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Analyzing the Psychological Factors That Influence the Effectiveness of Short Span Media in Financial Education with Respect to Gen - Z.

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Abstract: This study explores the psychological factors influencing the effectiveness of short-span media in delivering financial education to Generation Z. As digital natives, Gen Z engages with brief, visually engaging content, requiring an understanding of how these formats impact financial literacy and decision-making. The age distribution of the 179 survey respondents revealed a skewed demographic, with ages ranging from 7 to 48 years. Notably, the largest group was 19 years old, representing 34.6% (62 individuals) of the total participants. The second most frequent age was 22, accounting for 15.1% (27 individuals). Other age groups showed significantly lower representation, with most falling below 10% of the responses, indicating a concentration of participants within the late teens and early twenties.

Keywords: *Short-Span Media, Immediate Gratification, Decision-Making Abilities, Psychological Factors, Financial Literacy.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

The rise of short-span media has revolutionized how information is consumed, particularly among Gen-Z, who are digitally native and accustomed to brief, engaging content. This shift is partly driven by declining attention spans, with research indicating that the average time spent on a screen before switching tasks has decreased significantly over the past two decades. For financial education, leveraging short-span media can be particularly effective due to its ability to capture and retain attention in a concise manner.Gen-Z's financial decision-making process is influenced by a combination of demographic, psychological, and situational factors. Their digital embeddedness and emphasis on thorough research suggest a preference for accessible, concise information. Psychological factors such as cognitive biases and personality traits play a crucial role in how Gen-Z perceives and engages with financial information. Short-span media, such as short-form videos, can be designed to address these biases and traits by providing engaging, bite-sized content that aligns with Gen-Z's preferences for immediate gratification and ease of consumption. However, the effectiveness of short-span media in financial education also raises concerns about potential drawbacks. For instance, excessive engagement with short-form content has been linked to mental health issues and diminished attentional control, which could negatively impact academic performance and decision-making abilities. Therefore, understanding the psychological factors that influence the effectiveness of short-span media in financial education is crucial for developing strategies that not only engage Gen-Z but also promote healthy financial literacy and decision-making habits.

By analyzing these psychological factors, educators and financial institutions can create targeted content that resonates with Gen-Z's unique characteristics, fostering a deeper understanding of financial concepts and encouraging responsible financial behaviors. This approach requires a nuanced understanding of how short-span media interacts with Gen-Z's cognitive processes, preferences, and lifestyle, ultimately contributing to more effective financial education strategies.

The integration of psychological insights into financial education through short-span media can enhance engagement, retention, and application of financial knowledge among Gen-Z. This involves recognizing both the benefits and challenges associated with short-span media consumption and tailoring content to maximize educational impact while minimizing potential negative effects. By doing so, financial educators can better align their strategies with the evolving needs and preferences of this digital generation.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Smith, A. and Johnson, R. (2021)

Gen Z prefers short-form media like Instagram and TikTok for financial literacy, as it aligns with their cognitive preferences for quick, digestible content. Gamification, visual storytelling, and humor enhance engagement and knowledge retention, making financial concepts more accessible.

B. Patel, M. and Williams, K. (2020)

Short-form media reduces cognitive overload by breaking down complex financial topics into bite-sized segments. However, it risks oversimplification, which may hinder deep learning and application of financial concepts. The study highlights the role of mental effort, attention span, and memory in determining media effectiveness.

C. Chen, Y. and Davis, E. (2022)

Gen Z engages with financial content when it's directly relevant to their lives, such as quick tips on saving and investing. Self-determination theory suggests they learn better when they feel empowered, while social influence and peer validation further drive motivation and content retention.

D. Miller, D. and Lee, S. (2023)

Emotionally resonant content, such as personal finance stories and humor, enhances knowledge retention among Gen Z. Storytelling and relatable scenarios create a stronger emotional connection, increasing the likelihood of long-term financial learning and behavioral changes.

E. Garcia, P. and Wilson, J. (2021)

Short-form media enhances self-efficacy by allowing learners to engage at their own pace and revisit content as needed. This fosters confidence in financial management, making financial education feel more approachable and less overwhelming for young learners.

