CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

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This chapter reviews current research on advertising, digital marketing, social media marketing, creative determinants, and viral video advertising. It also elaborates on the creative determinants instrumental in video virality.

2.1 Social media platforms: engagement dynamics

Organizations can interact and engage with consumers on social media in various ways. What an organization shares on social media largely depends on the organization's budget and goal behind engagement. Most social media facilitates brands to engage in two distinct ways with customers, i.e., organic (free) and paid promotion. Facebook permits brands to engage with Facebook users in two different ways: The first is organic (free), which includes brand pages that users can like and share and posts containing videos or photos on the pages that allow for interaction and engagement of brand and TG (Curran et al., 2011; Logan, 2014).

In the free (organic) way, brands aim to connect with the customer by creating and posting interesting/engaging posts. The 2nd is a paid form of advertising which includes posts sponsored by a company. There are various types of paid advertising - pay-per-click, carousel, click-to-site, plug-ins or apps, and stories supported by the sponsors, to name a few (Curran et al., 2011; Gaber & Wright, 2014).

Marketers ensured high-quality content and decent design for better engagement. Marketers should also consider that too much waiting time or too many operation actions force customers away, even to the brink of ceasing to access the Facebook page (Chen et al., 2013). Companies need to ignore overload users with information and ask them to perform complicated tasks. When creating marketing strategies, a brand should assess the impact of the Facebook page on customer experience (Chen et al., 2013).

Customers receive multiple paid /organic messages from marketers. Without the right appeal, context, and content, the message vanishes quickly in a highly competitive scenario. A weak video can reduce engagement and affect the brand image negatively.

The customer interested in the specific products or services expects regular communication from the respective brands. Brand engagement at regular intervals helps gain space in the

consumer's mind. With continuous updates of Facebook pages with helpful links and news, the marketer can ensure that new information users can review appropriate business pages to get updates and news based on selected preferences and interests (Minasyan, 2014).

A sale of the product or service is an actual outcome, and consumer awareness, branding, etc., is the intangible outcome of the communication. Social media yields tangible and intangible results. There are various ways to measure brand engagement. A user on Facebook can exhibit interest in a post/page by liking it, commenting, or sharing (Curran et al., 2011; Pletikosa Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013). The consumer can raise their voice about positive or negative feelings, thoughts, and experiences and influence their social circles about the brand. In other words, this functionality allows them to express their feelings and thoughts towards it to those who see the post. The user can redirect others to a website or Facebook page (Pletikosa Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013).

2.2 Social media platforms: effectiveness measurement techniques

TV, radio, newspaper, and hoarding are traditional forms of advertising. Social media advertising is different from conventional advertising in many aspects. The primary differentiator between these forms of advertising is their way of monitoring communication effectiveness. Marketers can analyze Facebook engagement through likes, comments, and shares (Sanne & Wiese, 2018).

The ignorance of social media measuring tools can lead to ineffective communication. Social media platforms offer various measurement tools to influencers and users. Without understanding factors influencing Facebook user engagement, marketing strategies are likely unsuccessful (Bannister et al., 2013).

Facebook offers campaign results in the form of - the number of views, likes, comments, and shares (Curran et al., 2011; Houk & Thornhill, 2013). Companies can reach a specific target audience for paid promotion through CPC and CPM advertising options. In the Cost-Per-Click (CPC) form of advertising, paid listings are displayed. The money is charged to the organizations only when a user clicks on the ad. Cost-Per-Mille (CPM) charges money for thousands of ad impressions, not considering user behavior (Minasyan, 2014).

A Facebook user following a specific page is not an absolute criterion of user engagement. A marketer needs to evaluate the attention and engagement of users towards the brand. The Constant updates on the Facebook pages will not be sufficient for a brand for effective marketing. Minasyan stated this with an example: User X had liked only the Facebook page of a company named Y. Its effectiveness is highest due to regular updates and less exposure to other pages. However, if X likes and follows other Facebook pages, the significance of page Y decreases, with a low probability of accessing the Y page by the user. Hence, the effectiveness of Facebook Pages depends not only on regular updates of the content but also on the total number of pages liked by each Facebook user (Minasyan, 2014).

Minasyan's (2014) research unfolded a bold connection between two different groups of traffic sources. Web pages with lots of backlinks from Facebook had received more organic search traffic than those with a low number of Facebook backlinks for the observed period (Minasyan, 2014).

2.3 Viral Video Advertising

The enormous growth in video streaming is an opportunity for marketers in India. Marketers exploit these opportunities by creating content that generates deep engagement with viewers and makes a video viral. The viral-ability of the content is a crucial factor in ensuring engagement at a large scale. Viral video advertising is unpaid peer-to-peer communication of provocative content originating from an identified sponsor using the internet to persuade or influence an audience to pass along the content to others (Porter & Golan, 2006).

