



Research Title:

Identifying the impact video and photo content posted on social media has on Gen Z users' consumer behaviour.

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Declaration: *I hereby declare that the Research Report submitted for the Bcom Honours Strategic Brand Management degree to the Independent Institute of Education is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for degree purposes.*

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Abstract

The aim of this research was to identify the impact video and photo content posted on social media has on Gen Z users' consumer behaviour. Despite the focus of social media platforms shifting from photo to video content it was realised that there was limited research as to which format better met the marketing needs of Gen Z consumers in terms of capturing their attention and persuading a positive purchase decision. This became an area of interest as social media has become one of the most utilised methods for brands to communicate with consumers and understanding which types of content were most efficient could assist in reduce time and marketing costs. This research was conducted as a quantitative study and made use of an online curated questionnaire with a sample of n=43. Based on the sample brands may find it useful that although video content is more popularly consumed by Gen Z and is the more preferred method for receiving communications, however the elements that contribute to the effectiveness of the content are of potentially more importance than the content format itself, these specifics are in actual fact where the contents successful impact on consumer behaviour lies.

Keywords: *Gen Z; Social Media; Consumer Attention; Purchase Decision; Social Media Content.*

Table of Contents

Abstract	2
Introduction	6
Rationale	6
Problem Statement	7
Purpose Statement	8
Research Questions.....	8
Primary Research Question.....	8
Secondary Research Questions	8
Objectives	9
Literature Review	10
Conceptualisation.....	10
Theoretical Foundation	13
The Engel-Kollat-Blackwell Model of Consumer Behaviour (EKB Model)	13
Aaker's (1991) Brand Based Equity Model	15
Review of Previous Literature	16
Conclusion relative to previous literature	19
Research Design and Methodology.....	21
Paradigm.....	21
Research Approach and Design	22
Population and Sampling.....	22
Data Collection method	23

Data Analysis Method.....	25
Findings and Interpretation of Findings.....	28
Findings.....	28
Presentation of findings	28
Interpretation in terms of research questions	40
Secondary question 1:	40
Secondary question 2:	41
Secondary question 3:	42
Conclusion	44
Validity and Reliability of Findings	44
Validity	44
Reliability	44
Implications of findings for future practices	44
Conclusions.....	45
Final Conclusion.....	47
Ethical Considerations	47
Limitations	48
Reference List.....	49
Annexure A	59
Annexure B	61
Annexure C	63
Annexure D	68

Annexure E	73
Annexure F	74

Introduction

As new generations have started using social media, research has shown that every generation uses and responds to social media marketing efforts made by brands differently (Wolf, 2020; Muralidar and Raja, 2019). These alterations in use have resulted in the need for brands to alter their online social media marketing strategies to attract the users belonging to specific generations and Generation Z (Gen Z) is no different. Previous research has addressed the impacts the progression of various online content formats – namely: text, image and video, have had on attracting general consumer's (who will hereon be referred to as user's) attention and its influence on users purchase decisions (Wolf, 2020; Thangavel, Pathak and Chandra, 2019; Jacobsen and Barnes, 2020; Mayrhofer, Matthes, Einwiller and Naderer, 2019). However, to date no research currently exists comparing the impacts of social media's photo and video content specifically on attracting Gen Z's attention and influencing their purchase decision.

The purpose of reviewing previous literature will be to identify: the general factors that influence the purchasing decisions of Gen Z users, as they are the largest and most diverse user base to date (Hunt, 2020; Donovan, 2017); the content elements necessary in both photo and video content to best attract Gen Z user attention; and potentially which format of content between the two have been the most successful in attracting previous generations user's attention promoting positive purchase decisions to identify if there are any previously successful elements from these formats that could be transferred to Gen Z marketing strategies.

Rationale

Social media has become a key factor in how brands are able to communicate their marketing strategies to their consumers (Poturak & Softić, 2019), the more a brand can authentically communicate with their consumers, the more likely consumers are to be loyal towards the brand (Bilgin, 2018). During 2020, the short form video sharing app TikTok saw a large spike in international downloads (Kennedy, 2020), to compete with TikTok, Instagram created and pushed forward their version of video sharing with their 'Reels' feature (Ahmed, 2021). Instagram has previously been labelled as a photo sharing application however in 2021 head of Instagram, Adam Mosseri, announced that the normal photo sharing options will still be available on the application however they no longer want Instagram to be seen as a solely photo sharing application (Clark, 2021).

Through extensive sourcing of literature it was found that there has been research conducted on the marketing strategy adjustment from text to image format content on social media as well as research conducted on the impact of consumer attention from television advertisements to online video advertisements; there has also been consideration as to what impact multimedia social media content formats have on various branding factors. However, none of the research found considered video content and image content in regard to which format better gained the attention of users and impacted positively on their purchase decision, specifically for Gen Z, considering they are the largest consumer base to date (Hunt, 2020; Donovan, 2017).

Problem Statement

With the introduction of social media and social media marketing there has been an increase regarding the power of brands to communicate with users to build stronger brand equity by means of increasing brand awareness (Bilgin, 2018). This increased power and means of communication has resulted in a mass and constant flow of new and updated communications being posted on social media platforms every day. As a result of increased information flow there has also been an increase user's ability to search for and process information to make decisions - including their purchasing decisions (Wolf, 2020 and Mayrhofer *et al.*, 2019) and as a result has returned power back into the hands of the user. This influx of brand communication on social media platforms and users being bombarded with constant information has also resulted in brands messages getting lost amongst the clutter (Mayrhofer *et. al*, 2019; Thangavel *et al.*, 2019) which has caused the need for brands to find new and innovative ways to capture their audiences attention (Hussin, Sulong, and Ibrahim, 2021) by utilising the various formats of media made available such as static images and videos. Gen Z is the first truly digital generation, growing up with and to an extent fully emerging their lives with social media (Jacobson and Barnes, 2020). Due their induced immersion into the internet age, Gen Z behaves differently to any generation who came before them. It has been proven that the group have shorter attention spans, the rough average being estimated at eight seconds (Hunt, 2019); they spend an average of eleven hours per day either directly or indirectly consuming media from online sources such as social media platforms (Jacobson and Barnes, 2020); and it has further been identified that in order to attract their attention and gain their awareness content posted by brands needs to not only entertain but also inform the group, should brands want the content to have a positive impact on Gen Z users

purchase decision (Jain, Rakesh, and Chaturvedi, 2018). Recently social media platforms have been showing a shift towards a focus on promoting video content over static images, Instagram being an example of this with their new Reels and IGTV features (Clark, 2021). Previous studies such as: Li, and Xie's (2020) study considered the impact of text-based social media formats to static image media formats on user awareness; the changes in marketing strategies from traditional television advertisements to online video (Jain *et al.*, 2018); and Chodak, Chalwa, Dzidowski and Ludwikoska (2018) also considered the effectiveness of various marketing communication formats: comparing text, image and video formats on social media, specifically on Facebook and their respective impacts with regards to engaging users and brands generating sales. However no current and/or accessible research could be sourced comparing the effects of video content and static image content on Gen Z's purchase behaviour, to identify which format of content is more effective in gaining user attention, brand awareness and promoting a positive purchase decision. The findings of such a research study could be in brands best interest to identify which format of content better attracts the attention of these users and promotes a positive purchase decision for Gen Z - as they are the largest generation of consumers (Geyser, 2021) to date whose most dominant source of information is social media.

Purpose Statement

The aim of the research study is to determine by means of a quantitative study, which format of content - between audio-visual (video) and still image (photo) content - brands post on social media would benefit the brands more; to encourage their Gen Z followers/consumers/users to engage with and/or make a positive purchase decision.

Research Questions

Primary Research Question

Which form of content, between audio-visual (video) and still image (photo) content, is more effective in influencing Gen Z consumer behaviour?

Secondary Research Questions

Secondary Research Question 1:

What impact does video content on social media have on the purchase decision of Gen Z?

Secondary Research Question 2:

What impact does still image content on social media have on the purchase decision of Gen Z?

Secondary Research Question 3:

Do Gen Z consumers engage more with video content or still image content on social media?

Objectives

1. Understanding the purchase behaviour of Gen Z on social media by means of a literature review.
2. Identifying the impact of video content and image content on user attention and its influence on the purchase behaviour of Gen Z users by means of a literature review.
3. Data will be collected by means of a cross-sectional, close ended online questionnaire using a deductive approach. Using a minimum sample size of 30 participants, in order to ensure findings can be generalised, who will be randomly selected by means of posting the questionnaire link on various social media platforms using the researcher's personal public accounts for the potential of anyone who sees the post and meets the requirements to complete the questionnaire.
4. Data will be collated and analysed using a spread sheet on Microsoft Excel, the researcher will be making use of the formulae available using this software to gather the necessary objective information. Research findings will also be collated into appropriate graphs for ease of reading and conclusions.
5. Conclusions and recommendations will be made to identify whether either video content or photo content, or potentially neither, on social media platforms are more effective in having an effect in attracting Gen Z app users and their impact on consumer purchase behaviour of these users.

Literature Review

Conceptualisation

Brand Awareness

There are many variations as to what brand awareness is, Aaker (1991) stated that brand awareness is “the ability of a potential buyer to recognise or recall that a brand is a member of a certain product category”, however this definition does not fully account for the relationship of brand awareness in a social media context. Keller’s (2009) definition of the concept however is partially better suited in terms of social media: Keller considered brand awareness to be more about consumer’s ability to recognise or recall a brand in varying conditions. The overall assumption for this research can be made that brand awareness is the user’s ability to recognise and recall a brand in any situation – i.e. before seeing the account name that posted the content; the brand could be identified from the content itself.

Consumer Attention

There is little research regarding the concept of consumer attention (Janiszewski and Bickart, 1994: 329) and thus no clearly defined definitions of the concept however, there exists abstract pieces of knowledge concerning the concept. With the rise of social media and subsequently an increase in the quantity of information consumers are exposed to the competition to gain consumer attention has become more intense than in previous marketing eras (Mayrhofer *et al.*, 2019), this has resulted in marketers having to find innovative ways to capture the limited attention capacity of their target audiences (Zhang, Qin, Wang and Luo, 2019). Targeted content has becoming increasingly important (Wolf, 2020); the use of visual stimuli, such as colour and quality of content has a positive impact on attracting consumer attention (Li and Xie, 2020) as well as; the entertainment element of content posted (Bilgin, 2018).

Purchase Decision

Purchase decision is commonly considered in terms of the purchase decision process (Yogesh and Yesha, 2014; Darmawan, 2018) which considers price, product quality, promotional efforts and the brand itself. There are several factors that influence users purchase decision on social media: Positive or negative online information about the brand (Sharma and Rehman, 2012) also referred to as eWOM or electronic/online word of mouth, which is user generated (Bilgin, 2019; Poturak and Softic, 2018; Thangavel *et al.*,

2019) and therefore out of the direct control of brands. Factors that are in the brands control includes: the quality of content (Li and Xie, 2020), the enjoyment of the content posted (Di Pietro and Pantano, 2012), the ease of use of the platform being used and the ability of the content to reduce users perceived uncertainty - potentially bridging the psychological distance that exists between users and the brand (Zhang *et al.*, 2019). Past research has also proven that format the content takes (video or photo) has also shown to have had an influence on user's purchase decision (Chodak *et al.*, 2019: 74).

Social media marketing

Social media is the collective term for online platforms where data, which is interactive and predominantly controlled by users, can be collected. Social media also allows for collaboration and sharing of information between brands and consumers (Agung and Darma, 2019). Social media marketing considers users as being at the centre of businesses and has provided marketers with a new set of tools and platforms in order for them to create strategies allowing for interactions with consumers in previously unavailable ways (Prasath and Yoganathen, 2018). Bilgin (2018: 129) confirms that this form of marketing has led to a more interactive relationship being forged between brands and their consumers and has also allowed for the introduction of innovative methods in brands marketing efforts. The overall aim of social media marketing is to gain the attention of new customers, increase sales and strengthen advocacy for the brand (Tsimonis and Dimitriadis, 2014).

Social media content

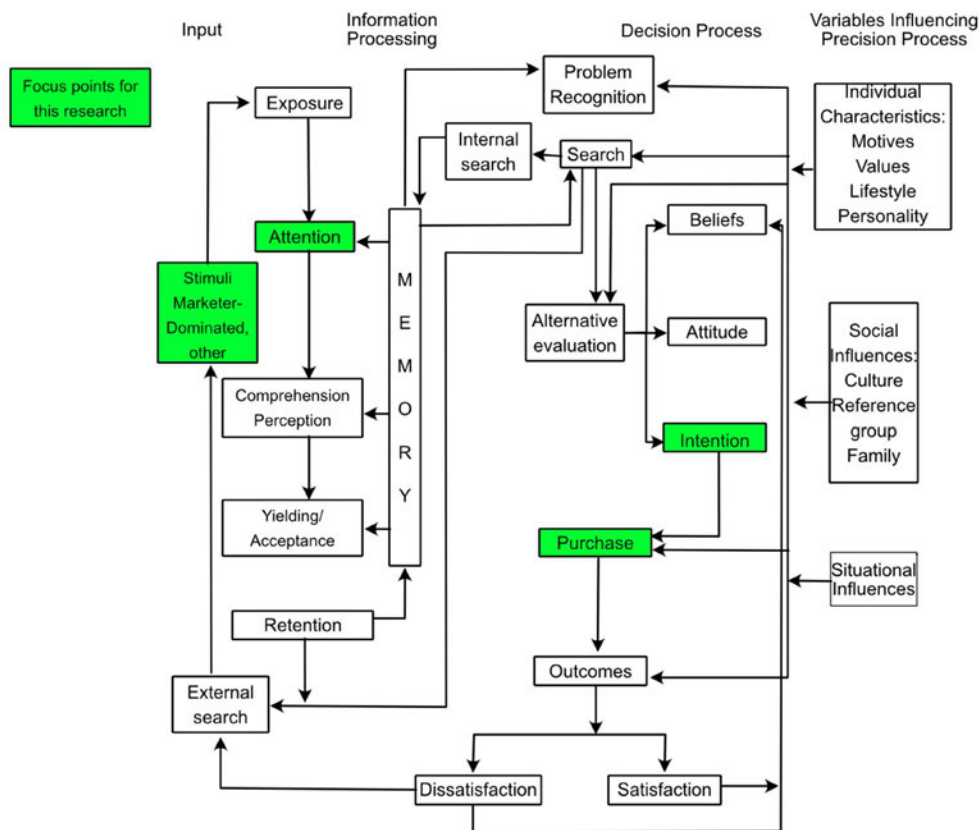
The legal working definition of social media content according to Law Insider (2017) is any materials, documentation, information, audio and graphics such as videos and images that are created and posted or shared on online social media applications. The social media content that will be considered in terms of this research will be multimedia communications (Jain *et al.*, 2018) in the formats of: video content, consisting of a combination of audio and visual content, in the forms of: short videos, five seconds to five minutes; long videos, five minutes or longer (Xiao, Wang and Wang, 2019); and live video streams (Zhang *et al.*, 2019) as well as static images, also known as photos (Li and Xie, 2020) posted to and available on social media platforms capable of sharing these formats of communications.

