

Meme Marketing: An Analysis of Its Effects on Brand Recall Among Youth

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Abstract—This study examines meme marketing and its association with brand recall among youth, with a focus on their exposure, engagement, perceptions, and reported brand remembrance. The study is based primarily on primary data collected through a structured questionnaire from 200 youth respondents. Secondary information was also referred to for understanding the development and use of meme marketing in digital advertising. The study adopts a descriptive research design, and the collected data are analyzed using frequency, percentage, and mean scores to identify major response patterns. The findings indicate that youth have considerable exposure to meme-based marketing content and generally perceive such content as entertaining, attention-grabbing, relatable, and engaging. The analysis also indicates a positive pattern in respondents' reported brand recall, particularly for humorous and relatable meme advertisements. The mean-score analysis further indicates generally favorable responses across the major dimensions of meme marketing and brand recall. The study suggests that humour, relatability, creativity, shareability, and clear brand integration are important considerations when using memes as a digital promotional tool. However, meme marketing also involves challenges such as rapid changes in trends, cultural sensitivity, possible misinterpretation, and the difficulty of maintaining a clear brand identity. Overall, the study highlights meme marketing as a relevant contemporary communication approach for reaching and engaging young social-media users. Since the study is descriptive in nature, the findings represent the responses of the selected respondents and do not establish a direct causal effect of meme marketing on brand recall.

Index Terms—Meme Marketing, Brand Recall, Youth, Digital Marketing, Social Media, Consumer Engagement, Advertising.

I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of social media has transformed the way brands communicate with consumers, particularly with younger audiences. Digital platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp have created new opportunities for businesses to communicate with consumers through interactive, creative, and easily shareable content. Among the various forms of digital marketing, meme marketing has emerged as a distinctive promotional approach that combines humour, entertainment, creativity, and contemporary internet culture to attract audience attention.

Memes are short, humorous, and relatable forms of digital content that can be created and shared rapidly across social media platforms. Their simple and entertaining nature makes them highly suitable for communicating marketing messages in an informal manner. Brands increasingly use memes to present their products, services, and messages in a more relatable format. Compared with conventional advertising formats, meme-based content can encourage users to view, share, comment on, and interact with promotional messages.

One of the important aspects of marketing communication is brand recall, which refers to the ability of consumers to remember a brand when they encounter a relevant product category or purchasing situation. Effective communication can contribute to brand awareness and consumer memory. In this context, meme marketing provides an interesting area of study because the combination of humour, familiarity, and brand-related messages may influence how consumers notice and remember advertised brands. However, the extent to which consumers remember the brand associated with a meme may

depend on factors such as the clarity of the brand message, relevance of the meme, creativity of the content, and level of consumer engagement.

Youth represent an important audience for meme marketing because of their frequent use of social media and familiarity with digital trends and internet-based communication. Meme content is commonly integrated into their online interactions, making meme-based advertising a relevant subject for understanding contemporary consumer responses. Studying youth responses can therefore provide useful insights into how meme-based promotional content is perceived and remembered by young consumers.

The present study focuses on meme marketing and brand recall among youth. It aims to examine the awareness, exposure, engagement, and brand-recall responses of young consumers towards meme-based marketing content. The study is based on primary data collected from youth and uses descriptive analysis to present their responses through frequencies, percentages, tables, and graphical representations. The findings may provide useful insights into the role of meme marketing as a contemporary digital promotional approach and help marketers understand how young consumers respond to meme-based brand communication.

II. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study has the following objectives:

1. To understand the concept and use of meme marketing in digital advertising.
2. To examine the exposure and engagement of youth towards meme-based marketing content.
3. To assess brand recall among youth in relation to meme marketing.
4. To analyze the responses of youth towards meme-based advertisements.
5. To understand the role of meme marketing as a promotional tool for brands.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Schivinski and Dąbrowski (2016), in their study *The Effect of Social Media Communication on Consumer Perceptions of Brands*, examined how social media communication influences consumer perceptions and responses towards brands. The objective was to understand the role of different forms of social media

communication in developing brand-related outcomes. The findings indicated that social media content can influence brand perceptions and consumer responses. The study concluded that engaging and relevant digital content can support effective brand communication. These findings provide a basis for examining newer forms of social media content such as memes.

Yadav and Rahman (2018), in their study *The Influence of Social Media Marketing Activities on Customer Loyalty*, examined the relationship between social media marketing activities and consumer responses. The objective was to identify how social media marketing characteristics influence customer engagement and loyalty. The findings showed that interactive, informative, and relevant social media activities contribute to positive consumer responses. The study concluded that creative social media communication can strengthen relationships between consumers and brands. This provides a relevant background for studying meme-based marketing among youth.