Consumers receive numerous messages from the internet. Creating experiences of an act, sense, think, feel and relate in marketing can be utilized in social media environments that truly touch customers and result in effective outcomes (Topsümer & Yarkin, 2015). The relevance of content marketing crucially changed because of the elimination of three content marketing obstructions. First, Brands of all sizes are motivated to produce content as the acceptance has increased. Second, for content creation, more talent is available. Brands work with more credible storytellers for the content, and third, with lower investment, brands can publish and share content, enabling a different efficiency level (Pulizzi, 2012). Who would have ever

guessed that the future of marketing is, in fact, not marketing at all but publishing? (Pulizzi, 2012).

Viral video advertising can construct engagement through P2P (peer-to-peer) interactions, constitute an endorsement, and improve the brand's reliability (Chiu et al., 2007). One of the disadvantages of viral content is difficulty controlling reach (Petrescu & Korgaonkar, 2011).

Online videos provoke motivation and emotionally intense connection with consumers than traditional advertising (Eckler & Bolls, 2011). Online video advertising is more compelling (Lee & Lee, 2010) than personal (Porter & Golan, 2006) and traditional advertising.

In the past few years, internet marketing strategy has shifted away from emphasizing paid media to earned media, where the customers themselves become the delivery channel (Corcoran, 2009). The broad scope of word-of-mouth in social media offers a geographic and timeless impact. It allows the customers/followers to influence the brand's image and change the perception of other consumers (Laureano et al., 2018). The viral quotient depends on its ability to stand out from the clutter and engage the viewer in a meaningful or entertaining way.

There is uncertainty regarding viral marketing definition amongst scholars & corporate professionals. They use stealth marketing, buzz marketing, viral marketing, and viral advertising interchangeably (Porter & Golan, 2006). Viral marketing is different from viral advertising. Viral marketing refers to a comprehensive marketing strategy that may include several (viral) components, and viral advertising refers to a specific online advertising practice (Porter & Golan, 2006).

Brands have different motives behind creating and sharing content. Few reasons are more effective in triggering consumers than the rest. Content with high-sharing potential includes anyone from these seven, i.e., warn, amaze, give, advise, amuse, unite and inspire (Carter & Marketo, 2014). A New York Times insider group report indicates the following critical influential factors (CIG, 2011).

1) Appealing to consumers' motivation to associate with each people, not just brand

2) Trust is the cost of entry for getting shared

3) Keeping it simple

4) Appealing to their sense of humor

5) Embracing a sense of urgency

The researcher intends to study viral video advertising. Viral Marketing and paid online advertising (like the pre-roll ads on YouTube) are outside the scope of this research. This research aims to identify and inquire about what makes an ad so engaging that viewers share, promote, and discuss it. At the initial stage of the video release, marketers spend on promoting the video to ensure that a video reaches a broader audience. Although, spending on promotion has little effect on the video's virality. The high video virality depends on consumer engagement and voluntarily shares with their social circle. In other words, paid promotion can increase the number of views but not the number of shares unless the content is engaging. There are multiple objectives behind creating content to curate on social media. It can be sales, sales promotion, building brand awareness, perceived quality and brand associations, brand loyalty, etc.

Based on the various literature reviewed, the following is the list of determinants that affect video virality'.

Table 2.1 Creative determinants that impacts video engagement

Author	Determinants	Suggestions / Finding
(Porter & Golan, 2006) (Brown et al., 2010)	disgraceful content like nudity, sexuality, and violence, humor)	Highlight the significance of disgraceful content as a determinant of virality. The magnitude of comedic violence.

Table continues on next page

(Eckler & Bolls, 2011)	The emotional tone of the content	Emphasize the importance of a positive emotional tone for virality.
(Weinberger & Gulas, 1992)	Humour	Humor appeal successfully encourages user response to the ad and encourages high organic reach levels.
(Peters et al., 2009)	happiness, interest, disgust, and surprise	People share content that arouses happiness, interest, disgust, and surprise.
(Porter & Golan, 2006)	Sales promotion	Couponing campaigns were more effective on social media than traditional marketing ways to transmit as part of the viral strategy.
(Mazzarol et al., 2007)	Storytelling	Intense, vivid, and detailed storytelling leads to word of mouth.
(Mazzarol et al., 2007)	strong advocacy and enthusiasm	Enthusiasm and Strong advocacy towards a subject lead to considerable experiences and higher recall.