Generation Z

Also referred to as Gen Z are born between mid-to-late 1990's (Wolf, 2020); Gen Z are also considered to be born more specifically between 1995 and 2015 (Jacobsen and Barnes, 2020: 51); and Thangavel *et al.* (2019) consider this generation to being anywhere from the early half of the 1900s to 2000's. For the purpose of this research Gen Z will be considered as those born between 1995 and 2003 (as those born in 2003 are eighteen years of age already). Gen Z have begun their entry into mainstream consumption (Thangavel *et al.*, 2019), they are also the largest and most informed consumer group to date (Donavan, 2017; Jacobsen and Barnes, 2010: 51-52). This generation is considered as the first truly digital generation (Jacobsen and Barnes, 2020: 51; Thangavel *et al.*, 2019: 3). Due to their over-exposure to the internet, information sources and their hyper-connectedness with one another through various social media platforms (Wolf, 2020); Gen Z have shown drastic differences in shopping behaviours when compared with previous generations (Jacobsen and Barnes, 2020: 51). Among the differences identified the group show a decrease in their attention spans, roughly eight seconds and a need for constant entertainment (Madden, 2017). With the considerations of these new behaviours there is a need for varied and innovative marketing strategies to attract the attention of and persuade this generation to make or consider making positive purchase decisions.

Theoretical Foundation

The Engel-Kollat-Blackwell Model of Consumer Behaviour (EKB Model) (1978)



The purpose of this research is to identify which format of content posted on social media between video and image content is more effective in capturing user's attention and therefor potentially has a more beneficial impact on consumer behaviour with regards to influencing a positive purchase decision of Gen Z users. The seminal EKB Model is considered as one of the core theories of consumer behaviour (Ashman, Soloman and Wolny, 2015) and provides a framework to gain a better understanding of the two complementary considerations (attention and decision) as it also acknowledges potential other factors that could impact these considerations throughout the consumers decision making process. The EKB models suggests that user's rationally and systematically go through the purchase decision process through a fixed sequence of stages (Ashman *et al.*, 2015: 128), consequently due to the rationality of this model it complements the selected research paradigm of positivism and therefore has been selected as the best suited model. As revised by MBA Knowledge Base (2014), the model consists of four distinct stages: (1) Information input stage; (2) Information processing stage; (3) Decision process stage; and (4) Variables influencing the decision process.

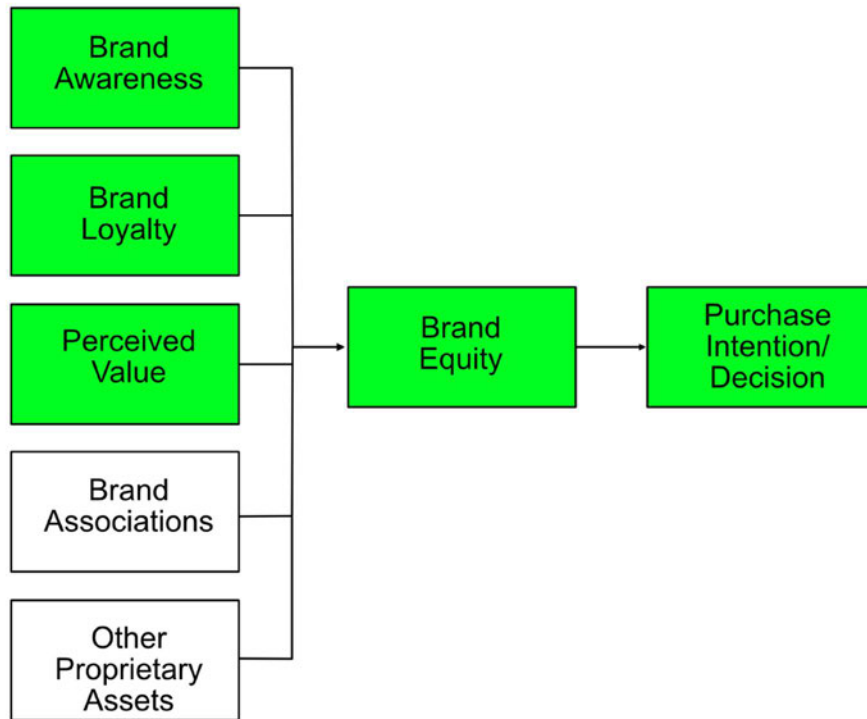
The former stages of the model represent the stage at which a brand would release their social media content they have created in the form of photos and/or videos on the various available and/or chosen social media platforms. This content can be considered as the stimulus that users would receive by means of exposure, “something that incites to action” (Dictionary.com, [s.a.]).

Following the order of the stages: Once the stimuli have been posted, users would then enter the information processing stage where they would then be exposed to the stimuli posted by brands on social media platforms, and should that stimuli be successful it would gain the users attention – which is a component that this research is considering: which content format better gains user attention. Users could intentionally search for this content, based on the recognition of a need, or could receive it unintentionally through scrolling on their feed.

Should the stimuli be successful in the information processing stage by means of being memorable users would then continue onto the decision processing stage – the second consideration of this research, where further factors are considered that have an influence on the user’s decision to purchase whatever the brand has marketed.

This model would be useful for brands to understand the process users undertake when marketing content is posted, to better curate content that successfully meets the requirements of each stage in the decision process to lead to a positive purchase decision.

Aaker's (1991) Brand Based Equity Model



Seminal author David A Aaker created a version of the brand based equity theory in his 1991 publication 'Managing Brand Equity'. The theory is based on the contributory factors that build towards brand equity. In Aaker's model there are five components to consider: (1) Brand loyalty; (2) Brand awareness; (3) Perceived Quality; (4) Brand associations; and (5) Other proprietary assets (Patents; IP and Trading partners (Qualtrics, 2019)).

Aaker's model best suits the requirements of this research as it considers that all the stages can be measured, and that data scores for each stage can be collected to identify how far the product is to achieving brand equity. This compliments the positivism paradigm selected for this research.

From previous research it has been concluded that having strong brand equity does in fact have a positive impact on consumer purchase decision (Shahid, Hussain and aZafar, 2017: 37; Chi, Yeh and Yang, 2009: 141; Aaker, 1991: 27-30). For the purpose of this research, only three of the five components will be considered to address the brand equity of brands using social media marketing strategies as well as to consider the perspective of the Gen Z user and the influence of their perceptions on the brand.

Part of the research will consider whether and if so to what extent Gen Z users regard loyalty to brands as part of their purchase decision as well as to what extent brands could incentivise loyalty with these users to promote positive purchase decisions (Aaker, 1991: 30). The research will also consider brand awareness and what Gen Z users require from the brands social media communication in order for the content to capture their attention and in part result in users becoming aware of brands (Aaker, 1991: 170). Brand awareness also has rippling effects on recognition and recall (Aaker, 1991: 271) which relates to the EKB model that will be used for this research. Lastly perceived quality and how Gen Z users view the quality of the brand and what creates their perception of the quality of products being marketed by brands on social media platforms.

It should be noted that even though brand association and other proprietary assets will not be largely considered in this research, it has been taken into consideration that each of the five components of this model do influence each other. This interdependence can either add or reduce value for users which in turn can promote or defer users purchase decisions.

Review of Previous Literature

The introduction of social media and subsequently social media marketing brought in an array of possibilities for brands to communicate and interact with their consumers and put consumers back at the centre of marketing strategies (Prasath and Yoganathen, 2018; Bilgin, 2019). Along with a shift in marketing strategies research has shown social media marketing has also had an impact on users brand awareness (Bilgin, 2019: 132); some research indicates that this shift to brands focussing more on online marketing, a gap has formed in the minds of users in the form of psychological distance due to the physical distance that now exists between brands, brand's products and users (Zhang *et al.*, 2019: 5). This gap has resulted in negative impacts on purchase intention due to consumer perceived uncertainty. Contrary to the physical distance theory, alternate research found that the presence of brands on social media provides a feelings of closeness for consumers and resolves previously existing space and time limitations; consumers are now able to directly compare products from their mobile and internet capable devices which in turn speeds up the consumers decision making process (Bilgin, 2018: 130; Agung and Darma, 2019:) however, it still remains uncertain whether the ease of comparisons has solved the psychological distance barrier that exists in consumers' minds. Ansari,

Ansari, Ghorri and Khazi (2019) also argue in favour: that social media content marketing assists in creating brand awareness and helps clear any perceived uncertainty that consumers may have. Whether this gap has been bridged or extended cannot yet be confirmed however it does have an impact on the perceived value of brands and products for consumers which directly influences a consumers purchase decision.

In the introductory phase of social media platforms, social media content used in social media marketing efforts were only text based however as technology advanced a shift to visually oriented content occurred (Li and Xie, 2020: 1). Li and Xie (2020) identified three factors of photo content that had an effect in attracting consumers: (1) Photo content could stand out from text clutter; (2) Photo content could provide information to users in an attractive and aesthetically appealing way; and that (3) Users were more in favour of content that had relevant photos to complement the information of the content, however Zhang *et al.* (2019) stated that compared to video content, it is more difficult for consumers to rely on the information that they receive from photos. In 2015 research showed that photo content was more effective than video content to attract user attention however it was later found in 2019 that although photos resulted in higher consumer engagement, video content had higher consumer reach which was found more effective in generating purchases (Chodak *et al.*, 2019: 74).

Video content, especially in the form of live video streams have been effective in presenting the uniqueness of products to consumers which has benefitted brand in terms of lessening perceived uncertainty (Zhang *et al.*, 2019); the use of both auditory stimulants and moving graphics were also found to help better catch consumers visual attention by means of cognitive manipulation (Mayrhofer *et al.*, 2019: 167). Studies regarding consumer behaviour have found three dominant factors that gain the attention of users and also increase brand awareness that could be utilised in both video and photo format: (1) Users want entertaining content (Jain *et al.*, 2018: 89; Hussin *et al.*, 2021: 13; Schreiner, Fischer and Reidl, 2019: 340), this assists with gaining the users attention; (2) Users want information regarding the marketed products benefits, conclusions made by Hussin *et al.* (2021) adjusted the previous assumption that consumers prefer the entertainment element of content over the information element, their study identified that information from the content is in fact seen as higher value to consumers and assists in increasing brand awareness; and (3) The quality of the content (Wolf, 2020; Hussin *et al.*, 2021: 3), previous research has found that a good quality video is a point of attraction and

has the potential to influence on purchase attention, and the same consideration exists for high-quality photos that relate to whatever is being marketed and makes sense to the user.

Social media platforms over time have changed with regards to what format of content they want to push out to consumers, seen in the move from text-centric content on Twitter and Facebook (Li and Xie, 2020) to a combination of text and photo content. With the introduction of Instagram (Jacobsen and Barnes: 56), resulting in Facebook and Twitter also adopting the approach for users to post photos on their platforms (Li and Xie, 2020). Further advancements saw ability for brands to post video content on social media platforms which resulted in diverse forms of video content: short and long form videos and live video streams (Kennedy, 2020: 1070; Ansari *et al.*, 2019: 5; Xiao *et al.*, 2019: 416; Zhang *et al.*, 2019).

Due to the increase: of content; the volume of information; and user exposure this has resulted in a cognitive overload for consumers (Mayrhofer *et al.*, 2019: 167-168), this has resulted in the need for brands to adjust their social media marketing strategies in order to stand out from their competitors and to influence positive purchase decisions from consumers (Ansarie *et al.*, 2019). Gen Z consumers have shown characteristics of consumer misbehaviour (Jacobsen and Barnes, 2020) in that they do not behave the same as any previous generation and therefore social media marketing strategies need to be specifically adjusted when marketing to this consumer group.

