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HOW MEME CULTURE SHAPES CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR OF GENERATION Z: THE ROLE OF HUMOUR IN MODERN ADVERTISING

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how meme culture and humour affect the buying decisions of individuals belonging to Generation Z. Through a combination of literature review and analysis of a questionnaire, it investigates how memes impact brand perception, emotional engagement, and purchase intent. By analysing these, the study aims to create an understanding of the appropriate manner to leverage meme-based and humorous advertising to grow their sales.

Keywords: *Meme culture, Generation Z, consumer behaviour, humour in advertising, meme marketing, brand perception, social media, digital marketing, brand recall, emotional engagement, virality, relatability, purchase intent.*

INTRODUCTION

In the ever-evolving digital landscape, memes have emerged as a dominant form of online communication, shaping cultural narratives, and influencing consumer behaviour. What started as humorous, easily shareable internet content has now transformed into a powerful marketing tool, particularly for brands targeting Generation Z. Unlike traditional advertisements, meme marketing leverages relatability, humour, and virality to engage audiences organically, fostering brand awareness and emotional connections in a way that conventional advertising struggles to achieve.

Generation Z, having grown up in the digital age, interacts with media differently from previous generations. Their short attention spans, preference for authentic brand interactions, and engagement with social media make them highly receptive to memes as a form of advertising. Marketers have recognized this shift and have increasingly integrated meme culture into their promotional strategies to remain relevant and competitive in the attention-driven economy.

This research aims to explore the role of meme culture in shaping Gen Z's consumer behaviour, focusing on how humour influences purchasing decisions and brand perception. By investigating the intersection of memes, humour, and digital marketing, this study seeks to highlight the effectiveness of meme culture as a modern advertising strategy. It will provide insights into how brands can harness the power of memes to connect with Gen Z consumers, build brand loyalty, and ultimately drive sales.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aims to examine the impact of meme culture on Generation Z's consumer behaviour, focusing on the role of humour in modern advertising. The key objectives include:

1. To evaluate the level of engagement with meme-based advertising

- Assess whether Gen Z notices and interacts with brand-generated memes.
- Examine their perception of brands that use meme marketing.

2. To assess the psychological impact of humour in meme-based advertising

- Determine emotional responses to meme marketing (e.g., amusement, curiosity, indifference).
- Explore the role of humour in brand recall and emotional connection.

3. To analyse the exposure and consumption habits of Gen Z regarding memes

- Understand the frequency and platforms of meme consumption.

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- Identify the types of memes that engage them the most.
- 4. To investigate the influence of meme marketing on purchase intent**
- Identify whether meme-based ads influence buying decisions.
 - Measure trust levels in brands using memes as a marketing tool.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Despite offering valuable insights, the study has certain limitations:

1. Generational Focus

- The research is limited to Generation Z, making findings less applicable to Millennials or Gen Alpha.

2. Self-Reported Data

- Surveys and case studies rely on subjective responses, which may not always accurately reflect consumer behaviour.

3. Short-Lived Nature of Memes

- Meme trends evolve rapidly, making it difficult to analyse their long-term effects on consumer decision-making.

4. Cultural Differences in Humour

- Perceptions of humour vary across demographics and regions, meaning meme effectiveness may not be universal.

5. External Influences on Buying Decisions

- While the study focuses on memes, other factors such as product quality, influencer endorsements, and economic conditions also affect purchase intent.

Despite these limitations, this research provides valuable insights into how meme culture shapes advertising strategies, helping brands better understand how to engage Generation Z effectively.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Sample Technique

- The method used in data collection for this research was Probability Sampling Method under which Random Sampling was used. In a simple random sample, every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected. The sampling frame should include the whole population.

B. Sample size

- The target population size was 80 respondents and all of them were collected which gives a 100% respondent rate.

C. Sampling Frame

- Responses for the research were collected from 80 respondents, out of which 50% were female respondents and 48.8% were male respondents and 1.2% were non-binary.

D. Data Collection Method

- The primary data was collected through an online survey using a well-structured questionnaire.
- Primary responses were collected online through e-mails and social media tools including WhatsApp.
- Secondary data is collected from different websites, articles, and journals.

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E. Questionnaire

- A structured questionnaire with 15 questions were used in the survey that was conducted to obtain primary data from respondents. The respondents were courteously asked to fill the survey.

