

Negative Hook Storytelling: A study on the impact of Instagram influencer advertisements among Gen Z

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Abstract: The growth of digital technologies and social media has made enormous developments in the field of online advertising. The social media advertisements are more effective in promoting the products than the traditional methods. The use of social media platforms and targeting the consumers of a particular category is useful to all promoters to make their product promotion in an effective way. Instagram influencers are helpful in creating a live human experience about a product and its usage. Negative hook is a technique for seeking the attention of viewers and making them watch the full advertisement video without scrolling down. The negative hook technique will have negative information about the product or its usage in the beginning of the video followed by the actual real information which will make the people watch the full video. The viewers are more engaged with storytelling concepts of Instagram advertisements (Madiha Atiq 2022). This study aims to focus on the impact of Instagram influencers advertising through negative hook storytelling and how Gen Z are attracted towards the promotion videos. The study will be conducted using a quantitative research method. The Gen Z viewers from Chennai, Tamil Nadu will be selected as research samples. Survey research tools will be used for collecting data. The study will provide the reach and impact of influencers advertisement and how Gen Z attracted towards the same through negative hook storytelling.

Keywords: Negative Hook, Storytelling, Instagram, Advertisement, Gen Z

INTRODUCTION

Social media marketing has become the most popular and easy way to advertise products and services. Instagram plays a most important role in promoting advertising through influencers. Influencer advertisements are a modern way of promoting products and services through popular actors, personalities and individuals. The habit of looking into the reviews and knowing about the products was practiced from social media platforms. Consumers of the present generation expect to know a detailed review of products before they purchase. The Instagram influencer promotion advertisements are more useful to the consumers to know about the authenticity of the products. The Instagram users who scroll down the reels try to give likes, comments and share if they really find interest with the message content of the reel which helps the other users to know about that message. Traditional marketing used positive ways of storytelling to attract the audience or the customers to buy the product, but social media platforms have adopted a new narrative storytelling strategy which includes negative hook to attract the immediate attention of the viewers. The influencers nowadays try to target this negative hook storytelling to attract immediate attention and trigger the individual's emotional engagement seeking for compelling resolutions.

Instagram advertisements created by influencers are deeply affecting the consumer attitude and purchase intention. Content engagement is considered to be one of the important variables to measure the effectiveness of social media marketing by Wijaya, et al., (2024). The longer session time of an Instagram advertisement could help in predicting the purchase intention and persuades the Instagram users to keenly watch the long-form advertisements by Hazari et al. (2022). The audience plays an active role being followers if they find the influencers are honest, genuine and consistent in their message content. This helps the micro influencers to drive measurable effects in promoting self-expressive products as this involves more of self-branding rather than functional needs by Chen, et al., (2024). With social media influencers the reach of a product or services is much higher than conventional media because it helps the viewers understand the usage of the products which significantly tends to increase the buying behavior. The trust of influencers and their collaboration with companies in highlighting the usage of the products helps the Gen Z to have positive purchase behavior by Harish (2025). The Gen Z impulse buying behavior depends on certain source credibility of the influencers including expertise, attractiveness, and trustworthiness. The collaborating companies or the marketers must choose an influencer according to this source credibility apart from marketing communication strategies which may help them to attract the Gen Z customers on the social media, by Fadhilah et al., (2023). The Gen Z consumers rely on influencers based on informational values regarding usage of the product, the entertainment values of trending products and contents and also based on the credibility and brand trustworthiness which influences the purchase decision and intention to follow advice by Yadav, et al., (2025). The influencers content determinants play a vital role in buying behaviors where the respondents purchased at least one product recommendation made by the influencers whom they follow by Guar et.al., (2025). Influencer marketing consistently becomes very effective on both non-transactional beliefs, attitude, engagement and transactional outcomes like their purchase behavior and sales by Pan et al., (2024). Social media engagement (SME) acts as a powerful predictor for purchase intentions and mediates amongst Gen Z based on Brand Generated Content (BGC) and User Generated Content (UGC). The usage of professional and high-quality content-based visuals is the primary engine for Egyptian based marketing by El-Shihy et al., (2025). Social media platforms allow short-form and long-form storytelling narratives compared to traditional media. The effectiveness of storytelling enhances the minds of viewers and it becomes highly receptive in looking into the content. The creative potential of storytelling includes slice-of-life in social media advertising by Teraiya et al., (2023).

