

-RESEARCH ARTICLE-

EMOTIONAL DYNAMICS IN VIRAL MARKETING: UNRAVELLING THE IMPACT OF CONTENT, AUDIENCE, PLATFORM, AND TIMING

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—Abstract—

This research centres on investigating the facial emotional dynamics inherent in viral marketing, elucidating the influence of content, audience demographics, platform attributes, and temporal factors on the virality of content. By scrutinizing these variables, the study endeavours to furnish marketers with pragmatic insights to enhance the efficacy of viral marketing campaigns. Data on audience engagement is quantitatively analysed in this study. Information was gathered from 213 people who resided in different Saudi Arabian cities. The gathered data examines several viral marketing content categories on various digital channels. Analytical techniques such as factor analysis and structural equation modelling using Amos were employed to investigate and verify the connections among content, audience, platform, time, and virality. The study's conclusions provide important new information about the cognitive dynamics of commercialised viruses. First, a piece of content's emotional resonance has a big impact on audience participation and sharing patterns, which in turn affects how viral it becomes. Second, as emotionally intelligent audiences are more likely to interact with and share emotionally charged content, emotional intelligence of the audience has a significant impact on how viral a piece of content becomes. Third, timing and trend relevance are emerging as significant drivers of content virality, with timely and relevant content possible having established momentum with audiences. Platform factors, including as design, content, and functionality, strongly affect audience involvement and sharing behaviour. The intricacy of content viruses and the part sensory dynamics play in viral marketing are highlighted in this study. Analysing the effects of audience, content, timing, and platform. This research provides useful information for marketers who want to get the most out of their viral marketing campaigns. Using timing strategies, platform dynamics, and an awareness of the emotional factors that contribute to content virality

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can significantly increase the effectiveness of viral marketing initiatives. This study is interesting because it looks at the sensory processes that underlie mouse trafficking in great detail. The study integrates knowledge from audience, platform, and content research to provide a thorough grasp of content virality in the digital environment. Research findings add to the body of knowledge about the various forms of viral marketing that are currently in use by giving marketers practical advice and factual proof.

Keywords: Viral Marketing, Emotional Dynamics, E-Marketing, Audience Engagement, Platform Characteristics, Timing and Relevance.

INTRODUCTION

The virality of marketing hinges upon a multitude of integral constituents that collectively influence its capacity for rapid propagation and widespread engagement across the internet. The emotive resonance of content stands as pivotal, given observations indicating that materials evoking intense emotions such as amusement, contemplation, or empathy tend to exhibit heightened prospects for dissemination. Moreover, the significance of timeliness cannot be overstated; content that is contemporaneous or addresses prevailing events or phenomena is inherently more predisposed to capture the attention of the target audience and prompt their inclination to share it. The diffusion of advertising content, particularly within the realms of social media platforms, constitutes a nuanced phenomenon propelled by a myriad of contextual factors. [Xie-Carson, Benckendorff, & Hughes \(2023\)](#) and [Jhawar, Kumar, & Varshney \(2023\)](#) independently explore the influence of virtual influencers on individual engagement. [Xie-Carson, Benckendorff, & Hughes \(2023\)](#) underscores the importance of ethical considerations, whereas [Jhawar, Kumar, & Varshney \(2023\)](#) proposes a framework centred on Para social interaction and credibility provision.

However, [Rathje et al. \(2022\)](#) underscores a dissonance between perceived viral material and the preferred viral content, suggesting a potential misalignment between individual preferences and the actual dynamics of virality. [Elmas, Stephane, & Houssiaux \(2023\)](#) introduces a metric and methodology for discerning viral tweets, offering potential enhancements for the virality of marketing content. The incorporation of novel features distinguishes content within saturated online environments, fostering sharing by presenting distinct viewpoints or unexpected challenges. High-quality content fosters trust, legitimacy, and enhancing sharing like videos and infographics that capture immediate attention. Moreover, ease of sharing across platforms boosts virality potential. Communication elements like influencer collaboration and engaging questions further drive user engagement. While the virality phenomenon remains elusive, capturing these attributes increases the likelihood of achieving viral success. [Meirandari, Nastiti, & Yuliniar \(2024\)](#) identified significant influences of consumer attitudes, brand image, and

purchase intention on subscription decisions. Likewise, [Basry et al. \(2024\)](#) underscored the pivotal role of entrepreneurship and marketing technology in fostering entrepreneurial mindset. Furthermore, [Setiawan et al. \(2024\)](#) illuminated the utilization of social media by faith-based schools to augment their Islamic identity, whereas [Al Adwan & Altrjman \(2024\)](#) underscored the escalating relevance of social media in perpetuating consistent brand strategies.

