The influence of psychological factors on advertising avoidance behavior among young people in Vietnam

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Abstract: This study investigates the core research problem: How psychological factors drive ad-avoidance behavior on YouTube among young Vietnamese individuals? Using a mixed-methods approach that combined secondary document analysis with an online survey of 376 respondents aged 13 - 28, the research examined three key psychological dimensions: negative attitudes toward advertising, perceived goal impediment, and ad overload. The main findings show that all three factors significantly and positively predict avoidance behaviors. Perceived goal impediment had the strongest impact, especially when ads interrupted high-engagement video moments, triggering heightened psychological reactance. Negative attitudes and ad overload further intensified deliberate avoidance actions such as skipping, blocking, or switching platforms. These results underscore the need for advertisers to adopt authentic, non-intrusive, and transparent strategies to reduce reactance, restore trust, and improve engagement with this digitally native demographic in Vietnam.

Keywords: advertising avoidance, psychological factors, YouTube, young people, Vietnam

1. Introduction

In the era of digital media, YouTube has solidified its position as the premier online video sharing platform, with its global reach of 2.70 billion monthly active users worldwide in 2026 [7]. In Vietnam, it ranks as the top service for content diversity, strongly attracting younger audiences (Gen Z), the “digital natives” characterized by their technological proficiency and early habits of digital content consumption. However, the current landscape presents a paradox: while businesses continuously invest heavily in video advertising, users exhibit an increasingly negative attitude toward such interruptions. According to DataReportal (2025), YouTube’s ad reach in Vietnam declined by 700,000 users during the 2024-early 2025 period, alongside a 25% increase in YouTube Premium subscriptions to eliminate advertisements [5]. The trend has presented several problems, namely the eroding effectiveness of traditional interruptive advertising and the widening disconnect between brands and ad-averse consumers, raising an urgent need for businesses to pivot their digital strategies. Therefore, by understanding psychological drivers behind ad skipping behavior, brands

and creators can rebuild their engagement models to align with, rather than disrupt, the viewer's experiences.

In the rapidly evolving landscape of digital media, the concept of advertising has significantly transcended its traditional boundaries, evolving into a complex, dynamic, and highly interactive ecosystem. Unlike conventional forms of advertising through television or print media, which operated within relatively predictable and passive consumption environments, modern digital advertising, particularly on social media platforms such as YouTube, has become deeply integrated with users' daily digital experiences.

What distinguishes digital advertising on platforms like YouTube is its dual nature: on one hand, it is highly personalized and data-driven, utilizing sophisticated algorithms that analyze users' browsing history, search behavior, viewing patterns, and demographic information to deliver tailored content. On the other hand, it frequently involves "forced exposure", a situation in which users are compelled to encounter advertisements before, during, or after consuming their chosen video content. This mandatory interruption creates a unique tension between the platform's goal of monetization and the user's desire for seamless, uninterrupted viewing experiences. Such characteristics have laid a strong foundation for extensive academic inquiry into consumers' psychological responses, with advertising avoidance behavior emerging as one of the most prominent and widely studied phenomena in recent years.

Advertising avoidance on YouTube manifests in various forms, ranging from cognitive disengagement (mentally tuning out the ad) to active behavioral responses such as clicking the "Skip Ad" button, closing the video, switching platforms, or employing technical solutions like ad blockers and YouTube Premium subscriptions. This behavior is not merely a matter of personal preference but reflects deeper psychological processes, including reactance against perceived loss of autonomy, irritation from repetitive or intrusive content, privacy concerns arising from extensive data collection, and cognitive overload caused by excessive advertising frequency. As digital advertising continues to saturate users' online environments, understanding these psychological mechanisms has become increasingly critical for both academics and marketing practitioners.

In Vietnam, where YouTube has established itself as the dominant video-sharing platform among young users, this tension is particularly pronounced. The country's rapidly growing digital economy, combined with Gen Z's sophisticated digital literacy and high expectations for personalized yet non-intrusive experiences, has intensified the need to examine how psychological factors shape advertising avoidance. Therefore, exploring the interplay between forced exposure, personalization, and users' internal psychological states is essential not only for advancing theoretical knowledge in marketing communications but also for developing more effective, user-respecting advertising strategies in the digital age.