(Chiu et al., 2007)	Utility, value, and messages with high hedonic factor	Content with a high utility, valueand message with a high hedonic factor has more probability of sharing.
(Phelps et al., 2004)	Jokes categories	Jokes on gender, games, computers, work, warning about crime, naked pictures, and luck-oriented chain letters were more likely to be passed along
(Palka et al., 2009)	Content appeal and relevance & image building	Factor leads to word of mouth: · Appeal or benefits to the receiver. · Harm reputation, · Connect with others · Personally relevant to them · Amuse
(Phelps et al., 2004) (Walsh et al., 2004)	Obligation & wish to help others	A responsibility to share information, joy in sharing knowledge, and want to help others, leads to virality.

The researcher identified 42 creative determinants categorized under three clusters, i.e., emotional appeal, message characteristics, and treatment factors. Some research mentioned above studied these factors in isolation or in small clusters. There is no in-depth research that explored the role of three major clusters instrumental in video virality.

2.4 Creative Determinants of Viral Video Advertising

Below is the list of creative determinants observed by researchers and academics in this field. This research is focused on understanding and evaluating the impact of 42 creative determinants categorized into three clusters - emotional appeal, message characteristics, and treatment factors. Below is an in-depth review of 42 creative determinants.

2.4.1   Emotional Appeal

How to appeal to consumers has been an ongoing challenge for advertisers across the globe in different cultures. The challenge continues to increase as new technology and augmented economic globalization contribute to the explosion of advertising and international marketing (Albers-Miller & Stafford, 1999).

Marketers and advertisers use the word appeal to connect with the target audience. Appeals do not always feature the product convincingly. Instead, appeal creates an environment where customer / potential customer connects with the communication. Not all appeals work in the same way and to the same degree. Different appeals arouse different responses in the viewer's mind.

The idea that the target audience can make their buying decisions for emotional or rational reasons has been responsible for research by consumer psychologists (Albers-Miller & Stafford, 1999). Advertising scholars, marketers, and advertisers are enormously concerned with understanding the effect of advertising appeal on the end consumer.

There are two types of emotional appeals; rational appeal and emotional appeal. A clear distinction has been drawn between emotional appeals and rational appeals. The emotional appeals aim at the consumer's symbolic, social or psychological needs, targeting to blend emotions and bring into play an affection mechanism that stimulates the target audience to purchase products. In contrast, rational appeals focus on the rational thinking process of the customer, where utilitarian and measurable benefits play an essential role (Leonidou & Leonidou, 2009).

Marketers view rational appeals as uninteresting and consider appeals to customers' emotions to better sell brands that do not differ noticeably from rival brands since rational differentiation is intricate (Belch & Belch, 2003). Feelings influence consumers emotionally, based on the mental states or feelings directed to the self, such as excitement or pleasure, and those with a more social orientation, such as status or recognition (Belch & Belch, 2003).

Positive emotional appeal advertising creates favorable emotional responses like happiness, joy, and pleasure, while negative emotional appeals produce responses like anger and fear. Such different emotional response experiences may vary depending on individuals' ability to relate their self-relevant to the specific events, persons, or situations (Stout & Leckenby, 1988).

A comprehensive list of 28 appeals was referred to and reviewed for this research (Belch & Belch, 2003).

a) Love

Love is considered one of the fundamental emotional appeals of the human being (Moriarty, 1991). Love is an intense feeling or deep affection for someone or something. Love is considered one of the most frequently evoked emotions in brand communication (Tafesse & Wien, 2017). Romantic love is just one aspect of emotional appeal. Marketers also weave stories around mother and son, father and daughter, brother and sister to evoke love as an emotional appeal. Love can also be projected beyond personal relationships, like love for the countries, nature, etc.

b) Fear

This emotional appeal is effective in a specific product, service, and ideas segments. Advertising scholars have studied various appeals that affect consumer attitudes. Among these appeals, fear generates immediate behavioral changes in customers (Witte & Allen, 2000). For the same reason, the fear appeal is used to spread a social message to prevent undesired behavior events, such as a smoking campaign. The expression of the emotional appeal is also affected by the stage of emotional intensity it conveys, as in the case of fear appeals, where the higher the fear created, the lower the efficiency of advertising messages conveyed (Leonidou & Leonidou, 2009).

c) Affection

Affection is one of the emotional appeals that compel individuals to purchase products (Ambujakshan, 2013). Affection has a different emotional quality than the emotion of love. Love represents a solid emotional connection between individuals, whereas affection can be projected for things and people to a certain degree.

d) Nostalgia

Nostalgia is one's sentimental longing for the past (Muehling et al., 2014). In an advertising context, a large set of research indicates that the effects of nostalgia appear to be relatively strong, which signals to marketers and advertisers that nostalgia may be a practical, emotional appeal to a wide range of audiences (Marchegiani & Phau, 2010).

e) Safety and Security

Marketers understand the importance of product features and their benefits to consumers. One of the emotional appeals is safety and security, which marketers strive to communicate and sell. The underlying thought is to communicate how consumers can avoid certain risks by using the product/service. In advertising, security often refers to protection from external threats, like stability, carefulness, caution, absence of guarantees/warranties, potential injury, or other risks (Pollay, 1983).

