THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL ADVERTISING
ON THE CONSUMER PURCHASING BEHAVIOR OF YOUNG GENERATION IN MYANMAR

Peti Khin[1], Dr. Anna Davtyan [2]

Master of Science in International Digital Business, Rangsit University, Pathum Thani, Thailand
Faculty of International College, Rangist University, Pathum Thani, Thailand
Dr. Anna Davtyan[*](Corresponding author): anna.d@rsu.ac.th

Abstract

As digital advertising rapidly grows, understanding consumer purchasing behavior is essential for businesses aiming to refine their strategies and engage effectively with young consumers. This study investigates the impact of digital advertising on the purchasing behavior of Myanmar's young generation, specifically examining the role of social media platforms such as Facebook and TikTok. Quantitative methods were employed in this study, with data collected from 410 young Myanmar consumers aged between 18 and 35 years old through structured surveys. This study examines how different types of digital advertising, including sponsored ads, influencer marketing, video content, and user-generated posts, influence consumer purchasing decisions. It further analyzes how social media platforms influence the motivations and processes behind consumers' buying decisions. Correlation analysis indicated a statistically significant positive relationship between various digital advertising formats and purchasing behavior. Regression analysis revealed that video advertisements exert the most substantial effect on purchasing behavior, followed closely by influencer marketing, sponsored ads, and user-generated content. The findings indicate that all examined forms of digital advertising significantly impact consumer purchasing decisions, with social media platforms playing a critical role, particularly Facebook and TikTok. The proposed model accounts for 88.6% of the variance in purchasing behavior, confirming the substantial influence of these advertising formats. This research offers valuable insights for businesses seeking to enhance their digital advertising strategies to better engage with young Myanmar consumers, thereby improving brand trust, consumer engagement, and ultimately, sales performance. This study contributes to a broader understanding of the role digital advertising plays in shaping consumer behavior within Myanmar's rapidly evolving market.

Keywords: *Digital Advertising, Sponsored ads, Influencer marketing, Video advertising, User-generated content, Consumer Purchasing Behavior, Social Media Platforms, Young Generation*

1. Introduction

With the rapid evolution of digital advertising, businesses should develop a comprehensive understanding of consumer purchasing behavior to refine their strategies and engage with customers more effectively. Technological advancements—particularly the widespread use of the internet and social media—have significantly transformed brand visibility and marketing approaches (Deejay, Wells, Henne, & Bächtold, 2023). However, there remains a notable absence of research on the specific demographics of Myanmar's population and their responses to various digital advertising formats. The lack of detailed studies focusing on digital-native young generations hinders a nuanced understanding of how different segments within this group are influenced by digital advertising. Additionally, knowledge remains limited regarding how digital advertising impacts consumer behavior within the distinctive socio-economic and technological landscape of Myanmar.

In Myanmar, digital advertising has become increasingly dominant since the early 2010s, driven by increased internet accessibility and the widespread adoption of social media. By January 2024, approximately 44% of the population was active internet users, indicating a significant digital shift (Nan Oo, 2024). This transformation is particularly evident among Generation Z, a pivotal demographic shaping Myanmar's digital landscape (The FutureList, 2024). Nearly all members of Gen Z in Myanmar actively engage with social

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media, prioritizing authenticity, personalized experiences, and peer recommendations in their interactions with brands (Nan Oo, 2024).

As of January 2024, Myanmar had 24.11 million internet users (Kemp, 2024). Social media platforms play a central role in daily communication and information sharing among users. According to Nan Oo (2024), Facebook remains the most popular social media platform in Myanmar, with approximately 18.5 million active users as of early 2024. In the same period, TikTok had 16.65 million users aged 18 and above in Myanmar (Nan Oo, 2024). Understanding how digital advertising influences Myanmar's Generation Z consumers is essential for brands aiming to tailor marketing strategies effectively. This study explores the impact of digital advertising on consumer behavior, with a particular focus on Facebook and TikTok, providing insights into the evolving dynamics of marketing in Myanmar.

Consumer purchasing behavior is influenced by psychological, social, cultural, and personal factors, which significantly shape buying decisions (Gupta, 2024). Businesses must develop a deep understanding of these behaviors to enhance their marketing strategies and product development. The rise of e-commerce, social media, and digital advertising has fundamentally reshaped consumer habits, necessitating adaptation (Bertoni, 2024). The COVID-19 pandemic further altered consumer spending priorities (The Current State of the Economy: Understanding Consumer Behavior, 2023). Psychological motivations, cultural influences, and peer recommendations have been shown to play a critical role in shaping purchasing decisions (Herdiyanti et al., 2024; Bertoni, 2024). Data analytics have become increasingly essential in forecasting trends and optimizing marketing efforts. A data-driven approach not only improves competitiveness but also prevents inefficient spending and strengthens customer loyalty in the rapidly evolving digital marketplace (Admin, 2024; Cpatete, 2024).

