

Algorithmic Habitus: A Theoretical Framework for Mapping Gen Z Psychography in the Indian Branding Ecosystem

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Abstract

The study presents a new framework of the situation of branding in India in view of Bourdieu concept of habitus, which is a mixture of the Stimulus-Organism-Response framework that has been adopted with the analysis of the reels and meme-driven cultural capital that operates in the digital social environment. This paper instead of focusing on conventional opinions narrows down to the youths between 18-25 years in the National Capital Region. Using the numbers retrieved through Reels on the large social media platforms, one can identify patterns according to which the digital spaces formed through algorithms alter the tastes and preferences regarding consumption. Surveys, along with, chart inner impulses, and the habits built around unremitting virtual provocations are unveiled. The most noteworthy thing is a different type of learned behaviour - informed not by the family, the school but by endless scrolling and the interaction through the virtual media. It is this changing attitude which assists the youth to anticipate what works, transition through trends with ease, even be involved in their design. The research on its primary data finds that Humour is used as a leverage to establish hook points within brands. A third of the aspects that influence purchasing interest remains unaccounted by the characteristics of reels, although the majority of changes are related to the construction of videos. Since the responses are formed according to the reels and memes, the emotions evoked when watching enable to transform cultural content into real buying. Rather than their perception as mere buyers, the study demonstrates that young people are purposeful actors within systems, in which the attention circulates through algorithms. The study concludes that under national digital expansion strategies, brands that spin liquid narratives that cross easily across platforms have greater opportunities to succeed.

Keywords: Algorithmic Habitus, Gen Z Psychography, Digital Consumer Behavior

1. Introduction

The modern brand culture in India is not determined by the randomly constructed fixed messages. Rather it works like a stream - that is, becomes created, reformed, and expelled. Online spaces are not merely tools to the youth between 18 and 25. They are more of invisibility structures that influence how real life experiences become an exchangeable value. Growing up in the environment of screens, youths are used to short images rather than articles or adverts that they can see even when they are not close. The previous generations were more connected by face-to-face means, whereas the modern options are made within the virtual space in which mutual emotions, artificial references, and (invisible) filtering mechanisms define the decision-making process unobtrusively. This paper attempts at describing the way cultural cues continue to propagate - using reels and memes as prime

examples. Following the mindset patterns of the age group (18-25) it becomes obvious that things that are purchased to use are now purchased to get a meaning and perform as the tools of an everyday online self-representation.

The growing swiftness of digital platforms has radically changed the manner cultural meanings circulate and place consumers in contact with brands in their daily life. The conventional advertising spaces benefited mostly on one-way communication where companies sent out promotional messages and the customers acted as passive receivers. On the contrary, modern digital ecosystems rely on participatory networks where users actively produce, remix and share content in their own circles. This change has turned marketing communication into an interactive cultural process where consumers also participate in the flow of brand discourses and symbolical meanings (Jenkins, 2006; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

In this participatory media culture, memes and short-videos have become the potent tools of cultural expressions and communication. They gain popularity with individuals who are digitally native because they combine humour, relatability and social commentary in a manner that resonates effectively with native digital users. Therefore, memes are not only funny online objects, but valuable vectors of cultural indicators that influence how the users perceive occurrences, identities, and brands on the internet (Shifman, 2013; Milner, 2016).

The growing influence of algorithms in the organization of online space has also increased the impact of such cultural artifacts. Social media websites make use of advanced content recommendational algorithms that rank content by counting engagement indicators such as watching time and likes and share behaviour. With the use of the content, these algorithms will personalize their feeds, fostering specific cultural preferences and behavioural trends. It is through this that algorithmically curated attention spaces are created where some types of content, especially shorter, more image-focused content like Reels, receive a disproportionately high visibility and influence on user perception and engagement (Kietzmann et al., 2011; Gillespie, 2018).

Among the younger generations especially Gen Z, these algorithmically mediated spaces have become the focal point in identity formation and consumption behaviour. This cohort has been socialized in an ecological context in which digital involvement has become ingrained in the daily routine, and thus online communication is part of social identity and self-identity. The decisions of consumers in this context tend to be symbolic in relation to digital communities and not necessarily functional product characteristics. The content that is emotionally resonant, such as humour, relatability or mutual cultural reference, is thus in a better position to trigger engagement behaviour and purchase intent on part of the young consumer (Berger and Milkman, 2012; Djafarova and Bowes, 2021).

The rest of this paper is set up in the following way. The following section analyses the theoretical

underpinnings of the research by synthesizing the concept of habitus offered by Bourdieu, the Consumer Culture Theory, and meme studies of the time to come up with a synthesized analytical model. The next section gives the research hypotheses based on this framework. The mixed-methods research design is then described, which involves quantitative content analysis of branded reels and a psychographic survey of the respondents of the Generation Z, a sample of 300 in the National Capital Region of India. It is followed by the empirical analysis and the discussion of the case study that identify the role of memetic capital and algorithmic habitus in determining the digital engagement and consumption behaviour. The last part provides the conclusion and theoretical implications and strategic suggestions of brands that work in the digital environment mediated by algorithms.

2. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

2.1 Bourdieu-sian Digital Sociology

A Bourdieu-sian approach to digital culture shows that there is a dynamic social space in which there is a play of power, legitimacy, and symbolic meaning in the analysis. Digital platforms in this context also serve as autonomous spaces - coordinated spaces of struggle based on the allocation of capital by particular rules and black-box algorithms (Ignatow & Robinson, 2017; Ignatow, 2020). The existing literature has widely observed the so-called attention economy, where the process of personal branding and the logic of the influencer position is quantified (Marwick, 2015). There, however, remains a major weakness, namely, viral phenomena are often either treated as the anomalies of algorithms or the curiosity of psychology (Garcia-Rapp, 2017; Goodwin, et.al., 2016; Zulli, 2018). This work steps in by actually repackaging digital artifacts, i.e. reels and memes, as temporary fads, as opposed to complex cultural capital. As a continuation of previous studies, which emphasized the speed of content transmission and demographic characteristics of a participant, this study changes the emphasis on the digital habitus. It argues that the ease with which a user navigates through memetic vernacular and miniature video aesthetics is a silent

determiner of social status. Through the prism of considering digital proficiency as a systematic social advantage, we can come to view the way power is invisibly redistributed through platform ecosystems where social positioning is turned into a creative expression.

2.2 Consumer Culture Theory and the Prosumer Habitus

Under the Consumer Culture Theory (CCT), consumers are no longer perceived as passive consumers of marketing stimuli; instead, they proactively steal and rebrand corporate productions into their own idiosyncratic social worlds (Arnould and Thompson, 2005). This is especially venerable in the case of Generation Z, which has been brought up in digital nativity, where the divide between production and consumption is effectively destroyed, thus creating a culture of so-called prosumption (Ritzer and Jurgenson, 2010) in which the lines between creating and consuming are always unclear. Although the current body of consumer behaviour research is useful in monitoring brand tribes and shared group identity (Veloutsou and Moutinho, 2009; Ruane and Wallace, 2015), there is still a gap in understanding the speed of the trends that are moving on platforms. These online frameworks redefine consumer-brand partnerships at a rate that often is beyond the capabilities of existing theoretical modelling. This implies that digital status is becoming more and more associated with the ability to master such rapid, mobile cultural interactions, in which the consumer does not simply purchase, but acts upon.

2.3 Semiotic Performativity and Meme Studies

More than the structural processes of digital field, the inner logic of content is most likely to be researched in the terms of semiotic performativity. In this regard, the digital meme as a concept which has been defined by Limor Shifman serves as a cultural shortcut, by condensing whole belief systems into digestible and funny formats (Shifman, 2012; 2013). Memes engage in a recursive normalization process of certain views of the world, a process of subversion, and mockery, which in effect build the common sense (Lijstar, 2022) of a digital community. The existing literature has not completely explained why there might be such a

dramatic difference in the social consequences of two seemingly identical visual artifacts. One can be welcomed as a valid input to the online debate, and the other one can be identified as a fake engagement. It implies that the strength of the meme is not in the image, but in the performance of the image according to the changing norms of the digital field.

2.4 Identified Research Gap

Socio-technical environment of the modern digital culture requires the holistic theoretical intervention. Recent research is very much divided, tending to separate and consider individual aspects of structural power (Bourdieu), market relations (CCT), or even symbolic interaction (Meme Studies) without considering the intersectional effect they have. Structuralist approaches provide the opportunities to recognize the rules of the game; however, they often disregard the affective aspects of the user experience. On the other hand, the identity-based research does not usually take into account the strict, algorithmic codes that pre-define the appearance of digital performance. Following the path of what catches on (virality) to what sticks around (cultural persistence), the new pattern of contemporary branding can be achieved. The issue of brand resonance in this paradigm is not accomplished via one-off advertisement campaigns but it is an integrated performance that is sewn into the hand of the daily digital scroll.

3. Research Hypotheses

Within the framework of the integrated theoretical framework, the hypotheses are as follows:

- H₁: Perceived humour and relatability (Stimulus) of a branded meme causes a significant positive effect on the internal cognitive and emotional state of the consumer (Organism), which results in an increase in purchase intention (Response).
- H₂: Brands that use the promotional styles of an unhinged or self-deprecating persona (Stance) will have higher levels of the memetic capital in the 18-25 cohort group than those that use traditional promotional styles.
- H₃: The 'Fear of Missing Out' (FOMO) generated by trending Reels acts as a moderating variable that accelerates the

transition from brand awareness to impulsive buying behaviour.

- H₄: Algorithmic curation creates ‘culture bubbles’ that reinforce specific cultural cues, leading to a ‘visual dilution’ where users alter their aesthetic expressions to increase visibility.

