

RESEARCH ARTICLE

How Does Short-Form Video Marketing Influence Consumers' Purchase Intention?

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ABSTRACT

With the explosive growth of the digital economy, short-form videos have become a dominant marketing tool; however, existing research has insufficiently explained how and why short-form video content quality shapes consumer purchase intention through psychological mechanisms. To fill this gap, this study develops an S–O–R–based structural model to examine the influence of short-form video content quality on consumers' purchase intentions and to test the mediating roles of emotional resonance, brand trust, and perceived value. A total of 389 valid responses were collected using an online questionnaire, and the proposed hypotheses were empirically tested through structural equation modeling (SEM). The results show that content quality significantly enhances emotional resonance and brand trust, which subsequently increase perceived value and ultimately drive purchase intention. Moreover, all three mediating effects were statistically supported. This study enriches digital marketing and consumer psychology literature by uncovering the internal decision-making pathways triggered by short-form video stimuli. Practically, the findings offer actionable guidance for brands to optimize content creativity, enhance emotional interaction, strengthen trust-building strategies, and maximize value perception in short-form video marketing.

Keywords: Content quality; Emotional resonance; Brand trust; Perceived value; Purchase intention

1. Introduction

Amidst the rapid advancement of the digital economy, short-form video has emerged as one of the most impactful and widely adopted new media formats worldwide. According to Global Digital Advertising Market Report (2023), the global user base of short-form video platforms has surpassed 2.5 billion, with China's market alone exceeding 1 billion users, representing nearly half of the global total. The rise of short-form video platforms has reshaped the social media landscape, with platforms such as TikTok (Douyin's international counterpart), YouTube Shorts, and Instagram Reels experiencing sustained growth in user engagement. Notably, TikTok reported over 1.5 billion monthly active users worldwide in 2023, with average daily usage exceeding 95 minutes per user. The impact of short-form video extends beyond social entertainment ^[1], fundamentally transforming brand marketing paradigms ^[2]. Compared to traditional advertising, short-form video's fragmented nature, high interactivity, and immersive experiences enable brands to precisely target consumers, enhance brand awareness, and foster customer loyalty ^[2]. According to

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the 2023 Global Digital Advertising Market Report, short-form video advertisements now account for over 40% of global digital advertising expenditures, with the e-commerce, fashion, and beauty sectors at the forefront of this trend. In China, short-form video marketing has become a key driver of brand promotion and sales growth. For instance, Douyin E-commerce achieved a GMV (Gross Merchandise Volume) of CNY 2.7 trillion in 2023, representing an 80% year-on-year increase. These developments highlight that short-form video is not merely a communication tool but a critical factor in shaping consumer purchase decisions [3].

Amid the rapid proliferation of short-form video marketing, a central question has arisen in both academia and industry^[4] [5]: How can brands strategically leverage short-form video content to influence consumer purchase decisions? Although brands increasingly invest in short-form video formats, many still struggle to translate exposure into genuine engagement, conversion, and sustained brand equity. Recent empirical work shows that characteristics of short-form video ads such as usefulness, ease of use and entertainment significantly affect consumer trust and purchase intention [5]. Moreover, studies on Generation Z reveal that factors like influencer relatability and trust-signals meaningfully shape purchase outcomes in short-form video contexts [6]. However, existing research still falls short by failing to (a) systematically map the internal psychological pathways through which short-form video content quality affects purchase intention, and (b) integrate chain-mediating processes involving emotional resonance, brand trust and perceived value within short-form video marketing. In the highly competitive, trend-driven fashion and apparel industry—where brand image, innovation and consumer attention are especially critical [4]—these gaps are even more pronounced. To address these gaps, we therefore pose the following research questions:

RQ1: How does short-form video content quality influence consumers' purchase intentions?

RQ2: Do emotional resonance, brand trust and perceived value sequentially mediate this influence process?

Answering these questions promises not only to advance theoretical understanding of consumer behaviour in high-velocity digital marketing environments, but also to yield actionable recommendations for brand managers to refine short-form video strategies, boost emotional engagement, fortify trust and elevate perceived value.

This study makes a novel contribution by systematically exploring how short-form video marketing influences consumer purchase intention within the fast-evolving digital consumption environment. Theoretically, it extends digital marketing research by reconceptualizing consumer psychological mechanisms through an enhanced S–O–R model, in which emotional resonance and brand trust are positioned as dual sequential mediators, offering a newly articulated explanatory pathway that deepens understanding of consumer decision-making under algorithm-driven media stimuli. Methodologically, the study introduces a data-driven analytical approach combining multi-dimensional measurement and model validation, enabling the extraction of industry-specific success factors that have not been empirically tested in the fashion context. Practically, it develops an evidence-based short-form video optimization framework, providing implementable strategic guidelines for enhancing content design, emotional appeal, and brand credibility. By integrating theoretical innovation, contextual specificity, and methodological rigor, this research fills a critical knowledge gap and enriches digital marketing scholarship with new conceptual, empirical, and managerial insights.

2. Theoretical bases and literature review

2.1. SOR theory

The Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) model was originally introduced by Mehrabian and Russell (1974) to describe how environmental stimuli evoke individuals' internal cognitive–affective states and subsequently lead to behavioral responses^[7]. The model has since evolved beyond environmental psychology and has been widely adopted in consumer behavior, digital media, and online marketing research due to its explanatory power in uncovering indirect, psychological, and process-based behavioral mechanisms^[8]. Compared with other behavioral theories—such as the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) or Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which emphasize attitudinal evaluation or technology adoption intention—S-O-R offers a more comprehensive, process-oriented framework that explains how external media stimuli transform into consumer decisions through internal psychological states, rather than treating intention as a direct cognitive outcome. This makes S-O-R particularly suitable for rich-media, emotionally charged, and immersive short-form video environments.

