

THE INFLUENCE OF SHORT-FORM VIDEO GRATIFICATIONS ON CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT AND PURCHASE INTENTION: AN EXPLANATORY SEQUENTIAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

With the rapid rise of short-form videos (SFVs) on social media, understanding their influence on consumer behavior is increasingly important. This study examines how SFV gratifications affect consumer engagement and purchase intention, with perceived value as a mediator and e-influencer as a moderator. Grounded in the Uses and Gratifications (U&G) perspective and the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) framework, a conceptual model was developed and then tested using a quantitative survey of 690 valid responses, analyzed via Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Results show that the gratifications studied significantly impact consumer engagement and, indirectly, purchase intention through perceived value. Unexpectedly, most moderating effects of e-influencer were statistically insignificant. A qualitative follow-up using explanatory sequential design suggests that the term “influencer” may have been misunderstood in the Algerian context. This study offers theoretical insights and practical guidance for Algerian brands optimizing their digital marketing strategies.

KEYWORDS: short-form videos, consumer engagement, purchase intention, perceived value, Uses and Gratifications (U&G)

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1. Introduction

The modern digital world is shaped by rapid technological progress and the growing influence of the internet in everyday life. These developments have completely transformed how people

consume media and how they interact with brands. By early 2024, around 68% of the global population, or about 5.5 billion people, were using the internet, and more than 5 billion were active on social media platforms. This widespread digital adoption

has pushed businesses to adapt their marketing strategies to align with new digital habits and trends.

One of the most notable changes in this digital landscape is the rise and popularity of short-form videos (SFVs). These short, visually engaging clips, usually lasting from a few seconds to a few minutes, have become a dominant form of online content and a major way for people to find information, entertainment, and social connection. Their brief and shareable nature makes them especially effective at capturing attention in today's fast-paced digital environment. Platforms such as TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts have grown rapidly, and brands now use these formats not only to promote products but also to encourage interaction and build lasting relationships with audiences.

This phenomenon is particularly relevant in Algeria, where digital engagement continues to grow. As of January 2024, internet penetration in Algeria reached 72.9 percent, and about 24.85 million people, representing 54.1 percent of the population, were active social media users. Despite the strong role of SFVs in digital marketing, there remains a noticeable gap in academic research, especially in the Algerian context, regarding how this form of content influences consumer behavior. This study addresses that gap by examining how short-form videos affect consumer engagement and purchase intention in a rapidly developing digital market.

The study is grounded in two well-established psychological frameworks that explain why people engage with media. The first is the Uses and Gratifications (U&G) Theory, which suggests that individuals actively consume media content to satisfy different needs. In the case of SFVs, these needs, known as gratifications, include content gratification, process gratification and social gratification.

To explain how these needs translate into behavior, the study also applies the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) Model.

In this framework, SFV gratifications represent the stimulus that influences the consumer's internal psychological state, or organism, which in this research is defined as perceived value. Perceived value refers to how consumers evaluate the benefits they receive compared to the costs involved and is expected to be directly shaped by the gratifications experienced while watching short videos. This internal evaluation then leads to the response, expressed through purchase intention, which reflects the willingness to buy a product or service.

Finally, the study examines the moderating role of the e-influencer. E-influencers, who share opinions, experiences, and recommendations, have a growing influence on how consumers perceive brands and make decisions. Previous studies have shown that influencer characteristics often have a moderate to strong effect on both consumer engagement and purchase intention. Understanding this moderating role is important because e-influencers may strengthen the impact of short-form video gratifications on these behavioral outcomes.

1.1. Use and Gratification Theory and Short Videos

The Use and Gratification (U&G) theory provides a foundational lens to understand why users actively engage with short-form video platforms. Unlike traditional media theories that view audiences as passive receivers, U&G highlights that individuals are active participants who seek out media to fulfill specific psychological and social needs (Hoi & Yin, 2023; Jiang & Chen, 2024; Stafford et al., 2004). Gratification refers to the satisfaction users gain from consuming media content, whether it is for entertainment, information, or social interaction.

In the context of short-form video platforms such as TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts, U&G theory explains their growing popularity and persuasive potential. These platforms deliver highly

engaging, bite-sized, and visually dynamic content that meets users' diverse needs more efficiently than traditional media (Fan et al., 2024; Zeng, 2023). The literature identifies three major types of gratifications associated with short videos: content gratifications, process gratifications, and social gratifications (Jiang & Chen, 2024; Stafford et al., 2004).

- Content gratifications are derived from the informational and entertainment value of the content itself. Users consume short videos to gain quick, entertaining, and relevant knowledge, such as product demonstrations or reviews. (Liu et al., 2019; Wong, 2023).

- Process gratifications are linked to the pleasure of browsing and interacting with the medium itself. Users often scroll through short videos to pass time or relieve boredom, gaining hedonic satisfaction from the act of browsing (Fan et al., 2024).

- Social gratifications emerge from the opportunity to connect, comment, and share with others, fulfilling users' needs for social validation, belonging, and self-expression (Jiang & Chen, 2024).

These gratifications make short-form video platforms powerful marketing tools. By satisfying entertainment, informational, and social needs simultaneously, they foster deeper engagement and influence consumer perceptions and behaviors.

1.2. Short-Form Video Gratifications and Consumer Engagement

Engagement extends beyond mere transactions to include interactive experiences such as content consumption, contribution, and creation (Maslowska et al., 2016; Ndhlovu & Maree, 2022). On social media, consumer engagement manifests through viewing, commenting, liking, or creating user-generated content, each reflecting increasing levels of participation (Gu & Duan, 2024).

Short-form videos are particularly well suited for stimulating engagement.

Their vivid visuals, brevity, and interactive features (e.g., hashtags, challenges, sound effects) enhance users' attention and emotional connection. Empirical evidence shows that entertainment value, informativeness, and interactivity are among the strongest predictors of engagement on platforms like TikTok. When videos align with users' interests and provide enjoyment or useful information, consumers are more likely to interact with the brand and share content within their networks (Simon et al., 2016).

Drawing from U&G theory, the gratifications obtained from viewing short videos act as motivational drivers for engagement behavior. Consumers who derive pleasure, information, or social connection from short videos tend to spend more time interacting with brand-related content and communities. Therefore, the gratifications gained from short-form videos are expected to positively influence consumer engagement.

H1: Short-form video gratifications positively influence consumer engagement.

1.3. Short-Form Video Gratifications and Perceived Value

Perceived value refers to the consumer's overall evaluation of a product's worth based on the perceived benefits received relative to the costs incurred. In digital contexts, this concept encompasses functional, emotional, social, and epistemic dimensions.

