

## THE MODERATION OF GENDER AND LEVEL OF VIVIDNESS IN THE EFFECT OF CONTENT TYPES ON CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT

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**Abstract:** This study examines the influences of rational and emotional content on Instagram consumer engagement moderated by gender and the level of media vividness. This research is a survey. This study uses primary data collected with a scale of consumer involvement and content type. The population in this study are consumers who are Instagram users. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling with the criteria of users involved in posting activities on Instagram and following Instagram ad posts. The sample that was collected was 709 respondents from the Special Region of Yogyakarta and Central Java. The data analysis technique used moderated regression analysis (MRA). The results showed that the type of content affected on consumer engagement. The results show that female consumers reinforce emotional content rather than rational, and vice versa for male consumers. The results also show the interaction of vividness level with marketing content types. The high vividness strengthens the influence of emotional content compared to rational content, and vice versa in the low vividness.

**Keywords:** marketing content, digital marketing, social media, instagram, e-business

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini mengkaji pengaruh konten rasional dan emosional terhadap consumer engagement Instagram yang dimoderasi oleh jenis kelamin dan tingkat kejelasan media. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian survei. Penelitian ini menggunakan data primer yang dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan skala consumer engagement dan tipe konten. Populasi dalam penelitian ini adalah konsumen yang merupakan pengguna Instagram. Teknik pengambilan sampel yang digunakan adalah purposive sampling dengan kriteria pengguna yang terlibat dalam aktivitas posting di Instagram dan mengikuti posting iklan Instagram. Sampel yang berhasil dikumpul sebanyak 709 responden yang berasal dari DIY dan Jawa Tengah. Teknik analisis data yang digunakan adalah Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tipe konten berpengaruh pada consumer engagement. Hasil menunjukkan peran moderasi yaitu konsumen wanita memperkuat konten emosional daripada rasional, dan sebaliknya untuk konsumen pria. Hasilnya juga menunjukkan interaksi tingkat kejelasan dengan jenis konten pemasaran. Tingkat kejelasan media yang tinggi memperkuat pengaruh konten emosional dibandingkan dengan konten rasional, dan sebaliknya pada tingkat kejelasan yang rendah.

**Kata kunci:** konten pemasaran, pemasaran digital, media sosial, instagram, e-bisnis

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## INTRODUCTION

The development of social media has an impact on business development, especially on digital marketing models. Social media is also used as marketing media (Ting et al., 2015; Gumuz, 2017). Social media was also pointed out as a prominent supporter of engagement and became a new marketing phenomenon. Companies are currently trying to get consumers to be actively involved with corporate brands or products through social media to produce deeper and more meaningful relationships (Kotler & Armstrong, 2014). Research results by Piramita et al. (2021) prove the role of social media on brands and purchasing decisions.

The concept of engagement in recent years has attracted practitioners and marketing academics primarily related to social media. Content marketing aims to improve business performance and achieve consumer engagement (Laksmi and Nuraeni, 2020). In social media-based marketing communication, the content of marketing communication is an essential element that is persuasive (Mohr and Nevin, 1990). Marketing content contributes to the effectiveness of the product development process (Seyyedamiri and Tajrobehkar, 2021) and product sales (Wan and Ren, 2017). In general, media-based marketing communications content can be grouped into rational and emotional content (Wu and Wang, 2011). Dolan et al. (2019) classify informational and remunerative content as rational content, while emotional content consists of entertaining and relational content.

Research on consumer engagement's role in rational and emotional content still presents inconsistent and conflicting results (Shahbaznezhad et al., 2021). Dolan et al. (2019) found that entertaining content affects engagement in the form of likes but does not affect engagement in the form of comments. Dolan et al. (2019) also found that remunerative content only affects engagement passively but not actively. Tafesse (2015) found that consumers tend to have engagement in likes on entertaining content compared to informational content. Swani et al. (2013) found that remunerative content increased active engagement. The differences in the findings need to be followed up with further research to bridge these differences. Demographic characteristics predict consumer engagement (Perea et al., 2004; Dolan et al., 2019). Serenko et al. (2006) stated that gender is an essential demographic attribute that influences internet usage. Males and females have different attitudes and behaviors in interacting online (Islam et al., 2018).