Malodia et al. (2022), in their study *How Viral Marketing Campaigns Affect Brand Recall*, investigated the role of meme virality in consumer responses and brand recall. The objective was to examine whether the virality of memes influences consumers' ability to remember advertised brands. The findings showed differences in brand recall across memes with different levels of virality. The study concluded that meme characteristics and viral potential can play an important role in brand communication. The study is particularly relevant to understanding meme marketing and brand recall.

Dwivedi et al. (2021), in their study *Setting the Future of Digital and Social Media Marketing Research*, reviewed emerging developments in digital and social media marketing. The objective was to identify important trends and future research directions in digital marketing. The study highlighted the increasing importance of creative, interactive, and user-oriented content in social media communication. It also emphasized the need to understand changing consumer behaviour in digital environments. The study provides a broader theoretical background for examining meme marketing as an emerging digital promotional practice.

Chuah et al. (2022), in their research on *Meme Marketing and Consumer Engagement*, examined the role of memes in digital marketing communication and

consumer engagement. The objective was to understand how humorous and relatable meme content encourages consumers to interact with brands. The findings indicated that meme-based content can generate consumer attention and participation through activities such as liking, commenting, and sharing. The study concluded that the interactive nature of memes makes them a relevant tool for contemporary digital marketing. These findings support the present study of youth responses to meme marketing. Kumar et al. (2024), in their study on Meme Marketing and Brand Recall, examined the effectiveness of meme-based advertising in creating consumer awareness and brand recall. The objective was to understand how meme content contributes to brand communication and consumer memory. The findings indicated that humour, relevance, creativity, and shareability are important characteristics of effective meme-based marketing. The study concluded that meme marketing can be a useful promotional approach when the brand message is appropriately integrated with the meme content. This study provides recent evidence for examining brand recall among young consumers.

Wang et al. (2026), in their study From Owning to Connecting: Understanding and Leveraging the Effect of Internet Meme Marketing, examined how and under what conditions meme marketing influences digital advertising effectiveness. The objective was to understand the psychological mechanism through which meme marketing affects consumer responses and brand-related outcomes. The findings showed that meme marketing can strengthen shared psychological ownership of the marketing message and subsequently enhance consumers' self-brand connection. The study further found that the effectiveness of memes varies according to factors such as meme maturity and product type. The authors concluded that effective meme marketing depends not only on using popular memes but also on creating meaningful connections between consumers, memes, and brands.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Design- This study adopts a descriptive research design to examine meme marketing and brand recall among youth. The study is based on primary data collected from youth respondents and relevant secondary literature.

4.2 Data Collection

Primary Data: Primary data were collected from 200 youth respondents aged 18–30 years through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire focused on meme marketing exposure, meme engagement, brand awareness, and brand recall among young consumers.

Secondary Data: Secondary information was collected from research articles, journals, books, reports, and relevant online academic sources related to meme marketing, social media marketing, consumer behaviour, and brand recall.

4.3 Sampling

The study used a convenience sampling method for selecting 200 youth respondents. Respondents belonging to the age group of 18–30 years who were familiar with social media and meme-based content were included in the study.

4.4 Data Analysis

The collected primary data were organized and presented using frequency and percentage analysis. Tables and graphical representations were used to describe respondents' demographic characteristics, meme marketing exposure, engagement, and brand recall. The findings were interpreted descriptively to understand the responses of youth towards meme marketing.

4.5 Scope of the Study

The study focuses on youth consumers aged 18–30 years and examines their exposure to meme-based marketing content and their responses regarding brand recall. The study primarily considers meme marketing as a contemporary social media promotional tool.

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The primary data collected from 200 youth respondents were analyzed using frequency and percentage methods. The results are presented through tables and descriptive interpretation to understand the respondents' exposure to meme marketing, engagement with meme-based advertisements, and brand recall.

5.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Particulars	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	100	50.0
	Female	100	50.0
Age	18–20 Years	50	25.0
	21–25 Years	90	45.0
	26–30 Years	60	30.0
Educational Qualification	Undergraduate	70	35.0
	Postgraduate	100	50.0
	Other	30	15.0
Social Media Usage	Less than 2 hours	30	15.0
	2–4 hours	90	45.0
	More than 4 hours	80	40.0

The demographic profile shows that the respondents were equally distributed by gender, with 50% male and 50% female respondents. The largest age group was 21–25 years, representing 45% of the respondents. Half of the respondents were postgraduate students, while 45% reported using social media for 2–4 hours per day. A considerable proportion (40%) used social

media for more than four hours daily, indicating substantial exposure to digital content among the respondents.