Short-form videos can significantly enhance perceived value by combining information, entertainment, and interactivity. Videos that clearly demonstrate product usage or benefits contribute to functional value, as they help consumers make more informed decisions (Fan et al., 2024). Entertaining and emotionally rich videos strengthen hedonic value, while interactive elements and influencer collaborations build social value by fostering trust and

identification with others (Jiang & Chen, 2024; Lin et al., 2022). In addition, the novelty and discovery inherent in short videos generate epistemic value, fulfilling consumers' curiosity and learning desires (Kol & Levy, 2022).

As a result, when consumers perceive that short videos deliver useful, enjoyable, and socially meaningful experiences, they tend to view the brand or the product as more valuable. Hence, gratifications derived from short-form videos are expected to positively shape perceived value.

H2: Short-form video gratifications positively influence perceived value.

1.4. Perceived Value and Purchase Intention

Purchase intention represents an individual's willingness or likelihood to buy a specific product or service (Bigliardi et al., 2020). It is a well-established predictor of consumer behavior and reflects the outcome of prior evaluations, attitudes, and perceived value. Within online and social media contexts, purchase intention is shaped by both cognitive judgments and affective responses to marketing stimuli (Ajzen, 1991).

Perceived value is a central determinant of purchase intention, as consumers are more inclined to buy when they believe that the benefits of a product outweigh the costs or sacrifices involved (Pandža Bajsić, 2015; Senic & Marinković, 2016). In digital environments, this includes not only economic considerations but also emotional and experiential satisfaction. Functional elements, such as clear and informative videos, reduce uncertainty and enhance trust, while emotional appeal and entertainment value strengthen positive attitudes toward brands (Fan et al., 2024). Social and epistemic values also play a role by fulfilling users' desire for belonging and curiosity (Kol & Levy, 2022).

As shown in previous research, perceived value consistently mediates the

relationship between digital marketing content and behavioral outcomes such as purchase (Jiang & Chen, 2024). Therefore, consumers who perceive higher value from short-form videos are more likely to develop favorable attitudes and stronger intentions to make a purchase.

H3: Perceived value positively influences purchase intention.

1.5. Mediating Role of Perceived Value and the S-O-R Model

The relationship between short-form video gratifications and purchase intention can be better understood through the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model. This framework suggests that external stimuli (S), in this case, the gratifications from short-form videos, affect internal psychological states (O), such as perceived value, which then lead to behavioral responses (R), such as purchase intention (Fan et al., 2024; Hoi & Yin, 2023; Jiang & Chen, 2024).

Short-form videos act as stimuli that trigger emotional and cognitive responses. When users experience entertainment, informational utility, and social connection while consuming video content, these experiences influence how they perceive the value of both the content and the featured brand. A video that effectively demonstrates a product's benefits, offers relatable storytelling, or creates a sense of belonging can significantly enhance perceived value (Jiang & Chen, 2024).

This heightened perceived value, in turn, leads to more favorable purchase decisions. Thus, perceived value functions as a psychological bridge between the gratifications obtained from watching short-form videos and the consumer's behavioral intention to purchase.

H4: Short-form video gratifications positively influence purchase intention through the mediation of perceived value.

1.6. The Moderating Role of E-Influencer

In the evolving digital ecosystem, electronic influencers (e-influencers) play a pivotal role in shaping consumers' attitudes and behaviors. E-influencers are individuals who create and share branded content, leveraging their credibility and social connection to affect followers' perceptions (Ao et al., 2023; Gu & Duan, 2024). Their authenticity, expertise, and attractiveness enhance consumers' trust and emotional involvement, making them highly effective in digital marketing contexts (Onofrei et al., 2022).

The presence of influencers can amplify the impact of short-form video gratifications on consumer outcomes. When influencer credibility and relatability are high, consumers are more likely to perceive the content as authentic and valuable, thus reinforcing engagement and perceived value (Ao et al., 2023; Gu & Duan, 2024). Therefore, e-influencers are expected to function as moderating variables, enhancing the positive effects of video gratifications on both engagement and perceived value.

H5: E-influencer moderates the relationship between short-form video gratifications and consumer engagement.

H6: E-influencer moderates the relationship between short-form video gratifications and perceived value.

In light of the reviewed theories and empirical evidence, the relationships proposed in this study are synthesized into a conceptual framework that integrates short-form video gratifications, consumer engagement, perceived value, purchase intention, and the moderating role of e-influencers. Drawing on the U&G theory, S-O-R model, and COBRA framework, the model illustrates how the gratifications derived from short-form videos act as stimuli influencing engagement and perceived value, which in turn drive purchase intention. Moreover, the inclusion of e-influencer as a moderator reflects the growing importance of influencer credibility in shaping consumer responses to digital content. This conceptual framework provides a comprehensive foundation for examining the psychological and behavioral mechanisms underlying consumer engagement and purchase intention in the context of short-form video marketing.

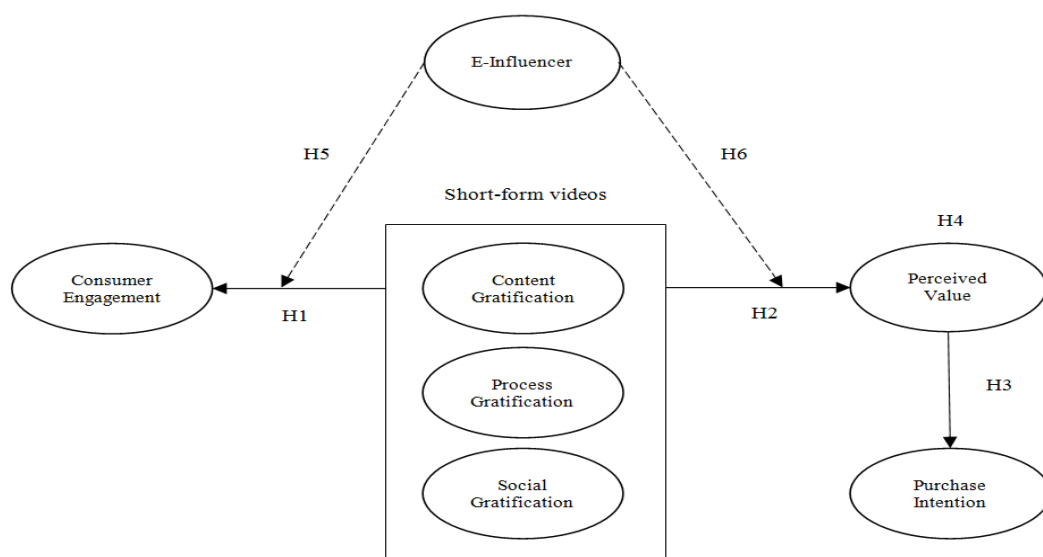


Figure no. 1: *Conceptual Framework of the Study*
(Source: By the authors)

2. Methodology

2.1. Participants

A total of 690 valid participants took part in the quantitative phase of this study. Respondents were active social media users aged 18 years and older, with a primary focus on the 18-30 age group, which represents the most active consumers of short-form video (SFV) content on platforms such as TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts. Participants were recruited through a judgmental sampling method, which allowed the researcher to target individuals most likely to provide relevant insights. Recruitment occurred online between May 2 and May 12, 2025,

using email and social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp to distribute the survey link.