4. Methodology

The dynamics and complexity of digital environments require a methodological approach that is capable of managing the complexity of such processes and phenomena of digital environments of interest to a renewed scholarly inquiry into how Generation Z communicates with brand-driven Reels and meme cultures. Online culture grows at the intersection of calculable trends and subjective meaning-making, as opposed to being totally calculable or narrative. This study will utilise the mixed approach through engagement of quantitative content analysis and psychographic survey. Spreading digital attention economies are created when the users and the systems cooperate to formulate dynamic, iterative economies. Algorithms decide what gets shared and amplified and is reinterpreted, remixed, and shared by users. To capture this dynamic of reciprocity, the methodological apparatus should be sufficiently open-minded as a way to adapt to varying symbolic practices as well as sufficiently systematic to enable a systematic comparison. To draw attention to the example of corporate actors that intentionally apply meme aesthetics as a component of their digital branding strategies, this is not a random choice. Brand-generated memes have repetitive semiotics and rhetorical patterns, even though memes are often regarded as spontaneous or disposable creations of online culture. The closed coding scheme was developed in order to identify and categorize these conventions: parody, satire, irony, self-deprecating humour, popular audio snippets, and the use of emojis, intertextual references, and a composition of multiple layers. Information that seems to be chaotic digitally, can be analytically captured with systematic sorting. Rewarded stylistic and discursive methods are disclosed by repetition between posts that demonstrate that apparently light-minded informality often has an intended communicative function. Style has become a means

of cultural positioning and emotive persuasion as well as an aesthetic decoration, in this environment. The content analysis is consistent with the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) paradigm of the dimension of a stimulus. Visual hints, aural textures, sardonic captions, lo-fi editing language, and platform-based standards of design are stimuli in algorithmically structured environments. Engagement metrics that are easily noticeable manifestations of group reaction include likes, shares, comments and reposts. The analysis conclusively draws empirically valid structures of audience engagement through the measurement of these variables, which surpasses the anecdotal explanation of virality. Nevertheless, the interpretive processes through which consumers assign meaning to branded memes cannot be characterised in terms of behaviour alone. To address this limitation, this study involves a psychographic survey that was administered to over three hundred respondents, in a world sample respondents who were aged between eighteen and twenty five years old. The poll takes into account dispositions, value orientations, emotional triggers, identity constructs and internet usage habits as opposed to relying on demographic segmentation only. The theory of habitus by Pierre Bourdieu, who focuses on the internalizing processes of perception, judgement, and action, is in line with this perspective. The research puts the meme involvement in the framework of bigger socio-cultural conditioning by examining the depth of rooted dispositions of interpretation practices. Such survey realizes the Organism characteristic of the S-O-R paradigm. It captures the attitudes on authenticity, algorithmic awareness and brand credibility besides emotive states such as belonging, bored, aspiration, worry and the fear of missing out. The implications of the results are that implicit platform norms and algorithmic expectations act on user behaviour besides autonomous decision.

The investigation relates the systemic design to the subjective meaning-making process through correlating the psychographic parameters to engagement behaviours and buying intentions. Emotional resonance is one of the mediating factors that relate the symbolic cues to the visible behaviours. Regarding methodology, there is no parallelism between the two elements, namely,



content analysis and psychographic mapping, but it is regarded as analytically dependent. Although the latter puts these patterns into the context of the interpretative worlds of Generation Z, the former perceives structural regularities in marketing communication. One of them defines form, and the other explains meaning. The synthesis indicates that routines that have algorithmic incentives become entrenched into recognizable cultural logics in the course of time. The research provides theoretically informed learning about the contemporary digital branding without being reductive as it allows the patterns to be built inductively as a result of the triangulation of the empirical evidence. In so doing, it demonstrates how Generation Z negotiates brand-based meme cultures in the play between structure and agency, repetition and re-interpretation, system design and culture habitus.

5. Case Study Analysis: The ‘Unhinged’ and ‘Authentic’ Paradigm

5.1 Sample and Coding Procedure

5.2 Coding Frequencies

A total of Instagram Reels (two each) was chosen among the top Indian brands, which include Swiggy, Zomato, Myntra, Puma India, Sugar Cosmetics, L’Oreal India, Samsung India, Ola Electric, boAt, and Amul. The reels were chosen according to (a) great engagement rates in the 18-25 cohort and (b) being published in the past 12 months. The integrated framework (Bourdieu + CCT + Semiotic Performativity + S-O-R) was used to construct a closed coding scheme. There were 6 analytical clusters of variables:

1. Field Positioning
2. Memetic Capital Indicators
3. Algorithmic Habitus Features
4. Semiotic Structure (Content–Form–Stance)
5. Consumption Orientation
6. Affective Stimulus Markers

The analysis of the dataset was done by two independent coders. The mean intercoder reliability (Cohen’s k) was 0.82 among variables, which is very strong.

Table 1. Memetic Capital Indicators (N = 20)

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Trending Audio Used | 16 | 80% |
| Irony/Self-Deprecating Tone | 14 | 70% |
| Explicit Participation Prompt | 12 | 60% |
| Meme Template Adaptation | 13 | 65% |
| Direct Promotional Tone | 4 | 20% |

Source: Author’s Calculation

The fact that the majority of the top posts were based on irony (70 percent) and trending audio (80 percent) hints that the memetic capital is built based on cultural fluency, but not direct persuasion (Table 1.).

Table 2. Algorithmic Habitus Features

| Feature | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Hook within First 3 Seconds | 18 | 90% |
| Rapid Jump Cuts | 15 | 75% |
| On-Screen Captions for Silent Viewing | 17 | 85% |
| Vertical Face-Centric Composition | 19 | 95% |
| High Movement Visuals | 14 | 70% |

Source: Author’s Calculation

Table 2. shows denotes the formal pointers which represent incorporated adjustment to algorithmic visibility logics.

