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Inspiration Motivation: Inspiring the User Attitudes and Behaviors toward Advertising on Social Network Sites

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Abstract

Social network sites (SNS) have become a most attractive destination for users globally. Several motivational factors drive users' SNS engagement. Inspiration motivation is one of them. Scare studies have assessed how inspiration motivation affects users' attitudes and behavior related to SNS advertising. This study examines the effects of inspiration motivation on users' attitudes and behaviors related to SNS advertising. The data were collected with 200 Pakistani SNS users' using an online survey. The structural equation modeling technique was used to assess the construct validity and test the model. The current study identified that users' inspiration motivation for participating in SNS consists of two dimensions. Those dimensions are exploration and ideation. Inspiration motivation partially affects users' attitudes toward SNS advertising and SNS ad click behavior. Inspiration motivation directed SNS advertising-related attitude and ad-click behavior result in users' online purchase intentions and online shopping behavior. SNS advertisers can utilize these findings while designing SNS ads for Pakistani users.

Keywords: *Inspiration Motivation, Attitude, SNS Advertising, Ad-click Behavior, Online Purchase Intentions, Online Shopping Behavior.*

Introduction

SNS (e.g., Facebook) have become a central destination for internet users globally (Mir, 2021; Appel, Grewal, Hadi, & Stephen, 2020). Different motivational factors (e.g., information gathering and sharing, fun and enjoyment, making friends) drive users' SNS engagement (Barbovschi, Macháčková, & Ólafsson, 2015; Mir, 2018; Park, Chen, & Cheng, 2021). One vital users' SNS engagement factor is inspiration motivation (IM) (Bottger, Rudolph, Evanschitzky, & Pfrang, 2017; Heinonen, 2011; Izogo & Mpinganjira, 2020; Mir, 2018; Muntinga, Moorman, & Smit, 2011; Rieger, & Klimmt, 2019). IM is defined as users' drive to get inspiration about what to buy and consume (Bottger et al., 2017; Mir, 2018). According to Muntinga et al. (2011), IM is ingrained in users' need to identify new and innovative consumption ideas.

Social media such as SNS have become a source of inspiration for users (Rieger & Klimmt, 2019; Sheng, Yang, & Feng, 2020). On SNS and social media applications such as Facebook and Instagram, users upload and share consumption-related content; for instance, images, video clips, and comments (Mir, 2018). Other users view those images and video clips, as well as read comments to explore and generate inspiring consumption ideas (Mir, 2018; Tiggemann & Zaccardo, 2015).

Despite the significance of IM as a vital users' SNS engagement motivation (See Bottger et al., 2017; Izogo & Mpinganjira, 2020; Mir, 2018; Muntinga et al., 2011; Rieger, & Klimmt, 2019), little research has been conducted on it in the context of SNS advertising (SNA). Importantly, it's unknown whether IM is a single factor or multidimensional construct. Examining the linkage between users' IM for engaging in SNS and their attitudes and behaviour toward SNA is indispensible. Because the income generation model of SNS firms like Facebook is ingrained in advertising (Mir, 2018). Prior research shows that users concede SNA when it is in harmony with their motivations (See Mir, 2014). Generally, researchers assess the users' approval of SNA in terms of attitude (See Taylor, Lewin, & Strutton, 2011). Yet, based on the users' positive attitude, one cannot deduce that advertising was fully effective (Briggs & Hollis, 1997). Attitude is an evaluation (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). It must translate into behaviour (Briggs & Hollis, 1997). In the context of SNS, immediate response to advertising is measured by users' ad-click behaviour (ACB) (Mir, Haider, & Sharjeel, 2021). ACB is a person's deliberate action to click SNS ads, which redirects him or her to the sponsor's website or online store (Mir, 2014). SNS research (Arora & Agarwal, 2020; Mukherjee & Banerjee, 2017) suggests that assessing impact of IM on attitude towards SNA (ATSNA) is necessary because attitude affects users' online purchase intentions (OPI). OPI is a person's plan for future action (Spears & Singh, 2004). Similarly, Mir (2018) discovered that IM affects ATSNA, which in turn affects ACB. Both OPI and ACB lead to online shopping behaviour (OSB) (Mir, 2018). OSB is user actions to buy a product online (Varma & Agarwal, 2014). Does IM based ATSNA and ACB affect users' OPI and OSB? This question is still unanswered. Thus, the current study aims at assessing the dimensions and effect of IM on ATSNA and ACB. Furthermore, the effect of ATSNA on ACB and OPI is examined. In addition, the effect of ACB on OPI and OSB and OPI on OSB is assessed. The specific research questions and objectives are given below.