Gen Z is the largest consumer base to date and is considered the first truly digital generation (Jacobsen and Barnes, 2020: 51) as a result they process information faster than any previous generation (Wolf, 2020). Access to technology within this generation is not as limited as it was previously and accesses to social media has resulted in Gen Z consumers behaving differently when it comes to how they shop online and make purchase decisions (Thangavel *et al.*, 2019; Jacobsen and Barnes, 2020: 51). This access is a predominant reason why this consumer generation cannot be compared to previous consumer generations and why targeted marketing has become increasingly important to capture the attention of this consumer group (Zhang *et al.*, 2019; Wolf, 2020). Gen Z users are exposed to roughly eleven hours social media per day both directly and indirectly (Jacobsen and Barnes, 2020: 52), this over-exposure to social media has also impacted the attention span of these consumers (Hunt, 2019; Jacobsen and Barnes, 2020: 52) and

has therefore made it challenging for brands to effectively capture the attention of these users in order to potentially trigger a purchase decision process. Gen Z are also incredibly social and reviews regarding brands and products from the online and offline communities they belong to are highly valued by these consumers (Bilgin, 2018; Thangravel *et al.*, 2019) and play an essential role in their decision making process, however this consumer consideration cannot be completely controlled by the brand but needs to be considered.

Even though Gen Z's attention span is significantly lower than previous generations there are potential social media content forms such as short videos, which vary in length between 5 seconds and 5 minutes, due to the short and explosive nature of the content (Xiao *et al.*, 2019) that could potentially be effective in attracting Gen Z users. This does not necessarily mean that photo content is not still effective in attracting consumer attention and influencing purchase decisions. Wolf (2020) found that if the photo content is relatable to users and seen as authentic it could still engage consumers. Despite behaving differently to previous generations, Gen Z consumers have shown some similarities to previous generations regarding what they want to receive from content: they want the content to be entertaining as well as provide information specifically regarding the product benefits (Chen, 2017) but they still do not want the ad-based content to be obvious advertisements – which could cause potential problems regarding new requirements for brands to disclose advertisements' on social media which could impact Gen Z users' attention to the post and therefore influence their decision to make purchases (Mayrhofer *et al.*, 2019: 167).

Conclusion relative to previous literature

There has been multiple research topics conducted surrounding the effects of video and photo content on attracting consumer attention, building brand awareness and the impact of these content formats on consumer behaviour with regards to influencing purchase decisions. It can be said that both entertainment and information received from social media posts are incredibly valuable to consumers. With Gen Z's increase use of the internet and subsequently social media, consumers are being exposed to more information than ever before and although this increase in volume of information exists, due to the nature of online shopping a psychological distance in the minds of consumers has been formed which has impacts on consumers' perceived uncertainty of both brands and products being promoted online and therefore has influence on their purchase

decision. Although technology has allowed for the advancements of content formats that brands can post online: text, image and various forms of videos, to communicate with their consumers; and there are previous studies indicating the effectiveness of photo and video content on attracting consumer attention and influencing their purchase decision in the past, no research currently exists to consider the effectiveness of these content formats on the new larger consumer group: Gen Z.

Known factors regarding this generation is that, similarly to prior consumer groups, they value entertainment and product information in which ever content they receive. Due to their heightened exposure to social media content it is more difficult for brands to capture and retain the attention of these consumers which in turn has an impact on their brand awareness and as a result influences their purchase decision. By identifying which content format, between photo and video, is more effective in capturing the attention of these consumers would be beneficial to brands to better curate their targeted content to align more with what Gen Z consumers want to see and how they want to see it on social media platforms which in turn could potentially influence positive purchase decisions from this group as well as assist with a better understanding of this consumer group and how they use social media to make purchases.

Research Design and Methodology

Paradigm

(du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014: 24-27)

Previous research conducting the topics surrounding Gen Z as consumers, social media marketing and the influences various formats of content, respectively, have been conducted under the paradigms of both: positivism both experimental and questionnaire based: Thangavel *et al.* (2019); Jacobsen and Barnes (2020); Hussin *et al.* (2021); and interpretivism by means of interviews: Wolf (2020); and Chen (2018). Considering that no research currently exists that specifically considers Gen Z social media users and the comparison of the effectiveness of online video content and photo content on their attention and purchase decisions, a positivism approach has been selected for the purpose of conducting this research.

The paradigm selected has the epistemology that knowledge is objective and can be tested and/or measured (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014: 24-27; the researcher believes that identifying which content format on social media better attracts the attention of Gen Z, between video and image content, can be verified through the objective collection of numerical data from respondents. The ontology of positivism as a paradigm (what is reality) is that reality is not social, natural laws exist that people and things follow that results in everyone experiencing the same reality and respond to experiences the same regardless of social or cultural influences (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014: 24-27) – in regards to this research the belief is that all Gen Z social media user's respond to content on social media the same way, using the same decision processes. With regard to values, positivism is value free, since values cannot be measured (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014: 24-27). Value free research for this research will be conducted by means of using a cross-sectional, closed ended, online questionnaire which by its nature will allow for the researcher to remain objective and base all findings on numerical facts.

Research Approach and Design

Population and Sampling

Population

The population chosen for this study was: Gen Z consumers, born between 1995 and 2003 (Wolf, 2020; Jacobsen and Barnes, 2020: 51; Thangavel *et al.*, 2019), and who had access to the researcher's social media profiles on: Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, Whatsapp and Facebook; and who followed the r/SampleSize subreddit on Reddit. The population was decided on the grounds that the overall research concerned brands communication on social media platforms therefore using social media as a population variable was best suited as these individuals would have experience and prior exposure to brand communications on social media. According to previous market findings this generation has begun their entry into mainstream consumption and are currently categorised as the largest consumer base to date (Jacobsen and Barnes, 2020: 51-52; Thangavel *et al.*, 2019).

Sampling

The sampling method utilised for this research was non-probability, convenience sampling with an addition of unforeseen snowball sampling (Maree and Pieterse, 2019: 219-220). Due to the time and financial constraints of this study, convenience and snowball sampling were the most efficient forms of sampling identified for the purpose of the research. The online questionnaire was made available publically on various social media platforms such as: Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, Facebook, Whatsapp and Reddit. Potential participants were made aware of the online questionnaire through 'Stories' and 'Posts' and were requested to participate, if they met the requirement of being between 18 and 27 years of age. These platforms also allowed for the opportunity for the online questionnaire link to be shared further by other users on the various social media platforms by means of "Retweets", "Sharing", "Recommendations" and story sharing options on the respective social media platforms - which occurred throughout the duration of the questionnaire being available to responses. These standard options available on the various utilised social media platforms for participants and other users to further share the online questionnaire link on their profiles resulted in the unintended use of snowball sampling. The sample for this study was Gen Z consumers born between 1995 and 2003 (Wolf, 2020; Jacobsen and Barnes, 2020: 51; Thangavel *et al.*, 2019); who were active on social media platforms

such as: Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, Reddit, Whatsapp and TikTok; who were made aware of the online questionnaire and chose to participate; and who had made or considered a purchase of a product or a service as a result of seeing a social media post. The sample gathered from the online questionnaire was $n=43$, therefore all findings for the research gathered will be generalised in terms of the participants from this sample (Ganti, 2022).

Data Collection method

As this research follows a quantitative approach to identify the impact video and photo social media content has on Gen Z's consumer behaviour; data was collected by means of a cross-sectional, web-designed, structured, closed-ended, online questionnaire which was created using "Google forms" (Refer to Annexure C). This achieved the requirements of meeting the third research objective set out in the introduction of this research. The questionnaire consisted of 28 questions divided into five categories: Consent; Demographic questions (Nominal variables); Video content; Photo content; and Photo and video. All questions used in the online questionnaire were adapted for the purposes of this research from previous studies relating to: social media content and consumer purchasing behaviour (Poturak and Softić, 2019); consumer decision making (Thangavel *et al.*, 2019); photo based social media content and engagement (Li and Ying, 2020); and consumer purchase intention with regards to video content (Hussin *et al.*, 2021). By utilising Google forms as the data collection server it was possible to have participants remain completely anonymous when responding to the online questionnaire.

The link to the questionnaire was made available on the researcher's publicly accessible social media platforms (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, Whatsapp and TikTok) as well as on the Subreddit: r/SampleSize. The posts containing the link to the online questionnaire on the respective social media platforms were coupled with a request for participants born between 1995 and 2003 to complete the questionnaire. Participants and additional social media users assisted – potentially those who did not meet the sample requirements, without being requested to do so. This additional sharing of the link assisted in boosting awareness for the online questionnaire by sharing the link on their respective personal profiles by means of the various sharing options available on the social media platforms. Additional sharing of the online questionnaire link allowed for further reach to additional Gen Z users active on social media who the researcher's personal profile would not have

been otherwise able to reach. By posting the online questionnaire on these internationally accessible, publically available social media platforms it allowed for the reduction of the limitation of space allowing, in theory, anyone, who was anywhere in the world, who was made aware of the online questionnaire link could be a participant. The online questionnaire was made available 'live' on the 01st August 2022 and the online questionnaire link was then disabled on the 18th August 2022 (18 days). Time was a constricting factor for this research as results and analysis need to be submitted by a specified deadline.

The questionnaire was curated with various forms of question types: 1 question requesting participant's consent; 7 nominal multiple choice questions; 20 ordinal questions of which: 3 were questions requiring participants to rank variables; and 17 were Likert scale questions (Maree and Pieterse, 2021: 202-208). The Likert scale questions were used to determine participant's level of agreement with various statements regarding various elements of social media posts characteristics in order to identify which of these elements were seen as the most attractive and persuasive to the sample. The use of these question types allowed for a reliable objective measurement of attitudes and opinions of respondents (Vogt, 1999; Deckelmann, 2019) this aligned well with the positivist paradigm of the study. Demographic questions were included with the purpose of ensuring that the respondents met the sampling requirements, specifically those of being part of the Gen Z consumer group and being active on social media. Demographic questions were also utilised for the purposes of describing the sample and for the purposes comparison and conclusion in the later phase of interpreting the data collected.

Questions were divided by theme or topic to objectively determine answers to the set primary and secondary research questions. Division 1: The impact video content has on the purchase intention of Gen Z (secondary research question 1) was tested by means of section 3 of 5 of the questionnaire in combination with section 5 of 5. Division 2: The impact photo content has on the purchase intention of Gen Z (secondary research question 2) was tested using section 4 of 5 of the online questionnaire in combination with section 5 of 5. Division 3: Section 5 of 5 of the online questionnaire was predominantly focused on the combination of video and photo content to identify whether Gen Z users engage more with video content or photo content on social media (secondary research question 3). The purpose of the questionnaire in totality being to answer the primary

research question: 'Which form of content on social media, between video and photo content, is more effective in influencing Gen Z consumer behaviour?'.

Data from questionnaire responses were automatically collected and collated by means of tables, graphs and charts. This is a feature was executed automatically through functions on Google Forms. Where the researcher required additional graphs, tables and charts, for the purpose analysis of better suited presentation, these were constructed using the online application, CanvaPro. The data was from the collected online questionnaires was manually catalogued and coded onto a Microsoft Excel 2010 spread sheet. The Microsoft Excel 2010 spread sheet was utilised in order to translate the collected data to assist with the calculations of various descriptive statistic formulae and to perform correlation analysis for the purpose of the data analysis

Data Analysis Method

Descriptive Data Analysis

Descriptive data-analysis methods have been used for the purpose of this study. This is in alignment with the selected positivism paradigm. Descriptive analysis will be conducted in order to describe and summarise the sample collected in terms of demographic, characteristics and the size of the response group (Jansen and Warren, 2020; Maree and Pieterse, 2019: 229). The analysis will be conducted by means of using the available formulae on Microsoft Excel 2010 to determine: mean ($\bar{x}$) (=AVERAGE): which is the most common measure of location and is the calculated average of all the data values (Maree and Pieterse, 2019: 229); mode (Mo) (=MODE): Determine which values occur most frequently (Maree and Pieterse, 2019: 229); median (Me) (=MEDIAN): the middle value of the distribution (Maree and Pieterse, 2019: 230); standard deviation (s) (=STDEV.S and =STDEV.P) (Maree and Pieterse, 2019: 231) and how the data may be potentially skewed (=SKEW) of the sample set (Maree and Pieterse, 2019: 232).

Inferential Statistics

Inferential statistics have been utilised by means of correlation analysis using Pearson's Product-Moment correlation, also known as the Pearson correlation coefficient. The Pearson correlation co-efficient allows for the measurement of the strength of a linear relationship or association between two variables (Laerd statistics, 2018). The Pearson correlation coefficient analysis has been conducted utilising 'Data Analysis' tools on

Microsoft Excel 2010. These calculations have resulted in a Pearson correlation coefficient, denoted as “ r ”. Either a Pearson or Spearman correlation would have been appropriate however post conducting both correlations the results did not differ upon comparison (Abbasi, 2022) and therefore choice to continue using a Pearson correlation coefficient was made by the researcher. The Pearson correlation coefficient is suitable to identify strength of linear relationships between two variables tested (Laerd statistics, 2018) from the Likert and multiple choice form questions. For the Pearson correlation the symbol “ r ” has been used over “ p ”, as for the purpose of this research only inferences for the sample collected have be made over inferences of the population (Lane, 2022).

Guidelines for the interpretation of the Pearson’s correlation coefficient will be as follows:

Strength of association	Coefficient, r	
	Positive	Negative
None	0	
Small	0.1 to 0.3	-0.1 to -0.3
Medium	0.3 to 0.5	-0.3 to -0.5
Large	0.5 to 1.0	-0.5 to -0.1

(Table 1: Laerd statistics, 2018)

For Pearson’s correlation, r can range between 1 and -1 where 1 is an indication of a perfect positive linear relationship, 0 indicates no relationship and -1 indicate a perfect negative linear relationship between the variables being compared (Lane, 2022).

The analysis of the data collected allows for the requirements to be met of the fourth research objective listed under “Research objectives” under the introductory section of this research paper.

