



IMPACT OF INSTAGRAM REELS ADVERTISING ON PURCHASE INTENTION OF AFFORDABLE FASHION BRANDS AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Abstract: The increasing dominance of short-form video content has significantly transformed the digital advertising landscape, with **Instagram Reels** emerging as a key promotional tool for affordable fashion brands targeting young consumers. College students represent a digitally native, trend-sensitive, and price-conscious segment whose purchase decisions are strongly shaped by social media advertising. Despite growing managerial relevance, academic research examining the effectiveness of Instagram Reels advertising on purchase intention — particularly in the Indian affordable fashion context — remains limited.

This study integrates the **Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)** (Ajzen, 1991), the **Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)** (Davis, 1989), and **Advertising Effectiveness Theory** (Ashley & Tuten, 2015) to examine how consumer attitude, ease of engagement, entertainment value, and informativeness jointly influence purchase intention toward affordable fashion brands. Drawing from TPB, the study investigates how attitude toward Instagram Reels advertisements shapes purchase intention. TAM adds a technological dimension by explaining how ease of engagement influences attitude formation. Advertising effectiveness theory contributes a content-based perspective by examining the role of entertainment value and informativeness on attitude.

A **quantitative, cross-sectional research design** was adopted using primary data collected from **120 college students in Bengaluru** through a structured questionnaire employing five-point Likert scales. Statistical analyses including reliability testing

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(Cronbach's alpha), Pearson correlation, and multiple regression with robust HC3 standard errors were conducted to test the proposed relationships. Key results reveal that informativeness ($\beta = 0.302$, $p < 0.001$) and ease of engagement ($\beta = 0.385$, $p < 0.001$) significantly shape consumer attitude, while attitude strongly and significantly predicts purchase intention ($\beta = 1.560$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.401$). All constructs demonstrate strong internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.85. The study contributes theoretically by integrating behavioral, technological, and content-based perspectives into a unified framework for short-form video advertising research. Practically, it offers actionable insights for affordable fashion brands on designing Reels content that effectively converts consumer engagement into purchase intention. The findings align with India's broader digitalization goals and the IEA 2025 theme of "*Technology and Innovation as Growth Drivers in the Indian Economy*."

Keywords: Instagram Reels, Purchase Intention, Affordable Fashion Brands, Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Advertising Effectiveness, Entertainment Value, Informativeness, College Students, Social Media Marketing

1. INTRODUCTION

India's rapid digitalization has fundamentally reshaped consumer interaction with brands, particularly through social media platforms. With over **500 million active Instagram users** in India, the platform has become a central arena for brand communication and consumer engagement (Smith & Anderson, 2018). Among recent innovations, **Instagram Reels** has emerged as a dominant short-form video feature that allows brands to deliver promotional messages through immersive, visually rich, and algorithm-amplified content. Affordable fashion brands such as Myntra, Meesho, Bewakoof, and H&M increasingly leverage Reels to build awareness and influence purchase decisions among young consumers who spend significant time consuming this format daily.

College students represent one of the most digitally active consumer segments in India — characterized by high social media engagement, sensitivity to fashion trends, and budget-conscious purchasing behavior. Their purchase decisions are strongly influenced by advertising content that is entertaining, informative, and easy to engage with. Instagram Reels, through its intuitive swipe-and-view interface and seamless integration with shopping features, provides affordable fashion brands with a low-cost, high-reach channel to shape consumer attitudes and drive purchase intention among this high-potential segment.

While prior research has examined social media advertising and influencer marketing broadly (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017; Lou & Yuan, 2019), limited empirical studies focus specifically on Instagram Reels advertising and its influence on purchase intention within the affordable fashion category in India. Moreover, existing studies tend to examine behavioral, technological, or content-based factors in isolation, failing to capture their combined and interactive influence on consumer response to short-form video advertising. This gap is significant given the scale of Reels adoption among college students and the strategic importance of this segment for affordable fashion brands.

To address these gaps, this study integrates three well-established and complementary theoretical frameworks: the **Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)** (Ajzen, 1991), the **Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)** (Davis, 1989), and **Advertising Effectiveness Theory** (Ashley & Tuten, 2015; Voorveld et al., 2018). TPB explains how favorable consumer attitudes translate directly into behavioral intention to purchase. TAM clarifies how the ease with which consumers engage with the Reels platform shapes their attitudinal responses to embedded advertising. Advertising effectiveness theory identifies entertainment value and informativeness as the key content-level drivers of attitude formation toward advertisements.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Understanding consumer response to Instagram Reels advertising requires synthesizing knowledge from behavioral, technological, and advertising effectiveness perspectives. The following review examines the theoretical foundations and empirical evidence that underpin the study's integrated framework.

