 0.11 |
| 8. <b>Credibility:</b> I believe branded social-media adverts from face-care brands are credible.                       | 121 | 3.01 | 1.08 | 3      | 3.05    | 1.48 | 1   | 5   | 4     | -0.22 | -0.59    | 0.10 |
| 9. <b>Behavioural loyalty:</b> These brands are the only brands in the category of face-care that I need.               | 121 | 3.01 | 1.04 | 3      | 3.00    | 1.48 | 1   | 5   | 4     | 0.03  | -0.62    | 0.09 |
| 10. <b>Behavioural loyalty:</b> In the future, I will be loyal to these face-care brand.                                | 121 | 3.25 | 1.12 | 3      | 3.30    | 1.48 | 1   | 5   | 4     | -0.39 | -0.55    | 0.10 |
| 11. <b>Attitudinal attachment:</b> These brands and I have shared values i.e. its more than just a brand.               | 121 | 3.12 | 1.06 | 3      | 3.13    | 1.48 | 1   | 5   | 4     | -0.16 | -0.71    | 0.10 |
| 12. <b>Attitudinal attachment:</b> I will continue buying these face-care brands even if their prices are going higher. | 121 | 3.20 | 1.23 | 3      | 3.25    | 1.48 | 1   | 5   | 4     | -0.27 | -0.92    | 0.11 |
| 13. <b>Sense of community:</b> Like joining a social-media group created by those using the same face-care brands.      | 121 | 2.72 | 1.21 | 3      | 2.67    | 1.48 | 1   | 5   | 4     | 0.23  | -0.93    | 0.11 |

| Item                                                                                                                                     | n   | mean | sd   | median | trimmed | mad  | min | max | range | skew  | kurtosis | SE   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------|------|--------|---------|------|-----|-----|-------|-------|----------|------|
| 14. <b>Sense of community:</b> Like joining social-media platforms created by the brands.                                                | 121 | 1.37 | 0.89 | 1      | 1.11    | 0.00 | 1   | 5   | 4     | 2.42  | 4.76     | 0.08 |
| 15. <b>Active engagement:</b> I want to participate in the brands social-media challenges i.e., TikTok challenge                         | 121 | 2.89 | 1.30 | 3      | 2.87    | 1.48 | 1   | 5   | 4     | -0.03 | -1.29    | 0.12 |
| 16. <b>Active engagement:</b> I want to invite others to participate in brands social-media challenges TikTok challenges/Instagram reels | 121 | 2.82 | 1.28 | 3      | 2.78    | 1.48 | 1   | 5   | 4     | 0.06  | -1.24    | 0.12 |
| 17. <b>Active engagement:</b> I will comment on the brands social-media posts                                                            | 121 | 3.13 | 1.38 | 3      | 3.16    | 1.48 | 1   | 5   | 4     | -0.24 | -1.25    | 0.13 |

Based on the table of descriptive statistics (table 4.4), all 121 respondents answered all items as required. For items 1, 3, 6 to 13, and 15 to 17, the median score is 3 for undecided, indicating that half the respondents score less than or equal to 3, while the other half score greater than or equal to 3. For items 2 and 14, respondents provide nearly identical scores, as reflected by a mean absolute deviation of 0 and a low standard deviation. The median score for these items is 1 for strongly disagree, showing that half of the responses are less than or equal to 1, with the remainder scoring greater than or equal to 1. For item 4, the median score is 4 for agree, meaning half of the respondents score less than or equal to 4 and the other half score greater than or equal to 4.

Table 4.5: Correlation matrix

| Item | 1      | 2     | 3      | 4      | 5     | 6    | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
|------|--------|-------|--------|--------|-------|------|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1    | 1.00   |       |        |        |       |      |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 2    | -0.031 | 1.00  |        |        |       |      |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 3    | 0.398  | 0.101 | 1.00   |        |       |      |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 4    | 0.470  | 0.107 | 0.811  | 1.00   |       |      |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 5    | -0.192 | 0.046 | -0.418 | -0.351 | 1.00  |      |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 6    | -0.151 | 0.006 | -0.384 | -0.303 | 0.599 | 1.00 |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |

| Item | 1     | 2      | 3     | 4     | 5      | 6      | 7      | 8    | 9    | 10   | 11   | 12   | 13   | 14   | 15   | 16   | 17   |
|------|-------|--------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 7    | 0.391 | -0.175 | 0.554 | 0.506 | -0.327 | -0.332 | 1.00   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| 8    | 0.396 | -0.131 | 0.456 | 0.429 | -0.237 | -0.164 | 0.585  | 1.00 |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| 9    | 0.374 | 0.062  | 0.274 | 0.303 | -0.246 | -0.176 | 0.254  | 0.29 | 1.00 |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| 10   | 0.288 | 0.002  | 0.288 | 0.277 | -0.165 | -0.172 | 0.229  | 0.32 | 0.51 | 1.00 |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| 11   | 0.156 | 0.089  | 0.365 | 0.333 | -0.261 | -0.303 | 0.253  | 0.27 | 0.33 | 0.36 | 1.00 |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| 12   | 0.209 | 0.049  | 0.244 | 0.204 | -0.130 | -0.167 | 0.177  | 0.26 | 0.40 | 0.50 | 0.48 | 1.00 |      |      |      |      |      |
| 13   | 0.232 | -0.116 | 0.284 | 0.236 | -0.193 | -0.248 | 0.387  | 0.35 | 0.14 | 0.37 | 0.41 | 0.35 | 1.00 |      |      |      |      |
| 14   | 0.137 | 0.684  | 0.096 | 0.111 | -0.039 | -0.135 | -0.055 | 0.01 | -0.0 | 0.07 | 0.20 | 0.08 | 0.18 | 1.00 |      |      |      |
| 15   | 0.140 | 0.016  | 0.292 | 0.267 | -0.201 | -0.245 | 0.347  | 0.32 | 0.13 | 0.21 | 0.34 | 0.32 | 0.62 | 0.24 | 1.00 |      |      |
| 16   | 0.178 | -0.030 | 0.365 | 0.330 | -0.261 | -0.227 | 0.454  | 0.34 | 0.16 | 0.26 | 0.33 | 0.23 | 0.63 | 0.16 | 0.79 | 1.00 |      |
| 17   | 0.168 | 0.078  | 0.418 | 0.390 | -0.267 | -0.224 | 0.364  | 0.35 | 0.20 | 0.20 | 0.32 | 0.25 | 0.51 | 0.20 | 0.58 | 0.62 | 1.00 |

Table 4.6 indicates the thresholds for testing the significance and strength of the correlation or relationship.

*Table 4.6: Table for testing the significance and strength of correlation*

| Positive        | Negative          | Strength        |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| $0 < r < 0.25$  | $-0.25 < r < 0$   | Negligible      |
| $0.1 < r < 0.3$ | $-0.3 < r < -0.1$ | Weak            |
| $0.3 < r < 0.5$ | $-0.5 < r < -0.3$ | Moderate/medium |
| $0.5 < r < 1$   | $-1 < r < -0.5$   | High            |

Tables 4.4 and 4.5 indicate:

Item 1: informativeness has a positive and moderate correlation or relationship with items 3: entertainment, 4: entertainment, 7: credibility, 8: credibility, and 9: behavioural loyalty with  $0.3 < r < 0.5$ .

Item 2: informativeness has a positive and high correlation with item 14: sense of community with  $0.5 < r < 1$ .

Item 3: entertainment has a positive and high correlation with items 4: entertainment and 7: credibility with  $0.5 < r < 1$ .

Item 3: entertainment has a positive and moderate correlation with items 8: credibility, 11: attitudinal attachment, and 17: active engagement with  $0.3 < r < 0.5$ .

Item 3: entertainment has a negative and moderate correlation with items 5: irritation and 6: irritation  $-0.5 < r < -0.3$ .

Item 4: entertainment has a positive and high correlation with item 7: credibility with  $0.5 < r < 1$ .

Item 4: entertainment has a positive and moderate correlation with items 8: credibility, 9: behavioural loyalty, 11: attitudinal attachment, 16: active engagement, and 17: active engagement  $0.3 < r < 0.5$ .

Item 4: entertainment has a negative and moderate correlation with items 5: irritation and 6: irritation with  $-0.5 < r < -0.3$ .

Item 5: irritation has a positive and high correlation with item 6: irritation with  $0.5 < r < 1$ .

Item 5: irritation has a negative and moderate correlation with item 7: credibility with  $-0.5 < r < -0.3$ .

Item 6: irritation has a negative and moderate correlation with items 7: credibility and 11: attitudinal attachment with  $-0.5 < r < 0.3$ .

Item 7: credibility has a positive and high correlation with item 8: credibility with  $0.5 < r < 1$ .

Item 7: credibility has a positive and moderate correlation with items 13: sense of community, 15: sense of community, 16: active engagement, and 17: active engagement with  $0.3 < r < 0.5$ .

Item 8: credibility has a positive and moderate correlation with items 10: behavioural loyalty, 13: sense of community, 15: sense of community, 16: active engagement and 17: active engagement with  $0.3 < r < 0.5$ .

Item 9: behavioural loyalty has a positive and high correlation with item 10: behavioural loyalty  $0.5 < r < 1$ .

Item 9: behavioural loyalty has a positive and moderate correlation with items 11: attitudinal attachment and 12: attitudinal attachment with  $0.3 < r < 0.5$ .

Item 10: behavioural loyalty has a positive and moderate correlation with items 11: attitudinal attachment, 12: attitudinal attachment, and 13: sense of community with  $0.3 < r < 0.5$ .

Item 13: sense of community has a positive and high correlation with items 15: active engagement, 16: active engagement, and 17: active engagement  $0.5 < r < 1$ .

Item 15: active engagement has a positive and high correlation with items 16: active engagement and 17: active engagement with  $0.5 < r < 1$ .

Item 16: active engagement has a positive and high correlation with item 17: active engagement with  $0.5 < r < 1$ .

The correlation analysis reveals clear interdependence among the advertising-value dimensions and brand-resonance components, offering insight into how these constructs work together to shape consumer–brand relationships. Positive and high-to-moderate correlations between informativeness, entertainment, credibility, and the various elements of brand resonance, behavioural loyalty, attitudinal attachment, sense of community, and active engagement, indicate that these advertising-value drivers play a role in fostering meaningful consumer connections. Conversely, negative correlations between irritation and key brand-resonance components highlight its detrimental effect on building strong brand relationships. These findings suggest that maximising entertainment, informativeness, and credibility while minimising irritation drives higher levels of brand loyalty, emotional attachment, and active consumer participation.

#### **4.4 Testing of sampling adequacy**

To test for factorability, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett tests for sampling adequacy are performed in R using the functions `KMO` and `cortest.bartlett` in package `psych` (Zhang et al., 2024).

##### ***KMO factor adequacy***

Call: `KMO (r = new)`

Overall measure of sampling adequacy = 0.8

The measure of sampling adequacy for each item is presented in Table 4.6. The measure of sampling adequacy is a statistical measure that reflects the proportion of variance among variables that can be attributed to common variance. It evaluates

whether the partial correlations between variables are sufficiently low to support the use of factor analysis, with values approaching 1 indicating that the data is highly suitable for this analysis (Lorenzo-Seva and Ferrando, 2021).

*Table 4.7: KMO*

| Item 1  | Item 2  | Item 3  | Item 4  | Item 5  | Item 6  | Item 7  | Item 8  | Item 9 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 0.79    | 0.44    | 0.82    | 0.81    | 0.80    | 0.76    | 0.88    | 0.89    | 0.76   |
| Item 10 | Item 11 | Item 12 | Item 13 | Item 14 | Item 15 | Item 16 | Item 17 |        |
| 0.81    | 0.88    | 0.81    | 0.87    | 0.49    | 0.81    | 0.81    | 0.93    |        |

The minimum acceptable value is 0.50, but most authors recommend a value of 0.60 before undertaking factor analysis (Lorenzo-Seva and Ferrando, 2021). In this case, the overall KMO for the data is 0.80, an excellent result. This suggests that the planned factor analysis can be undertaken.

### ***Bartlett test***

H<sub>0</sub>: Matrix of population correlations is identity

H<sub>1</sub>: Matrix of population correlations is different from identity correst. Bartlett (new)

*Table 4.8: Bartlett test*

| Chisq test value | df  | p-value       |
|------------------|-----|---------------|
| 936.8407         | 136 | 1.011897e-119 |

Since p-value < 0.05, the null hypothesis that the matrix of correlations is identity is rejected. Factor analysis is appropriate for the data.

*Table 4.9: Testing for reliability and validity of items*

|      |     | Overall   | Raw alpha | STD alpha | G6 (smc)        |                  |
|------|-----|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|
|      |     |           | 0.86      | 0.86      | 0.91            |                  |
| Item | n   | Raw alpha | Std alpha | G6 (smc)  | Item_totalr.cor | Item-totalr.drop |
| 1    | 121 | 0.86      | 0.86      | 0.91      | 0.470           | 0.419            |
| 2    | 121 | 0.87      | 0.87      | 0.91      | 0.140           | 0.054            |
| 3    | 121 | 0.84      | 0.85      | 0.90      | 0.720           | 0.657            |

|    |     | Overall | Raw alpha | STD alpha | G6 (smc) |       |
|----|-----|---------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------|
| 4  | 121 | 0.85    | 0.85      | 0.90      | 0.680    | 0.616 |
| 5  | 121 | 0.86    | 0.86      | 0.91      | 0.470    | 0.432 |
| 6  | 121 | 0.86    | 0.86      | 0.91      | 0.470    | 0.422 |
| 7  | 121 | 0.85    | 0.85      | 0.90      | 0.610    | 0.559 |
| 8  | 121 | 0.85    | 0.85      | 0.91      | 0.560    | 0.522 |
| 9  | 121 | 0.86    | 0.86      | 0.91      | 0.470    | 0.422 |
| 10 | 121 | 0.85    | 0.85      | 0.91      | 0.520    | 0.463 |
| 11 | 121 | 0.85    | 0.85      | 0.91      | 0.570    | 0.539 |
| 12 | 121 | 0.86    | 0.85      | 0.91      | 0.500    | 0.446 |
| 13 | 121 | 0.85    | 0.85      | 0.90      | 0.620    | 0.573 |
| 14 | 121 | 0.86    | 0.86      | 0.90      | 0.320    | 0.261 |
| 15 | 121 | 0.85    | 0.85      | 0.90      | 0.640    | 0.580 |
| 16 | 121 | 0.85    | 0.85      | 0.90      | 0.670    | 0.613 |
| 17 | 121 | 0.85    | 0.85      | 0.90      | 0.620    | 0.589 |

The internal consistency of the scale is assessed using Cronbach's alpha, which produces an overall raw alpha of 0.86. This indicates good internal consistency, as a value of 0.70 or higher is generally considered acceptable. This is supported by the Guttman's Lambda 6 (G6-smc). The Guttman squared multiple correlation (smc) indicates the proportion of variance in each item that can be explained by other items in the scale. A G6 of 0.91 or 91% is obtained which suggests better reliability.