Objectives

1. To identify the impact of negative hooks on Gen Z's attitudes toward the advertised products.
2. To measure the reach of negative hook in influencers ads and its effect on Gen Z's scrolling attention.
3. To examine whether negative hook advertisements lead to purchase intention
4. To examine the engagement such as likes, comments, and shares on negative hook storytelling.

RESEARCH METHOD

Methodology

The study was conducted using quantitative research methodology. Survey as research technique with questionnaire as research tool was used to conduct the research. A sample size of 390 was determined using Cochran's formula for sample size determination when the sample is infinite. The research samples were selected from Chennai. Simple random

sample technique was used to select the samples. The questionnaire was constructed using a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire was categorized into four different sections such attention and engagement, perceived authenticity and relevance, attitude, recall, and purchase intent, overall impact and drawbacks. The questions on negative hook storytelling were asked to find impact of Instagram influencer advertisements among Gen Z.

Findings

The data obtained from the Gen Z respondents were examined to study the impact of Instagram influencers advertising on Negative Hook Storytelling. The data was collected and analyzed using Scientific research tools such as ANOVA and Pearson correlation to find the frequency and significance of the impact created through Instagram influencer advertisements.

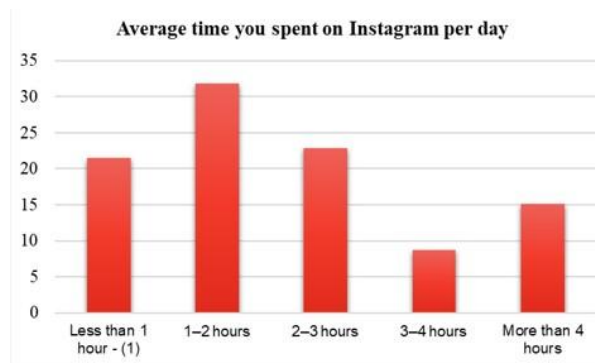


Figure 1. illustrates the distribution of respondents on the average times spent on Instagram per day

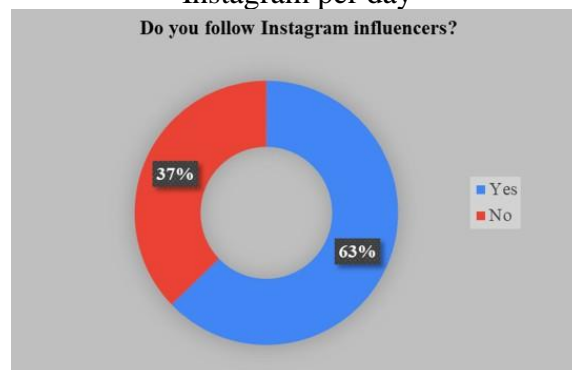


Figure 2. represents the distribution of respondents who follow Instagram influencers

Figure-1 illustrates the distribution of respondents on the average times spent on Instagram per day. The chart, categorized with five-time intervals, represents the average time spent on Instagram per day by Gen Z respondents. The data indicates that 21.5% of the respondents spent less than 1 hour indicating the usage of Instagram occasionally and the largest population of respondents around 31.8% of the respondents spent less than 1-2 hours in the given sample.

The second highest respondents of around 22.8% spent 2-3 hours, while the lowest percentage of 8.7 % respondents spent 3-4 hours. In contrast, 15% of the respondents spend more than four hours daily which indicates they are highly active in the given sample.

Figure-2 represents the distribution of respondents who follow Instagram influencers. The majority of the sample represents 63% of the respondents following Instagram influencers. On the other hand, 37% of respondents do not follow any Instagram users.

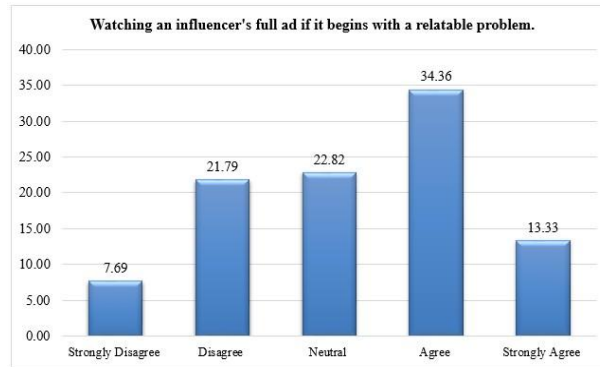


Figure 3. illustrates data of respondents watching influencers full ads when it begins with a relatable problem