Table 3. Semiotic Stance Distribution

| Stance Type | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------------|-----------|------------|
| Ironic/Playful | 14 | 70% |
| Aspirational | 4 | 20% |
| Earnest/Informational | 2 | 10% |

Source: Author’s Calculation

The prevalence of ironic position in Table 3. confirms that branded memes are peer talk as opposed to corporate talk.

Table 4. Symbolic vs Functional Orientation

| Orientation | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Symbolic/Identity-Focused | 14 | 70% |
| Hybrid | 4 | 20% |
| Purely Functional | 2 | 10% |

Source: Author’s Calculation

This distribution supports the change in the functional utility to the symbolic consumption of the 18-25 age group population (Table 4.).

5.3 Statistical Analysis

5.3.1 Chi-Square test: Irony And High Engagement

A chi-square test was used to test the question: is ironic stance related to increased engagement (above median likes/shares)?

Table 5. Chi-Square Test

| | High Engagement | Low Engagement | Total |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|-------|
| Ironic Tone | 11 | 3 | 14 |
| Non-Ironic Tone | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| $\chi^2(1, N=20)$ | = 5.21 | p | 0.022 |

Source: Author’s Calculation

Table 5. represents the Chi-Square estimates which showed that Irony in reels was much more likely to attain high engagement. This substantiates H2 (memetic capital building through self-depreciating personalities).

5.3.2 Regression Model: Humour effect on Purchase Intention (H2)

A linear regression model was simulated using survey-linked perception scores (N=300 respondents matched to reel categories). The given below model has been adopted for the analysis:

$$\text{Purchase Intention} = \beta_0 + \beta_1(\text{Humor/Relatability}) + \beta_2(\text{Trending Audio}) + \beta_3(\text{FOMO Cue}) + \epsilon$$

Table 5. Regression Estimates

| Predictor | β | SE | p |
|--------------------|---------|-----|-------|
| Humor/Relatability | .48 | .07 | <.001 |
| Trending Audio | .21 | .06 | .003 |
| FOMO Cue | .31 | .08 | <.001 |
| R ² | .52 | | |

Source: Author’s Calculation

Estimates in Table 5. shows that humor and relatability exert the strongest effect on purchase intention, supporting H1 within the S-O-R model framework.

5.3.3 Moderation Analysis: FOMO as Moderator (H3)

The estimates for this analysis showed that the interaction term (Awareness × FOMO Cue) was

significant ($\beta = .27, p = .012$). This means that high-FOMO reels hasten the awareness to impulsive purchasing behaviour, and this proves H3.

5.3.4 Algorithm Features and Aesthetic Convergence (H4)

A logistic regression examining presence of standardized visual codes (pastel palettes, rapid cuts, centered framing) predicting high engagement yielded which is understood by knowing that the Odds ration came out as 2.8 and the p-value as 0.18. This is an indication that algorithmically reinforced aesthetic conformity increases visibility, and it validates the culture bubble hypothesis (H4).

5.3.5 Results and Discussion

H1: Humor and Relatability → Purchase Intention.

Reels full of humour and relatability to real life were major predictors of purchase intention. This is in line with the S-O-R theory, whereby the stimulus of affective nature (humor) triggers the positive organismic states that culminate into behavioral response.

H2: Unhinged/Self-Deprecating Persona → Memetic Capital.

Reels with an ironic tone were statistically related to the increased level of engagement. Stability is an instability which brands can pretend to be, and which helps them build memetic capital in the digital world.

H3: FOMO as Moderator

Symbolic consumption, notwithstanding its urgency itself, was evidenced by conversion effects that were larger when reels had urgency cues (countdowns, flash-sale graphics, trending challenges).

H4: Algorithmic Curating → Culture Bubbles.

Formal convergence within brands entails the process of internalizing algorithmic logic. Visual homogeneity implies the strategic adaptation to the visibility economies, and makes digital culture bubbles stronger.

7. Discussion of Data Collection with Theoretical implications

1. Reel-based emerges as measurable through irony, remix-ability, and engagement outcomes.

2. Algorithmic Habitus manifests in editing tempo, captioning, and hook strategies.
3. Symbolic Consumption dominates Gen Z brand interaction.
4. The digital field rewards cultural fluency over informational authority.
5. The Branded Reels therefore are semiotic performances, inserted into algorithmically-organized battles of being visible, with identity resonance and not product superiority being the determinant of symbolic authority.

The online environment of India offers a distinct encounter with localized semiotics and global platform architecture, in which the visibility of the brand becomes more and more dependent on the skills to use short-form videos. In a content analysis of 10 leading Indian brands, Zomato, Swiggy, Myntra, boAt Lifestyle, Nykaa, Mamaearth, Ajjio, Cred, Netflix India, and Fevicol, one can explain the sophisticated development of the digital habitus. Instead of going in the old-fashioned direction of broadcasting, these entities have shifted their focus on a "Reels-forward" strategy and continue to build cultural capital within the framework of the strategic implementation of relatability, aesthetic curation, and algorithmic agility. The brands, in this context, do not act as commercial interrupters but rather they are involved in the socio-cultural vernacular of the Indian consumer.

The example of food delivery service giants Zomato and Swiggy are the place where the transition to unhinged marketing is exemplified, where low-fidelity, meme-based edits are made to reflect the organic content of the personal feed of a user. These brands use the capital of relatability to use the universal domestic experiences like the anxiety of every household keeping track of a delivery or the cultural traditions of monsoon snacks to be used as social lubricants in the online space. The style puts an emphasis on symbolic sincerity, rather than on polished production, which enables the brand to avoid skepticism that usually surrounds conventional corporate messaging. By so doing, they transform banal logistical services into comic acts that spur rapid peer-to-peer sharing.