With regards to providing answers to the research questions set out in the introduction of this research an analysis using descriptive and inferential statistics will assist. The analysis of data collected from section 5 of 5 of the online questionnaire has been used to assist in answering secondary question 3: “Do Gen Z users’ engage more with video content or photo content on social media?” in terms of the sample collected. Predominantly the calculations of mean ($\bar{x}$) (=AVERAGE) and mode (M_o) (=MODE) have been used for questions from this section. Analysis of section 4 of 5 of the online questionnaire has been used to assist in answering secondary question 2: “What impact does photo content have on the purchase intention of Gen Z?” in terms of the sample collected. Pearson’s

correlation (inferential statistics) coupled with descriptive statistics and reference to the demographic data collected in section 2 of 5 in the online questionnaire has been used to identify the relationships between characteristics and which of these characteristics of photo content have a greater or weaker impact on the purchase intention of Gen Z. The same analysis as that conducted for secondary question 2 has been conducted for the consideration of secondary question 1: “What impact does video content have on the purchase intention of Gen Z?” using the collected responses from section 3 of 5 from the online questionnaire, in terms of video content.

Using the analysis of the data collected from the sections from the online questionnaire using, answers relating to the primary research question set out for this study: “Which form of content between video and photo content has a better impact on influencing Gen Z consumer behaviour?” have been identified in terms of the sample collected.

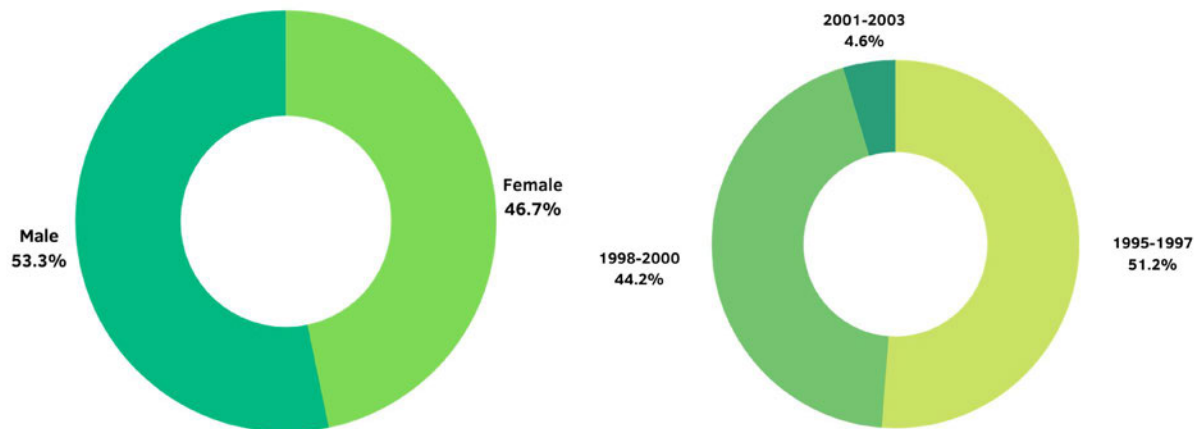
Findings and Interpretation of Findings

Findings

Presentation of findings

Descriptive statistics

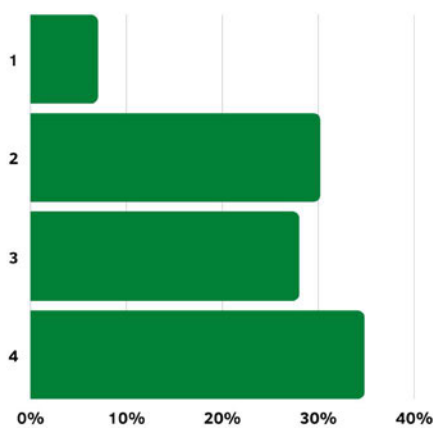
Section 2 of 5: Demographic questions



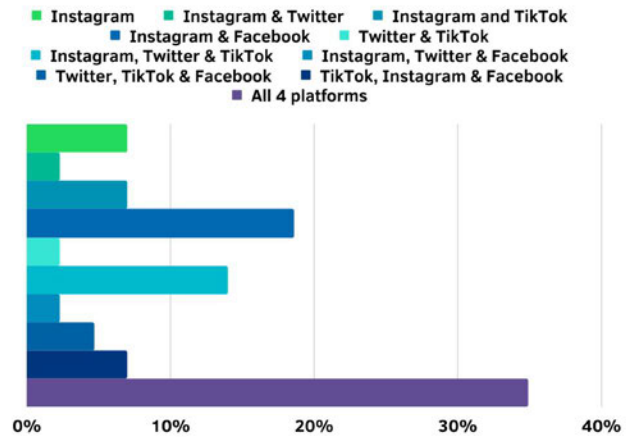
Donut chart 1: Gender

Donut chart 2: Age grouping

At the point of conclusion for the data collection phase the sample collected consisted of 43 participants ($n=43$) of which 53.3% were male and 46.7% were female (*Donut chart 1*). The set parameters for responses were that participants be born between 1995 and 2003, as members from this grouping are classified as Gen Z (Wolf, 2020; Jacobsen and Barnes, 2020: 51; Thangavel *et al.*, 2019), from this 51.2% of participants were born between 1995 and 1997, being roughly between 25 and 27 years of age (*Donut chart 2*).



Graph 1: Number of social media platforms participants are active on



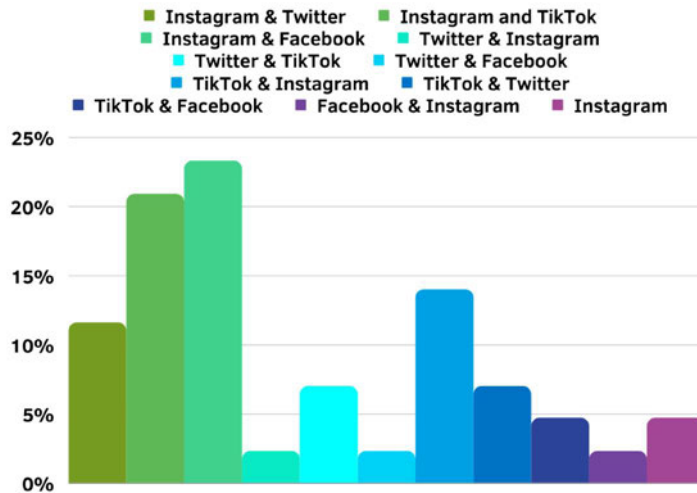
Graph 2: Combinations of social media platforms participants are active on

Of the sample $n=43$, 7% were active on only one platform (*Graph 1*), that platform was Instagram (as seen in *Graph 2*). Furthermore from *Graph 1*: 30.2% of participants were active on 2 platforms and 27.9% were active on 3 platforms. Majority (34.9%) of participants were active on all 4 social media platforms being considered in the research (*Graph 1*), these platforms include Instagram, TikTok, Twitter and Facebook (*Graph 2*). For a further breakdown of which social media platforms participants were active on see *Table 1*.

Table 1

Social media platform combination	Percentage of participants
Instagram	7%
Instagram and Twitter	2.3%
Instagram and TikTok	7%
Instagram and Facebook	18.6%
Twitter and TikTok	2.3%
Instagram, Twitter and TikTok	14%
Instagram, Twitter and Facebook	2.3%
Twitter, TikTok and Facebook	4.7%
Instagram, TikTok and Facebook	7%
All four platforms	34.9%

For participants who were active on only 2 platforms, Instagram and Facebook was the most popular social media platform combination (18.6%) with Twitter and TikTok being the least popular (2.3%). The most popular social media platform combination for participants who were active on 3 social media platforms was Instagram, Twitter and TikTok (14%) with the least popular being Instagram, Twitter and Facebook (2.3%).



Combination of the 2 most used social media platforms by participants

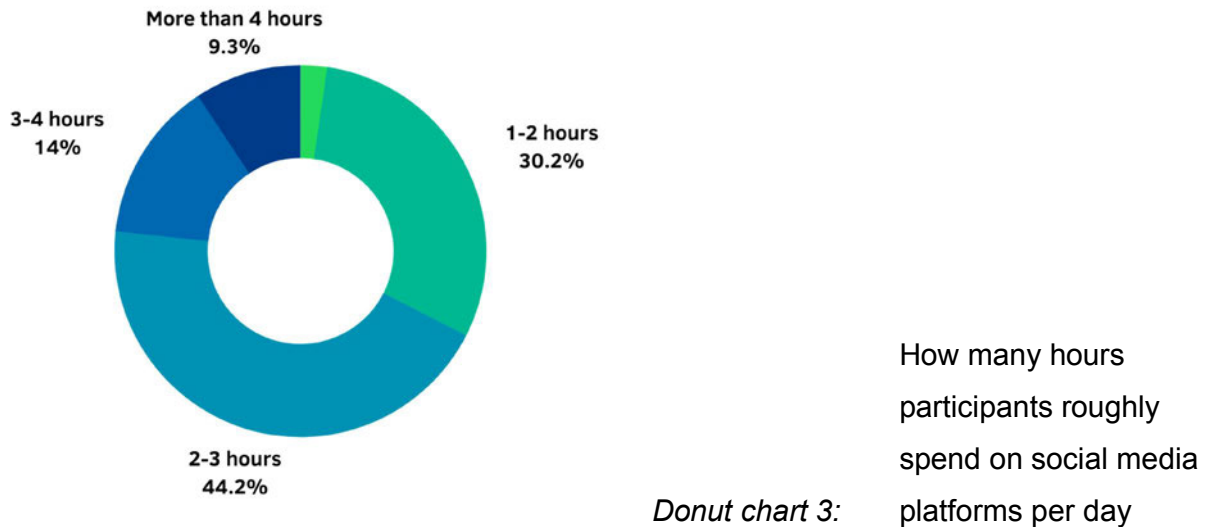
Graph 3:

From the question “Which two social media platforms do you use the most?” participants had the option to categorise the platforms they used the most as first and second, these were the results (*Graph 3* and *Table 2*). The most popular combination of social media platforms used by the sample was found to be a combination Instagram and Facebook (23.3%), where Instagram was prioritised as the first option platform and Facebook the second. The responses recorded showed three combinations that were the least popular: Twitter and Instagram, Twitter being prioritised over Instagram (2.3%); Twitter and Facebook, Twitter being prioritised over Facebook (2.3%). A further 2.3% of participants again had a combination of Facebook and Instagram being their most used platforms however with the difference of Facebook being prioritised for use over Instagram.

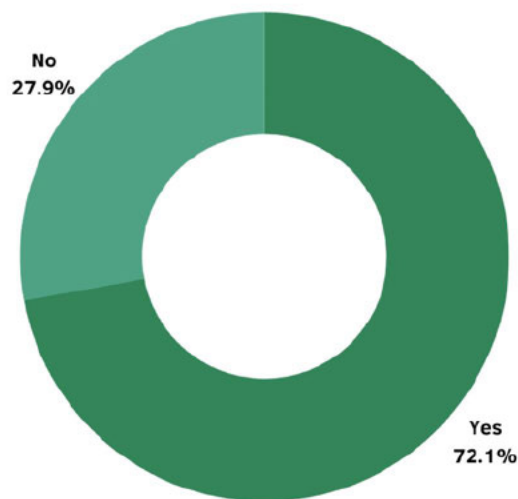
Table 2

Platform	First choice	Second Choice
Instagram	58.1%	20.9%
Twitter	11.6%	20.9%
TikTok	27.9%	23.3%
Facebook	2.3%	30.2%
None	N/A	4.7%

Instagram was the platform participants selected as their most used social media platform (58.1%) with the least popular first choice option being Facebook (2.3%). The most used second option was Facebook (30.2%). The results also showed that 4.7% of participants did not have a second choice platform and for these participants the first choice platform was Instagram.



Donut chart 3 is a visual representation of how many hours participants roughly spend on social media platforms a day. A noted limitation for this data is that it does not account for whether hours on social media platforms are for businesses or personal purposes. Data from the sample collected showed that majority of participants spend roughly 2 to 3 hours on social media platforms per day. 2.3% of participants spent less than 1 hour on social media per day, from this 2.3% all of these participants were born between 1998 and 2000 ($\pm$ 22-24 years old). Of the 9.3% of participants who use social media for more than 4 hours a day, all of these participants were born between 1998 and 2000. Of the participants who spent roughly 2-3 hours a day on social media 50% were born between 1995 and 1997 ($\pm$ 25-27 years old) and 50% were born between 1998 and 2000. From participants born between 2001 and 2003 ($\pm$ 18-22 years old) 100% of these participants responded that they spent 3-4 hours a day on social media. On average participants spent between 2 and 3 hours on social media a day.

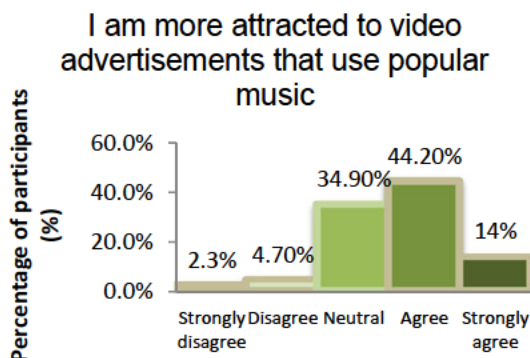


Percentage of participants who have made a purchase after seeing an advertisement on social media

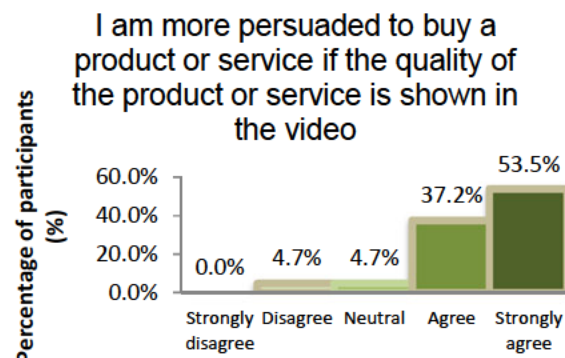
Donut chart 4:

Majority of participants (72.1%) have made a purchase for a product or service after seeing an advertisement for the product or service on social media (*Donut chart 4*). From the 27.9% participants who responded “No”, that they have not made a purchase after seeing an advertisement on social media 90.9% were male and 9.1% were female.