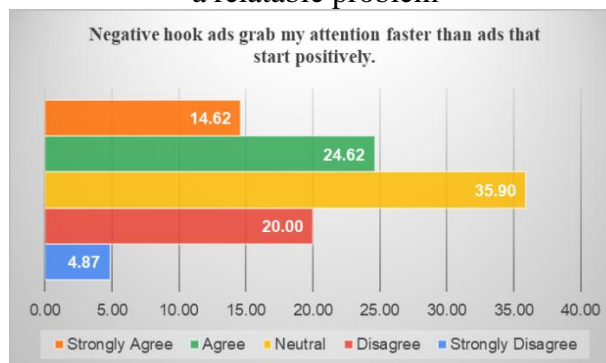


Figure 4. represents the statement negative hook ads grab my attention faster than ads that start positively

Figure 3 illustrates data of respondents watching influencers full ads when it begins with a relatable problem. The collected data represents that 34.36% of the respondents stated that they agree with the advertisements if it starts with their relatable problem, while 13.33% of the respondents strongly agree. Together, 47.69% of the respondents agreed with the statement. However, 21.79% of the respondents disagree, 7.69% strongly disagree while 22.82% of the respondents remain neutral with the statement.

Figure-4 represents the statement negative hook ads grab my attention faster than ads that start positively. Around 39% of the respondents expressed both agree and strongly agree. However, 36% of them responded to neutral and 25% of respondents responded to both disagree and strongly disagree with the given statement.

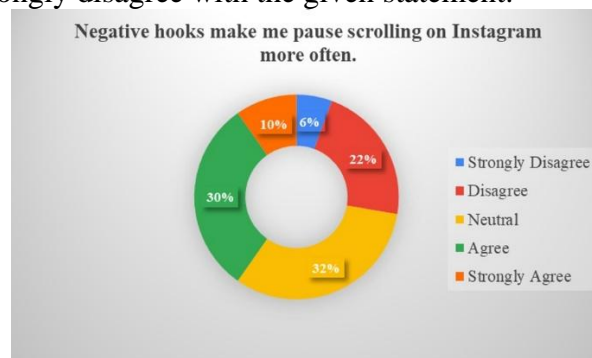


Figure 5. the chart signifies that negative hooks

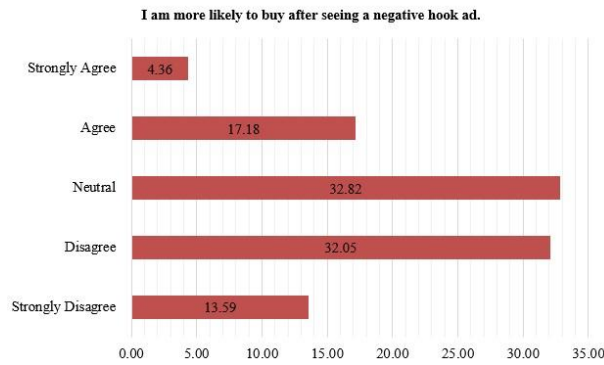


Figure 6. represents the data for the statement

Figure 5 the chart signifies that negative hooks make me pause scrolling on Instagram more often creating a mixed perception amongst the responded. The data indicate that 40% respondents have responded to agree and strongly agree with the statement. Around 28% of them responded to disagree and strongly disagree. Meanwhile, around 32% of them responded to neutral.

Figure 6 represents the data for the statement “I am more likely to buy after seeing negative hook ads”. The findings of the research identify that 32.82% of them responded to a neutral and 32.05% disagree. Around 13.59% of respondents strongly disagree with the given statement. Comparatively 21.54% of respondents agree and strongly agree with the statement.