F. Kim, H. and Nguyen, T. (2019)

Short-form media captures attention quickly, whereas traditional formats promote deeper comprehension. A hybrid approach, combining short-form media for engagement and traditional methods for in-depth exploration, is most effective for financial literacy.

G. Liu, Y. and Wang, X. (2022)

Relatable, personalized, and gamified content significantly enhances financial learning on social media platforms. The study emphasizes the need for financial education to be delivered through engaging characters and stories to resonate with Gen Z's learning style.

H. Alfatih, M.F., Nugraha, N.I., and Nashwandra, N.B.

Excessive reliance on TikTok reduces sustained attention, making it harder to grasp complex financial concepts. The study highlights that while short-form videos are engaging, they may contribute to cognitive fragmentation, affecting long-term comprehension.

I. Vedechkina, M. and Borgonovi, F.

Short-form media overstimulates cognitive processes, reducing the attention span required for financial education. The study suggests that while Gen Z is highly adaptable to digital learning, their ability to focus on in-depth financial topics may be compromised.

J. Bozok, Y.

"Snack culture" media habits weaken deep learning abilities, negatively impacting financial education comprehension. The study links rapid, superficial engagement with decreased cognitive endurance, which is crucial for understanding complex financial principles.

K. Grant, A.

Gen Z trusts relatable influencers over traditional institutions for financial advice, leading to higher engagement and learning. The study finds that credibility and authenticity are key factors in determining whether financial content resonates with young audiences.

L. Reddington, M.

Gamified short-form content enhances retention and engagement in financial education. Interactive elements such as challenges, quizzes, and progress tracking help sustain motivation and reinforce learning outcomes.

M. Kim, R.

Microlearning, which delivers financial education in short, focused bursts, significantly improves understanding and retention. The study suggests that Gen Z favors content that is easily accessible and immediately applicable to real-life financial decisions.

N. Thompson, J. and Bailey, L. (2021)

Interactive elements like quizzes, visual aids, and dynamic content improve cognitive engagement and retention. The study finds that breaking learning into manageable segments prevents cognitive fatigue and increases motivation to absorb financial knowledge.

O. Jackson, R. and Smith, T. (2022)

Gen Z learns financial concepts effectively through peer-created content on platforms like TikTok and YouTube. Observing relatable financial discussions fosters a sense of community and increases the likelihood of adopting positive financial habits.

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study aims to understand psychological factors that influence the effectiveness short span media in financial eduction with respect to Gen z . Gen Z has more access to financial tools and information than any generation before them, yet many still struggle with financial literacy. Short attention spans, impulsive spending, and the pressure of social comparison make it hard to use social media and apps effectively for financial education. On top of that, real-world challenges like inflation, student debt, and an unpredictable job market make managing money even more stressful. Traditional financial education often feels outdated and out

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of touch with their digital lifestyles, leaving many unprepared for financial independence. The key to improving financial literacy for Gen Z is meeting them where they are—through engaging, bite-sized content that considers their unique habits, biases, and behaviors.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To analyze the psychological factors, including cognitive processes, emotional responses, and motivational drivers, that influence the effectiveness of short-span media in delivering financial education to Generation Z.
- To identify key psychological determinants, such as attention span, perceived relevance of content, and the role of social influence, in enhancing the educational impact of short-span media on Gen Z's financial literacy.
- To find the importance of incorporating gamification and storytelling techniques in short-span media to foster deeper connections with financial concepts for Gen Z learners.
- To develop innovative financial education strategies that effectively engage younger audiences through digital platforms, promoting enhanced financial literacy and informed decision-making within this demographic.
- To examine how specific characteristics unique to Gen Z, such as their affinity for technology, preference for visual content, and desire for instant gratification, influence their engagement with financial education material delivered via short-span media.

V. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study explores the psychological factors influencing the effectiveness of short-span media in enhancing financial literacy among Generation Z, focusing on how cognitive processing styles, behavioral biases, social influence, and emotional factors impact their engagement with financial information delivered through platforms like social media and short videos. It investigates how Gen Z's attention span and multitasking habits affect information retention, how impulsivity and digital misconceptions influence financial decisions, the role of peer validation and influencers in shaping financial attitudes, and the impact of financial stress and emotional appeals on engagement and learning, which ties with the importance of understanding Gen Z's preference for digital platforms to enhance financial literacy through interactive learning, gamification, real-life applications, and focusing on real-world financial scenarios.

VI. METHODOLOGY

This study examines the psychological factors influencing short-span media's effectiveness in Gen Z's financial education using a mixed-methods approach. A Google Forms survey, distributed via social media and student groups, assessed media consumption habits, attention span, motivation, emotional engagement, self-efficacy, and financial literacy through a quiz. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlations, and regression. A literature review from sources like Google Scholar and JSTOR informed survey design and contextualized findings, comparing results with prior studies on attention spans, cognitive load, and social learning theory. This approach provides insights for optimizing financial education strategies using short-form media.

VII. DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

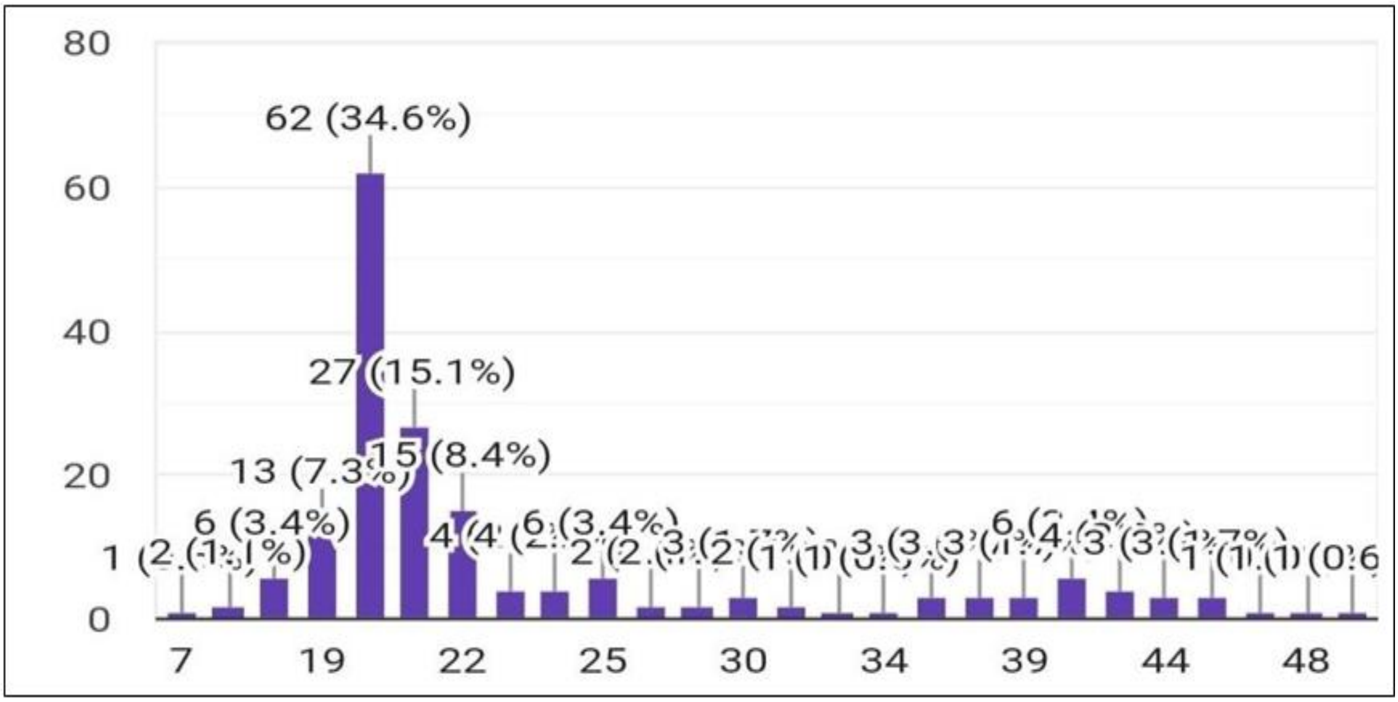

Fig 1 Showing the Age of the Respondents

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A. Analysis & Interpretation

The age distribution of the 179 survey respondents revealed a skewed demographic, with ages ranging from 7 to 48 years. Notably, the largest group was 19 years old, representing 34.6% (62 individuals) of the total participants. The second most frequent age was 22, accounting for 15.1% (27 individuals). Other age groups showed significantly lower representation, with most falling below 10% of the responses, indicating a concentration of participants within the late teens and early twenties.