Most items, except item 2, have item-total correlations ranging from 0.32 to 0.720, with all items correlating positively with the total score. These results suggest the score's reliability and validity.

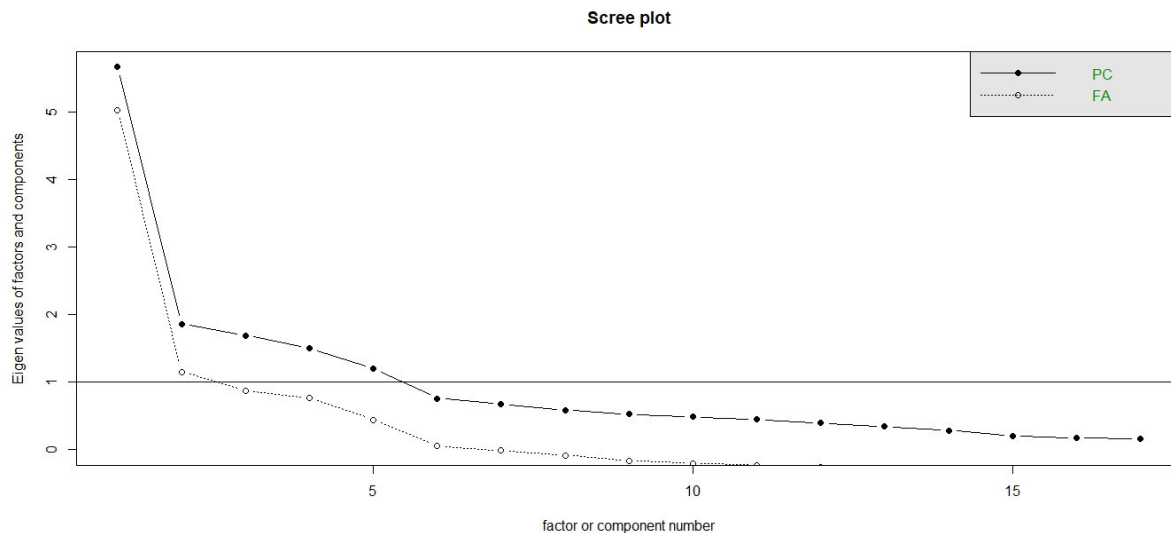


Figure 4.6: Scree plot

The scree plot shows that five factors indicated by black dots above the horizontal line must be retained.

## 4.5 Final results of exploratory factor analysis

Table 4.10: Table of final factor loading with oblique (promax) rotation

| Item       | 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    | 6    | 7    | 8    | 9    | 10   | 11   | 12   |
|------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Uniqueness | 0.70 | 0.01 | 0.19 | 0.20 | 0.58 | 0.01 | 0.51 | 0.61 | 0.57 | 0.44 | 0.63 | 0.52 |
| Item       | 13   | 14   | 15   | 16   | 17   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Uniqueness | 0.42 | 0.46 | 0.23 | 0.20 | 0.49 |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

| Loadings |          |          |          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
|          | Factor 1 | Factor 2 | Factor 3 | Factor 4 | Factor 5 |
| Item 1   | -0.104   | 0.448    | 0.253    |          |          |
| Item 2   |          | 0.164    |          | 1.00     |          |
| Item 3   |          | 0.958    |          | 0.100    |          |
| Item 4   |          | 1.000    |          | 0.107    |          |
| Item 5   |          | -0.214   |          |          | 0.520    |
| Item 6   |          |          |          |          | 1.00     |
| Item 7   | 0.218    | 0.503    |          | -0.180   |          |

| Loadings |          |          |          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
|          | Factor 1 | Factor 2 | Factor 3 | Factor 4 | Factor 5 |
| Item 8   | 0.159    | 0.400    | 0.195    | -0.137   | 0.109    |
| Item 9   | -0.195   |          | 0.694    |          |          |
| Item 10  |          |          | 0.826    |          |          |
| Item 11  | 0.144    |          | 0.450    |          | -0.117   |
| Item 12  |          | -0.178   | 0.749    |          |          |
| Item 13  | 0.692    | -0.155   | 0.221    | -0.121   |          |
| Item 14  | 0.208    |          |          | 0.691    |          |
| Item 15  | 0.953    | -0.114   |          |          |          |
| Item 16  | 0.945    |          |          |          |          |
| Item 17  | 0.631    | 0.205    |          |          |          |

|                | Factor 1 | Factor 2 | Factor 3 | Factor 4 | Factor 5 |
|----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| SS loadings    | 2.889    | 2.733    | 2.107    | 1.600    | 1.406    |
| Proportion var | 0.170    | 0.161    | 0.124    | 0.094    | 0.083    |
| Cumulative var | 0.170    | 0.331    | 0.455    | 0.549    | 0.631    |

- The chi-square statistic is 75.26 on 61 degrees of freedom.
- The p-value is 0.104 > 0.05 (do not reject the null hypothesis)

To enhance the interpretability of the factors, i.e., the latent variables or constructs, oblique (promax) factor rotation is done. Items with factor loadings greater than 0.5 are considered significant.

From the table of factor loadings, factor 1: sense of community and active engagement is loaded heavily by items 13, 15, 16, and 17. These items have significant effect on sense of community and active engagement. Factor 2: entertainment and credibility is heavily loaded by items 3, 4, and 7. Factor 3: behavioural loyalty and attitudinal achievement is heavily loaded by items 9, 10, and 12. Factor 4: informative and sense of community is heavily loaded by items 2 and 14. Factor 5: irritation is heavily loaded by items 5 and 6 and agrees with theoretical expectations.

Table 4.11: Table of factor correlations

|          | Factor 1 | Factor 2 | Factor 3 | Factor 4 | Factor 5 |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Factor 1 | 1.000    |          |          |          |          |
| Factor 2 | 0.006    | 1.000    |          |          |          |
| Factor 3 | -0.379   | -0.004   | 1.000    |          |          |
| Factor 4 | 0.470    | -0.106   | -0.528   | 1.000    |          |
| Factor 5 | -0.349   | 0.035    | 0.520    | -0.589   | 1.000    |

From the table of factor correlations given by a symmetric lower-triangle matrix, there is a high positive correlation between factors 3 and 5 with  $0.5 < r < 1$ .

There is a moderate negative correlation between factors 3 and 4 with  $-0.5 < r < -0.3$ .

There is a moderate negative correlation between factors 4 and 5 with  $-0.5 < r < -0.3$ .

There is a moderate positive correlation between factors 1 and 4 with  $0.3 < r < 0.5$ .

There is a weak negative correlation between factors 1 and 3 and between factors 1 and 5 with  $-0.3 < r < -0.1$ .

## 4.6 Confirmatory factor analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis is applied to the five factors using the lavaan and semPlot packages in R. Lavaan package is used to fit and test the model and semPlot package is used to draw the path diagram (Grassi, Palluzzi and Tarantino, 2022; Marsh and Alamer, 2024).

Table 4.12: Confirmatory factor analysis

| Estimator                  | Maximum likelihood |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Optimisation method        | NLMINB             |
| Number of observations     | 121                |
| Number of model parameters | 66                 |
| Model-fit test statistic   | 96.497             |
| Degrees of freedom         | 87                 |
| P-value (chi-square)       | 0.000              |
| Comparative fit index      | 0.989              |

| Estimator          | Maximum likelihood |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Tucker-Lewis index | 0.983              |
| RMSEA              | 0.030              |

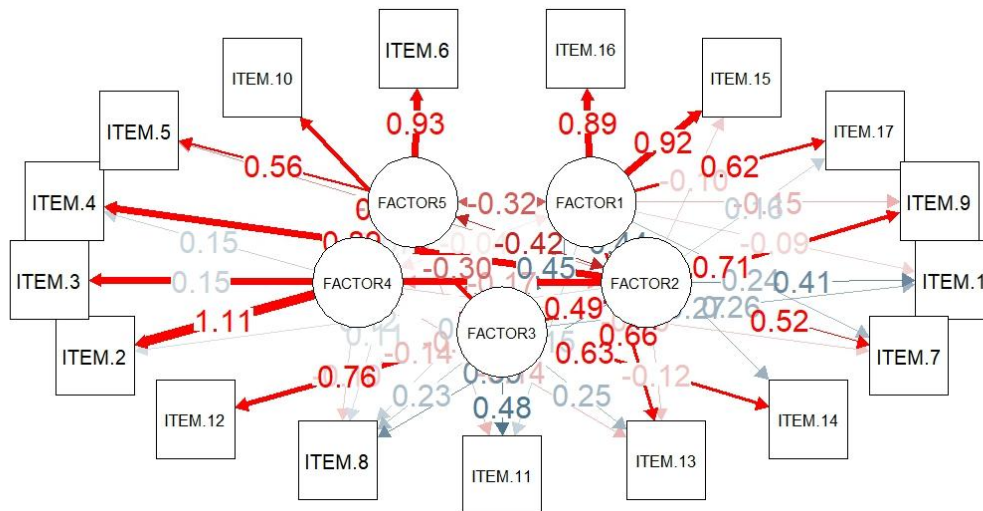


Figure 4.7: Path diagram

The results (table 4.12) in the table above on confirmatory factor analysis show that the presented model has a

$\chi^2 = 96.497$  with  $p = 0.000$ . CFI = 0.989, TLI = 0.983, RMSEA = 0.030.

This means the model is acceptable.

The path diagram (figure 4.7) supports the numerical results given by factor loadings.

## 4.7 Hypotheses testing and results

Building on the conceptual framework, this section presents the results of the hypothesis testing conducted to examine the proposed relationships between the study variables. Each hypothesis is tested to determine whether the anticipated effects and associations hold true within the collected data. The findings from this analysis provide insights into the validity of the theoretical assumptions and lay the groundwork for the subsequent discussion and interpretation.

In this analysis, the four dimensions of advertising value,; informativeness, entertainment, irritation, and credibility, are the independent variables. The four dimensions of brand resonance, behavioural loyalty, attitudinal attachment, sense of community, and active engagement, are the dependent variables.

The results indicate that eight of the 16 hypotheses are supported (table 4.12). H2 (0.00285), H3 (0.02346), H6 (0.0002), H7 (0.0018), H10 (0.0071), H11 (0.0196), H13 (0.303), and H15 (0.009) are rejected because they do not demonstrate a significant relationship with the dependent variables, showing p-values below 0.05. The remaining hypotheses are accepted, displaying significance levels above the 0.05 threshold.

Multiple regression using nlme and MASS packages in R tests the hypotheses.

A)  $H_0$ : Behavioural loyalty is not positively influenced by informativeness

$H_1$ : Behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by informativeness.

| Dependent variable: Behavioural loyalty (item 9)  |          |        |         |        | Decision |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|---------|--------|----------|
|                                                   | Estimate | SE     | t-value | P      | Accepted |
| Intercept                                         | 1.7597   | 0.3005 | 5.857   | 0.0000 |          |
| ITEM 1                                            | 0.3573   | 0.0809 | 4.417   | 0.0000 |          |
| ITEM 2                                            | 0.0564   | 0.0657 | 0.858   | 0.3920 |          |
| $F_{118}^2 = 10.2$ p-value = 0.0000               |          |        |         |        |          |
|                                                   |          |        |         |        |          |
| Dependent variable: Behavioural loyalty (item 10) |          |        |         |        |          |
|                                                   | Estimate | SE     | t-value | P      |          |
| Intercept                                         | 2.2769   | 0.3361 | 6.774   | 0.0000 |          |
| ITEM 1                                            | 0.2963   | 0.0905 | 3.274   | 0.0014 |          |
| ITEM 2                                            | 0.0094   | 0.0735 | 0.128   | 0.8986 |          |
| $F_{118}^2 = 5.359$ p-value = 0.0059              |          |        |         |        |          |

The p-values for items for item 1 ( $p < 0.05$ ) for Informativeness suggest that the item is an important predictor for behavioural loyalty (levels 9 and 10), while informativeness (item 2) is not significant. There  $H_0$  is rejected at the 5% level of significance; behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by informativeness (level 1).

B)  $H_0$ : Behavioural loyalty is not positively influenced by entertainment

$H_1$ : Behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by entertainment

| Dependent variable: Behavioural loyalty (item 9) |          |        |         |        | Decision |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|---------|--------|----------|
|                                                  | Estimate | SE     | t-value | P      | Accepted |
| Intercept                                        | 2.1221   | 0.2696 | 7.887   | 0.0000 |          |
| ITEM 3                                           | 0.0691   | 0.1239 | 0.558   | 0.5780 |          |
| ITEM 4                                           | 0.1967   | 0.1255 | 1.568   | 0.1200 |          |
| $F_{118}^2 = 6.123$ p-value = 0.00285            |          |        |         |        |          |

Similar output is obtained for behavioural loyalty (level 10). The p-values for items 3 and 4 (entertainment) are not significant ( $p > 0.05$ ).  $H_0$  is not rejected at the 5% level of significance; behavioural loyalty is not positively influenced by entertainment.

