

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

## Comparative analysis of the impact of immersive and non-immersive ads on brand likeability

### *Análisis comparativo del impacto de los anuncios inmersivos y no inmersivos en la simpatía de marca*

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#### ABSTRACT

This study aims to compare the effects of immersive and non-immersive advertisements on brand likeability and to determine whether immersive advertisements exert a stronger influence on brand likeability than non-immersive advertisements. A quantitative, cross-sectional design was employed using a convenience sample of 101 respondents from Lahore, Pakistan. Participants were exposed to two Coca-Cola advertisements representing immersive and non-immersive formats and completed a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire. Internal consistency and sampling adequacy were assessed using Cronbach's alpha, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure, and Bartlett's test of sphericity. Principal component analysis with Varimax rotation was conducted to examine the structure of the measurement items, followed by correlation and multiple regression analyses. Both immersive and non-immersive advertising were positively associated with brand likeability. Immersive advertising showed the stronger standardized contribution within the regression model, while non-immersive advertising also remained a significant predictor. The findings support the relevance of both advertising formats for brand likeability, with immersive advertising showing the stronger relative contribution in the model. However, non-immersive advertising continues to retain strategic value. Future research should test these relationships using larger, more diverse samples and more controlled advertising stimuli.

**Keywords:** Immersive Marketing; Non-immersive Marketing; Augmented reality; Consumer perception; Regression analysis.

#### RESUMEN

Este estudio tiene como objetivo comparar los efectos de los anuncios inmersivos y no inmersivos sobre la simpatía hacia la marca y determinar si los anuncios inmersivos ejercen una influencia más fuerte sobre la simpatía hacia la marca que los anuncios no inmersivos. Se empleó un diseño cuantitativo y transversal, utilizando una muestra por conveniencia de 101 participantes de Lahore, Pakistán. Los participantes fueron expuestos a dos anuncios de Coca-Cola que representaban formatos inmersivos y no inmersivos, y completaron un cuestionario con una escala Likert de cinco puntos. La consistencia interna y la adecuación muestral se evaluaron mediante el alfa de Cronbach, la medida Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin y la prueba de esfericidad de Bartlett. Se realizó un análisis de componentes principales con rotación Varimax para examinar la estructura de los ítems de medición, seguido de análisis de correlación y regresión lineal múltiple. Tanto la publicidad inmersiva como la no inmersiva se asociaron positivamente con la simpatía hacia la marca. La publicidad inmersiva mostró una contribución estandarizada más fuerte dentro del modelo de regresión, mientras que la publicidad no inmersiva también se mantuvo como un predictor significativo. Los hallazgos respaldan la relevancia de ambos formatos publicitarios para la simpatía hacia la marca, aunque la publicidad inmersiva mostró una mayor contribución relativa en el modelo. Sin embargo, la publicidad no inmersiva continúa conservando valor estratégico. Futuras investigaciones deberían examinar estas relaciones utilizando muestras más amplias y diversas, así como estímulos publicitarios más controlados.

**Palabras clave:** Marketing inmersivo; Marketing no inmersivo; Realidad aumentada; Percepción del consumidor; Análisis de regresión.



## INTRODUCTION

The continuous evolvement of technology has shifted how conventional businesses are operated (Freina & Ott, 2015). While industrialization and specialization emerged, marketing concepts also evolved in response to changing times (Hutapea, 2016). From the production concept to the product concept, and from hard selling to a customer-focused approach, the marketing philosophy of value creation has consistently remained a top priority for marketers (Webster, 2005).

This value creation has made brands work hard to sustain competitive advantage, thus contributing to brand equity (Kotler, 2020). Strategies like product development, innovation, and identification of new target markets have long been practiced by companies (Martin, 2011), and beyond that, a strong emphasis continues to be placed on new ways of marketing and advertising the product (Smith & Colgate, 2007).

While there may be a limit to seeking innovation in product development requiring effective research and development (R&D) and companies' cost constraints, the induction of tech and artificial intelligence (AI) is aiding the cause of differentiation, at least in the advertising protocols (Barnes, 2016). This is where the marketing philosophy continues to be significant, where tech-driven ads can be a source of competitive advantage and make brands a market leader in terms of viewership and up-to-date advertising (Patti, 1977). The fact can't be denied that interesting advertisements continue to contribute to brand engagement and add to the sales of the companies (Terkan, 2014), and the advent of immersive ads and the usage of immersive media have opened the way for creativity and competition alongside (Barnes, 2016).