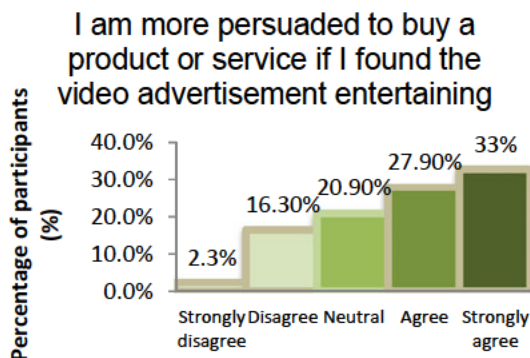
Section 3 of 5: Video content



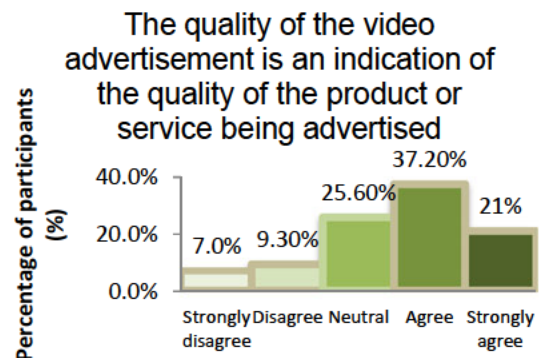
Histogram 1



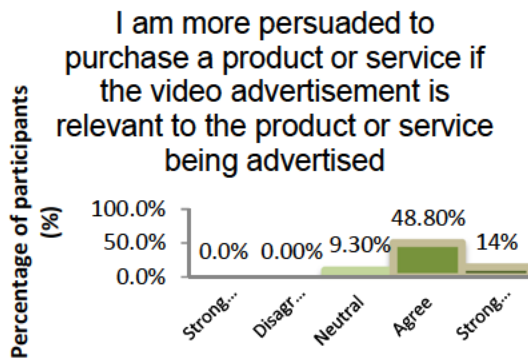
Histogram 2



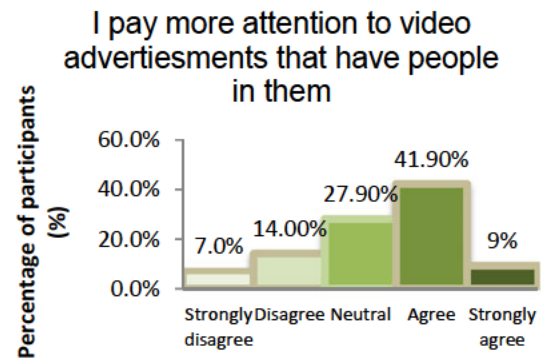
Histogram 3



Histogram 4



Histogram 5



Histogram 6

Histogram 1 to 6 all represent data sets that resulted in high levels of agreement from participants regarding the respective characteristics of popular music; whether there was an indication of the quality of the product or service in the video advertisement; the entertainment element of the video advertisement; quality of a video advertisement; and the video advertisements relevance to the product or service being advertised. Data collected and represented in Histogram 2 show that 53.5% of participants strongly agreed that they were more persuaded to make a purchase of a product or service if they could see the quality of the product or service in the video advertisement. From Histogram 3 most (33%) of participants indicated that they are more persuaded to purchase a product or service if they found the video advertisement entertaining. All the data collected for these questions showed no to little disagreement for the statements made. The data collected for the above histograms resulted in negatively skewed data (see Annexure E for Histograms representing skew distribution).

Table 3: Participants level of agreement regarding statements related to video advertisements on social media platforms

	Level of agreement				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Level of attraction – Use of a public figure	0.0%	27.9%	37.2%	23.3%	11.6%
Quality of the product or service can be identified by the quality of the video advertisement	9.3%	27.9%	27.9%	25.6%	9.3%

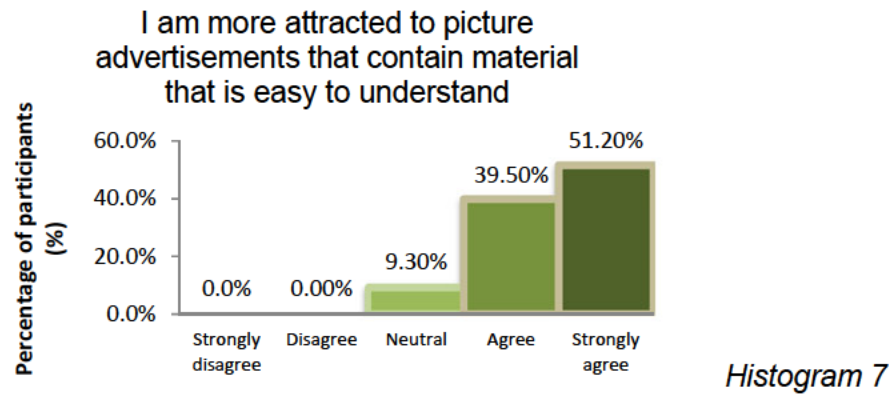
Table 3 displays the summarised responses to the questions that indicated a higher neutral level of disagreement to a low level of disagreement.

Table 4: Participants ranking of the most/least important characteristics of a video advertisement on a social media platform

	Degree of importance				
	Least important (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Most important (5)
Entertainment	16.3%	20.9%	9.3%	30.2%	23.3%
Presence of a human(s)	58.1%	18.6%	9.3%	2.3%	11.6%
Video quality	11.6%	18.6%	34.9%	9.3%	25.6%
Video relevance to the product or service being advertised	7%	14%	25.6%	39.5%	14%
Product information	7%	27.9%	20.9%	18.6%	25.6%

From Table 4 it can be seen that the presence of a human in a video is considered by the sample as the least important characteristic of a video advertisement on a social media platform with 58.1% of participants ranking it as such. At 25.6%, respectively, participants ranked video quality and product information the most important characteristics of an advertisement on a social media platform. However it should be noted that although these are ranked as the most important characteristics of a video advertisement on a social media platform, the larger degree of importance regarding these two characteristics is relatively low to mid-rank. Results gathered for video quality indicate that more participants (34.9%) ranked it in the mid-rank (3) and for product information most participants (27.9%) ranked it in the lowest to mid-rank (2).

Section 4 of 5: Photo content



Responses gathered from the question relating to *Histogram 7* were the only responses from this section's Likert scale questions to show majority of participants (51.2%) had the highest high level of agreement to the statement.

High levels of agreement were also recorded from the statements relating to quality of the photo advertisement and quality of the product being shown, see *Table 5*.

Table 5: Higher levels of participants agreement regarding statements related to photo advertisements on social media platforms

		Level of agreement				
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
a)	More persuaded to purchase – quality of product or service shown in photo advertisement	0.0%	4.7%	11.6%	46.5%	37.2%
b)	Quality of the photo advertisement = Quality of the product or service being advertised	4.7%	4.7%	23.3%	30.2%	37.2%

Although most participants (37.2%, *Table 5*) selected that they strongly agreed with the statement relating to the quality of a photo advertisement being an indication of the quality of the product or service being advertised, it was not a majority response.

Table 6: Statements that resulted in neutral levels of agreement regarding photo advertisements on social media platforms

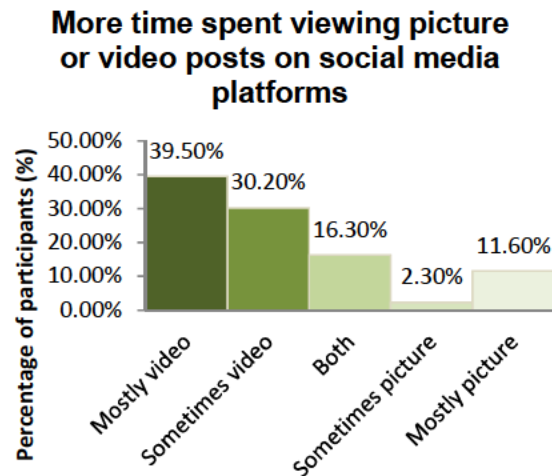
	Level of agreement				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
More attractive – Use of a public figure	4.7%	25.6%	32.6%	27.9%	9.3%
Can easily tell the quality of a product or service from a photo advertisement	14%	30.2%	34.9%	14%	7%

Table 7: Participants ranking of the most/least important characteristics of a photo advertisement on a social media platform

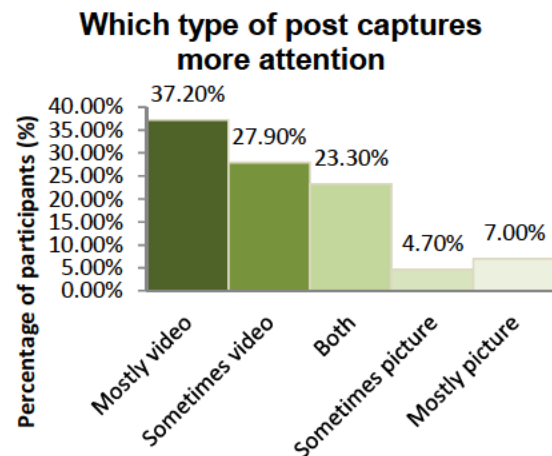
	Degree of importance				
	Least important (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Most important (5)
Colourfulness	20.9%	34.9%	18.6%	18.6%	7%
Presence of a human(s)	55.8%	16.3%	11.6%	4.7%	11.6%
Photo quality	7%	23.3%	34.9%	9.3%	25.6%
Photo relevance to the product or service being advertised	9.3%	9.3%	14%	44.2%	23.3%
Product information	7%	16.3%	20.9%	23.3%	32.6%

Majority (55.8%, *Table 7*) of participants ranked the presence of a human in a photo advertisement for a product or service as the least important characteristic for a photo advertisement on a social media platform. Product information was ranked as the most important characteristic by 32.6% (*Table 7*) of participants, although not the majority it can be seen that the degree of importance was leaning more towards most important. The photo being relevant to the product or service being advertised, although not ranked as the most important characteristic, was ranked relatively high (44.2%, *Table 7*) compared to the other characteristics.

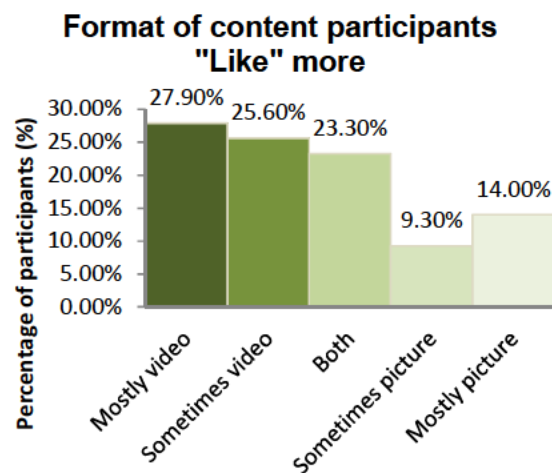
Section 5 of 5: Photo and video content



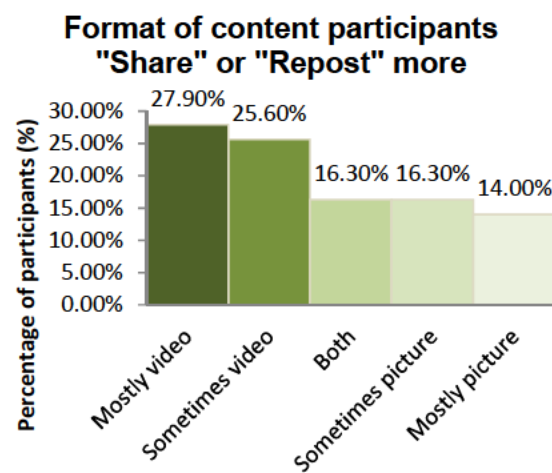
Histogram 8



Histogram 9



Histogram 10



Histogram 11

From data gathered in section 5 of 5, represented by Histogram 8 through 11 it can be seen that the format of video content posted on social media is the format that majority of participants pay more attention to and engage with more. 100% of participants selected that they can tell the quality the quality of a product or service more from a video advertisement.

When participants were requested to rank their preferred form of communication the following results were collected (*Table 8*):

Table 8

	Level of preference				
	Least preferred (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Most preferred (5)
Video posts	9.30%	9.3%	34.88%	27.91%	18.6%
Photo posts	20.93%	44.19%	18.60%	16.28%	0.00%
Customer reviews	2.33%	16.28%	13.95%	23.26%	44.19%
Family/Friend recommendations	9.30%	13.95%	25.58%	23.26%	27.91%
Public figure endorsements	58.14%	16.28%	6.98%	9.30%	9.30%

From *Table 8* it can be identified that the least preferred form of communication for the sample was ‘Public figure endorsements’ with the majority (58.1%) of the sample ranking it as such. Although not ranked in the majority the most preferred form of communication was “Customer reviews” ((5), 44.2%). Between video and photo posts video posts (3) did outrank photo posts (2) though both formats were ranked relatively low.

Inferential statistics

For Pearson’s correlation co-efficient strength of association is ranked as small, medium, large or non-existent relating to the linear relationship between variables (Laerd statistics, 2018). Where the coefficient, r , calculates to ± 0.1 to 0.3 (small strength of association); ± 0.3 to 0.5 (medium strength of association); ± 0.5 to 1.0 (large strength of association); and 0 being non-existent strength of association. (Laerd statistics, 2018).