C)  $H_0$ : Behavioural loyalty is not positively influenced by irritation

$H_1$ : Behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by irritation

| Dependent variable: Behavioural loyalty (item 9) |          |        |         |        | Decision |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|---------|--------|----------|
|                                                  | Estimate | SE     | t-value | P      | Rejected |
| Intercept                                        | 3.6345   | 0.2574 | 14.116  | 0.0000 |          |
| ITEM 5                                           | -0.2000  | 0.1021 | -1.960  | 0.0424 |          |
| ITEM 6                                           | -0.0355  | 0.0869 | -0.4080 | 0.6837 |          |
| $F_{118}^2 = 3.875$ p-value = 0.02346            |          |        |         |        |          |

Behavioural loyalty (item 9) is negatively influenced by irritation (item 5) ( $p = 0.0424 < 0.05$ ). Behavioural loyalty (item 10) is not influenced by irritation ( $p > 0.05$ ).

$H_0$  is not rejected at the 5% level of significance; behavioural loyalty is not positively influenced by irritation.

D)  $H_0$ : Behavioural loyalty is not positively influenced by credibility

$H_1$ : Behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by credibility

| Dependent variable: Behavioural loyalty (item 9) |          |        |         |        | Decision |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|---------|--------|----------|
|                                                  | Estimate | SE     | t-value | P      |          |
| Intercept                                        | 2.0118   | 0.2987 | 6.736   | 0.0000 |          |

| Dependent variable: Behavioural loyalty (item 9)       |          |        |         |        | Decision |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|---------|--------|----------|
|                                                        | Estimate | SE     | t-value | P      | Accepted |
| ITEM 7                                                 | 0.1139   | 0.0963 | 1.182   | 0.2394 |          |
| ITEM 8                                                 | 0.2087   | 0.1040 | 2.007   | 0.0471 |          |
| F <sub>118</sub> <sup>2</sup> = 6.231 p-value = 0.0027 |          |        |         |        |          |
|                                                        |          |        |         |        |          |
|                                                        |          |        |         |        |          |
| Dependent variable: Behavioural loyalty (item 10)      |          |        |         |        |          |
|                                                        | Estimate | SE     | t-value | P      |          |
| Intercept                                              | 2.1570   | 0.3206 | 6.727   | 0.0000 |          |
| ITEM 7                                                 | 0.0590   | 0.1034 | 0.571   | 0.5693 |          |
| ITEM 8                                                 | 0.2991   | 0.1116 | 2.680   | 0.0084 |          |
| F <sub>118</sub> <sup>2</sup> = 7.063 p-value = 0.0    |          |        |         |        |          |

The p-values for item 8 ( $p < 0.05$ ) for credibility suggest that the item is an important predictor for behavioural loyalty (items 9 and 10), while credibility (item 7) is not significant for behavioural loyalty (items 9 and 10).  $H_0$  is rejected at the 5% significance level; behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by credibility.

E)  $H_0$ : Attitudinal attachment is not positively influenced by informativeness

$H_1$ : Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by informativeness.

| Dependent variable: Attitudinal attachment (item 12) |          |        |         |        | Decision |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|---------|--------|----------|
|                                                      | Estimate | SE     | t-value | P      | Accepted |
| Intercept                                            | 2.3461   | 0.3761 | 6.238   | 0.0000 |          |
| ITEM 1                                               | 0.2373   | 0.1012 | 2.343   | 0.0208 |          |
| ITEM 2                                               | 0.0510   | 0.0823 | 0.619   | 0.5370 |          |
| $F_{118}^2 = 2.896$ p-value = 0.0592                 |          |        |         |        |          |

The p-value for item 1 for informativeness is significant ( $p = 0.0208 < 0.05$ ). This means attitudinal attachment (item 12) is positively influenced by informativeness (item 1). Attitudinal attachment (level 11) is not influenced by informativeness.  $H_0$  is rejected at

the 5% level of significance; only attitudinal attachment (item 12) is positively influenced by informativeness (level 1).

F)  $H_0$ : Attitudinal attachment is not positively influenced by entertainment

$H_1$ : Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by entertainment

| Dependent variable: Attitudinal attachment (item 11) |          |        |         |        | Decision |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|---------|--------|----------|
|                                                      | Estimate | SE     | t-value | P      | Rejected |
| Intercept                                            | 2.0494   | 0.2693 | 7.609   | 0.0000 |          |
| ITEM 3                                               | 0.2347   | 0.1238 | 1.896   | 0.0604 |          |
| ITEM 4                                               | 0.0929   | 0.1253 | 0.741   | 0.4549 |          |
| $F_{118}^2 = 9.391$ p-value = 0.0002                 |          |        |         |        |          |

The p-values for entertainment items are not significant ( $p > 0.05$ ) with regard to their effect on attitudinal attachment (item 11). This is true for attitudinal attachment (item 12).  $H_0$  is not rejected at the 5% level of significance; attitudinal attachment is not positively influenced by entertainment.

G)  $H_0$ : Attitudinal attachment is not positively influenced by irritation

$H_1$ : Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by irritation

| Dependent variable: Attitudinal attachment (item 11) |          |        |         |        | Decision |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|---------|--------|----------|
|                                                      | Estimate | SE     | t-value | P      | Rejected |
| Intercept                                            | 3.9993   | 0.2578 | 15.511  | 0.0000 |          |
| ITEM 5                                               | -0.1153  | 0.1022 | -1.128  | 0.2616 |          |
| ITEM 6                                               | -0.1834  | 0.0870 | -2.108  | 0.0372 |          |
| $F_{118}^2 = 6.682$ p-value = 0.0018                 |          |        |         |        |          |

Attitudinal attachment (item 11) is negatively influenced by irritation (item 6) ( $p = 0.0372 < 0.05$ ). Attitudinal attachment (item 12) is not influenced by irritation ( $p > 0.05$ ).

$H_0$  is not rejected at the 5% level of significance; attitudinal attachment is not positively influenced by irritation.

H)  $H_0$ : Attitudinal attachment is not positively influenced by credibility

H<sub>1</sub>: Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by credibility

| Dependent variable: Attitudinal attachment (item 12) |          |        |         |        | Decision |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|---------|--------|----------|
|                                                      | Estimate | SE     | t-value | P      | Accepted |
| Intercept                                            | 2.2589   | 0.3595 | 6.283   | 0.0000 |          |
| ITEM 7                                               | 0.0421   | 0.1159 | 0.363   | 0.7170 |          |
| ITEM 8                                               | 0.2670   | 0.1252 | 2.133   | 0.0350 |          |
| $F_{118}^2 = 4.246$ p-value = 0.01658                |          |        |         |        |          |

Attitudinal attachment (item 12) is positively influenced by credibility (item 8) ( $p = 0.0350 < 0.05$ ). Attitudinal attachment (item 11) is not influenced by credibility ( $p > 0.05$ ).

H<sub>0</sub> is rejected at the 5% level of significance; attitudinal attachment is not positively influenced by credibility.

l) H<sub>0</sub>: Sense of community is not positively influenced by informativeness

H<sub>1</sub>: Sense of community is positively influenced by informativeness

| Dependent variable: Sense of community (item 13)       |          |        |         |        | Decision |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|---------|--------|----------|
|                                                        | Estimate | SE     | t-value | P      | Accepted |
| Intercept                                              | 2.0744   | 0.3653 | 5.679   | 0.0000 |          |
| ITEM 1                                                 | 0.2522   | 0.0983 | 2.564   | 0.0116 |          |
| ITEM 2                                                 | -0.0979  | 0.0799 | -1.225  | 0.2231 |          |
| F <sub>118</sub> <sup>2</sup> = 4.139 p-value = 0.0183 |          |        |         |        |          |
|                                                        |          |        |         |        |          |
| Dependent variable: Sense of community (item 14)       |          |        |         |        |          |
|                                                        | Estimate | SE     | t-value | P      |          |
| Intercept                                              | 0.1757   | 0.1979 | 0.888   | 0.3766 |          |
| ITEM 1                                                 | 0.1288   | 0.0533 | 2.418   | 0.0171 |          |
| ITEM 2                                                 | 0.4543   | 0.0433 | 10.492  | 0.0000 |          |
| F <sub>118</sub> <sup>2</sup> = 5.168 p-value = 0.0071 |          |        |         |        |          |

The p-values for items for items 1 and 2 for informativeness are important predictors (significant) for sense of community (item 14) ( $p < 0.05$ ). Informativeness (item 1) is an important predictor for sense of community (item 13) but informativeness (item 2) is not. There is overwhelming evidence to reject  $H_0$  at the 5% level of significance and conclude that sense of community is positively influenced by Informativeness.

J)  $H_0$ : Sense of community is not positively influenced by entertainment

$H_1$ : Sense of community is positively influenced by entertainment

| Dependent variable: Sense of community (item 13) |          |        |         |        | Decision |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|---------|--------|----------|
|                                                  | Estimate | SE     | t-value | P      | Rejected |
| Intercept                                        | 1.8192   | 0.3159 | 5.759   | 0.0000 |          |
| ITEM 3                                           | 0.2581   | 0.1452 | 1.778   | 0.0751 |          |
| ITEM 4                                           | 0.0183   | 0.1470 | 0.125   | 0.9001 |          |
| $F_{118}^2 = 5.168$ p-value = 0.0071             |          |        |         |        |          |

Entertainment items are not important predictors for sense of community (items 13 and 14).

$H_0$  is not rejected at the 5% level of significance; sense of community is not positively influenced by entertainment.

K)  $H_0$ : Sense of community is not positively influenced by irritation

$H_1$ : Sense of community is positively influenced by irritation

| Dependent variable: Sense of community (item 13) |          |        |         |        | Decision |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|---------|--------|----------|
|                                                  | Estimate | SE     | t-value | P      | Rejected |
| Intercept                                        | 3.4998   | 0.2990 | 11.707  | 0.0000 |          |
| ITEM 5                                           | -0.0741  | 0.1185 | -0.625  | 0.5330 |          |
| ITEM 6                                           | -0.1870  | 0.1009 | -1.854  | 0.0663 |          |
| $F_{118}^2 = 4.069$ p-value = 0.0196             |          |        |         |        |          |

Irritation items are not important predictors for sense of community (items 13 and 14).  $H_0$  is not rejected at the 5% level of significance; sense of community is not positively influenced by irritation.

L)  $H_0$ : Sense of community is not positively influenced by credibility

$H_1$ : Sense of community is positively influenced by credibility

| Dependent variable: Sense of community (item 13) |          |        |         |        | Decision |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|---------|--------|----------|
|                                                  | Estimate | SE     | t-value | P      | Accepted |
| Intercept                                        | 1.1561   | 0.3322 | 3.481   | 0.0007 |          |
| ITEM 7                                           | 0.2895   | 0.1071 | 2.704   | 0.0079 |          |
| ITEM 8                                           | 0.2077   | 0.1156 | 1.796   | 0.0750 |          |
| $F_{118}^2 = 12.32$ p-value = 0.0000             |          |        |         |        |          |

Only credibility (item 7) is an important predictor for sense of community (item 13) ( $p = 0.0079 < 0.05$ ). Item 14 of sense of community is not influenced by credibility.

$H_0$  is rejected at the 5% level of significance; sense of community is positively influenced by irritation.

M)  $H_0$ : Active engagement is not positively influenced by informativeness

$H_1$ : Active engagement is positively influenced by informativeness

| Dependent variable: Active engagement (item 15) |          |        |         |        | Decision |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|---------|--------|----------|
|                                                 | Estimate | SE     | t-value | P      | Rejected |
| Intercept                                       | 2.3176   | 0.4042 | 5.734   | 0.0000 |          |
| ITEM 1                                          | 0.1679   | 0.1088 | 1.543   | 0.1250 |          |
| ITEM 2                                          | 0.0197   | 0.0884 | 0.222   | 0.8240 |          |
| $F_{118}^2 = 1.206$ p-value = 0.303             |          |        |         |        |          |

Informativeness items are not important predictors ( $p > 0.05$ ) for active engagement (items 15, 16, and 17).  $H_0$  is not rejected at the 5% level of significance; active engagement is not positively influenced by informativeness.

N)  $H_0$ : Active engagement is not positively influenced by entertainment

H<sub>1</sub>: Active engagement is positively influenced by entertainment

| Dependent variable: Active engagement (item 17) |          |        |         |        | Decision |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|---------|--------|----------|
|                                                 | Estimate | SE     | t-value | P      | Accepted |
| Intercept                                       | 1.5068   | 0.3420 | 4.406   | 0.0000 |          |
| ITEM 3                                          | 0.3286   | 0.1572 | 2.091   | 0.0387 |          |
| ITEM 4                                          | 0.1660   | 0.1591 | 1.043   | 0.2991 |          |
| $F_{118}^2 = 13.15$ p-value = 0.0000            |          |        |         |        |          |

Only entertainment (item 3) is an important predictor ( $p = 0.0387 < 0.05$ ) for active engagement (item 17).  $H_0$  is rejected at the 5% level of significance; active engagement is positively influenced by entertainment.

O)  $H_0$ : Active engagement is not positively influenced by irritation

H<sub>1</sub>: Active engagement is positively influenced by irritation

| Dependent variable: Active engagement (item 15) |          |        |         |        | Decision |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|---------|--------|----------|
|                                                 | Estimate | SE     | t-value | P      | Rejected |
| Intercept                                       | 3.7228   | 0.3166 | 11.760  | 0.0000 |          |
| ITEM 5                                          | -0.2205  | 0.1255 | -1.757  | 0.0816 |          |
| ITEM 6                                          | -0.1071  | 0.1068 | -1.002  | 0.3183 |          |
| $F_{118}^2 = 4.838$ p-value = 0.009             |          |        |         |        |          |

Irritation items are not important predictors ( $p > 0.05$ ) for active engagement (items 15, 16, and 17).  $H_0$  is not rejected at the 5% level of significance; active engagement is not positively influenced by irritation.