The survey, created in Microsoft Forms, was available in Arabic, French, and English to ensure accessibility and inclusivity. Participation was voluntary, and no compensation was provided. Out of 717 responses initially collected, 27 were removed due to invalidity, resulting in 690 valid responses. The sample included 51% females and 49% males. Most respondents were university students or young professionals. This demographic reflects the digital-native population most familiar with short-form video culture.

Table no. 1
Sample Information

Variable	Category	Number of People	Percentage
Short-Form Video Consumption Status	Watch SFVs	690	96.23%
	Do not watch SFVs	27	3.77%
	Total	717	100%
Gender	Male	203	29.42%
	Female	487	70.58%
	Total	690	100%
Age	Under 18 years old	21	3.04%
	18–24 years old	585	84.78%
	25–34 years old	46	6.67%
	35–44 years old	21	3.04%
	45–54 years old	9	1.30%
	55 years and above	8	1.16%
	Total	690	100%
Level of Education	High school or less	61	8.84%
	Some college	203	29.42%
	Licence	97	14.06%
	Master	308	44.64%
	Doctorate	21	3.04%
	Total	690	100%
Employment Status	Student	591	85.65%
	Employed	48	6.96%
	Unemployed	33	4.78%
	Self-employed	18	2.61%
	Total	690	100%

Variable	Category	Number of People	Percentage
Favorite Content Type	Short-form videos	478	69.28%
	Long-form videos	157	22.75%
	Text content	37	5.36%
	Images	17	2.46%
	GIFs	1	0.14%
	Total	690	100%
Favorite Platforms*	Instagram Reels	540	78.37%
	TikTok	341	49.49%
	Facebook Reels	139	20.17%
	YouTube Shorts	127	18.43%

* Multiple responses allowed for “Favorite Platforms”. Percentages do not total 100%.
(Source: By the authors)

For the follow-up phase, four semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants who had disagreed with the statement “*I watch short-form videos that include e-influencers I like*”. All participants were between 18 and 25 years old and reported regular use of short-form video platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube Shorts.

2.2. Research Design

The study adopted a mixed-methods approach using an explanatory sequential design which integrates quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. The quantitative phase served as the core component and tested the hypothesized relationships among six latent variables: short-form video gratifications (independent variables), consumer engagement and purchase intention (dependent variables), perceived value (mediator), and e-influencer presence (moderator). The subsequent qualitative phase followed to provide additional insights and explanations for unexpected results observed in the survey analysis.

Short-form video gratifications, grounded in the Uses and Gratifications (U&G) framework (Katz et al., 1974), included three main dimensions: content gratification, process gratification, and social gratification. Content gratification captured the informational or utilitarian

value derived from SFVs, process gratification reflected entertainment and enjoyment, and social gratification represented the interaction and connection users experienced with others through video content. Each gratification construct was measured with multiple reflective indicators on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 7 (“strongly agree”).

Consumer engagement and purchase intention were treated as dependent variables. Consumer engagement referred to the psychological and behavioral involvement of viewers with SFV content, including liking, commenting, or sharing, and was measured using established scales from Husnain & Toor (2017). Purchase intention represented the consumer’s likelihood or willingness to purchase products featured in short-form videos. Perceived value, adapted from Wu & Zhang (2024), was introduced as a mediating variable, capturing consumers’ assessment of the overall benefits of their SFV experience. Finally, the e-influencer variable acted as a moderator, reflecting how the presence of digital influencers in videos affected consumer engagement and perceived value (Jamil et al., 2023). Together, these variables formed the structural model analyzed through Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM).

2.3. Materials

Participants interacted with an online self-administered questionnaire designed to measure all constructs in the proposed conceptual framework. The survey included three main sections. The first section contained screening questions that verified participants' regular use of short-form video platforms. The second section consisted of the main measurement items corresponding to each construct: gratifications, perceived value, engagement, purchase intention, and e-influencer influence. The third section collected demographic information such as gender, age, education, and occupation.

All scale items were adapted from validated sources to ensure construct validity and reliability. A seven-point Likert scale was used consistently across all constructs to enhance comparability and capture subtle differences in attitudes. The questionnaire was translated into Arabic and French. A two-stage pilot test was conducted to refine the instrument. The first pilot (n = 20) assessed item clarity, leading to minor wording revisions, while the second pilot (n = 24) confirmed the questionnaire's structure, flow, and average completion time of under five minutes.

Table no. 2
Measurement Scale Used in this Study

Constructs		Measurement Items	References
Content Gratification	information seeking	1. Short-form video content gives me useful information 2. Short-form video content lets me know what is going on in society	(Kamboj, 2019) (Rathnayake & Winter, 2018)
	entertainment seeking	1. Short-form video content is fun 2. Short-form video content provides more entertaining information than other content	
	trends following	1. I like trendy content on short-form videos	Personal efforts based on literature review
Process Gratification	tension release	1. Watching short-form videos helps me relieve boredom 2. Watching short-form video enables me to escape from pressures	(Chen et al., 2022) (Jang & Liu, 2019) (Wang, 2018)
	killing time	1. Watching short-form videos helps me kill time 2. Watching short-form videos is just a habit, just something I do	
Social Gratification	algorithmic delivery	1. I like that the algorithm only delivers content that interests me 2. I appreciate that the quality of the video recommendations improves as I react to the videos	(Ko et al., 2005) (Gan, 2015) (Papacharissi, 2002)
Social gratification	social interaction	1. Short-form videos are a good place for me to interact and socialize with others	(Ko et al., 2005)
		2. I see the reactions of others (likes, comments, video shares...)	
		3. I wonder what other people have said in comments	
		4. I share what I have watched with my family and friends	
		5. I watch the videos my friends and family have sent me	