F. Data Analysis Techniques

- To perform analysis, assess data, and draw findings and conclusions from it, tools such as a pie charts were used.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Richard Dawkins (1976) introduced the concept of "memes" in his book *The Selfish Gene*, and defined them as units of cultural transmission that spread through imitation. While initially applied to broader cultural ideas, this concept has now evolved in the digital age to explain the rapid spread of internet memes. Dawkins' theory laid the foundation for understanding meme virality and their role in shaping consumer behaviour.
2. Shifman (2013) explored the role of internet memes as cultural artifacts that facilitate digital communication and participatory engagement. The study differentiated internet memes from Dawkins' (1976) original concept, and emphasized their collective creation, remixing, and social transmission. Shifman identified key characteristics of memes, including multiplicity, intertextuality, and social participation, highlighting their significance in shaping online discourse. The research also examined how memes serve as tools for humour, political expression, and branding, making them highly relevant in digital marketing. This framework helps in understanding how meme-based advertising resonates with Gen Z consumers by leveraging relatability, humour, and social engagement.
3. "Kilroy Was Here: The Infamous WWII Meme That Lives On" (2022) examined the origins and cultural significance of one of the earliest known memes. The study explores how "Kilroy Was Here" functioned as a viral symbol during World War II, spreading through soldiers' graffiti and evolving into a widely recognized cultural reference. It highlighted how memes, even before the digital age, were used for identity expression, social bonding, and humour. This historical perspective provides context for understanding the enduring nature of meme culture and its role in shaping consumer engagement and brand communication in modern digital advertising.
4. Huang et al. (2024) examined how internet memes transcend linguistic barriers and facilitated cross-cultural communication in digital spaces. Using a social semiotic framework, the study analysed how visual and textual elements of memes adapt to different linguistic and cultural contexts while retaining their core message. The authors highlighted how global brands leverage this phenomenon to engage diverse audiences through meme-based marketing. Their findings suggested that the effectiveness of meme advertising lies in its ability to create culturally resonant yet universally understandable content, making it a powerful tool for international marketing strategies.
5. Occa, Chen, and Teffeteller (2024) systematically reviewed how online memes were used to communicate health-related messages. Their study examined the effectiveness of memes in health promotion, exploring how humour, relatability, and visual appeal contributed to audience engagement and message retention. The findings suggested that memes could enhance public health communication by simplifying complex information and making it more accessible. However, the study also highlighted challenges such as misinformation and varying audience interpretations. This research is relevant to meme-based advertising, as it demonstrates how humour-driven content influences audience perception and engagement across different contexts.
6. The Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications at Penn State (n.d.) examined the role of digital media, particularly memes, in shaping public discourse and consumer engagement. The study highlighted how memes functioned as cultural artifacts that contribute to the formation of collective identity within online

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communities. By fostering shared humour, values, and references, memes helped users feel a sense of belonging, which brands could leverage to build stronger connections with their audience. The research also explores how meme culture influenced brand perception, political messaging, and social interactions, emphasizing humour and relatability as key drivers of engagement. Additionally, it discussed how social media platforms amplify meme virality, reinforcing their role in shaping consumer behaviour and digital marketing strategies.

7. Ling et al. (2021) examined the factors that contribute to the virality of image-based memes across social media platforms. The study identified key features that influence meme success, including text complexity, object presence, colour diversity, and facial expressions. It highlighted that memes with clear and concise text, recognizable objects, and emotionally expressive faces tend to perform better in terms of engagement. Additionally, platform-specific factors, such as subreddit culture and meme format popularity, played a significant role in determining virality. The study also underscored the importance of community dynamics, humour, and relatability, demonstrating how niche internet communities drive meme trends. These insights are particularly relevant for brands aiming to integrate memes into their marketing strategies, as they suggest optimizing visual elements and leveraging online subcultures for maximum reach.
8. Daily (2025) examined the evolution of Pepe the Frog, originally created by Matt Furie for his 2005 comic *Boy's Club*, into one of the most widely recognized internet memes. The study highlighted how Pepe transformed from a simple comic illustration into a viral meme with multiple variations, such as Sad Frog, Smug Pepe, and Angry Pepe, reflecting different emotions and internet subcultures. As Pepe gained widespread popularity, it became associated with extremist ideologies and was co-opted for political messaging, including its use in memes by Donald Trump Jr. during the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign. The article discussed how Pepe's appropriation by various online communities led to its classification as a hate symbol by the Anti-Defamation League. This case study demonstrates the fluid nature of meme culture, where a single image can shift meanings across different digital and political landscapes, reinforcing broader discussions on meme virality, appropriation, and symbolic reinterpretation in online spaces.
9. Catanescu and Tom (2001) examined humour in advertising by categorizing different types of humour used in marketing and analysing their effectiveness in capturing consumer attention and influencing brand perception. Their study identified six main types of humour which are comparison, personification, exaggeration, pun, sarcasm, and silliness, each contributing differently to audience engagement. The researchers emphasized that humour enhanced brand recall and positive brand associations, making it a powerful tool for advertisers. Their findings support the idea that meme-based advertising, which relies on humour, plays a crucial role in shaping consumer behaviour, particularly among younger audiences.
10. Speck (1991) presented a comprehensive framework for understanding humour in advertising, categorizing it into three distinct dimensions: cognitive, affective, and structural. The cognitive dimension involves the mental processing of humour, including surprise and incongruity. The affective dimension relates to the emotional response elicited by humour, influencing consumer attitudes toward the advertisement. The structural dimension focuses on the execution of humour, such as wordplay, exaggeration, or character-driven humour. The study emphasized that humour can enhance brand recall and engagement but must align with the target audience's preferences to be effective.
11. Guld and Maksa (2014) examined the media consumption habits of Generation Z, emphasizing their preference for digital and interactive content. The study highlighted how Gen Z actively participates in online culture through the creation and sharing of user-generated content, including memes. The authors explored how humour, visual appeal, and relatability influenced engagement with digital media, which aligned with the increasing role of meme-based advertising. The research underscored how traditional marketing approaches may be less effective for Gen Z, as they gravitate towards content that is humorous, shareable, and seamlessly integrated into their digital experiences.

