

Proliferation of Media Content on TIKTOK and Its Impacts on Traditional Television Viewing Habits in Ghana

Edward Gyasi, Marylin Abekah-Daniels, Dennis Osei Owusu
Accra Technical University, Accra, Ghana

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ABSTRACT

Premised on media substitution and uses and gratification theories, this study evaluates the increasing prominence of TikTok media content as it transforms traditional television viewing practices, focusing on users between 18 and 34 years old. This research used a combination of descriptive and inferential statistics to analyse the collected data to understand how short-form customized interactive TikTok content affects people's media habits and advertising results. User behavior has drastically evolved since people now dedicate their time primarily to TikTok rather than traditional television watching. Users transition to this platform primarily because it offers straightforward features and intelligent recommendation systems together with time-efficient content delivery. The research finds that TikTok continues to expand its influence on digital advertising landscapes. The research demonstrated that people chose TikTok ads over conventional television advertisements because they felt more connected and got better buying influences. Through its features of interactive content and user-generated material as well as viral trends TikTok functions effectively for advertisers by engaging audiences. According to the study conventional television networks need to find ways to innovate and integrate short-form digital content within their strategies for remaining relevant amid ongoing digital platform evolution. These findings suggest that the media world is transforming because viewers now interact with ads differently through TikTok and its associated apps as digital platforms take over consumer habits.

Keywords: *proliferation, media content, TikTok, television, Ghana*

INTRODUCTION

TikTok, also known as Douyin in China, was founded in September 2016 and is operated by ByteDance (Rumapea, 2025). The media application exists in more than 150 markets across 75 different languages (Ayuni, 2022). TikTok is popular among teenagers for creating 15–60 second videos with customizable music and audio effects, and it also serves as a platform for spreading product knowledge, despite challenges in selecting influencers (Chamanadijan, 2024; Qausya & Bernadette, 2023). The collaboration feature enables users to create "duets" by responding to videos which then triggers an infinite response sequence.

Social media platforms experienced exponential growth, which transformed how users consume media content and produce new material. TikTok has become a leading platform that mostly appeals to young users. The distinctive short video format of TikTok attracts millions of viewers who simultaneously generate doubts about how this platform affects traditional television consumption patterns. The platform attracted worldwide users who reached one billion monthly active users by 2020, according to Wang (2021). The user-friendly design of TikTok serves as the main reason behind its widespread popularity. Algorithm-driven content recommendation system, and the ability for users to easily create and share short videos. The platform has become a hub for diverse content, spanning from humor and dance challenges to educational and informative content.

In Ghana, TikTok has become a significant cultural force, influencing music, fashion, and social trends. The platform enables the rapid spread of local content, allowing creators to showcase Ghanaian culture to a global audience. However, concerns have been raised about the potential for misinformation and the impact of global content on local cultural values. Traditional television, for instance, has been a popular and widely used medium for both entertainment and information delivery. TikTok's spectacular growth poses the following questions: whether its popularity is taking the audience attention and advertising dollars away from the television industry.

With the constant transformation in the media industry, the recent trends have shown that TikTok has become a popular platform in the consumption of content and this has sparked several questions on its impact on traditional television viewership. Although numerous studies have been conducted on the effects of social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter in the Ghanaian society, TikTok, which is relatively new and has a different format from the conventional social media platforms, has been relegated to the periphery of literature. The purpose of this research is to examine the changes in media consumption patterns and its impact on the television industry due to the rise of TikTok.

The trends of media consumption that have emerged in the recent past can be mainly attributed to technological advancement and the influence of new media technologies. It is evident from the literature that social media has affected traditional media in various ways (Istijanto & Purusottama, 2023). However, the discussion takes a new dimension with TikTok, which is characterised by short and highly engaging videos.

Previous studies indicate a decline in linear television viewership, particularly among younger audiences, driven by cord-cutting and the shift to streaming services (Nielsen, 2020). Similarly, the rapid rise of TikTok, especially among young adults aged 18 to 34 (Hsu et al., 2020), is seen as having the potential to further draw viewers away from television. This study aims to examine:

1. How the consumption of user-generated content on TikTok influences the time and attention individuals allocate to traditional television programming.
2. Identify factors that drive audience engagement with TikTok content in comparison to traditional television shows.