Research Questions

- Is IM to participate in SNS a multifaceted construct?
- Does IM based ATSNA and ACB affect users' OPI and OSB?

Research Objectives

- To determine dimensions of the IM in the SNA context.
- To measure effects of IM on ATSNA and ACB.
- To measure effects of ATSNA and ACB on OPI and OSB.

Literature Review

Inspiration Motivation (IM)

Social media, especially SNS have become an important source of inspiration for users. (Rieger & Klimmt, 2019; Sheng et al., 2020). IM is an important user motivation to involve in SNS (Heinonen, 2011; Izogo & Mpinganjira, 2020; Mir, 2018; Muntinga et al., 2011). It is associated with realizing new ideas (Thrash & Elliot 2003). Oleynick et al. (2014) defined IM as a desire to realize new ideas. According to Bottger et al. (2017) and Mir, 2018), IM refers to users' drive to get inspiration about what to buy and consume. IM is imbedded in users' need to identify new and innovative consumption-related ideas (Muntinga et al., 2011).

Inspirational content appears in an image or written idea form (Densten, 2002). Users frequently share their consumption-related content (e.g., comments, images, and video clips) on SNS like Facebook. This content serves as a source of inspiration for other users and drives them to shop particular products and brands online (Mir, 2018). For instance, on SNS like Facebook users can observe or browse images of what dresses and shoes other users wear to generate new ideas about what products and brands to purchase and how to use or consume them (Muntinga et al., 2011; Sheng et al., 2020). Similarly, fitness freaks read posts, check advice and view fitness photos of other users on SNS to get fitness inspiration (Tiggemann & Zaccardo, 2015).

Prior marketing scholarship defined IM construct differently. For instance, Bottger et al. (2017) described Users' IM as an intrinsic motivation induced by external stimuli. Muntinga et al. (2011) and Mir (2018) described IM as a dimension of information seeking motivation. The current research treats IM as a type of information motivation. Users involve in SNS to get inspiration about what users buy and consume and to generate consumption-related novel ideas. The current study proposes that users' IM construct is a bi-dimensional in nature. Users' involve in SNS to explore inspiring consumption-related content as well as generate novel ideas.

Proposed Model and Hypotheses

The current investigation utilizes uses and gratifications theory (UGT) by Katz and Foulkes (1962) for conceptualizing the effects of IM on ATSNA and ACB. UGT is also employed for conceptualizing the effects of ATSNA on OPI and ACB. In addition, the UGT is used to conceptualize the effects of ACB and OPI on OSB. Despite the criticism of UGT as a generic theoretical framework (Ruggiero, 2000), it is applied for detecting users' SNS motivations (Hossain, 2019) and their effects on ATSNA and ACB (Mir, 2018). To fulfill their needs and drives, users involve in SNS. Users' SNS involvement exposes them to banner ads. This exposure impacts their ATSNA (Mir, 2017). Similarly, to fulfill their inspiration needs and drives, users involve in SNS (Mir, 2018). On SNS, they read the other users' consumption-related posts and view images and video clips (Muntinga et al., 2011; Sheng et al., 2020). During this process, they are exposed to SNS ads. This exposure affects their ATSNA. The current investigation offers that users' IM positively affects their ATSNA (See Figure 1). Studies (e.g., Erdem, Durmus, & Ozdemir, 2017; Mir, 2017) found that besides attitude, SNS motivations have a positive effect on users' ACB. The current research proposes that users' IM has a positive effect on their ACB (See Figure 1). Furthermore, some studies (e.g., Zhang & Mao, 2016) confirmed that ATSNA positively affects users' ACB. Similarly, it is presumed that IM triggered ATSNA will positively affect users' ACB (See Figure 1). Numerous SNS studies (e.g., Sheth & Kim, 2017) acknowledged the positive link between users' ATSNA and their online purchase intentions of the products presented in SNS ads. Izogo and Mpinganjira (2020) found that users' inspiration motives affect their purchase intentions. It is presumed that IM directed ATSNA would have a positive effect on users' OPI. Precisely, the current investigation offers that ATSNA positively affects users' OPI of the products presented in SNS ads (Figure 1). The precise, hypotheses are as follows:

H1. Users' IM has a positive effect on their ATSNA.
H2. Users' IM has a positive effect on their ACB.
H2. Users' ATSNA has a positive effect on their ACB.
H4. Users' ATSNA has a positive effect on their OPI.