2.1. Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Consumer Attitude

Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior is among the most extensively applied frameworks in consumer behavior research. TPB proposes that **behavioral intention** — the immediate antecedent of actual behavior is primarily determined by attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Of these determinants, **attitude** has consistently emerged as the strongest predictor of purchase intention in digital contexts (Pavlou, 2003; Kumar & Dange, 2020). Hsu et al. (2017) confirmed that favorable attitudes

toward online advertisements significantly enhanced purchase intention among young consumers, particularly in visually engaging advertising formats. In the Instagram Reels context, consumers' evaluative judgments regarding the creativity, relevance, and overall quality of advertisements are expected to shape their purchase intention — forming the theoretical basis for Hypothesis 1 of this study.

2.2. Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Ease of Engagement

Davis (1989) introduced the Technology Acceptance Model to explain user adoption of information technology through **Perceived Usefulness (PU)** and **Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)**. In the social media advertising context, ease of use translates into **ease of engagement** — the degree to which consumers find it effortless and natural to interact with advertising content on a platform. Venkatesh and Bala (2021) extended TAM's applicability across digital environments, while Chatterjee and Kar (2022) demonstrated that platform interaction efficiency directly enhances attitude formation in online retail contexts. Instagram Reels is architecturally designed to minimize engagement friction — content auto-plays, requires minimal navigation, and is algorithmically personalized — creating conditions that should naturally enhance positive attitude formation toward advertising content. This forms the basis for Hypothesis 3.

2.3. Advertising Effectiveness: Entertainment Value and Informativeness

Ashley and Tuten (2015) established **entertainment value** and **informativeness** as the two most critical content-level dimensions of effective social media advertising. Entertainment value encompasses perceived enjoyment, visual creativity, and appeal; informativeness reflects the clarity, relevance, and usefulness of product information communicated through an advertisement. Both dimensions have been shown to positively and significantly influence consumer attitudes toward social media advertisements (Lou & Yuan, 2019; Voorveld et al., 2018). In the Instagram Reels context, fashion advertisements that are visually stimulating and creatively produced — while also communicating clear product details, pricing, and purchase pathways are expected to generate stronger favorable attitudes among college students. Nandagopal and Chinnaiyan (2021) confirmed the relevance of these content

dimensions for Indian college student consumers specifically, finding that content creativity and platform suitability significantly drove fashion purchase decisions. This forms the theoretical basis for Hypothesis 2.

2.4. Research Gap and Conceptual Framework

While individual studies have examined TPB, TAM, and advertising effectiveness factors in isolation, **no prior study has simultaneously integrated all three frameworks** to examine Instagram Reels advertising in the specific context of affordable fashion brands and college students in India. Most existing research analyzes behavioral or technological determinants without accounting for content quality, or examines content factors without grounding them in behavioral theory. This study fills that gap by proposing and empirically testing an integrated framework in which **entertainment value and informativeness** (Advertising Effectiveness) and **ease of engagement** (TAM) shape **consumer attitude** (TPB), which in turn predicts **purchase intention** — using primary quantitative data from 120 college students in Bengaluru.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Problem

Despite the rapidly increasing use of Instagram Reels as an advertising platform by affordable fashion brands, limited empirical research examines the combined influence of consumer attitude, ease of engagement, entertainment value, and informativeness on purchase intention among college students in India.

3.2. Research Objectives

1. To examine the impact of attitude toward Instagram Reels advertisements on purchase intention among college students.
2. To analyze the influence of entertainment value and informativeness of Instagram Reels advertisements on consumer attitude.
3. To assess the role of ease of engagement with Instagram Reels in shaping consumer attitude toward advertisements.

3.3. Research Hypotheses

- **H1:** Attitude toward Instagram Reels advertisements has a significant positive impact on purchase intention toward affordable fashion brands.

- **H2:** Entertainment value and informativeness of Instagram Reels advertisements positively and significantly influence consumer attitude.
- **H3:** Ease of engagement with Instagram Reels positively and significantly influences consumer attitude toward advertisements.