P)  $H_0$ : Active engagement is not positively influenced by credibility

H<sub>1</sub>: Active engagement is positively influenced by credibility

| Dependent variable: Active engagement (item 15) |          |        |         |        | Decision |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|---------|--------|----------|
|                                                 | Estimate | SE     | t-value | P      | Accepted |
| Intercept                                       | 1.3576   | 0.3654 | 3.715   | 0.0003 |          |
| ITEM 7                                          | 0.2715   | 0.1178 | 2.304   | 0.0230 |          |

| Dependent variable: Active engagement (item 15)         |          |        |         |        | Decision |
|---------------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|---------|--------|----------|
|                                                         | Estimate | SE     | t-value | P      |          |
| ITEM 8                                                  | 0.2179   | 0.1272 | 1.712   | 0.0894 |          |
| F <sub>118</sub> <sup>2</sup> = 9.769 p-value = 0.00001 |          |        |         |        |          |
|                                                         |          |        |         |        |          |
| Dependent variable: Active engagement (item 16)         |          |        |         |        |          |
|                                                         | Estimate | SE     | t-value | P      |          |
| Intercept                                               | 1.0129   | 0.3446 | 2.939   | 0.0040 |          |
| ITEM 7                                                  | 0.4236   | 0.1111 | 3.812   | 0.0020 |          |
| ITEM 8                                                  | 0.1440   | 0.1200 | 1.200   | 0.2325 |          |
| F <sub>118</sub> <sup>2</sup> = 16.2 p-value = 0.0000   |          |        |         |        |          |

| Dependent variable: Active engagement (item 17) |          |        |         |        | Decision |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|---------|--------|----------|
|                                                 | Estimate | SE     | t-value | P      |          |
| Intercept                                       | 1.3886   | 0.3839 | 3.616   | 0.0004 |          |
| ITEM 7                                          | 0.2857   | 0.1238 | 2.309   | 0.0227 |          |
| ITEM 8                                          | 0.2719   | 0.1336 | 2.035   | 0.0441 |          |
| $F_{118}^2 = 11.37$ p-value = 0.0000            |          |        |         |        |          |
|                                                 |          |        |         |        |          |

H<sub>0</sub> is rejected at the 5% level of significance; active engagement is positively influenced by credibility.

Table 4.13: Summary of hypothesis testing

| Hypothesis |                                                                    | Decision |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>H1a</b> | Behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by informativeness    | Accepted |
| <b>H1b</b> | Behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by entertainment      | Accepted |
| <b>H1a</b> | Behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by irritation         | Rejected |
| <b>H1d</b> | Behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by credibility        | Accepted |
| <b>H2a</b> | Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by informativeness | Accepted |
| <b>H2b</b> | Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by entertainment   | Rejected |

| Hypothesis |                                                                | Decision |
|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| H2c        | Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by irritation  | Rejected |
| H2d        | Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by credibility | Accepted |
| H3a        | Sense of community is positively influenced by informativeness | Accepted |
| H3b        | Sense of community is positively influenced by entertainment   | Rejected |
| H3c        | Sense of community is positively influenced by irritation      | Rejected |
| H3d        | Sense of community is positively influenced by credibility     | Accepted |
| H4a        | Active engagement is positively influenced by informativeness  | Rejected |
| H4b        | Active engagement is positively influenced by entertainment    | Accepted |
| H4c        | Active engagement is positively influenced by irritation       | Rejected |
| H4d        | Active engagement is positively influenced by credibility      | Accepted |

To guide this research, a conceptual framework (**Error! Reference source not found.**) illustrates the relationships between the dimensions of advertising value and brand resonance. This framework integrates theoretical insights and prior literature to formulate the hypotheses that are empirically tested in this study. By mapping the expected connections, the framework provides a structure for examining how specific aspects of advertising value influence different facets of brand-consumer relationships.

The research framework for this study is grounded in Ducoffe's (1995) advertising-value model and Keller's (2001) brand-resonance model, integrating the four core dimensions of advertising value, informativeness, entertainment, irritation, and credibility with the four components of brand resonance, loyalty, attachment, sense of community, and engagement. The framework proposes 16 testable hypotheses, H1 to H16, each representing a directional relationship between an advertising-value dimension and a brand-resonance component. The hypotheses are: H1 to H4 test the influence of informativeness on loyalty, attachment, community, and engagement; H5 to H8 examine the effect of entertainment on the same four brand-resonance elements; H9 to H12 assess the impact of irritation; and H13 to H16 evaluate the role of credibility. This structure enables a systematic examination of how each advertising-value driver contributes to, or detracts from, the formation of deep, meaningful consumer-brand relationships in the context of social-media short-video advertising targeted at South African black-female gen-Z face-care consumers.

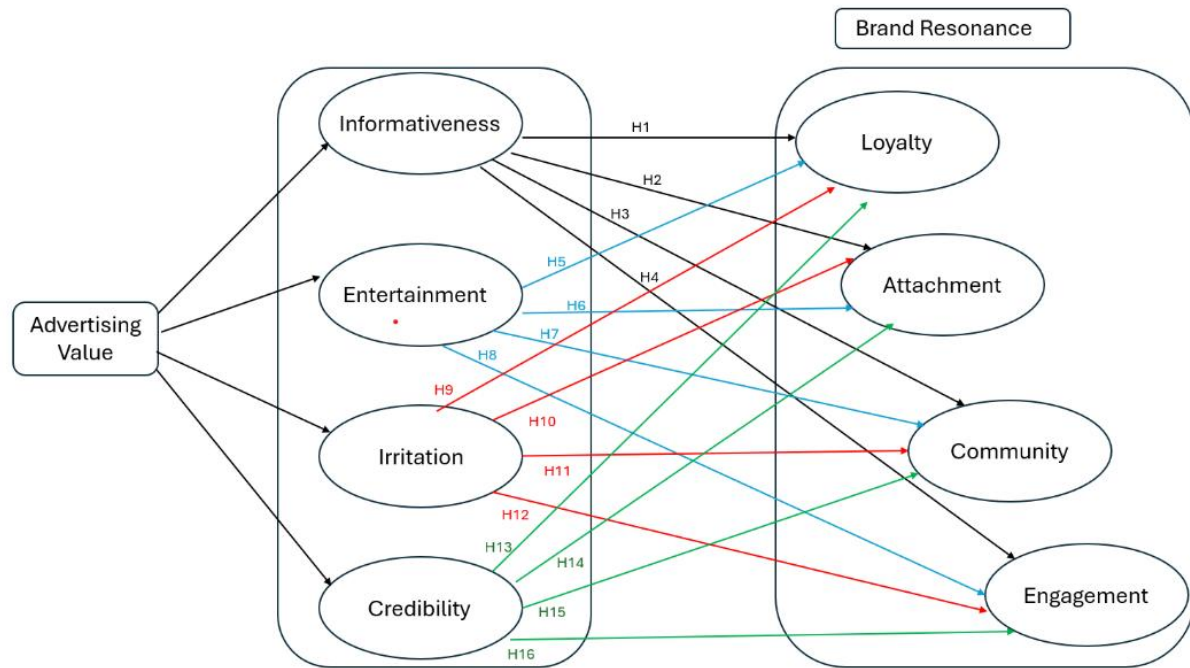


Figure 4.8: Conceptual framework  
Author's construct

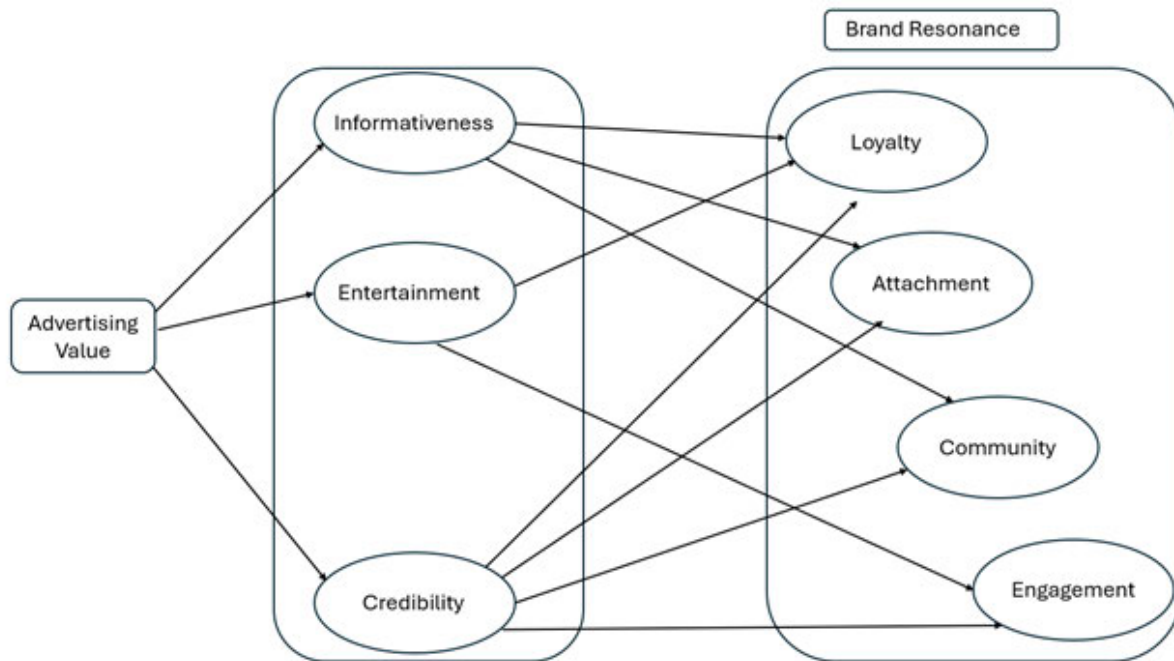
Table 4.14: Research model

| Hypothesis |                                                                    | Decision |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| H1a        | Behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by informativeness    | Accepted |
| H1b        | Behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by entertainment      | Accepted |
| H1a        | Behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by irritation         | Rejected |
| H1d        | Behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by credibility        | Accepted |
| H2a        | Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by informativeness | Accepted |
| H2b        | Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by entertainment   | Rejected |
| H2c        | Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by irritation      | Rejected |
| H2d        | Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by credibility     | Accepted |
| H3a        | Sense of community is positively influenced by informativeness     | Accepted |
| H3b        | Sense of community is positively influenced by entertainment       | Rejected |
| H3c        | Sense of community is positively influenced by irritation          | Rejected |
| H3d        | Sense of community is positively influenced by credibility         | Accepted |
| H4a        | Active engagement is positively influenced by informativeness      | Rejected |
| H4b        | Active engagement is positively influenced by entertainment        | Accepted |
| H4c        | Active engagement is positively influenced by irritation           | Rejected |

| Hypothesis |                                                           | Decision        |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>H4d</b> | Active engagement is positively influenced by credibility | <b>Accepted</b> |

*Author's construct*

*Figure 4.9: Framework for driving brand resonance through short-video advertising*



*Author's construct*

Figure 4.9 presents the results of the accepted hypotheses. Following hypothesis testing, the research framework is refined to reflect the statistically-significant relationships between advertising-value dimensions and brand-resonance components. The final model shows that informativeness emerges as a consistent driver of brand resonance, significantly influencing loyalty, attachment, and sense of community. Entertainment demonstrates a strong link to attachment and engagement, highlighting its role in fostering emotional connection and active consumer participation. Credibility significantly impacts loyalty, community, attachment, and engagement, underscoring the importance of trust in shaping lasting brand-consumer relationships. Irritation is excluded from the final framework, as none of its hypothesised effects on brand resonance are supported, suggesting that in the context of social-media short-video advertising for South African black-female gen-Z face-care consumers, irritation does not contribute meaningfully to building brand relationships. This refined framework represents an evidence-based model of how specific advertising-value drivers translate into deeper consumer-brand bonds.

Considering these findings, the framework depicted in figure 4.9 is recommended for driving brand resonance through short-video advertising amongst gen-Z black-female face-care consumers.

The descriptives portray a mobile-first, TikTok/Instagram-led audience with moderate YouTube use and low brand-page followership at 25%, while qualitative insights highlight a preference for authentic, educational short-video content, e.g., before-after journeys, tutorials, ingredient explainers.

Drawing on 121 valid responses, the results establish sound measurement quality ( $\alpha = .86$ ;  $G6 = .91$ ), adequate sampling ( $KMO = .80$ ), and a suitable correlation structure (Bartlett  $p < .001$ ). Exploratory factor analysis yields a coherent five-factor solution, and confirmatory factor analysis establishes excellent model fit ( $CFI = .989$ ,  $TLI = .983$ ,  $RMSEA = .030$ ). Hypothesis tests show credibility as the most-pervasive driver of brand resonance, positively predicting loyalty, attachment, community, and engagement. Informativeness significantly predicts loyalty, attachment, and community, but not engagement. Entertainment reliably predicts engagement only while irritation exhibits no positive effects and some negative associations. Collectively, these findings indicate that trust and teaching build durable relationships, while entertainment catalyses visible participation.

## **4.8 Conclusion**

This chapter presents the key findings of the study, offering a comprehensive account of the patterns, trends, and relationships that emerge from the data analysis. The results reveal both anticipated outcomes, which align with initial expectations, and unexpected insights that provide fresh perspectives on the research problem. These findings address the research questions and begin to illustrate the complex dynamics underlying the phenomenon under investigation. The value of these results extends beyond their descriptive function, as their meaning becomes clearer when situated within the broader body of literature, existing theoretical frameworks, and the practical realities of brand-consumer engagement. By doing so, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of the topic, highlighting areas of alignment with prior research and potential points of departure. The next chapter moves from description to interpretation, critically engaging with these findings in the context of literature to unpack their theoretical significance, practical implications, and limitations, while identifying opportunities for future research.

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents a critical interpretation of the study's findings, exploring their implications for theory, practice, and the broader digital-marketing landscape. The chapter explains the statistical relationships between the variables, in the context of South African black-female gen-Z face-care consumers. This consumer segment is increasingly shaping the future of brand engagement in digital spaces (Pillay, 2021).