Digital advertising significantly shapes Gen Z's purchasing behavior by influencing trust, engagement, and brand loyalty. Previous studies show that 71% of young consumers trust influencer referrals more than traditional ads, making authenticity-driven formats like sponsored ads, influencer marketing, video content, and user-generated content (UGC) highly effective (Kuzminov, 2024). Sponsored ads leverage data analytics to enhance brand familiarity and influence consumer decisions (Nancholas, 2024; Ambuyo, 2024). Influencer marketing proves particularly impactful, with 68% of Gen Z preferring influencer endorsements over celebrity promotions (Shaw, 2024). Video advertising, especially on TikTok, has become a dominant format, driving consumer engagement (Shaw, 2024; Tobin, 2024). Additionally, 82% of Gen Z trust brands that incorporate UGC, reinforcing brand credibility (Vasey, 2024). In Myanmar, TikTok-driven digital advertising has proven effective in influencing youth purchasing decisions, demonstrating the power of targeted campaigns in emerging markets (HapEye, 2024). Interactive elements such as quizzes and augmented reality have been shown to increase engagement by up to 60% compared to static ads (Ward & Williams, 2022). Repeated ad exposure further strengthens brand loyalty, underscoring the need to understand both emotional and cognitive consumer responses (Pine, 2023). By prioritizing transparency, authenticity, and interactivity, brands can effectively connect with Myanmar's Gen Z consumers and drive sales (Bagsarian & Azhari, 2023; Sama, 2019).

H_a: There is a significant relationship between digital advertising (e.g., sponsored ads, influencer marketing, video advertising, user-generated content) and the consumer/purchasing behavior of the young generation in Myanmar.

H_{a0}: There is no significant relationship between various formats of digital advertising (e.g., sponsored ads, influencer marketing, video advertising, user-generated content) and the consumer/purchasing behavior of the young generation in Myanmar.

Social media plays a crucial role in shaping Gen Z's purchasing behavior in Myanmar, with Facebook and TikTok emerging as dominant platforms. Facebook fosters brand perception through social connections, peer recommendations, and user-generated content, with 98% of Gen Z actively engaging with the platform (Aung & Htet, 2024). Businesses leverage targeted ads and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) to build trust, while Facebook Marketplace significantly influences purchase decisions, as 75% of young

consumers rely on peer reviews prior to making a purchase. In contrast, TikTok drives impulsive purchases through engaging short-video content, trends, and influencer marketing, with 63% of Myanmar's Gen Z making purchases directly from TikTok ads (Tan & Rahman, 2024). Its emphasis on authenticity and user-generated content strengthens consumer trust and brand loyalty. While Facebook builds long-term brand credibility, TikTok encourages immediate purchasing behavior through entertainment-driven content. An effective marketing strategy should integrate both platforms—using Facebook to maintain sustained engagement and trust, while leveraging TikTok for high-impact, trend-driven conversions.

H_β: Social media platforms, Facebook and TikTok, significantly influence the purchasing behavior of young consumers in Myanmar.

$H_{\beta o}$: Social media platforms, Facebook and TikTok, have no significant influence on the purchasing behavior of young consumers in Myanmar.

This research provided insights into how businesses can refine their digital advertising strategies to better engage Myanmar's young consumers, ultimately enhancing brand trust, engagement, and sales.

2. Objectives

1) To analyze which forms of digital advertising affect the young generation consumer's purchasing behavior in Myanmar.

2) To examine and find out the influence of social media platforms (Facebook and TikTok) on the young generation's purchasing behavior in Myanmar.

3. Materials and Methods

This study employed a quantitative methodology to examine the impact of digital advertising on the consumer purchasing behavior of the young generation in Myanmar. The research methodology involved primary data collection through standardized survey questionnaires based on a corporate five-point Likert Scale. The scale ranges from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Data collection occurred from December 2024 to January 2025, targeting young individuals aged between 18 and 35 who are active and engaged digital platform users. A sample size of 410 valid replies was obtained, determined by employing a level of confidence of 95%. Given that this age group represents the most active digital users, the research targets a population size of approximately 15.07 million based on DataReportal's Digital 2023: Myanmar report. To ensure representativeness across key demographics, including gender, educational background, and income level, a stratified sampling method was employed. The sample size was determined using the Taro Yamane formula (1967), which indicated a required sample of 400 respondents for a population exceeding 100,000, at a 95% confidence level.