3.4. Research Design

This study employs a **quantitative, cross-sectional, primary data research design**. A quantitative approach was selected to empirically measure and statistically test the strength and direction of relationships between theoretically defined constructs using structured numerical data. A cross-sectional design was appropriate since the study aims to capture consumer perceptions and purchase intentions at a specific point in time, consistent with established practice in social media advertising research (Ashley & Tuten, 2015; Voorveld et al., 2018).

3.5. Sample and Data Collection

The target population comprised college students in Bengaluru actively using Instagram and exposed to affordable fashion brand advertisements on Reels. A **convenience sampling technique** was employed to recruit **120 respondents** from PGDM and undergraduate programs, aged 18–25 years. This sample size is consistent with prior social media advertising studies in the Indian context (Nandagopal & Chinnaiyan, 2021) and provides adequate statistical power for multiple regression analysis. Data were collected through a **structured online questionnaire** administered via Google Forms. All respondents confirmed active Instagram usage and prior exposure to affordable fashion brand Reels advertisements as screening criteria.

3.6. Measurement Instrument and Variables

The questionnaire used **five-point Likert scales** (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) with three items per construct, adapted from validated scales in the literature:

- **Attitude (ATT):** Favorability, interest, and overall evaluation of Instagram Reels advertisements ($\alpha = 0.856$).
- **Entertainment Value (EV):** Perceived enjoyment, visual creativity, and appeal of Reels ad content ($\alpha = 0.885$).

- **Informativeness (INF):** Perceived clarity, relevance, and usefulness of product information in Reels ads ($\alpha = 0.899$).
- **Ease of Engagement (EOE):** Perceived simplicity and effortlessness of interacting with Reels content ($\alpha = 0.862$).
- **Purchase Intention (PI):** Likelihood of purchasing affordable fashion brands advertised via Reels, measured on a 1–10 scale.

3.7. Analysis Plan

Data were analyzed using Python (SciPy, NumPy) and SPSS through the following sequential plan: **Step 1** — Cronbach’s alpha for reliability; **Step 2** — Descriptive statistics; **Step 3** — Pearson correlation matrix; **Step 4** Regression 1 (TPB): Attitude → Purchase Intention; **Step 5** — Regression 2 (Advertising Effectiveness):

EV + INF → Attitude; **Step 6** — Regression 3 (TAM): EOE → Attitude. All regressions used OLS with robust HC3 standard errors to correct for heteroskedasticity.

4. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This section presents all statistical analyses conducted on primary data from **120 college students** in Bengaluru to test the three hypotheses derived from the integrated TPB–TAM–Advertising Effectiveness framework. Results proceed from reliability testing and descriptive statistics through correlation and three regression models.

4.1. Reliability Analysis

Internal consistency of all four multi-item constructs was assessed using Cronbach’s alpha (Table 1). A value of $\alpha > 0.70$ is the accepted minimum threshold; $\alpha > 0.80$ indicates good reliability. All four constructs comfortably exceed 0.85, confirming strong internal consistency and validating the use of composite mean scores in subsequent analyses.

Table 1: Cronbach’s Alpha — Internal Consistency of Constructs (N = 120)

<i>Construct</i>	<i>No. of Items</i>	<i>Cronbach’s α</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
Entertainment Value	3	0.885	Good
Informativeness	3	0.899	Good
Ease of Engagement	3	0.862	Good
Attitude	3	0.856	Good

All alpha values range from 0.856 to 0.899, confirming that items within each construct are measuring the same underlying variable reliably. This validates all composite scores used in subsequent analyses.

4.2. Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 presents mean, standard deviation, minimum, median, and maximum scores for all five study variables.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of All Study Variables (N = 120)

Variable	Mean	SD	Min	Median	Max
Entertainment Value (1–5)	3.725	0.723	1.33	4.000	5.00
Informativeness (1–5)	3.597	0.853	1.33	3.667	5.00
Ease of Engagement (1–5)	3.844	0.706	1.33	4.000	5.00
Attitude — composite (1–5)	4.581	0.551	2.33	5.000	5.00
Purchase Intention (1–10)	7.258	1.357	3.00	7.000	10.00