Guided by the conceptual framework, the discussion explains the connections between core advertising-value dimensions, informativeness, entertainment, credibility, and irritation, and their influence on the four key components of brand resonance, behavioural loyalty, attitudinal attachment, sense of community, and active engagement. Each advertising-value element is explored in a dedicated section to highlight its specific contribution, or lack thereof, to the development of meaningful brand-consumer relationships.

A central outcome of this research is the development of a framework that maps the role of each advertising-value driver in shaping brand resonance among gen-Z face-care consumers, using short-form-video advertising. This framework offers a structured, evidence-based model integrating both the quantitative results, and the qualitative insights gathered during the study. This research study provides strategic guidance to brands that are looking to connect meaningfully with this powerful, yet discerning generation.

Building on this foundation, this section undertakes a detailed analysis of the statistical relationships uncovered in the study. Each relationship is examined considering existing literature, theoretical perspectives, and the unique characteristics of South African black-female gen-Z face-care consumers. By doing so, the discussion interprets the numerical results and contextualises them within the broader discourse on advertising value and brand resonance. This approach ensures that the findings are not viewed in isolation, but rather as part of a coherent narrative that links empirical evidence to both academic theory and practical brand-building strategies.

## 5.2 Entertainment

The discussion opens with entertainment, which, while secondary to credibility and informativeness, plays a meaningful role when perceived as authentic. This section examines how engaging, relatable, and enjoyable content can capture attention, foster positive associations, and encourage active engagement provided it aligns with the values and expectations of South African black-female gen-Z face-care consumers.

**H1b: Behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by entertainment.** This finding highlights the role of enjoyment and engaging content in sustaining brand preference. Past studies suggest that entertainment generates positive affect, which over time can reinforce loyalty (Jacob and Johnson, 2021). For gen-Zs, who actively curate their media experiences and reward creative content, entertaining short videos appear to build familiarity and strengthen the likelihood of repeat purchase (Neufeld-Wall, 2023). Hypothesis H1b is accepted.

**H2b: Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by entertainment.** While entertaining ads may generate short-term interest, they may lack the depth required to cultivate enduring brand attachment. Literature shows that attachment typically develops through consistency, authenticity, and relevance rather than temporary amusement (Leckie, Dwivedi and Johnson, 2022; Neufeld-Wall, 2023). In the context of gen-Z face-care consumers, entertainment may need to be complemented by credibility and alignment with identity to foster true attachment (Molinillo, Japutra and Ekinci, 2022). Hypothesis H2b is rejected.

**H3b: Sense of community is positively influenced by entertainment.** While entertaining content may attract attention, it does not necessarily encourage social bonding or collective identification. Prior research (Jacob and Johnson, 2021; Lou and Xie, 2021; Song and Kim, 2022) suggests that community formation relies more on shared values and meaningful interactions than fleeting amusement. For gen-Z face-care consumers, entertainment may enhance individual enjoyment without translating into deeper community belonging. Hypothesis H3b is rejected.

**H4b: Active engagement is positively influenced by entertainment.** Engaging and enjoyable content appears to motivate gen-Z consumers to participate actively through likes, shares, or creating related content. This aligns with studies that highlight entertainment as a key driver of interactivity and co-creation in digital contexts (Hollebeek and Macky, 2019; Cuevas-Molano, Matosas-López and Bernal-Bravo

2021). For face-care brands, this underscores the value of producing creative and entertaining short-form videos that invite consumer participation. Hypothesis H4 is accepted.

These study findings reveal that entertainment plays a limited, yet targeted role in shaping brand resonance among South African black-female gen-Z face-care consumers. Statistically, entertainment shows a significant positive influence on behavioural loyalty and active engagement, but no significant relationship with attitudinal attachment or sense of community. This positions it as the second-least-influential advertising-value element in this study, particularly in relation to building emotional connection or collective identity.

This finding challenges a common assumption in digital marketing (Pillay, 2021; Chang and Chang, 2023; Parsons, 2024) that younger audiences, particularly gen-Zs, are primarily driven by fun, visually-dynamic, and emotionally-stimulating content. Ducoffe (1996) defines entertainment in advertising as the degree to which the content provides aesthetic pleasure, amusement, and emotional enjoyment. In line with this definition, social video platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube have popularised formats that emphasise creativity, humour, and visual appeal, factors widely presumed to attract and sustain gen-Zs' attention (Khairan and Fachira, 2021; Qotrunnada and Marsasi, 2023; Tauhit and Asmadi, 2024). The results of this study suggest that while entertainment may capture initial interest, it does not necessarily translate into deeper attitudinal attachment, pointing to the need for more-substantive drivers such as credibility and authenticity in fostering lasting brand–consumer relationships (Ngangom, 2020; Liu et al., 2023).

A wide range of studies supports entertainment's ability to increase attention, positive attitude, and short-term engagement. For example, Abbasi et al. (2021) find that in gamified and in-video advertising, entertainment meets hedonic needs by offering escapism and emotional relief. Hamouda (2018) and Sabuncuoğlu-İnanç et al. (2020) confirm that entertaining content enhances consumer perception of ad value, especially when designed for mobile-first formats. These insights explain why behavioural loyalty and active engagement are positively impacted in this study. This implies that enjoyable content may encourage brand recall, habitual engagement, and even light user interaction such as likes, shares amongst others (Lee, Hosanagar and Nair, 2017; Radu, Constantinescu and Olteanu, 2023).

The limitations of entertainment become clear when assessing its failure to significantly influence attitudinal attachment and sense of community. These are deeper, more-emotionally-anchored dimensions of brand resonance that are rooted in pleasure, meaning, identity alignment, and trust. The findings suggest that while gen-Zs may appreciate entertaining content, they do not form deeper connections with brands unless the content reflects authentic experiences, shared values, or peer influence (Singh, Katoch and Singh, 2022). This echoes Keller's (2009) and Munsch's (2021) views that brand resonance is achieved through meaningful connection and psychological alignment and not merely entertainment. Entertainment may act as a gateway to interaction, but it does not inherently sustain emotional or communal investment. The qualitative responses in this study reinforce this distinction of entertainment as a catalyst for initial interaction, rather than a primary driver of attachment and community formation. Respondents express that they "enjoyed" aesthetically pleasing face-care videos but do not necessarily "trust" or "relate" to the brands unless credible information or real-life stories are present. This supports the theory that entertainment satisfies hedonic and cognitive gratifications, but often falls short on social gratification, such as shared identity or belonging (Keller, 2009; Possler, Kümpel and Unkel, 2020).

Authenticity stands out as a core value that reflects the defining characteristics of gen-Z. The data suggests that this cohort holds dual expectations of brands, as they expect them to be both entertaining and authentic. This presents an apparent paradox, as entertainment is traditionally associated with fictional or exaggerated content, whereas authenticity demands realism and sincerity (Arya and Kerti, 2020). This contradiction is central to understanding gen-Zs. While often stereotyped as fun-loving, this generation is hyper-analytical, purpose-driven, and deeply attuned to inauthenticity (Bezbaruah and Jay Trivedi, 2020; Romaine, 2024). As Francis and Hoefel (2018) note, gen-Zs *seek truth*, and quickly disengage from content that feels overly polished, disingenuous, or irrelevant to their lived experience.

In this study, respondents make it clear that entertainment is insufficient without credibility or relatability. Many state that although they enjoy humorous content, they are unlikely to trust a brand or make a purchase based on that alone. This sentiment echoes findings by Halohoa and Wibowo (2020), who find that gen-Z viewers often watch influencers for entertainment but follow them for their authenticity and informational value.

Similarly, Monaco (2024) finds that gen-Zs' online behaviour is intensely goal oriented, focused on researching product efficacy, sourcing peer reviews, and validating decisions through trusted sources. Even when they consume entertaining content, it serves as part of a larger evaluative process, rather than being the central driver of engagement or loyalty.

This explains the weak link between entertainment and sense of community. While entertainment may be enjoyable at an individual level, it does not foster peer-to-peer discussion, group validation, or shared rituals, key elements of community formation. Without social or participatory cues, entertaining content often remains passively consumed, rather than actively co-created or socially circulated (Noguti and Waller, 2020).

Entertainment that is not underpinned by meaningful or informative content may pose reputational and strategic risks for brands. The stakes are especially high in the face-care category, where trust, routine, and identity are intertwined. Unlike categories such as fashion or tech, face-care decisions involve health, self-image, and personal confidence (Achempong, 2021). Gen-Z consumers, particularly black women in South Africa are seeking efficacy, representation, safety, and authenticity in product communication. As such, entertainment that lacks real educational value, emotional honesty, or inclusivity risks feeling trivial or dismissive. In this study, respondents are less influenced by overly-curated, humorous, or fast-paced content if it does not deliver evidence, real reviews, or routine-based demonstrations. This finding suggests that in highly-personal categories like face-care; substance must accompany spectacle (Salem, 2023).

For face-care brands targeting gen-Zs, these findings call for a strategic reframing of entertainment's role in advertising. Rather than treating entertainment as the primary vehicle of influence, it should be used in service of more-authentic and value-driven messaging (Ha 2021; Genoveva 2022). Ultimately, brands must understand that gen-Zs engage with content that reflects their identity, values, and real needs. Entertainment is only effective when it supports these deeper gratifications (Arora and Agarwal, 2019).

While entertainment plays a role in attracting attention and prompting light engagement, this study confirms it is the second-least-impactful driver of brand resonance among South African gen-Z face-care consumers. In a category where

credibility, identity, and peer validation matter deeply, gen-Z demands more than just amusement. For brands to resonate, content must go beyond being watchable. It must be believable, relatable, and meaningful. Entertainment alone does not sustain trust, loyalty, or belonging. Instead, it should be thoughtfully integrated into a broader content strategy that reflects gen-Zs' values: authenticity, utility, and shared experience.

### **5.3 Informativeness**

This section explores informativeness, identified as a core driver of brand resonance in this study. The discussion considers how the provision of relevant, useful, and clear product information builds trust, supports informed decision-making, and strengthens both behavioural loyalty and emotional connection within short-form-video advertising.

**H1a: Behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by informativeness.** This suggests that when advertising provides clear, relevant, and useful information, consumers are more likely to repurchase and remain loyal to the brand (Arya and Siddiqui, 2021). Ducoffe (1995) argues that informativeness enhances the value of advertising by reducing uncertainty; this appears to hold true for gen-Z face-care consumers who frequently research products online before committing to a purchase (Rosli et al., 2024). In short-form-video contexts, concise and credible product details may strengthen repeat-usage intentions. Hypothesis H1a is accepted.

**H2a: Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by informativeness.** When advertising clearly communicates meaningful product benefits, it strengthens emotional ties to the brand by aligning with consumers' values and needs. This finding resonates with the idea that useful information enhances consumer confidence, fostering not just loyalty but deeper emotional identification (Cho, 2021; Burbano-Gómez 2022). For gen-Z face-care users, informative content validates their purchase decisions and reinforces long-term attachment. Hypothesis H2a is accepted.

**H3a: Sense of community is positively influenced by informativeness.** Providing clear and relevant information builds individual trust and strengthens collective brand communities where consumers share knowledge and experiences. This is consistent with the notion that informational value encourages social interaction and shared learning (Yusof et al., 2022; Bauer, 2023). For gen-Zs, who are active in online face-care communities, informative content may foster stronger connections among like-minded peers. Hypothesis H3a is accepted.

**H4a: Active engagement is not positively influenced by informativeness.** While information may strengthen loyalty and attachment, it does not necessarily motivate consumers to take an active role in interacting with brand content. Previous research suggests that engagement often requires emotional triggers beyond rational information (Park and Ha, 2021; Zanger, Meißner and Rauschnabel, 2022). For gen-Zs, engagement is more likely to be driven by playful, interactive, or social experiences than by information alone. Hypothesis H4a is rejected.

The findings of this study affirm the importance of informativeness as a key driver of brand resonance among South African black-female gen-Z face-care consumers. Informativeness is found to have a significant positive effect on behavioural loyalty, attitudinal attachment, and sense of community, but does not significantly influence active engagement. These results position informativeness as a core element of advertising value and one that plays a central role in shaping how gen-Z consumers relate to, trust, and choose face-care brands. This outcome is supported by various scholars (Ramadhani, Suroso and Ratono, 2020; Cho, 2021; Sinulinga et al., 2022).

Ducoffe (1996) defines informativeness as the degree to which advertising delivers helpful, accurate, and relevant information. Numerous studies affirm that informative ads increase perceived ad value and improve consumer attitudes and behavioural outcomes (Sabuncuoğlu-İnanç et al., 2020; Jacob and Johnson, 2021). Sinulinga et al. (2020) find that information-rich video advertising significantly improves purchase decisions, especially among younger consumers who rely on digital content to evaluate brands. In this study, this insight holds true: informative content fosters loyalty, emotional affinity, and community dialogue. This is foundational to brand resonance.

A defining trait of gen-Zs is their propensity to seek out and engage with information in a deliberate and informed manner (Gabrielova and Buchko, 2021). They are widely recognised as proactive, detail-oriented, and sceptical digital natives. Unlike previous generations, gen-Zs do not passively receive brand messages. Instead, they seek information, compare options, and assess credibility through independent research. This behaviour is prominent in face-care, where concerns around product efficacy, ingredients, safety, and identity alignment are paramount (Arya and Kerti, 2020; Paramitha et al., 2021).

Qualitative responses in this study confirm that respondents frequently consult influencer content such as product reviews, unboxings, skincare routines, and tutorial

vlogs to inform their decisions. This behaviour corresponds with a defining characteristic that distinguishes gen-Z from other generations, their identity as digital natives (Kim et al., 2020; Djafarova and Bowes, 2021). Chabata (2024) similarly finds that beauty vlogs drive brand choice through trusted product knowledge, relatable personalities, and accessible beauty education. All the top face-care brands selected by respondents in this study are international, reflecting a bias driven by greater exposure to informative and credible content. This insight suggests that local brands may struggle not due to product inferiority, but due to limited digital presence and lower perceived informativeness.