	Gender	Age grouping	Number of platforms used	Quality of product shown in video ad	Can easily tell quality of product/service from video ad	Video quality	Time spent viewing either photo/video content	Presence of a human(s) in a photo ad	Product information in a photo ad	Video entertainment	Photo content as the preferred communication
Bought a product/service	0.476**	0.406**									
Content format "Liked" most			- 0.318**								
Customer reviews as preferred communication			0.316**								
Video posts as preferred communication				- 0.418**	-0.241**						
Photo/Video content captures attention more							0.638**				
More time spent viewing video/photo content0.				0.304**							
Product information						- 0.410**					
The photo ad is relevant to the product/service								- 0.588**	0.352**		
Family/Friend recommendations as preferred communication											-0.520**
The video ad is relevant to the product/service										-0.472**	

From the data retrieved from the online questionnaire few variables had meaningful strong relationships, majority of relationships fell between the ranges of weak to medium strength of association. The relationship between photo content as the preferred communication and family/friend recommendations as the preferred communication resulted in $r = -0.520^{**}$ indicating a strong negative relationship between the variables. Presence of human(s) and a photos relevance to the product or service being advertised had a strong negative relationship where $r = -0.588^{**}$. The strongest positive relationship recorded was that between time spent viewing photo or video content and which format of content captured attentions more with the coefficient $r = 0.638^{**}$.

Interpretation in terms of research questions

Secondary question 1:

What impact does video content have on the purchase intention of Gen Z?

Zhang *et al.* (2019) as well as Bilgin (2018) voiced the concerns of a consumer's perceived uncertainty due to the psychological distance of a product or service being sold over social media platforms. Their argument was that video content allows for the quality of the product or service to be shown. Data collected indicated that there was a high level of agreement (37.2%) from the sample that the quality of the video advertisement is indeed seen as an indication of the level of quality the product or service being advertised is. Data also revealed that the sample was more inclined to purchase a product or service advertised on social media where the quality of the product/service was shown in the video advertisement.

In Aaker's (1991) Brand Based Equity model 'Perceived Value' is one of the factors that Aaker (1991) stated leads towards brand equity which in turn would or could lead to a positive purchase decision. From the data analysed this theory holds true in that majority of the sample showed strong agreement (53.5%) that they are more persuaded to purchase a product or service if the quality is shown. 33% of the sample strongly agreed that they are more persuaded to purchase a product or service if they found the video advertisement entertaining, although this was not the majority the analysed data was skewed towards agreement. However, no significant relationship was found between purchases previously made and the importance of entertainment. A negative medium strength relationship was identified between the importance of a video advertisement

being entertaining and the video being relevant to the advertised product/service where $r = -0.472^{**}$. Several author's in their research found that entertainment was an important factor to their samples of Gen Z (Husain, Sulong and Ibrahim, 2021; Bilgin, 2018; Jain *et al.*, 2018), the findings from this sample were in agreement with that from previous research. Product information was found to be considered one of the most important characteristics of a social media video advertisement (25.6%); this was in agreement with findings from Jain *et al.* (2018). A characteristic that previous research had not referred to that this sample considered as an additional characteristic of high importance was the quality of the video. This is a further indication that the sample relates the quality of the video advertisement posted on social media platforms with the quality of the product/service being sold.

Zhang *et al.* (2019) stated that the sight, sound and motion of video content were more effective in capturing user's attention. According to the EKB Model (1978), a stimulus capturing attention is part of the initial steps that lead towards an intention to purchase and ultimately a decision to make a purchase. The sample analysed showed that 44.2% of participants agreed to the statement that they are more attracted to video advertisements that use popular music, thus indicating agreement with findings from Zhang *et al.* (2019).

Secondary question 2:

What impact does photo content have on the purchase intention of Gen Z?

Findings from Wolf (2020) revealed that Gen Z users were not ultimately concerned about the quality of photos posted on social media platforms. Data analysed from this research sample indicated that the quality of the photo advertisement was relatively unimportant ranking 3rd on the degree of importance, compared to other characteristics. The sample tended towards agreement that the quality of the photo advertisement was an indication of the quality of the product; however it was found that most (44.2%) could not easily tell the quality of a product or service from a photo advertisement. Without a strong indication that the quality of the photo assists in alleviating the psychological distance, considering Aaker's Model (1991), photo advertisements do not assist in Gen Z consumer's being able to perceive positive value from photo advertisements posted on social media therefore the format is not effective in leading towards a positive purchase decision.

Data analysed found that the photo advertisement being relevant to the product or service being advertised was the second most important characteristic of this format of content

(44.2% ranking it 4th out of 5 in terms of degree of importance). These findings agree with that found by Li and Xie (2020), where it was found that relevance of the photo was important for comprehension of the message. Assisting with the comprehension of a message falls part of the EKB Model (1978) and has the potential to lead to a positive purchase decision.

Li and Xie (2020) found that colourfulness of a post was important to enhance attraction, data from this sample however disagreed. The sample considered the colourfulness of photo advertisements relatively unimportant (Ranked 2nd out of 5 by 34.9%). This characteristics degree of unimportance is a potential indicator that the stimuli would not be effective in capturing attention and therefore would not successfully lead to a purchase decision (EKB Model, 1978).

Secondary question 3:

Do Gen Z users' engage more with video content or photo content on social media?

The photo and video sharing social media platform Instagram was found to be the go to channel for Gen Z because it meets their consumer needs (Jacobsen and Barnes, 2020: 56; Chen 2017). Findings for this sample of Gen Z are in agreement that Instagram is the most used social media platform for the generation with 58.1% selecting the platform as the first choice platform. This makes Instagram a priority channel to push sales (Jacobsen and Barnes, 2020: 56). By posting to Instagram it would be easy for advertisements to capture attention of Gen Z consumers and as Aaker's Model (1991) indicated that awareness assists in building brand equity which leads towards positive purchase intentions/decisions.

As previously addressed in the research problem, there is no existing research that compares video and photo content and the consumer behaviour of Gen Z, therefore the interpretation of findings for this section will be predominantly from the data collected and analysed for this sample.

Overall the sample tended toward video content being the more engaged with platform. 39.5% of the sample tending towards spending more time viewing video content. Most of the sample engage with video content more in terms of 'liking' or sharing posts. 37.2% of the sample leaned more towards video when comparing which type of content captures

their attention more. This is a strong indication that video content therefore video advertisements would be strong stimuli in regards to the EKB Model (1978) as it captures the samples attention more so than photo content.

Although according to the sample video content is engaged with more than photo content, the samples most preferred means of communication is customer review, ranked as most preferred by 44.2% of the sample. Family/Friend recommendations ranked 2nd, this is in partial agreement with findings from Chen (2017) that Gen Z users prefer this option as a means of communication about a product. Video content ranking 3rd and photo content ranking 4th most important forms of communication to the sample.

Conclusion

Validity and Reliability of Findings

Validity

Several attempts were made to ensure the validity of the research. In terms of the methodology and the research instrument, measures were taken to ensure that the online questionnaire would allow for the measurement of what was intended to be measured (Middleton, 2022) with regard to social media video and photo content and Gen Z users. This was done by means of utilising questions previously tested and validated in previous studies which researched similar or surrounding topics. Furthermore the researcher made further effort to ensure that the questions contained no spelling or grammatical errors which could have impeded on the participants understanding of each question. As this research was conducted in a cross-sectional manner this allowed for the reduction in the threat of change in participants. To ensure participants were not subjectively selected by the researcher the online questionnaire was made and promoted on publically accessible accounts as well as on an online forum where the researcher had no prior affiliations or contacts. The sections dividing each section clearly explained how each section should be answered so to reduce any assumptions made from potential misunderstandings, furthermore the questions were asked in a succinct manner to assist participants understanding further.

Reliability

Reliability refers to the extent to which a study can be repeated and yield the same results (Middleton, 2022). The research instrument used in this study was created using previously tested, peer reviewed studies from previous authors, and which had previously conducted relevant tests for validity and reliability, therefore ensuring reliability in the studies design (Trochim, 2022). Internal reliability was also made present in the use of questions within the instrument having high degrees of similarity (Weeds, 2002).

Implications of findings for future practices

The implications of this research include adding to the known body of knowledge regarding Gen Z as a consumer group, specifically with regards to social media marketing and e-commerce with social media as a primary source.

This research also contributes to a continuation of understanding how both photo and video formats on social media can be utilised with regard to understanding the context of the desired communication and the desired outcome. Furthermore this research contributes by further defining the strength of relationships between various content elements and user's perception towards them in order to aid in best identifying which elements should have primary focus when curating messages for the purpose of either gaining user's attention and/or persuading their purchase decisions. Caution should however be practiced in terms of the sample gathered for this research, although allowing for part generalisations in terms of the desired population, this sample was a minute percentage of the overall population and location of participants is unknown. Future research could potentially be conducted that is more geography specific or potentially there is opportunity to consider the effects of specific social media platforms. This research may be of particular interest to other academic scholars, researchers, social media managers, content creators and marketing/brand/product managers.

Conclusions

Secondary Research Questions

Secondary Research Question 1:

What impact does video content on social media have on the purchase decision of Gen Z?

Video advertisement content that users perceive as entertaining as well as informative have more of an impact in persuading a positive purchase decision. This agrees with the findings of Hussin *et al.* (2021); Bilgin (2018); and Jain *et al.* 2018 that product information is among the most important characteristics. Additionally the quality of the video contributes to the perception of quality – Aaker's Brand Equity Model (1991), in that should the video quality be higher the quality of the product is seen as the same as a result.

Secondary Research Question 2:

What impact does still image content on social media have on the purchase decision of Gen Z?

Zhang *et al.* (2019) found that with regards to being able to rely on the information given, photos made it more difficult for consumers parallel to this difficulty the information offered

in the content is of major importance (Li and Xie, 2020). These findings regarding the importance of the information communicated in the content aligns with the findings from section 4 of 5 of the research where majority of the sample responded that they are more attracted to photo advertisement content that is easy to comprehend. Overall quality of the image is again predominantly an element of characteristic in that consumers relate the quality of the image with that of the product or service being communicated.

Secondary Research Question 3:

Do Gen Z consumers engage more with video content or still image content on social media?

Based on the findings in section 5 of 5 of the research there is a clear indication that video content is the more preferred format in terms of consumption and engagement. This would align with the shift in social media platforms focus from photo based content to video content in order to capture these user's limited attention and time spent on social media (Kennedy, 2020: 1070; Ansari *et al.*, 2019: 5; Xiao *et al.*, 2019: 416; Zhang *et al.*, 2019).

Primary Research Question

Which form of content, between audio-visual (video) and still image (photo) content, is more effective in influencing Gen Z consumer behaviour?

From the findings there exists a clear indication that video content can be considered the most effective in influencing Gen Z consumer behaviour. However this is not to say that photo content has become irrelevant with this consumer group. What holds more substance or influences are in actual fact the elements or characteristics offered in both photo and video content. Jain *et al.* (2018); Hussin *et al.* (2021); and Schreiner *et al.* (2019) were correct in determine that the entertainment value offered by video content is of utmost importance however findings found an expansion in that entertainment that users found relevant and of higher quality would have more of an impact in influencing their behaviours in terms of capturing attention and leading towards a purchase decision. These same characteristics less entertainment can be converted for photo content allowing for photo content to still capture the attention of Gen Z users.

From the research it can be concluded that Gen Z consumers are moving with social media platforms towards being more focussed on video content therefore it can be argued that brands should do the same. This is potentially of interest to those given the responsibility of marketing brands or products as to where to focus their attention when

marketing to Gen Z consumers. The take away is that it is not merely that video would be the more impactful option but also the elements consumers look for within the content that aid towards them paying attention to the content and persuading their purchase decision.

Final Conclusion

In line with the EKB model (1978), gaining a consumers attention is a primary phase that leads towards a consumer making a decision to purchase a product or service. With this consideration in mind it is clear that in terms of impacting consumer behaviour with regards to Gen Z, video content would be more effective in capturing this group's attention. However, it should be acknowledged that the content merely being in a video format is not enough. Content posted in this format must be entertaining and informative in order to have more of an impact on this consumer group's attentions and decision making process. Overall the shift in social media platforms focus to video content has had an effect and translated over to Gen Z users offering further insight as to how to best capture this consumer group.

Ethical Considerations

This research followed the set requirements of the prescribed IIE ethical considerations document (Annexure A and B). No participants will be offered an incentive to participate in the research; this is done to insure that all responses received are as sincere as can be controlled. As a means of ensuring participants consent, the first question on the online questionnaire will be request consent from the participant, participants will not be able to continue with the questionnaire should they not choose the option "Yes". The consent question will also inform participants as to what the research is being conducted in aid of and how their responses will be utilised to assist the researcher. Due to the nature of the questionnaire being online the researcher will not be present during participants responses, also the questionnaire will be completely anonymous with no potential indication of participants identities. Participants will furthermore be given the opportunity to terminate their participation at any point during the questionnaire with no explanation. The researcher will store the collected questionnaire in a secure location for a minimum of 5 years. No additional parties will be aware as to where the data will be stored nor will any additional third parties be given access to the responses collected. These acts will all be practiced as a means to ensure the researcher maintains their promise of anonymity and confidentiality made to participants.

Limitations

Several limitations impacted this research. Perhaps the most limiting factor to the research was time. The researcher had to adhere and account for due dates for each section presented. These due dates limited the time available for the research to find, interpret and analyse previous literature potentially limiting the context for the findings collected. In terms of gathering data, time was also constricted regarding how long the online questionnaire was available to the public, limiting the potential number of responses that could have been collected should the time have been extended. An additional limitation included financial resource constraints, limiting each population member's ability to participate equally or the expansion of the online questionnaire to further members of the population. Additionally the sample consisting of $n=43$ does not allow this research to be considered an accurate representation of the entire proposed populations, which consists of roughly two-billion users (Rand, 2022). This minute sample is an indication that the research, although applicable to the sample, may not reflect the opinions of majority of Gen Z social media users. Finally, the lack of experience regarding the researcher's limited ability and expertise in using Microsoft Excel as a means of a data analysis software and their understanding of regression models limits the extent to which relationships in the data can be described and interpreted, thereby limiting the depth of which the statistical analyses could be conducted and; findings and insights could be concluded.