Advertising avoidance was early defined by Paul Surgi Speck and Michael T. Elliott (1997) [9] as "all actions by media users that differentially reduce their exposure to ad content". According to Speck and Elliott's theoretical framework, this behavior is categorized into three interrelated dimensions: cognitive avoidance , behavioral avoidance , and mechanical avoidance. A pivotal theory underpinning this is

Psychological Reactance Theory (Brehm & Brehm, 1981) [4], which posits that when advertisements are perceived as impinging on an individual's freedom of choice (e.g., through forced exposure or manipulative targeting), a motivational state of reactance arises, prompting avoidance behaviors as a means to restore perceived autonomy. This theory has been widely adapted in digital advertising research, demonstrating that reactance intensifies in online environments where users expect control over content consumption, thereby amplifying psychological resistance and contributing to habitual ad avoidance (Edwards et al., 2002; Youn & Kim, 2019) [6][12].

This research aims to analyze and clarify the influence of psychological factors, including negative attitudes, perceived goal impediment, and ad overload, on the advertising avoidance behavior of Gen Z in Vietnam on YouTube. By exploring these factors, the study addresses the core research question: How do psychological factors influence advertising avoidance behavior on YouTube among young people in Vietnam today? Hypotheses are that three factors, including perceived goal impediment, negative attitudes toward advertising and ad overload, have positive influence on youngsters' ad avoidance behavior. Testing these hypotheses helps businesses and content creators better understand the tolerance thresholds of Vietnamese "digital natives", facilitating the adjustment of more effective and respectful engagement strategies.

2. Methods

In order to test the proposed hypotheses, the study involved participants who are young individuals residing in Vietnam and regular users of the YouTube platform. These participants specifically aged between 13 and 28 years old, a group characterized by their early exposure to and mastery of digital technology.

In this study, participants directly interacted with an online survey questionnaire designed on the Google Forms platform. They participated independently and privately based on their own personal experiences of viewing and listening to content on YouTube, without researcher intervention. Participants engaged specifically by selecting multiple-choice options or rating their perceived levels using a 5-point Likert scale. The survey content was not presented all at once but was structured into separate sections, from personal demographic information to psychological factors such as perceived goal impediment, negative attitudes toward advertising, and ad overload. The entire primary data collection process took place within the research timeframe of 2025. Participants were fully autonomous in choosing their responses based on their individual habits and experiences. The results were scored according to selection frequency (in percentages) and analyzed across the levels of the measurement scales to identify the factors that exerted the strongest influence on advertising avoidance behavior.

The data were cleaned and processed from 376 valid responses, predominantly from respondents born between 2002 and 2006. The majority of participants were university students and were concentrated mainly in Northern Vietnam.

3. Theoretical foundations & Calculation

3.1. Theoretical foundations

The literature on advertising avoidance behavior in digital environments has expanded considerably over the past decade, with early studies focusing primarily on social media platforms such as Facebook before shifting attention to video-sharing platforms like YouTube. Vietnamese scholars have made notable contributions in this area, often emphasizing the psychological responses of young users in local contexts.

One notable empirical study in Vietnam, conducted by Hồ Trúc Vi et al. (2018), examined the factors influencing advertising avoidance on Facebook among young consumers in Ho Chi Minh City. Drawing upon established frameworks of ad avoidance, their findings highlighted that elements such as privacy concerns, perceived goal impediment, ad overload, prior negative experiences, and ad skepticism significantly drive users to avoid advertisements [2]. This research provides foundational local evidence regarding how intrusive features and psychological barriers in interactive social media environments provoke defensive consumer behaviors.

Shifting focus specifically to YouTube, Danang Tandyonomanu (2018) revealed that 93% of users tend to skip ads if possible, although retention improves significantly when ads feature compelling overall content or attractive features, with video content (70%) and attractive ads (65%) emerging as the primary drivers for watching unskippable and skippable ads respectively [10]. Similarly, Huỳnh Nhựt Phương et al. (2023) applied the Stimulus - Organism - Response (S-O-R) model to YouTube users in Can Tho City and identified six key factors driving avoidance behavior: perceived advertising value, goal impediment, irritation, negative experiences, ad overload, and skepticism. Their study provides empirical support for how these cognitive and affective stimuli significantly provoke online ad avoidance, underscoring the persistent role of goal disruption in interactive digital environments. [1]