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12. Bowo, Anisah, and Marthalia (2024) examined the role of meme marketing in influencing Generation Z's consumer behaviour on social media. The study highlighted how memes served as an effective engagement tool, leveraging humour, relatability, and cultural relevance to capture audience attention. The researchers identified key factors that contributed to the success of meme marketing, including emotional resonance, shareability, and authenticity. Additionally, the study explored how meme-based advertisements impacted brand perception and purchase intent, emphasizing the importance of aligning meme content with brand identity to maintain credibility and avoid potential backlash.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

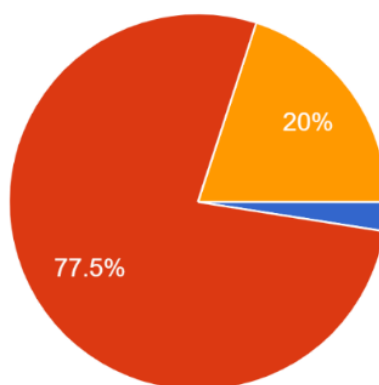
This chapter presents an in-depth analysis of the survey responses collected for the study on How Meme Culture Shapes Consumer Behaviour of Generation Z: The Role of Humour in Modern Advertising. The data has been visualized using pie charts to highlight key patterns and trends.

Pie charts are an effective tool for representing categorical data as they provide a clear and visually intuitive breakdown of different response distributions. By using proportional segments, these charts make it easier to compare percentages and identify dominant trends at a glance. In this study, pie charts help illustrate factors such as meme engagement frequency, preferred platforms, consumer reactions to meme-based advertising, and the impact of humour on brand perception.

The analysis covers demographic factors such as age, gender, occupation, and social media usage, followed by insights into meme engagement habits, preferred platforms, and the types of memes that resonate most with Gen Z. Additionally, this chapter examines the perception of meme-based advertising, its influence on brand recall, consumer trust, purchasing decisions, and the emotional responses it evokes.

Through this analysis, the study aims to determine the effectiveness of meme marketing and its role in shaping consumer behaviour among Generation Z.

Q1. Age

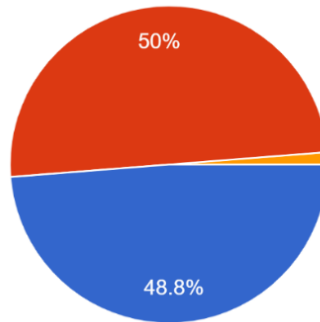


Consumer behaviour varies significantly across different age groups, making age an important factor in understanding purchasing decisions. The age groups included in the survey were 13-18, 18-22, and 23-28 years.

- Majority of respondents belong to the **18-22** years age group, with **62** (77.5%) responses.
- The second-largest group is **23-28** years age group, with **16** (20%) responses.
- The least number of respondents belong to the **13-18** years age group, with **2** (2.5%) responses.

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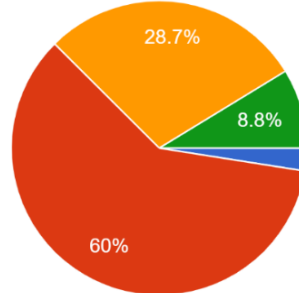
Q2. Gender



Gender plays a significant role in consumer behaviour as different genders may have varying preferences and responses to marketing strategies. The survey included three gender categories: male, female, and non-binary/other.

- The highest number of respondents were **FEMALE**, with **40** (50%) responses.
- The second most respondents were **MALE**, with **39** (48.8%) responses.
- Lastly, the least number of respondents belonged to the **NON-BINARY/OTHER** category, with **1** (1.2%) response.