Some SNS UG studies, such as Erdem et al. (2017), found that ACB positively affects users' OPI. Chu, Kamal and Kim (2013) found that users' behavioural response to SNS ads positively affects their OPI. Users' behavioural response to online ads or SNA is known as ACB (Chatterjee, 2008). Sheng et al. (2020) stated that social media as an important source of users' inspiration positively affects their OPI. The current study proposes that users' ACB on SNS has a positive effect on their OPI of products presented in SNS ads (See Figure 1). Pansari and Kumar (2017) stated that users' inspiration affected actual buying behaviour. Several UG studies (e.g., Mir, 2018) identified that users' ACB positively affects their OSB. SNS users'

ACB connects them with the ad sponsor's website. On the ad sponsor's website, a user may acquire the advertised product (Mir, 2021). The current study proposes that users' ACB on SNS has a positive effect on their OSB (See Figure 1). Furthermore, the current investigation advances that OPI positively affects users' OSB (See Figure 1). IM can affect user attitudes (Thrash et al., 2017) which in response affect OPI (Sheng et al., 2020). Specifically, the following hypotheses are suggested:

H5. Users' ACB on SNS has a positive effect on their OPI.
H6. Users' ACB on SNS has a positive effect on their OSB.
H7. Users' OPI on SNS has a positive effect on their OSB.

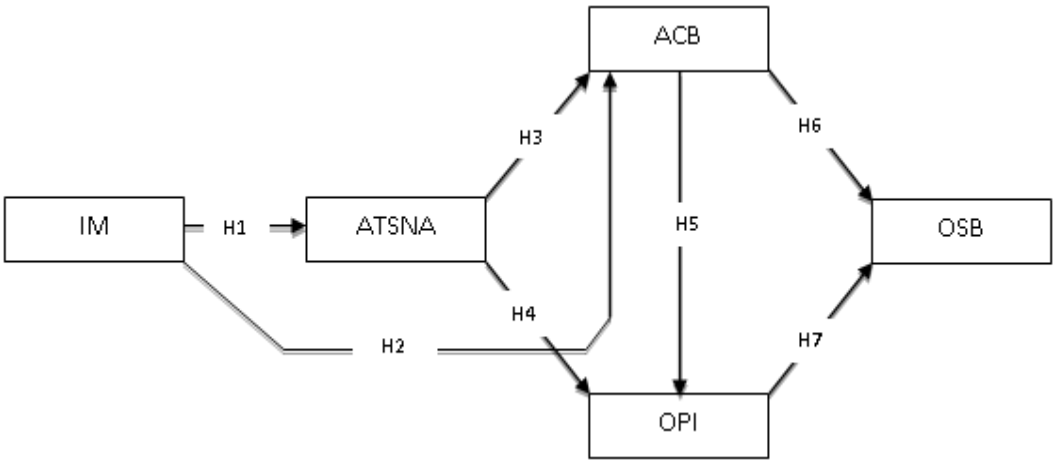

Figure 1: Proposed Model

Method and Materials

Data were gathered from a convenience sample consisting of 200 Pakistani SNS users (male = 63 % and female = 37 %), using online survey questionnaire. The 27%, 69 %, 3 %, and 1 % respondents' ages were between 18-20, 21-25, 26-30, 31-35 and above respectively. All respondents were typical users of Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Questionnaire link was shared with respondents through their Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts when they agreed to fill the questionnaire.

IM Measures, Assessment and Source

A 10 item inventory was developed from Ishii (2008), Jere and Davis, (2011), Mir (2018), and Rodgers, Wang, Rettie, and Alpert (2007) to measure users' IM triggered SNS involvement. On a 5-point Likert scale which ranged from 1 to 5 (i.e., strongly disagree to strongly agree), responses of respondents were recorded. The principal component analysis (PCA) was executed on data to reduce a larger number of items into a meaningful scale and discern dimensions of IM. The PCA with a KMO = .731, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity = .000, and total variance explained 71.384 percent discerned two factors of IM. The rule of communalities > .40 and item loading > .60 were followed to retain scale items. The eigenvalue > 1.00 was employed to retain components/factors. Table 1 presents the IM factors and their item loading.