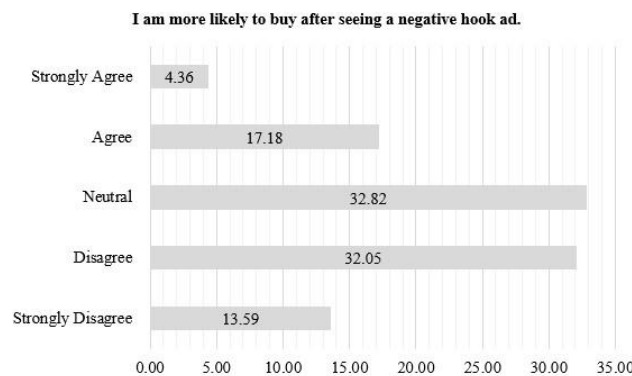


Figure 7. represents the distribution of respondents towards

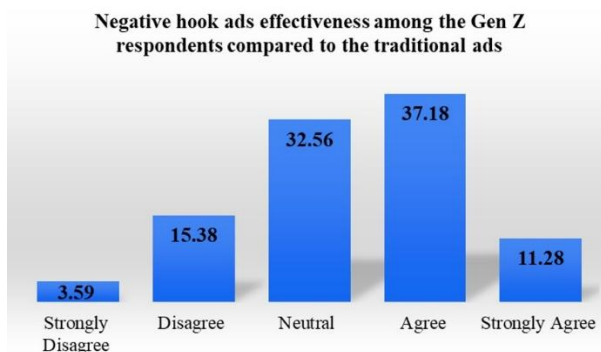


Figure 8. Representing the negative hook ads effectiveness among the Gen Z

Figure 7 represents the distribution of respondents towards more likely to buy after seeing a negative hook ad is represented in the chart. The majority of 32.82% of the respondents are neutral and 45.64% of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree with the given statement. A small proportion of respondents of 21.54% agree and strongly agree with the statement.

Figure-8 representing the negative hook ads effectiveness among the Gen Z respondents compared to the traditional ads. The data indicates that 37.18% respondents agree and 11.28% respondents strongly agree for the given statement. Where 32.56% of the respondents remain neutral. On the other hand, 18.97% of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree with the given statement.

The other findings of the research suggest that the respondents feel more honest and real from influencers was agreed by 38.72%, the advertisement starting with a problem makes respondent to find the product solution was agreed by 34.62%, the negative hook ads reduce the belief of sponsored content advertisement was agreed by 28.72%, the attitude towards brand was improved due to negative hook advertisement was agreed by 37.16%, negative hook advertisements make me to remember the product even after a long time was agreed by 43.59%, negative hook influencer advertisements make the respondents to try the product was agreed by 36.16%, influencers who use negative hook technique over those who don't was agreed by 27.44%. Further findings identify that 25.90%, 19.49%, 28.71% of the respondents like, comment and share the Instagram influencers advertisements with others. These findings clearly show that negative hook influencer advertisement in Instagram needs more audience engagement stories to attract gen Z.

Table 1. ANOVA on Overall Impact

| | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Between Groups | 79.078 | 1 | 79.078 | 6.281 | .013 |
| Within Groups | 4885.219 | 388 | 12.591 | | |
| Total | 4964.297 | 389 | | | |

The table 1 represents the Anova conducted to find the significance difference between the overall impact of negative hook storytelling and the Instagram influencer followers. The sum of squares 79.078 is compared within groups variance, 4885.219. The f-value 6.281 with the significance level of 0.013. Since the significance value $0.013 < 0.05$ the result is statically significant. Therefore, null hypothesis is rejected and there is significant difference between negative hook storytelling and the Instagram influencer followers.

Table 2. Correlations between attention and engagement, perceived authenticity and relevance, attitude, recall, and purchase intent, overall impact

| | | Attention | Perceived | Attitude | Overall Impact |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------------|
| Attention & Engagement | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .670** | .677** | .596** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 390 | 390 | 390 | 390 |
| Perceived Authenticity & Relevance | Pearson Correlation | .670** | 1 | .740** | .645** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 390 | 390 | 390 | 390 |
| | Pearson Correlation | .677** | .740** | 1 | .701** |

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|------|
| Attitude, Recall & Purchase Intent | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | | .000 |
| | N | 390 | 390 | 390 | 390 |
| Overall Impact | Pearson Correlation | .596** | .645** | .701** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .000 | |
| | N | 390 | 390 | 390 | 390 |

The table 2 shows the correlation relation between attention and engagement, perceived authenticity and relevance, attitude, recall, and purchase intent, overall impact based on the sample size 390. The correlation significance at 0.01 level (p=.000) which indicates the strong relationship evidence among the variable.

The strong positive correlation is noted between attention and engagement with perceived authenticity and relevance (r = .670), attention and engagement with attitude, recall, and purchase intent (r = .677), attention and engagement with overall impact (r = .596). This suggest that attention and engagement have higher impact on perceived authenticity and relevance, attitude, recall, and purchase intent, overall impact among the respondents towards Instagram influencer advertisements.

Perceived authenticity and relevance have strong relationship with attention and engagement (r = .670), attitude, recall purchase intent (r = .740), and overall impact (r = .645). This shows the strong positive correlation of perceived authenticity and relevance that make the respondents to pay attention towards the influencer advertisements and the overall impact of the influencer’s advertisements is high among Gen Z.