Q3. Social Media Usage (Daily Average Time Spent)



Social media usage is a crucial factor in understanding consumer behaviour, as it influences purchasing decisions and brand interactions. The survey included four categories based on daily average time spent on social media: less than 1 hour, 1-3 hours, 4-6 hours, and more than 6 hours.

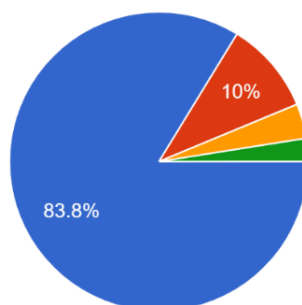
- The highest number of respondents spend **1-3 HOURS** daily on social media, with **48** (60%) responses.
- The second most respondents spend **4-6 HOURS** daily, with **23** (28.7%) responses.
- Then, a smaller group of respondents spend **MORE THAN 6 HOURS** daily, with **7** (8.8%) responses.
- Lastly, the least number of respondents spend **LESS THAN 1 HOUR** daily, with **2** (2.5%) responses.

Interpretation:

Most respondents are moderately active online (1-3 hours per day), which means that digital and meme-based marketing efforts have a good chance to reach them during their regular social media browsing. A notable minority are heavier users (4-6 hours and more than 6 hours), further increasing the potential exposure to online ads. The very small group spending less than 1 hour suggests limited engagement from that segment.

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Q4. How Often Do You Engage With Memes?



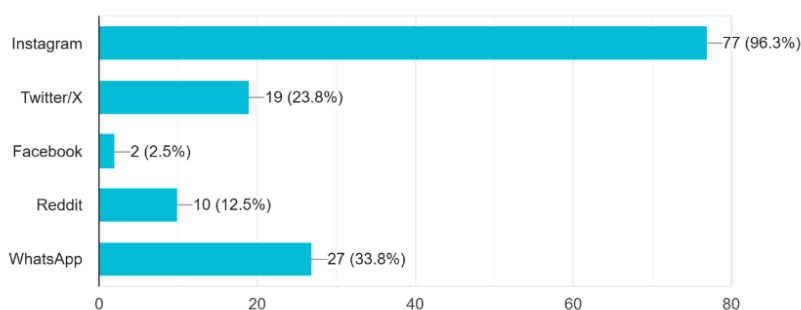
Meme engagement frequency is an important factor in understanding how deeply embedded memes are in consumer behaviour. The survey included four categories: multiple times a day, once a day, a few times a week, and rarely.

- The highest number of respondents engage with memes **MULTIPLE TIMES A DAY**, with **67** (83.8%) responses.
- The second most respondents engage with memes **ONCE A DAY**, with **8** (10%) responses.
- Then, a smaller group of respondents engage with memes a **FEW TIMES A WEEK**, with **3** (3.7%) responses.
- Lastly, the least number of respondents **RARELY ENGAGE** with memes, with **2** (2.5%) responses.

Interpretation:

A vast majority of respondents engage with memes multiple times daily, indicating that memes are an integral part of their daily online experience. This high level of engagement shows that meme-based marketing is likely to be seen and appreciated by the target audience.

Q5. Which platforms do you primarily use to consume memes? (Select all that apply)



The platforms used for meme consumption vary among respondents. The survey included Instagram, Twitter/X, Facebook, Reddit, and WhatsApp as options.

- The highest number of respondents primarily use **INSTAGRAM** for meme consumption, with **77** (96.3%) responses.
- The second most used platform is **WHATSAPP**, with **27** (33.8%) responses.
- Following that, **TWITTER/X** is used by **19** (23.8%) respondents.

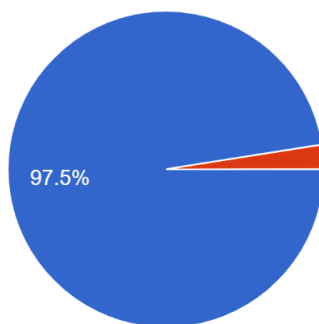
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- **REDDIT** is chosen by **10** (12.5%) respondents.
- Lastly, **FACEBOOK** is the least used platform for meme consumption, with only **2** (2.5%) responses.

Interpretation:

Instagram is by far the dominant platform for meme consumption among respondents, suggesting it should be the primary channel for meme-based advertising. WhatsApp also offers significant opportunities for viral sharing, while Twitter/X and Reddit can target more specific communities. Facebook appears to have minimal impact for this audience.

Q6. Have you ever seen a brand using memes for marketing?