5.2 Exposure to Meme Marketing

Table 2: Respondents' Exposure to Meme-Based Marketing Content

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very Frequently	52	26.0
Frequently	78	39.0
Sometimes	48	24.0
Rarely	17	8.5
Never	5	2.5
Total	200	100.0

The table indicates that meme-based marketing content is commonly encountered by young consumers. About 65% of respondents reported seeing meme-based marketing content either frequently or very frequently. Around 24% encountered such content sometimes, while only 11% reported rarely or never seeing it. This indicates that meme marketing has considerable visibility among the youth included in the study.

5.3 Responses Towards Meme Marketing

Table 3: Youth Responses Towards Meme-Based Advertisements

Statement	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
Meme advertisements are entertaining	42.0	38.0	12.0	6.0	2.0
Meme advertisements attract my attention	36.0	41.0	14.0	7.0	2.0
I find meme advertisements relatable	34.0	40.0	16.0	7.0	3.0
I share interesting meme advertisements	27.0	39.0	19.0	10.0	5.0
Meme advertisements are easy to remember	32.0	42.0	15.0	8.0	3.0

The responses indicate generally favorable perceptions of meme-based advertisements among the respondents. The highest level of agreement was observed for the statement that meme advertisements are entertaining, with 80% of respondents either strongly agreeing or agreeing. Similarly, 77% reported

that meme advertisements attract their attention, while 74% considered them relatable. The findings suggest that entertainment, attention, and relatability are important characteristics of meme-based marketing content.

5.4 Brand Recall Through Meme Marketing

Table 4: Brand Recall among Youth

Statement	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
I remember brands that use memes	35.0	42.0	14.0	7.0	2.0
Meme advertisements help me remember a brand later	31.0	43.0	16.0	7.0	3.0

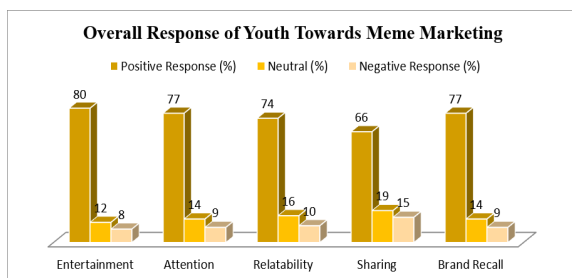
I can identify a brand after seeing its meme advertisement	30.0	41.0	17.0	9.0	3.0
Humorous meme content makes a brand memorable	37.0	39.0	14.0	7.0	3.0
I remember brands better when their advertisements are relatable	39.0	38.0	13.0	7.0	3.0

The table shows that a substantial proportion of respondents reported positive brand-recall responses towards meme marketing. About 77% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they remember brands that use memes. Similarly, 74% stated that meme advertisements help them remember a brand later. The findings also indicate that humour and relatability are perceived as useful characteristics for remembering brands. Overall, the responses suggest that meme-based advertising is associated with noticeable brand-recall experiences among the surveyed youth.

5.5 Overall Responses Towards Meme Marketing

Table 5: Overall Response of Youth Towards Meme Marketing

Response Area	Positive Response (%)	Neutral (%)	Negative Response (%)
Entertainment	80.0	12.0	8.0
Attention	77.0	14.0	9.0
Relatability	74.0	16.0	10.0
Sharing	66.0	19.0	15.0
Brand Recall	77.0	14.0	9.0

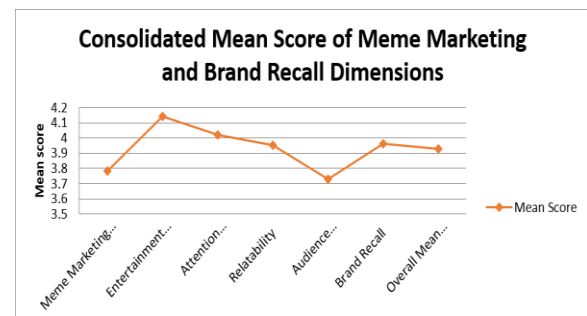


The overall results show that respondents reported positive responses across the major dimensions of meme marketing. Entertainment received the highest positive response at 80%, followed by attention and brand recall at 77% each. Relatability received a positive response from 74% of respondents, while sharing recorded 66%. The descriptive findings indicate that meme marketing is widely noticed and positively perceived by the surveyed youth, particularly in terms of entertainment, attention, and brand recall.