Customer engagement encompasses the array of interactions individuals have with a brand, product, or service across online and offline channels, including social media, websites, and email newsletters. This involvement extends to actions like likes, shares, comments, and clicks, signifying consumer interest and communication. Social media platforms facilitate engagement through features like comments and direct messaging, serving as key channels for interaction. The intricacies of customer engagement are shaped by social, cultural, technological, and individual factors. [Scarano, Regany, & Özçaglar-Toulouse \(2023\)](#) underscores the significance of cultural determinants and technological utilities in shaping consumer brand engagement. Meanwhile, [Wu et al. \(2023\)](#) scrutinized consumer engagement behaviours, particularly within the healthcare domain, revealing that such behaviours are subject to the influence of personal interactions and technological interfaces.

[Saikia & Bhattacharjee \(2024\)](#) offers a comprehensive insight into digital consumer engagement within social networks, stressing the necessity for additional investigation across diverse contexts and activities. [Aziz & Ahmed \(2023\)](#) delves into the association between consumer brand awareness and purchase intent, identifying consumer brand associations as a mediating factor. Efficient and personalized customer service contributes significantly to positive customer experiences and heightened brand engagement. Furthermore, successful messaging exchanges and tailored recommendations foster communication based on mutual understanding of personal interests. Community-building endeavours and feedback mechanisms, such as online forums and questionnaires, foster consumer interaction and brand affinity, fostering trust and a sense of belonging. [Meirandari's \(2024\)](#) research underscores the influence of consumer attitude, brand image, and purchase intention on Netflix subscription decisions. [Albarq \(2024\)](#) outlines various strategies, including network charging and enhanced customer service, that have bolstered customer satisfaction in the Saudi Arabian mobile service sector. [Adebisi et al. \(2024\)](#) emphasizes the necessity of impartial student engagement in e-learning, proposing the integration of physical methods, deep learning models, non-contact technologies, and recommendation systems to achieve this objective.

Understanding the intricate interplay among multiple dimensions is crucial for devising effective strategies in digital marketing. This study aims to elucidate the correlation between emotional content, audience emotional intelligence, platform attributes, timing, and trend relevance, providing insights into their significance and impact on customer

engagement. It investigates how various emotional stimuli influence audience response and engagement, with a focus on leveraging emotions to enhance content quality. Through examining the nexus between content's emotional dimension, audience emotional intelligence, platform features, temporal trends, and relevance, marketers can make informed decisions and plans to optimize audience engagement and outcomes. The study offers concrete insights and practical solutions to address the challenges of digital customer engagement, a pressing concern in contemporary marketing.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS

The research examines how emotional arousal in marketing content influences audience response and engagement, emphasizing the critical role of emotional resonance in viral marketing success. Matching the emotional tone of content with the audience's emotional intelligence enhances engagement and resonance. Platform quality, including unique features and functions, is also pivotal. Additionally, the study explores the impact of temporal features such as publication date and trend relevance on audience engagement. Its primary aim is to unravel the intricate relationship between message emotional content, audience emotional intelligence, platform attributes, and trend timeliness in viral marketing. Furthermore, it delves into understanding digital consumer behaviour, a largely unexplored domain. This research contributes significantly to the advancement of the digital marketing industry by deepening insights into the emotional underpinnings of viral content and its consequential impact on audience engagement and brand resonance.

Consumer communication serves as a mediator between emotional resonance and the subsequent broader dissemination of content. Consumers who perceive a strong emotional connection or affinity towards products are more inclined to engage actively with them on various platforms, thereby amplifying their reach and potential for virality. Engagement metrics such as likes, shares, and comments serve as indicators of content resonance and facilitate connection with a broader audience. The ability to propagate content empowers consumers to play a pivotal role in generating and actively contributing to emotionally resonant content that proliferates virally. The narratives crafted by marketers wield considerable influence over consumer perceptions of brands, with informative content proving particularly effective in bolstering consumer sentiment, especially in adverse circumstances (Meire et al., 2019). Content marketing is crucial for increasing customer brand engagement, particularly when it's distributed via social media (Mahmić-Muhić & Klico, 2022). The presence of intense positive and negative emotions, particularly highly arousing ones, correlates with higher chances of articles going viral. Conversely, depression sensitivity exhibits a negative correlation with virality (Berger & Milkman, 2013; Heimbach & Hinz, 2016).