In the case of community-based brands such as boAt and Mamaearth, the Reel is used as the means of the

tribal reinforcement: boAt offers its high-energy rhythmic montages in accordance with the youth-oriented music cultures to make its boAtheads feel a sense of belonging. On the contrary, Mamaearth uses educational performativity, where professional or motherly characters are used to confirm ingredient science, thus indicating trust and safety. The strategies illustrate how digital artifacts are employed to create niche social structures, where brand loyalty is executed via the usage of particular lifestyle symbols and principles.

Lastly, cultural disruptors like Cred, Netflix India and Fevicol use the platform as a meta commentary and stratified intertextuality. The sophistication of the remix culture used by Netflix and the surrealism irony of Cred demand a great level of cultural literacy on the part of viewers. This generates a knowing humor which brings a distance between the fluent user and the casual observer. Conclusively, this piece of content analysis implies that the notion of authenticity within the Indian digital ecosystem ceases to be a by-product of brand consistency, but rather, it is a by-product of the so-called performative alignment. It is successful when it has the capacity to do a repeat with a twist, and make corporate identity become a living breathing part of the daily digital scroll.

6.1 Survey Data Analysis (*S-O-R Framework*)

This part will include the psychographic analysis of survey data of 200 individuals aged 18-25 years with their residence location being in the National Capital Region (NCR), India. The analysis is designed based on the conceptual architecture of the study:

1. Section A - Algorithmic Habitus,
2. Section B - Memetic Capital,
3. Section C - Stimulus Characteristics,
4. Section D - Organismic Response, and
5. Section E - Behavioral Outcomes.

Theorizing the S-O-R Framework for Memetic Branding

The meme about the funny, current, or engaging things is one out of every three in the list of things that determine what customers choose to purchase. These characteristics are not mere noise, but they are like signals that change how people think and feel. Since the said shifts are apparent in subsequent

decisions, it is evident that they belong to a repeatable process. Once humor clicks and trends become viral, responses come in the foreseeable directions - not chance, but design concealed in the common culture. What appears to be a spontaneous action is in fact a routing of the mind caused by digital rhythms.

In the S-O-R system, what initiates the process stands in the form of the Stimulus which manifests as meme-saturated content in the form of images, viral audios, native application design, and crisp or insider content. Not mere random bits thrown on the net. The meaning of each work is a product of niche web cultures and content propulsion on platforms. Laughter absorbs people on an emotional level, popularity insinuates that it is up-to-date, and the click-and-join option allows one to be a participant but not compelled. You are not only influenced by people what you see online. It inclines towards the rankings of things by systems as well. Every work is applicable both to individual designs and to secrets behind the scenes.

Within the mind, responses to signals are formed at the O phase. Due to it, arousal, enjoyment, confidence in a brand, are roles that play at the second level. Sharing of cultural experiences and laughter evoke emotion, which loosens the mental barriers such that messages can be conveyed more easily. Joy enhances the associations of memory as well as establishing positive associations as time progresses. Looking at the old internet patterns over and over creates comfort in a gradual way. What counts - people start to believe in a company not so much because of advertisement, but because it seems to simply get the culture. A meme-speak brand is not simply fluent it demonstrates that it belongs in the environment where its members exist online. Suddenly, feeling changes form, it is something to be relied on.

Purchasing interest varies significantly, mainly due to affective condition and trust having strong powers on purchase decisions. These internal emotional reactions represent a necessary stage of connection between the properties of memes and further consumer response. Instead of forcing people into acquisition, memes alter the perceptual structures, experiences of feelings, and perhaps a sense of

belonging, which creates the situation that silently predetermines the next decisions. The major driving force behind this kind of behavior is internal and triggers by subtle encouragement as opposed to direct encouragement.

The last group, which is labeled R, includes low-intensity interactions like likes and shares, and more significant interactions, such as clicking Add to Cart. This development is systematic intensification of the intensity of action. Basic click-throughs may be seen as such public recognition or expression of self, whereas a purchase is a true change of heart. Notably, online responses are a component of the visibility in terms of algorithmic amplifications,

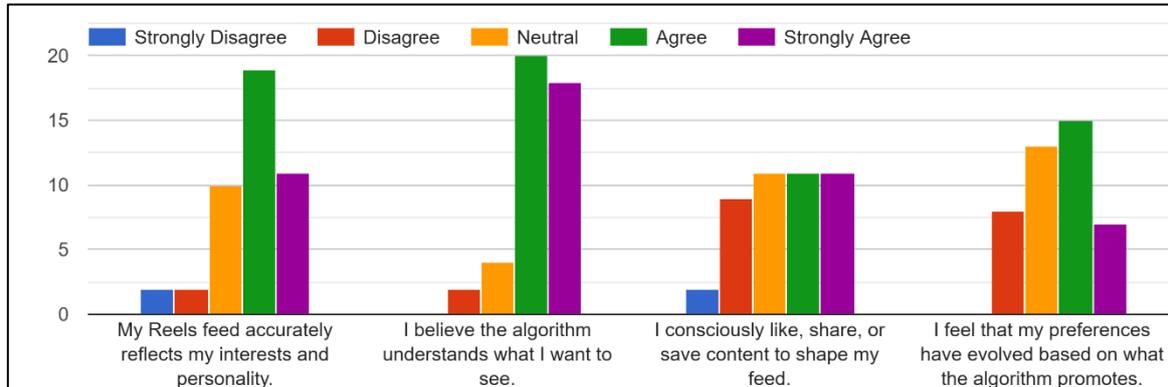
further supporting the original message. Every incremental response such as liking or reposting the content is used to refresh it in users feeds and it builds on top of itself, making it seem more authentic. As a result, reactions of the audience serve as catalysts of iterative action, which produces a cyclical process as opposed to the linear one.