Interpretation: Ease of Engagement recorded the highest mean ($M = 3.844$), reflecting that college students find interacting with Instagram Reels highly effortless and natural — consistent with the platform’s intuitive design. Entertainment Value ($M = 3.725$) and Informativeness ($M = 3.597$) were both rated favorably above the Likert midpoint of 3.0, confirming that respondents perceived affordable fashion Reels advertisements as both enjoyable and informative. Attitude scored notably high ($M = 4.581$), indicating that on the whole, respondents hold strongly favorable dispositions toward Reels-based fashion advertising. Purchase Intention ($M = 7.258$, median = 7.0 on a 10-point scale) reflects strong behavioral intent, with the majority of college students inclined to purchase after viewing Reels advertisements. The moderate standard deviations indicate reasonable individual variation without excessive spread, supporting the representativeness of results.

4.3. Pearson Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the direction, strength, and significance of bivariate relationships among all five constructs before regression testing (Table 3). Figure 1 presents the correlation heatmap for visual interpretation.

Table 3: Pearson Correlation Matrix (N = 120)

Variable	1. EV	2. INF	3. EOE	4. ATT	5. PI
1. Entertainment Value (EV)	1.000	0.420***	0.166	0.376***	0.365***
2. Informativeness (INF)	—	1.000	0.194*	0.543***	0.408***
3. Ease of Engagement (EOE)	—	—	1.000	0.493***	0.379***
4. Attitude (ATT)	—	—	—	1.000	0.634***
5. Purchase Intention (PI)	—	—	—	—	1.000

Note: EV = Entertainment Value; INF = Informativeness; EOE = Ease of Engagement; ATT = Attitude; PI= Purchase Intention. * p < 0.05; *** p < 0.001. All correlations are two-tailed.

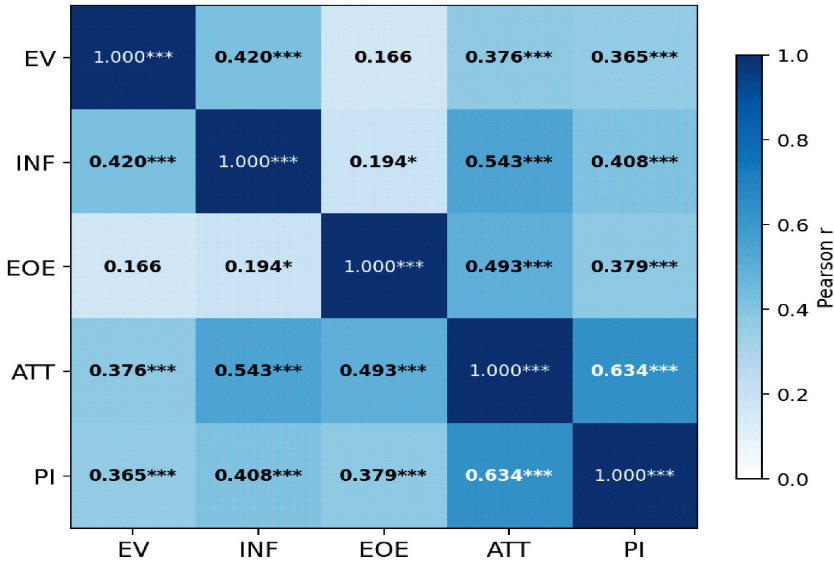


Figure 1: Pearson Correlation Heatmap — Strength of Association Among All Key Variables (N = 120)

Interpretation: The correlation matrix and heatmap reveal a theoretically coherent and statistically robust pattern. **Attitude demonstrates the strongest correlation with Purchase Intention** ($r = 0.634$, $p < 0.001$) — the darkest cell in Figure 1 — providing strong preliminary support for H1 and confirming TPB’s proposition that attitude is the dominant predictor of purchase behavior. Among the predictors of Attitude, **Informativeness** shows the strongest association ($r = 0.543$, $p < 0.001$), followed by **Ease of Engagement** ($r = 0.493$, $p < 0.001$) and **Entertainment Value** ($r = 0.376$, $p < 0.001$). All these relationships are significant at the 0.1% level, providing preliminary support for H2 and H3. Inter-predictor correlations are moderate (maximum $r = 0.420$ between EV and INF), confirming that multicollinearity is not a concern in

the regression models. The heatmap clearly maps the theoretical pathways of the integrated framework — from content quality and platform ease through attitude to purchase intention.