Through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), the good fit of the IM measurement model was assessed. With χ^2 = 18.695, *df* = 8, and P = .017 < .05 IM measurement model yielded a bad fit. However, it fitted data with a χ^2/df = 2.337 < 3. IM measurement model also showed good fit with GFI = .972, NFI =.955, IFI = .974, TLI = .950, CFI = .973, and RMSEA = .08. The CFA established that IM is a bi-dimensional construct. Table 2 shows CFA item-wise statistics (i.e., β, t, p) of IM factors, average variance extracted (AVE), and reliability values (α).

Table 1: IM Factors and Their Item Loading.

Inspiration Motivation (IM) Measures	F1	F2
I use SNS……..		
1.To get new ideas	.832	-
2.To explore new things	.841	-
3.To generate ideas	.756	-
1.To find what other users buy	-	.837
2.To find what users consume	-	.877
3.To find how other users buy and use products	-	.844

Table 2: IM Construct Measures, Factors, CFA item-wise statistics, AVE and Reliability

Inspiration Motivation (IM) Measures		F	β	t	P	AVE	α
I use social network sites (SNS)……..							
1.To get new ideas	←	F1	.74	-	-	.522	.76
2.To explore new things	←	F1	.78	8.02	***		
3.To generate ideas	←	F1	.64	7.32	***		
1.To find what other users buy	←	F2	.79	-	-	.618	.83
2.To find what users consume	←	F2	.79	10.27	***		
3.To find how other users buy and use products	←	F2	.78	9.98	***		

***p < .001, Factor (F), Standardized Beta (β)

Construct Validity

To examine the convergent validity of IM factor measures, their AVE was evaluated. The AVE of both IM factors (i.e. exploration and ideation) were ≥ .50 criteria (See Table 2), thus confirmed convergent validity. Furthermore, the significant β and t statistics > 1.96 ensured the convergent validity of IM factor measures (See Table 2). In addition, the AVE of exploration and ideation (See Table 2) were > their correlation (i.e. .319), which confirmed discriminant validity.

Endogenous Variables' Measures, Assessment and Sources

ATSNA and ACB were operationalized using 6 and 3 items respectively adapted from Mir (2018). OPI was operationalized using 4 items adapted from Chang, Yan, Zhang, and Luo (2010). OSB was operationalized using 1 item scale adapted from Mir (2018). On a 5-point Likert scale which ranged from 1 to 5 (i.e., strongly disagree to strongly agree), responses of respondents were recorded. Measures of ATSNA, ACB, and OPI were refined by examining their internal consistency. The corrected item to total correlation (CITC) with a conventional criteria ≥ .50 and reliability evaluation using Cronbach's Alpha were used to confirm internal consistency of endogenous variables. The single-item OSB measurement scale was not evaluated. Table 3 shows endogenous variables' measures, their CITC and Alpha.

Table 3 Endogenous Variables' Measures and their CITC and Alpha

Variable	Measures	CITC	Alpha
	1. I consider social network sites (SNS) advertising very important	.52	
	2. I like SNS (e.g. Facebook) advertising.	.57	
ATSNA	3. I regard SNS advertising as very necessary.	.64	.81
	4. Overall, I evaluate SNS banner advertising very favourably.	.62	
	5. Generally, my point of view about SNS advertising is favourable.	.55	
	6. I like product-related SNS banner ads.	.53	
ACB	1.I often click on ads presented on SNS	.79	

	2.I often click on SNS banner ads exhibited on SNS	.71	.83
	3. I often click on ads published on my SNS profile	.67	
OPI	1.I will consider shopping online the products advertised on SNS	.63	
	2.I have strong need to purchase the products advertised on SNS	.71	
	3.I intend to acquire the products presented in SNS banner ads	.66	.83
	4.I am likely to purchase the products presented in SNS banner ads	.62	
OSB	1. I normally purchase those products from the advertisers' website, which are shown in SNS banner ads.	-	-

Model and Hypotheses Testing

The model which was proposed in this study did not indicate a good fit with a χ^2 = 12.289, DF = 5 and P = .03. However, it fitted data with χ^2/ DF = 2.458 (≤ 3). It also indicated fitted data with GFI = .980, NFI =.952, IFI =.971, TLI =.910, CFI =.970, and RMSEA = .08.