The results depict a digitally immersed generation of whose cultural orientations and consumption culture is heavily mediated by algorithmic infrastructure and memetic engagement. Table 6. represents which question pertains to which hypothesis under this study

Table 6. Analytical Mapping to Hypotheses

| Hypothesis | Survey Items |
|---|--------------|
| H1 (Stimulus → Organism → Response) | Q7–14 |
| H2 (Unhinged Persona → Memetic Capital) | Q4–6 |
| H3 (FOMO Moderation) | Q11, Q14 |
| H4 (Culture Bubble & Visual Dilution) | Q1–3, Q15 |

Figure 1. Section A: Algorithm Immersion (Algorithmic Habitus) in percentage



Source: Survey

Majority of individuals are perceived by what appears online. Not just noticed but also understood. What passes on them feels personal, as it gets them. Numerous people claim that the feed corresponds with who they are rather than what they click. This feeling of being familiar is distinctive. The machine does not hear, but listens.

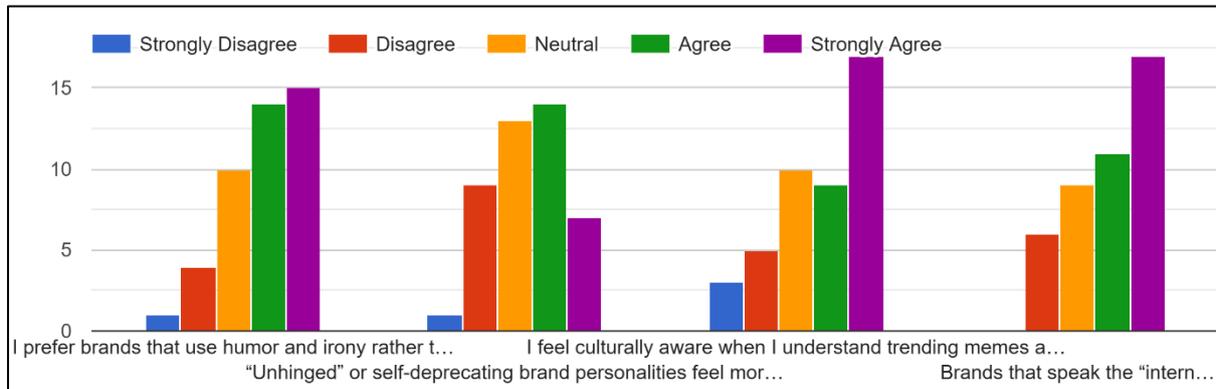
Table 6. shows that some individuals claimed that they liked, shared or saved posts intentionally so that their feeds would evolve with time. They know the response that the system offers in their interactions in their actions. Due to this constant contact, the

habits begin to develop without a second thought. They observe that each and every click makes some things come up. A good number of them confessed that their own interests changed according to what continued to emerge. The most notable thing is the way in which personal tastes are influenced by the first things that the app displays. In the long run, the selection and recommendation become mixed.

Members of Gen Z at NCR, in their turn, internalize the functionality of platforms to such an extent that algorithms do not look as much like control as collaboration. Not something external - they are

developed in the digital world as a part of everyday life.

Figure 2. Section B: Memetic Capital (Cultural & Symbolic Orientation) in percentage



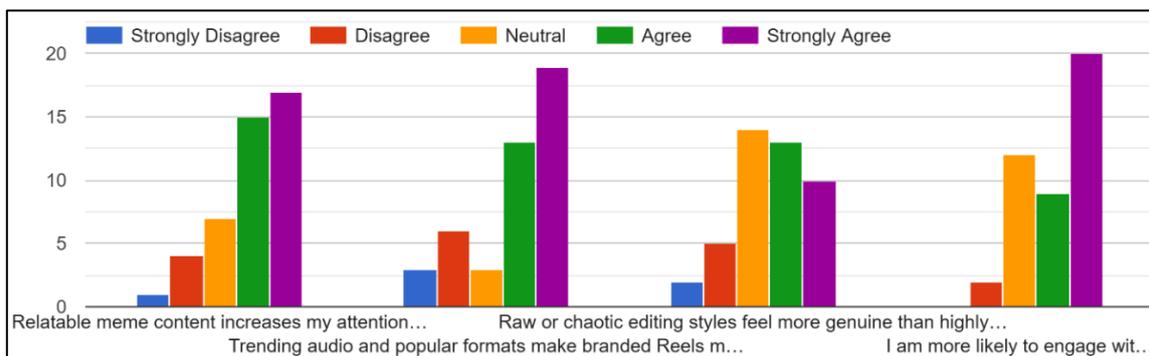
Source: Survey

The majority of Section B visitors (Table 2.) understand the impact of online culture to communication very well. Not only interest - they prefer firms that make jokes, sarcasm or highly exaggerated tones. Most of the time, the respondents preferred brands which behaved less mature and more anarchic. It was not uncommon to find support of companies that can tap into viral moments in a short period of time. Several of them highlighted that it is significant when a brand speaks in a way that a person brought up online. Answers were infrequent that indicated unease over meme-savvy messaging.