f) Sentiment

The sentiment is a specific emotion that refers to an emotional expression of sympathy and kindness (Hutchinson, 2016). Moods are the consistent state of a customer, whereas sentiments are not persistent conscious states but are inactive until stimulated by the dormant object (O'Shaughnessy & O'Shaughnessy, 2003). In other words, sentiments elicit and enhance sympathy and kindness towards the message and brand in the viewer's mind.

g) Excitement

Excitement reflects tremendous enthusiasm and eagerness about someone or something. Research on loan advertisements in UK newspapers found that emotional appeals in loan print ads are used most repeatedly for loans that carry more risk. Loan commercials, marketers, and advertisers, usually position loans as products that offer relief, security, adventure, and excitement (Czarnecka & Mogaji, 2020). A product or service that reflects the excitement in advertising creates a positive image in the consumer's mind.

h) Joy

Joy refers to the delight caused by something exceptionally good or satisfying. Joy is a common emotion used in TVC and social media videos to appeal to viewers in everyday life. Research has indicated that video ads with surprise or joy have a higher probability of retaining attention but are less likely to be shared further (Teixeira et al., 2012).

i) Arousal/stimulation

Arousal is the act of arousing someone or something (Merriam-webster, 2022a). In advertising, it is the act of stimulation or excitement for an activity. Videos that focus on high or negative arousal are more likely to share than passive emotions such as sadness (Berger & Milkman, 2012).

j) Happiness

The generic definition of happiness is the appeal of excitement and elation (Deans et al., 2016). Marketers and advertisers use this emotional appeal as a related experience that may result in using a product or service of a specific brand. Happiness is a positive emotional appeal and turns out good for the brand recall and image of a product/service or company.

k) Sorrow/grief

Sorrow/grief is an emotion to generate empathy in the audience's mind. As per the dictionary, Sorrow is distress caused by loss, affliction, disappointment, etc.; grief, sadness, or regret (Harcourt, 2022). Grief generates strong emotion in the mind of the consumer. The probability of sharing is high in videos with sadness, inspiration, fear, or humor, as they fuel strong emotion (Phelps et al., 2004). Emotional appeals such as sadness, inspiration, humor, and fear are likely to be shared (Phelps et al., 2004).

l) Pride/Respect

The emotion of pride is associated with dignity, importance, and superiority. Pride is one of the eleven types of emotional appeal mentioned by Moriarty (Moriarty, 1991). As an emotional appeal, pride has less impact on advertising attitude for products with high involvement (Akbari, 2015).

m) Achievement/accomplishment/ambition

A sense of achievement is one of the emotional appeals associated with a person's deeper level. The need for articulating self-achievement is one of the causes of positive word of mouth spread to seek confirmation of the decisions and look for advice (Cheung et al., 2007).

n) Self-esteem

Self-esteem is confidence and satisfaction in oneself. Social media is one of the tools to connect and interact with a group of people. A video with self-esteem generates the emotion of self-respect, which also increase engagement and sharing. Self-esteem and the need for belonging alter students' attitudes toward social media sites (Gangadharbatla, 2008).

o) Actualization

Actualization makes the viewer realize something about an event, thought, person, etc. Actualization/realization helps the viewer realize something for himself, increasing recall and sharing. Actualization is one of the emotional appeals mentioned by Belch in his work (Belch & Belch, 2003).

p) Pleasure/Comfort

Pleasure is a feeling of satisfaction. One meaning of comfort is a satisfying or enjoyable experience (Merriam-webster, 2022b). Brands use pleasure appeal to communicate the enjoyment derived from a product/service. There are occasions when brands use attractive visual imagery to communicate pleasure to viewers. Pleasure is one of the critical personal emotional appeals (Belch & Belch, 2003).

q) Recognition/Status

Recognition is the emotion of receiving acknowledgment and validity. Status is the standing we expect in relative social circles. The need to present oneself as unique, superior, and above others is also one of the reasons behind sharing the video with social circles. College students share videos for self-enhancement and express some aspects of their identity (Taylor et al., 2012).

r) Involvement/Affiliation/Belonging

Human beings are social animals and seek affiliation and belonging to a group, community, or larger groups. In advertising, the involvement of the viewer or consumer towards the brand/company also plays a vital role in word-of-mouth communication. The involvement or interest in the product enhances word-of-mouth communication (Engel et al., 1990). In another research, Richins and Root Shaffer state that involvement and situational factors affect consumers' ability to engage in word of mouth (Richins & Root-Shaffer, 1988). The viewer's involvement with the message/product and the likelihood of sharing the message is positively correlated.