The gender aspect is also a concern in studying of consumer engagement on social media. Gender has been identified as influencing information seeking and other meaningful consumer constructs (Putrevu, 2001). Research on gender and online media is still contradictory (Kimbrough et al., 2013), thus creating research opportunities in this area. Studying gender differences in media use is an essential issue in media studies (Ularu, 2014). Research in psychology shows differences between men and women when processing information obtained from messages (Massar & Buunk, 2013). The research results on gender differences in information processing refer to the development of the selectivity hypothesis (Meyers-Levy, 1989), which states that men and women have differences in interpreting many things, and that how they process persuasive information is also different. No research has examined matters related to gender interactions with content types, even though this aspect is crucial in the needs of segmentation and social media communication (Oh et al., 2002).

Apart from consumer characteristics, the level of vividness is also an essential aspect of consumer engagement. Vividness refers to the representational richness of a stimulus that stimulates multiple senses (Steur, 1993). The combination of text and photo formats produces more vivid product information for users (Van Der Heide et al., 2012). Regarding the type of content, the level of vividness can increase the content related to the information needs consumer needs. Content vividness can capture the persuasion of the medium (Swani and Milne, 2017). The content vividness aspect relates to consumer engagement because it conveys messages aiming to persuade customers (Chun and Lee, 2016). Content vividness is essential in assessing digital engagement because the medium's perception influences the receiving and circulating of unpaid advertising messages (D'Urso and Rains, 2008).

This research focuses on Instagram, which in addition to acting as social media, is also used in various marketing activities. The use of Instagram for social media marketing has been utilized in various marketing activities such as political campaigns (Munoz & Towner, 2017), start-up companies (Virtanen et al., 2017), and restaurant brands (Salleh et al., 2015). Instagram is one of the social media with the most limited features compared to other social media. However, because of the simplicity and ease of use of Instagram, the app has become the most popular social media among young people, among others (Solomon, 2013). However, because of the simplicity and ease of use of Instagram, the app has become the most popular social

media among young people (Solomon, 2013). Posts from followed accounts appear on the home feed and are sorted according to the Instagram algorithm. Instagram is also one of the consumers' choices, especially for generation Z (Wijaya et al., 2020). The general objective of this study is to examine the interaction of gender and vividness level aspects with marketing content types. In addition to examining the role of marketing content types on consumer engagement, the novelty of this study examines the role of gender and vividness level in moderating the effect of marketing content types on consumer engagement.

## METHODS

Field research was carried out through empirical observations, analysis of literature and results of previous studies, and a survey by using questionnaires. The research population in this study was active consumers of social media (Instagram) users. The purposive sampling technique was employed in this study. This study sample criteria were consumer groups of Instagram users following Instagram posts and ad posts. The sample was collected from 709 respondents from the Special Region of Yogyakarta and Central Java.

The dependent variable in this study was consumer engagement, while the independent variable consisted of the type of social media marketing content, namely rational and emotional content. The moderator variables consist of gender and vividness level. Viviek et al. (2014) define consumer engagement as the intensity of an individual's participation in connection with an organization's offers and organizational activities, which either the customer or the organization initiates. Consumer engagement was measured by dimensions, namely conscious attention, enthused participation, and social connection. The social media marketing content type consists of both rational and emotional content. Rational content is defined as content related to factual product information (de Vries et al., 2012; Ashley and Tuten, 2015). In social media studies, rational content consists of information and remuneration (Dolan et al., 2019). Informational content consists of information about specific products or information that helps consumers. Remuneration posts content provides financial rewards or incentives. Emotional content consists of entertainment and social (Dolan et al., 2019). Entertainment content contains content that pleases and entertains users, and social content contains questions and statements that provide opportunities to interact or feel social benefits. Gender is measured by dichotomy, namely male and female, and

the level of vividness is classified as content with low and high vividness. This study used primary data in the form of responses related to consumer engagement and content given by the participants. The data were collected using of questionnaires. Meanwhile, the research instrument was adapted from Viviek et al. (2014), and Dolan et al. (2019). The collected data in this study were analyzed using moderated regression analysis (MRA).