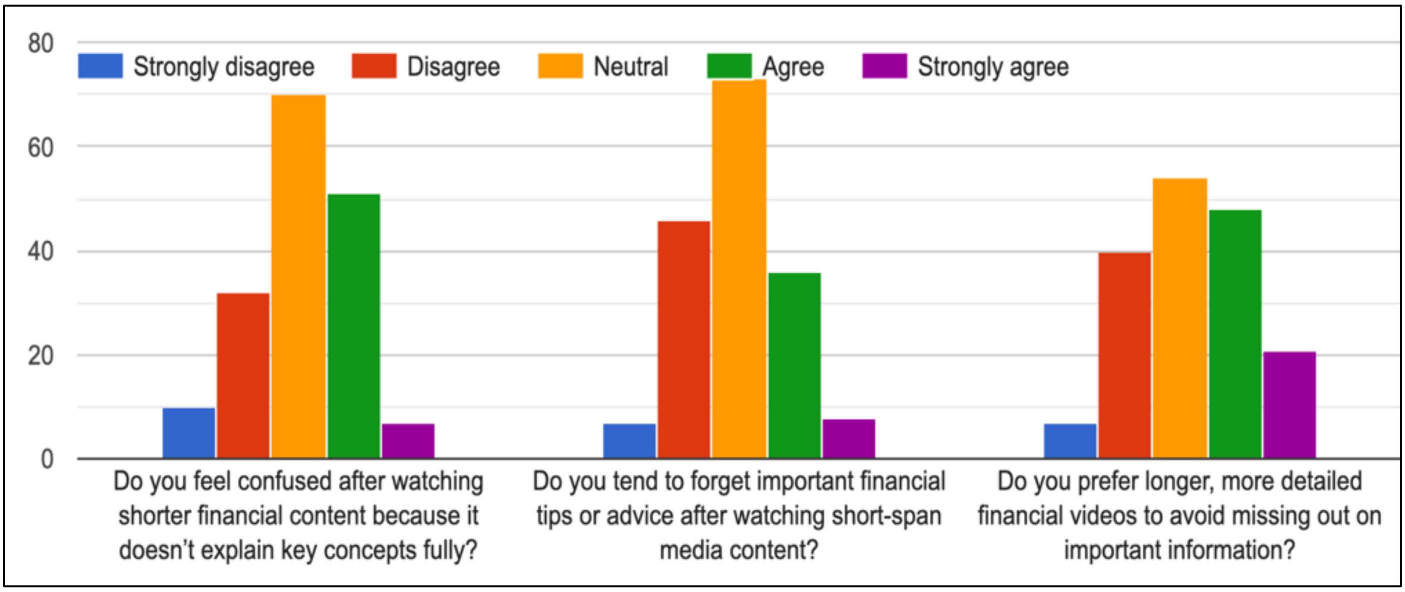

Fig 2 Showing Cognitive Overload & Retention Challenges

B. Analysis and Interpretation:

70 respondents remained neutral, while 36 agreed that they forget financial advice after watching short-span media, suggesting that retention may be a challenge.48 respondents agreed that they prefer longer, detailed financial videos to avoid missing important information, indicating a potential gap in short-form content effectiveness.