4.4. Regression Analysis 1 — TPB: Attitude → Purchase Intention

The first regression model tests **Hypothesis 1** from the Theory of Planned Behavior, examining whether attitude toward Instagram Reels advertisements significantly predicts purchase intention toward affordable fashion brands.

Model Specification: Purchase Intention = $\beta_0 + \beta_1 \times \text{Attitude} + \epsilon$ | Method: OLS with robust HC3 standard errors

Table 4: Regression Results — Attitude Predicting Purchase Intention (N = 120)

Predictor	Coefficient (β)	Robust SE	t-value	p-value
Constant	0.112	0.900	0.125	0.901
Attitude	1.560	0.195	8.004	< 0.001

Model Fit: $R^2 = 0.401$ | Adjusted $R^2 = 0.396$ | F-statistic $p < 0.001$

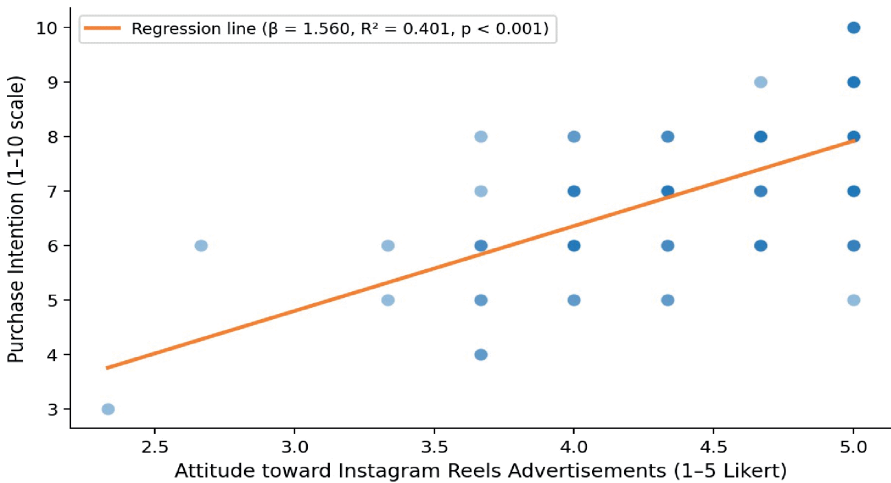


Figure 2: Scatter Plot with Regression Line — Attitude Predicting Purchase Intention (TPB; N = 120, $R^2 = 0.401$)

Interpretation: The regression results provide compelling support for **H1**. Attitude is a **strong and highly significant predictor** of purchase intention ($\beta = 1.560$, $p < 0.001$, $t = 8.004$). The model explains **40.1% of the variance in purchase intention** ($R^2 = 0.401$) — a large effect size in social science research. The Adjusted R^2 of 0.396 confirms this result is robust and not inflated by model complexity. Figure 2 visually confirms the relationship:

the scatter plot shows a clear positive linear trend with data points distributed closely around the upward-sloping regression line, affirming that as attitude scores increase, purchase intention scores rise consistently. The steep slope ($\beta = 1.560$) highlights the magnitude of this effect — every one-unit increase in attitude score translates into a 1.56-point increase in purchase intention on the 10-point scale. **H1 is fully supported.** This finding confirms TPB’s central proposition in the short-form video advertising context and establishes attitude as the primary lever through which Reels advertising drives purchase behavior among college students.

Regression Analysis 2 — Advertising Effectiveness: Entertainment Value & Informativeness → Attitude

The second regression model tests **Hypothesis 2** by examining whether entertainment value and informativeness — the two core advertising content dimensions — jointly and significantly predict consumer attitude toward Instagram Reels advertisements.

Model Specification: Attitude = $\beta_0 + \beta_1 \times$ Entertainment Value + $\beta_2 \times$ Informativeness + ϵ | Method: OLS, robust HC3 SE

Preliminary Correlations with Attitude: Entertainment Value ↔ Attitude: $r = 0.376, p < 0.001$ | Informativeness ↔ Attitude: $r = 0.543, p < 0.001$

Table 5: Regression Results — EV & Informativeness Predicting Attitude (N = 120)

Predictor	Coefficient (β)	Robust SE	t-value	p-value
Constant	2.984	0.253	11.789	< 0.001
Entertainment Value	0.137	0.071	1.942	0.055†
Informativeness	0.302	0.056	5.361	< 0.001

Model Fit: $R^2 = 0.322$ | Adjusted $R^2 = 0.310$ | F-statistic $p < 0.001$

Note: † $p = 0.055$ (positive but marginally non-significant at the conventional 5% level).