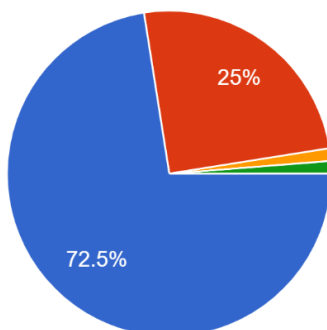
Most of the respondents have seen brands using memes for marketing.

- The highest number of respondents answered **YES**, indicating that they have come across brands leveraging meme culture for promotional purposes which was **78** (97.5%) responses.
- Only **2** (2.5%) respondents answered **NO**, suggesting that almost everyone in the sample has been exposed to meme-based marketing in some form.

Interpretation:

The near-universal exposure to meme marketing shows that it is a well-established strategy. Brands are successfully incorporating memes into their promotional activities, making this approach familiar and recognizable to consumers.

Q7. How do you feel about brands using memes in advertisements?



Most respondents have a positive perception of brands using memes in advertisements.

- **58** (72.5%) respondents **ENJOY AND ENGAGE** with such content, indicating that meme-based marketing resonates well with them.

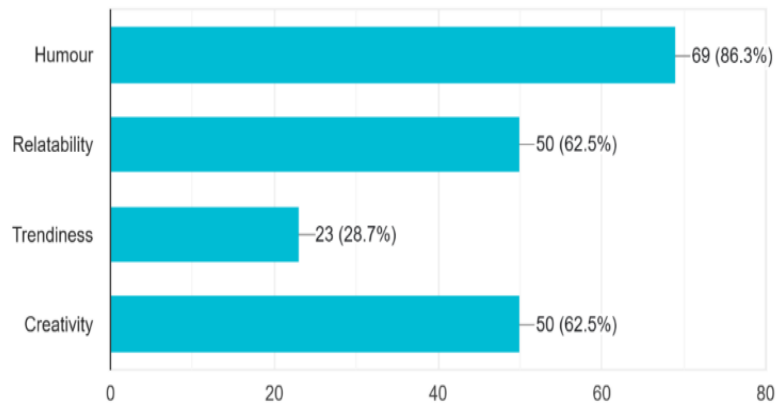
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- **20 (25%)** respondents **NOTICE MEMES BUT DO NOT ENGAGE**, showing that while the content is acknowledged, it does not necessarily drive interaction.
- The number of respondents that find it **UNAPPEALING** or **DON'T PAY ATTENTION TO IT**, are equal, being **1 (1.2%)** response each.

Interpretation:

Most of the respondents respond positively to meme-based advertising, with a strong portion actively engaging with it. While a quarter merely notice the content without engaging, the very low numbers of negative responses suggest that meme marketing is generally well-received.

Q8. What makes a meme-based advertisement appealing to you? (Select all that apply)



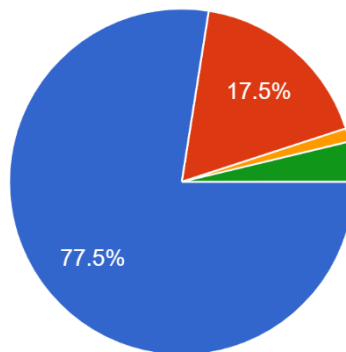
Meme-based advertisements appeal to consumers based on various factors, including humour, relatability, trendiness, and creativity. The survey allowed respondents to select multiple factors that make such advertisements engaging.

- The highest number of respondents chose **HUMOUR**, with **69 (86.3%)** responses. This indicates that humour is the most significant element in making meme-based advertisements appealing.
- The second most selected factors were **RELATABILITY** and **CREATIVITY**, both receiving **50 (62.5%)** responses. This suggests that consumers engage more with ads that they find personally relatable and creatively executed.
- A smaller group of respondents, **23 (28.7%)**, selected **TRENDINESS** as a key factor. This implies that while staying current with trends is valuable, it is not the primary reason for engagement.

Interpretation:

Humour is the key driver in making meme-based advertisements appealing, as evidenced by its high selection rate. Relatability and creativity also play crucial roles in capturing consumer interest, while trendiness has a relatively lower impact. Brands should focus on creating humorous, relatable, and creative content rather than solely chasing trends to maximize engagement.

Q9. How do you typically react to meme-based brand content?



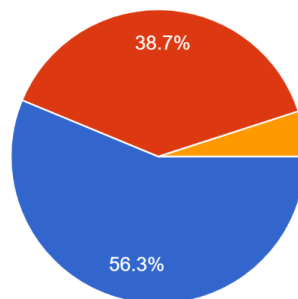
Reactions to meme-based brand content were categorized into four responses: amusement, relatability, indifference, and annoyance.