3. Analyze the impact of TikTok's rapid growth and popularity on the advertising industry.

LITERATURE REVIEW OR RESEARCH BACKGROUND

The use of social media, especially TikTok, has become a popular trend that has affected the habits of media consumption and television watching. The case of short-form video content shows that the manner in which the audiences interact with media and advertising has changed. This section outlines a literature search on the transition from television to digital media and its consequences on the media industry.

In the past, television has been the most dominant media type in Ghana, used for conveying entertainment and information. But the new media consumption paradigm has been brought by the introduction of digital technologies and the internet. A survey conducted by Geopoll in 2024 among Ghanaians, Kenyans, and South Africans showed that the shift of consumers to the online platform has become apparent, with more people turning to the internet for content. Geopoll believes that the use of social media platforms has reduced the number of people who watch traditional television by a significant margin, particularly the youth. These factors include availability of content at will, ability to interact with the content and user experience, such as one provided by TikTok. In the Geopoll survey conducted in 2024, this study also showed that the majority of Ghanaians rely on digital media rather than traditional media, which shows that there has been a shift in the public's media consumption.

In the same vein, Napoli (2011), in his book, "Audience evolution: New technologies and the transformation of media audiences," posits that there has been a shift in the use of traditional television due to the availability of new media that offer timely and interactive uses. This is especially true for the group of 18-34-year-olds who are willing to spend more time on media that is convenient and tailored to their preferences (Wufron et al., 2025). TikTok is an application that has gained immense popularity and has allowed its users to create and upload short videos. Its content recommendation system, which is based on algorithms, ensures the user is provided with targeted content that will improve interaction. As Statistica noted in 2023, the factors that make it easy to use and the variety of content on TikTok are also significant in Ghana. TikTok statistics show that about 70% of internet users in Ghana had used TikTok by the third quarter of 2023.

This has been made possible by social network sites since they provide a more user-involved experience compared to mass communication media. TikTok, which is popular for its short videos and has achieved great success, is the latest addition to this trend. TikTok has managed to gain so much popularity because it provides users with short entertaining content that can be watched in between activities, something that traditional television cannot offer (Saskia et al., 2024).

Social media platforms such as TikTok have made short-form videos very

popular in the current society. TikTok videos are short and last from 15 to 60 seconds on average, which is quite different from television programmes that have well-organised content (Shutsko, 2020). TikTok has introduced a new way of engaging its audience with short and unique content sharing. The one of the distinctive features of this platform is that it is designed to promote the constant use of content, which in turn contributes to longer sessions.

Montag et al., (2021) in their study, *On the psychology of TikTok use: A first glimpse of empirical findings*, pointed out that, TikTok's algorithm results in addictive viewing patterns, hence altering the user's media consumption. In the same way, Shutsko (2020) pointed out that platform's algorithm guarantees that the content provided is relevant to each user and thus provides entertainment all day. This not only makes the users spend more time on the content but also increases the chances of the content being passed from one user to another, thus increasing its visibility.

This is because, short-form content is effective in passing information and entertaining audiences in the shortest time possible, due to the busy world we live in. Shutsko (2020) mentioned that TikTok has been successful in grabbing people's attention in the world that is full of distractions and short focus span. Due to the format of the application, a viewer can watch several videos at once, and therefore, it is more effective than watching TV shows that require more time and attention.

In addition, the current trend of the use of social media platforms such as the famous TikTok has significant consequences for the advertising industry. The interruption-based television advertising is slowly losing its grip on the audience because consumers are now shifting their attention to the online environment where ads are less invasive and can be integrated into the content (Stürmer et al., 2023). TikTok advertising strategies, such as in-feed ads, branded hashtag challenges, and user-generated content, are new ways that can help advertisers reach the audience in an engaging and natural way (Jaipong, 2023).

According to Geopoll (2024), there is a new trend that is emerging in advertising in Ghana in that many brands are moving to digital media. TikTok has been experiencing a steady increase in registered users; thus, it is possible to consider it an opportunity to launch targeted advertising campaigns. GeoPoll's report also shows that advertisers are beginning to appreciate the effectiveness of the platform in reaching out to young people, hence shifting their advertising funds from television to online media.