It can be a competition for the top brands to make the best use of the latest immersive techniques, depicting themselves being an updated and relevant brand; on the other hand, it is an opportunity for all ordinary brands to best use the ease of immersive media and make advertising somewhat like that of leading brands. For instance, brands like Coca-Cola can employ the best of the resources to develop immersive ads, and on the other hand, a newly established brand can adapt any of the Market Follower strategies to do the same.

Although not all brands may have the resources or strategic intention to invest in immersive advertising, non-immersive advertising remains a relevant and viable communication approach (Le et al., 2024). In addition to cost considerations, some brands may deliberately limit the use of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence to remain consistent with their brand values. For example, Dove has publicly committed to avoiding AI-generated models in its advertising in order to reinforce its positioning around authentic and natural beauty (Alaimo, 2024).

Previous studies have compared traditional and digital or social media in different communication contexts (Han & Xu, 2020; Laurell & Sandström, 2018; Robson et al., 2013; Xu, 2020). However, comparatively less attention has been given to the specific distinction between immersive and non-immersive advertising and their respective effects on consumers' evaluations of brands. Limited empirical evidence is available regarding whether immersive advertising produces a stronger effect on brand likeability than non-immersive advertising. Addressing this gap is relevant both to advertising research and to practitioners seeking to determine the most appropriate advertising format for their audiences.

Therefore, the objective of this study is to compare the effects of immersive and non-immersive advertisements on brand likeability and to determine whether immersive advertisements exert a stronger influence on brand likeability than non-immersive advertisements. Based on this objective, *RQ: Do immersive advertisements have a stronger effect on brand likeability than non-immersive advertisements*

## Literature Review

### *Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC)*

IMC refers to the strategic coordination of multiple communication channels to deliver a consistent company message and create value for customers (Ambika et al., 2025). IMC acts as a theoretical backbone linking consumer experience with brand likeability, which establishes a link to this study. These channels mainly include the use of social media, traditional media, and other emerging media of marketing communication (Chen & Yao, 2022).

This further encapsulates the communication mix, which includes direct marketing, personal selling, advertisement, promotions, and discounts, etc. (Kitchen & Burgmann, 2010). The essence of integrated marketing lies in the consistent delivery of the marketing message across all channels employed (Schultz, 1992). Marketers make the best use of emerging technologies to execute marketing strategies based on data and market trends.

With regards to the convergence of industries, IMC aims at brand awareness and loyalty with new marketing trends like omnichannel marketing, whereas strategies like guerrilla marketing, market challenger, and market follower strategies continue to make up essentialities of integrated marketing communication (Kitchen & Burgmann, 2015). The above discussion aims at creating a clear conceptual flow towards brand likeability, by strengthening IMC with that of consumer impact.

### *Non-Immersive Ads*

Non-immersive media surrounds the use of traditional marketing media such as print, electronic, and digital media (Briandana & Dwityas, 2020). The ads displayed, provided, and played on these media are termed traditional media ads (Kim & Balachander, 2023). The further dissection of ads for print media includes the use of newspapers, brochures, pamphlets, leaflets, newsletters, etc., whereas TVCs, radio, and cable TV ads correspond to electronic media (Adzharuddin, 2012).

The conventional media advertisement also includes ads given on billboards and hoardings. With technological advancement, a great shift among B2B and B2C marketing platforms has been found, and the advent of Digital Marketing is shaping or has shaped the conventional marketing scenario (Alzubi, 2023).

This has given rise to the use of digital marketing strategies like SEOs, Content Marketing, marketing analytics, etc., to name a few, further adding to the use of digital marketplaces and social media platforms (Katrodia, 2022). Although changes in marketing media have transformed the format and duration of advertisements, as reflected in formats such as reels and short-form videos, the underlying marketing principle remains unchanged: creating value for customers. This continuing emphasis on value creation supports the ongoing relevance of non-immersive advertising.

As predominantly one-way forms of communication, non-immersive advertisements typically involve companies delivering messages to their audiences and tend to emphasize the content and value propositions of the products or services being promoted. Depending upon demographics, non-immersive ads employ all the necessary ingredients of customer engagement, which are possible in one way or another (Cannon, 2001).

This further justifies the room for adjustments in brand elements to keep updated with market trends and customer demands. While non-immersive ads mainly have a one-way communication focus, their cognitive impact on consumers is different from that of immersive ads. This divergence will be integrated into the conceptual framework.

### *Immersive Ads*

The immersion in advertisements is an outcome of the tech revolution at its latest (Tung, 2024). Immersive ads act as two-way communication, which encapsulates consumer emotions, further theorizing brand attachment and affective response. Incorporation of technologies like augmented and virtual reality has given advertisements a new way of formation and execution (Sands et al., 2024).