- Majority of respondents **LAUGH OR FIND IT AMUSING**, with **62** (77.5%) responses.
- A smaller group of respondents **RELATE** to it, with **14** (17.5%) responses.
- The number of respondents that find it **ANNOYING OR FORCED** show **3** (3.7%) responses.
- Only **1** (1.12%) respondent feels **INDIFFERENT** towards it.

Interpretation:

The overwhelming positive reaction (amusement) indicates that meme-based brand content is generally entertaining. A modest proportion relates to the content, while very few find it annoying or feel indifferent. This suggests that when executed well, meme content can effectively engage the audience.

Q10. Does humour in advertising make you more likely to remember a brand?



The impact of humour in advertising on brand recall was analysed with three response categories: definite influence, conditional influence, and no influence.

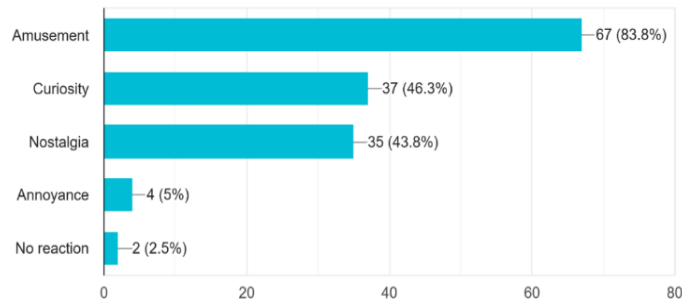
- Majority of respondents stated that humour **DEFINITELY** makes them more likely to remember a brand, with **45** (56.3%) responses.
- A significant portion said they **MAY REMEMBER IT IF IT IS CREATIVE**, with **31** (38.7%) responses.
- The least number of respondents indicated that humour **DOES NOT AFFECT** their brand recall, with **4** (5%) responses.

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Interpretation:

Humour significantly enhances brand recall, especially when combined with creativity. Although a large portion of respondents will remember a brand because of humorous content, a small group indicates that without creativity, the impact is reduced. This underscores the importance of creative execution in meme marketing.

Q11. Which emotions do meme-based advertisements typically evoke in you? (Select all that apply)



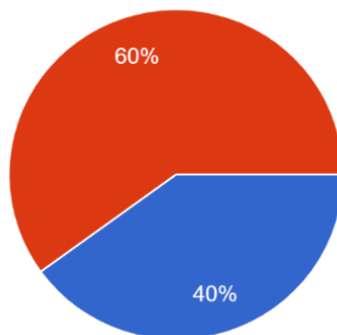
The emotional impact of meme-based advertisements was analysed with five response categories: amusement, curiosity, nostalgia, annoyance, and no reaction.

- The highest number of respondents reported that meme-based advertisements evoke **AMUSEMENT**, with **67** (83.8%) responses.
- A significant portion indicated that these ads trigger **CURIOSITY**, with **37** (46.3%) responses.
- A similar number stated that **NOSTALGIA** is a common emotional response, with **35** (43.8%) responses.
- A small group found meme-based advertisements **ANNOYING**, with **4** (5%) responses.
- The least number of respondents reported having **NO REACTION** to such advertisements, with **2** (2.5%) responses.

Interpretation:

Meme-based advertisements predominantly evoke positive emotions, with amusement being the strongest reaction. Curiosity and nostalgia are also notable, suggesting that memes resonate on multiple emotional levels. Minimal negative responses indicate that the overall impact of meme marketing is largely favourable.

Q12. Has a meme-based advertisement ever influenced your decision to buy a product?



The influence of meme-based advertisements on purchasing decisions was assessed with two response categories: yes and no.

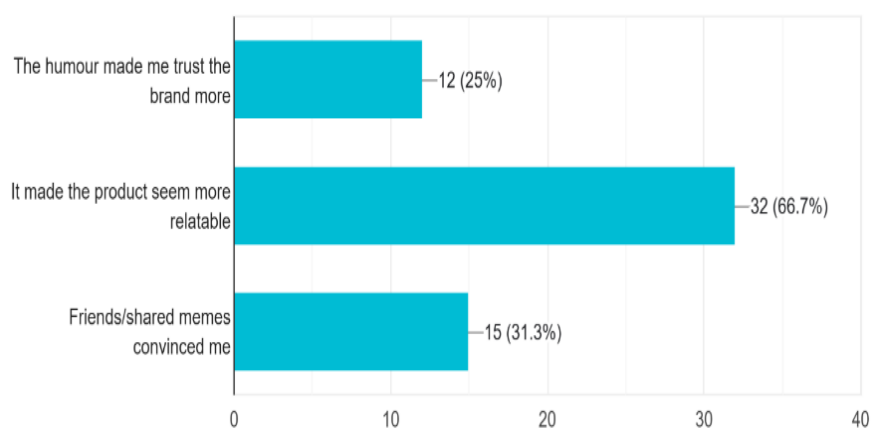
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- Majority of respondents stated that a meme-based advertisement has not influenced their decision to buy a product, with **48** (60%) responses. **(NO)**
- A significant portion acknowledged that such advertisements have influenced their purchasing decisions, with **32** (40%) responses. **(YES)**