Constructs		Measurement Items	References
Consumer engagement	passive engagement	1. I watch short-form videos 2. I feel engaged when I watch short-form videos	(Husnain & Toor, 2017) (Mardhatilah et al., 2023)
	active engagement	1. I use the “like” button on short-form videos 2. I comment on short-form videos 3. I share short-form videos	
Perceived value		1. Watching short-form videos that feature products helps me understand those products	(Wu & Zhang, 2024) (Fan et al., 2024)
	perceived usefulness	2. Products presented in short-form videos seem very practical and useful. 3. Watching short-form videos is helpful for my purchase decision	
	perceived risk	1. Watching short videos helps me reduce the risk of buying a product that doesn't meet my needs 2. Watching short videos helps me reduce my financial risk	
Purchase intention		1. I intend to purchase products featured on short videos	(Wu & Zhang, 2024) (Jiang & Chen, 2024)
The role of influencer		1. I usually watch short-form videos that include influencers	(Jamil et al., 2023)

(Source: By the authors)

In addition to the quantitative survey, a semi-structured interview guide was developed for the qualitative phase. The guide was created in collaboration with a qualitative research expert from IMMAR Maghreb, ensuring professional rigor and contextual relevance. It was divided into four sections that explored participants' general SFV habits, exposure to influencer-related content, perceptions of the term “influencer”, and their understanding of authentic influence. The interviews were conducted in Darija (Algerian dialect), interspersed with Arabic and French, and were recorded and transcribed for analysis.

2.4. Procedure

The study began with the quantitative phase, where participants accessed the online survey link distributed via social media. Upon clicking the link, participants read an informed consent statement explaining the

study's purpose, anonymity, and voluntary nature. After agreeing, they completed screening questions confirming active SFV use before proceeding to the main questionnaire. Items appeared one at a time on-screen, and participants could complete the survey at their own pace. Responses were automatically recorded and exported into SmartPLS version 4.1.1.2 for statistical analysis.

The data analysis followed the standard PLS-SEM procedure as outlined by Hair et al. (2021). The process began with model specification, defining both measurement (construct-indicator relationships) models and the structural (hypothesized relationships). The PLS algorithm was then applied to estimate parameters, including indicator loadings, latent variable scores, and structural path coefficients. Measurement model evaluation focused on indicator reliability, internal consistency (factor loadings and composite

reliability), convergent validity (Average Variance Extracted), and discriminant validity using the HTMT criterion. The structural model was assessed by examining path coefficients, bootstrapping significance (10,000 samples), and predictive metrics such as R^2 and Q^2_{predict} . This sequence ensured that both reliability and predictive accuracy were established before interpretation.

Following the quantitative analysis, a qualitative follow-up was conducted to clarify one unexpected finding: nearly half of survey respondents reported not watching influencer-related SFVs, which contrasted with prior studies. To explore this discrepancy, four young Algerian SFV users aged 18-24 were purposively selected for in-depth interviews. The interviews were held in person at IMMAR Maghreb's qualitative research center and lasted approximately 15-20 minutes each.

The data were analyzed using Braun & Clarke's (2006) six-step thematic analysis approach, including familiarization, coding, theme generation, theme review, definition, and reporting. Initial coding combined manual interpretation with AI-assisted auto-coding in ATLAS.ti to enhance efficiency. Themes were reviewed iteratively to ensure coherence and relevance to the research objectives.

3. Results

3.1. Hypotheses testing

Measurement Model Assessment

Several reliability and validity issues were revealed during the initial assessment of the measurement model. Out of the original 21 items, 13 had factor loadings were below the recommended threshold of 0.70, with 3 of them below 0.60. In addition, when it comes to convergent validity, 3 out of 5 constructs had an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value below the threshold of 0.50. Discriminant validity was also a concern, as there was particularly a high correlation (0.938) between the constructs of social gratification and engagement, exceeding the 0.90.

Based on Hair et al. (2021), Indicators with weaker outer loadings (between 0.40 and 0.70) should be considered for removal only when deleting them increases the construct's internal consistency reliability or convergent validity above the suggested threshold value. In order to improve the measurement model, five items were removed, and they were: CG1, CG2, SG4, CE1, and CE4. After these adjustments, the revised model included 16 indicators, and all reliability and validity issues were resolved, as will be demonstrated in the following analysis.

Indicator Loadings

All indicators loaded significantly on their respective constructs, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2021). Two indicators (PG2 = .696, CE5 = .675) were slightly below this level but retained for content validity. All loadings were significant at $p < .001$.

Internal Consistency Reliability

Composite reliability (CR) values ranged from .755 to .839, surpassing the .70 threshold (Hair et al., 2021). This indicates satisfactory internal consistency. CR values below .90 also confirm the absence of item redundancy.

Convergent Validity

Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values ranged from .507 to .635, meeting the minimum criterion of .50. This indicates that the constructs explain more than 50% of the variance in their indicators.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Heterotrait–Monotrait ratio (HTMT). All HTMT values were below .85, except for one between social gratification and consumer engagement (.854), which was below the conservative .90 threshold, confirming acceptable discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015). A bootstrapping test (5,000 resamples) confirmed that none of the 90% confidence interval upper bounds exceeded 1.00, providing additional evidence of discriminant validity.

Table no. 3*Results of validity and internal consistency testing*

Latent Variable	Indicator	Factor Loading	Indicator Reliability	Composite Reliability (ρ_C)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
CON_GRA	CG2	0.78	0.608	0.787	0.552
	CG3	0.72	0.518		
	CG5	0.727	0.529		
POC_GRA	PG1	0.754	0.569	0.823	0.537
	PG2	0.696	0.484		
	PG3	0.719	0.518		
	PG4	0.761	0.58		
SOC_GRA	SG1	0.737	0.543	0.76	0.514
	SG2	0.707	0.5		
	SG3	0.706	0.5		
CON_ENG	CE2	0.744	0.554	0.755	0.507
	CE3	0.715	0.511		
	CE5	0.675	0.456		
PER_VAL	PV1	0.731	0.534	0.839	0.635
	PV2	0.847	0.717		
	PV3	0.809	0.655		
PUR_INT	PI	1	1	1	1
E_INFLU	IN	1	1	1	1
E_INFLU $\times$ CON_GRA	Interaction Term	1	1	–	–
E_INFLU $\times$ POC_GRA	Interaction Term	1	1	–	–
E_INFLU $\times$ SOC_GRA	Interaction Term	1	1	–	–

(Source: By the authors)