Although both technologies provide immersive experiences, augmented reality (AR) advertisements integrate digital elements into the user's view of the real-world environment, whereas virtual reality (VR) advertisements create a fully virtual environment for the user (Sands et al., 2024). AR advertisements enable users to visualize virtual objects within their physical environment. For example, IKEA uses AR technology to allow consumers to virtually place furniture in their own spaces before making a purchase decision. Through an app or web-based interface, users can select a furniture item and view a digital representation of it within a chosen real-world setting.

This is how immersion is addressing and satisfying customer needs to the next level. As the customer-centric approach can best be practiced by using immersive marketing, imparting an experiential focus (Leveau & Camus, 2023) It will be interesting to analyze how detrimental it is to ensure brand likeability as the study proceeds to its findings. The gap in the prior literature is addressed in this study by comparing the impact of immersive and non-immersive ad.

### *Brand likeability*

The brand's likeability is an aspect of the brand's ability to be liked and appeal to the customer (Nguyen et al., 2013). It is the extent that tempts customers to have a liking for the brand (Nguyen et al., 2015). It is not just limited to users of a specific brand, as it can be generated for non-users as well. This is the point when the concept of brand likeability has its own significance over other branding-related concepts. Its implications may affect word of mouth, further leading to brand loyalty and brand perception, and ultimately to brand equity in the longer term (Suetrong, 2023).

The theory-driven foundation for this study is proposed by deriving consumer engagement from immersive and non-immersive ads. Therefore, the role of previously discussed IMC becomes notable in enhancing brand likeability and demands a right mix of communication channels and modern marketing practices.

Yousef (2024) discusses the development of positive brand associations that aid in brand likeability. The greater the positive brand associations, the higher the brand likeability. Also, there can be a huge role of brand personality and brand archetypes that can contribute to the cause of brand likeability. Once effective brand likeability is developed among the audience, it becomes easy for marketers to create a name for the brand both amongst its customers and prospective customers.

**DRIP Model**

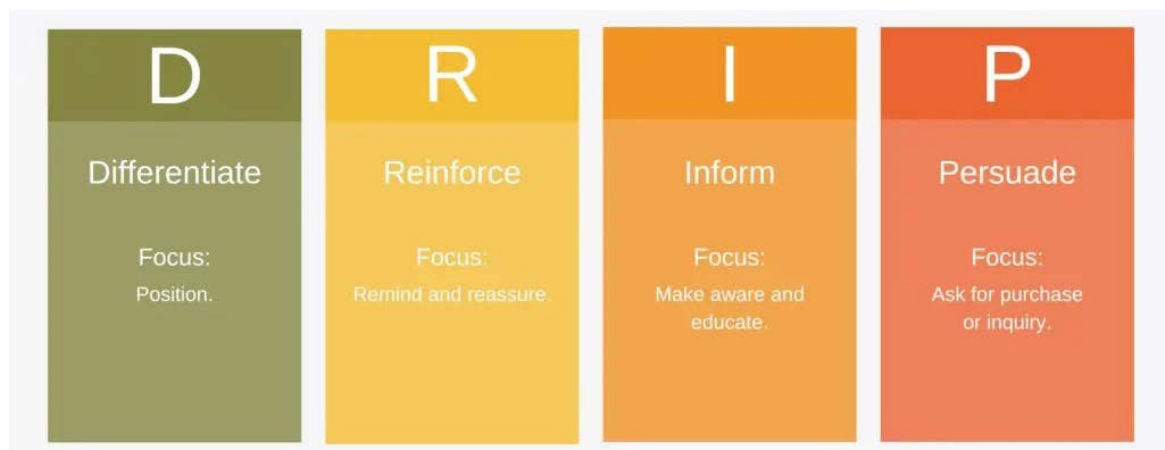
The DRIP model comprises four key communication objectives: differentiation, reinforcement, information, and persuasion (Fill & Turnbull, 2023). Though rarely used in academic literature, the model encompasses the necessary elements of how a campaign should go through its various phases.

The phase Differentiation is linked to the Unique Selling Point (USP) of a product. It ensures that a product must have a different composition/ features/ attributes from those of its competitors. This differentiation should be practiced beyond the marketing message as well (Rabindranath & Singh, 2024). The next is the “Reinforce” stage, which brings in the involvement of prospects. It is to affirm that prospects (yet to be customers) receive the marketing message again about the benefits of the products, thus affecting their decision-making positively.