The model is built based on several previous studies that support the effect of content type on consumer engagement on social media (Dolan et al., 2019; Luarn et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2013). Dolan et al. (2019) assessed social media consumer engagement and grouped content types into rational and emotional content. Rational content consists of informational and remunerative content, while emotional content consists of entertaining and relational/social content. Informational content contains information about products, brands, companies, and marketing activities (de Vries et al., 2012). This type of content is needed by consumers that involve a high cognitive process in choosing products. Bandura's social cognitive theory (2005) also explains this phenomenon, where individuals in their involve many social and cognitive aspects. Users use social media driven by needs such as social activities and information as part of cognitive processing.

Gender is a sign of differences between men and women, but these differences are fundamental physical differences. One has to consider each individual's social and psychological as a view perceived by society and culture. Gender differences can be perceived differently by other cultures or by several people within one culture. The term gender has been used for decades, and naturally, stereotypes between genders are created. Gender stereotypes are prejudices, citing stereotypical ideas and perceptions about human behavior and judgments appropriate to their gender (Rusínová, 2010). Gender stereotyping believes that a specific attribute, such as work or role behavior, can differentiate between women and men (Eisend et al., 2014). Social Role Theory explains that women prioritize communal traits over men (Kimbrough et al., 2013). This theory explains that women focus more on interactive activities than men. Some literature suggests that men process information more analytically. Logical and based on values, women process information based on intuition, subjectivity, and emotion (Jeong and Jang, 2016; Khan and Rahman, 2016). Previous research has also shown that women have more symbolic motives while men prioritize utilitarian values in their behavior (Bakewell and Mitchell, 2006).

According to Steuer (1993), vividness represents of information richness in a media defined by standard features. The standard features in question are those that the five senses can capture. De Vries et al. (2012) revealed that the level of vividness could be distinguished based on its ability to stimulate several senses. Based on the level of vividness category, the higher the level of vividness, the higher the consumer engagement (Luarn et al., 2015). Regarding the type of content, the richer the information presented in the media will support the informational content. Content vividness can capture the persuasion of the medium (Swani and Milne, 2017) to engage the user emotionally. The level of vividness relates to consumer engagement because it conveys messages aiming to persuade customers (Chun and Lee, 2016). Based on the framework of this research, the marketing content variable affects consumer engagement. As hypothesised, the strength and weakness of the influence of marketing content on consumer engagement depend on gender and the level of vividness. The hypothesis proposed in this study are:

- H1. Male consumers reinforce rational content more than emotional content-in consumer engagement.
- H2. Female consumers reinforces emotional content more than rational content in consumer engagement.
- H3. When the level of vividness is high, the effect of emotional content on consumer engagement is increased.
- H4. When the level of vividness is high, the effect of rational content on consumer engagement is increased.

The model framework in this study is schematically depicted in Figure 1.

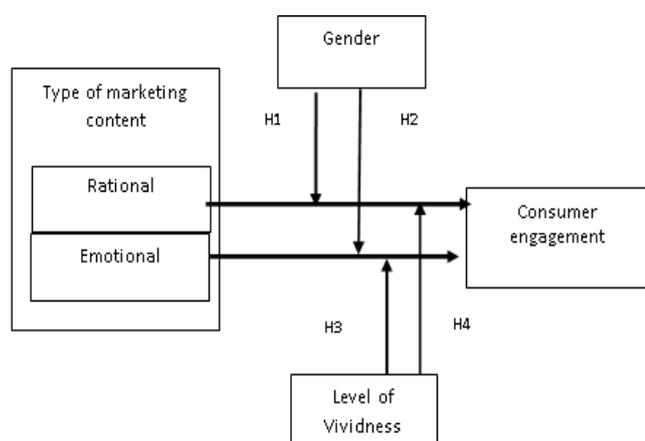


Figure. 1. Research Model

## RESULTS

The results of the validity test using factor analysis show that all items are valid. Reliability test results using Cronbach's Alpha formula show that all variables are reliable. The results of the instrument test are summarized in Table 1 and Table 2.