In the context of this study, short-form video content quality is conceptualized as the stimulus (S) that triggers three internal psychological organism states: emotional resonance, brand trust, and perceived value (O). These, in turn, influence consumers' purchase intention as the behavioral response (R)^[9]. Linking the original theory to this research model, S-O-R enables a multi-stage causal explanation in which short-form video stimuli affect not only cognition but also emotion-based and trust-based evaluation processes, which have become critical in today's algorithm-driven, experience-oriented video consumption environment.

Although previous studies have applied S-O-R to livestreaming commerce and influencer-driven marketing, existing research largely focuses on real-time interaction, social presence, or parasocial relationships, while the psychological chain mechanism derived from short-form video content quality remains insufficiently examined. By introducing a sequential mediating organism structure (emotional resonance → brand trust → perceived value), this study extends the S-O-R paradigm into non-synchronous, short-form, algorithm-distributed video content environments, thereby advancing theoretical understanding of digital persuasion pathways beyond livestreaming-based engagement mechanisms. This contributes new insights to short-form video marketing literature by positioning S-O-R not merely as a behavioral model but as a multi-layer explanatory framework that integrates emotional, relational, and value-based psychological drivers.

2.2. Short-form video marketing

The rise of short-form video platforms has fundamentally transformed the digital marketing ecosystem, establishing them as pivotal channels for brand promotion and consumer engagement. Capitalizing on fragmented content delivery, immersive experiences, and high interactivity, short-form videos have rapidly attracted massive user bases and emerged as a critical marketing tool for businesses^[10]. Empirical studies demonstrate that short-form video marketing enhances brand exposure, strengthens user stickiness, and directly influences consumer purchase decisions^[11]. In China's market, platforms like Douyin and Kuaishou have leveraged algorithmic recommendations and social interaction mechanisms to position short-form video as a dominant force in branded content marketing^[12]. Nevertheless, despite extensive research on its outcomes, the underlying mechanisms of short-form video marketing remain theoretically underexplored.

The current literature on short-form video marketing largely centers around three analytical dimensions:: brand communication, consumer cognition, and emotional engagement^[13]. For instance, YAO and KIM

(2021) found that the authenticity and interactivity of short-form video content positively shape consumer brand attitudes^[14]. Lou and Yuan (2019) highlighted that user-generated content (UGC) in short-form videos, compared to traditional advertisements^[15], fosters greater consumer trust and reinforces brand loyalty^[16]. In addition, studies have investigated how content characteristics—such as video quality, information richness, and emotional valence—affect consumer behavior^[4]. While these studies highlight the positive impacts of short-form video marketing, they predominantly isolate individual factors, rather than holistically analyzing the integrated mechanisms.

Three critical research gaps persist: (1) the lack of systematic investigation into the psychological pathways through which short-form video marketing operates; (2) fragmented findings on its efficacy in the fashion and apparel industry, which lacks a consolidated theoretical framework; and (3) limited application of the SOR theory to dissect how short-form video stimuli translate into purchase intention through organismic states. Addressing these gaps, this study synthesizes prior findings to develop an SOR-based model that elucidates the impact mechanisms of short-form video content quality on purchase intention. Focusing on the fashion industry, we analyze how consumers' psychological perceptions (e.g., emotional resonance, brand trust) mediate the relationship between content quality and purchasing behavior, thereby offering theoretical and practical guidance for optimizing short-form video strategies.

2.3. Hypothesis development

2.3.1. Short-form video content quality

Short-form video content quality refers to the multidimensional performance of platform-published content across visual aesthetics, information delivery, emotional resonance, and interactivity. As short-form video becomes mainstream, content quality has evolved beyond technical metrics like resolution or visual appeal to encompass creativity, emotionality, interactivity, and information relevance^[17]. Superior content quality directly shapes user viewing experiences and brand communication efficacy, making originality, emotional salience, and informational authenticity core evaluation criteria^[18]. Empirical studies emphasize the centrality of creativity and emotional transmission in content quality assessment. For example, innovative storytelling in short-form videos enhances audience engagement and emotional investment^[19]. Meanwhile, information quality—defined as the truthfulness and richness of product/service details—positively correlates with brand cognition and trust^[19]. These multidimensional attributes collectively establish content quality as a critical determinant of marketing success.

Emotional resonance in short-form videos is typically activated through affectively charged narratives and visual stimuli^[20]. High-quality content elicits audience empathy by embedding emotional storylines, relatable characters, or lifelike scenarios. Fashion brands, for instance, effectively foster resonance by showcasing authentic consumer stories and lifestyle contexts^[21]. By synergizing creativity with emotional appeal, premium videos cultivate positive affective responses that elevate brand image and awareness. Furthermore, interactive features—likes, comments, and shares—amplify emotional engagement, transforming passive viewers into active participants who develop stronger emotional bonds with brands^[22]. Thus, emotional resonance emerges as a pivotal outcome of content quality optimization.

Research confirms that information quality and authenticity are primary drivers of brand trust^[23]. High-quality videos enhance credibility by demonstrating genuine product effects, consumer testimonials, and transparent brand narratives. Brands that integrate real user reviews and usage scenarios into content significantly reduce consumer skepticism^[24]. Additionally, creative and emotionally resonant content builds affective trust, which sustains long-term brand relationships^[24]. The interactive nature of short-form

platforms further strengthens brand trust through bidirectional communication, as viewers engage as co-creators by commenting and sharing, thereby fostering relational reciprocity^[25].