The “I” in the DRIP model stands for “Inform”. It is about an engaging marketing message that is a continuation of the previous two steps. The emphasis may be put on informing the audience about product features, usage possibilities, the product, and ways to handle the product efficiently. In terms of immersive ads, this step might best be executed by showing product tutorials and testimonials, etc. The last stage is Persuade. Here, the attempt is to convince the prospects or even return customers to purchase from the company (Fedusenko, 2023).

A call-to-action stage, this can be about removing any doubts or dealing with a poor word of mouth about your product or company. Though the DRIP model is ideally developed for planned communication, its implication in advertising can be observed as well. Given the rise of immersive marketing and the significance discussed in this study, modern marketing may best employ immersive tools and mediums in their campaigns, be it email marketing, reels, or TVCs. Following the DRIP stages may turn out to be decisive if executed optimally.

The significance of the DRIP model lies in its ability to distinguish the communication objectives of both the immersive and non-immersive advertisements. While informational consistency aids in creating differentiation and reinforcement in non-immersive ads, the inform and persuade stages of the DRIP model led to experiential engagement and emotional connection through immersive ads. Thus, DRIP provides a foundational and theoretical basis for how various advertisement formats impact consumer thought process, ultimately affecting the brand’s likability. The above literature leads to the development of the following hypotheses, also depicted in the conceptual framework as Figure 2 below.



**Figure 1.** DRIP Model.

Source. Fill (2002)

Based on the theoretical arguments and empirical evidence discussed above, both immersive and non-immersive advertisements are expected to influence consumers’ evaluations of a brand. Non-immersive advertisements may contribute to brand likeability through message clarity, informational content, and value communication, whereas immersive advertisements may enhance brand likeability by fostering greater engagement and experiential involvement. The hypothesized relationships are summarized in the conceptual framework presented in Figure 2.

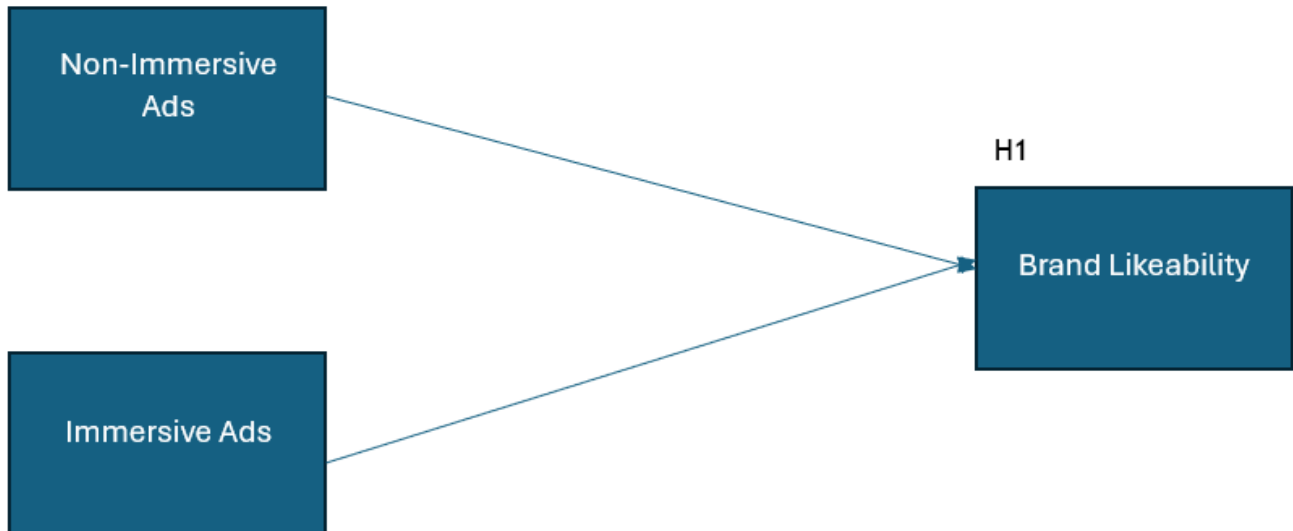


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research design

This study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional research design to examine the effects of immersive and non-immersive advertising on brand likeability. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to respondents in Lahore, Pakistan. The study employed a within-respondent comparison, as participants were exposed to both an immersive and a non-immersive advertisement from the same brand before evaluating the corresponding constructs. The use of advertisements from a single brand was intended to reduce variation, attributable to differences in brand identity and to facilitate comparison between the two advertising formats.