The description of consumer engagement level based on social media marketing content type and gender aspects is summarized in Table 3. Based on the description of the table above, it can be seen that female consumers ( $\mu = 3.69$  SD = 1.055) have a higher level of consumer engagement than male consumers ( $\mu = 2.69$  SD = 1.362). Based on the type content, it is known that rational content of male ( $\mu = 3.41$  SD = 0.974) has a higher level than emotional content ( $\mu = 2.71$  SD = 0.987). The average value of the social media marketing content type shows that female consumers tend to have a high level of emotional content ( $\mu = 3.53$  SD = 0.877) than rational ( $\mu = 3.11$  SD = 0.912). Analysis of the effect of marketing content types on consumer engagement directly or moderated by gender and level of vividness is summarized in Table 4.

Model 1 is used as a basis for comparison before and after adding gender variables and vividness level as moderators. The results of the analysis in model 1 show that there is a positive and significant effect of rational ( $\beta = 0.27$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and emotional ( $\beta = 0.27$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) content on consumer engagement. These findings are supported by an F value of 19.71 ( $p < 0.01$ ) and a coefficient of determination of 21% ( $R^2 = 0.21$ ), which means that model 1 as a whole is acceptable. Gender roles in the form of interaction with marketing content types are shown in model 2. Data analysis shows that there is a positive and significant effect of rational content ( $\beta = 0.34$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), emotional ( $\beta = 0.45$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), gender ( $\beta = 0.19$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), gender interaction with rational content ( $\beta = 0.13$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), and gender interaction with emotional content ( $\beta = 0.17$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) on consumer engagement. The F value supports the role of gender in moderating the influence of both rational and emotional content types on consumer engagement in the change in  $R^2$  of 17.22 ( $p < 0.01$ ) and the coefficient of determination of 32% ( $R^2 = 0.32$ ). Average value support shows that male consumers strengthen the influence of rational content, while female consumers strengthen emotional content. The role of the level of vividness in moderating the effect of marketing content type on consumer engagement is shown in model 3 analysis. Data analysis shows that there is a positive and significant effect of rational content ( $\beta = 0.31$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), emotional ( $\beta = 0.37$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), level of vividness

( $\beta = 0.12$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), interaction of level of vividness with rational content ( $\beta = 0.14$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), and interaction of level of vividness with emotional content ( $\beta = 0.11$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) on consumer engagement. The role of the level of vividness as a moderator is supported by the F value in the change in

R<sup>2</sup> of 15.59 ( $p < 0.01$ ) and the coefficient of determination of 28% ( $R^2 = 0.28$ ). The coefficient  $\beta$  value indicates that the level of vividness strengthens rational content more than emotional content.

Table 1. Consumer Engagement

Consumer engagement Indicator	Loading factor	Cronbach Alpha
Factor 1: Conscious Attention		
I like to know more about Instagram.	0.743	0.891
I like events that are related to Instagram.	0.752	
I like to learn more about Instagram.	0.871	
I pay a lot of attention to anything about Instagram.	0.782	
I keep up with things related to Instagram.	0.788	
Anything related to Instagram grabs my attention.	0.793	
Factor 2: Enthused Participation		
I spend a lot of my discretionary time for Instagram.	0.773	0.857
I am heavily into Instagram.	0.878	
I try to fit Instagram into my schedule.	0.782	
I am passionate about Instagram.	0.792	
My days would not be the same without Instagram.	0.781	
I enjoy spending time for Instagram.	0.824	
Factor 3: Social Connection		
I love to interact with my friends through Instagram.	0.891	0.912
I enjoy Instagram more when I am with others.	0.921	
Instagram is more fun when other people around me do it too.	0.889	