Perceived value encompasses consumers' holistic evaluation of functional, emotional, and social benefits derived from products or services. High-quality short-form videos amplify perceived value by enhancing product cognition through compelling demonstrations and brand storytelling^[26]. In the fashion industry, styling tutorials, celebrity endorsements, and product close-ups allow consumers to visually appraise uniqueness and superiority, elevating value perceptions^[27]. Emotional content further augments value by aligning brands with aspirational lifestyles or social values, thereby resonating with consumers' self-concept^[26]. Consequently, content quality influences perceived value through both informational and symbolic pathways.

Building on this theoretical foundation, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Short-form video content quality positively influences emotional resonance.

H2: Short-form video content quality positively influences perceived value.

H3: Short-form video content quality positively influences brand trust.

2.3.2. Emotional resonance

Emotional resonance refers to the psychological alignment and affective identification individuals when exposed to specific information, content, or brands. Tomkins (2014) conceptualized this construct as a deep-seated psychological connection formed when content triggers consumers' personal emotional experiences during information processing^[28]. In marketing contexts, this phenomenon manifests through consumers' emotional responses (e.g., empathy, joy) to brand narratives or product experiences, ultimately enhancing brand loyalty and purchase intention. Within short-form video environments, emotionally charged content proves particularly effective in rapidly eliciting such resonance, thereby influencing consumption patterns.

Scholarly interest in emotional resonance has intensified across marketing and consumer behavior domains. Building on Rigby and Lee (2024) dual-process framework, which conceptualizes consumers as both rational decision-makers and emotional beings, contemporary research underscores the critical role in driving consumption decisions^[29]. The proliferation of digital media—especially short-form video platforms—has catalyzed investigations into content-triggered resonance mechanisms. Empirical evidence identifies immersive storytelling, user-generated content (UGC), and social interactivity as key drivers^[30], while content typologies (e.g., humorous vs. educational) differentially modulate resonance intensity^[31].

Notably, emotional resonance experienced during video viewing cultivates favorable brand/product perceptions, thereby enhancing perceived value^[25]. This process enhances perceived brand authenticity by reframing brands as value-driven rather than mere commercial entities—a cognitive shift that improves holistic value assessments. As a core marketing metric, purchase intention is substantially mediated by resonance effects. Post-resonance consumers demonstrate stronger inclinations toward long-term brand relationships and repeat purchases^[32], with enhanced brand recall predisposing them to prioritize affectively aligned brands. Furthermore, resonance-driven social media interactions (liking/sharing) amplify brand visibility, ultimately converting emotional engagement into transactions^[32].

Building on this theoretical foundation, we propose:

H4: Emotional resonance positively affects perceived value.

H5: Emotional resonance positively affects purchase intention.

2.3.3. Brand trust

Brand trust, defined as consumers' confidence in a brand's reliability, integrity, and ability to fulfill promises^[33], is grounded in long-term consistent experiences and positive evaluations. In digital marketing contexts, brand trust is shaped not only by brand commitments but also through social media word-of-mouth, user-generated reviews, and interactive experiences^[34]. Recent studies highlight brand trust's pivotal role in shaping consumer behavior, particularly in e-commerce and social media environments. Empirical evidence confirms that brand trust reduces perceived uncertainty and bolsters purchase confidence—a critical determinant of buying decisions^[35]. Within short-form video marketing, trust-building mechanisms include brand transparency (e.g., unfiltered product demonstrations), content authenticity (e.g., genuine user experiences), and real-time interactions^[36]. For instance, Huang and Guo (2021) demonstrated that authentic content featuring key opinion leaders (KOLs) or user testimonials significantly strengthens brand trust^[37]. Interactive features such as live Q&A sessions further enhance trust by fostering immediacy and reciprocity^[38]. However, while existing research extensively examines brand trust in traditional advertising and e-commerce, its formation mechanisms in short-form video contexts remain underexplored.

Brand trust amplifies consumers' perceived value—a multidimensional construct comprising functional, emotional, and social benefits^[39]. Trusted brands are perceived to offer higher product quality and cost-effectiveness, thereby elevating overall value perceptions^[40]. In the context of short-form video marketing, trust cultivated through authentic narratives and bidirectional interactions enhances the credibility of brand messages, directly augmenting perceived value^[41]. Furthermore, brand trust exerts a direct influence on purchase intention. Dam (2020) established that trusted brands mitigate concerns about product performance and transaction risks, accelerating decision-making^[40]. Within short-form video ecosystems, trust is reinforced through verified brand accounts, KOL/user-generated content (UGC) endorsements, and positive comment sections^[42]. High brand trust transforms consumers into loyal advocates, who view the brand as a reliable long-term choice^[43].

Based on this theoretical synthesis, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H6: Brand trust positively influences perceived value.

H7: Brand trust positively influences purchase intention.

2.3.4. Perceived value

Perceived value refers to consumers' holistic assessment of a product or service based on the trade-off between perceived benefits and associated costs^[39]. This multidimensional construct encompasses functional value (quality, performance), emotional value (affective experiences), social value (brand's symbolic meaning), and economic value (price fairness)^[44]. Within short-form video marketing contexts, perceived value is shaped not only by product attributes but also by content quality, brand trust, and interactive engagement^[45].

As a pivotal determinant of consumer decisions, perceived value has been extensively studied in marketing, particularly in digital environments where it significantly influences brand attitudes and purchasing behaviors^[46]. In short-form video ecosystems, value perceptions are modulated by content quality (e.g., informational accuracy), trust-building mechanisms (e.g., KOL authenticity), and participatory features (e.g., user-generated challenges)^[47]. Empirical evidence indicates that premium video content enhances functional/emotional value cognition while interactive elements amplify social value through community co-creation, collectively elevating overall perceived value^[48]. Despite these insights, research remains scarce on optimizing content strategies to maximize value perceptions and their subsequent behavioral impacts.