The questionnaire was structured into four sections: demographic information, exposure to various digital advertising formats, influence of social media platforms, and consumer purchasing behavior. The survey was distributed online through social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Telegram, Viber) and student groups, facilitating access to the target audience. A pilot test with 20 respondents was conducted to ensure the clarity and reliability of the questionnaire prior to full distribution.

The collected data, organized and structured in Excel, were subsequently analyzed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize demographic characteristics and advertising exposure. Furthermore, Pearson correlation and multiple regression analyses were applied to examine the relationships between digital advertising formats and purchasing behavior across various social media platforms. The findings provide valuable insights into how digital advertising shapes consumer purchasing decisions among Myanmar's young population.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

The age distribution of respondents indicates that the majority, 209 (51%), fall within the 22–25 years of age group, followed by those aged 26–30 years, comprising 108 (26.3%). Respondents aged 18–21 account for 74 (18%), while the smallest group, aged 31–35, comprises only 19 (4.6%). This highlights that over half of the sample population is in their early twenties, representing a dominant young adult demographic. In terms of gender, the majority of respondents were female, accounting for 221 (53.9%) of the sample, while males accounted for 189 (46.1%). This suggests a slightly higher engagement or interest among female participants, although the gender distribution remains relatively balanced. In terms of education, nearly half of the respondents, 192 (46.8%), hold undergraduate degrees, a trend likely influenced by the university shutdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic. Graduate degree holders make up 144 (35.1%) of the sample, while postgraduate degree holders and individuals with other qualifications each represent 37 (9%). This indicates a well-educated respondent group. Occupation-wise, the largest group consisted of students, 172 (42%), followed by individuals in entry-level positions, 102 (24.9%). Business owners comprised 53 (12.9%), supervisors 43 (10.5%), and the remaining 40 (9.8%) reported "other" occupations. This indicates that the majority are either pursuing education or in the early stages of their careers. Regarding income, the highest proportion of respondents, 125 (30.5%), reported a monthly income between 150,000 and 200,000 MMK. This was followed by 113 (27.6%) who earned 360,000 MMK or more. Other income brackets included 70 (17.1%) earning between 210,000–250,000 MMK, 69 (16.8%) earning 260,000–300,000 MMK, and 33 (8.0%) earning 310,000–350,000 MMK. This distribution reflects a predominance of lower-income earners, with a notable portion in the higher-income ranges. In terms of daily social media usage, most respondents 169 (41.2%), reported spending 3–4 hours per day on social media, followed by 142 (34.6%) who spent 5–7 hours. Additionally, 47 (11.5%) reported spending 8 hours or more daily, while smaller groups spent 1–2 hours (29, 7.1%) or less than 1 hour (23, 5.6%). These findings indicate the majority of respondents are highly engaged online, spending between 3 to 7 hours per day. When analyzing the number of social media platforms used, 212 (51.7%) of respondents primarily used three platforms, followed by 113(27.6%) respondents who used two platforms, and 52 (12.7%) used only one platform. A smaller percentage engaged with four platforms, 31 (7.6%), and only 2 (0.5%) used five platforms. This demonstrates that most respondents are active on multiple social media platforms, with three platforms being the most common number of platforms used.

Table 1 Demographic and Social Media Usage Conditions of Young Consumers in Myanmar

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
18-21	74	18
22-25	209	51
26-30	108	26.3
31-35	19	4.6
Total	410	100
Gender		
Male	189	46.1
Female	221	53.9
Total	410	100
Education		
Undergraduate	192	46.8
Graduate	144	35.1

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Postgraduate	37	9
Other	37	9
Total	410	100
Occupation		
Student	172	42
Entry level	102	24.9
Supervisor level	43	10.5
Business owner	53	12.9
Others	40	9.8
Total	410	100
Income		
150,000 - 200,000 MMK	125	30.5
210,000 - 250,000 MMK	70	17.1
260,000 - 300,000 MMK	69	16.8
310,000 - 350,000 MMK	33	8
360,000 MMK and above	113	27.6
Total	410	100
Hours per day spent on social media		
Less than 1 hour	23	5.6
1-2 hours	29	7.1
3-4 hours	169	41.2
5-7 hours	142	34.6
8 hours or more	47	11.5
Total	410	100
Number of social media used		
One social media	52	12.7
Two social medias	113	27.6
Three social medias	212	51.7
Four social medias	31	7.6
Five social medias	2	0.5
Total	410	100