s) Embarrassment

Embarrassment is the feeling of shame or awkwardness. Marketers use this appeal to sell the product and avoid the shame involved in certain situations. Emotions such as embarrassment are specifically self-relevant, as they also subsume reflection and evaluation about oneself (Tracy & Robins, 2004).

t) Rejection

Rejection is the dismissal or refusal of a proposal, event, or person. In advertising, rejection as an appeal is used to project the product/service as an alternative or escape from rejection in career, social circles, etc. Moriarty considered shame or rejection as one of the 11 emotional appeals (Moriarty, 1991).

u) Acceptance/Approval

Acceptance and approval from social circles are driving determinants for individuals to share videos. Approval from the social circles is a positive stimulus for the individual. Millennials consumers are keen to share ads on the internet to receive social currency and create bonds with other people through positive emotions (Nikolinakou & King, 2018).

2.4.2 Message Characteristics

One of the clusters that affect virality is message characteristics. It refers to how the message is imbibed and weaved in the video. Below is the list of message characteristics affecting video virality.

a) Utility

The utility of the product, service, or idea is one of the message characteristics of the video. Direct benefits presented in the audio-visual catch the attention. Utilitarian communication is considered more effective than value-based appeals as the target customer feels a higher level of connection between the practical features of the service or product and anticipated characteristics likely found in the product or service that cause higher persuasion (Johar & Joseph Sirgy, 2003).

b) Distinctiveness (Originality)

Distinctiveness is recognizably dissimilar from something else of a similar type. The original content helps the brand gain attention, increase recall, and enhance word-of-mouth in advertising. There is a sense of status by sharing knowledge related to the original content (Wojnicki, 2006).

c) Encourage participation

Marketers aim to craft content that engages the audience and provides them with some tools to participate in the campaign. Participation increases viewers' involvement and enhances word-of-mouth automatically because of brand ownership by participants. In research, encouraging participation is considered one of India's ten successful viral marketing tactics commandments (Mantri et al., 2015).

During the literature review, the researcher observed above mentioned three creative determinants under the message characteristics cluster. The researcher identified four new

creative determinants during the pilot study. The below section elaborates on four message characteristics pointed out by participants during the pilot study.

d) Topical content in message

Topical content refers to the video relevant to the socio, political, and national events that simultaneously affect large numbers of people. In other words, a large set of people are concerned and talking about it in online and offline circles.

Marketers select topical content to communicate concerns or motivate people for a specific event. During the pilot study interviews, experts considered 'topical content in the message' as one of the creative determinants for video virality.

e) Social Message

In the social message, brands address societal issues in their communication. The video presents situations that allow people to look at social issues/causes differently. It may generate inquiry or curiosity about the topic/issues. For example, the third most viral video, 'Samsung Bixby' features a deaf-dumb girl and her mother. The video demonstrates how technology can enable us to improve the lives of deaf-dumb people. According to the pilot study participants, when a video contains a social message like improving people's lives, it makes the content viral.

f) Inspired by real-life events/values

Videos that exhibit real-life events and incidents build a stronger connection with the audience. The content with actual incidents offers users an outlet for review and reflection on real-life conditions portrayed in the video. According to experts, content inspired by real-life events/values draws greater attention and sharability from the audience.

g) Corporate Storytelling

Storytelling is an old form of engaging people of all ages. Here, we are referring to the storytelling by a brand. It is important to note that the prime focus in 'corporate storytelling' is to share a story with the viewer and product promotion is secondary in this type of video. As observed by participants, marketers craft this type of video to engage consumers with a story. The video is not about product/service promotion but about telling a good story. Brands intentionally keep the product promotion at the back seat for compelling storytelling.

2.4.3 Treatment factors

The art and craft of video making is an essential aspect of effective communication. Treatment factors refer to how video is treated/produced and how it impacts video engagement. Here is the list of creative determinants under the cluster of treatment factors.

a) Unusual perspective

Unusual perspective means looking at things from an altered or uncommon Way; it also means the capacity to see underneath the surface and give unfamiliar contexts (Smith & Yang, 2004). Unusual ways of presenting an issue, idea, or concept can increase communication creativity. It is considered a significant facet of creativity in advertising (Smith & Yang, 2004).

b) Generate curiosity

Content that hooks the viewer by generating curiosity is also a treatment factor. Curiosity is limited to the promotion part of the communication. It covers the language and content presented in the video – for example, in the case of the Vodafone campaign - zoozoo and kolaveri di song, where the viewer is curious about the name of the campaign itself (Mantri et al., 2015).

c) Richness and colorfulness of imagery

Visual imagery is an essential creative determinant for video virality. Richness and colorfulness help a video grab and retain attention. Greenwald and Leavitt suggested including affect-evoking, new, moving, and colorful to retain attention (Greenwald & Leavitt, 1984).

d) Dramatic effect & Fantasies

The dramatic effect is a unique factor found in a compelling video (A. Singh & Singh, 2016). It refers to making something noticeable and surprising (Collins, 2022) and uplifting attention. The way the story of the video has been curated also influences engagement. A dimension of video content is its ability to create a dramatic effect in the video; the study also indicates the connection between dramatic effect and digital virality (Quesenberry & Coolsen, 2019).