Table 2. Content Type

Type of Content Indicator	Loading factor	Cronbach Alpha
Rational: Informational Remuneration		
Information about the product brand.	0.788	0.829
Information about product prices.	0.767	
Information about the advantages/reviews/benefits of the product	0.812	
Information on the product description.	0.831	
Special offers for the product	0.779	
Promotional information.	0.763	
Information on the product discount/discount program	0,745	
Financially helpful information.	0,776	
Emotional: Entertainment Social/Relational		
Things (stories, impressions) that please me.	0.796	0.881
Things (stories, impressions) that made me feel comfortable.	0.832	
Things (stories, impressions) that were funny/ridiculous.	0.815	
Entertaining information (celebrities, films, music, and other entertainment programs.	0.822	
Opportunity to respond to content.	0.836	
Allowed interacting with other people.	0.817	
An opportunity for asking something.	0,795	
A space that meets social needs.	0,811	

Table 3. Descriptive statistics

Gender	Social media marketing content type			Consumer engagement	
	Type	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Male (n=327)	Rational	3.41	0.974	2.69	1.362
	Emotional	2.71	0.987		
Female (n=382)	Rational	3.11	0.912	3.69	1.055
	Emotional	3.53	0.877		

Table 4. Regression model

Variable	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	$\beta$	SE	$\beta$	SE	$\beta$	SE
Rational	0.27**	0.24	0.34**	0.19	0.31**	0.17
Emotional	0.34**	0.11	0.45**	0.16	0.37**	0.15
Gender			0.19*	0.24		
Level of Vividness					0.12*	0.23
Gender x Rational			0.13*	0.27		
Gender x Emotional			0.17*	0.31		
Level of Vividness x Rational					0.14*	0.24
Level of Vividness x Emotional					0.11*	0.32
R <sup>2</sup>	0.21	0.32	0.28			
F for change in R <sup>2</sup>	19.71**	17.22**	15.59**			
Dependent: Consumer engagement						
*p<0.05 **p<0.01						

The type of marketing content both rationally and emotionally has a role in influencing consumer engagement. Consumers in making decisions involve cognitive and affective elements. The consumer processing model explains that making decisions depends on cognitive function or rational processes involving some information. Rational content tends to contain information that requires high cognitive engagement (Chiu et al., 2014). Consumers will better appreciate a rational approach that involves logic, information, and facts (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004). Several offers such as promotions and other rewards stimulate consumer engagement in the online community (Wirtz et al., 2013). Remunerative benefits or benefits will be considered logically about the benefits obtained to engage with consumers. This argument is supported by several previous studies that show a role for rational content, namely informational and remuneration (Dolan et al., 2019; Cvijik and Michahelles, 2014) in increasing consumer engagement.

The hedonic experiential model explains that consumers involve some affective aspects in making decisions (Shimp and Andrew, 2013). This process involves several emotional aspects, such as entertaining and relational/social content (Dolan et al., 2019). In this perspective, products are more

than mere objective entities, including several personal symbols that precipitate feelings and promise fun and the possible realization of fantasies (Shimp and Andrew, 2013). Some researchers argue that the dynamic approach is more effective in increasing consumer engagement than the rational approach (Shimp and Andrew, 2013), although there are still conflicts. Emotional aspects are part of psychological and social needs (Ashley and Tuten, 2015), which play a role in stimulating consumer emotions toward brands or consumers (McKay-Nesbitt et al., 2011). Content containing entertainment functions more to entertain consumers and meet their emotional needs of consumers. In addition to building emotional consumer relationships with products, emotional content (Ashley and Tuten, 2015) also fulfills consumers' social needs by facilitating consumers to interact, in this case through social media. Involvement in the social media community builds a sense and engagement as a member (Tafesse and Wien, 2017). The same findings from previous research support the effect of emotional content, namely entertainment content (Dolan et al., 2019; Cvijik and Michahelles, 2014) and relational (Dolan et al., 2019) on consumer engagement. Social or relational messages encourage interaction in social media so that consumers tend to engage more towards social content than other posts (Luarn et al., 2015).