5.6 Overall Mean Score of Major Study Dimensions

Table 6: Consolidated Mean Score of Meme Marketing and Brand Recall Dimensions

S. No.	Major Study Dimension	Mean Score	Interpretation
1	Meme Marketing Exposure	3.78	High
2	Entertainment Value	4.14	High
3	Attention Attraction	4.02	High
4	Relatability	3.95	High
5	Audience Engagement / Sharing	3.73	High
6	Brand Recall	3.96	High
	Overall Mean Score	3.93	High



The consolidated analysis shows that all major study dimensions have mean scores above 3.40, indicating a high level of favorable response on the five-point scale. Entertainment has the highest mean score of 4.14, followed by attention attraction at 4.02. Brand recall records an overall mean score of 3.96, while relatability records 3.95.

Meme marketing exposure records a mean score of 3.78, and audience engagement/sharing records 3.73. The overall mean score of 3.93 indicates that the selected respondents generally expressed favorable perceptions and reported experiences regarding meme marketing and brand recall.

VI. CONCLUSION

Meme marketing has emerged as an important form of digital communication, particularly among young social-media users. The present study, based on the descriptive analysis of responses from 200 youth respondents, examined their exposure, engagement, perceptions, and brand recall in relation to meme-based marketing. The findings show that meme advertisements are generally viewed as entertaining, attention-grabbing, relatable, and shareable. A considerable proportion of respondents also reported remembering or recognizing brands presented through meme-based content. Humour, relatability, creativity, and familiarity with current trends appear to be important characteristics of meme marketing from the respondents' perspective. Meme marketing therefore represents a contemporary promotional approach through which brands can communicate with young audiences in an informal and engaging manner. However, effective meme marketing requires appropriate brand integration, cultural sensitivity, relevant content, and careful consideration of audience responses.

Overall, the study indicates that meme marketing has considerable relevance in the digital marketing environment and can be used as a communication tool for engaging youth and supporting brand recall. Since the present study is descriptive in nature, the findings represent the responses and observed patterns within the selected sample and should not be interpreted as establishing a direct causal relationship between meme marketing and brand recall.

VII. RESEARCH FINDINGS

Based on the descriptive analysis of primary data collected from 200 youth respondents, the major findings of the study are as follows:

1. **High Exposure to Meme Marketing:** A considerable proportion of youth reported frequent exposure to meme-based marketing content on social media platforms.
2. **Meme Content Attracts Attention:** Most respondents indicated that humorous and creative meme advertisements are capable of attracting their attention more effectively than conventional promotional content.

3. **High Relatability of Meme Advertisements:** Respondents generally found meme advertisements relatable because they use familiar situations, popular trends, humour, and everyday experiences.
4. **Positive Engagement:** Meme-based advertisements encourage youth to interact with marketing content through likes, comments, reactions, and sharing.
5. **Brand Recall:** A considerable proportion of respondents reported that they could remember or recognize brands featured in meme-based advertisements.
6. **Role of Humour:** Humour emerged as an important characteristic of meme marketing because entertaining content is more noticeable and easier for respondents to remember.
7. **Role of Relatability:** Relatable memes help create a connection between the advertisement and the audience's everyday experiences.
8. **Shareability:** The informal and entertaining nature of memes encourages users to share marketing content with friends and social-media communities.
9. **Meme Marketing as a Promotional Tool:** The findings indicate that meme marketing has become a relevant digital promotional approach for reaching and engaging young social-media users.
10. **Importance of Brand Integration:** The findings also indicate that entertainment alone may not be sufficient; the brand name, product, or message should be clearly integrated into the meme.

VIII. SUGGESTIONS / PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following suggestions are made:

1. **Create Relevant Content:** Brands should develop memes that are relevant to the interests, lifestyle, and current trends among youth.
2. **Maintain a Balance Between Humour and Brand Message:** Humour should support the promotional message rather than overshadowing the brand.
3. **Use Simple and Relatable Memes:** Easy-to-understand and relatable content can help audiences connect with the advertisement.

4. Focus on Appropriate Platforms: Brands should select social-media platforms according to the preferences and usage patterns of their target audience.
5. Use Current Trends Carefully: Trending topics can increase visibility, but brands should ensure that the content remains appropriate and consistent with their brand image.
6. Encourage Audience Interaction: Memes can include questions, reactions, challenges, or shareable elements to encourage audience participation.
7. Maintain Cultural Sensitivity: Meme content should consider cultural, social, and regional sensitivities to reduce the possibility of misunderstanding or negative reactions.
8. Ensure Clear Brand Identification: The brand name, logo, product, or service should be sufficiently visible so that entertainment does not replace brand recognition.
9. Monitor Audience Response: Brands should regularly monitor comments, reactions, shares, and other audience responses to understand how their meme content is being received.
10. Focus on Long-Term Brand Communication: Meme marketing should be integrated with the broader digital marketing strategy rather than being used only as a short-term trend-based activity.

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