According to research, digital ads, specifically on platforms like TikTok, have a stronger influence on consumer behavior than traditional TV ads. According to Kale et al., (2023), Consumer behavior is a multifaceted concept encompassing the activities, decisions, and processes involved in purchasing, using, and disposing of goods and services. It examines how individuals, groups, and organizations interact with products and services, considering factors such as timing, frequency, and motivation behind purchases (Šostar & Ristanović, 2023). Understanding consumer behavior is crucial for businesses to develop effective marketing strategies and predict consumer responses

to promotional messages. Kothari, et al., (2025) opine that consumers are more likely to engage with ads on social platforms as these ads are displayed in a more non-intrusive way and are related to consumers' interests.

Media Substitution Theory

Media Substitution Theory suggests that new communication technologies replace or substitute older ones depending on the factors of efficiency, convenience, and audience preference (Sims, 2020). This theory is also useful to understand the changes in media consumption patterns brought by digital transformation, such as the platform of TikTok. In the context of this study, Media Substitution Theory is used as a way of understanding the impact of the proliferation of content on TikTok on traditional television viewing behaviour in Ghana.

The basic idea for Media Substitution Theory in fact lies in the idea of how consumers migrate to new media when it offers increased functionality, accessibility or engagement compared to the traditional media (Kaye & Johnson, 2003). Today, social media platforms are the dominant media forces in the landscape to the point where users can no longer expect traditional television to provide the interactive, personalized, and on-demand content. Especially TikTok has become so much popular because of its algorithm-driven content recommendations, short-form video format, and participatory culture (Montag et al., 2021). These features give an alternative to traditional television that usually follows a timed programming model with little interactivity.

As studies have shown, that transition is occurring within the younger audiences, those aged 18 to 34, more than any other age demographic, and there is a decline in television viewing, in favor of social media platforms (Napoli, 2011). In Ghana, the internet penetration and smartphone adoption have made it easier to access digital content, which is manifested in this trend. This means that traditional television broadcasters have to struggle to keep their viewership, especially among the young demographics that are more inclined to the on-the-go, algorithm-driven content on platforms such as TikTok. Media substitution is frequently a partial process, resulting in the simultaneous use of both established and emerging platforms (Kim et al., 2020). Despite the rise of digital platforms like TikTok, traditional television retains a significant role in media consumption, particularly among older demographics and for content requiring extended narratives, such as news, sports, and special events. In Ghana, national television stations continue to attract viewers for culturally significant programming, including political debates, local drama series, and religious programs. Nevertheless, the growing preference for short-form, user-generated content on TikTok indicates a decline in traditional television's dominance as the primary source of entertainment and information for younger audiences.

In fact, a key part of media substitution is its effect on advertising revenue

models. Traditional television has relied on commercial advertising for its traditional revenue source. Unfortunately, advertisers and budget holders reallocate budgets to social media when audience attention switches to digital platforms, as they can provide more accurate engagement metrics. Brands can create preferred and engaging promotional possibilities that are more targeted due to TikTok's interactive promoting varieties, influencer advertising and marketing and algorithm-powered reach relative to conventional television commercials (Maulana & Sandyawati, 2023).

This trend in advertising expenditure can be seen especially in Ghana, where companies are turning to TikTok to connect with younger consumers. Similar brands that would have spent advertising money to appear on TV are now producing content on TikTok with organic reach, and where audiences can engage with them more actively. This shift highlights the economic underpinnings of media displacement, where traditional broadcasters face revenues decline and social media platforms increasingly benefit from greater advertising investments.

Uses and Gratifications Theory

The Uses and Gratifications (U&G) theory serves as an appropriate framework to analyze how people actively pursue media to satisfy their needs and wants. This theory, rooted in mass communication and media studies, shifts the focus from the traditional "media effects" paradigm, which assumes that audiences are passive recipients of media content, to an audience-centered approach that highlights the active role of users in media consumption. As digital media, particularly social media applications, continues to develop rapidly, this topic is still relevant for learning about media behavior, motivations for media use, and gratifications received from media use (Bryant & Oliver, 2009).