### Participants and sampling

A non-probability convenience sampling approach was used to recruit participants from Lahore. A total of 101 valid responses were obtained and included in the analysis. The sample consisted predominantly of respondents aged 18-24 years, although participants from older age groups were also represented. Both male and female respondents participated in the study. Convenience sampling was selected because of the exploration nature of the study and the accessibility of respondents familiar with the selected brand. Nevertheless, the non-probability sampling procedure and the geographical concentration of the sample limit the generalizability of the findings beyond the population represented in this study.

### Advertising stimuli

Two advertisements from Coca-Cola were selected as the study stimuli. The non-immersive condition consisted of a television commercial released in 1971, whereas the immersive condition was represented by an advertisement from a 2023 campaign. The use of the same brand in both conditions was intended to provide a common brand context and reduce brand-related variability in participants' evaluations.

Participants were exposed to both advertisements through the questionnaire before responding to the corresponding measurement items. This procedure enabled respondents to evaluate the two advertising formats within the same study context.

### Measurement instrument

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*), with 3 representing a neutral response. The questionnaire included items designed to capture perceptions of non-immersive advertising, immersive advertising, and brand likeability. Some items were adapted or conceptually informed by the work of Nguyen et al. (2013), while other items were tailored to the advertising stimuli used in the study. The initial instrument comprised 12

items. Item dimensionality was assessed before hypothesis testing. Items with factor loadings of .50 or higher were retained, consistent with the threshold adopted in the study.

### ***Assessment of reliability and construction structure***

The internal consistency of the measurement instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The overall scale yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .851, indicating satisfactory internal consistency.

Prior to factor extraction, the suitability of the data for dimensionality assessment was examined using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity. The KMO value was .804, while Bartlett's test was statistically significant,  $\chi^2(66) = 500.493$ ,  $p < .001$ , indicating that the correlation matrix was suitable for factor extraction.

The dimensional structure of the 12 measurement items was examined using principal component analysis with Varimax rotation and Kaiser normalization. Three components with eigenvalues greater than 1 were retained, jointly explaining 65.35% of the total variance. All retained items exhibited factor loadings above .50. Rotation converged after five iterations.

### ***Data analysis***

Data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis was conducted in several stages. First, descriptive statistics were calculated to characterize the sample and summarize the distribution of the principal study variables. Second, internal consistency and the dimensional structure of the measurement instrument were evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, the KMO statistic, Bartlett's test of sphericity, and principal component analysis.

Third, Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to examine the associations among non-immersive advertising, immersive advertising, and brand likeability.

Finally, multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the extent to which perceptions of immersive and non-immersive advertising predicted brand likeability. Brand likeability was specified as the dependent variable, whereas immersive and non-immersive advertising were entered as predictor variables. Statistical significance was evaluated at the .05 level. The regression model was used to test the proposed relationships between the two advertising formats and brand likeability.

## **FINDINGS**

### ***Respondents' demographics***

The considerably higher percentage of respondents aged between 18 and 24 may be considered good for the study, as youngsters tend to be more oriented towards immersion and more tech-savvy. It can further be interpreted that current youth understand the immersive aspects of Marketing rather better, so a higher percentage of these respondents make the results notable and relatable as well. While there are also middle-aged respondents who must have experienced TVCs and might have also been influenced in terms of their decision-making.

Thus, the inclusion of respondents from different age groups contributed to a more diverse set of perspectives and strengthened the interpretability of the responses. In addition, Table 1 shows a relatively balanced gender distribution, indicating the participation of both male and female respondents in the study.

**Table 1.** *Demographic characteristics of the respondents.*

#### **a) Respondents' Age**

|            | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid      | 2         | 2.0     | 2.0           | 2.0                |
| 18 - 24    | 69        | 68.3    | 68.3          | 70.3               |
| 25 - 31    | 16        | 15.8    | 15.8          | 86.1               |
| 32 - 38    | 5         | 5.0     | 5.0           | 91.1               |
| 39 & Above | 9         | 8.9     | 8.9           | 100.0              |
| Total      | 101       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**b) Gender**

|        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid  | 2         | 2.0     | 2.0           | 2.0                |
| Female | 45        | 44.6    | 44.6          | 46.5               |
| Male   | 54        | 53.5    | 53.5          | 100.0              |
| Total  | 101       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Reliability and validity**

Table 2 above represents the reliability scores for the items. The Cronbach value surpasses the 0.6 threshold, indicating that items are clearly understood by the respondents, and data fit is ensured (Cronbach, 1951). As per Kaiser (1974), a KMO value above 0.5 is considered good to proceed with factor analysis. The value of 0.804 indicates that questionnaire items are a good fit for factor analysis.