Perceived value is a critical antecedent of purchase intention^[46]. Consumers exhibiting higher value perceptions demonstrate stronger purchase confidence and reduced uncertainty about product/service outcomes^[47]. In short-form video environments, elevated perceived value not only drives initial purchases but also fosters post-purchase satisfaction—a key predictor of repurchase intent and brand loyalty^[49]. This dual role underscores its strategic importance in converting transient viewers into long-term brand advocates.

Building upon this theoretical framework, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H8: Perceived value positively influences purchase intention.

Integrating hypotheses H1-H8, the study establishes the theoretical model depicted in Figure 1.

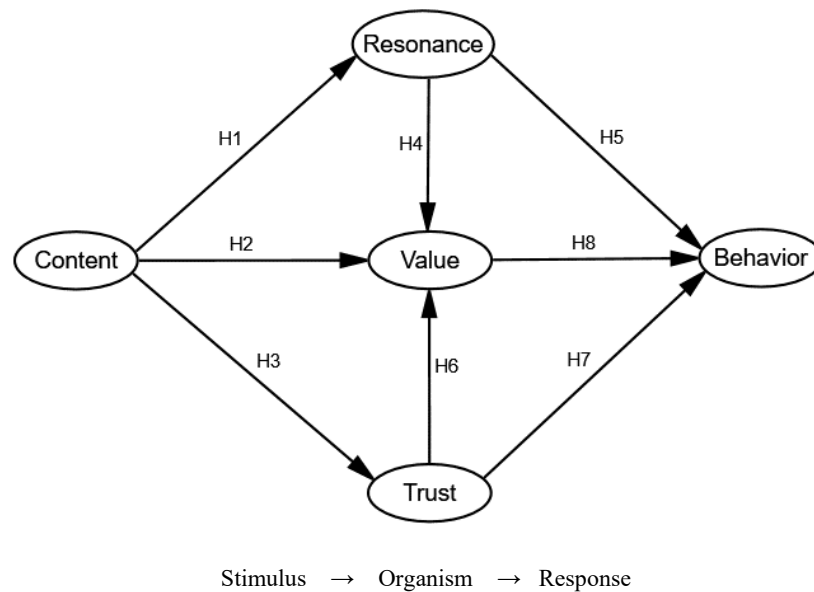


Figure 1. Theory model

3. Research design

3.1. Case Selection: PEACEBIRD Apparel

PEACEBIRD, founded in 1996 and headquartered in Ningbo, China, is a leading domestic fashion apparel brand that covers multiple categories such as menswear, womenswear, children's wear, and trendy brands. With the core concept of "youthful, trendy, and diverse," the brand is dedicated to creating fashionable products that align with the aesthetics of young consumers. In recent years, PEACEBIRD has actively promoted digital transformation through short video marketing, social media communication, and new retail models to achieve brand rejuvenation and market expansion. Its marketing cases on platforms such as Douyin, Kuaishou, and Xiaohongshu are highly representative, successfully shaping the image of a "Guochao" (China-chic) brand and attracting a large number of young consumers.

The reasons for selecting this brand include: (1) PEACEBIRD heavily relies on social media marketing, especially its mature short video marketing model on platforms such as Douyin and Xiaohongshu, providing abundant data and case study resources for this research. (2) The brand accurately captures the needs of young consumer groups and enhances its brand influence through celebrity endorsements, cross-industry collaborations, and content co-creation, which highly aligns with this study's focus on the impact of short video marketing on brand trust and purchase intention. (3) PEACEBIRD's operational strategy on e-commerce platforms such as Tmall and JD.com is deeply integrated with short video marketing, making it an essential case for exploring the influence of short video marketing on consumers' purchase decisions.

3.2. Measurement instrument

This study employed a self-administered online questionnaire utilizing 7-point Likert scales (1 = “strongly disagree” to 7 = “strongly agree”). The instrument comprised two sections: theoretical constructs and demographic variables. All measurement scales were adapted from validated instruments with established reliability and validity, and content validity was further ensured through expert review and iterative refinement based on feedback from three academic specialists and two industry practitioners. Specifically, short-form video content quality was measured using 3 items from Dabbous and Barakat (2020)^[50], while emotional resonance incorporated 10 items across two sub-dimensions based on Escalas and Stern (2003)^[51]. Brand trust was assessed using 8 items synthesized from Sahin et al. (2011)^[52] and Quynh et al. (2020)^[53]. Perceived value adopted 4 items from Gallarza and Saura (2006)^[54] and Wu and Li (2017)^[55], and purchase intention utilized 4 items adapted from Craig et al. (1998)^[56]. Demographic variables included age, gender, occupation, and monthly income. Prior to data collection, the study obtained ethics approval/exemption from the institutional review board, and all respondents were informed that participation was voluntary, anonymous, and solely for academic purposes. Electronic informed consent was obtained from all participants before completing the questionnaire.

3.3. Data collection

Targeting Gen Z and millennial consumers aged 18–35, this study collected data from individuals who had previously interacted with or followed the PEACEBIRD official Douyin account. Data were gathered through an online self-administered survey distributed via Douyin private message invitations between March and April 2024. A pilot test with 35 respondents was initially conducted to improve wording clarity and assess measurement validity before launching the formal survey. During the main data collection stage, a snowball sampling strategy was employed, whereby initial respondents were encouraged to forward the survey link to users within their social networks who matched the target age criteria. Out of the 500 questionnaires distributed, 389 valid responses were obtained after removing incomplete and inconsistent submissions, resulting in a valid response rate of 77.8%.