Fantasy refers to content deviating from reality or real-life portrayal (Law insider, 2022). The ability to generate non-real ideas, worlds, or creations, is often marked by highly supernatural or fanciful elements (Smith & Yang, 2004).

e) Element of irony

Any video that projects something contrary to what the viewer expected exhibits an element of irony (West, 2011). The element of irony is apt to convey the message that breaks social norms. The element of irony is instrumental in video virality (Burgess et al., 2006).

f) Element of surprise

A video would have an element of surprise if a character in the video made a visual or audible expression of surprise (West, 2011). The element of surprise can be positive or negative depending on the objective and message craft. Nine campaigns were evaluated globally based on sales, brand development, and message spread turnover in research. The 'element of surprise' is a common factor in all nine campaigns (Karpasitis, 2017).

g) Music quality

Music quality is one of the decisive and significant creative determinants of video virality. In a research, 28 studies reviewed conducted between 1982 to 2006 and focused on the effect of music in advertising revealed that musical properties like tempo and mode impact product preference, perception of advertisement time, brand recall, and arousal (Allan, 2007). Music alters the audience's brand perception (Yeoh & North, 2010).

Consumers' attitudes toward a brand can be more optimistic if the inferences of the music and other advertisement elements fit well together (North et al., 2004). Little research was found on video advertisements that used popular music (Allan, 2007).

2.5 Research Gaps

With the rise of social media marketing, marketers have new means to engage and interact with customers and viewers. As the marketing field is going through a transformation towards voluntary content consumption, it is crucial to understand how marketers should create videos that gain high shelf-life with engaging content.

Viral video advertising is one of the central mediums of engagement these days. Considering the growth and benefits of viral video advertising, the role of creative determinants is evident. The current research in this area is limited to the role of audio and plot on viral video advertising brand companies, consumer engagement through viral video content (Gangadharbatla, 2008), (Smith & Yang, 2004), (Greenwald & Leavitt, 1984), the impact of a selected few emotions on viral video content (Peters et al., 2009), (Porter & Golan, 2006),

(Brown et al., 2010), (Eckler & Bolls, 2011), (Weinberger & Gulas, 1992), and motivation triggers for viral video sharing (Chiu et al., 2007), (Phelps et al., 2004), (Walsh et al., 2004). The research in this area lacks consensus on what are the creative determinants that influence video virality? only a little conceptual development or empirical research has been conducted on the creative determinants that impact video virality. Besides, no prior empirical research has offered an inclusive outlook of a wide range of creative determinants in one single study, which could better understand the role of creative determinants in effective viral video advertising.

This study offers a comprehensive view on the impact of 42 creative determinants on viral video advertising. It evaluates the 'degree of impact' of creative determinants under study, which facilitates marketers to choose effective creative determinants from a range of available creative options.

2.6 Rationale of the Study

In today's times, media platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook etc., have altered the communication landscape for organizations, brands, and individuals (Sanne & Wiese, 2018). The communities exist offline and online (Lee & Lee, 2010). For digital marketers, this indicates a shift from paid media to earned media where customers turn out to be the channel of delivery (Corcoran, 2009).

The way companies post the content can be categorized in two ways. Firstly, the organic way (free), which includes posting videos or images on official pages that allow for interaction and engagement of brand and audience (Curran et al., 2011; Logan, 2014). The second is a paid form of advertising which includes posts sponsored by a brand.

In the age of over-communication, viewers are bombarded with multiple paid /organic messages from companies and brands. The content loses customer attention without the right message, context, and appeal. For marketers, the goal is to create video content that generates high viewing and engagement with viewers, which helps the video go viral.

The term 'viral video' is trending. However, there is high ambiguity regarding the decisive factors behind virality. In other words, how much viewing, liking, and sharing makes a video

viral is still questionable. There is even uncertainty in buzz marketing, viral marketing, and viral advertising, stealth marketing interchangeably (Porter & Golan, 2006).

The meaning and format of viral marketing and viral advertising are different. Porter and Golan observed that viral marketing is different from viral advertising (Porter & Golan, 2006). While Viral Marketing refers to a very comprehensive marketing strategy that may include several (viral) components, viral advertising refers to a specific online advertising practice (Porter & Golan, 2006).