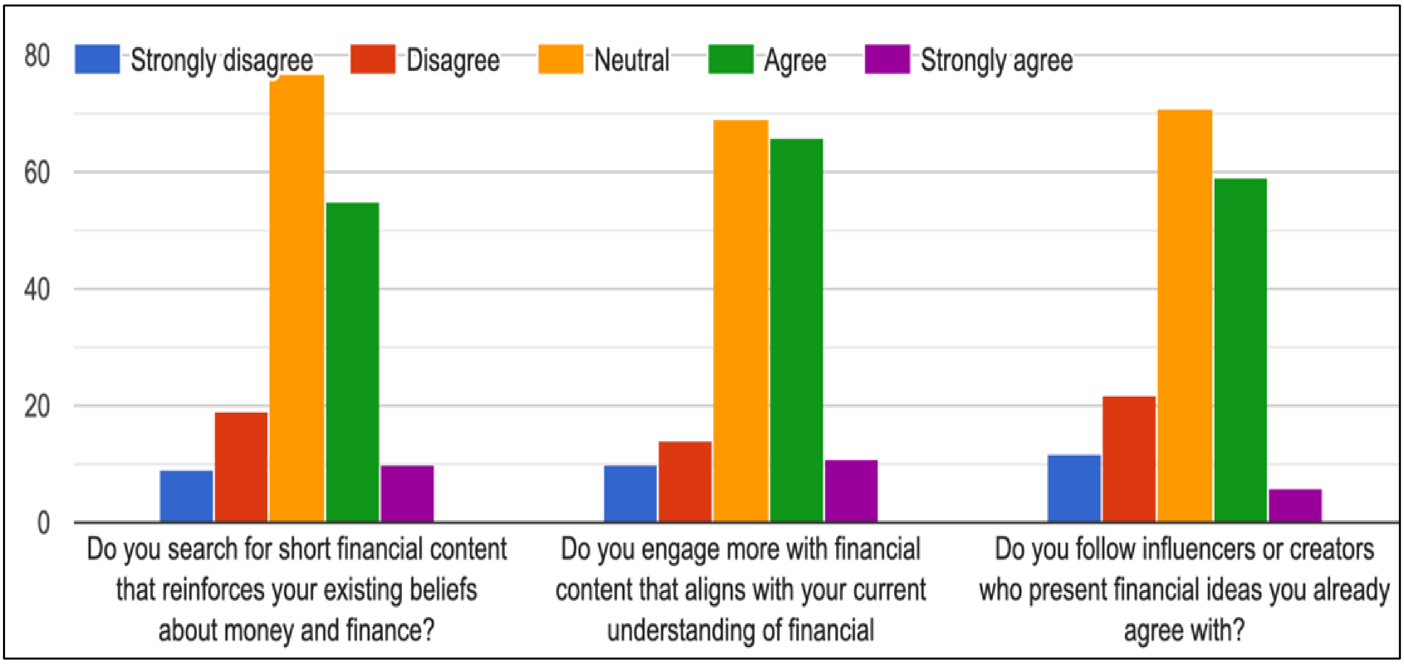

Fig 3 Confirmation Bias in Financial Learning

C. Analysis and Interpretation:

55 respondents agreed that they seek financial content that reinforces their existing beliefs, indicating a strong tendency toward confirmation bias. 59 respondents agreed that they follow influencers who align with their current financial mindset, which could limit exposure to diverse perspectives