Research indicates that emotionally evocative language significantly impacts the attention drawn to functional and other language characteristics, leading to active engagement

(Berger, Moe, & Schweidel, 2023). The positive effects of social media usage and celebrity endorsement on consumer engagement subsequently influence purchasing decisions (Syalsabila & Hermina, 2023). Empathy plays a crucial role in social media advertising, where aggression moderates the relationship between attitudes, empathic expression intentions, and brand association (Arora, Rana, & Prashar, 2023). Moreover, the delivery of corporate social responsibility (CSR) messages can influence online brand engagement, with the utilization of the benefits system being effective in evoking feelings of satisfaction and enhancing message credibility (Cordero-Gutiérrez et al., 2023).

H1. *Customer Engagement mediates the relationship between Content Emotionality and Virality of Marketing Content.*

Customer engagement serves as a critical mediator between audience emotional intelligence and content quality. Higher emotional intelligence among consumers correlates with increased identification with content, leading to more active engagement on digital platforms. This heightened engagement amplifies the reach and dissemination of emotionally stimulating content, enhancing its potential for virality. Metrics like shares, comments, and likes serve as tangible markers of audience engagement and the efficacy of content in evoking emotional responses. Marketer-generated content holds significant sway over consumer sentiment, particularly through feedback mechanisms (Meire et al., 2019). Inherent motivators such as regional culture and altruistic tendencies exert a positive influence on social media engagement and the propensity for content dissemination (Al Khasawneh et al., 2022). Emotions, particularly those evoking heightened positive and negative responses, serve as a pivotal determinant of content virality (Berger & Milkman, 2013). Additionally, aspects of brand personality such as humour and emotional resonance correlate with increased consumer engagement on social media platforms (Lee, Hosanagar, & Nair, 2018). Scholarly findings underscore the significance of customer engagement in the successful marketing of products (Kong et al., 2023). While various factors including social media usage, celebrity endorsements, and characteristics of social media influencers impact this interaction, further exploration is warranted to elucidate the specific relationship between audience emotional intelligence and the dissemination and virality of marketing content (Ao et al., 2023).

H2. *Customer Engagement Mediates the Relationship between Audience Emotional Intelligence and Virality of Marketing Content.*

Customer engagement serves as a pivotal mediator between platform characteristics and content virality. Platforms offer distinct functionalities and user experiences that shape content resonance and audience engagement levels. Features like flexible sharing options, interactivity, and community engagement enhance customer involvement and amplify content reach. Engagement metrics such as shares, likes, comments, and click-through rates serve as key indicators of audience interaction (Meire et al., 2019). The

significance of consumer engagement in social media marketing is underscored across studies. Willis (2019) emphasizes the role of social media marketing content (SMMC), while Jia et al. (2023) delves into the influence of humour and frivolity in SMMC, revealing a positive impact on purchase intentions through social media engagement. Zhang et al. (2023) highlights the effect of firm-generated content on various social media platforms, emphasizing the amplification of social media spread with warmth-oriented content. Furthermore, Jia et al. (2023) extends the discourse to encompass the influence of user-generated content from diverse platforms on product sales.

H3. Customer Engagement Mediates the Relationship between Platform Characteristics and Virality of Marketing Content.

Customer engagement mediates the interplay between timeliness, quality relevance, and content propagation. Strategically aligning content with trends or context enhances audience engagement. Addressing topics relevant to consumers' interests evokes emotional responses and behaviours like sharing, commenting, and liking. Such social trends amplify content reach and potential virality. Metrics like shares, retweets, and mentions signify audience engagement and content resonance within its cultural context. Ntarlas & Karayanni (2020) emphasizes the significance of interactivity within mobile marketing channels, elucidating its potential to augment the association between information processing and business performance. Anubha & Shome (2021) further elucidates this dynamic by uncovering the mediating function of consumer involvement in the association between perceived advertising value and purchase intention. Anas et al. (2023) similarly identifies the mediating influence of customer satisfaction in the relationship between social media marketing endeavours and purchase intention. Evania et al. (2023) underscores the notable influence of influencer and content marketing on consumer engagement, with the latter emphasizing the mediating function facilitated by consumer engagement.

H4. Customer Engagement Mediates the Relationship between Timing and Trend Relevance and Virality of Marketing Content.

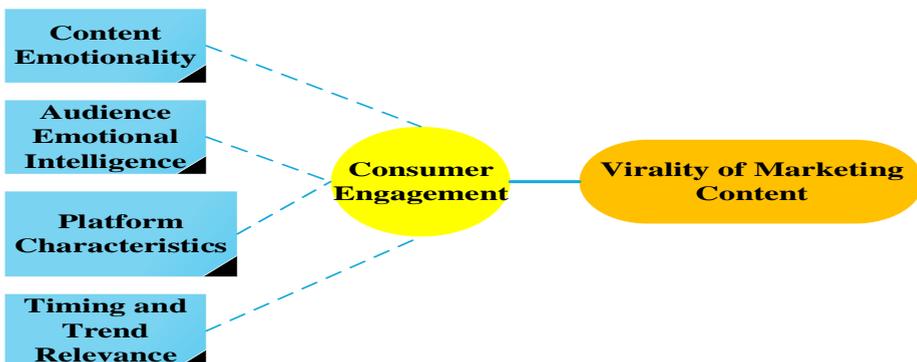


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework.