The positive relationship between informativeness and behavioural loyalty indicates that when brands provide clear, relevant, and useful product details, they reduce uncertainty and reinforce trust (Ater and Rigbi, 2023). This leads to repeat purchases. Similarly, the significant impact on attitudinal attachment shows that informative advertising is not just functional but emotionally reassuring. When gen-Z consumers feel well-informed, they are more likely to form emotional bonds with brands they see as transparent and aligned with their values (Wang and McCarthy, 2020). This finding connects to the concept of brand experience. Although brand experience is not directly measured in this study, previous research (Sharma and Jasrotia, 2016) demonstrates that credible information delivery contributes to a positive brand experience, which in turn enhances attitudinal loyalty. Saputra et al. (2021) argue that emotional customer value, built through trust and relevance, is a strong predictor of brand resonance.

Informativeness is found to positively influence sense of community. This suggests that when content is perceived as useful and shareable, it fosters peer conversation, knowledge exchange, and co-learning. Informative content, especially when amplified by influencer communities or micro-networks, becomes a vehicle for community-building (Lariba, 2023), echoing Keller's (2009) view that brand communities thrive on shared information and experiences.

An unexpected outcome is that informativeness does not significantly influence active engagement. While information builds trust and encourages community participation, it does not appear sufficient to motivate personal investment such as content creation, commenting, or sharing. This reflects similar findings by Cho (2021) and Kim et al. (2020), who argue that cognitive trust must be paired with hedonic or interactive elements such as humour, visual storytelling, or interactivity to drive higher levels of engagement. For gen-Z consumers, usefulness alone does not activate deeper

engagement; content must be entertaining, emotionally resonant, or socially meaningful (Buzeta et al., 2024).

For face-care brands aiming to connect with gen-Z women in South Africa, this insight provides a valuable strategic framework. Advertising content must deliver high informational value that highlights product benefits, transparent ingredient information, clear usage guidelines, and authentic testimonials from real users (Kothari et al., 2025). Collaborations with credible influencers who present content in relatable and genuine formats, such as tutorials, personal skincare journeys, or candid reviews can enhance credibility and resonance. To foster higher levels of active engagement, brands should strategically employ social-media platforms, integrating informative content with interactive features like live Q&A sessions, polls, user-generated challenges, and responsive comment-based interactions (Jones and Lee, 2022; Talreja and Chaturvedi, 2024).

Informativeness stands out as a vital force in shaping how gen-Z skincare consumers build brand relationships. By delivering clear, relevant, and trustworthy information, brands can foster trust, drive repeat purchases, and support peer-led communities (Malafe, Fereydoni and Chashmi, 2023). To convert cognitive trust into active engagement, informative content must evolve into interactive, emotionally-meaningful storytelling. Gen-Zs do not just want to be told; rather they want to learn, relate, and participate (Teraiya, Namboodiri and Jayswal, 2023).

## **5.4 Credibility**

Credibility is analysed as a central pillar of effective advertising for this demographic. This section discusses how perceived honesty, transparency, and brand trustworthiness influence both emotional connection and sustained consumer loyalty, reinforcing the role of credibility as a foundation for long-term brand relationships.

**H1d: Behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by credibility.** Trustworthy advertising appears to reassure consumers about product claims, increasing the likelihood of repeat purchase. This finding aligns with past work emphasising credibility as a key determinant of consumer trust (Disastra et al., 2019; Paramitha, Yatigammana and Gunathunge 2021). For gen-Z face-care users, credibility may be particularly relevant given their reliance on peer reviews and authenticity in brand communication. Hypothesis H1d is accepted.

**H2d: Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by credibility.** When ads are perceived as authentic and trustworthy, consumers develop stronger emotional connections to the brand. This is supported by studies showing that credibility strengthens attachment by reducing doubts and reinforcing identification with the brand (Basu and Sondhi, 2024). For gen-Z face-care consumers, who value honesty and transparency, credible communication provides reassurance and fosters lasting attachment. Hypothesis H2d is accepted.

**H3d: Sense of community is positively influenced by credibility.** Trustworthy advertising helps build collective confidence in a brand, which strengthens community identity. Literature on brand communities emphasises that credibility fosters legitimacy, enabling consumers to feel safe in associating with the brand publicly (Santos et al., 2022; Nikhashemi, Kennedy and Mavondo, 2025). For gen-Z face-care consumers, credible content may encourage them to share experiences online, reinforcing community ties. Hypothesis H3d is accepted.

**H4d: Active engagement is positively influenced by credibility.** When consumers perceive advertising as trustworthy and authentic, they are more likely to interact with the content and advocate for the brand (Ahmad, Ahmad and Siddique, 2024). Prior studies (Mustafi and Hosain, 2020; Loureiro et al., 2023) highlight credibility as a driver of both trust and word-of-mouth behaviour. For gen-Z face-care users, credible ads may inspire them to engage actively by sharing reviews or participating in brand-related conversations. Hypothesis H4d is accepted.

The results of this study indicate that credibility is the single most-influential element of advertising value in driving brand resonance among South African black-female gen-Z face-care consumers. It is the only factor that demonstrates a significant and positive impact on all four dimensions of brand resonance: behavioural loyalty, attitudinal attachment, sense of community, and active engagement. This makes credibility central to advertising effectiveness and foundational to meaningful, long-term consumer-brand relationships in the face-care category (Shukla and Kaur, 2025).

This outcome is supported by previous research, which consistently positions credibility as one of the most-powerful drivers of advertising value (Martins et al., 2019; Paramitha, Yatigammana and Gunathunge, 2021; Adeline et al., 2023). Ducoffe (1996) defines credibility as the extent to which advertising is perceived as truthful, reliable,

and trustworthy. These are qualities that build consumer confidence in both the message and the brand.

The comprehensive effect of credibility on brand resonance aligns with findings from Nizarikhutama and Murwanti (2023), of a strong, positive relationship between brand trust, brand resonance, and brand loyalty. Their study on Honda reveals that brands that communicate credibly can evoke feelings of happiness, pride, and emotional commitment which are core elements of resonance (Keller, 2009). In this study, qualitative feedback echoes this. Gen-Zs equate credibility with authenticity, repeatedly referencing influencers and content creators who are “real”, “relatable”, and showed genuine results through honest reviews, tutorials, or day-in-the-life face-care vlogs. These findings confirm that for this generation, credibility is not about slick corporate polish; rather it is about trust, realism, and representation.

This emphasis on credibility is particularly meaningful in the context of gen-Zs’ digital behaviour. As digital natives, they are highly exposed to content and inherently sceptical of marketing spin. They place value on authenticity, relatability, and transparency, particularly in personal-care categories where product claims involve safety, effectiveness, and identity expression (Cho, 2021; Loureiro et al., 2023). Studies support this view. Becker et al. (2019) note that gen-Zs are drawn to peer-led, experience-based content over traditional-marketing messages. Schoenberger, Kim, and Johnson (2020) find that perceived authenticity improves attitude to the brand, even if it does not always lead to social-media engagement, suggesting that gen-Zs distinguishes between emotional trust and algorithmic interaction.

Social-media influencers are key to delivering this trust. Hassan et al. (2021) find that knowledge, relatability, confidence, and articulation were the most-critical traits influencers need to build trust among young beauty consumers. Widyanto and Agusti (2020) confirm that gen-Zs respond more positively to influencers who promote cosmetic products with confidence and consistency, especially when their recommendations feel personal rather than transactional. In the local South African context, Moloko (2020) finds that authenticity in influencer content, especially around natural hair is a major credibility enhancer. When consumers *see themselves* in the content, they trust the brand more. This is consistent with Rigby and Lee’s (2024) findings that storytelling, language, and representation significantly enhance emotional resonance when aligned with the consumer’s social identity.

The statistical results in this study reinforce that credibility is a catalyst across all four resonance dimensions. These include:

- *Behavioural loyalty*: Trusted brands are more likely to be repurchased, especially in face-care, where credibility reduces perceived risk and increases repeat behaviour (Ramadhani et al., 2020).
- *Attitudinal attachment*: When consumers perceive brand messages as honest and values-based, emotional connection grows. This supports findings from Valette-Florence and Valette-Florence (2020) that brand trust drives emotional commitment.
- *Sense of community*: Credible content encourages sharing, peer recommendation, and community discourse. Gen-Z consumers often validate purchase decisions collectively, forming micro-communities around trusted influencers or face-care rituals (Tafesse and Wood, 2023).
- *Active engagement*: Unlike informativeness, which may build cognitive trust but not action, credible content motivates active participation such as commenting, sharing, and even creating user-generated content. Mustafi and Hosain (2020) confirm that trust is a direct driver of active brand behaviour. While one study (Sinulingga et al., 2020) reports a non-significant effect of credibility on purchasing via a t-test, the overwhelming consensus in the literature, particularly in skincare and influencer marketing confirms credibility's decisive influence on advertising value (Hamouda, 2018; Fraut, 2019; Arya and Kerti, 2020).

For face-care brands aiming to engage South African gen-Z women, the imperative of credibility cannot be overstated. This cohort values authenticity and transparency, making it necessary for marketing strategies to move beyond conventional advertising tropes (Pillay, 2021). A more-effective approach involves leveraging genuine, relatable storytelling that mirrors the lived experiences of the target audience. Collaborations with diverse influencers who authentically represent this demographic can enhance relatability and trust. Rather than relying on overly-scripted or polished content, brands should prioritise formats such as unfiltered vlogs, candid testimonials, and behind-the-scenes narratives that convey sincerity strengthens perceived credibility (Duffek et al., 2025). Importantly, exaggerated claims or overly-idealised portrayals risk provoking scepticism and undermining brand trust. In this context, credibility functions as a key bridge that elevates a product from a fleeting digital impression to a trusted recommendation that consumers are willing to use and to endorse (Jha et al., 2025).

In a saturated digital environment, trust is the currency of brand relevance and gen-Z demands it. Among all elements of advertising value, credibility stands out as the most-powerful driver of brand resonance. It enables brands to move beyond visibility and engagement toward something far more valuable: emotional commitment, community belonging, and lasting loyalty. In short, brands that are trusted are brands that thrive, especially with gen-Z consumers.

## 5.5 Irritation

This discussion turns to irritation, the only advertising-value dimension with a consistently negative association to brand resonance in this study. This section investigates why intrusive, irrelevant, or overly-repetitive content undermines brand-consumer relationships, particularly in a digital environment where attention is limited and consumer tolerance for disruption is low.

**H1c: Behavioural loyalty is positively influenced by irritation.** This hypothesis is rejected. Irritation is found to have no significant effect, suggesting that while annoying ads may disrupt user experience, they do not directly determine repeat purchase behaviour. Prior research indicates that irritation often leads to avoidance (Sharma et al., 2022); this is likely amplified among gen-Zs who are quick to skip or block intrusive content. Hypothesis H1c is rejected.

**H2c: Attitudinal attachment is positively influenced by irritation.** This hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that even if ads are considered irritating, this negative reaction does not translate into strong emotional disengagement in the form of attachment loss. It simply prevents positive bonds from forming. Prior studies suggest that irritation encourages avoidance (Arora, and Agarwal, 2019; Kang, He and am, 2022) rather than deep attitudinal shifts. For gen-Zs, who are highly selective about their digital interactions, irritation may block attachment opportunities but does not actively drive disconnection. Hypothesis H2c is rejected.

**H3c: Sense of community is positively influenced by irritation.** This hypothesis is rejected. Negative ad experiences may discourage engagement altogether, limiting opportunities for community participation. This aligns with earlier findings that irritation promotes avoidance behaviour rather than fostering or breaking social bonds. Among gen-Zs, irritation may cause disengagement from both brand content and peer discussion spaces (Martins et al., 2019; Dobrinic, 2022). Hypothesis H3c is rejected.

**H4c: Active engagement is positively influenced by irritation.** This hypothesis is rejected. Irritating ads are often ignored or actively avoided, which prevents consumers from engaging with the content or brand. This confirms previous findings that negative ad experiences discourage interaction rather than provoke engagement (Li and Shen, 2023). For gen-Z consumers, who have low tolerance for disruptive content, irritation likely leads to disengagement or switching to competitor brands. Hypothesis H4c is rejected.

Unlike entertainment, informativeness, and credibility, the element of irritation demonstrates no positive contribution to brand-resonance dimensions among South African black-female gen-Z face-care consumers. All four hypotheses under this factor, that irritation positively influences behavioural loyalty, attitudinal attachment, sense of community, and active engagement are statistically rejected.

This result reinforces long-standing advertising theory that positions irritation as a detrimental force in consumer-brand interaction (Martins et al., 2019; Dobrinic, 2022; Sharma et al., 2022). Ducoffe (1996), in his seminal model of advertising value, defines irritation as the degree to which advertising content is perceived as annoying, intrusive, offensive, or disruptive to the consumer experience. When ads are repetitive, irrelevant, or interfere with content consumption, they create emotional dissonance, triggering avoidance behaviour and fostering negative brand associations (Kang, He and am, 2022).

Extensive empirical evidence confirms irritation's corrosive effect on advertising effectiveness. Tefertiller (2020) argues that while entertainment and informativeness enhance the user experience and value perception, irritation consistently undermines it, often to the point of ad avoidance. Sabuncuoğlu-Inanç et al. (2020) highlight that unskippable video ads, like YouTube bumpers, often provoke frustration, a response that can translate into reduced purchase intent and negative brand attitudes.

Arya and Kerti (2020) similarly observe that Instagram Stories ads perceived as annoying significantly reduced advertising value among millennial users. Lin and Bautista (2018) extend this insight to mobile-based advertising, where irritation is shown to be the strongest negative predictor of ad receptivity, particularly when ads are poorly timed, location-incongruent, or content-intrusive. These findings affirm that irritation does not merely disrupt the moment, it damages the brand-consumer relationship, sometimes irreparably (Coyle, 2023).