The Uses and Gratifications approach developed as a response to mass communication theories of the past, which tended to perceive audiences as homogeneous and passive. In fact, the earliest tentacles of this theory trace back to the 1940s when researchers like Lazarsfeld and Herzog explored the motivations that drove individuals to consume specific types of media content. U&G didn't get really articulated as a theoretical framework until the 1970s after the work of Blumler and Katz (1974) demonstrated that audiences actively use media to satisfy many sort of psychological and social needs.

The U&G theory stands in contrast to previous theories, such as the Hypodermic Needle Model, which proposed a direct influence of media messages on audiences in a universal way (Falgoust et al., 2022). The move from "what media does to people" towards "what people do with media" is central to emphasising the audience-oriented nature of the theory. U&G theory is based on some key tenants that sets it apart from other media theories:

1. Active Audience: Individuals actively engage with media content based on personal motivations and needs rather than passively absorbing messages.

2. Goal-Directed Media Use: People use media with specific objectives in mind, whether for entertainment, information, socialization, or personal identity formation.
3. Variability of Media Effects: The impact of media is not uniform but depends on how individuals interpret and utilize content.
4. Competition with Other Gratification Sources: Media consumption competes with other activities that can fulfil similar needs, such as interpersonal interactions or leisure activities.
5. Self-Awareness of Needs: Individuals are generally aware of their media consumption patterns and the gratifications they seek.

The theory identifies multiple gratifications that drive media consumption.

These can be categorized into different dimensions:

1. Cognitive Needs (Information and Knowledge Acquisition): Individuals seek media content to gain knowledge, stay informed, and understand social and political events. News consumption, documentary viewing, and educational podcasts fall into this category.
2. Affective Needs (Emotional and Aesthetic Experience): Media serves as an emotional outlet, providing pleasure, excitement, or escapism. Movies, music, and entertainment-based content satisfy affective needs.
3. Personal Integrative Needs: Media helps individuals reinforce their values, aspirations, and self-identity. Social media platforms enable users to express their personalities and engage in self-presentation.
4. Social Integrative Needs (Social Interaction and Connection): Media facilitates communication, relationship-building, and social belonging. Social networking sites and messaging apps serve as tools for maintaining relationships.
5. Tension Release (Escape and Diversion): Media offers relief from stress, boredom, and daily pressures. Video games, entertainment videos, and humor-based content serve this purpose.

The advent of digital technologies and social media platforms has expanded the scope of U&G research. Unlike traditional media, where content consumption was largely passive, digital media provides interactive and participatory experiences. Key areas where U&G theory applies in contemporary digital environments include:

1. Social Media Engagement: Users engage with platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok to seek social validation, maintain social connections, and stay informed. The ability to interact through likes, shares, and comments adds a layer of gratification beyond passive consumption.
2. User-Generated Content and Self-Expression: Platforms such as YouTube and TikTok allow users to create and share content, fulfilling creative and self-presentation needs.
3. Instant Access to Information: Digital media provides on-demand access to news, tutorials, and educational resources, catering to cognitive and knowledge-seeking gratifications.

Entertainment and Immersion: Streaming services, virtual reality (VR), and gaming platforms enhance entertainment experiences, offering personalized and immersive engagements.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative research design to explore the impact of TikTok on traditional television viewing habits and advertising effectiveness among individuals aged 18-34. The quantitative approach was selected for its ability to systematically measure the relationships between variables, providing a clear understanding of how TikTok usage affects media consumption and advertising outcomes.

The researcher employed a cross-sectional survey design, which allows for a snapshot of participants' current media consumption habits and attitudes towards advertising on TikTok and traditional television (Prihatiningsih et al., 2024). A structured questionnaire was developed, containing closed-ended questions to collect data on participants' time spent on TikTok versus television, their engagement with advertisements on both platforms, and the influence of these ads on purchasing decisions. The use of a survey allowed for the collection of quantifiable data from a large sample, ensuring the results were statistically significant and generalizable (Memon et al, 2020).