METHODOLOGY AND DATA SAMPLING

The methodological approach adopted in this investigation encompassed the gathering of data from 213 participants located in diverse cities across Saudi Arabia to explore the interrelationships among key variables pertinent to viral marketing content. The scrutinized variables encompassed content emotionality, audience emotional intelligence, platform attributes, timing, trend relevance, the virality of marketing content, and consumer engagement. Data analysis encompassed assessments of factor loadings, reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and structural equation modelling (SEM) to evaluate the associations among these variables.

Factor Loadings Reliability, Convergent Validity

Factor loading reliability and convergent validity serve as crucial indicators of construct robustness and validity in research endeavours. Table 1 delineates the comprehensive reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), and Cronbach's alpha (α) values for each construct under examination, encompassing content, audience emotional intelligence, platform type, timing (inclusive of trend relevance), general marketing trends, and consumer engagement. The composite reliability (CR) values for all constructs notably surpass the threshold of 0.7, ranging from 0.701 to 0.834, indicating strong internal consistency among the measurement items within the latent variables. AVE values, indicative of convergent validity, are generally considered satisfactory if they exceed 0.5, signifying that the coefficient elucidates more than 50% of the factor's variance. In this study, all constructs meet or exceed this threshold, with values ranging from 0.61 to 0.73, thus affirming satisfactory convergent validity. Additionally, Cronbach's alpha (α) values demonstrate high reliability, ranging from 0.811 to 0.841, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.7 and further affirming the constructs' reliability on the standard measurement scale. Overall, the outcomes depicted in Table 1 signify robust factor loading reliability and convergent validity among the constructs examined, underscoring the reliability and validity of the survey results.

Table 1: Factor Loadings Reliability, Convergent Validity.

| | CR | AVE | α |
|---------------------------------|-----------|------------|----------------------------|
| Content Emotionality | 0.822 | 0.61 | 0.840 |
| Audience Emotional Intelligence | 0.814 | 0.72 | 0.823 |
| Platform Characteristics | 0.803 | 0.70 | 0.811 |
| Timing and Trend Relevance | 0.834 | 0.65 | 0.841 |
| Virality of Marketing Content | 0.798 | 0.73 | 0.811 |
| Consumer Engagement | 0.701 | 0.66 | 0.724 |

Discriminant Validity

Table 2 displays squared correlations and AVE values of the study's constructs, assessing discriminant validity. The diagonal exhibits AVE values, indicating the proportion of variance captured by each construct's items. For discriminant validity, AVE values should surpass squared correlations between constructs. The red dot signifies a squared relationship. All constructs in Table 2 show AVE values exceeding squared correlations, confirming discriminant validity. The asterisk (*) denotes statistical differences. In sum, Table 2 affirms that each construct measures a distinct concept from others, ensuring discriminant validity.

Table 2: Discriminant Validity.

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|-----|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|------|
| CE | 0.42 | | | | | |
| AEI | 0.23 | 0.53 | | | | |
| PC | 0.19** | 0.34 | 0.28 | | | |
| TTR | 0.40 | 0.28* | 0.10* | 0.34 | | |
| CE | 0.34 | 0.20** | 0.11** | 0.23** | 0.50 | |
| VMC | 0.31* | 0.37 | 0.25* | 0.28* | 0.39* | 0.22 |

Note: Values of AVE on Diagonal Higher than Squared Correlations Values. † P < 0.100; * P < 0.050; ** P < 0.010; *** P < 0.001.

Measurement Model Fit

Measurement model indices evaluate the goodness of fit between the proposed measurement model and the observed data. These indices are crucial for assessing the overall adequacy of the measurement model and its appropriateness for the observed underlying variables.

Comparative Fit Index (CFI): The CFI compares the fit of the proposed model with the null model. A CFI value of 0.90 or higher signifies a good fit, indicating that the proposed model fits the data well. In this instance, the overall model attains a CFI of 0.90, meeting the acceptable baseline of 0.90.

Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI): The AGFI assesses the proportion of variance and covariance estimated by the proposed model from sample data. An AGFI value of 0.80 or higher suggests an acceptable fit. The overall model attains an AGFI of 0.82, surpassing the acceptable baseline of 0.80.

Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA): RMSEA evaluates the disparity between observed data and the model, with lower values suggesting better fit. An RMSEA value below 0.10 is typically deemed acceptable. Here, the RMSEA is 0.013, falling below the lower bound of 0.10.

Comparative chi-square (CMIN/df): CMIN/df evaluates a standardized chi-square value, with a value below 3 indicating a good fit. All models achieve a CMIN/df ratio of 1.64, which is below the threshold of 3, signifying a good fit.

Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI): TLI assesses the fit of the proposed model against the null model, with a value of 0.89 or higher indicating acceptable fit. All models surpassed the baseline with a TLI of 0.90. Measurement model indices evaluate the adequacy of the proposed measurement model in fitting the observed data, crucial for assessing its overall adequacy and suitability for the underlying observed variables.

Comparative Fit Index (CFI): The CFI assesses how well the proposed model fits compared to the null model. A CFI of 0.90 or higher indicates a good fit, demonstrating that the proposed model fits the data well. The overall model achieves a CFI of 0.90, meeting the acceptable baseline of 0.90.

Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI): The AGFI evaluates the variance and covariance of the sample data estimated by the proposed model. An AGFI value of 0.80 or higher indicates an acceptable fit. The overall model achieves an AGFI of 0.82, surpassing the acceptable baseline of 0.80.

Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA): The RMSEA measures the disparity between observed data and the model, with lower values suggesting better fit. An RMSEA below 0.10 is typically considered acceptable. Here, the RMSEA is 0.013, falling below the lower limit of 0.10.

Comparative chi-square (CMIN/df): CMIN/df quantifies a standardized chi-square value, with a value below 3 indicating good fit. All models exhibit a CMIN/df ratio of 1.64, which is below the threshold of 3, signifying good fit.

Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI): TLI evaluates the fit of the proposed model against the null model, with a value of 0.89 or higher indicating acceptable fit. All models surpassed the baseline, achieving a TLI of 0.90.

Incremental Fit Index (IFI): An IFI value exceeding 0.90 denotes acceptable fit. The overall model attains an IFI of 0.91, aligning with the acceptable baseline.

In summary, the measurement model fit indices provided in [Table 3](#) suggest that the proposed model aligns well with the observed data and effectively captures the relationship between the observed variables and their underlying parameters.

Structural Model Fit

Structural model indices evaluate the degree to which the proposed structural model aligns with observed data. These indices play a crucial role in assessing the overall

quality of the structural model and its ability to accurately depict the relationships among the latent variables under investigation.

CFI: The CFI assesses how well the proposed structural model fits compared to the null model. A CFI of 0.90 or higher indicates a good fit, suggesting that the proposed model fits the data well. In this instance, the overall structural model attains a CFI of 0.92, exceeding the acceptable baseline of 0.90.

AGFI: The AGFI quantifies the proportion of variance and covariance estimated by the proposed structural model. An AGFI value of 0.80 or higher suggests an acceptable fit. The composite measure attains an AGFI of 0.85, surpassing the acceptable baseline of 0.80.

RMSEA: The RMSEA gauges the disparity between observed data and the design model, with lower values signifying better fit. An RMSEA below 0.10 is typically deemed acceptable. All structural models attain an RMSEA of 0.011, falling below the threshold of 0.10.

CMIN/df: CMIN/df evaluates the standardized chi-square value, with a value under 3 indicating a good fit. All classification models yield a CMIN/df ratio of 1.21, below the threshold of 3, indicating a good fit.

TLI: TLI evaluates the fit of the proposed structural model compared to the null model, with a coefficient of 0.89 or higher indicating acceptable fit. All classification models surpass the baseline for acceptance, achieving a TLI of 0.92.

IFI: The IFI assesses the enhancement in fit offered by the proposed structural model compared to the null model. A value of 0.90 or higher suggests acceptable fit. All structural models attain an IFI of 0.92, meeting the acceptable baseline criteria.

In summary, the structural model fit indices suggest that the proposed structural model aligns well with the observed data and effectively captures the relationships among the latent variables under investigation.

Summary of Effects

Table 3 presents a synopsis of the impacts of the variables under investigation, encompassing both direct and indirect effects, along with the effects of customer engagement (CE) and the virality of marketing content (VMC).

For Customer Engagement (CE): The direct effect of content emotionality (CE -> CE) is 0.324, indicating that for each unit increase in content emotionality, there's a corresponding increase of 0.324 units in consumer engagement. The direct effect of audience emotional intelligence (AEI -> CE) is 0.297, signifying that for every unit

increase in audience emotional intelligence, there's a corresponding increase of 0.297 units in consumer engagement.