4. Results

The final sample exhibited balanced gender distribution (male: 54.50%, $n = 212$; female: 45.50%, $n = 177$). Age groups were represented as follows: 18–25 years (40.62%, $n = 158$), 26–30 years (24.16%, $n = 94$), and 31–35 years (35.22%, $n = 137$). Occupational composition included students (34.71%, $n = 135$), corporate employees (26.22%, $n = 102$), freelancers (18.51%, $n = 72$), finance professionals (7.97%, $n = 31$), teachers (6.42%, $n = 25$), and government staff (6.17%, $n = 24$). Monthly income levels ranged from \leq CNY 3,000 (28.02%, $n = 109$) to \geq CNY 12,001 (11.31%, $n = 44$), reflecting China's urban youth income structure.

4.1. Common method bias and multicollinearity

Common method bias was assessed using Harman's single-factor test^[57]. The first unrotated factor accounted for 15.45% of the total variance, substantially below the recommended threshold of 50%. This indicates that common method variance did not significantly contaminate the dataset, permitting further statistical analyses.

The assessment of multicollinearity using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) showed that all VIF values ranged from 1.95 to 3.32, remaining below the commonly accepted cutoff value ($VIF < 5.0$), thus confirming that multicollinearity did not pose a threat to the validity of the model estimates.

4.2. Reliability

Data quality was evaluated via SPSS 26.0 with the following criteria: absolute kurtosis < 7 , absolute skewness < 3 , inter-item correlations > 0.3 , and corrected item-total correlations (CITC) > 0.5 . All constructs demonstrated high internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from 0.855 to 0.901 (see Table 1), exceeding the widely accepted threshold of 0.7 (Hair, 2010). These results confirm the dataset's robustness for subsequent analysis.

Table 1. The results of CFA

Constructs/Items		Estimate	T-value	Alpha	CR	AVE
Content Quality				0.855	0.860	0.673
C1	The content displayed by the brand I follow on short-form video platforms is accurate.	0.870				
C2	The content displayed by the brand I follow on short-form video platforms is interesting and captures my attention.	0.830	21.506			
C3	The content displayed by the brand I follow on short-form video platforms is valuable to me and helps me understand the product or brand information.	0.757	19.301			
Emotional Cognition (Sub-dimension of Emotional Resonance)				0.890	0.891	0.622
RE1	When watching short-form video ads, I can understand the feelings of the characters in the ad.	0.808				
RE2	When watching short-form video ads, I can understand the troubles faced by the characters in the ad.	0.809	20.688			
RE3	When watching short-form video ads, I can clearly grasp the situations experienced by the characters in the ad.	0.802	20.477			
RE4	When watching short-form video ads, I can clearly understand the problems faced by the characters in the ad.	0.762	19.120			
RE5	When watching short-form video ads, I can understand the motivations behind the characters' actions.	0.760	19.060			
Emotional Empathy (Sub-dimension of Emotional Resonance)				0.883	0.884	0.605
RE6	When watching short-form video ads, I have had personal experiences similar to the ad's storyline.	0.821				
R70	When watching short-form video ads, I sometimes feel like I am the protagonist in the ad.	0.799	20.513			
RE8	When watching short-form video ads, I feel immersed in the ad's storyline.	0.773	19.657			
RE9	When watching short-form video ads, I can relate to the situations of the characters in the ad.	0.731	18.263			
RE10	When watching short-form video ads, I can experience the feelings of the characters in the ad.	0.762	19.264			
Brand Trust				0.901	0.901	0.604
BT8	I believe purchasing this brand's products will satisfy me.	0.766				
BT 7	I believe this brand will not let me down.	0.882	21.362			
BT 6	This brand's short-form videos meet my expectations.	0.796	19.008			
BT 3	Watching this brand's short-form videos gives me confidence in the product.	0.760	18.010			
BT 2	I believe the information conveyed by this brand is trustworthy.	0.728	17.142			
BT 1	I find the short-form video content of this brand to be credible.	0.705	16.511			

Constructs/Items		Estimate	T-value	Alpha	CR	AVE
Perceived Value				0.883	0.887	0.663
PV4	Watching product demonstrations or brand stories in short-form videos feels like a worthwhile experience for me to invest my time in.	0.767				
PV 3	Through the content displayed in short-form videos, my needs and desires are fulfilled, and I feel satisfied.	0.871	20.821			
PV 2	Watching product recommendations or usage experiences in short-form videos feels like a process worth my time.	0.823	19.578			
PV 1	Overall, I believe the information obtained through short-form video marketing is highly valuable to me and worth spending time on.	0.792	18.738			
Purchase Intention				0.880	0.882	0.652
PI1	After watching related short-form video marketing content and learning about the product's price and brand information, I am more inclined to purchase the product.	0.827				
PI 2	If I need to purchase this type of product, I would choose the brand mentioned in this study.	0.863	23.053			
PI 3	I am likely to purchase products related to this study within the next six months.	0.732	18.465			
PI 4	In my future shopping decisions, I will consider choosing the brand mentioned in this study.	0.803	20.949			

Table 1. (Continued)

4.3. Validity

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted using Amos 24.0 to assess the measurement model's validity. The model exhibited excellent fit indices: $\chi^2 = 567.119$, $df = 309$, $\chi^2/df = 1.835$, GFI = 0.923, AGFI = 0.906, NFI = 0.939, RFI = 0.931, iIFI = 0.972, TLI = 0.967, CFI = 0.971, RMSEA = 0.040, and SRMR = 0.033. All indices met or exceeded recommended thresholds, indicating strong model fit. Convergent validity was supported by composite reliability (CR) values ranging from 0.860 to 0.901 and average variance extracted (AVE) values between 0.604 and 0.673. Factor loadings for all retained items fell within 0.705–0.882, except for two brand trust items with substandard loadings (<0.60), which were removed to ensure measurement rigor^[58]. Discriminant validity was verified through Fornell and Larcker (1981)^[59] criterion, where the square root of each construct's AVE exceeded its correlations with other constructs (see Table 2). These results collectively confirm the robustness of the measurement model.