**Table 2. Reliability and sampling adequacy tests.**

|                                                  |         |
|--------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Cronbach's Alpha                                 | .851    |
| N of Items                                       | 12      |
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. | .804    |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square | 500.493 |
| Df                                               | 66      |
| Sig.                                             | .000    |

**Factor analysis**

The principal component analysis identified three components with eigenvalues greater than 1, which jointly explained 65.35% of the total variance. The first component accounted for 38.57% of the variance, the second for 17.40%, and the third for 9.38%. As shown in Table 3, the cumulative variance explained by the three retained components exceeded the 60% criterion adopted in this study (Hair et al., 2009), indicating an acceptable representation of the underlying structure of the measurement items. Table 3 summarizes the eigenvalues and the proportion of variance explained before and after rotation.

**Table 3. Total variance explained by the retained components.**

| Component | Initial Eigenvalues |               |              | Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings |               |              | Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings |               |              |
|-----------|---------------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
|           | Total               | % of Variance | Cumulative % | Total                               | % of Variance | Cumulative % | Total                             | % of Variance | Cumulative % |
| 1         | 4.628               | 38.565        | 38.565       | 4.628                               | 38.565        | 38.565       | 3.043                             | 25.359        | 25.359       |
| 2         | 2.088               | 17.400        | 55.964       | 2.088                               | 17.400        | 55.964       | 2.807                             | 23.392        | 48.751       |
| 3         | 1.126               | 9.383         | 65.347       | 1.126                               | 9.383         | 65.347       | 1.992                             | 16.596        | 65.347       |
| 4         | .862                | 7.185         | 72.532       |                                     |               |              |                                   |               |              |
| 5         | .642                | 5.346         | 77.879       |                                     |               |              |                                   |               |              |
| 6         | .560                | 4.665         | 82.544       |                                     |               |              |                                   |               |              |
| 7         | .473                | 3.944         | 86.488       |                                     |               |              |                                   |               |              |
| 8         | .442                | 3.687         | 90.175       |                                     |               |              |                                   |               |              |
| 9         | .401                | 3.345         | 93.520       |                                     |               |              |                                   |               |              |
| 10        | .309                | 2.579         | 96.098       |                                     |               |              |                                   |               |              |
| 11        | .277                | 2.304         | 98.402       |                                     |               |              |                                   |               |              |
| 12        | .192                | 1.598         | 100.000      |                                     |               |              |                                   |               |              |

All the factors in Table 4 are over 0.5, suggesting that items relate well with the variables. The values close to 1 measure the strength of the relationship between variables and the factors.

**Table 4. Rotated Component Matrix**

|                                                     | Component |      |      |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------|------|------|
|                                                     | 1         | 2    | 3    |
| The TV ad was visually appealing                    | .         | .879 |      |
| I found the TV ad reliable                          |           | .751 |      |
| The adâ€™s message was conveyed successfully to me  |           | .795 |      |
| The ad was comprehensive in its content             |           | .769 |      |
| I felt myself part of the advertisement             | .792      |      |      |
| I became involved in the ad                         | .794      |      |      |
| The ad aroused my interest in it                    | .782      |      |      |
| The immersive adâ€™s story narration was compelling | .762      |      |      |
| This brand is exciting                              |           |      | .726 |
| The immersive ad made this brand likeable           |           |      | .539 |
| The non-immersive ad made this brand noticeable     |           |      | .572 |
| The ads can contribute to brand perception          |           |      | .809 |

*Note.* Extraction method: principal component analysis. Rotation method: Varimax with Kaiser normalization. Rotation converged in five iterations. Loadings below the reporting threshold were suppressed.

### Descriptives

Descriptive statistics were calculated to summarize the distribution of the study variables. As shown in Table 5, brand likeability reported the highest mean score ( $M = 14.89$ ,  $SD = 2.63$ ), followed by immersive advertising ( $M = 14.45$ ,  $SD = 3.18$ ) and non-immersive advertising ( $M = 13.51$ ,  $SD = 3.15$ ). The relatively similar standard deviations observed for immersive and non-immersive advertising indicate comparable levels of response variability, whereas brand likeability exhibited slightly lower dispersion. These descriptive results provide an initial overview of the variables; the relationships among them are examined subsequently through correlation and regression analyses.