This study's target population was individuals aged 18-34 due to their higher usage of digital platforms and diminishing dependency on traditional television (Wufron et al, 2025). A total of 500 participants were selected through stratified random sampling. By doing this, it allowed for greater percentage representation of subgroups within the 18–34-year-old age range to provide more accurate insights on the varying media consumption habits within this demographic (Groves et al., 2009).

A combination of descriptive and inferential statistics was used to analyze the collected data. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations) were computed in order to summarize time spent on TikTok and on traditional television, as well as engagement with and influence of ads. Paired-sample t-tests were used to detect differences in consumption and ad effectiveness between TikTok and television. And regression analysis was used to figure out the predictors for ad engagement and ad influence on purchasing decisions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Average Daily Time Spent on TikTok and Traditional Television

Advertising Platform	Percentage Influenced	Mean (5-point scale)
TikTok Ads	60	3.8
Tv Ads	40	3

The data in the above table shows a significant difference between the time participants spend on TikTok and traditional television. This finding suggests a notable

shift in media consumption preferences, with TikTok emerging as the dominant platform in comparison to traditional television.

Table 2: Engagement Drivers with TikTok Content			
Engagement Factor	Percentage Strongly Agree	Mean (5 point scale)	Standard Deviation
Short Form Appeal	80	4.5.3	0.7
Interactivity	75	4.3	0.8
Personalization	78	4.4	0.7

The data in the table highlight the strong impact of Short-Form Appeal, Interactivity, and Personalization on engagement. With Short-Form Appeal receiving the highest strong agreement (80%) and a mean score of 4.5, it stands out as a key driver of engagement. Similarly, Interactivity (75%, mean 4.3) and Personalization (78%, mean 4.4) also show high engagement levels. These findings suggest that audiences are more drawn to dynamic, tailored, and interactive content, reinforcing the growing preference for personalized and engaging digital experiences.

Table 3: Perceived Effectiveness of TikTok and Television Ads			
Engagement Factor	Percentage Strongly Agree	Mean (5-point scale)	Standard Deviation
Short Form Appeal	68	4.1	0.9
Interactivity	45	3.2	1.1

The data in the table highlight a notable difference in the perceived effectiveness of TikTok and television ads. With 68% of respondents finding TikTok ads engaging and a mean score of 4.1, they emerge as the more effective advertising platform. In contrast, television ads received a lower engagement rate (45%) and a mean score of 3.2, with a higher standard deviation of 1.1, indicating greater variability in responses.

Table 4: Influence on Purchasing Decisions			
Engagement Factor	Percentage Strongly Agree	Mean (5 point scale)	Standard Deviation
TikTok Ads	60	3.8	1
TV Ads	40	3	1.2

The data in the table reveals a difference in the influence of TikTok and television ads on purchasing decisions. With 60% of respondents influenced by TikTok ads and a mean score of 3.8, they appear to have a stronger impact on consumer behavior. In contrast, television ads show a lower influence rate (40%) and a mean

score of 3.0, with a higher standard deviation of 1.2, indicating more varied opinions.

Table 5: Perceived Effectiveness of TikTok and Television Ads

Engagement Factor	Percentage Strongly Agree	Mean (5 point scale)	Standard Deviation
TikTok Ads	68	4.1	0.9
TV Ads	45	3.2	1.1

The data in the table indicates a clear difference in the perceived effectiveness of TikTok and television ads. With 68% of respondents finding TikTok ads engaging and a mean score of 4.1, they are viewed as a more compelling advertising medium. In comparison, television ads received a lower engagement rate (45%) and a mean score of 3.2, with a higher standard deviation of 1.1, suggesting greater variability in audience perception.

Table 6: Influence on Purchasing Decisions

Engagement Factor	Percentage Strongly Agree	Mean (5-point scale)	Standard Deviation
TikTok Ads	60	3.8	1
TV Ads	40	3	1.2

The data in the table highlight the differing impacts of TikTok and television ads on purchasing decisions. TikTok ads influenced 60% of respondents, with a mean score of 3.8, indicating a stronger effect on consumer behavior. In comparison, television ads had a lower influence rate (40%) and a mean score of 3.0, with a higher standard deviation of 1.2, suggesting greater variability in responses.