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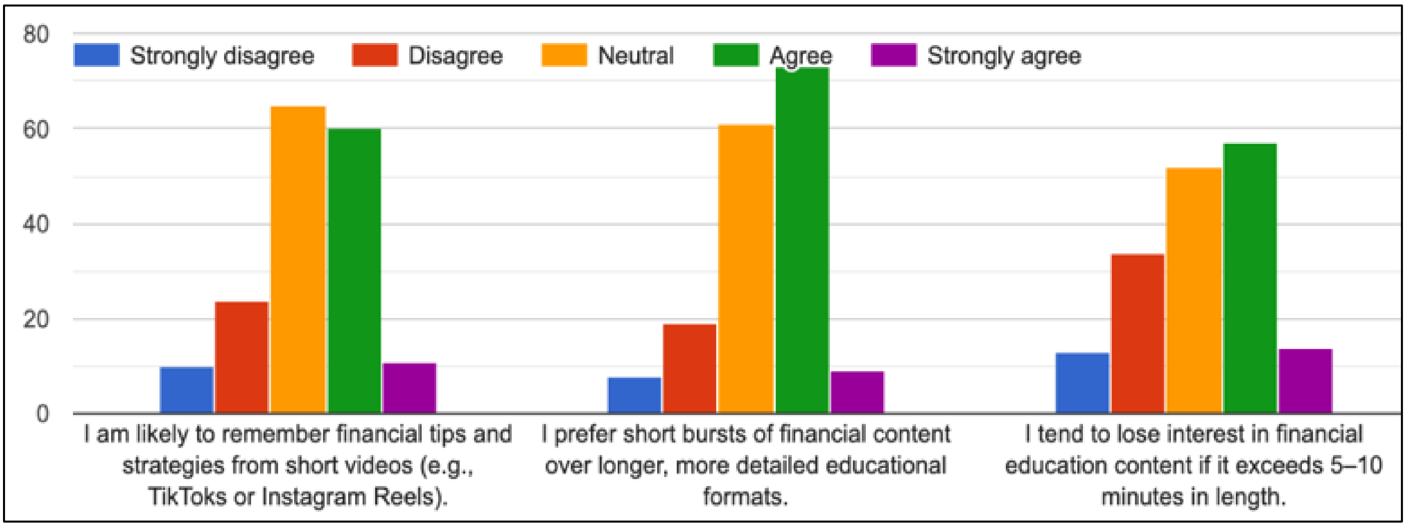

Fig 4 Attention Span & Engagement with Short Financial Content

D. Analysis and Interpretation

60 respondents agreed that they can remember financial tips from short videos, showing that concise content does have an impact. 73 respondents agreed that they prefer short bursts of financial content over longer educational formats, reinforcing the appeal of short-span media. 57 agreed that they lose interest in financial content exceeding 5–10 minutes, emphasizing the need for brevity in financial education.