**Table 5. Descriptive statistics of the study variables.**

|                    | N   | Minimum | Maximum | M       | SD      |
|--------------------|-----|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Nonimmersive       | 101 | 4.00    | 20.00   | 13.5149 | 3.15472 |
| Immersive          | 101 | 5.00    | 20.00   | 14.4455 | 3.17640 |
| BrandLikeability   | 101 | 4.00    | 20.00   | 14.8911 | 2.63401 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 101 |         |         |         |         |

*Note.* N = sample size; M = mean; SD = standard deviation.

### Hypotheses testing

Table 6 summarizes the correlation and multiple regression results used to evaluate the hypothesized relationships between immersive advertising, non-immersive advertising, and brand likeability. As shown in Panel A, brand likeability was positively correlated with both non-immersive advertising ( $r = .402$ ) and immersive advertising ( $r = .550$ ). The correlation between the two predictor variables was comparatively lower ( $r = .292$ ). Panel B presents the multiple regression results. The overall model was statistically significant,  $F(2, 98) = 28.239$ ,  $p < .001$ , with an  $R^2$  of .366 and an adjusted  $R^2$  of .353. Thus, immersive and non-immersive advertising jointly accounted for 36.6% of the variance in brand likeability.

Regarding the individual predictors, non-immersive advertising showed a positive and statistically significant association with brand likeability ( $B = .220$ ,  $SE = .070$ ,  $B = .263$ ,  $t = 3.131$ ,  $p = .002$ ), providing support for H1. Immersive advertising also showed a positive and statistically significant association with brand likeability ( $B =$

.392,  $SE = .070$ ,  $B = .473$ ,  $t = 5.619$ ,  $p < .001$ ), supporting H2. The standardized regression coefficient was larger for immersive advertising ( $B = .473$ ) than for non-immersive advertising ( $B = .263$ ), indicating that immersive advertising made the stronger relative contribution to brand likeability within the estimated model.

**Table 6.** *Correlation and regression analysis.*

|                  | BrandLikeability |            |                   |            | Nonimmersive    |            | Immersive |      |      |
|------------------|------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|-----------------|------------|-----------|------|------|
| BrandLikeability | 1.000            |            |                   |            | .402            |            | .550      |      |      |
| Nonimmersive     | .402             |            |                   |            | 1.000           |            | .292      |      |      |
| Immersive        | .550             |            |                   |            | .292            |            | 1.000     |      |      |
| Model            | R                | R Square   | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error | R Square Change | F Change   | df1       | df2  | Sig. |
| 1                | .605             | .366       | .353              | 2.11926    | .366            | 28.239     | 2         | 98   | .000 |
| Model            | Sum of Squares   |            |                   | df         | Mean Square     |            | F         | Sig. |      |
| Regression       | 253.658          |            |                   | 2          | 126.829         |            | 28.239    | .000 |      |
| Residual         | 440.144          |            |                   | 98         | 4.491           |            |           |      |      |
| Total            | 693.802          |            |                   | 100        |                 |            |           |      |      |
| Model            | B                | Std. Error | Beta              | T          | Sig.            | Zero-order | Partial   | Part |      |
| (Constant)       | 6.256            | 1.184      |                   | 5.283      | .000            |            |           |      |      |
| Nonimmersive     | .220             | .070       | .263              | 3.131      | .002            | .402       | .302      | .252 |      |
| Immersive        | .392             | .070       | .473              | 5.619      | .000            | .550       | .494      | .452 |      |

*Note.*  $N = 101$ . Dependent variable: brand likeability.  $B$  = unstandardized regression coefficient;  $SE$  = standard error;  $B$  = standardized regression coefficient. Model statistics:  $R = .605$ ,  $R^2 = .366$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .353$ , standard error of the estimate = 2.119,  $F(2, 98) = 28.239$ ,  $p < .001$ .

## DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that both immersive and non-immersive advertising are positively associated with brand likeability, although immersive advertising showed the stronger standardized contribution within the estimated regression model ( $B = .473$ ) compared with non-immersive advertising ( $B = .263$ ). This finding is consistent with recent literature emphasizing the capacity of immersive technologies to intensify consumer engagement and advertising experiences. In particular, Sands et al. (2024) highlight the growing relevance of augmented reality, virtual reality, and mixed reality in advertising, while Leveau & Camus (2023) emphasize the role of embodiment and immersion in shaping consumer enjoyment within virtual marketing experiences. Similarly, Chen & Yao (2022) associate immersive media and narrative characteristics with mechanisms such as telepresence and transportation.