Correlation Analysis

The Pearson correlation analysis examining the relationship between various forms of digital advertising and the consumer purchasing behavior in Myanmar's young generation reveals significant positive correlations between all variables at the 0.01 significance level ($p < 0.01$). Notably, social media platforms show a very strong correlation ($r = .918$, $p < 0.01$), highlighting the importance of the role that platform selection plays in shaping purchasing behavior. Among the various forms of digital advertising, video advertising demonstrates the strongest correlation with consumer purchasing behavior ($r = .897$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that video content is particularly influential in driving consumer decisions. Influencer marketing ($r = .866$, $p < 0.01$) and sponsored ads ($r = .862$, $p < 0.01$) also exhibit strong positive correlations, indicating that promotional content has a notable impact on the consumer purchasing behavior of young consumers. Additionally, user-generated content ($r = .850$, $p < 0.01$) is significantly correlated with consumer behavior,

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reflecting the influence of peer reviews and authentic content on purchasing choices. Additionally, strong interrelationships were observed among the different digital advertising strategies. For example, influencer marketing is highly correlated with sponsored ads ($r = .820$, $p < 0.01$) and user-generated content ($r = .809$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that these strategies frequently complement one another in affecting consumer behavior. Overall, the findings emphasize the critical role of digital advertising—especially video content, influencer marketing, and social media platform selection—in shaping the purchasing decisions of Myanmar's young generation.

Table 2. Pearson correlation between digital advertising (e.g., sponsored ads, influencer marketing, video advertising, user-generated content) and the consumer/purchasing behavior of young generation in Myanmar

Variable	Sponsored ads	Influencer marketing	Video advertising	User generate content	Social media platforms	Consumer purchasing behavior
Sponsored ads	1					
Influencer marketing	.820**	1				
Video advertising	.797**	.803**	1			
User generate content	.811**	.809**	.845**	1		
Social media platforms	.836**	.847**	.853**	.822**	1	
Consumer purchasing behavior	.862**	.866**	.897**	.850**	.918**	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Multiple Linear Regression

The regression analysis results examining the effect of digital advertising (sponsored ads, influencer marketing, video advertising, and user-generated content) on the consumer purchasing behavior of the young generation in Myanmar show that the model explains 88.6% of the variance in consumer purchasing behavior, with an adjusted R^2 of 0.885. This indicates a strong fit between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The analysis revealed that video advertising has the most substantial impact on consumer purchasing behavior, with an unstandardized coefficient of 0.451 and a standardized beta coefficient of 0.426 ($p < 0.001$). This means that for every unit increase in video advertising, consumer purchasing behavior increases by 0.451 units, while holding other variables constant. Both sponsored ads and influencer marketing also show significant positive effects on consumer behavior, with unstandardized coefficients of 0.265 and 0.227, respectively, and standardized beta coefficients of 0.245 and 0.252. These results indicate that both sponsored ads and influencer marketing are important drivers of purchasing decisions among young consumers in Myanmar ($p < 0.001$). User-generated content, while still statistically significant, has a comparatively smaller effect on consumer behavior. It has an unstandardized coefficient of 0.092 and a standardized beta coefficient of 0.087 ($p = 0.015$), suggesting a moderate but noteworthy influence on consumer behavior. The overall regression model was highly significant (F = 786.125, $p < 0.001$), confirming that the independent variables collectively have a significant effect on consumer purchasing behavior.

Table 3 The Effect of digital advertising (e.g., sponsored ads, influencer marketing, video advertising, user-generated content) on the consumer/purchasing behavior of the young generation in Myanmar

Factors	Unstandardized Coefficients β	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	Sig.
(Constant)	-0.119	0.073		0.105
Sponsored ads	0.265	0.036	0.245	<.001
Influencer marketing	0.227	0.03	0.252	<.001
Video advertising	0.451	0.037	0.426	<.001
User generate content	0.092	0.038	0.087	0.015

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F (p-value)	786.125 (<0.001) ***
R2	0.886
Adjusted R2	0.885

Dependent Variable: Consumer purchasing behavior

The results of the regression analysis examining the influence of social media platforms (Facebook and TikTok) on the consumer purchasing behavior of the young generation in Myanmar are presented in the table. The model explains 84.3% of the variance in consumer purchasing behavior, with an adjusted R^2 of 0.842, indicating a strong explanatory power. The analysis revealed that social media platforms have a significant positive effect on consumer purchasing behavior, with an unstandardized coefficient of 0.987 and a standardized beta coefficient of 0.918 ($p < 0.001$). This suggests that for every unit increase in social media platform engagement, consumer purchasing behavior increases by 0.987 units, while holding other variables constant. The overall regression model was highly significant (F = 2187.241, $p < 0.001$), confirming that social media platforms collectively have a significant influence on the purchasing behavior of the young generation in Myanmar.