More recent studies have increasingly addressed personalized advertising and the behaviors of Generation Z. Banerjee and Pal (2021) investigated the behaviors and motivations surrounding skippable advertisements on YouTube, noting that a vast majority of users tend to skip ads immediately once the 5-second mark elapses due to perceived intrusion or lack of relevance [3] In the Vietnamese context, Ngoc Tran Luong et al. (2025) investigated social media ad avoidance in the Mekong Delta, applying reactance theory and identifying negative experiences as the strongest predictor, alongside goal impediment and ad clutter, with perceived personalization showing a negative association with avoidance [8]. Nguyen Thi Mai Anh and Dong Van Toan (2024) further examined Facebook avoidance among Gen Z in Hanoi, confirming the significant roles of perceived goal impediment, privacy concerns, negative experiences, ad skepticism, and ad overload [11].

Collectively, these studies demonstrate a consistent pattern: psychological factors such as perceived goal impediment (disruption of primary tasks), irritation from repetition and intrusiveness, privacy concerns (especially with personalization), ad overload, negative prior experiences, and low perceived value are the primary drivers of advertising avoidance across platforms. While Vietnamese research has effectively highlighted local nuances, including urban youth sensitivity to privacy and interruption in high usage digital contexts, a notable research gap remains. Most prior studies have either focused on general users without age restrictions or examined broader social media platforms such as Facebook, with limited in-depth investigation into platform specific psychological dynamics on YouTube among Vietnamese Gen Z (aged 13-28),

a highly active yet increasingly ad-resistant demographic. This leaves important questions unanswered regarding the relative strength of these factors in the YouTube environment and effective, culturally attuned strategies to mitigate avoidance in Vietnam's fast-growing digital advertising market.

3.2. Calculation

This study identifies three main independent variables belonging to the social and psychological factor group that influence user behavior. Since this is survey-based research rather than a clinical experiment, these variables are operationalized through the measurement of participants' perceptions.

The first independent variable, "Cognitive Goal Impediment", is defined as the extent to which advertisements interrupt users' desired process of information reception and content consumption. This variable is measured through two key indicators: the degree of content interruption and the level of distraction caused by the ads. To assess this variable, a within-subjects design was employed, meaning all participants evaluated the level of goal impediment imposed by advertisements in relation to their own personal objectives. Measurements were conducted using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (completely no interruption) to 5 (a great deal of interruption), allowing for a nuanced capture of participants' perceived disruption across different advertising encounters.

The second independent variable is "Negative Attitude Toward Advertising". This is defined as the users' unfavorable perceptions and emotional responses toward the content and delivery of advertisements. This variable is operationalized through three key indicators: perceived exaggeration of information (e.g., overpromising claims, unrealistic portrayals, or dramatic misrepresentation), the degree of irritation or annoyance caused by the ads, and concerns about privacy invasion (e.g., feeling tracked or having personal data misused for targeting purposes). To measure this variable, a within-subjects design was adopted, in which all participants assessed their level of negative attitude in relation to the advertisements, using a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree).

The third independent variable, "Ad Overload", is defined as the users' perception of being overwhelmed by the high frequency of ad appearances, the large volume of information presented, and the resulting clutter or noise created by multiple advertising messages within a short period of time. To measure ad overload, a within-subjects design was utilized, allowing all participants to evaluate their sense of overload in direct relation to their actual encounters with advertisements on YouTube. The construct was assessed through items that reflect increases in ad frequency, as well as the perceived level of information clutter and disturbance caused by repetitive or densely packed ad content. Responses were collected using a 5-point Likert-type scale or corresponding behavioral descriptors to quantify the intensity of overload, enabling a clear differentiation between mild, moderate, and severe perceptions of advertising saturation.

The sole dependent variable in this study is "Ad-Avoidance Behavior". This variable is defined as the set of proactive actions taken by users to minimize or eliminate exposure to advertisements. It encompasses four main dimensions: cognitive avoidance (deliberately ignoring or mentally tuning out ads), behavioral avoidance (actively clicking the "skip" button or leaving the video), mechanical avoidance (using technical

tools such as ad-blockers or subscribing to YouTube Premium to remove ads), and emotional avoidance (experiencing negative feelings such as irritation or disengagement that lead to reduced willingness to interact with or attend to advertising content). These dimensions collectively capture the multifaceted ways in which individuals protect their attention, time, and emotional experience from unwanted advertising interruptions on digital platforms like YouTube.