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Annexure A



Vega Ethics checklist: RESE8419

Student Details												
Title	Prof	☐	Dr	☐	Ms	☒	Mrs	☐	Mr	☐	Mx	☐
First name(s)	Jené											
Last name(s)	Burgers											
Title of study	Identifying the impact video and picture content posted on social media has on Gen Z users' consumer behaviour.											
Qualification	Bcom Honours in Strategic Brand Management											

Supervisor Details												
Title	Prof	☐	Dr	☐		☐	Mrs	☐	Mr	☒	Mx	☐
First and last names	Franklin Kum											

Co-supervisor Details (if applicable)												
Title	Prof	☐	Dr	☐	Ms	☐	Mrs	☐	Mr	☐	Mx	☐
First and last names	Click or tap here to enter text.											

Explaining your research process						
Philosophical paradigm	Positivism	☒	Interpretivism	☐	Constructivism	☐
	Realism	☐	Objectivism	☐	Pragmatism	☐
	Functionalist	☐	Subjectivism	☐	Humanist	☐
	Other:					
Research design:	Interview	☐	Questionnaire (self administered)	☒	Focus group	☐
	Ethnography/ Observation	☐	Artefact analysis/website/ social media analysis	☐	Action Research	☐
	Case Study	☐	Design Research (Practice based)	☐		☐
	Other (if so, state)	☐	Click or tap here to enter text.			
Brief explanation of the population and number of participants/items	Minimum of 30 Gen Z consumers born between 1995 and 2003					
Target group sampling methods/artefact (No under 18's or vulnerable groups allowed)	Purposive	☐	Random	☒	Snowball	☐
	Convenient	☐	Stratified	☐	Census	☐
	Explain selection process		Participants will not be selected by the researcher instead the questionnaire will be made available on online public social media platforms for respondents who meet the sampling requirements described to choose to participate in the study.			

Ethics		
Documentation submitted with proposal	Gatekeeper's letter (institutional consent)	☐
	Completed Annexure E if you conduct research on IIE sites/students/staff	☐
	Instrument(s) (interview schedule or questionnaire)	☒
	Participant or respondent consent form	☒
	Audio-visual consent form (if applicable)	☐

Campus ethics committee recommendation	
Proposal has been reviewed by the supervisor and necessary ethics considerations have been included.	
☐ Accepted as is and provide letter ☒ Accepted with provisions: Nature of provision: Please use updated Data Collection Instrument ☐ Major issues: Student should not continue with fieldwork. Actions to be taken: Click or tap here to enter text.	
Supervisor signature	
Signed on behalf of Mr Franklin Kum	2022/07/31

Co-supervisor/Campus ethics panel member signature	
	2022/07/31

Annexure B



Date: 20 June 2022

Student name: Jené Burgers

Campus: Bordeaux

Re: Approval of RESE8419/RMET8429 Proposal and Ethics Clearance

HONOURS ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

Your research proposal and the ethical implications of your proposed research topic were reviewed by your supervisor and the campus research panel, a subcommittee of The Independent Institute of Education's Research and Postgraduate Studies Committee.

Your research proposal posed no significant ethical concerns and your supporting documents and instruments are in order to proceed. We hereby provide you with permission to proceed with your research.

In the event of you deciding to change your research methodology in any way, kindly consult your supervisor to ensure all ethical considerations are adhered to and pose no risk to any participant or party involved. A revised ethical clearance letter will be issued.

We wish you all the best with your research!

GENERAL CONDITIONS TO BE FULFILLED IN RELATION TO RESEARCH

Permission is granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted.

Please note: The panel has not considered the merits, accuracy or ethical soundness of the research. The only merits examined are the use of The IIE as a sample.

Permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The researcher(s) will need to obtain informed consent in writing from all of the participants in his/ her sample if the study is not anonymous.
2. The researcher(s) may only use the data collected for research purposes and in no other way.
3. Photographs of human subjects may only be taken if relevant to the research, informed consent was obtained, and even with informed consent, the photographs

may not be published on any online platforms.

4. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
5. No names or identifying information of participants may be used within the research and the research must be voluntary.
6. Please make it clear that the information will not be used punitively in any way and participants may in no way be counselled/advised based on this.

Supervisor name: Mr Franklin Kum

Campus Postgraduate Coordinator (CPC) name: Mrs Nicole Mason

Signature:

A large black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the supervisor.

Signed on 31st July 2022

Annexure C

Research instrument – Online questionnaire

Section 1 of 5

Identifying the impact video and picture content posted on social media has on Gen Z users' consumer behaviour.

To whom it may concern,

I, Jené Burgers am a student at IIE-Vega (a brand of the Independent Institute of Education). I am currently conducting research for my BCom Honours degree in Brand Management in which I am investigating the impact video and picture content posted on social media has on Gen Z's consumer behaviour.

- Your inclusion in this study is completely voluntary;
- If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so;
- Even if you agree to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision;
- Your participation will be anonymous.

This survey should take roughly 3-4 minutes to complete.

The study has been approved by my supervisor and the IIE-campus ethics committee. I can be contacted at: [REDACTED] should you have any questions or concerns.

I hereby acknowledge and give my full consent to the participation to this study as stipulated above.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Section 2 of 5

Demographic questions

Please indicate your gender

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Please select the year you were born

- ☐ 1995-1997
- ☐ 1998-2000
- ☐ 2001-2003

Please select which social media platforms you are active on

- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ TikTok
- ☐ Twitter

Which two social media platforms do you use the most?

	1	2
Instagram	☐	☐
Facebook	☐	☐
TikTok	☐	☐
Twitter	☐	☐

Roughly how many hours a day do you spend on social media?

- ☐ Less than 1 hour
- ☐ 1-2 hours
- ☐ 2-3 hours
- ☐ 3-4 hours
- ☐ More than 4 hours

Have you ever bought a product or service after seeing an advertisement for it on social media?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Section 3 of 5

Video content

When answering the following questions consider any video content you have seen on any social media platform you use.

For each statement, place a tick in the box which indicates the degree to which you agree with the statement: 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree

	1	2	3	4	5
I am more attracted to video advertisements that use popular music	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am more attracted to video advertisements which use a recognisable public figure (e.g. a celebrity, a social media influencer...)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am more persuaded to buy a product or service if the quality of the product or service is shown in the video	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am more persuaded to buy a product or service if I found the video advertisement entertaining	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The quality of the video advertisement is an indication of the quality of the product or service being advertised	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can easily tell the quality of a product or service from watching a video advertisement	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I pay more attention to video advertisements that have people in them	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am more persuaded to buy a product or service if the video advertisement is relevant to the product or service being advertised	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = Least important and 5 = Most important) rank the importance of the following characteristics of a video advertisement

	1	2	3	4	5
Entertainment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Presence of a human(s)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Video quality	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Video relevance to product/service being advertised	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Product information	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section 4 of 5

Picture content

When answering the following questions consider any picture content you have seen on any social media platform you use.

For each statement, place a tick in the box which indicates the degree to which you agree with the statement: 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree

	1	2	3	4	5
I am more attracted to picture advertisements that contain material that is easy to understand	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am more attracted to picture advertisements which use recognisable public figures (e.g. celebrities, social media influencers...)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am more persuaded to buy a product or service if the quality of the product or service is shown in the picture	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The quality of the picture advertisement is an indication of the quality of the product or service being advertised	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can easily tell the quality of a product or service from seeing a picture advertisement	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = Least important and 5 = Most important) rank the importance of the following characteristics of a picture advertisement

	1	2	3	4	5
Colourfulness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Presence of a human(s)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Picture quality	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The picture is relevant to product/service being advertised	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Product information	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section 5 of 5

Picture and video content

When answering the following questions consider any picture and video content you have seen on any social media platform you use.

For each statement, place a tick in the box which indicates the degree to which you agree with the statement: 1 = Mostly video; 2 = Sometimes video; 3 = Both; 4 = Sometimes picture; 5 = Mostly picture

	1	2	3	4	5
Do you spend more time viewing picture or video posts on social media	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Which type of post captures your attention more on social media	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Between video and picture posts, which would you say you "Like" more	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Between video and picture posts, which would you say you "Share" or "Repost" more	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

I can easily tell the quality of a product or service more from a

- ☐ Video advertisement
- ☐ Picture advertisement

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = Least preferred and 5 = Most preferred) rank which form of communication you prefer when considering purchasing a product or service advertised on social media

	1	2	3	4	5
Video posts	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Picture posts	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Customer reviews	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Family/Friend recommendations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Public figure endorsements	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this study!

Annexure D

Collected responses from the Google Forms online survey (Raw data)

Consent

I hereby acknowledge and give my full consent to the participation to this study as stipulated above.

Yes	100
No	0

Demographic questions

Please indicate your gender

Female	46.5
Male	53.5
Prefer not to say	0

Please select the year you were born

1995-1997	51.2
1998-2000	44.2
2001-2003	4.6

Please select which social media platforms you are active on

Instagram	97.70 %
Facebook	65.1
TikTok	67.2
Twitter	55.8

Which two social media platforms do you use the most?

	1	2
Instagram	58.1	20.9
Facebook	2.33	30.2
TikTok	27.9	25.6
Twitter	11.6	18.6

Roughly how many hours a day do you spend on social media?

Less than 1 hour	2.3
1-2 hours	30.2
2-3 hours	44.2
3-4 hours	14
More than 4 hours	9.3

Have you ever bought a product or service after seeing an advertisement for it on social media?

Yes	72.1
No	27.9

Video content

I am more attracted to video advertisements that use popular music

1	2.3
2	4.7
3	37.2
4	41.9
5	14

I am more attracted to video advertisements which use a recognisable public figure (e.g. a celebrity, a social media influencer...)

1	0
2	27.9
3	37.2
4	23.3
5	11.6

I am more persuaded to buy a product or service if the quality of the product or service is shown in the video

1	0
2	4.7
3	4.7
4	37.2
5	53.5

I am more persuaded to buy a product or service if I found the video advertisement entertaining

1	2.3
2	16.3
3	20.9
4	30.2
5	30.2

The quality of the video advertisement is an indication of the quality of the product or service being advertised

1	7
2	9.3
3	25.6
4	37.2
5	20.9

I can easily tell the quality of a product or service from watching a video advertisement

1	9.3
2	27.9
3	27.9
4	25.6
5	9.3

I pay more attention to video advertisements that have people in them

1	7
2	14
3	30.2
4	39.5

5 9.3
I am more persuaded to buy a product or service if the video advertisement is relevant to the product or service being advertised

1 0
2 0
3 9.3
4 48.8
5 41.9

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = Least important and 5 = Most important) rank the importance of the following characteristics of a video advertisement

	1	2	3	4	5
Entertainment	16.3	20.9	9.3	32.6	20.9
Presence of a human(s)	58.1	16.3	9.3	2.3	13.9
Video Quality	9.3	18.6	37.2	9.3	25.6
Video relevance to product/service being advertised	6.9	16.3	25.6	34.9	16.3
Product information	9.3	27.9	18.6	20.9	23.2

Picture content

I am more attracted to picture advertisements that contain material that is easy to understand

1 0
2 0
3 9.3
4 37.2
5 53.5

I am more attracted to picture advertisements which use recognisable public figures (e.g. celebrities, social media influencers...)