Table 2. The results of discriminant validity

		CR	AVE	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Content Quality	0.860	0.673	0.820					
2	Emotional Cognition	0.891	0.622	0.665	0.788				
3	Emotional Empathy	0.884	0.605	0.585	0.739	0.778			
4	Perceived Value	0.887	0.663	0.475	0.652	0.630	0.814		
5	Brand Trust	0.901	0.604	0.429	0.499	0.516	0.476	0.777	
6	Purchase Intention	0.882	0.652	0.516	0.695	0.648	0.724	0.475	0.808

4.4. Structural model

The structural model was tested using Amos 24.0, demonstrating acceptable fit indices: $\chi^2 = 627.580$, $df = 314$, $\chi^2/df = 1.999$, GFI = 0.916, AGFI = 0.899, NFI = 0.933, RFI = 0.925, IFI = 0.965, TLI = 0.961, CFI =

0.965, RMSEA = 0.044, SRMR = 0.063—all within recommended thresholds. Hypothesis testing revealed that seven of the nine proposed hypotheses were supported, with H2 (short-form video content quality → perceived value) and H8 (perceived value → purchase intention) statistically non-significant (detailed results in Figure2 and Table 3).

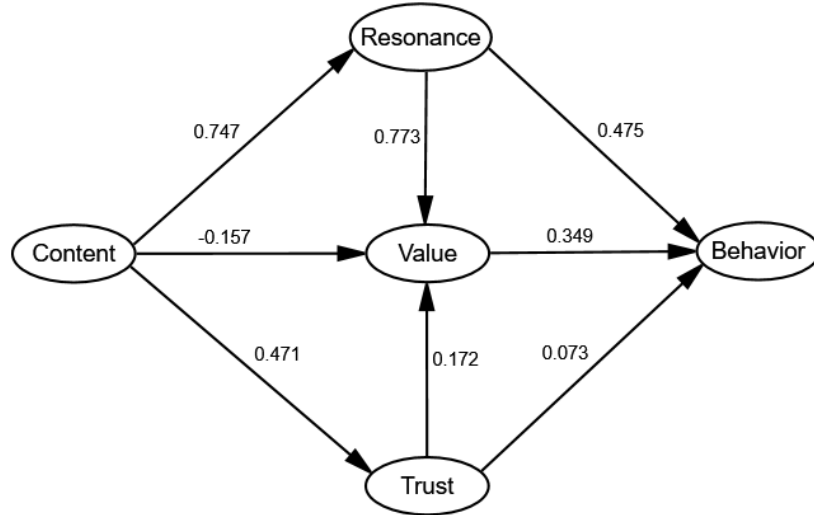


Figure 2. The results of hypothesis test

Table 3. The results of structural model

	Hypothesis			Estimate	S.E.	T-value	P	results
H1	Content Quality	→	Emotional Resonance	0.747	0.046	14.172	***	√
H2	Content Quality	→	Perceived Value	-0.157	0.067	-1.931	0.053	X
H3	Content Quality	→	Brand Trust	0.471	0.04	9.575	***	√
H4	Emotional Resonance	→	Perceived Value	0.773	0.086	8.442	***	√
H5	Emotional Resonance	→	Purchase Intention	0.475	0.067	7.384	***	√
H6	Brand Trust	→	Perceived Value	0.172	0.046	3.815	***	√
H7	Brand Trust	→	Purchase Intention	0.073	0.043	1.944	0.052	X
H8	Value	→	Purchase Intention	0.349	0.067	5.794	***	√

4.5. Mediation effects

Given the non-significant direct effects of short-form video content quality on perceived value (H2) and brand trust on purchase intention (H7), mediation analyses were conducted using bootstrapping procedures (5,000 resamples, 95% CI). Results revealed significant indirect pathways: short-form video content quality exerted its influence on perceived value through emotional resonance ($\beta = 0.274$, $p < 0.001$) and brand trust ($\beta = 0.182$, $p = 0.003$), while brand trust impacted purchase intention via perceived value ($\beta = 0.316$, $p < 0.001$). Notably, emotional resonance demonstrated dual mediation roles—not only bridging content quality and perceived value but also indirectly affecting purchase intention through perceived value ($\beta = 0.408$, $p < 0.001$). These findings indicate complete mediation effects, suggesting that the initially non-significant direct relationships are fully explained by underlying psychological mechanisms. Detailed mediation coefficients and confidence intervals are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. The results of mediation effects