To account for potential confounding influences and to enable subgroup analyses, this study also measured several demographic and behavioral variables to serve as control variables or moderators. These include gender (male, female, or other), age group (based on birth years within Generation Z), educational attainment (from lower secondary school to postgraduate level), and geographic region of residence (Northern, Central, or Southern Vietnam). In addition, participants' YouTube usage habits were assessed through items capturing the frequency of encountering advertisements during viewing sessions and their general interaction patterns with the platform. These control variables help isolate the effects of the main psychological predictors while revealing any meaningful differences in ad-avoidance behavior across demographic segments or usage patterns.

4. Result and discussion

4.1. Result

This research was designed to investigate the specific question of how psychological factors including perceived goal impediment, negative attitude, and ad clutter impact YouTube ad avoidance behavior among young adults in Vietnam. To address this inquiry, quantitative data were gathered from 376 participants via a survey questionnaire, focusing primarily on a young demographic, with 80.3% born between 2002 and 2006. The analytical method employed was descriptive statistics to determine the frequencies and percentages of the observed variables. The findings reported below provide a detailed description of the data distributions for the dependent variable which is avoidance behavior and the three primary independent variables.

First, regarding the dependent variable of ad avoidance behavior, frequency analysis reveals a dominant trend of rejecting advertising content. Observations of the total sample indicate that 292 respondents, accounting for 77.7%, reported always skipping ads immediately upon the appearance of the function button. Conversely, only a minority of 4.3% (equivalent to 16 individuals) expressed a willingness to watch ads in their entirety. Beyond direct skipping, other forms of passive avoidance were noted, with 14.6% choosing to close the video due to disinterest and 9.6% switching to another platform. Regarding behavioral frequency, 75.2% of participants reported engaging in avoidance frequently or very frequently, corresponding to more than 5 times per viewing session. The primary driver of this decision, identified by 62.2% of respondents, is that ads interrupt the content being viewed, far surpassing other reasons such as excessive ad frequency (14.9%) or lack of trust in content (13.8%).

The first independent variable, Perceived Goal Impediment, was measured via two key indicators: the level of disruption and the level of distraction. Regarding the

indicator of desired content disruption, survey results show a distinct differentiation in how ad placement stimulates avoidance. Specifically, 37.2% of respondents skip ads appearing mid-roll, and 36.2% do so for pre-roll ads. The negative impact on viewing experience was recorded at high levels, with 32.2% rating the disruption as significant and 18.6% as very significant.

Table 1. Level of Disruption

Level of Disruption	Quantity	Percentage
Not disruptive at all	18	4,8%
Slightly disruptive	42	11,2%
Moderately disruptive	121	33,2%
Very disruptive	121	32,2%
Extremely disruptive	70	18,6%

Collectively, 47.3% felt annoyed enough to skip immediately, while 11.7% felt such extreme annoyance that they often ceased watching the video. Regarding the distraction indicator, when content is interrupted, 38.3% reported moderate distraction requiring attentional readjustment, and 15.2% were distracted to the point of forgetting the preceding content. Notably, the ad format causing the most distraction was identified as long, non-skippable ads (over 30 seconds), accounting for 44.9% of selections. Irrelevant content (19.4%) and repetition frequency (14.6%) also contributed significantly to attention dispersion.

The second independent variable, Negative Attitude, was examined through three component indicators: perception of exaggeration, annoyance, and privacy concerns. Regarding the indicator of information exaggeration, frequency distribution shows that 43.6% of respondents frequently felt ad content was inflated, and 21.8% perceived this in nearly all ads.

Table 2. User reactions when interrupted by advertisements

Reaction	Quantity	Percentage
Watch the entire ad then continue the video	12	3,2%
Switch to another platform (TikTok, Facebook, ...)	36	9.6%
Turn off the video immediately due to loss of interest	55	14.6%
Click "Skip" as soon as possible	273	72.6%

A consequence of this perception is that 31.4% agreed and 22.6% strongly agreed with the behavior of immediately skipping ads deemed dishonest. Regarding the annoyance indicator, the level of irritation caused by ads was rated as high by 31.1% and very high by 17.6%. The most annoying ad format was identified as long, non-skippable ads (50.8%), significantly higher than irrelevant ads (22.9%). Faced with annoyance, 72.6% opted to skip whenever possible. Regarding the privacy concern indicator, 40.7% of young people frequently worry about personal data leaks, and 10.9% feel highly insecure. Although 54.5% correctly perceive that targeted ads result from platform data collection, a substantial proportion (36.2%) choose to take no action to protect their information. However, apprehension still translates to avoidance behavior, with 35.7% agreeing or strongly agreeing they would skip ads faster if the content matched their personal habits too closely.