Attitude, recall, and purchase intent has a strong relationship towards overall impact (r = .701). which suggest the respondents have overall impact on the Instagram influencer advertisements which in decide their purchase intent.

The overall impact has relationship with all the variables such as attention and engagement, perceived authenticity and relevance, attitude, recall, and purchase intent. This shows that the overall impact is likely to increase respondents’ attention and engagement, perceived authenticity and relevance, attitude, recall, and purchase intent towards negative hook Instagram influencer advertisements.

Table 3. Attention and Engagement & Age - Descriptives

| | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error | 95% Confidence Interval for Mean | | Minimum | Maximum |
|-------|-----|---------|----------------|------------|----------------------------------|-------------|---------|---------|
| | | | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound | | |
| 1 | 245 | 17.5184 | 4.555 | .29103 | 16.9451 | 18.0916 | 6.00 | 30.00 |
| 2 | 97 | 17.7732 | 4.388 | .44560 | 16.8887 | 18.6577 | 8.00 | 30.00 |
| 3 | 27 | 17.5926 | 5.212 | 1.00321 | 15.5305 | 19.6547 | 8.00 | 29.00 |
| 4 | 15 | 18.0000 | 6.845 | 1.76743 | 14.2092 | 21.7908 | 6.00 | 26.00 |
| 5 | 6 | 13.1667 | 3.600 | 1.47007 | 9.3877 | 16.9456 | 6.00 | 15.00 |
| Total | 390 | 17.5385 | 4.664 | .23619 | 17.0741 | 18.0028 | 6.00 | 30.00 |

Table 4. ANOVA - Attention and Engagement

| | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Between Groups | 123.394 | 4 | 30.848 | 1.424 | .225 |
| Within Groups | 8339.530 | 385 | 21.661 | | |
| Total | 8462.923 | 389 | | | |

The table 3 and 4 represents the Anova conducted to find the significance difference between attention on negative hook advertisements and the age of respondents. The sum of squares between groups 123.394 is compared within groups variance, 8339.530. The f-value 1.424 with the significance level of 0.225. Since the significance value $0.225 > 0.05$ the result is statically not significant. Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference between attention on negative hook advertisements and the age of respondents.

CONCLUSION

This research study examined the impact of Instagram influencer advertisements among Gen Z in terms of Negative Hook Story telling. Social media platforms have become a part of everyday routine for Gen Z as they have grown up in the digital age. The Instagram influencers advertisements are significantly becoming popular. The research focuses on Gen Z's attention and engagement, relevance, perceived authenticity, attitude, purchase intention and overall impact of the response towards Instagram influencer advertisements. According to the research findings only about 40% responded that negative hook advertisements grab their attention, while 47.69% of the respondents watch full ads and 48.46% find them engaging. The results suggest that the negative hook ads grab initial attention while the attention and behavioural outcomes such as purchase intention is inconsistent. The research studies by Atiq et.al, (2022) found that audience engagement increases through relatability and trust based on the storytelling and Hazari and Sethna (2022) in their research identified the longer engagement time with the Instagram influencer increases persuasion.

The research findings here suggest that content type is necessarily important and not mere attention alone is insufficient. Also, Chen et al. (2024) and Yadav et al. (2025) in their research emphasized on Gen Z's engagement largely depends on entertainment, credibility and informational value, which may not have satisfied with negative hook advertising strategy. Furthermore, prior study suggests that Gen Z exhibit selective retention instead of short attention spans, and engage only with content pertaining to their needs and if it is emotionally appealing (Rajgor, 2025). This indicates why negative storytelling, does not create stronger purchase intentions or attitudes though it grabs the attention of the viewers. The findings reinforce Pan et al. (2024), who argues that the effectiveness of influencer marketing depends both on trust and engagement rather than innovative techniques. In conclusion, negative hook storytelling potential draws initial attention but does not significantly impact the Instagram influencer ads among Gen Z compared with other storytelling techniques. Instead of depending on storytelling techniques the marketers must focus on relatability, authenticity and value driven content rather than relying on negative hook storytelling. Future research may investigate the actual attention duration in seconds, their emotional reactions, format of the content to gain a deeper understanding of Gen Z's engagement patterns. Further research can study the interaction patterns of short-form videos and its information potential to optimize the efficacy of advertisements.

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