Table no. 4*HTMT Ratios and Confidence Intervals for Discriminant Validity*

First construct	Second construct	HTMT value	90% Confidence interval
CON_GRA	CON_ENG	0.719	0.812
E_INFLU	CON_ENG	0.409	0.473
E_INFLU	CON_GRA	0.395	0.459
PER_VAL	CON_ENG	0.631	0.709
PER_VAL	CON_GRA	0.663	0.726
PER_VAL	E_INFLU	0.385	0.441
POC_GRA	CON_ENG	0.67	0.749
POC_GRA	CON_GRA	0.76	0.824
POC_GRA	E_INFLU	0.391	0.446
POC_GRA	PER_VAL	0.552	0.613
PUR_INT	CON_ENG	0.488	0.548
PUR_INT	CON_GRA	0.385	0.448
PUR_INT	E_INFLU	0.342	0.39

First construct	Second construct	HTMT value	90% Confidence interval
PUR_INT	PER_VAL	0.698	0.741
PUR_INT	POC_GRA	0.399	0.452
SOC_GRA	CON_ENG	0.854	0.94
SOC_GRA	CON_GRA	0.699	0.774
SOC_GRA	E_INFLU	0.457	0.517
SOC_GRA	PER_VAL	0.54	0.614
SOC_GRA	POC_GRA	0.67	0.733
SOC_GRA	PUR_INT	0.324	0.39

(Source: By the authors)

3.2. Structural Model Assessment
Collinearity Diagnostics
Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were calculated to test multicollinearity. All VIF values were well below the critical value of 3.00, indicating no collinearity concerns.

Table no. 5
VIF Values for Testing Collinearity among Predictor Constructs

Predictor Construct	Endogenous Construct	VIF
CON_GRA	CON_ENG	1.425
CON_GRA	PER_VAL	1.425
CON_GRA	PUR_INT	1.511
POC_GRA	CON_ENG	1.467
POC_GRA	PER_VAL	1.467
POC_GRA	PUR_INT	1.473
SOC_GRA	CON_ENG	1.364
SOC_GRA	PER_VAL	1.364
SOC_GRA	PUR_INT	1.338
PER_VAL	PUR_INT	1.339
E_INFLU	CON_ENG	1.215
E_INFLU	PER_VAL	1.215
E_INFLU x CON_GRA	CON_ENG	1.322
E_INFLU x CON_GRA	PER_VAL	1.322
E_INFLU x POC_GRA	CON_ENG	1.338
E_INFLU x POC_GRA	PER_VAL	1.338
E_INFLU x SOC_GRA	CON_ENG	1.246
E_INFLU x SOC_GRA	PER_VAL	1.246

(Source: By the authors)

Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

A two-tailed bootstrapping procedure (5,000 subsamples) was conducted to test the significance of path coefficients.

All three gratification types, content ($\beta = .175$, $t = 4.14$, $p < .001$), process ($\beta = .172$, $t = 3.82$, $p < .001$), and social ($\beta = .286$, $t = 7.21$, $p < .001$), significantly predicted consumer engagement. Similarly, they all significantly predicted perceived value: content ($\beta = .266$, $t = 6.23$, $p < .001$), process ($\beta = .169$, $t = 3.79$, $p < .001$), and social ($\beta = .118$, $t = 2.87$, $p = .004$). Perceived value, in turn, significantly predicted

purchase intention ($\beta = .542$, $t = 14.49$, $p < .001$).

Perceived value significantly mediated the relationship between gratifications and purchase intention for all three types: content ($\beta = .144$, $t = 5.72$, $p < .001$), process ($\beta = .091$, $t = 3.69$, $p < .001$), and social ($\beta = .064$, $t = 2.78$, $p = .006$).

Moderating effects of e-influencer were tested using interaction terms. Only one interaction, between social gratification and e-influencer on consumer engagement, was significant ($\beta = .082$, $t = 2.23$, $p = .026$). All other interaction terms were nonsignificant ($p > .05$).

Table no. 6
Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Path	Path Coefficient	t-Value	p-Value	Result
H1	CON_GRA → CON_ENG	0.175	4.140	0.000	Supported
	POC_GRA → CON_ENG	0.172	3.815	0.000	
	SOC_GRA → CON_ENG	0.286	7.210	0.000	
H2	CON_GRA → PER_VAL	0.266	6.229	0.000	Supported
	POC_GRA → PER_VAL	0.169	3.791	0.000	
	SOC_GRA → PER_VAL	0.118	2.868	0.004	
H3	PER_VAL → PUR_INT	0.542	14.494	0.000	Supported
H4	CON_GRA → PER_VAL → PUR_INT	0.144	5.723	0.000	Supported
	POC_GRA → PER_VAL → PUR_INT	0.091	3.689	0.000	
	SOC_GRA → PER_VAL → PUR_INT	0.064	2.777	0.006	
H5	E_INFLU x CON_GRA → CON_ENG	-0.064	1.471	0.141	Not supported
	E_INFLU x POC_GRA → CON_ENG	-0.025	0.580	0.562	
	E_INFLU x SOC_GRA → CON_ENG	0.082	2.233	0.026	
H6	E_INFLU x CON_GRA → PER_VAL	-0.013	0.302	0.763	Not supported
	E_INFLU x POC_GRA → PER_VAL	0.034	0.734	0.463	
	E_INFLU x SOC_GRA → PER_VAL	0.041	0.996	0.319	

(Source: By the authors)

Identification of Mediation Types

To determine mediation type, direct paths were tested. Direct effects for content ($\beta = .006$, $t = .158$, $p = .874$) and social gratification ($\beta = .002$, $t = .045$, $p = .964$) were nonsignificant, indicating

indirect-only mediation. Process gratification showed both a significant direct ($\beta = .120$, $t = 2.80$, $p = .005$) and indirect effect, suggesting complementary mediation (see Table no. 4).

Table no. 7*Mediation Analysis Results and Mediation Types*

Path	Path Coefficient	<i>t</i> -Statistics	<i>p</i> -Values	Mediation Type
CON_GRA → PUR_INT	0.006	0.158	0.874	Direct-only Mediation
SOC_GRA → PUR_INT	0.002	0.045	0.964	
POC_GRA → PUR_INT	0.120	2.803	0.005	Complimentary Mediation

(Source: By the authors)

Model Explanatory Power

Coefficients of determination (R^2) indicated that predictor constructs explained 31.1% of the variance in consumer engagement ($R^2 = .311$, $t = 9.65$, $p < .001$), 27.6% of perceived value ($R^2 = .276$, $t =$

9.24, $p < .001$), and 36.4% of purchase intention ($R^2 = .364$, $t = 10.75$, $p < .001$). These results, displayed in Table no. 6, reflect moderate to strong explanatory power for psychological and behavioral constructs.