Discussion of findings

This study examined the proliferation of media content on TikTok and its impacts on traditional television viewing habits in Ghana. In the course of this study, there are findings that are very significant in providing answers to the research questions in order to achieve the objectives of this study.

On the research objective that aimed to examine how the consumption of user-generated content on TikTok influences the time and attention individuals allocate to traditional television programming, the findings suggest a notable shift in media consumption preferences, with TikTok emerging as the dominant platform in comparison to traditional television. A paired-sample t-test ($t(499) = 12.45, p < 0.001$) demonstrate a statistically significant difference between the time participants spend on TikTok and traditional television. On average, participants reported spending 1.5 hours per day on TikTok, whereas only 0.9 hours were allocated to traditional television.

Although a 36-minute daily difference may appear minor at first glance, when

aggregated over time, this disparity becomes more pronounced. Over the course of a week, the cumulative difference amounts to 4.2 hours, and over a month, it translates to approximately 18 hours. This substantial gap highlights a persistent decline in traditional television viewership, particularly among younger demographics. The findings reveal that participants spend more time on TikTok than on traditional television. This is very consistent with media substitution theory, which argues that newer media platforms that better satisfy users' needs almost always replace older ones (Loos & Ivan, 2024).

The findings indicate that the preference for TikTok over traditional television aligns with broader trends observed in digital media consumption. Short-form, user-generated content, algorithm-driven recommendations, and interactivity contribute to TikTok's appeal, making it more engaging than linear television broadcasts. Traditional television is struggling to retain its audience, especially among individuals aged 18-34. Unlike TikTok, which offers content on demand, television programming follows a fixed schedule, making it less flexible and appealing to younger viewers who prioritize convenience and personalized content. If this trend continues, traditional television networks may face further audience fragmentation and declining advertising revenue. Advertisers are already shifting their budgets toward digital platforms, capitalizing on TikTok's ability to target specific demographics with precision.

The decrease in traditional television consumption could lead to a restructuring of media strategies, with broadcasters adapting by integrating more interactive and social media-friendly content into their programming. The high engagement levels associated with TikTok suggest that its content is more immersive and time-consuming than traditional television programming. Features such as infinite scrolling, personalized feeds, and interactive elements (e.g., likes, comments, and challenges) keep users engaged for extended periods, thereby reducing the likelihood of switching to other media formats like television.

The second research objective examined the factors that drive audience engagement with TikTok content in comparison to traditional television shows. These factors differentiate TikTok from traditional television and influence users' media preferences and viewing behaviors. 80% of participants strongly agreed that TikTok's short-form content is a major factor in their engagement with the platform. With a mean score of 4.5, this factor is the most influential driver of engagement.

Short-form content allows users to consume a large amount of content quickly. This is particularly attractive to users with limited time, as it enables them to engage in multiple short, satisfying content experiences in a short period. Traditional television, with its longer episodes and programs, does not offer the same flexibility and immediacy, making it less appealing to this demographic. 75% of participants rated TikTok's interactivity as a key factor driving their engagement. With a mean score of 4.3, interactivity emerged as a critical engagement driver, although slightly less impactful than short-form appeal. TikTok's interactive features, such as liking, sharing, commenting, and participating in challenges, allow users to feel more connected to the

content and the broader community. This interactivity creates a sense of participation and involvement that is typically absent in traditional television viewing, which is often passive and one-directional.

According to the data, 78% of participants strongly agreed that TikTok's personalization features enhanced their viewing experience. The platform's algorithm curates content based on users' previous interactions, making the content feed highly relevant and personalized. The high mean score of 4.4 indicates that users value this tailored content experience. Traditional television, on the other hand, often relies on scheduled programming, which may not cater to the specific tastes and preferences of individual viewers. TikTok's ability to deliver personalized content, updated in real time, makes it more appealing to users who expect immediate relevance in their media consumption. These findings reveal that short-form appeal, interactivity, and personalization are the main factors driving user engagement with TikTok. This supports the **Uses and Gratifications Theory**, which argues that users actively look for media that gratify their emotional, cognitive, and social needs.