The present findings also contribute to the literature on brand likeability. Nguyen et al. (2013) conceptualize brand likeability as the extent to which a brand generates favorable affective evaluations, while Nguyen et al. (2015) further develop this construct through the Brand Likeability Scale. In the current study, the positive association between immersive advertising and brand likeability suggests that advertising experiences characterized by involvement, interest, and compelling narration may contribute to favorable brand evaluations. This interpretation is also compatible with Shehu et al. (2016), who examined the relevance of advertising likeability in online video effectiveness, and with Smit et al. (2006), who demonstrated the continuing importance of advertising likeability in the evaluation of television commercials. The present study extends this line of research by examining brand likeability in relation to two different advertising formats within the same brand context.

Importantly, the results do not suggest that non-immersive advertising has become irrelevant. Non-immersive advertising also showed a positive and statistically significant association with brand likeability. This result supports the continuing relevance of conventional advertising formats despite the rapid development of immersive technologies. Kim & Balachander (2023), for example, examine the coordination of traditional and online advertising within brand marketing, reinforcing the view that newer communication technologies do not necessarily eliminate the strategic value of established media formats. Similarly, studies comparing traditional and newer communication channels, including Han & Xu (2020), Laurell & Sandström (2018), Robson et al.

(2013), and Xu (2020), indicate that different media formats may continue to perform distinct communication functions rather than simply replacing one another.

The positive contribution of non-immersive advertising may also be explained by the continuing importance of message content and emotional appeal. Otamendi & Sutil Martín (2020) emphasize the emotional effectiveness of advertising, suggesting that consumer responses are not determined exclusively by technological sophistication. Consequently, conventional television commercials and other non-immersive formats may remain effective when they communicate relevant, credible, or emotionally engaging content. This interpretation is also consistent with the broader integrated marketing perspective discussed by Kitchen & Burgmann (2010, 2015), according to which communication effectiveness depends on the coordinated and consistent delivery of brand messages across channels. }

At the same time, the stronger standardized coefficient observed for immersive advertising is consistent with the increasing strategic relevance attributed to technologically mediated consumer experiences. Ambika et al. (2025), in their review of immersive technologies and consumer behavior, position immersive technologies as an increasingly important area of marketing research, while Tung (2024) discusses immersive marketing and advertising within emerging information systems. These perspectives reinforce the interpretation that immersive advertising may offer additional opportunities for interaction, experiential involvement, and differentiation.

This qualification is particularly important in relation to brands that deliberately restrict the use of certain emerging technologies. The example of Dove discussed by Alaimo (2024) illustrates that some brands may choose not to employ AI-generated representations when such practices are perceived as inconsistent with their brand values. Although AI and immersive advertising are conceptually distinct phenomena, this example demonstrates a broader strategic principle: the adoption of new technologies should remain consistent with brand positioning and identity.

The findings also have implications for differentiation. As immersive technologies become increasingly accessible, their mere adoption may become less capable of generating sustainable competitive differentiation. Competitors and market followers may reproduce technologically sophisticated advertising formats relatively quickly. In this respect, the differentiation dimension of the DRIP framework becomes particularly relevant: immersive technology may enhance the execution of a communication strategy, but differentiation ultimately depends on how distinctive and meaningful the brand proposition is. Consequently, marketers should avoid treating immersion as an objective and should instead integrate it with content, brand positioning, and a coherent value proposition.

Whereas previous research has frequently compared traditional and digital or social media channels (Han & Xu, 2020; Laurell & Sandström, 2018; Robson et al., 2013; Xu, 2020), the present study focuses specifically on the distinction between immersive and non-immersive advertising and their association with brand likeability. The findings suggest that both formats remain relevant, while immersive advertising exhibited the stronger relative contribution in the regression model. Future research should examine whether this pattern persists across brands, product categories, demographic groups, and cultural settings.

## CONCLUSIONS

The findings support both hypotheses, indicating that each advertising format contributes positively to consumers' favorable evaluations of the brand. However, immersive advertising showed a stronger relative contribution, suggesting that advertising experiences characterized by greater involvement, interaction, and experiential engagement may be particularly effective in enhancing brand likeability. At the same time, the results confirm that non-immersive advertising continues to retain relevance and should not be regarded as an obsolete communication approach.

Overall, the study suggests that immersive and non-immersive advertising can both play meaningful roles in brand communication, although their effectiveness may depend on the characteristics of the audience, the brand's positioning, and the objectives of the campaign. Rather than treating both formats as mutually exclusive, firms may benefit from selecting or combining them according to strategic communication needs.

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The author was responsible for all aspects of the study, including conceptualization, methodology, analysis, and writing.

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