Table no. 8*Coefficients of Determination (R^2) for Endogenous Constructs*

Endogenous Construct	R^2 Value	<i>t</i> -Statistics	<i>p</i> -Values
CON_ENG	0.311	9.648	0.000
PER_VAL	0.276	9.243	0.000
PUR_INT	0.364	10.747	0.000

(Source By the authors)

Predictive Power

The model's predictive validity was evaluated using the PLSpredict procedure (10-fold cross-validation, 10 repetitions). Q^2 predict values were greater than zero for all indicators, confirming predictive relevance. RMSE values were compared between the PLS-SEM model and a linear regression (LM) benchmark. For consumer engagement,

PLS-SEM RMSE values were consistently lower than LM, indicating high predictive power. For perceived value, only one indicator (PV1) showed a lower PLS-SEM RMSE, suggesting low predictive power. For purchase intention, PLS-SEM RMSE was higher than LM, indicating no predictive power.

Table no. 9*Predictive Power Indicators*

Indicator	Q^2 predict	PLS-SEM_RMSE	LM_RMSE	Predictive Power
CE2	0.203	1.593	1.614	High Predictive Power
CE3	0.12	1.991	2.006	
CE5	0.11	1.847	1.85	
PV1	0.16	1.608	1.608	Low Predictive Power
PV2	0.188	1.671	1.667	
PV3	0.136	1.812	1.779	
PI	0.156	1.679	1.654	Lacks Predictive Power

(Source: By the authors)

Overall, the quantitative results demonstrated statistically significant relationships among most constructs and

supported the majority of hypotheses (H1-H4), with limited evidence for moderation effects (H5-H6).

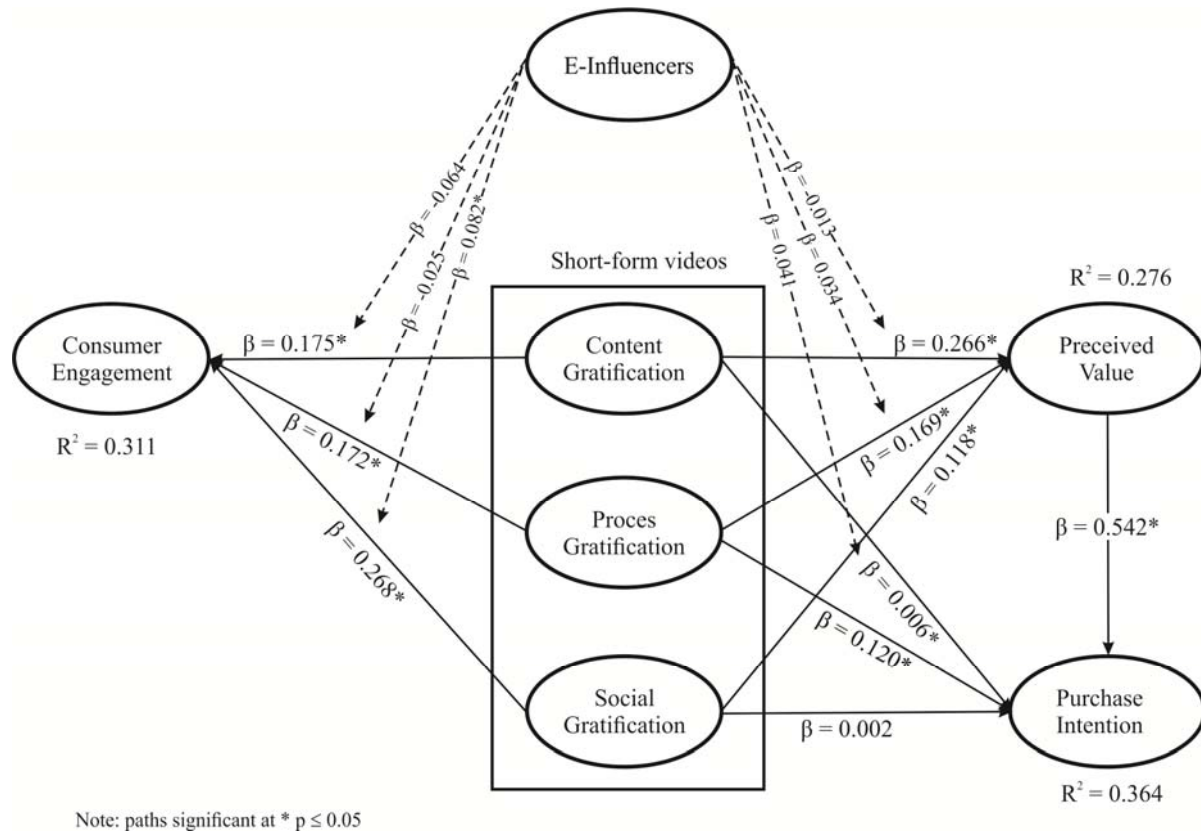


Figure no. 2: Results of the PLS-SEM Structural Model Analysis
(Source: By the authors)

Qualitative Follow-Up Investigation

Following the quantitative analysis, a qualitative phase was conducted to explore the unexpected non-significance of most moderating effects involving e-influencer. The aim was to identify how participants understood the concept of “influencer” and whether this interpretation affected their survey responses. This follow-up phase adopted an explanatory sequential design. Data were transcribed and analyzed thematically following Braun & Clarke’s (2006) framework, resulting in four primary themes.

Theme 1: Short-Form Video Usage

All participants reported daily use of short-form video (SFV) platforms, typically one to four hours on weekdays and longer on weekends, mostly between 4 p.m. and

midnight. TikTok and Instagram were the most used platforms. Participants described their viewing as both habitual and purposeful, primarily for entertainment, relaxation, or information. Preferred content included comedy, lifestyle, travel, and educational videos. TikTok was praised for its personalized recommendations, while Instagram was described as more commercial.

Theme 2: Perceptions of “Influencer”

Across all interviews, the term “influencer” generated negative reactions. Participants associated it with advertising, self-promotion, and superficiality. Algerian influencers, in particular, were described as lacking professionalism or meaningful content, while foreign influencers were viewed as more creative and educational.

Typical comments included: “Advertising, that’s the first thing I think of”, and “Anyone can open a channel and be called an influencer”. This consistent skepticism suggested that the label itself carried unfavorable connotations.