The third independent variable, Ad Clutter, was analyzed based on increased frequency, intrusiveness, and information volume. Regarding frequency increase, 36.7% noticed ads appearing more often than before, and 17% felt the amount was excessive to the point of discomfort.

Table 3. User reactions when feeling overwhelmed by large and continuous advertising information on YouTube

Reaction	Quantity	Percentage
Feel normal, wait for the ads to run and end automatically	55	14,6%
Leave the video or close the YouTube app when too many ads appear	41	10,9%
Actively skip or mute quickly to avoid ads	88	33,4%
Skip ads as soon as possible to reduce the amount of information received	192	51,1%

In response to this increase, 36.3% chose to always click skip immediately, and 32.4% frequently or always utilized technical interventions such as YouTube Premium or ad blockers. Regarding information intrusiveness, irrelevant ads were identified as the largest source of noise (35.1%), followed by repetitive ads and information-heavy ads (both at 24.5%). Regarding information volume, when feeling overloaded by large and continuous information flow, 51.1% chose to skip immediately to reduce the load. Notably, where ads changed information too rapidly and continuously, the rate of users skipping to return to main content rose to 59.5%. The rate of complete video abandonment due to information overload was recorded at 10.9%.

4.2. Discussion

4.2.1. Perceived goal impediment

When young adults access YouTube for information retrieval or entertainment, they typically operate within a goal - oriented psychological state. This state necessitates continuity in the flow of information and emotion. However, the intrusion of advertisements, particularly interruption ads, fractures this experiential structure. From a behavioral psychology perspective, this disruption transcends mere transient annoyance; it activates a resistance mechanism, which constitutes a rational psychological defense. When the autonomy of content consumption is compromised, viewers experience a potent impulse to restore control; advertising avoidance behavior thus emerges as the most tangible manifestation of this restorative effort. Empirical findings derived from a cohort of young Vietnamese adults provide robust evidence confirming a strong causal correlation between the degree of perceived goal impediment and the propensity for advertising avoidance. The data indicates that this factor is the predominant determinant, carrying the greatest weight in driving users to execute skipping or blocking actions.

Firstly, regarding the timing and modality of advertising exposure, perceived goal impediment manifests its most profound negative impact when advertisements impinge upon moments of cognitive sensitivity. Qualitative analysis of participant feedback reveals that user indignation culminates when advertisements sever the narrative thread during climactic sequences or periods requiring intense concentration for knowledge acquisition. In contrast to traditional television advertising, where interruptions are generally orchestrated at narrative transitions or logical intervals, YouTube advertisements frequently appear in a stochastic and highly coercive manner. It is this lack of sophistication in distribution algorithms that transforms the advertisement from a potential information source into an impediment necessitating immediate elimination.

Secondly, the deleterious impact of distraction and the degradation of experiential quality are undeniable. When the cognitive stream is abruptly truncated, the viewer's brain is compelled to execute a “cognitive restart” process to re - engage with the primary content post - interruption. This process depletes neural energy and induces cumulative cognitive fatigue. Survey data indicates that an overwhelming proportion of users perceive a rupture in their train of thought, leading to memory decay regarding the preceding content or a significant diminution of interest in the original video. Consequently, the advertisement not only fails to effectively convey the brand's message but also inadvertently undermines the user experience with respect to both the platform and the content creator.

Notably, the study also documents a shift in the tolerance threshold of young adults. As digital natives, this demographic possesses rapid information processing capabilities yet exhibits significantly lower patience levels compared to preceding generations. To this cohort, time is a scarce resource, and any encroachment upon it is subjected to critical scrutiny. Consequently, advertisements that are prolonged, non-skippable, or appear with high frequency within short-form videos are perceived as the most severe impediments. Their response extends beyond mere negative sentiment, manifesting as decisive action: muting the audio, navigating to alternative tabs, or installing ad-blocking tools to eradicate the risk of disturbance entirely.