Interpretation: The overall regression model is statistically significant (F $p < 0.001$), explaining **32.2% of variance in Attitude** ($R^2 = 0.322$) — a meaningful effect indicating that advertising content quality substantially shapes how college students evaluate Instagram Reels advertisements. **Informativeness** is a **highly significant positive predictor** of attitude ($\beta = 0.302, p < 0.001, t = 5.361$). This is the most important finding of this model:

in the affordable fashion context, where college students are price-conscious and functionally motivated consumers, the clarity and relevance of product information — pricing, features, availability, styling details — are the primary content-level drivers of favorable attitude formation.

Advertisements that communicate clear product value are not just functionally useful; they actively and significantly shape how students feel about the brand and its advertising approach.

Entertainment Value shows a **positive directional effect** on attitude ($\beta = 0.137, p = 0.055$), falling just short of the 5% significance threshold. This marginal result is meaningful: it confirms that entertainment value plays a genuine positive role in attitude formation, contributing to the overall advertising experience, but that it operates as a supporting rather than dominant factor in the affordable fashion Reels context. Visual creativity and enjoyability attract attention and create positive affect, but it is informational substance that translates most reliably into favorable attitude. **H2 is partially supported.** The strategic implication is clear: affordable fashion brands should design Reels that blend compelling visual entertainment with substantive product information, prioritizing informational quality as the cornerstone of attitude-building content strategy.

Regression Analysis 3 — TAM: Ease of Engagement → Attitude

The third regression model tests **Hypothesis 3** using the Technology Acceptance Model, examining whether ease of engagement with Instagram Reels significantly predicts consumer attitude toward advertisements.

Model Specification: Attitude = $\beta_0 + \beta_1 \times \text{Ease of Engagement} + \epsilon$ | Method: OLS with robust HC3 standard errors

Preliminary Correlation: Ease of Engagement ↔ Attitude: $r = 0.493, p < 0.001$

Table 6: Regression Results — Ease of Engagement Predicting Attitude (N = 120)

Predictor	Coefficient (β)	Robust SE	t-value	p-value
Constant	3.100	0.351	8.832	< 0.001
Ease of Engagement	0.385	0.084	4.567	< 0.001

Model Fit: $R^2 = 0.243$ | Adjusted $R^2 = 0.237$ | F-statistic $p < 0.001$

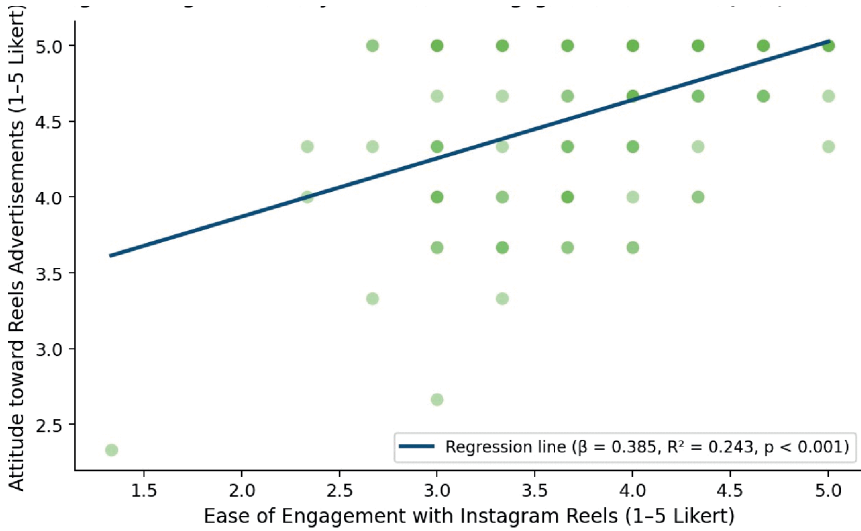


Figure 3: Scatter Plot with Regression Line — Ease of Engagement Predicting Attitude (TAM; N = 120, R² = 0.243)

Interpretation: Ease of Engagement is a **strong and highly significant predictor** of Attitude ($\beta = 0.385, p < 0.001, t = 4.567$), explaining **24.3% of variance** — a medium-to-large effect. Figure 3 confirms a clear positive linear relationship: as ease of engagement increases, attitude scores rise consistently. Instagram Reels’ frictionless interface — auto-play content, minimal navigation, algorithmic personalization — creates a low-effort environment where advertising is encountered naturally and evaluated more openly. When college students experience the platform as effortless, they are less cognitively guarded and more receptive to forming favorable attitudes toward embedded brand content. **H3 is fully supported**, confirming TAM’s applicability in short-form video advertising contexts.