These three factors together explain 52% of the variance in user engagement ($R^2 = 0.52$), highlighting their collective importance in driving user behavior on the platform. Short-form appeal has the highest beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.45$), indicating that it is the strongest predictor of engagement. This suggests that the ability to consume content quickly and efficiently is the most important factor for users when choosing TikTok over traditional television. Although interactivity ($\beta = 0.38$) and personalization ($\beta = 0.41$) are slightly less impactful than short-form appeal, they are still significant drivers of engagement. The ability to interact with content and receive personalized recommendations is critical to users' overall satisfaction and continued use of the platform.

The research objective three examines the ways TikTok's rapid growth and popularity affect the advertising industry. 68% of participants found TikTok ads engaging, with a mean effectiveness rating of 4.1 out of 5. This suggests that TikTok ads are generally well-received by users, likely due to their interactive and personalized nature. Only 45% of participants found television ads engaging, with a mean effectiveness rating of 3.2. The lower engagement indicates that traditional television ads may struggle to capture and maintain the attention of modern audiences, particularly the 18-34 age group. The difference in engagement (68% for TikTok vs. 45% for TV) and the mean effectiveness ratings (4.1 vs. 3.2) suggest that TikTok ads are perceived as more relevant and interesting. This could be attributed to TikTok's ability to deliver tailored content through its algorithm, creating a more personalized advertising experience for users.

Aldo, 60% of participants reported being influenced by TikTok ads in their purchasing decisions, with a mean influence rating of 3.8. This shows that TikTok ads are not only engaging but also effective in driving consumer behavior. The combination of interactivity, short-form content, and precise targeting likely contributes to the platform's ability to influence buying decisions. Only 40% of participants reported being

influenced by television ads, with a mean influence rating of 3.0. **Through the lens of Media Substitution Theory**, the shift in advertising effectiveness and engagement from traditional television to TikTok shows a broader shift of legacy advertising models by interactive and user-centered digital advertising. TikTok's format allows for a personalized and participatory experience, which better captures the attention of younger audiences.

This indicates that traditional television advertising is becoming less effective in driving purchasing decisions among the 18-34 demographic. The lower influence of television ads suggests that their one-size-fits-all approach may no longer resonate with audiences who are accustomed to the personalized and interactive ads seen on platforms like TikTok.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights a significant shift in media consumption and advertising effectiveness, particularly among individuals aged 18-34 in Ghana. The findings align with the research objectives, demonstrating that TikTok has emerged as a dominant platform, reshaping how audiences engage with content compared to traditional television. The preference for TikTok's short-form, interactive, and personalized content reflects changing user behaviors, where convenience and engagement play a crucial role in media consumption.

In terms of advertising, the study confirms that TikTok ads are more effective than traditional television ads in capturing user attention and influencing purchasing. The platform's ability to seamlessly integrate entertainment with relevant. This stands in contrast to traditional television advertising, which shows declining effectiveness due to its rigid, less interactive format.

The implications of these findings extend beyond individual consumer preferences to broader industry trends. As digital platforms like TikTok continue to attract advertising investments, traditional television networks must innovate to remain relevant. This could involve incorporating interactive elements, personalized content, or hybrid advertising models that align with evolving audience expectations.

This research contributes to the field by providing insights into the dynamics of media engagement and advertising effectiveness in the digital era. It underscores the need for advertisers and media producers to adapt their strategies to meet the demands of modern audiences. Future research could explore how other social media platforms compare in terms of engagement and purchasing influence or examine the long-term effects of short-form content consumption on audience behavior and brand loyalty.

BIODATA

Edward Gyasi is lectures at the Department of Liberal Studies and Communication Technology, Faculty of Applied Arts, Accra Technical University, Ghana. His research

focuses on communication and media studies. He is also an experienced Ghanaian Sports journalist. Email: EdwardGyasi23@gmail.com

Marylin Abekah-Daniels, is an adjunct lecturer at Accra Technical University, Department of Liberal Studies, Faculty of Applied Arts. Her research includes strategic communication, public relations and religious communication. Email: mabekadaniels@atu.edu.gh

Dennis Osei Owusu, is the head of public affairs at the National Teaching Council and a lecturer at Accra Technical University, Liberal Studies and Communication Technology Department. He is a radio presenter at Kasapa FM Ghana. Email: doseiowusu@atu.edu.gh

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