Interpretation:

Although meme-based advertisements are effective in engaging audiences and creating brand recall, they do not directly translate into purchasing decisions for majority of consumers. However, a sizable minority (40%) indicates that meme marketing can impact purchase behaviour, suggesting that while it is a strong tool for engagement, additional strategies may be needed to convert interest into sales.

Q13. If yes, what aspect of the meme marketing influenced your decision?

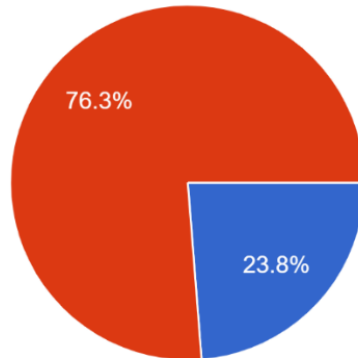


Among the **48** respondents who acknowledged being influenced by meme marketing, the key factors that contributed to their decision were:

- **RELATABILITY** of the product was the most significant factor, with **32** respondents (67.3%) stating that meme marketing made the product seem more relatable.
- **SOCIAL INFLUENCE** played a role for **15** respondents (30.6%), who mentioned that friends or shared memes convinced them to make a purchase.
- **TRUST BUILDING** through humour was cited by **12** respondents (24.5%), who felt that the humour in meme marketing increased their trust in the brand.

Interpretation:

For those consumers whose purchasing decisions were influenced by meme marketing, relatability stands out as the most critical factor. Social influence and trust built through humour also contribute, but to a lesser extent. This highlights that connecting the product to the consumer's personal experience is key in driving purchase decisions via meme-based advertising.

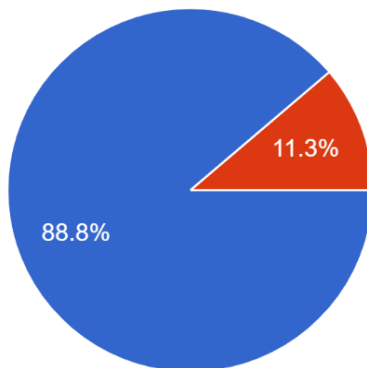
Q14. Do you trust brands that use memes in their advertising?

Regarding trust in brands that use memes in their advertising, responses indicate:

- **61** (76.3%) responses believe that trust **DEPENDS ON THE BRAND**, suggesting that meme marketing is not universally effective and must be executed appropriately.
- **19** (23.8%) respondents feel that meme-driven advertising makes **BRANDS SEEM MORE RELATABLE**, indicating a positive perception among a smaller segment.
- **0** (0%) respondents selected the option stating that meme marketing **FEELS INAUTHENTIC**, implying that while execution matters, meme marketing is generally not perceived negatively.

Interpretation:

The data shows that most consumers view trust in meme marketing as conditional on the brand itself, meaning that the success of this strategy relies heavily on the brand's overall image and authenticity. A smaller segment perceives meme advertising as enhancing brand relatability, while no respondents see it as inauthentic. This suggests that meme marketing, when executed well, does not harm brand credibility.

Q15. Are you more likely to share a meme-based advertisement compared to a traditional ad?

Regarding the likelihood of sharing a meme-based advertisement compared to a traditional ad, the responses indicate:

- **71** (88.8%) respondents answered **YES**, they are more likely to share a meme-based ad, highlighting its virality and potential for organic reach.
- **9** (11.3%) respondents answered **NO**, that they would not share a meme-based ad.

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Interpretation:

The overwhelming majority of respondents are inclined to share meme-based advertisements, underscoring their high potential for virality. This high shareability can significantly boost organic reach and engagement for brands using meme marketing, making it a powerful tool in digital advertising.

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**1. Social Media Usage**

The survey shows that 60% of respondents spend 1-3 hours daily on social media, 28.7% spend 4-6 hours, 8.8% spend more than 6 hours, and only 2.5% spend less than 1 hour.

Recommendations:

- Focus on scheduling posts and ads during peak times when the majority (1-3 hours) are active.
- For the 4-6 hours group, consider delivering more in-depth or interactive content to engage heavy users.
- Develop strategies (like time-sensitive offers) that cater to both moderate and heavy social media users.
- Minimal resources need to be allocated for the less active group (less than 1 hour).