Viral video engagement can be categorized into four categories based on the level of engagement. Video viewing is one of the parameters of the success of the video. However, when a viewer likes a video, it represents one notch higher engagement than just viewing. The viewer's comment on the video indicates higher involvement than just liking. Furthermore, sharing the video represents a high level of engagement than liking or commenting on the video.

Marketers and advertisers aim to develop a video that gains higher engagement. This research evaluates the impact of creative determinants on viral video advertising. It examines the impact of 42 factors categorized into three clusters, i.e., emotional appeal, message characteristics, and treatment factors, on video virality.

The research aims to facilitate advertisers and marketers to identify creative determinants that help select message, emotional appeal, and treatment factors that yield higher engagement.

2.7 Proposed Research Outcomes

This research facilitates those who want to distribute information or engage the audience through social platforms. It shares insights with marketers and advertisers to help select creative determinants like appeal, message, and treatment factors for effective viral content. Image consulting firms and NGOs can also learn about the content that spreads. The study helps independent bloggers, authors, and other creators who hope to inform and engage the audience with audio-visual communication.

The researcher identified 42 creative determinants and categorized them into three clusters, i.e., message characteristics, emotional appeals, and treatment factors.

Some studies aim to assess the effect of sound, plot, and engagement quotient; this research focuses on various factors to determine their impact on viral video advertising. A viewer engages and shares the video due to emotion, message, and plot, to name a few. However, it is also essential to understand that viewers are not always aware of music, colors, and treatment factors that motivate them to pass the content forward. The advertising experts who worked with the production studio and advertising agencies understand the nuances of viral video making. Advertising professionals' opinions on viral video advertising could be a decent practice for industry professionals. In this way, the researcher also aims to develop ongoing collaboration and association beyond the Ph.D.

2.8 Research Objective

Companies and advertising agencies are equally involved in decision-making. Numerous ideas emerged during the conceptualization and scripting process to pursue an influential video. This research aims to identify patterns that help marketers & creative agencies make correct creative decisions in selecting message characteristics, emotional appeal(s), and treatment factors.

The objectives are:

● To evaluate the importance of 28 emotional appeals in the success of viral video advertising. And evaluate the combination of various emotional appeals in the success of viral video advertising.
● To evaluate the importance of 7 message characteristics in the success of viral video advertising.
● To evaluate the importance of 7 treatment factors in the success of viral video advertising.
● Identify patterns of optimum combination of emotional appeals, message characteristics, and treatment factors with a high probability of going viral.

2.9 Basic Concepts

● Marketing: Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society (AMA, 2017).

- Advertising: Advertising is any paid form of non-personal communication about an organization, product, service, or idea by an identified sponsor (Belch & Belch, 2003)

- Digital Marketing: Digital marketing is advertising delivered through digital channels such as the radio, tv, social media, mobile applications, email, web applications, search engines, websites, or any new digital channel (Patel, 2022).

- Social Media Marketing: Social media marketing uses networking platforms to connect with your audience to build your brand, increase sales, and drive website traffic (Buffer, 2022).

- Viral Marketing: Viral marketing is a marketing phenomenon that facilitates and encourages people to pass along a marketing message (AMA, 2017).

- Viral Videos Advertising: Viral video advertising is unpaid peer-to-peer communication of provocative content originating from an identified sponsor using the internet to persuade or influence an audience to pass along the content to others (Porter & Golan, 2006).

- Branded Content: Branded content is a content creation tactic, typically produced through a sponsored or paid partnership between the brand and the media, encouraging audiences to engage with the brand based on its entertainment, information, or educational value (Rose, 2019).

- Content Marketing: Content marketing is a technique of creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and acquire a clearly defined audience to drive profitable customer action (AMA, 2017).

- Virality: Virality tends to become very popular and spread quickly, especially on the internet (Macmillan, 2022).

2.10 Chapterisation

This section shares details about each chapter's content that constitutes this Ph.D. thesis.

Chapter 1 - Introduction: This chapter introduces the purpose of the study, research outcomes/contribution, aims and objectives, and terms & definitions.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review: The second chapter presents a literature review on the topic. The chapter introduces social media marketing, social media platforms, and the engagement dynamics of social media, followed by viral video advertising and creative determinants instrumental in video virality.

Chapter 3 - Research Methodology: The third chapter represents the research method employed during the study. The chapter elaborates research method, viral video selection criteria, survey questionnaire development, pilot study sampling, and interview process.

Chapter 4 – Data Analysis and Findings: The fifth chapter takes a deeper look into the data analysis process employed in the research, followed by detailed research findings against each objective of the study.

Chapter 5 – Summary, Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations: This chapter summarizes the research findings and discusses the results concerning various stakeholder groups. The later part of the chapter deals with the conclusion, limitation, and recommendation for further research.

The below diagram elaborates the scope and interconnection of chapters.