The direct impact of platform type (PC -> CE) stands at 0.367, suggesting that with each unit increase in platform type, there's a corresponding rise of 0.367 units in consumer engagement. Meanwhile, the direct effect of time and trend relevance (TTR -> CE) is 0.154, indicating that for every unit increase in time and trend relevance, there's a corresponding augmentation of 0.154 in consumer engagement.

For Virality of Marketing Content (VMC): Consumer Engagement (CE -> VMC) exhibits a direct effect of 0.645, implying that each unit increase in consumer engagement corresponds to a 0.645 unit increase in the virality of marketing content. Audience emotional intelligence (AEI -> VMC), platform type (PC -> VMC), and time and trend relevance (TTR -> VMC) also directly influence the virality of marketing content, with values of 0.640, 0.664, and 0.590 respectively. Additionally, the table illustrates indirect effects, representing the influence of independent variables (AEI, PC, and TTR) on VMC mediated by CE. These indirect effects contribute to the overall impact on VMC.

In summary, the findings delineated in [Table 3](#) offer insights into the scale and orientation of each variable's influence on consumer engagement and the brand dynamics within the examined context.

Table 3: Summary of Effects.

| Variables | Direct Effects | Indirect Effects | Total Effects |
|------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| CE -> CE | 0.324 | | 0.324 |
| AEI-> CE | 0.297 | | 0.297 |
| PC-> CE | 0.367 | | 0.367 |
| TTR-> CE | 0.154 | | 0.154 |
| CE-> VMC | 0.645 | | 0.645 |
| CE -> VMC | | 0.598 | 0.598 |
| AEI-> VMC | | 0.640 | 0.640 |
| PC-> VMC | | 0.664 | 0.664 |
| TTR-> VMC | | 0.590 | 0.590 |

RESULT OF ANALYSES AND HYPOTHESES

[Table 4](#) offers a succinct yet comprehensive overview of the outcomes derived from the conducted experiments and hypothesis testing within the research. It delineates the p-values, t-values, and the corresponding acceptance or rejection decisions for each hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1 (H1): This hypothesis proposes that consumer engagement mediates the relationship between the emotional content of marketing materials and their virality rates. The null hypothesis yields a p-value of 0.015 and a t-value of 2.95. Given that the p-value is lower than the significance level (typically 0.05) and the t-value surpasses the critical value (usually 1.96 for a two-tailed test), the hypothesis is accepted. Thus, consumer engagement facilitates the amalgamation of emotional aspects in marketing and their widespread adoption.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): The proposed theory posits that the connection between audience emotional intelligence and marketing content virality hinges on customer engagement. With a statistically significant p-value of 0.031 and a t-value of 3.01, indicating that the hypothesis is accepted given the p-value is below 0.05 and the t-value exceeds the critical threshold. These findings suggest that customer involvement amplifies the establishment of an emotional bond between audience emotional intelligence and the dissemination capacity of marketing content.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): This hypothesis suggests that consumer interaction mediates the relationship between platform characteristics and content virality. With a p-value of 0.028 and a t-value of 3.22, indicating statistical significance, the hypothesis is accepted. Customer engagement serves as the intermediary outcome between communication attributes and the dissemination of brand information.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): This hypothesis suggests that customer engagement mediates the relationship between the time and trend relevance of marketing content and its virality. With a p-value of 0.01 and a t-value of 4.22, both meeting the criteria for statistical significance, the hypothesis is accepted. The data indicate that customer interaction alters the extent to which the relevance and timing of marketing content affect its virality.

Table 4: Result of Analyses and Hypotheses.

| | Hypotheses | p-value | t-value | Accept or Reject |
|----|---|---------|---------|------------------|
| H1 | Customer Engagement mediates the relationship between Content Emotionality and Virality of Marketing Content | 0.015 | 2.95 | Accept |
| H2 | Customer Engagement mediates the relationship between Audience Emotional Intelligence and Virality of Marketing Content | 0.031 | 3.01 | Accept |
| H3 | Customer Engagement mediates the relationship between Platform Characteristics and Virality of Marketing Content | 0.028 | 3.22 | Accept |
| H4 | Customer Engagement mediates the relationship between Timing and Trend Relevance and Virality of Marketing Content | 0.010 | 4.22 | Accept |

p-Value <0.05 (Hair Et Al., 2007), t-Value > 1.96 (Bhatti & Sundram Kaiani, 2015).

The outcomes of this investigation, along with the hypothesis testing, corroborate the theoretical framework. They posit that customer engagement is crucial in the interaction among various factors (such as emotional content, audience emotional intelligence, platform characteristics, timeliness, and relevance to current trends) and the dissemination of marketing content.