Theme 3: “Influencer” vs. “Content Creator”

Participants consistently distinguished between “influencer” and “content creator”. The latter term was linked to authenticity and creativity, while “influencer” implied fame without substance. All interviewees preferred the term “content creator” to describe individuals they respected. Several suggested alternatives, domain-specific labels such as “comedian”, “makeup artist”, or “vlogger”. Statements such as “A content

creator actually creates something; an influencer might not” captured the overall sentiment.

Theme 4: Redefining the Influencer

When presented with a neutral definition of “influencer” as a person who creates content and influences audiences through information or entertainment, participants identified local figures they followed and trusted, including Fouad Maalla, Khoubeib, Rifka, and Duks. These individuals were described as credible, informative, and capable of shaping opinions or purchase decisions. Comments such as “If Fouad advertised something, I’d be convinced” indicated that participants did engage with influencer-type content, even if they initially rejected the label.

Table no. 10
Results of the Qualitative Follow-up

Theme	Illustrative Quotes	Main Findings
Theme 01: Short-Form Video Usage Among Participants	“I usually watch them when I’m relaxing... from around 10–11 AM and again at night from 11 to midnight.” (Int.1) “From around 7 PM until I go to bed... sometimes the whole day on weekends.” (Int.3) “From around 4 PM to 7 PM, then again from 10 PM to midnight.” (Int.4) “I like comedy, drama, and travel vlogs, TikTok shows me what I like.” (Int.4) “On TikTok, I find religious and informative content. On Instagram, I get ads or random videos.” (Int.1)	• All participants were active short-form video users (mainly TikTok & Instagram). • Viewing routines are habitual and purpose-driven (relaxation, entertainment, information). • Weekday use mostly in evenings; longer sessions on weekends. • Content preferences vary (religious, educational, comedy, lifestyle). • TikTok praised for algorithmic accuracy; Instagram seen as superficial.
Theme 02: Perception of the Term “Influencer” and Its Reputation in Algeria	“Advertising. That’s just what came to mind.” (Int.3) “Commerce, advertising, influence, opinion, society.” (Int.1) “It’s a broad and vague term. Nowadays, anyone can open a channel with or without content and be called an influencer.” (Int.2) “Foreign influencers make more educational content. Algerians do drama and things like that.” (Int.3) “When you see their videos, they lack content, goals, ideas... that’s where the bad image comes from.” (Int.2) “Most of them? I don’t like them. Especially the female influencers.” (Int.1)	• The term “influencer” carries negative connotations, linked to advertising, superficiality, and lack of authenticity. • Algerian influencers viewed more negatively than foreign ones. • Participants believe Algerian content lacks depth and originality. • Rejection of influencers is often tied to the label itself, not actual avoidance of influencer content.

Theme	Illustrative Quotes	Main Findings
Theme 03: Influencer vs Content Creator and Alternative Labels	“A content creator actually creates the content themselves. An influencer might not.” (Int.1) “When you think of ‘content creator’, you expect content. But when you hear ‘influencer’, content is not the first thing that comes to mind.” (Int.2) “It’s better to say ‘content creator’, ‘influencer’ feels a bit cliché.” (Int.2) “If brands want to use influencers, they should present them as content creators.” (Int.4)	• Participants draw a clear distinction between “influencer” (commercial, superficial) and “content creator” (authentic, professional). • Prefer “content creator” for credible figures. • Suggest using occupation-based labels (e.g., comedian, vlogger, makeup artist). • Language strongly shapes credibility and perception.
Theme 04: Redefining the Influencer – Recognizing Authentic Influence	“Yes, the ones I already mentioned, especially Fouad and Duks.” (Int.1) “Khoubeib, Djamel Mohamed Taleb... those are the first names that came to mind.” (Int.2) “If Fouad were to advertise something to me, I’d be convinced.” (Int.1) “The word ‘influencer’ suits them, they deserve it because they have an impact on society.” (Int.1) “For me, yes, Rifka and Ines Beauty deserve the title.” (Int.4)	• When reframed neutrally, participants identified respected Algerian influencers (e.g., Fouad Maalla, Khoubeib, Rifka, Duks). • These figures seen as credible, authentic, and socially impactful. • Participants follow influencers but reject the negative label. • Indicates that perception, not behavior, drives rejection of “influencers.”

(Source: By the authors)

Summary of Qualitative Findings

All interviewees were active SFV users and familiar with influencer content. However, they displayed strong aversion to the word “influencer”, often equating it with superficiality and poor credibility. When the term was reframed neutrally, the same individuals acknowledged following and trusting several Algerian creators who fit the intended definition of e-influencers.

These findings clarify the quantitative results: the weak moderation effects of e-influencer may stem not from a lack of influencer impact but from semantic bias in participants’ understanding of the term. In the Algerian context, “influencer” appears culturally loaded and negatively perceived, affecting how respondents report their engagement behaviors.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

4.1. Summary of Main Findings

This study set out to examine how short-form video (SFV) gratifications influence consumer engagement and purchase intention, considering perceived value as a mediator and e-influencer as a moderator. Using a mixed-methods approach that combined quantitative analysis (PLS-SEM) with a qualitative follow-up, the results offered an integrated view of how audiences interact with SFV content in the Algerian digital context.

The quantitative results confirmed that all three forms of gratification, content, process, and social, positively affected both consumer engagement and perceived value. Among these, social gratification emerged as the most powerful driver of engagement, indicating that when people watch short-form videos to connect with others or express themselves socially, they tend to like, comment on, or share the content more

actively. Content gratification, in contrast, exerted the strongest effect on perceived value, showing that viewers who find value in the substance and quality of videos are more likely to form positive evaluations of the product or brand featured.

The relationship between perceived value and purchase intention was also highly significant, confirming that perceived value plays a direct and decisive role in shaping consumers' purchase intentions. In other words, when viewers form a favorable evaluation of the product featured in a short-form video, they become more likely to develop an intention to buy it. This emphasizes that it is not merely the act of watching short-form videos that drives purchase intention, but rather the positive perception of the product's value that viewers construct as a result.

Further, perceived value acted as a mediator in the relationship between gratifications and purchase intention. For content and social gratification, the mediation was indirect-only, suggesting that these forms of gratification influence purchase intention exclusively through perceived value. In contrast, process gratification (the enjoyment or relaxation derived from the process of watching) exhibited both direct and indirect effects, indicating a complementary mediation, viewers motivated by process-related gratifications can form purchase intentions even without fully evaluating the product, while perceived value reinforces this effect.