Literature Review

- **Presenting the existing pool of knowledge from related fields of study**
- **Examining related research**
- **Presenting the findings and conclusions from available pool of knowledge**
- **Providing detailed review on creative determinants spread across three clusters**

Methodology

- **Presenting the research method used during the study**
- **Selection criteria of viral videos**
- **Survey questionnaire development**
- **Participants selection process and criteria for research and interview process.**
- **Sampling, Data Collection and analysis**
- **Pilot study**

Summary, Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendation

- **Summary and Discussion**
- **Conclusion**
- **Recommendation**
- **Limitations**
- **Future scope of the study**

Data Analysis and Findings

- **Data Analysis and findings for qualitative and quantitative data**
- **Triangulation**
- **Major Themes emerging under each cluster**
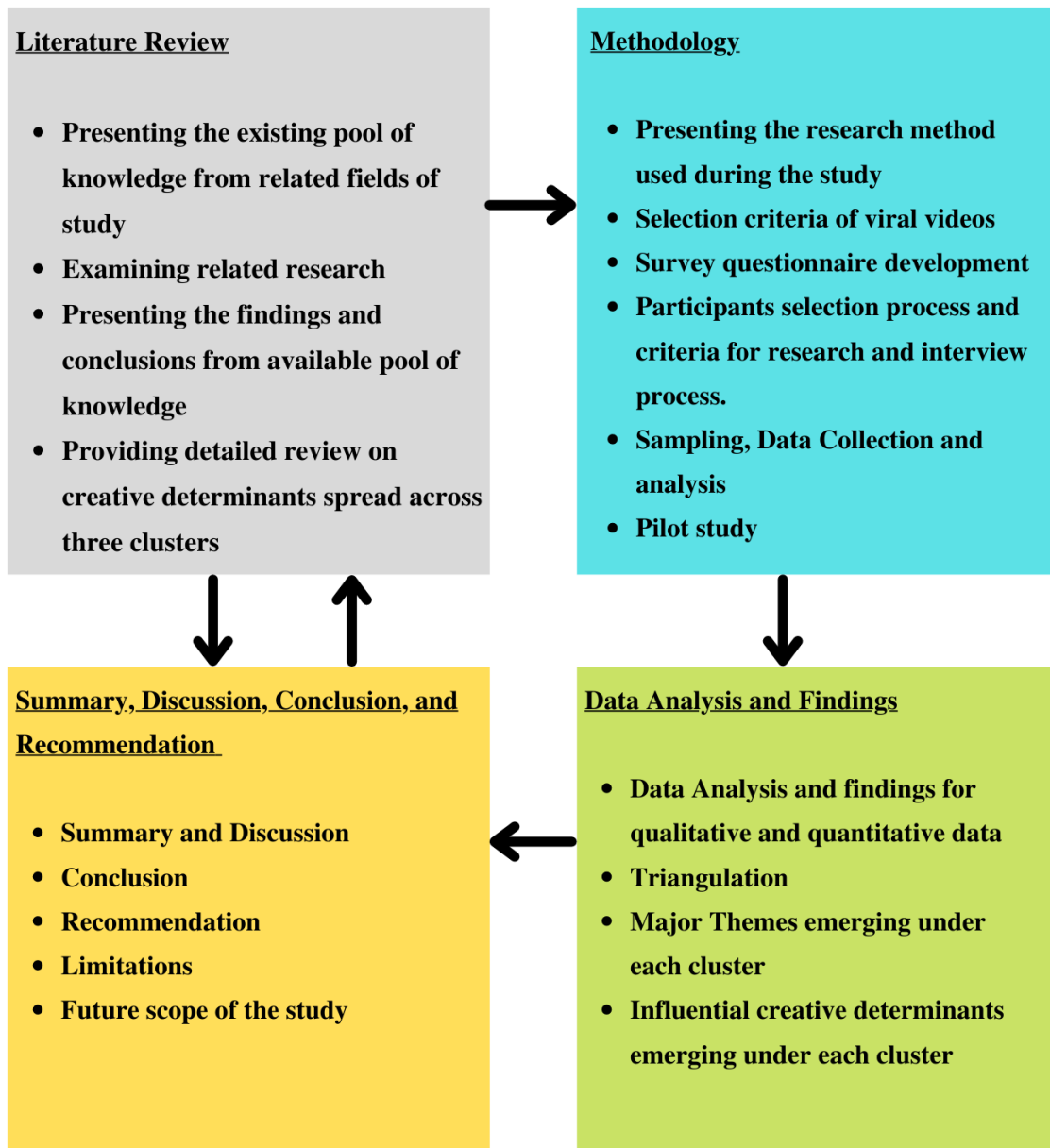- **Influential creative determinants emerging under each cluster**

Figure 2.1 Flow of information and interconnection between chapters