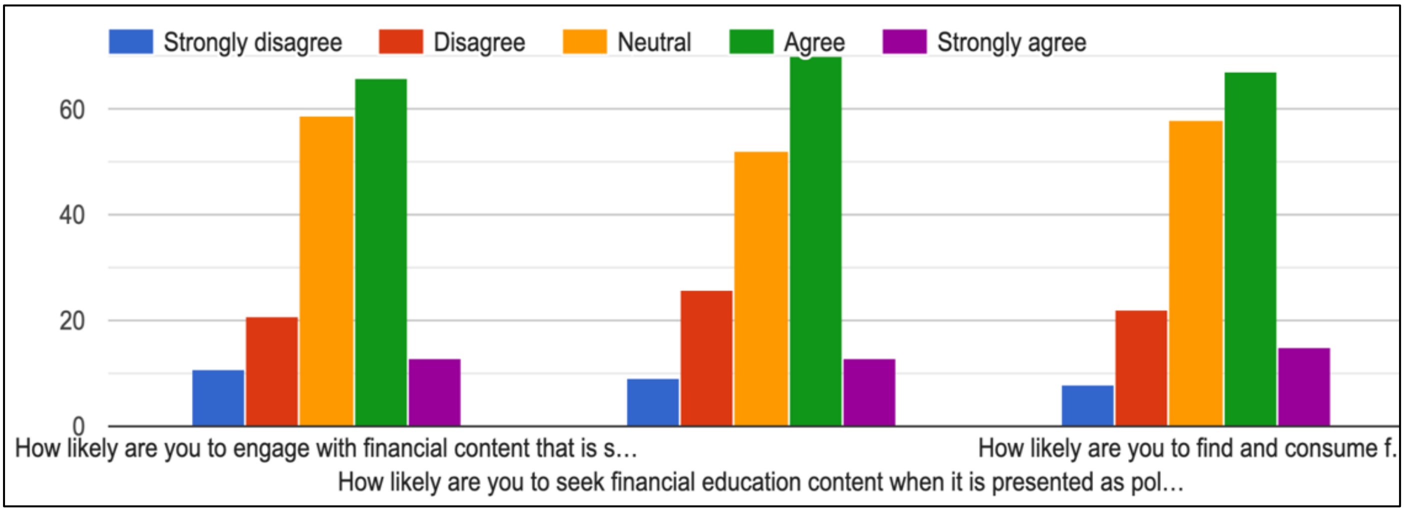

Fig 5 Accessibility and reach & Social Influence

E. Analysis and Interpretation

The survey revealed strong support for digital financial education, with 66 respondents agreeing that they engage with mobile-optimized financial content, highlighting social media's efficacy. Furthermore, 70 respondents indicated a preference for interactive formats like polls and quizzes, suggesting that engagement is heightened by active participation. Finally, 67 respondents acknowledged consuming financial education through platform recommendations, emphasizing the significant role of algorithms in content discovery and exposure.

F. Interpretation & Recommendations

- Short-span media is effective but has retention challenges – Content creators should integrate reinforcement strategies like summaries and follow-up content.
- Confirmation bias limits learning diversity – Platforms should introduce counterbalancing perspectives to encourage a broader understanding of financial topics.
- Engagement is high for mobile-friendly and interactive content – Financial educators should prioritize short, interactive formats with engaging visuals and quizzes.

VIII. RESULTS & FINDINGS

- *In-Depth Interpretation of Findings*

The data reveals that while short-span financial media is highly engaging for Gen Z, it presents challenges in retention, cognitive overload, and confirmation bias, all of which impact financial literacy development. Below is a deeper analysis of how these factors interact.

- *Cognitive Overload & Retention Issues*

Short-span media grabs attention but does not always lead to deep learning, as Gen Z struggles to retain complex financial concepts from rapid, information-dense content. Financial topics condensed into 60–90 second videos may not allow enough cognitive processing, leading to information overload and reduced comprehension. Unlike traditional learning methods, short-form media often lacks reinforcement mechanisms, resulting in lower knowledge retention over time.

- *Confirmation Bias & Selective Learning*

Gen Z tends to seek financial content that aligns with their pre-existing beliefs, reinforcing an echo chamber effect where exposure to diverse financial perspectives is limited. This skepticism toward opposing ideas, such as risk-taking versus conservative investing, can hinder well-rounded financial understanding. Additionally, financial influencers play a major role in shaping perceptions, with Gen Z trusting personal brands over institutional sources, sometimes leading to biased or incomplete learning.

- *Attention Span & Engagement with Financial Content*

Gen Z prefers short financial bursts but may miss out on deeper concepts like portfolio management or debt structuring, which require more detailed explanations. While many respondents claim to remember financial tips from short videos, passive consumption without practical application limits true retention. The tradeoff between entertainment and education also matters—highly engaging content can sometimes dilute educational impact if not structured effectively.

- *Accessibility & Social Influence on Financial Education*

Financial education among Gen Z is heavily influenced by social media algorithms, as platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube dictate what content is consumed. Peer-driven learning, such as discussions in online communities or social media interactions, reinforces financial behaviors. Additionally, interactive formats like quizzes, polls, and challenges drive higher engagement compared to static content, making financial education more appealing in a digital-first environment.

IX. SUGGESTION & RECOMMENDATIONS

- *Cognitive Overload & Retention Issues*

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X. CONCLUSION

In summary, the effectiveness of short-span media in financial education for Generation Z is significantly influenced by various psychological factors that align with their unique cognitive, emotional, and behavioral traits. Gen Z's shorter attention span, preference for bite-sized content, and constant exposure to digital media make short-span formats particularly well-suited for engaging this demographic. Additionally, the desire for immediate gratification and quick learning outcomes further enhances the appeal of concise financial education tools such as videos, infographics, and social media content.

Moreover, social influence and peer validation play a crucial role in shaping how Gen Z engages with financial education. This generation heavily relies on recommendations from influencers, online communities, and peer networks when consuming digital content. The credibility of financial information is often determined by the popularity and perceived expertise of content creators rather than traditional credentials. By integrating trusted influencers, interactive discussions, and community-driven learning experiences into short-span media, financial education can become more relatable, accessible, and impactful, ultimately improving knowledge retention and financial decision-making among Gen Z learners.

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