

Mediating Role of Advertising Attitude in the Relationship between Advertising Value in Embedded Advertising of YouTube Influencers and Purchase Intention: Special Reference to e-Commerce Platforms in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Sri Lanka's e-commerce sector is rapidly growing, with YouTube influencers emerging as powerful channels for consumer engagement. However, the effectiveness of embedded advertising integrated into influencer content requires closer examination, as consumer responses to informativeness, entertainment, and irritation remain underexplored. Addressing this gap, the objective of this study was to investigate the effect of advertising value dimensions (informativeness, entertainment, and irritation) on purchase intention, while examining the mediating role of advertising attitude. The study employed a quantitative research design, using a structured questionnaire distributed to 384 YouTube users in the Western Province of Sri Lanka, selected through convenience sampling. Regression and mediation analyses were conducted using SPSS to test the hypothesised relationships. The findings revealed that informativeness and entertainment positively influence advertising attitude, which significantly drives purchase intention. Irritation exerts a weaker but negative effect. Mediation analysis confirmed that advertising attitude partially mediates the relationship between advertising value and purchase intention. These results support Ducoffe's Advertising Value Model, with entertainment emerging as the strongest predictor of positive consumer response. The research contributes theoretically by applying and extending Ducoffe's model to the Sri Lankan influencer marketing context and practically by offering insights for marketers and influencers to design engaging yet non-intrusive embedded advertising strategies. Limitations include the use of convenience sampling and the cross-sectional design, suggesting that future studies adopt longitudinal approaches and incorporate variables such as influencer credibility and brand trust.

Keywords: advertising attitude, advertising value, e-commerce, purchase intention, YouTube influencers