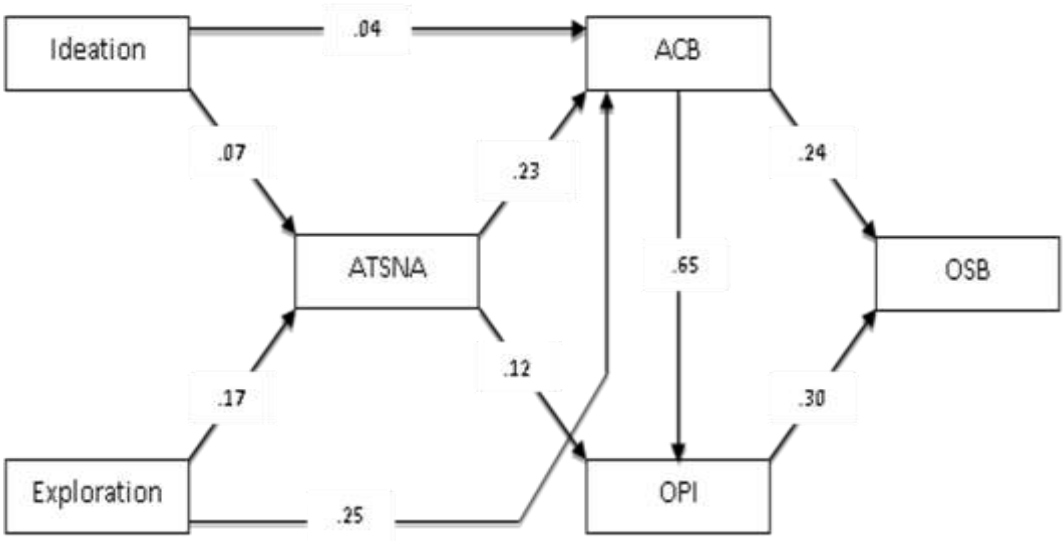

Figure 2: Structural Model

The structural model assessed in the current investigation is made of 9 paths. To evaluate the suggested hypotheses path values (β, t, P) between variables were assessed. Table 4 presents Hypotheses, decision criteria and decision.

Table 3: Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis	Decision Criteria (β, t, P)	Decision
H1. IM (Ideation & Exploration) →ATSNA	$.07^{NS}$ (.90), .17* (2.23)	Partially Supported
H2. IM (Ideation & Exploration) →ACB	$.04^{NS}$ (.59), 25*** (3.50)	Partially Supported
H3. ATSNA→ ACB	.23*** (3.36)	Supported
H4. ATSNA→ OPI	.12* (2.26)	Supported
H5.ACB→ OPI	.65*** (12.11)	Supported
H6.ACB→ OSB	.24** (2.82)	Supported
H7.PI→ OSB	.30*** (3.61)	Supported

*p < .05, **p <.01, ***p < .001, NS (non-significant), t value in brackets

Discussion

Inspiration is an important users' SNS involvement motivation (Bottger et al., 2017; Heinonen, 2011; Izogo & Mpinganjira, 2020; Mir, 2018; Muntinga et al., 2011; Rieger & Klimmt, 2019). Users involve in SNS to explore and generate inspiring consumption-related ideas. Users do so by reading consumption-related comments and view images and video clips on SNS (Muntinga et al., 2011; Sheng et al., 2020). Consumption-related content (e.g., posts, comments, images, and video clips) which users share on SNS has become a vital source of inspiration for other SNS users (Mir, 2018). For instance, users involve in SNS to explore what products other users buy and consume. Users explore content on SNS to generate inspiring consumption-related ideas (Sheng et al., 2020). The current study detected two dimensions of users' IM to participate in SNS labelled as exploration and ideation. Users take part in SNS to explore what products other SNS users buy and consume (Mir, 2018), which is called exploration. Users read comments and view images and video clips of others users on SNS to generate inspiring and fresh consumption-related ideas (Muntinga et al., 2011), which is called ideation.

According to Thrash et al. (2017), users' IM could impact their attitudes and behaviours. In line with prior SNS UG research (Mir, 2018; Taylor et al., 2011), the current study found that IM positively affects the users' ATSNA and their ACB. However, this effect is partial. Only the exploration dimension of IM positively affects users' ATSNA and their ACB. Whereas, ideation dimension of IM does not affect users' ATSNA and their ACB. These findings suggest that users use both user-shared and commercial content on SNS to explore consumption patterns (Sheng et al., 2020). However, they do not deem commercial content like SNS ads inspiring enough to generate novel consumption ideas. These findings indicate that SNS advertisers should look at the IM construct from a multidimensional perspective. According to Bloch, Sherrell, and Ridgway (1986), detecting dimensions of an information motivation construct is needed. Those dimensions affect users' attitude and behaviour in a different way.