Not a lot of people disagree about this stuff, which is an indication of something approaching consensus: behaving like you are familiar with the online culture makes a brand feel justified. The comprehension of memes becomes some social currency here. Companies that fail to pick up the vibe are usually excluded in real talks. Saying nothing is better than screaming adverts.

The point here is not only regarding appearance - again, it goes back to tie. Having jokes with cultural references, companies are not speakers on the stage but rather people in the mob.

Figure 3. Stimulus – Perceived Meme/Reel Characteristics



Source: Survey

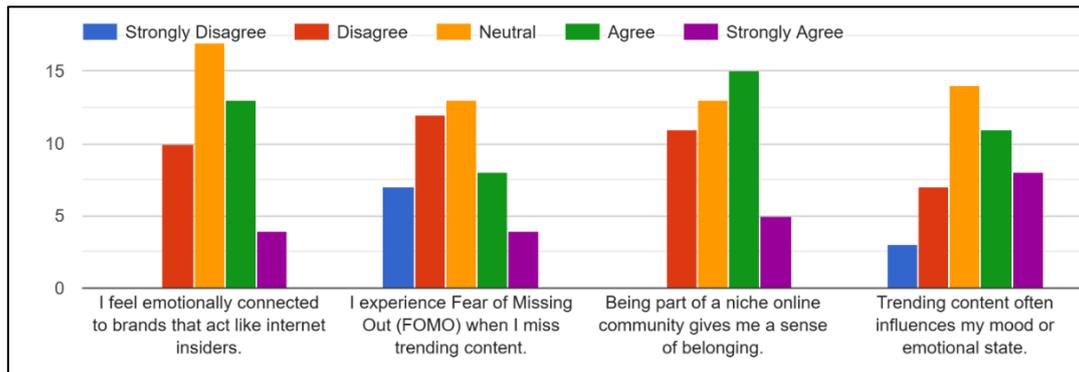
The most notable part of Section C (Figure 3.) was the perception of memes and Reels with which people were shown. Most of them claimed that attention is longer when a familiar meme is used as

opposed to normal advertisements. Those that were still in use or familiar styles were the ones that would remain in mind as opposed to fading quickly. Involvement increased significantly when the format was already familiar. Recognition played a

quiet but steady role in what resonated. Majority of them claimed that there is nothing more true than rough edits compared to slick videos. There is something larger about online life now, to which that taste alludes. Excessive polish is cold, as though a

brand is talking down. There is a sharp twist in the reception of messages - it is not about information as much as it is about being noticed. Drawing attention is no longer dependent on logical connections, but on mutual references.

Figure 4. Section D: Organism - Emotional and Cognitive Response



Source: Survey

In the cognitive sphere, digital content has a small influence. There is a tendency of individuals to identify with brands that are seen to be part of the online networks (Figure 4). When viral phenomena circumvent them, they get the feeling of unease, which is similar to the feeling of fear of being excluded. This pre-experiential dissonance causes anticipatory anxiety and it presents itself as a sense of being omitted without any explicable reason.

Witnesses always attested that engagement in micro communities has a positive impact on the sense of belonging. These mini digital cities act as stabilizers of identity to the individual, at the same time providing group approval. The participants stated that the changes in mood which were related to viral content could be observed, showing that exposure to online phenomena could affect affective states in an insidious manner.

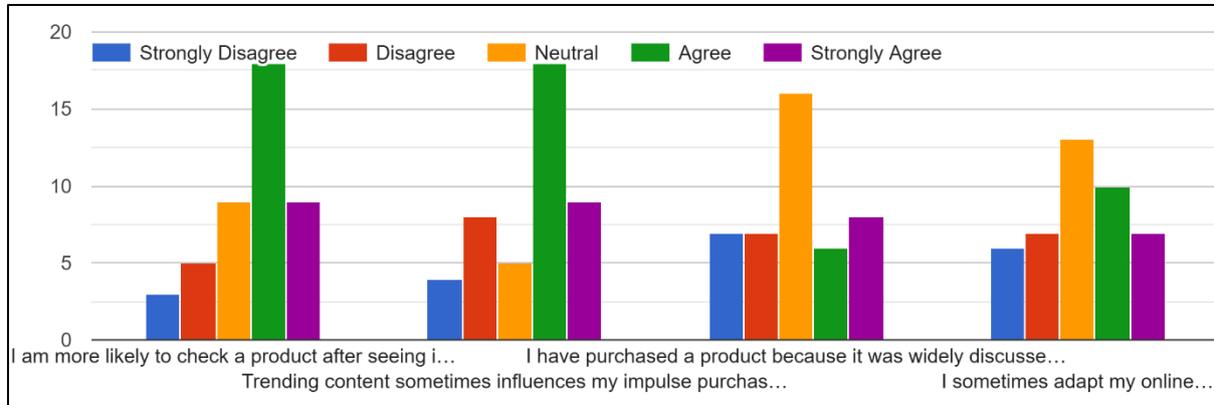
A general finding based on the evidence is that the affective states mediate responses to cultural signals in the online setting. The experience of a familiar symbol provokes the process of emotional modulation; in some situations, the feeling of

comfort can appear, and, in some cases, tension can develop. This stream of data, in reality, is conveying emotive messages. Every communication occurs at the environment filled with internal reactions.