The moderating effects of e-influencer were more nuanced. Only one moderating path was statistically significant: the presence of e-influencers strengthened the link between social gratification and consumer engagement. This implies that influencers play a role in amplifying social interaction motives, viewers who seek connection may engage more actively when an influencer is involved. However, all other moderation effects were nonsignificant, contradicting

expectations based on prior literature that emphasized influencers' impact on consumer perceptions and purchase intentions.

Finally, the qualitative phase provided critical context for understanding these unexpected moderation results. Interviews revealed that many participants associated the term "influencer" with superficiality or low-quality content, particularly in the Algerian context. When the term was reframed neutrally, participants acknowledged following and trusting several Algerian figures who fit that definition. This finding indicates that the lack of significant moderation effects may be due less to the actual influence of these figures and more to negative perceptions associated with the label "influencer".

4.2. Interpretation and Theoretical Implications

The findings carry important implications for understanding how audiences derive value and engagement from short-form videos. The results reinforce the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) by confirming that consumers engage with media to satisfy specific needs, informational, social, and emotional, and that these gratifications shape their behavioral outcomes.

From a theoretical standpoint, this study extends UGT by integrating perceived value as a mediating psychological mechanism within the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework. The gratifications act as external stimuli (S), perceived value represents the internal evaluation process (O), and engagement and purchase intention serve as behavioral responses (R). This structure clarifies the path through which user motivations translate into consumer decisions. The confirmation of mediation across all three gratification types strengthens the conceptual alignment between UGT and the S-O-R model, showing that internal

cognitive evaluations are essential in transforming media use into market-relevant behavior.

The differentiation between indirect-only and complementary mediation further refines our understanding of these relationships. While content and social gratifications require cognitive evaluation (perceived value) to drive purchase intention, process gratification can evoke behavioral responses more directly. This distinction underscores that not all gratifications operate through the same psychological mechanisms, some are more affective and immediate, while others depend on cognitive processing.

The study also contributes to the growing literature on digital influence by highlighting how local cultural interpretations can affect the conceptual validity of constructs like “influencer”. While prior studies in Western or Asian contexts have found influencers to be powerful moderators of online consumer behavior, this research reveals that cultural reputation and linguistic framing can significantly alter audience perceptions. In Algeria, the term “influencer” carries negative social connotations, leading participants to disassociate from the label even when they actively follow influential creators. This insight invites a re-examination of influencer-based models in regions where social norms or terminology may distort respondents’ self-reported behaviors.

Finally, predictive power assessment revealed high predictive power for consumer engagement, low predictive power for perceived value, and no predictive power for purchase intention. This suggests that while the model can effectively anticipate engagement behaviors, it struggles to predict more complex psychological concepts such as perceptions or purchase-related behaviors like intentions, which are likely influenced by additional variables beyond the scope of this study.

4.3. Practical Implications

The findings also hold direct implications for marketers, strategists, and digital creators seeking to optimize short-form video strategies. First, the clear distinction between types of gratification offers actionable insights for content design. Since process gratification (entertainment and relaxation) is the most common reason people watch SFVs, brands seeking broad reach and attention should prioritize videos that maximize enjoyment, visual appeal, and rhythm, elements that align with platform algorithms and sustain view duration.

However, if the goal is to enhance brand perception or product evaluation, marketers should focus on content gratification, emphasizing substance, usefulness, or storytelling that shape perceived value. Videos that inform, educate, and entertain in a meaningful way are more likely to strengthen positive attitudes and perceived utility.

Importantly, directly targeting purchase intention may be less effective. Instead, brands should aim to shape perceived value first, as this study found it to be the most consistent predictor of purchase intention. Viewers are more likely to buy when they perceive genuine value or authenticity.

The findings concerning e-influencers also suggest that terminology and cultural sensitivity matter in influencer marketing. In contexts like Algeria, where the word “influencer” has gained negative connotations, brands should consider presenting collaborators as “content creators” or “experts”, emphasizing their creativity and authenticity.

Finally, because social gratification was the strongest driver of engagement, campaigns that encourage interaction, through challenges, comments, or user-generated content, can significantly enhance participation. Creating opportunities for viewers to connect or

express themselves socially may yield higher engagement rates than passive viewing strategies.

4.4. Study Limitations

Despite its valuable contributions, several limitations should be considered when interpreting these findings.

First, the sample composition was dominated by university students and young adults aged 18-24. Although this group represents the most active users of short-form video platforms, it limits the generalizability of results to the broader Algerian population, which includes older and more socioeconomically diverse viewers.

Second, the study employed a judgmental sampling method, which is appropriate for exploratory research but does not ensure representativeness. Consequently, the observed relationships should be interpreted as indicative rather than definitive.

Third, two constructs, purchase intention and e-influencer, were measured using single-item indicators. This approach was chosen to maintain participant attention and minimize survey fatigue, yet it may have reduced the measurement precision for these key variables. Future research should include multi-item scales to capture these constructs' multidimensional nature more reliably.

Another notable limitation concerns construct interpretation bias, particularly regarding the term "influencer". The qualitative phase revealed that Algerian participants associated this label with superficial or commercialized figures, which led some to disassociate themselves from content they actually consumed. This semantic bias likely influenced self-reported measures in the survey.

Finally, the study adopted a cross-industry approach rather than focusing on a specific sector or product type. While this enhances the general applicability of findings, it may overlook sector-specific dynamics that shape consumer reactions.

4.5. Future Research Directions

Building upon these limitations, several directions are suggested for future research.

First, future studies should aim to include more demographically diverse samples, incorporating participants from various age groups, professions, and regions, to test whether the observed patterns hold across broader audiences.

Second, researchers could extend the model by integrating additional psychological and contextual variables such as brand trust, perceived authenticity, parasocial relationships, and device type (e.g., smartphone versus desktop viewing). This would provide a more complete understanding of the factors that influence consumer engagement and purchase intention in digital video contexts.

Third, it is recommended to conduct cross-platform comparative studies, exploring whether gratifications, perceived value, and influencer effects differ across TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts. Such comparisons could uncover platform-specific mechanisms that shape user behavior and inform platform-tailored marketing strategies.

Another promising avenue involves the cultural adaptation of constructs. Since this study demonstrated that the meaning of "influencer" varies significantly across cultural contexts, future research should seek to develop localized measurement scales that better reflect how audiences interpret labels within their own sociocultural environments.

Finally, future research could investigate sector-specific applications of short-form video marketing, such as fashion, travel, or technology industries, to determine whether the relative influence of gratifications and perceived value differs by product category. This would enhance the practical relevance of findings for businesses seeking to design effective SFV-based marketing strategies.

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