4.7. Hypothesis Testing Summary

Table 7: Consolidated Hypothesis Testing Results (N = 120)

H	Relationship Tested	Key β (p-value)	R ²	Conclusion
H1	Attitude → Purchase Intention	1.560 (< 0.001)	0.401	Supported
H2	EV + Informativeness → Attitude	INF: 0.302 (< 0.001) EV: 0.137 (0.055†)	0.322	Partially Supported
H3	Ease of Engagement → Attitude	0.385 (< 0.001)	0.243	Supported

Note: *** p < 0.001; † p = 0.055 (positive directional effect, marginally non-significant).

H1 and H3 are fully supported; H2 is partially supported with Informativeness significant and Entertainment Value positive but marginally non-significant. All three R^2 values represent medium-to-large effect sizes (0.243 to 0.401), confirming the practical and statistical significance of the integrated framework.

5. FINDINGS

The statistical analyses conducted on data from 120 college students in Bengaluru yield comprehensive findings about how Instagram Reels advertising shapes purchase intention toward affordable fashion brands. Findings are organized around the study's three theoretical dimensions and key integrative insights.

5.1. Behavioral Dimension — H1 Supported (TPB)

Consumer attitude toward Instagram Reels advertisements is the **strongest and most significant predictor** of purchase intention in this study ($\beta = 1.560$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.401$). The model explains 40.1% of variance in purchase intention — a large effect size that establishes attitude as the primary mechanism through which Reels advertising drives purchase behavior. College students who form strongly favorable attitudes toward Reels advertisements are substantially and significantly more likely to intend to purchase the advertised affordable fashion brands. This finding firmly validates the Theory of Planned Behavior in the short-form video advertising context. The strong Pearson correlation between Attitude and Purchase Intention ($r = 0.634$, $p < 0.001$) further corroborates this result, confirming that attitude is the critical behavioral bridge between advertising exposure and purchase action in this context.

5.2. Advertising Content Dimension — H2 Partially Supported

Among the two advertising content factors examined, **Informativeness** emerges as a highly significant predictor of attitude ($\beta = 0.302$, $p < 0.001$), while **Entertainment Value** shows a positive but marginally non-significant effect ($\beta = 0.137$, $p = 0.055$). Together, the two content factors explain 32.2% of attitude variance ($R^2 = 0.322$). The dominance of informativeness over entertainment value is a noteworthy finding. In the affordable fashion context, where college students are price-sensitive and functionally motivated, the clarity and relevance of product information in Reels advertisements appear to carry

greater weight than visual creativity alone in shaping attitude. This does not mean entertainment is unimportant — its positive coefficient confirms a real contribution — but rather that informational substance is the more powerful attitude driver. Effective Reels advertising must achieve a balance: entertainment captures attention and creates positive affect, while informativeness converts that affect into a coherent, strong, purchase-driving attitude.

5.3. Technological Dimension — H3 Supported (TAM)

Ease of Engagement is a **significant positive predictor** of Attitude ($\beta = 0.385$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.243$), confirming TAM's applicability in short-form social media advertising contexts. Instagram Reels' architecturally effortless interface — auto-play, algorithmic personalization, minimal navigation — creates a low-friction advertising environment in which content is encountered naturally and evaluated more favorably. When consumers experience the platform as easy and intuitive to use, they are more cognitively open and more likely to evaluate advertising content positively. This finding underscores that the choice of advertising platform matters as much as the content itself, and that Instagram Reels' technological design actively amplifies advertising receptivity.

5.4. Sequential Model of Advertising Effectiveness

Integrating the three regression findings, the results support a **sequential three-stage model** of Instagram Reels advertising effectiveness: **Stage 1** — Platform ease (TAM) and informative content (Advertising Effectiveness) jointly drive favorable attitude formation; **Stage 2** — Entertainment value reinforces attitude by enhancing the hedonic quality of the advertising experience; **Stage 3** — Favorable attitude (TPB) reliably and powerfully converts into purchase intention. This integrated model demonstrates that advertising effectiveness in the short-form video context is a layered process in which platform usability, content quality, and behavioral attitudes work together to produce purchase intention.