2. Meme Engagement Frequency

The data indicates that 83.8% engage with memes multiple times a day, 10% once a day, 3.7% a few times a week, and 2.5% rarely engage.

Recommendations:

- Leverage the high daily engagement by posting new meme content frequently to remain top-of-mind.
- Experiment with varied formats and humour to keep content fresh, avoiding over-saturation.
- Use scheduling tools to maintain a consistent presence, ensuring that your memes are part of the daily scroll for most users.

3. Platforms for Meme Consumption

Instagram is the dominant platform (96.3%), followed by WhatsApp (33.8%), Twitter/X (23.8%), Reddit (12.5%), and Facebook (2.5%).

Recommendations:

- Prioritize Instagram for primary meme-based campaigns using features like Stories, Reels, and posts.
- Leverage WhatsApp for viral sharing by encouraging users to forward memes in group chats.
- Tap into niche audiences on Twitter/X and Reddit with platform-specific content.
- Allocate minimal resources for Facebook since it shows very low engagement from this target audience.

4. Exposure to Meme-Based Marketing

Nearly all respondents (97.5%) have seen brands using memes for marketing.

Recommendations:

- Since meme-based marketing is widely recognized, focus on differentiating your brand's approach through originality and authenticity.
- Experiment with unique formats and fresh content to ensure your memes stand out from competitors.
- Continuously update your content to keep pace with evolving trends without compromising your brand's voice.

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5. Perception of Brands Using Memes in Advertisements

Most respondents (72.5%) enjoy and engage with meme-based ads, 25% notice them without engaging, and only 1.2% each find them unappealing or ignore them.

Recommendations:

- Maintain a fun, relatable, and engaging tone to sustain the positive engagement from the majority.
- Introduce interactive elements (polls, contests, Q&A) to convert the 25% who only notice into active participants.
- Keep testing different styles to ensure that the content remains appealing and does not drift into unappealing territory.

6. Factors Driving Meme-Based Advertisement Appeal

Humour is the key factor (86.3%), followed by relatability and creativity (both at 62.5%), with trendiness being less important (28.7%).

Recommendations:

- Prioritize creating humorous content as the foundation of your meme marketing strategy.
- Ensure your memes are relatable by incorporating language, scenarios, or cultural references that resonate with your audience.
- Invest in creativity to produce unique visuals and ideas that set your brand apart.
- Stay aware of current trends to add timely touches, but don't rely on them as the main appeal.

7. Trust in Brands Using Memes

Most respondents (76.3%) feel that trust depends on the brand, while 23.8% believe meme-driven ads make brands seem more relatable, and 0% think it feels inauthentic.

Recommendations:

- Build and maintain a consistent brand voice that reinforces trust and authenticity across all meme content.
- Use memes as a tool to humanize your brand, ensuring that your humour aligns with your overall brand values.
- Avoid forced or off-brand humour that could jeopardize credibility; quality and consistency are key.

8. Likelihood of Sharing Meme-Based Advertisements

A significant 88.8% are more likely to share meme-based ads compared to traditional ads, with only 11.3% not inclined to share.

Recommendations:

- Create shareable content by focusing on high-impact, humorous, and relatable memes.
- Include subtle calls-to-action that encourage sharing, such as hashtags or prompts to tag friends.
- Monitor the performance of shared content to refine and amplify those that generate the most organic reach.
- Leverage user-generated content or reposts to boost overall engagement and virality.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the role of meme culture in shaping the consumer behaviour of Generation Z, particularly the impact of humour in modern advertising. The findings highlight that memes have become a dominant digital communication tool, influencing brand perception, emotional engagement, and purchasing decisions.

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Generation Z, having grown up in a digitally connected world, interacts with content in a manner that differs significantly from previous generations. Memes, due to their relatability, shareability, and humour, have emerged as a key marketing tool for brands seeking to engage Gen Z consumers effectively.

The research findings suggest that humour enhances brand recall and fosters positive associations. When incorporated effectively, meme marketing can strengthen brand identity and drive higher consumer engagement. Despite the benefits, meme-based marketing has certain limitations. Meme trends evolve rapidly, making it challenging to sustain long-term engagement. Additionally, humour is subjective, and what resonates with one audience may not appeal to another. The study also acknowledged external factors like economic conditions and personal preferences that influence purchasing decisions beyond meme marketing alone.

In conclusion, meme culture has reshaped digital marketing strategies, providing brands with an innovative way to engage Gen Z. By understanding meme dynamics, leveraging humour effectively, and maintaining authenticity, marketers can harness the power of memes to drive brand awareness and consumer engagement. This study serves as a foundation for further exploration into how digital culture continues to transform consumer behaviour in the evolving marketing landscape.

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