In the context of this study, irritation is found to be inert across all brand-resonance dimensions, including those typically influenced by positive affect such as attitudinal attachment and sense of community. This suggests that no meaningful relational bond can emerge when the consumer's emotional baseline is frustration or annoyance. This rejection of irritation is pronounced among gen-Z face-care consumers, who possess high digital literacy and low tolerance for intrusive media experiences (Kuncoro and Kusumawati, 2021). Gen-Z is widely characterised by its demand for autonomy, control, and authenticity in all brand communications (Francis and Hoefel, 2018; Fromm and Read, 2021). Unlike previous generations, gen-Zs have grown up with tools that allow them to curate their media environments by skipping ads, using ad blockers, and actively disengaging from brands that feel irrelevant or manipulative (Sokolova and Tan-intaraarj, 2024).

The qualitative insights from this study reinforce this behaviour. Many participants express frustration with face-care ads that “interrupt”, “feel fake”, or “try too hard to sell”. These emotional responses are telling. Irritation undermines the ad experience and signals a disconnect between the brand's intent and the consumer's values. In a category as personal as face-care, where efficacy, safety, and representation are key, this disconnect may lead to long-term brand rejection rather than curiosity (Coyle, 2023). Gen-Zs' aversion to irritation reflects a deeper psychological need for respectful brand interaction. Unlike older audiences who may tolerate intrusive formats as part of the advertising norm, gen-Zs expect brands to *earn* their attention through value-adding, non-disruptive content (Pragathi and Saravanakumar, 2021). They view their digital time as precious and personal, a space to engage with content that aligns with their interests, identity, and goals. Ads that violate this space are perceived as annoying and as disrespectful or even offensive (Nainggolan, 2020; Szabo, 2021).

While early advertising research (Aaker and Bruzzone, 1985) suggests that irritation might generate attention through disruption, more-recent evidence and this study show that any short-term attention gained comes at the cost of trust and resonance (Hamouda, 2018). In this study, irritation fails to translate into behavioural loyalty, emotional affinity, peer discussion, or active engagement. Instead, it likely produces defensive behaviour such as ad-skipping, disengagement, or even negative word-of-mouth. This aligns with Paramitha et al. (2021) and Ramadhani et al. (2020), who observe that irritation triggers ad avoidance and emotional distancing. When consumers are annoyed, they mentally disconnect from the message, become

sceptical of its intent, and may even associate negative emotions with the brand. This is damaging in the face-care space, where trust and credibility are key precursors to purchase (Traiyarach, Sawunyavisuth and Palusuk, 2025).

The strategic implications for face-care marketers targeting gen-Zs are both clear and significant: minimising consumer irritation is essential. This generation demonstrates low tolerance for advertising that is perceived as repetitive, intrusive, overly aggressive, or inauthentic. Rather than fostering brand connection, these tactics often generate aversion and disengagement, ultimately undermining brand equity (Saraiva and Lues, 2024). To maintain relevance and cultivate meaningful relationships with gen-Z consumers, marketers must adopt more user-centric-advertising approaches. This involves prioritising ad formats that are non-disruptive, such as skippable videos, native advertisements, and seamlessly-integrated story content which allow users to retain a sense of control over their media experiences (Vardeman, 2024). Advertising should be designed to complement rather than interrupt the natural flow of content consumption, enhancing rather than detracting from the user experience (Vardeman, 2024).

Irritation is not just ineffective; it is counterproductive in the context of gen-Z face-care marketing. This study confirms that irritation fails to contribute to any dimension of brand resonance and may actively inhibit relationship-building. For a generation that values autonomy, authenticity, and emotional relevance, respectful communication is not optional but expected. In a digital ecosystem where consumers choose what they see, brands that provoke annoyance will be ignored, skipped, or unfollowed. To win gen-Zs' loyalty, brands must build trust and not tension.

## **5.6 Framework for driving advertising value through social-media short-video advertising**

Figure 5.1 is a framework for driving advertising value through social-media short-video advertising. The framework produced by this study identifies credibility, informativeness, and entertainment as key dimensions of advertising value that contribute, albeit to varying degrees, to brand-resonance outcomes. These outcomes include behavioural loyalty, attitudinal attachment, sense of community, and active engagement. The relationships depicted in the framework are as follows: (1) informativeness positively influences behavioural loyalty, attitudinal attachment, and sense of community; (2) entertainment positively influences behavioural loyalty

and active engagement; (3) credibility has a comprehensive and significant positive influence on all four brand-resonance dimensions: behavioural loyalty, attitudinal attachment, sense of community, and active engagement.

This framework represents a nuanced understanding of how gen-Z face-care consumers engage with short-video advertising, highlighting what drives attention, and what fosters deep, lasting consumer-brand relationships.

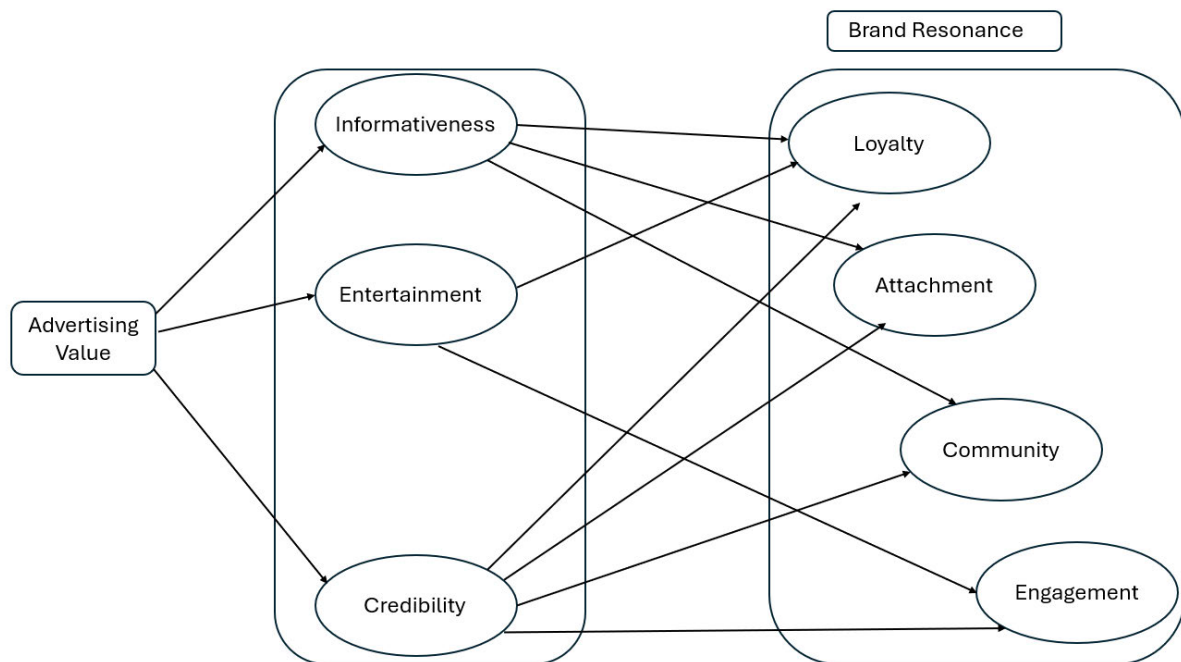


Figure 5.1: Framework for driving advertising value through social-media short-video advertising  
Author's construct

### 5.6.1 Understanding the role of each advertising value element presented in framework for driving advertising value through social-media short-video advertising

#### 1. Credibility as the core driver

Credibility lies at the centre of the integrated framework (figure 5.1), the only element with a positive relationship across all four dimensions of brand resonance. This underscores that gen-Z consumers, particularly in high-involvement, identity-linked categories like face-care, place trust, transparency, and authenticity above all else. Credible content builds the cognitive and emotional foundation for repeat purchase, i.e., behavioural loyalty, brand love, i.e., attitudinal attachment, social alignment, i.e., sense of community, and interactive participation, i.e., active engagement (Basu and Sondhi, 2024). Credibility, in this context, is not limited to traditional markers like expert

endorsement or formal branding; it includes relatable, peer-driven content such as influencer vlogs, tutorials, and product reviews that reflect real-world experiences. For gen-Zs, credibility is humanised; it is built through consistency, representation, and perceived honesty (Loureiro et al., 2023).

## ***2. Informativeness as a trust and loyalty building tool***

Informativeness is found to have a strong positive influence on behavioural loyalty, attitudinal attachment, and sense of community, but not on active engagement. This reinforces that information contributes to cognitive trust, especially when consumers are evaluating product efficacy, safety, or alignment with their values. In face-care, where misinformation and unrealistic beauty standards are rampant, well-informed advertising empowers consumers and affirms their identity (Arya and Siddiqui, 2021). For gen-Zs, informativeness manifests in how much real value they derive from content: clear product benefits, ingredient explanations, honest comparisons, and practical-usage guidance. The absence of a significant effect on active engagement indicates that information, in isolation, may be insufficient to drive consumer action unless it is complemented by emotional appeal, entertainment value, or interactive features (Burbano-Gómez 2022).

## ***3. Entertainment's limited but targeted role***

While entertainment is often seen as key in short-form-video marketing, this study reveals its more-limited role. It only significantly impacts sense of community and active engagement, suggesting that entertaining content may facilitate shared enjoyment, social bonding, and deep engagement, but does not independently foster loyalty and emotional attachment (Ho et al., 2020; Jacob and Johnson, 2021). For gen-Z face-care consumers, entertainment is a cultural connector. It creates relevance, helps brands enter the social conversation, and increases shareability. Unless grounded in authenticity or paired with informative and credible messaging, entertainment alone is insufficient to build long-term brand relationships (Chang and Chang, 2023).

### **5.6.2 Implications for the study context**

Figure 5.1, a framework for driving advertising value through social-media short-video advertising, holds particular significance in the context of South African black-female gen-Z face-care consumers. This population is highly engaged, digitally native, and

often underrepresented or stereotyped in traditional beauty advertising (Djafarova and Bowes, 2021). The framework demonstrates that these consumers exhibit a clear preference for authenticity and substantive content rather than superficial spectacle. They attach significance to shared experiences and peer validation, while showing a strong affinity for messages that are relatable and culturally resonant. They anticipate a degree of agency and respect in their engagement with media (Wang, 2022; Dong et al., 2023).

Brands operating in this space must meet this cohort where they are, not just with flashy content, but with content that respects their intelligence, affirms their identity, and offers real value (Addo et al., 2022).

### **5.6.3 Strategic implications for the industry**

This study presents five key implications that serve as a practical guide for marketers, media planners, and content creators in the face-care and beauty category, and more broadly in gen-Z-focused short-video campaigns. As illustrated in figure 5.1, these implications provide a roadmap for designing advertising strategies that capture attention and build enduring brand resonance.

The implications are:

1. Credibility must be prioritised in all messaging whether through influencer collaborations, brand-led communication, or user-generated content. For gen-Zs, credibility is not optional; it is the foundation of digital persuasion and brand trust.
2. Investing in clear, informative content strengthens consumer confidence and aids decision-making. Complex product information should be broken down into accessible, platform-appropriate formats that support consumer understanding.
3. While entertainment is a powerful hook for visibility and social sharing, it should not be the central driver. Instead, it should act as a wrapper for value-driven, credible, and informative messaging that sustains engagement.
4. Brands should reconsider the use of disruptive or intrusive formats. Findings on irritation highlight that gen-Z responds more positively to respectful, choice-based engagement that aligns with their digital behaviour.
5. Content should be tailored to platforms where interactivity and authenticity thrive such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. Campaigns must ensure that content offers more than entertainment, delivering both value and authenticity.

#### **5.6.4 Positive impact of the framework for the industry and academia**

According to figure 5.1, this study makes the following contribution to both academic literature and industry practice:

1. For scholars, it provides an empirically-supported model that connects advertising-value theory with brand resonance, specifically in the under-researched context of gen-Zs and social video.
2. For practitioners, it demystifies what truly drives gen-Zs' engagement and loyalty, shifting the focus from virality at all costs to value, trust, and representation.
3. For local South African brands, it presents a competitive edge. By investing in credibility and informative content, they can compete with international brands that dominate exposure, not through scale, but through authenticity and relevance.

Figure 5.1 developed through this study offers a clear, culturally-grounded, and insight-driven understanding of how to build brand resonance through advertising value in the age of gen-Z and short-form video. It challenges brands to go beyond superficial tactics and instead design content that is credible, informative, culturally aware, and socially meaningful. In doing so, brands can capture gen-Zs' attention, earning their trust, loyalty, and advocacy.

#### **5.7 Research delimitations**

According to Coker (2022), delimitations refer to the boundaries intentionally set by the researcher to narrow the scope of a study. They are decisions made about what to include and exclude, shaping the focus, feasibility, and clarity of the research design. Unlike limitations, which are beyond the researcher's control, delimitations are purposeful choices that reflect the researcher's priorities and the intended contribution of the study.

This study is defined by four key delimitations, each of which constrains the breadth of the findings but simultaneously enhances the depth and manageability of the research.

##### **5.7.1 Delimitation 1: Use of only the brand-resonance element of Keller's CBBE model**

From a theoretical perspective, this study applies only the brand-resonance element of Keller's (2001) customer-based brand-equity (CBBE) model. While the broader model encompasses other layers such as brand salience, brand performance, and

brand imagery, the focus on brand resonance is deliberate. Brand resonance is deemed the most-relevant construct for capturing the depth of consumer-brand relationships in the context of gen-Zs and social-media short-form-video advertising. This decision means the study does not account for how other CBBE dimensions may interact with advertising value to influence overall brand equity.

### **5.7.2 Delimitation 2: Exclusion of brand experience as a framework variable**

Brand experience was initially incorporated into the framework because the literature review identifies it as an important construct that is frequently examined in relation to brand resonance and advertising value. During the process of developing the hypotheses, it was determined that the inclusion of three major constructs of brand resonance, advertising value, and brand experience, makes the framework unnecessarily complex and extends it beyond the appropriate scope of a master's dissertation. Consequently, the model is deliberately streamlined to enable a more-rigorous examination of the advertising-value and brand-resonance dimensions most relevant to gen-Z short-form-video advertising.