Paths		Point estimate	product of coefficients		Percentile 95%CI		Bias-corrected percentile95%CI		Meditaion
			se	Z-value	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	
Content → Value	total effects	0.414	0.063	6.571	0.308	0.551	0.304	0.546	yes
	direct effects	-0.130	0.090	-1.444	-0.328	0.028	-0.340	0.024	
Content → Resonance → Value	indirect effects	0.477	0.100	4.770	0.326	0.721	0.329	0.737	
Content → Trust → Value	indirect effects	0.067	0.027	2.481	0.025	0.131	0.025	0.132	
Resonance → Intention	total effects	0.779	0.085	9.165	0.626	0.961	0.620	0.953	yes
	direct effects	0.497	0.095	5.232	0.326	0.697	0.329	0.702	
Resonance → Value → Intention	indirect effects	0.282	0.082	3.439	0.147	0.465	0.150	0.467	
Trust → Intention	total effects	0.152	0.081	1.877	0.014	0.330	0.008	0.320	
	direct effects	0.083	0.073	1.137	-0.045	0.249	-0.045	0.249	yes
Trust → Value → Intention	indirect effects	0.068	0.034	2.000	0.019	0.153	0.021	0.161	

5. Discussion and conclusions

5.1. Discussion

5.1.1. The impact of short-form video content quality on emotional resonance, brand trust, and perceived value

Among the proposed hypotheses (H1, H2, H3), empirical results confirm that only H1 and H3 were supported, whereas H2 was not. Specifically, the findings reveal that short-form video content quality exerts a significant positive influence on emotional resonance, indicating that high-quality content stimulates consumers' affective responses and facilitates the development of emotional bonds between consumers and brands. This result is consistent with Zhou and Li (2023), who highlight that high-quality short-form videos capture consumer attention through compelling visual stimuli and emotionally expressive content, thereby eliciting stronger emotional resonance^[18]. Taken together, these results reinforce the critical role of emotional processing in consumers' decision-making processes within short-form video marketing environments.

However, contrary to expectations, the direct effect of short-form video content quality on perceived value (H2) was not statistically significant, which diverges from prior research^[26, 27]. Although high-quality content may successfully attract and retain user attention, the findings suggest that it does not automatically translate into enhanced perceived value at the product or brand level. A plausible explanation is that short-form videos predominantly rely on visual and emotional cues, while perceived value is shaped through accumulated brand experience, long-term consumer evaluation, and utility-driven judgments. Thus, content quality alone may be insufficient to elevate perceived value without the presence of additional psychological processing mechanisms, suggesting that its influence may occur indirectly through mediators such as emotional resonance and brand trust.

Furthermore, the results validate the positive relationship between short-form video content quality and brand trust (H3 supported). This finding aligns with previous research^[23, 24], which demonstrates that well-produced video content conveys professionalism, credibility, and authenticity, thereby fostering consumer trust in the brand. These findings further emphasize the strategic relevance of content quality in shaping consumer trust perceptions. For fashion brands in particular, the continuous delivery of high-quality short-form video content may enhance brand reputation and credibility, ultimately reinforcing consumers' trust foundations and facilitating future purchase decisions.

5.1.2. The impact of emotional resonance and brand trust on perceived value and purchase intention

The empirical findings further verify the positive effects of emotional resonance on both perceived value and purchase intention (H4 and H5 supported). Specifically, emotionally rich short-form video content can effectively evoke emotional resonance among consumers, subsequently enhancing their perceived value and willingness to purchase. This result is consistent with Hollebeek et al. (2022)^[60], who reported that emotionally engaging short-form video content is more likely to stimulate consumer affective responses, foster favorable brand attitudes, and ultimately facilitate purchase decisions. Moreover, emotional resonance appears to play a critical role in enabling consumers to perceive products as being worth their price, thereby improving perceived value and increasing their likelihood of making purchasing decisions. Accordingly, brands engaging in short-form video marketing should prioritize the creation of emotionally appealing content to indirectly enhance overall marketing effectiveness.

In addition, this study corroborates the positive influence of brand trust on perceived value and purchase intention (H6 supported; H7 not supported). Specifically, the results demonstrate that while brand trust significantly enhances perceived value, it does not exert a direct influence on purchase intention. This finding is partially aligned with prior research^[30-32], suggesting that brand trust predominantly affects consumers' purchasing behavior indirectly through its positive impact on perceived value. A plausible explanation is that within the short-form video context, consumers' attitudinal formation and behavioral tendencies are more strongly shaped by content-driven emotional experiences and perceived value rather than direct trust-based judgments. This insight underscores the importance for brands to leverage high-quality, trust-building content that enhances perceived value, thereby indirectly promoting consumers' purchase intention.

5.1.3. The impact of perceived value on purchase intention

The results further validate the positive impact of perceived value on purchase intention (H8 supported). This aligns with Valarie A Zeithaml (1988) perceived value theory, which posits that consumers are more likely to develop purchase intention when they perceive higher value in products or services. In this study, short-form video content enhances consumers' perceived value by strengthening emotional resonance and brand trust, ultimately driving purchase intention. This finding highlights the critical mediating role of perceived value in short-form video marketing. Therefore, brands should focus on constructing consumers' perceived value through diversified, high-quality content to translate engagement into actual purchasing behavior.

5.1.4. Validation of mediation effects

Firstly, short-form video content quality influences perceived value through emotional resonance, indicating that content quality alone cannot directly enhance perceived value but significantly improves consumers' value cognition through the mediating role of emotional resonance. This suggests that high-quality content strengthens consumers' value perceptions of brands and products by evoking emotional resonance, ultimately driving purchase intention.

Secondly, short-form video content quality affects perceived value through brand trust, demonstrating that high-quality content conveys a brand's professionalism and credibility, thereby enhancing consumer trust, which in turn influences purchase intention through perceived value. This result further underscores the importance of brand trust in short-form video marketing.

Finally, both emotional resonance and brand trust indirectly influence purchase intention through perceived value, further confirming the central role of perceived value in consumer decision-making

processes. This also implies that brands should prioritize enhancing consumers' perceived value through content quality and brand trust to indirectly drive purchasing behavior in short-form video marketing.