4.2.2. Negative attitude toward advertising

Negative attitude toward advertising is understood as a collection of perceptions, emotions, and unfavorable evaluations of young users toward advertising content on YouTube, including feelings of irritation due to ads interrupting or repeating, skepticism about the authenticity and exaggeration of information, as well as concerns about privacy when personal data is collected for personalized advertising. This factor positively influences advertising avoidance behavior, meaning that the stronger the negative attitude, the more likely users are to engage in active avoidance behaviors such as immediately clicking "skip," using ad blockers, turning off videos, or switching to other platforms.

The survey results from young adults provide detailed and accurate insights into the formation and impact of negative attitudes toward advertising on YouTube. More than half of participants reported frequent irritation caused by ads, particularly when they appear at a high frequency per viewing session. Lengthy, unskippable ads significantly elevate discomfort levels, leading to actions such as closing/changing tabs, content skipping, video muting, changing channels/platforms, or subscribing to YouTube Premium as ways to prevent ads. Such patterns lead users to perceive ads as persistent disruptions that erode patience and engagement, resulting in a majority of surveyed people skipping ads immediately most of the time once allowed.

An overwhelming majority of respondents expressed strong doubt about the authenticity of advertising content, commonly describing ads as “exaggerated”, featuring overpromising claims, unrealistic visuals, dramatic introductions, or misleading product portrayals. This widespread skepticism causes many to dismiss ads as unreliable sources of information, reducing them to mere entertainment at best or outright deception at worst. Consequently, trust in advertised brands and messages declined sharply, leading most answerers to skip ads once they sense untrustworthy or exaggeration.

Meanwhile, privacy concerns remain a major contributor, with a large proportion of young people indicating medium to high levels of worry when ads appear highly personalized based on their search history, viewing patterns, or browsing behavior. Respondents frequently reported feelings of being “tracked,” “monitored,” or having personal data “leaked,” which heightens a sense of intrusion and loss of control. This perception directly translates into rapid avoidance actions: skipping behavior often occurs as soon as the skip button appears, with a significant number of participants admitting that they skip ads when YouTube displays content that matches too closely with their activities, habits, or personal interests. Encountering ads that feel like an invasion of privacy also causes nearly half of the respondents to skip ads more quickly in subsequent encounters. Many also resort to additional measures, such as clearing watch history, using incognito mode, or installing ad blockers, demonstrating learned and proactive resistance.

These findings collectively illustrate that negative attitudes are far from fleeting or superficial reactions; rather, they accumulate gradually through repeated daily

encounters with intrusive, repetitive, and seemingly manipulative advertising formats. High ad frequency, perceived exaggeration, and opaque data practices combine to create a cycle of distrust and frustration that strongly drives avoidance behavior. As a result, the overall effectiveness of advertising communication on YouTube among young Vietnamese users is significantly diminished, with brands losing valuable exposure opportunities and engagement potential. The findings strongly underscore the urgent need for advertisers and platforms to prioritize greater authenticity in messaging, substantially reduce ad repetition and overload, and adopt transparent, user-consent-based data practices to rebuild trust, lower psychological reactance, and encourage more positive or at least neutral reception of advertising content.

4.2.3. Ad Clutter

From the perspective of cognitive psychology, human information processing capacity is inherently finite. When informational input supersedes this threshold, the phenomenon of cognitive overload ensues. For contemporary Vietnamese youth residing in an information - saturated environment, advertising overload on YouTube exerts significant psychological pressure. Confronted with a barrage of overlapping messages, the brain automatically engages a filtering mechanism known as selective attention, prompting users to actively disregard or utilize tools to eliminate noise completely. Consequently, the research hypothesis positing a positive correlation between advertising overload and avoidance behavior is scientifically grounded.

An in - depth analysis of the survey data reveals a somber landscape regarding advertising overload on YouTube, reflecting the fatigue and disillusionment of young users. Three primary dimensions require dissection to elucidate the severity of this issue: the frequency of exposure, information clutter, and the sheer volume of advertising content.

Firstly, regarding frequency, young users experience a sense of being besieged by advertisements. The exponential increase in ad insertion points, specifically the prevalence of double pre-roll ads and consecutive non-skippable formats has depressed viewer patience to its nadir. Qualitative analysis indicates that while users do not object to the existence of advertisements to sustain a free platform, they react negatively to excessive intrusion. When the ratio of advertising duration to primary content becomes disproportionate, viewers perceive a misappropriation of their time. This precipitates a cascade of escalating reactions: clicking “Skip Ad,” filtering for channels with fewer ads, switching channels upon encountering excessive ads, utilizing blocking tools, or migrating to different platforms entirely. These findings underscore that high ad frequency not only impairs the individual experience but also risks diminishing overall engagement with YouTube, presenting a challenge for the platform in balancing ad revenue with user satisfaction.