5.5. Practical Implications

For affordable fashion brands targeting college students, these findings provide clear strategic direction. First, **attitude formation should be the primary objective** of Reels advertising strategy, as it is the single strongest predictor

of purchase intention. Second, brands must invest in **informational content quality** — communicating product value, pricing, features, and purchase pathways clearly and prominently in Reels content. Third, **platform-native content formats** should be prioritized to maximize ease of engagement: vertical video, trending audio, native transitions, and Instagram Shopping integration all reduce friction and enhance attitude formation. Brands that combine informative substance with entertaining delivery within a frictionless platform experience will generate the strongest purchase intentions among this high-potential consumer segment.

6. CONCLUSION

This study provides an integrated theoretical and empirical framework for understanding the impact of Instagram Reels advertising on purchase intention toward affordable fashion brands among college students in Bengaluru, India. Drawing on primary quantitative data from **120 respondents** and a unified framework combining the **Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)**, the **Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)**, and **Advertising Effectiveness Theory**, the study delivers a comprehensive, multi-dimensional account of short-form video advertising effectiveness in one of the world's fastest-growing digital consumer markets.

6.1. Summary of Results

The empirical results establish a clear and theoretically consistent hierarchy of influence. **Attitude** is the strongest driver of purchase intention ($\beta = 1.560$, $R^2 = 0.401$), functioning as the critical behavioral gateway through which Reels advertising converts consumer engagement into purchase action. **Informativeness** is the dominant content-level predictor of attitude ($\beta = 0.302$, $p < 0.001$), while **Entertainment Value** contributes positively but at a marginal significance level ($\beta = 0.137$, $p = 0.055$). **Ease of Engagement** significantly shapes attitude ($\beta = 0.385$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.243$), confirming that Instagram Reels' platform usability amplifies advertising receptivity. Together, these findings support a sequential model in which platform ease and informative content build attitude, and attitude converts into purchase intention — confirming H1 fully, H2 partially, and H3 fully.

6.2. Theoretical Contributions

This study advances the social media advertising literature in three important ways. First, it is among the first to simultaneously integrate TPB, TAM, and Advertising Effectiveness Theory in a single empirical framework, demonstrating that these three theoretical traditions are mutually reinforcing in explaining Reels advertising effectiveness. Second, it extends the application of TPB and TAM to the specific context of short-form video advertising on Instagram Reels, validating their explanatory power in this emerging domain. Third, it establishes a sequential process model of advertising effectiveness that provides a theoretically grounded account of how platform usability and content quality jointly shape attitude and purchase intention in the short-form video advertising context.

6.3. Managerial Implications

For affordable fashion brand managers, the findings translate into concrete strategic recommendations. **Informativeness must be treated as a strategic priority:** Reels content should clearly communicate product features, pricing, USPs, and purchase pathways alongside visual appeal. **Instagram Shopping integration** should be systematically deployed to minimize friction between purchase intention and actual purchase behavior. **Entertainment value should amplify, not substitute,** for informational substance: trending audio, influencer partnerships, and dynamic visual editing should frame and enhance product information rather than overshadow it. Brands should continuously A/B test Reels content, measuring not just engagement metrics but attitudinal and purchase intention indicators to optimize advertising effectiveness.

6.4. Limitations and Future Research

This study has limitations that future research should address. The sample is confined to 120 college students in Bengaluru, limiting generalizability across cities, age groups, and fashion categories. A multi-city, larger-scale replication would strengthen external validity. The cross-sectional design captures perceptions at a single point in time; longitudinal research tracking whether Reels-influenced intentions translate into actual purchases would add valuable behavioral evidence. Future studies should employ **Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)** to simultaneously test mediation pathways, and

examine whether brand familiarity, social influence, and influencer credibility moderate the attitude–purchase intention relationship. In conclusion, this study establishes that Instagram Reels advertising effectiveness is **attitude-mediated, content-informed, and platform-enabled** — for affordable fashion brands in India’s digital economy, investing in informative, engaging, and platform-native Reels content is a strategic imperative for reaching and converting the country’s most digitally active consumer generation.

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