Table 4. Influence of social media platforms (Facebook and TikTok) on young generation purchasing behavior in Myanmar

Factors	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
	β	Std. Error	Beta	
(Constant)	-0.135	0.076		0.077
Social media platforms	0.987	0.021	0.918	<.001
F (p-value)	2187.241 (<0.001) ***			
R2	0.843			
Adjusted R2	0.842			

Dependent Variable: Consumer purchasing behavior

4.2 Discussion

The findings suggest that digital advertising significantly influences the young consumer demographic in Myanmar, especially those in their early twenties with high digital engagement. The data suggests that video advertising and strategic use of social media platforms, such as Facebook and TikTok, are critical in shaping purchasing behavior.

The correlation analysis demonstrated positive relationships between digital advertising formats (sponsored ads, influencer marketing, video advertising, and user-generated content) and consumer purchasing behavior. Video advertising, in particular, showed the strongest correlation, highlighting the effectiveness of visual content. This supports the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_{a0}), which claimed no significant relationship between digital advertising formats and consumer purchasing behavior, and aligns with the alternative hypothesis (H_a), indicating a significant relationship. The regression analysis revealed a substantial influence of social media platforms (Facebook and TikTok) on purchasing behavior. This supports hypothesis ($H_β$) and rejects the null hypothesis ($H_{β0}$), which stated that social media platforms have no significant influence on purchasing behavior.

These results align with Tan and Rahman's (2024) study, which underscores TikTok's impact on Generation Z's purchasing behaviors in Myanmar, demonstrating that platform choice is crucial in shaping consumer behavior. Furthermore, these findings are consistent with the research by Aung et al. (2024), which highlights the determinants of consumer buying behavior on Facebook Marketplace in Myanmar, suggesting that social media platforms like Facebook are essential for digital commerce. However, Wang et al. (2022) found that cultural differences can moderate the influence of TikTok on consumer impulse buying, indicating

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that while TikTok is influential, cultural context can affect its impact, a nuance not directly explored in our study.

This study focused exclusively on young consumers (18–35), and the findings may not be representative of the behaviors of older age groups. Additionally, only popular platforms such as Facebook and TikTok were covered, while other rising platforms like Telegram and Viber were not deeply explored. Cultural and political factors unique to Myanmar, which could influence the effectiveness of digital advertising, were not analyzed in depth. The use of online surveys may have excluded offline or less digitally engaged users, potentially introducing response bias. Finally, the cross-sectional design of the study restricts insights into long-term behavioral changes, thus making it challenging to assess evolving consumer trends over time. Furthermore, while the study provides valuable practical insights, it does not draw on established theoretical frameworks such as the Theory of Planned Behavior or the Elaboration Likelihood Model, which could have enriched the analysis by providing deeper psychological or communicative perspectives on consumer behavior.

5. Conclusion

This study confirms the significant impact of digital advertising on the purchasing behavior of Myanmar's young generation, particularly those in their early twenties who are highly engaged with digital platforms. Various forms of digital advertising, including sponsored ads, influencer marketing, video advertising, and user-generated content, were found to play a crucial role in shaping consumer decisions. Social media platforms, especially Facebook and TikTok, were identified as essential tools for driving consumer engagement and influencing purchasing behavior.

Among the different formats of advertising, video advertising emerged as the most influential, demonstrating the power of visual content in capturing consumer attention. The findings emphasized the strong connection between digital advertising strategies and the online presence of the younger demographic, who are tech-savvy, socially active, and often use multiple social media platforms daily.

This research underscores the importance of integrating digital advertising strategies that leverage the strengths of social media platforms. Businesses targeting Myanmar's young consumers should focus on creating content that resonates with their preferences for authentic, interactive, and visually appealing advertising. These insights are valuable for marketers and businesses seeking to enhance their brand visibility, build consumer trust, and drive sales within this dynamic and evolving market.

Future research could examine the impact of cultural context and financial factors, especially given Myanmar's political situation, on the effectiveness of digital advertising. Additionally, it would be worthwhile to explore other social media platforms such as Telegram and Viber, as an increasing number of users have turned to these platforms. Furthermore, expanding the sample size and including different generations, as well as gathering data from Myanmar people living abroad, could provide a broader perspective. Incorporating established theoretical frameworks, such as the Theory of Planned Behavior, the Elaboration Likelihood Model, or the Uses and Gratifications Theory, could offer deeper insights into the psychological and cognitive mechanisms that drive consumer responses to digital advertising. This theoretical approach would enrich future research by offering a structured lens to analyze the influence of advertising strategies on purchasing behavior.

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