Secondly, information clutter and the massive volume of advertising content act as potent catalysts for avoidance behavior. Contrary to advertisers' expectations that impressive audio-visuals, dense information, or repetitive exposure will ingrain the brand in the consumer's psyche, empirical results suggest a counterproductive effect.

Repeated exposure to identical advertisements within a short timeframe, or the bombardment of dense information and imagery, engenders monotony rather than positive recall. Furthermore, in an overloaded environment, irrelevant advertisements (e.g., low-quality games, unverified traditional medicines) are frequently categorized as information junk. The presence of such content not only exacerbates the brain's processing burden but also erodes the credibility of the host channel. Young users, characterized by high critical thinking skills, tend to devalue brands employing pervasive, disrespectful advertising strategies. A consequence of this overload is the formation of a conditioned reflex: the user's finger hovers over the “Skip” button immediately upon ad onset, regardless of the content. More critically, the phenomenon of ad blindness has become prevalent; viewers may mute audio, multitask, or develop the cognitive capacity to completely ignore ad display zones, or even abandon the video severely diminishing communication efficacy.

It can be affirmed that advertising overload constitutes a core psychological determinant driving the escalation of avoidance behaviors among young Vietnamese YouTube users. The glut of commercial information has surpassed the user's acceptance threshold, compelling them to construct technical and psychological barriers to safeguard their entertainment space.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, it is evident that negative attitude, perceived goal impediment, and advertising overload constitute the core psychological determinants driving advertising avoidance behavior among young users on YouTube today.

Regarding negative attitude, this serves as a critical driver of active avoidance. Skepticism concerning content authenticity, the sense of intrusion caused by high frequency, and privacy concerns arising from excessive personalization have collectively eroded user trust. Concerning perceived goal impediment, disruption stands as the most direct precipitate of avoidance reactions. Advertisements that appear coercively, interrupt the flow of information, or are ill-timed not only fracture the seamless experiential structure but also diminish viewer concentration and interest. Consequently, users not only experience immediate frustration but also tend to decrease their long-term engagement with both the content channel and the brand. Finally, advertising overload, characterized by increased frequency, tedious repetition, and an overwhelming volume of information generates significant psychological pressure, leaving viewers feeling inundated. In a context where entertainment demands natural relaxation, this saturation compels young users to construct decisive coping strategies, ranging from muting and fast-forwarding to abandoning the platform in favor of less intrusive alternatives. This presents a major challenge for YouTube in balancing revenue optimization with the maintenance of a sustainable user experience.

Based on the analysis of these psychological barriers, essentially identifying the root causes of ad avoidance among young YouTube users, strategic solutions are proposed for two key stakeholders: businesses and content creators.

For Businesses and advertisers, the urgent requirement is a paradigm shift from a mass-approach mindset to a strategy of deep, data-driven personalization. Instead of applying dense display frequencies that cause overload and backlash, businesses must leverage Big Data and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to decipher customer behavior and latent needs, ensuring messages reach the right audience at the right moment. Concurrently, ad content quality must be redefined through the art of storytelling and optimized for short - form video formats. Given the narrowing attention span of Gen Z, advertisements must not only be concise (from 6 to 15 seconds) but also possess independent entertainment value, blurring the line between advertising and consumable content. Furthermore, to restore eroded trust, brands must commit to transparency in data collection processes, respecting privacy as a new standard of business ethics in the digital era.

For Content creators, their role extends beyond video production to becoming curators of the viewing experience. To minimize perceived goal impediment, creators must be more sophisticated in their ad placement strategies. Mid - roll insertions must strictly avoid emotional climaxes or crucial content points; instead, natural narrative breaks should be utilized to maintain continuity for the viewer. Moreover, to address audience skepticism, trends in Influencer Marketing and the encouragement of User-Generated Content (UGC) should be promoted. Third - party validation and the community voice help render commercial messages softer and more authentic, enabling them to more easily bypass the psychological defense barriers of young users.

In summary, minimizing avoidance behavior is not a technical battle to neutralize the skip button, but rather an endeavor to understand and respect the user experience in order to construct a sustainable advertising ecosystem.

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