### **5.7.3 Delimitation 3: Focus on short-form-video advertising**

This study concentrates on short-form-video advertising on social-media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube Shorts. Other forms of digital advertising including long-form video, static imagery, or display ads are not considered. This delimitation is intentional, as short-form video represents one of the most-dominant and culturally-influential modes of digital engagement among gen-Zs. By restricting the focus, the study's findings cannot be generalised to other advertising formats that may function differently in terms of consumer engagement and brand resonance.

### **5.7.4 Delimitation 4: Narrow consumer segment of black female gen-Z face care consumers**

The study population is restricted to black-female gen-Z consumers in South Africa within the face-care category. This group was chosen because of its growing influence in shaping beauty and face-care trends, and its active participation in digital and social-media culture. This delimitation means that the findings may not be directly applicable to other demographics, e.g., male consumers, other racial groups, or older

generations, or to other product categories outside of face-care, e.g., fashion, food, or electronics.

These delimitations reflect deliberate choices to ensure the study remains focused, feasible, and methodologically rigorous. While they narrow the scope and reduce the generalisability of the findings, they allow for a deeper and more-contextually-relevant exploration of how advertising value influences brand resonance among South African black-female gen-Z face-care consumers. Future research may expand beyond these boundaries to test additional model elements, other consumer segments, and different advertising formats, broadening the applicability of the insights generated in this study.

## **5.8 Recommendations for future research**

While this study offers valuable insights into the relationship between advertising value and brand resonance among black-female gen-Z face-care consumers in South Africa, it highlights several avenues for further inquiry.

First, future research can broaden the scope by including additional consumer segments, such as male gen-Z consumers or older cohorts like millennials, to establish the extent to which these findings hold across demographics. Comparative studies across product categories, such as fashion, food, or healthcare, may reveal whether the dynamics observed in skincare advertising are category-specific or generalisable.

Second, cross-cultural studies are recommended to test the applicability of the model in diverse geographic and cultural contexts. Given the influence of cultural norms on media consumption and brand relationships, these studies can determine whether advertising-value dimensions and brand-resonance outcomes are experienced similarly across markets or are shaped by cultural variations.

Third, future studies can integrate additional constructs that are excluded from this study due to scope limitations. For example, brand experience, parasocial relationships with content creators, or perceptions of intrusiveness in algorithm-driven environments may provide a more-holistic understanding of advertising effectiveness. Incorporating these dimensions can refine the theoretical framework and offer a more-comprehensive view of consumer-brand relationships in digital contexts.

Fourth, methodological innovations present opportunities for deeper insights. Future research could adopt larger, more diverse samples to improve generalisability, and mixed methods approaches combining surveys, interviews, ethnography, or digital

diaries to capture both behavioural and attitudinal dimensions of engagement. Longitudinal designs can investigate how brand resonance evolves over time, while neuromarketing methods such as eye tracking or facial coding may provide granular evidence of consumer responses to short-form video advertising in real time.

Fifth, future research may consider platform-specific dynamics. While this study treats short-form-video advertising broadly, comparative analyses of platforms such as Instagram Reels, TikTok, and YouTube Shorts may reveal platform-specific drivers of advertising value and brand resonance. Examining how algorithmic targeting and personalisation shape consumer responses may contribute to understanding the evolving role of digital advertising.

Finally, as the digital landscape continues to evolve, future research should investigate how emerging formats, such as AI-generated advertising, augmented-reality filters, and interactive video, reshape the dimensions of advertising value and their relevance to consumer engagement. New modes of interaction, such as remixing, duets, and collaborative content creation, may represent novel pathways through which gen-Z consumers build resonance with brands.

This study lays the groundwork for understanding the intersection of advertising value and brand resonance in the context of short-form-video advertising, while opening multiple pathways for future research to expand, adapt, and refine the framework in line with the rapidly-evolving digital-marketing landscape.

## **5.9 Conclusions**

This study demonstrates that, for black-female gen-Z face-care consumers, credibility and informativeness form the bedrock of effective short-form-video advertising, while entertainment plays a valuable but secondary role when it is perceived as authentic; irritation is consistently detrimental to engagement. These results deepen academic understanding of how advertising-value components influence brand resonance within this specific demographic, extending the application of Ducoffe's (1996) advertising-value model and Keller's (2001) brand-resonance framework in the context of short-form-video social-media advertising.

At the centre of the findings lies credibility, which emerges as the single most-influential driver of brand resonance. Unlike other advertising-value elements, credibility shows a strong and consistent positive effect on all four brand-resonance dimensions:

behavioural loyalty, attitudinal attachment, sense of community, and active engagement (Paramitha et al., 2021). This underscores the importance of trust, transparency, and authenticity in face-care advertising. For gen-Z black females, credibility is not an abstract concept but a lived expectation reflected in their reliance on influencers who are relatable, peers who are trustworthy, and content that feels real (Loureiro et al., 2023).

Informativeness is identified as a key driver of brand resonance, with significant effects on behavioural loyalty, attitudinal attachment, and sense of community. Informative content reduces uncertainty, fosters trust, and validates consumer decisions, making it central to long-term loyalty and emotional connection (Adeline et al., 2023). Informativeness cultivates brand communities by fuelling peer conversations and shared learning. Its inability to significantly influence active engagement highlights that information, while necessary, is not sufficient to inspire participation unless it is complemented by interactivity, creativity, or emotional triggers (Dwivedi et al., 2021).

Entertainment, although often assumed to be the defining factor for gen-Zs, proves less influential than expected. While it contributes positively to behavioural loyalty and active engagement, it fails to significantly impact attitudinal attachment and sense of community (Ao and Nguyen, 2020). This finding challenges the stereotype that gen-Zs primarily seek fun or flashy content. Instead, entertainment works best as a hook or wrapper for more-substantive, authentic messaging. For this demographic, entertainment may attract attention and motivate surface-level engagement, but it does not sustain deeper emotional or communal bonds without credibility and informativeness at its core (Holder, 2022).

Irritation, as anticipated, offers no positive contribution to brand resonance. Ads perceived as intrusive, irrelevant, or disruptive neither foster loyalty nor engagement, instead creating conditions for avoidance and disengagement. This finding reinforces Ducoffe's (1996) original assertions about the negative value of irritation and highlights gen-Zs' particularly-low tolerance for intrusive content. For this audience, respectful, choice-based advertising is not optional but a baseline expectation.

Taken together, these findings illustrate a hierarchy of advertising value for gen-Z face-care consumers: credibility as the foundation, informativeness as the enabler of trust and loyalty, entertainment as a contextual enhancer, and irritation as a detractor.

The integrated framework (figure 5.1) visually maps these relationships, providing a structured evidence-based guide for both scholars and practitioners.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to digital-marketing literature by demonstrating how Ducoffe's (1995) model can be meaningfully applied to social-media short-form advertising, while integrating it with Keller's (2001) brand-resonance construct. It affirms the enduring relevance of advertising-value theory while adapting it to the cultural, behavioural, and technological realities of gen-Z consumers in South Africa. It foregrounds an under-researched demographic, black-female gen-Z face-care consumers, offering fresh perspectives on how identity, representation, and digital nativity shape advertising effectiveness.

From a practical perspective, the study highlights several imperatives for brand managers, media planners, and content creators. Face-care brands must prioritise credibility in all messaging, ensuring that product claims are transparent, influencers are authentic, and representation is meaningful. Informativeness must be embedded into content strategies, breaking down complex product benefits in simple, relatable, and platform-appropriate ways. Entertainment should be used strategically to capture attention, but always in service of credibility and informativeness. Brands must avoid intrusive or disruptive formats that alienate gen-Z consumers, instead opting for content that is respectful, choice-based, and socially relevant.

For South African black-female gen-Z face-care consumers, the path to building strong brand-consumer relationships lies in authentic, credible, informative, and respectful advertising that is delivered in engaging but honest ways. Brands that achieve this balance are more likely to earn attention, loyalty, attachment, community belonging, and active participation. This study's findings affirm that gen-Zs do not simply want to be entertained; they want to be informed, respected, and represented. Brands that understand and deliver on these expectations will not resonate and thrive in an increasingly-competitive digital landscape.

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1 Questionnaire

### **SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHICS**

*We will begin the survey by asking you some key demographic question.*

**Q1. Which race classification do you identify with?**

|          |
|----------|
| White    |
| Black    |
| Coloured |
| Indian   |
| Other    |

**Q2. How old are you?**

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|

**Q3. Are you currently?**

|            |
|------------|
| Employed   |
| Unemployed |
| Student    |

### **SECTION 2: SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE**

*The next set of questions will focus on your social media usage.*

**Q4. Which of the following social media platforms do you frequently use? (Select all that apply).**

|           |
|-----------|
| Instagram |
| TikTok    |
| Facebook  |
| YouTube   |

**Q5. Which is your most preferred social media platform?**

|           |
|-----------|
| Instagram |
| TikTok    |
| Facebook  |
| YouTube   |

**Q6. On average, how much time do you spend on your most often used social media platform per day?**

|                  |
|------------------|
| Less than 30mins |
| 30 mins to 1hr   |
| More than 1hr    |
| More than 3hr    |
| More than 5hr    |

**Q7. Which of the following devices do you use most often to access your preferred social media platform?**

|             |
|-------------|
| Cell Phone  |
| Tablet/iPad |
| Laptop      |

**Q8. On average, how many different face-care brands do you use daily?**

|             |
|-------------|
| 1-2         |
| 2-4         |
| More than 4 |

**Q9. Please select below your most often used face-care brands (Please select your top 2).**

|              |
|--------------|
| L'Oréal      |
| Nivea        |
| Clinique     |
| Ponds        |
| Portia M     |
| Eucerin      |
| Gentle Magic |
| Dermalogica  |
| Garnier      |
| Neutrogena   |

Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Q10 Do you actively follow these brand's social media pages?**

|     |
|-----|
| Yes |
| No  |

**Q10.1 Can you describe your reasons for following or not following these brand's social media pages? What factors influence your decision?**

**Q10.2 What types of face-care content from brands capture your attention and keep you engaged? Can you share specific examples or features that make content appealing to you?**

*The next set of questions will focus on your experience of branded face-care video advertising on social media. You will answer the questions on a 5 point scale from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree. All questions follow the same structure.*

### **SECTION 3: ADVERTISING VALUE**

#### **Q11. Informativeness**

|                                                                                        | 1.<br>Strongly<br>Disagree | 2.<br>Disagree | 3.<br>Undecided | 4.<br>Agree | 5.<br>Strongly<br>Agree |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| I believe branded social media video adverts supply relevant information on products.  |                            |                |                 |             |                         |
| I believe branded social media video adverts are a good source of up-to-date products. |                            |                |                 |             |                         |

### Q12. Entertainment

|                                                            | 1.<br>Strongly<br>Disagree | 2.<br>Disagree | 3.<br>Undecided | 4.<br>Agree | 5.<br>Strongly<br>Agree |
|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| I find branded social media video adverts enjoyable.       |                            |                |                 |             |                         |
| I find branded social media video adverts are interesting. |                            |                |                 |             |                         |

### Q13. Irritation

|                                                                      | 1.<br>Strongly<br>Disagree | 2.<br>Disagree | 3.<br>Undecided | 4.<br>Agree | 5.<br>Strongly<br>Agree |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| I believe branded social media video adverts are irritating.         |                            |                |                 |             |                         |
| I skip majority of social media video adverts from face-care brands. |                            |                |                 |             |                         |

### Q14. Credibility

|                                                                              | 1.<br>Strongly<br>Disagree | 2.<br>Disagree | 3.<br>Undecided | 4.<br>Agree | 5.<br>Strongly<br>Agree |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| I believe branded social media adverts from face-care brands are convincing. |                            |                |                 |             |                         |
| I believe branded social media adverts from face-care brands are credible.   |                            |                |                 |             |                         |

## **SECTION 5 BRAND RESONANCE**

*The next set of questions will focus on the face-care brands you selected in Q5 (most often used face-care brand). You will answer the questions on a 5-point scale from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree. All questions follow the same structure.*

### Q15. Behavioural loyalty

In a scale from 1 to 5 which level do you agree or disagree with the following statements? A great social media video advert from your frequently used brand makes you feel...

|                                                                            | 1.<br>Strongly<br>Disagree | 2.<br>Disagree | 3.<br>Undecided | 4.<br>Agree | 5.<br>Strongly<br>Agree |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| These brands are the only brands in the category of face-care that I need. |                            |                |                 |             |                         |

|                                                          |  |  |  |  |  |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| In the future, I will be loyal to these face-care brand. |  |  |  |  |  |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|

## Q16. Attitudinal attachment

In a scale from 1 to 5 which level do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

A great social media video advert from a Face Care brand will make you feel....

*Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.*

|                                                                                      | 1.<br>Strongly<br>Disagree | 2.<br>Disagree | 3.<br>Undecided | 4.<br>Agree | 5.<br>Strongly<br>Agree |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| These brands and I have shared values (i.e. its more than just a brand).             |                            |                |                 |             |                         |
| I will continue buying these face-care brands even if their prices are going higher. |                            |                |                 |             |                         |

## Q17. Sense of community

In a scale from 1 to 5 which level do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

A great social media video advert from a Face Care brand will make you feel....

*Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.*

|                                                                                     | 1.<br>Strongly<br>Disagree | 2.<br>Disagree | 3.<br>Undecided | 4.<br>Agree | 5.<br>Strongly<br>Agree |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| Like joining a social media group created by those using the same face-care brands. |                            |                |                 |             |                         |
| Like joining social media platforms created by the brands.                          |                            |                |                 |             |                         |

## Q18. Active engagement

In a scale from 1 to 5 which level do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

A great social media video advert from a Face Care brand will makes you want to....

*Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.*

|                                                                                                              | 1.<br>Strongly<br>Disagree | 2.<br>Disagree | 3.<br>Undecided | 4.<br>Agree | 5.<br>Strongly<br>Agree |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| I want to participate in the brands social media challenges i.e., Tiktok challenge                           |                            |                |                 |             |                         |
| I want to invite others to participate in brands social media challenges (Tiktok challenges/Instagram reels) |                            |                |                 |             |                         |
| I will comment on the brands social media posts                                                              |                            |                |                 |             |                         |