1 4.7
2 25.6
3 32.6
4 27.9
5 9.3

I am more persuaded to buy a product or service if the quality of the product or service is shown in the picture

1 0
2 4.7
3 11.6
4 46.5
5 37.2

The quality of the picture advertisement is an indication of the quality of the product or service being advertised

1 4.7
2 4.7
3 20.9
4 32.6
5 37.2

I can easily tell the quality of a product or service from seeing a picture advertisement

1	14
2	27.9
3	37.2
4	14
5	7

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = Least important and 5 = Most important) rank the importance of the following characteristics of a picture advertisement

	1	2	3	4	5
Colourfulness	20.9	34.9	16.3	20.9	7
Presence of a human(s)	53.5	16.3	11.6	4.6	14
Picture quality	7	20.9	37.2	9.3	25.6
The picture is relevant to the product/service being advertised	9.3	11.6	14	44.2	20.9
Product information	9.3	16.3	20.9	20.9	32.6

Picture and video content

Do you spend more time viewing picture or video posts on social media

1	37.2
2	30.2
3	16.3
4	4.7
5	11.6

Which type of post captures your attention more on social media

1	34.9
2	30.2
3	23.3
4	4.7
5	7

Between video and picture posts, which would you say you "Like" more

1	27.9
2	25.6
3	23.3
4	11.6
5	11.6

Between video and picture posts, which would you say you "Share" or "Repost" more

1	25.6
2	25.6
3	16.3
4	18.6
5	14

I can easily tell the quality of a product or service more from a

Video advertisement 100

Picture advertisement 0

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = Least preferred and 5 = Most preferred) rank which form of communication you prefer when considering purchasing a product or service advertised on social media

1	2	3	4	5
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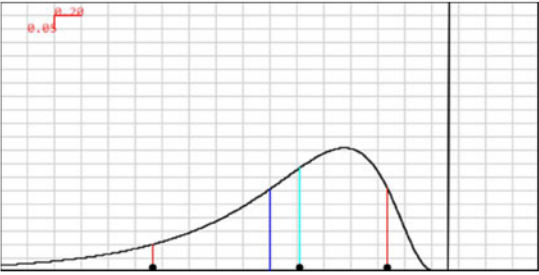
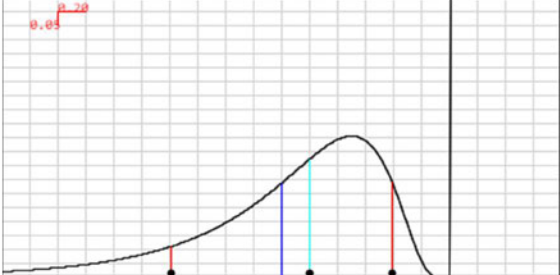
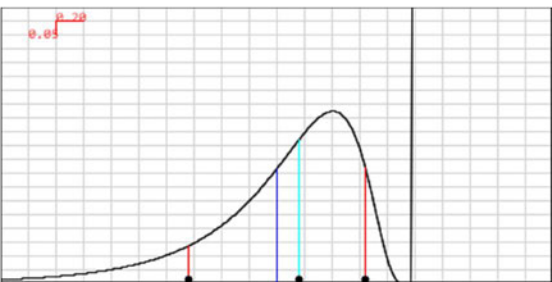
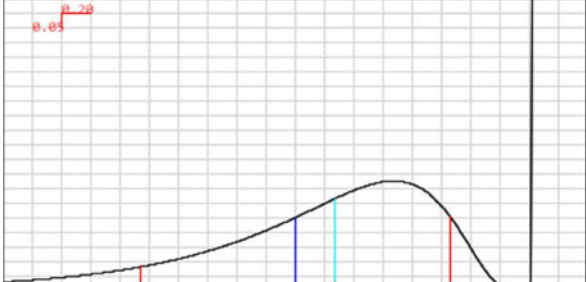
Video posts	9.3	9.3	34.9	30.2	16.3
Picture posts	20.9	44.2	18.6	16.3	0
Customer reviews	4.7	13.9	13.9	23.3	44.2
Family/Friend recommendations	9.3	16.3	25.6	20.9	27.9
Public figure endorsement	55.8	16.3	7	9.3	11.6

Annexure E

Additional graphs and tables

Section 3 of 5: Video content

Skew distribution graphs

	
Related to Histogram 2.1	Related to Histogram 2.2
	
Related to Histogram 2.3	Related to Histogram 2.4
	
Related to Histogram 2.5	Related to Histogram 2.6

(Shodor, 2022)

Annexure F

Updated concept document

<u>Project details</u>		
Your Name: Jené Burgers	Student Number: 	
Supervisor: Franklin Kum	Date: 28/11/2022	Version: 4

<u>Proposed Title</u>	
Title	Identifying the impact video and picture content posted on social media has on Gen Z users' consumer behaviour.

<u>Research details</u>	
Problem statement	With the introduction of social media and social media marketing there has been an increase in the power of brands to communicate with consumers to build stronger brand equity by means of increasing brand awareness (Bilgin, 2018) which has resulted in a mass of new and updated communications being posted on social media platforms every day, however there has also been an increase consumers ability to search for and process information to make decisions - including purchasing decisions (Wolf, 2020 and Mayrhofer, Matthes, Einwiller and Naderer, 2019) putting power back into the hands of the consumer (user). This influx of brand communication on social media platforms it has also resulted in users being bombarded with constant information and brand messages getting lost amongst the clutter (Mayrhofer <i>et. al</i> , 2019 and Thangavel, Pathak and Chandra, 2019) which has caused the need for brands to find new and innovative ways to capture their audiences attention (Hussin, Sulong, and Ibrahim, 2021) by using the various formats of media made available by the internet such as static images and various video formats (Jain, Rakesh, and Chaturvedi, 2018). Generation Z (Gen Z) is the first truly digital generation, growing up

	with and to an extent fully emerging their lives with social media (Jacobson, 2020). Due their induced immersion into the internet age, Gen Z behave very differently to any generation who came before them: They have shorter attention spans, the rough average being estimated at eight seconds (Hunt, 2019); They spend an average of eleven hours per day either directly or indirectly consuming media from online sources such as social media platforms (Jacobson and Barnes, 2020); and it has been identified that in order to attract their attention and gain their awareness content posted by brands needs to not only entertain but also inform if brands want the content to have a positive impact on Gen Z users purchase intention (Jain <i>et al.</i>, 2018). Recently social media platforms have been showing a shift towards a focus on promoting video content over static images, Instagram being an example of this with their new Reels and IGTV features (Clark, 2021). Previous studies such as Li, and Xie's (2020) study considered the impact of text-based social media formats to static image media formats on user awareness; the changes in marketing strategies from traditional television advertisements to online video (Jain <i>et al.</i>, 2018); and Chodak, Chalwa, Dzidowski and Ludwikoska (2018) also considered the effectiveness of various marketing communication formats: comparing text, image and video formats on social media, specifically on Facebook and their respective impacts with regards to engaging users and brands generating sales. However no current and accessible research could be sourced comparing the effects of video content and static image content on Gen Z's purchase behaviour, to identify which format of content is more effective in gaining user attention, brand awareness and promoting a positive purchase intention. The findings of such a research study could be in brands best interest to identify which format of content better attracts the attention of these users and promotes a positive purchase intention for Gen Z - as they are the largest generation of consumers (Geyser, 2021) to date whose dominant source of information is social media.
Purpose statement	The aim of the research study is to determine by means of a quantitative study, which format of content - audio-visual (video) and

	static image (photo) - posted on social media would benefit the brands more; to attract the attention of Gen Z users and encourage a positive purchase intention.
Research question/s	PRQ: Which form of content, between audio-visual (video) and still image (photo) content, is more effective in influencing Gen Z consumer behaviour? SRQ1: What impact does video content on social media have on the purchase intention of Gen Z? SRQ2: What impact does picture content on social media have on the purchase intention of Gen Z? SRQ3: Do Gen Z consumers engage more with video content or still image content on social media?
Hypotheses / Objectives	1. Understanding the purchase behaviour of Gen Z on social media by means of a literature review. 2. Identifying the impact of video content and image content on user attention of Gen Z users by means of a literature review 3. Data will be collected by means of a cross-sectional, close ended online survey using a deductive approach. Using a minimum sample size of 30 participants, in order to ensure findings can be generalised, who will be randomly selected by means of posting the survey link on various social media platforms using the researcher's personal public accounts for the potential of anyone who sees the post and meets the requirements to complete the survey. 4. Data will be collated and analysed using a spread sheet on Microsoft Excel, the researcher will be making use of the formulae available using this software to gather the necessary objective information. Research findings will also be collated into appropriate graphs for ease of reading and conclusions. 5. Conclusions and recommendations will be made to identify whether either video content or picture content, or potentially

	neither, on social media platforms are more effective in having an effect in attracting Gen Z app users and their impact on consumer purchase behaviour of these users.
Research rationale	Social media has become a key factor in how brands are able to communicate their marketing strategies to their consumers (Poturak & Softić, 2019), the more a brand can authentically communicate with their consumers, consumers are more likely to be loyal towards the brand (Bilgin, 2018). During 2020, the short form video sharing app TikTok saw a large spike in international downloads (Kennedy, 2020), to compete with TikTok, Instagram created and pushed forward their version of video sharing with their 'Reels' feature (Ahmed, 2021). Instagram has previously been labelled as a photo sharing application however in 2021 head of Instagram, Adam Mosseri, announced that the normal photo sharing options will still be available on the application however they no longer want Instagram to be seen as a solely photo sharing application (Clark, 2021). Through extensive sourcing of literature it was found that there has been research conducted on the marketing strategy adjustment from text to image format content on social media as well as research conducted on the impact of consumer attention from television advertisements to online video advertisements; there has also been consideration as to what impact multimedia social media content formats have on various branding factors. However, none of the research sourced considered between video content and image content: which better gained the attention of users and impacted positively on their purchase intention, specifically for Gen Z, as they are the largest consumers of online digital media and the largest consumer market to date.

<u>Literature overview</u>	
Key theories	Engel Kollat Blackwell Model of Consumer behaviour (1978) - Revised model by MBA Knowledge Base (2014) Aaker's Brand Equity Model (Aaker, 1991)
Seminal authors/	David A Aaker – Managing Brand Equity (1991) David T Kollat, Roger D Blackwell and James F. Engel – Model of

sources	Consumer Behaviour (1972)					
Literature review themes	<u>Theme 1</u> Gen Z	<u>Theme 2</u> Social media marketing	<u>Theme 3</u> Video content	<u>Theme 4</u> Image Content	<u>Theme 5</u> Purchase decision	<u>Theme 6</u> Gen Z consumer behaviour
Sources	• “David T Kollat, Roger D Blackwell and James F. Engel – Model of Consumer Behaviour (1972)” • “Managing Brand Equity” (Aaker, 1991) • “Influence of social media content on consumer purchase intention: Mediation effect of brand equity” (Poturak and Softić, 2019) • “Is a Picture Worth a Thousand Words? An Empirical Study of Image Content and Social Media Engagement” (Li and Xie, 2020) • “‘If the rise of the TikTok dance and e-girl aesthetic has taught us anything, it’s that teenage girls rule the internet right now’: TikTok celebrity, girls and the Coronavirus crises.” (Kennedy, 2020) • “The effect of social media marketing activities on brand awareness, brand image and brand loyalty.” (Bilgin, 2018) • “Consumer Behaviour Theory: Approaches and models.” (Bray, 2008) • “What is Generation Z (Gen Z)?” (Warren, 2022) • “Beyond Views: Measuring and Predicting Engagement in Online Videos” (Wu, Rizoio and Xie, 2018) • “Influence of social media marketing on consumer buying decision making process” (Perumal and Yoganathen, 2018) • “Social media, Gen z and Consumer Misbehaviour: Instagram					

	made me do it.” (Jacobsen and Barnes, 2020) • “The effectiveness of marketing communication in social media” (Chodak, Chawla, Dzidowski and Ludwikowska, 2019) • “Online Video Advertisements’ Effect on Purchase Intention: An Exploratory Study on Youth” (Jain, Rakesh, and Chaturvedi, 2018) • “Pictorial content, sequence of conflicting online reviews and consumer decision making: The Stimulus-Organism-Response Model revisited” (Bigne, Chatzipanagiotou and Ruiz, 2019) • “Opportunities and Challenges of Instagram algorithm in Improving Competitive Advantage,” (Agung and Darma, 2019) • “Impact of Brand Awareness and Social Media Content Marketing on Consumer Purchase Decision” (Ansari, Ansari, Ghor and Khazi, 2019) • “User generated content presenting brands on social media increase young adults’ purchase intention” (Mayrhofer, Matthew, Einwiller and Naderer, 2020) • “The impact of live video streaming on online purchase intention” (Zhang, Qin, Wang and Luo, 2019) • “College-Aged Young Consumers’ Perceptions of Social Media Marketing: The Story of Instagram” (Chen, 2017) • “Consumer Decision-Making Style on Gen Z: A Generational Cohort Analysis” (Thangavel, Pathak and Chandra, 2019) • “Impact of content characteristics and emotion on behavioural engagement in social media: literature review and research agenda” (Schreiner, Fischer and Riedl, 2019) • “Research on the influence of content features of short video marketing on consumer purchase intentions” (Xiao, Wang and
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	Wang, 2019) “Gen Z & Social Media Influencers: The Generation Wanting a Real Experience” (Wolf, 2020)			
Key concepts	Brand Awareness Consumer attention Purchase decision Social media marketing Social media content			
<u>Provisional Research Approach</u>				
Paradigm (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014)	<u>Paradigm</u> Positivism	<u>Epistemology</u> Objective and based in evidence	<u>Ontology</u> There’s a single, stable, objective external reality governed by laws	<u>Axiology</u> Objectivist
Approach/design	Non-experimental, quantitative study using a closed ended online survey.			

<u>Provisional Research Plan</u>	
Population	Generation Z consumers, people born between 1995 and 2015 (Warren, 2022; Wolf, 2020; Jacobsen and Barnes, 2020),.
Sampling	Non-probability, convenience sampling with an addition of snowball sampling (Maree and Pieterse, 2019). The sample consisted of members of Gen Z born between 1995 and 2003, who had access to and were made aware of the online survey link.
Data collection method(s)	Cross-sectional, close ended online survey using a deductive approach. Sample size of a minimum of n= 30 participants in order for any findings from the gathered research to be generalised. A survey will be created using Google Forms. A request for completion of the survey will be posted on the researcher's personal and publically accessible

	Instagram, Twitter, TikTok and Facebook accounts for potential respondents who meet the criteria to complete the online survey. With the additional inclusion of posting the online survey link on Reddit, r/SampleSize Questions for the survey have been adapted from previous research surveys relating to this research themes and concepts. Survey will consist of multiple choice, ranking and Likert-scale questions
Data analysis method(s)	Descriptive statistics will be used (Jansen and Warren, 2020), to assist in describing the sample size as well as making conclusions regarding the sample, the sample collected was n=43

<u>Ethical considerations and limitations</u>	
Ethics	Potential participants will only participate in the study should they accept the declaration set out by the ethics committee Potential participants will not be offered an incentive to complete the survey. All information will be objectively collected and analysed. Potential participants will be given the option to terminate their participation at any time should they feel to do so, with no explanation necessary. No personal information necessary therefore none will be collected No identifiable markers will be used, all participants will remain anonymous.
Limitations	Time – Data collection and analysis assignment submission deadline Gathering of prior research Sample – Limited reach due to time constraints Reduced population due to ethical consideration of no under 18 year old participants Experimental method may be better suited and more accurate to best identify impact of social media content on consumer attention