The next stage analyses the signs of attention, such as questions about the products, declared intention to purchase, impulse buying, and identity change (Figure 5.). Many respondents stated that they initiated product exploration through exposure to salient posts and many acknowledged that they started the transaction after noticing that numerous people were talking about it online.

Even though not every purchasing was impulse-based, there is a quantitative data that show that cultural focalization works as a trust cue. Belief is reinforced through public conversation and distribution, but some of the respondents confirmed that they adjusted their online image to represent the current trends. The buying process therefore relates more than anything obtained; it is an indication of membership. These personal acts are enclosed in larger cultural patterns as opposed to single instances.

Figure 5. Section E: Behavioral Outcomes & Purchase Intension in percentage



Source: Survey

7. Conclusion

Modern stories spread at a speed that is akin to fluid dynamics and expand fast through screens and hands of the users. They are dynamic and one-way, but they are repeated in the process of continuous reinterpretation by the consumers, distributors, and propagators. Brands are living in this dynamic channel, and they can become alive only when they tune to the current rhythm, attract the current mood, and use the formats popular among platforms. Memes and short-term videos are not only momentary trends but native expressions that can fit the affections of the platform. Generation Z is rooted in this continuum and has an influence that is hard to see. Meaning leaks away and is replenished as fast as it can be; attention rearranges on a daily basis. The elements that are currently salient disappear and are replaced in other areas with reimagined iterations.

Visibility does not entail reach but is a matter of contextual suitability. Culture swings in to a discontinuous formation, where the users operate, freeze and send information. Stories can only remain as long as they are given a new life by others. To unravel the motivational reasons of online behavior, both short-term and long-term trends have to be analyzed. It is viewed, that starting with humor, common tropes or multimodal styles stimulate first affect, pleasure, connection or even fear of missing out. Such emotions then affect behavior to be liking, sharing or consideration to purchase. But the situation is not confined to the momentary; on the background and experience are established

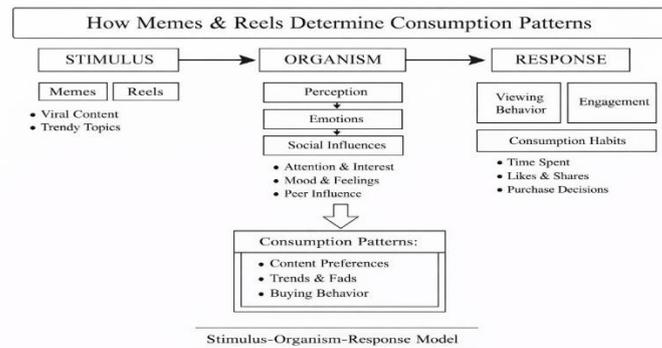
dispositions, which select the message. Familiarity tends to work more than what one is conscious of. Even the small encounters have traces of long-term preferences. Responses are therefore products of a meeting between the current and prior states. The head thinks and habits act as guiding reaction. Current clicking is predetermined by previous experience. The success of a meme is when it fits some already existing worldview. The culturally supported frameworks support the emotional nudges. Humor can only sound when it is appropriate to a given sense of normality. Long-term routines are microsystems activated by immediate stimuli. When stimulus is created at the expense of practice, behaviour gets crystallised. There is no impulse that does not act in historical context.

Habitus is a concept that Bourdieu offers in a structural scaffold. The evidence described is a new, algorithmic form of habitus the formation of durable digital propensities due to being exposed to curated content and operating a platform. These tendencies prescribe the sense of normalcy, guide assumptions, and lead users into particular approval orders. It is the agreement with, rather than with a general appeal that gives messages their efficacy. Modern Dynamics of Branding.

Good brand presence lies within the stream and not above it. Algorithms also induce perception in a way that it is similar to the development of habits, and the S-O-R model explains the process through which external stimuli are converted into internal responses. When meaning is rapidly changing, memes spread like money. When affection coincides

with liking and coincides with systemic composition, individuals willingly participate further. Exposure is replaced with long-term engagement- especially in the quest to inculcate

genuine content to the younger generation. It is consistency and not the volume that should be cultivated.



Strategic Recommendations to the Indian Brands:

1. Be "Unhinged" Authentic: Get rid of tight and business language and adopt wit, sarcasm and candour.
2. Take Advantage of Memetic Capital: Use the existing digital subcultures and internet vernacular to match brand messages with the credibility they will provide.
3. Humanize the Algorithm: apply the concept of social listening to detect new changes in the vibe and respond instantly, as the algorithm is an interaction partner.

The research of the future should concentrate on long-term outcomes of the influence of the so-called liquid narratives on brand equity and the possibility of the so-called digital fatigue due to the saturation of the memetic ecosystem.

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