5.2. Theoretical contributions

This study systematically explores the relationships among short-form video content quality, emotional resonance, brand trust, perceived value, and purchase intention within the context of short-form video marketing, based on the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) framework. Through mediation analysis, it reveals how short-form video content influences consumer purchase decisions through emotional and trust pathways.

Firstly, this study advances the theoretical understanding of how short-form video content quality influences purchase intention by identifying emotional resonance and brand trust as key mediating mechanisms. Unlike prior studies that primarily emphasized a direct causal relationship between content quality and purchase intention, the present findings demonstrate that content quality exerts no significant direct effect on either perceived value or purchase intention; instead, its impact operates through indirect psychological pathways. This contributes to the existing body of knowledge by offering a mechanism-based explanation for how short-form video content shapes consumer decision-making, thereby enriching theoretical discourse in short-form video marketing research and providing new implications for future scholarly exploration.

Secondly, this study underscores the pivotal function of perceived value within short-form video marketing contexts. The results reveal that both emotional resonance and brand trust influence purchase intention via perceived value, positioning perceived value as a critical mediating construct within the consumer response process. This finding not only substantiates earlier research that highlighted the importance of perceived value but also reinforces its core role in translating psychological responses into behavioral intentions, offering a theoretical basis for future investigations into how perceived value is formed and amplified within short-form video content environments.

Thirdly, this research enriches the literature by deepening insights into the mediating roles of emotional resonance and brand trust. The empirical evidence confirms that high-quality content enhances perceived value and purchase intention indirectly by either strengthening affective resonance or fostering trust-based relational bonds. These findings extend the application of emotional resonance and brand trust within digital marketing frameworks and offer theoretical guidance for strategic content development. Specifically, brands can enhance consumers' purchase intention more effectively by creating content that either elicits emotional engagement or reinforces trust perceptions, rather than relying solely on visual or informational quality.

5.3. Practical implications

The findings of this study not only enrich theoretical research in the field of short-form video marketing but also provide valuable insights for enterprises' marketing practices on short-form video platforms.

Firstly, enterprises should prioritize enhancing the overall quality of short-form video content while simultaneously cultivating emotional resonance and brand trust. The findings indicate that content quality does not directly influence purchase intention, but rather shapes consumer decision-making indirectly through emotional and trust-based mechanisms. Therefore, firms engaging in short-form video marketing should focus on producing high-quality, professionally designed, and emotionally appealing content that aligns with the interests, preferences, and affective needs of the target audience. Content narratives should be designed to evoke emotional resonance, while brand values, brand missions, or authentic brand-related storytelling should be integrated to reinforce brand credibility and trustworthiness, ultimately elevating consumer purchase intention through indirect pathways.

Secondly, enterprises should fully leverage the mediating role of perceived value by communicating distinctive value propositions that highlight product superiority and consumer benefits. As this study demonstrates, perceived value functions as a key psychological mechanism linking content quality, emotional resonance, brand trust, and purchase intention; thus, consumers' purchasing decisions rely more on their evaluation of value than on content aesthetics alone. Accordingly, short-form video content should not only emphasize visual attractiveness and entertainment features but also convey functional utility, performance benefits, and user-oriented product attributes. Presenting authentic product usage scenarios, customer testimonials, user-generated outcomes, or service experience demonstrations can effectively enhance perceived value formation during content exposure, thereby increasing consumers' willingness to purchase.

Finally, enterprises should adopt segmented and differentiated short-form video marketing strategies tailored to distinct consumer groups. Empirical results reveal that consumers aged 18–25, 26–30, and 31–35 display heterogeneous behavioral patterns and consumption preferences on short-form video platforms, and further differences are observed across occupations and income levels. Therefore, enterprises should exploit data analytics capabilities available on content platforms to precisely identify target audience profiles, behavioral habits, and motivational drivers, and subsequently design personalized, audience-specific content strategies. For example, for younger consumers, content can emphasize creativity, entertainment, and trend sensitivity, whereas for more mature consumers, the focus may be placed on functionality, product quality, and brand reliability. Implementing such audience-segmented content strategies can strengthen brand communication effectiveness, improve consumer engagement, and ultimately enhance purchase intention across diverse market segments.

5.4. Conclusion

This study contributes to a deeper understanding of how short-form video content quality drives consumer purchase intention by revealing the mediating roles of emotional resonance and brand trust within the S–O–R framework. The findings enrich digital marketing theory by clarifying psychological mechanisms in high-engagement media environments and provide actionable insights for fashion brands seeking to optimize short-form video strategies.

Despite its contributions, several limitations warrant attention. First, the present research centers on content quality and does not incorporate other influential variables, such as algorithmic recommendation mechanisms or influencer characteristics, which may further shape consumer decision-making. Second, the empirical investigation is limited to the PEACEBIRD brand, which may restrict the generalizability of the results across diverse brand types, product categories, and cultural contexts. Third, data were mainly obtained through self-reported questionnaires, which may not fully reflect actual consumer purchase behavior.

Future research could expand the model by integrating algorithmic cues, parasocial relationships, or influencer credibility to more comprehensively capture the determinants of consumer engagement and conversion. Additionally, cross-brand and cross-industry comparative studies, as well as multi-method approaches—such as big-data behavioral tracking, eye-movement analysis, or neuromarketing experiments—may provide richer and more objective evidence. Such efforts will deepen theoretical advancement and offer more refined, evidence-based guidance for enterprises aiming to develop targeted and sustainable short-form video marketing strategies.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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