Consistent with prior scholarship (e.g., Mir, 2018; Zhang & Mao, 2016), the current investigation found that ATSNA positively affects users' ACB. Furthermore, results indicated that ATSNA has a positive effect on OPI. This finding is in line with Arora and Agarwal (2020) and Sheth and Kim (2017), who recognized a positive link of users' ATSNA with their OPI. IM directed attitude influences the users OPI (Izogo & Mpinganjira, 2020). To gratify needs and motives; for instance, to explore inspiring consumption content to develop novel ideas, users participate in SNS. Users' SNS participation exposes them to SNS ads. Users' exposure to SNS ads affects their attitude towards SNA (Mir, 2017). Once users have developed a positive attitude towards SNA, it triggers their intentions to buy the advertised products online (Arora & Agarwal, 2020).

A vital finding of the current investigation is that users' ACB positively affects both OPI and OSB. ACB affects OPI. It endorses the findings of prior researchers; for instance, Chu et al. (2013) and Erdem et al. (2017). These researchers found a positive connection between users' ad click behaviour on social media websites and their intentions to shop advertised products online. ACB affects OSB. It validates the prior research findings. For example, Mir (2018) recognized a positive link between users' SNS ad-click behaviour and their online buy behaviour. When users click ads on SNS, it opens sponsoring company's website. On ad sponsor's websites (e.g., daraz.com) users are exposed to detailed product content such as product description and price. Product content exposure on the sponsoring company's website can either form users' OPI (Erdem et al., 2017) or they may just order the product (Mir, 2021). Furthermore, the current study found that OPI positively affects OSB. This finding endorses the well-established notion that OPI is a direct predictor of OSB (See Peña-García, Gil-Saura, Rodríguez-Orejuela, & Siqueira-Junior, 2020).

Conclusion

Inspiration is a significant users' SNS participation motivation. The current study found IM a two dimensional construct composed of exploration and ideation factors. Users involve in SNS to explore inspiring consumption content and to generate novel ideas. They do so by reading user-shared consumption-related comments and viewing images and video clips on SNS. Results indicated IM as an important predictor of users' ATSNA and ACB. IM directed ATSNA and ACB trigger OPI and OSB. However, only users' exploration motive affects their ATSNA and ACB. These findings stress that researchers should focus on the factors which constitute the IM construct. Treating IM as a single factor construct may not present its true picture and consequences.

Incremental Contribution and Implications

Despite the fact that inspiration is a vital user motivation to involve in social media, specifically SNS (See Heinonen, 2011; Izogo & Mpinganjira, 2020; Muntinga et al., 2011), rare studies (See Mir, 2018) have been conducted on it in SNA context. Unlike prior UG research, the current study identified two dimensions of users' IM to participate in SNS. The current study explored two dimensions of IM (i.e., exploration and ideation), which is a reasonable contribution to SNS literature on advertising. Furthermore, the current study contributed to SNS literature by rationalizing the effects of IM on users' attitudes, ACB, OPI, and OSB. Previously, such consequences of users' IM were not assessed in the SNA context.

The current study identified users' IM to join and use SNS as a bi-dimensional construct consisting of exploration and ideation factors. Users' involve in SNS to explore inspiring consumption content and generate novel ideas. These findings suggest that SNS advertisers should develop such consumption-related content in their SNS ads which is inspiring and useful in generating novel consumption ideas. Furthermore, the current study found that only exploration relates to users' ATSNA and ACB. It means users' do not deem SNA a useful source for generating novel consumption ideas. It implies that SNA should contain inspiring content which users find useful in generating novel consumption ideas.

Limitations and Future Research

The current study contributed to SNS literature on advertising by rationalizing dimensions of IM and their effects on users' ATSNA, ACB, OPI, and OSB. Yet, there are some weak areas in the current study which need to be improved. For instance, the current study used a convenient sample. Convenience sampling is criticized for lacking generalizability. In the future, researchers should apply probability sampling techniques such as simple random sampling. The current study focused on banner ads appearing on SNS such as Facebook. Future should focus on the ads embedded in user-generated videos on social media sites.

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