These findings prove that there is a role for gender in the effect of content marketing on consumer engagement. The thing that underlies the difference in consumer engagement based on consumer gender is inherent in gender. Kimbrough et al. (2013) concluded that there are differences between females and males regarding to motivation and time online. Females are more interactive than males, so women are more likely to prefer videos than photos. Women are more frequently using social media and online video calls than men (Kimbrough et al., 2013). They interact in activities that are more communal or interactive than men. They use the Internet more for social interaction and relationship maintenance, while men are more likely to spend their time online engaging in more task-focused activities (Guadagno et al., 201). Based on the Social Role Theory, men are agents (i.e., to achieve independence and focus on tasks); on the other hand, women are expected by Social Role Theory to be more communal (i.e., focus on forming bonds in social interactions) (Kimbrough et al., 2013). Another reason is that females have a better perception of the relative benefits of social media than males (Idemudia et al., 2017). Following emotional content containing entertainment and relational elements, women tend to like emotional content.

Previous research also supports that women are more sensitive to sensory stimuli than men. Therefore, women show more tendency to purchase something than men (Shao et al., 2004). Female consumers' purchase intention must be more related to sensory experience, affective, and social identity (Liang et al., 2013). In Social Role Theory, men prioritize cognitive over affective aspects so that they tend to be involved in rational content.

This finding also proves the role of vividness level on the effect of content marketing on consumer engagement. Several reasons support the findings related to the role of the level of vividness in consumer engagement. Video posts and photos increase consumer engagement (Jayasingh et al., 2018) through interactions with content types. Based on the concept of vividness and other supporting research, it is stated that more vivid media can increase engagement, and they are unusually short and easy, such as giving likes or single clicks (Ritu et al., 2003; de Vries et al., 2012; Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2014). Meanwhile, videos, compared with photos, have a higher level of vividness. With a higher level of vividness, video posts can present entertainment elements and are relational. Another reason multimedia content can increase consumer engagement is that it has a direct role in various senses (Coyle and Thorson, 2001). However, in its application to social media, photos or images can be loaded faster thus making it easier for users to engage with photo

posts than videos that require users to spend more time to watch before deciding whether or not to interact with the post. This assumption is corroborated by Trefzger et al. (2016), who prove that photo posts provide more engagement than videos in studies conducted on the Facebook social media site. A photo accompanied by text provides information that corresponds to rational content's role. However, based on the theory of vividness, it can be argued that video has more features which simultaneously are more vivid than another. Numerically, in the variable of video likes, the ratio is higher than the other

### **Managerial Implication**

Based on the findings, there is a suggestion for marketing practitioners to pay attention to the choice of content type when uploading a post to an Instagram account to get optimal engagement. The use of content types can be adjusted according to gender in communicating messages. Marketers also need to complete the elements of information entirely in enriching content. Social media marketers in building consumer engagement with male consumers should consider rational content containing product information, product benefits, and rewards. In contrast, emotional content is aimed at female consumers by presenting both entertainment and relational elements.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Conclusions**

Based on the research and discussion results, it can be concluded that there are significant influences of marketing content type on consumer engagement moderated by gender and vividness level. Female tend to strengthen rational content's role in consumer engagement, while male consumers tend to strengthen the influence of emotional content on consumer engagement. Based on the level of vividness, content with a high level of vividness tends to strengthen the influence of rational content on consumer engagement. Content that has a high level of vividness strengthens the role of emotional content in explaining consumer engagement.

### **Recommendations**

Uploading the right type of content by multiplying uploads in the form of a single post with high vividness will be more efficient and effective at marketing activities on social media, especially Instagram. The type of content also needs

to be adjusted to the target gender of the social media. Based on the findings on vividness level, Digital marketers can use content types with a high level of vividness that are gender adjusted. This research is inseparable from several limitations which need attention for the continuation of this research. Further studies can improve the limitations of the existing research in this study. This research only focuses on one social media, namely Instagram, and each type of social media has different characteristics. Future research can compare several types of social media to enrich the diversity of social media types. Further research can consider other characteristics that also act as control variables in determining consumer engagement such as age and occupation.

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