DISCUSSION

The study underscores the pivotal role of emotional dynamics in driving the success of viral marketing. Emotional resonance within content significantly influences audience engagement and sharing behaviours, aligning with concepts like emotional contagion and social sharing. To enhance the likelihood of content spreading widely on digital platforms, marketers can leverage strong emotional reactions such as joy, amazement, or awe. The study reveals that content virality is influenced by interconnected factors, necessitating consideration of multiple elements in content dissemination. Recognizing audience emotional intelligence underscores the importance of understanding audience perspectives and interpretations of emotional signals. Moreover, platform characteristics significantly impact audience interaction and content sharing behaviours, emphasizing the need for tailored content strategies across digital platforms. Furthermore, timing relevance and trend suitability profoundly affect content virality, highlighting the importance of adapting to favourable circumstances and aligning content with current trends to enhance audience engagement and sharing levels.

Hypothesis 1: First hypothesis suggests that customer engagement mediates the influence of emotional factors on content virality, highlighting emotional appeal as a strategy for enhancing audience engagement and promoting viral potential. This aligns with the concepts of emotional contagion and social sharing, indicating that emotionally charged content is more likely to be shared rapidly. Marketers should recognize the importance of customer engagement in fostering virality through emotionally compelling content. However, there is a risk of oversimplifying the relationship between emotional content, customer engagement, and virality, as this research may not fully consider the influence of demographic factors, cultural differences, and individual preferences on these dynamics. Nevertheless, this approach contributes to understanding the mechanisms underlying the diffusion of highly rated content in digital marketing. The research offers insights into the impact of emotional content on audience engagement and sharing behaviours, which ultimately define the viral nature of marketing endeavours, emphasizing the mediating role of customer relationships.

Hypothesis 2: This hypothesis posits that consumers' high emotional intelligence stimulates the virality of marketing content, predominantly through consumer engagement. It underscores the importance of understanding how audiences interpret

emotional cues in determining content virality, aligning with the concepts of emotional intelligence and social cognition. Marketers should tailor content to match audience emotional intelligence, as it guides content strategies aimed at maximizing engagement and virality. However, challenges arise in accurately measuring audience emotional intelligence and its impact on content appeal, given its potential variation among audience members. Despite these challenges, this assumption elucidates the behaviour of diverse social groups in digital marketing by leveraging emotional intelligence in content promotion. It elucidates the significance of personalized content and its interconnection with effective audience targeting.

Hypothesis 3: This inference emphasises how platform features mediate the dissemination of marketing content by influencing customer engagement levels. In line with theories of social impact and network effects, it highlights how platform design, features, and capabilities affect audience involvement and content sharing behaviours. To effectively distribute content, marketers must carefully choose and improve digital channels, considering platform features to customise content strategies and distribution techniques appropriately. However, it might be difficult to distinguish the unique influence of platform characteristics from other contextual factors, and the results might not last as long as expected due to the dynamic nature of digital platforms. Nevertheless, by highlighting the part that platform features play in spreading viral content, this theory improves knowledge of the dynamics of digital marketing platforms. It provides marketers with insightful information to carefully choose and optimise internet platforms based on their general layouts and features.

Hypothesis 4: The hypothesis states that consumer interaction affects virality for timely and new information. To increase engagement and attention, use timely events and link information with current trends. According to ideas on timing and societal forces on information distribution, timing is crucial to content delivery. Temporal and patterned factors affect audience attention; thus, marketers should consider timing and relevancy when creating and distributing content. However, forecasting and quantifying content's temporal and hierarchical value in a dynamic environment is difficult. Content's perceived value and general acceptance may also depend on audience characteristics. The hypothesis highlights the importance of time and trend relevance in content sharing promotion and digital marketing temporal dynamics. It emphasises strategic timing and trend synchronisation to improve content design and sharing tactics.

Insights from these aspects reveal the complex interplay of content attributes, audience and platform dynamics, and temporal factors, facilitating extensive distribution of marketing information. This study enriches our comprehension of the mechanisms behind content dissemination in the digital realm, emphasizing the role of customer involvement in shaping these dynamics.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATION

The study's findings have theoretical implications for digital marketing's online information diffusion processes. First, they emphasise emotional resonance in viral content, then content engagement. It emphasises emotional contagion theories and how powerfully emotional material affects many viewers. The research also examines how audiences process emotional cues from the material. According to social cognition and emotional intelligence theories, people's perception of emotional content affects their participation and contribution. The study also shows that platform characteristics and time affect content diffusion, indicating the importance of contextual elements in material transfer.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATION

The findings hold substantial importance for marketers and content creators who aim to capitalise on the potential for viral events with their marketing materials. Above all else, they place utmost importance on cultivating robust connections with the target audience, considering the creation of emotionally charged material to be of utmost significance. Marketers ought to discern the sentiments that can foster a profound connection with their intended demographic, thereby producing prospects for dialogue and collaboration. Beyond this, the advantage of customising the information according to the emotional intelligence level of the audience is apparent. In order to enhance engagement and improve the probability of virality, content producers must possess knowledge regarding the manner in which their audience interprets and comprehends emotional stimuli. Additionally, the research offers valuable perspectives on enhancing content distribution by strategically choosing and configuring digital platforms that possess distinctive attributes. By strategically utilising the features and functionality of marketing platforms, marketers can potentially increase audience engagement and encourage sharing. Furthermore, the research emphasises that to optimise user engagement and expand the target audience, it is critical to capitalise on current opportunities and generate content that is relevant to ongoing trends.

LIMITATIONS

Despite its limitations, the study provides significant information. Assessing and managing emotional content, audience emotional intelligence, platform characteristics, and real-world context is difficult. Variations in emotional responses, emotional intelligence, and platform preferences may impair validity. The study may also miss audience demographics, cultural differences, and personal preferences, which affect material dissemination. Digital technologies and customer behaviour may also change the research' relevancy.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Further investigation in the field of digital marketing may contribute to the advancement of knowledge regarding the prevalence of content. Critical areas of focus include the investigation of particular emotions that stimulate engagement and virality, the assessment of scheduling strategies such as real-time marketing, and the consideration of cultural variations. An examination of the impact of emerging technologies on content design, as well as an analysis of the enduring consequences of emotional resonance, audience perception, and platform attributes, can provide significant and worthwhile knowledge. In general, forthcoming research initiatives will augment the efficacy of content strategies within the digital ecosystem.

CONTRIBUTION

This research adds to our understanding of content marketing distribution by revealing its operational dynamics. This study helps us understand how emotional contagion, audience response, platform structure, characteristics, and timing disseminate viral phenomena. The essay provides a complete conceptual foundation for digital content diffusion. It emphasises consumer involvement in linking these linkages. The report also provides content designers and marketers with practical advice to improve their content strategies and operations.

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Appendix 1: Measurement Scales

| | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Content Emotionality | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Emotions play a key role in purchasing behavior. 2. I have much excitement and wait for the purchasing. 3. Gender plays a key role in exhibiting emotions. 4. I feel comfortable while place my order. 5. I do share my emotional experiences with friends and family. 6. My multiple attempts to purchase that make you feel happy. 7. Shopping under stress affecting my emotions. 8. It has affect my emotions of a change in packaging of my favourite brand. | Sharma, Kodhati, & Sukhavasi (2022) |
| Audience Emotional Intelligence | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By looking at people’s facial expressions, I recognize the emotions they are experiencing. 2. When making decisions, I listen to my feelings to see if the decision feels right. 3. How useful might it be to feel “guilt” when attempting to persuade someone to make an expensive purchase? 4. I have the vocabulary to describe how most emotions progress from simple to complex feelings. 5. I was interested and ready to make a purchase. Later, I felt embarrassed and guilty. | Kidwell et al. (2011) |
| Platform (Instagram and Facebook) Characteristics | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Instagram and Facebook sincerely provides me with reliable, relieved, and high-quality service. 2. The Instagram and Facebook really respects me, never perfunctory. 3. The Instagram and Facebook attaches great importance to establish a long-term relationship with me. 4. The Instagram and Facebook are really concerned about my shopping experience. 5. The Instagram and Facebook attach importance to establishing a personal friendship with me. | Hussain, Li, & Li (2021) |
| Timing and Trend Relevance | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The content of marketing is specific. 2. The content of marketing is general. 3. The content is relevant to me. 4. I have an emotional connection to the marketing content. | Botha & Reyneke (2013) |
| Virality of Marketing Content | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Marketing Content was entertaining/humorous. 2. Marketing Content was educational/useful. 3. Marketing Content was controversial/shocking. 4. Marketing Content challenged my views. 5. Marketing Content was unexpected/surprising. 6. Marketing Content was of no interest to me. | Hirvijärvi (2017) |

| Customer Engagement | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Dealing with my specific seller gets me to think about our business relationship.2. I think about this seller a lot when I'm dealing.3. Dealing with this specific industry stimulates my interest to learn more about it.4. I feel very positive when I deal with this seller.5. Dealing with my specific seller makes me happy.6. I feel good when I use the product of my specific seller.7. I feel proud dealing with my specific seller.8. I spend a lot of time dealing with my specific seller compared to other sellers.9. Whenever I desire to buy this product, I usually deal with my specific seller.10. I deal with my specific seller the most. | Ahmed et al. (2022) |