

TikTok MADE ME BUY IT! CONSUMER MOTIVATIONS AND
PURCHASING BEHAVIOR DURING COVID-19

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Using Mehrabian and Russell's stimulus (S) - organism (O) - response (R) model, this study examined consumer motivations to consume user-generated content (UGC) and sponsored video content on social media during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study also investigated the impact of information consumption on purchasing behavior as the main constructs. The study used the consumption patterns of active and passive social media users to further understand the level of short-form video consumption related to purchasing behavior. Grounded upon the SOR theory, this study measured utilitarian and hedonic motivations as stimuli with user-generated content and sponsored content as organism and purchasing behavior as response. A quantitative snowball survey ($n = 289$) was used to collect data from TikTok users to examine the relationships between motivations, types of content, and purchasing behavior. Statistical analyses including descriptive statistics, reliability tests, factor analysis, and multiple regression analyses was used to profile the sample and to test hypothesized relationships. All hypotheses were supported and found to have significant relationships between the independent and dependent variables. This study is useful to those in the fields of information sharing, crisis management, consumer behavior, and retail to develop communication strategies and understand and adapt to consumption habits and changing purchasing behaviors.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Retail businesses and consumers alike suffered unprecedented economic and social disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic. On March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared the COVID-19 outbreak a national emergency (DOD, 2022). On March 15, 2020, New York City, the largest school system (1.1 million students) in the U.S., issued the closure of physical school buildings, and Ohio called for restaurants and bars to close (CDC, 2022). These initial state mandates propelled federal recommendations as well as state ordered mandates regarding closures of non-essential businesses, workplaces, and school districts (Schumaker, 2020).

Communication during the COVID-19 pandemic was critical as people searched for information to understand the virus, its spread, protection, and treatments. In the United States, the percentage of searches related to current events and global news increased by 215% from 2018 (Broad et al., 2020). Social Media platforms are unique in terms of the sources of information available to the user. Social media users can see content from government entities, health agencies, news and media outlets, and from friends and family in one spot. During the initial lockdowns, 83% of U.S. consumers watched the same or an increased amount of short-form video content not only to seek information on COVID-19 but also for entertainment purposes (PRNewswire, 2020).

Many consumers remaining at home without normal levels of social interaction turned to social media platforms to connect to others including colleagues, family, and friends. Social commerce in the United States saw a significant boost to almost \$37 billion from the \$19 billion

pre-pandemic (Monteros, 2021). Social media platform's response to the growing need and interest of social commerce was seen as early as May 2020 with some social media platforms such as Instagram releasing updates allowing businesses to customize the brand's platform appearance (Cohen, 2020). The pandemic impact on social commerce influenced changes in consumers' consumption patterns that influenced the future of social media platforms. The retail industry is beginning to see the integration of ecommerce platforms on social media as well as new collaborations such as the Shopify and TikTok partnership (Perez, 2020). Many factors and motivations impacted increased consumer behavior within social commerce platforms during the pandemic. Generation Z (Gen Z) consumers, those born between 1996 onward (Arbanas et al., 2021) were more likely to act on hedonic motivations because many schools, universities, and recreational activities were closed, leaving this consumer group to turn to social commerce to find excitement and joy (Koch et al., 2020).

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to examine motivations to consume user-generated content (UGC) and sponsored video content on social media during the COVID-19 pandemic. A secondary purpose was to determine the impact of information consumption and social media usage patterns on purchasing behavior.

Operational Definitions

- *Active social media user*: one who engages with social media content (i.e., share, like, comment, or post content on social media) (Lee et al., 2020).
- *Ecommerce*: electronic commerce or internet commerce refers to the buying and

selling of goods or services using the internet and the transfer of money and data to execute these transactions (Business encyclopedia, n.d.).

- *Hedonic motivation*: hedonic values stem from a desire for entertainment, escapism, to seek a bargain, or for the enjoyment of discovery while shopping (Anderson et al., 2014).
- *Passive social media user*: one who only consumes content (i.e., read posts or watch videos on social media) (Lee et al., 2020).
- *Short-form video content*: diverse content that delivers key ideas in a concise manner less than 10 minutes in length, which can be widely diffused and easily accessible anytime, anywhere (Nam, 2021 & PRN Newswire, 2020).
- *Social commerce*: refers to the delivery of e-commerce activities and transactions via the social media environment (Liang, 2011).
- *Sponsored content*: the intentional incorporation of brands, products, or persuasive messages into traditionally noncommercial, editorial content (Müller, 2019).
- *TikTok*: a social media site that focuses on short-form videos rather than on pictures or words and allows users to quickly and easily create and upload up to 1.5-minute videos and share them with friends. “TikTok differentiates from newsfeeds on other social networking apps, as it is not based on who you follow” (Weimann et al., 2020).
- *User-generated content*: UGC is any kind of content produced by a user of free communicative spaces (i.e., online platforms or SNS), made accessible publicly (Raza et al, 2021).
- *Utilitarian motivation*: utilitarian motivations stem from a desire to be efficient and rational in task-oriented efforts when purchasing products (Anderson et al., 2014).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Disruptive Events

A disruptive event is a situation that leads to a profound change regarding the unit analyzed (Dahlhamer et al., 1998). There are three types of disruptive events when discussing crisis situations: natural disasters, terrorism, and disease outbreaks. These three types of disruptive events are categorized differently due to their impact as well as their effects on consumer behavior. Natural disasters include earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, and typhoons causing damage to infrastructure, economy, and human lives. Natural disasters can be predicted or unexpected. The expectation of a natural disaster can lead to consumer behavioral changes such as stockpiling necessities (Pan et al., 2020). Other consumer behavior includes impulsive, therapeutic, or replacement purchases to cope with losses from the disaster (Delorme et al., 2004). Natural disasters have different impacts at the local, national, or regional levels.

Terrorism affects national, regional, and local levels and is comprised of violent actions by a group with less power that seeks to destabilize a government or dominant organization (Bates et al., 2019). Terrorism impacts human lives, economies, and physical infrastructure. Impacts on consumer behavior from terrorism is relatively short term and induces avoidant behaviors due to higher risk avoidance leading consumers to choose an alternative or substitute consumption option (Herzenstein et al., 2015).

Disease outbreaks in recent decades include SARS, Influenza A, and H1N1. When compared to natural disasters and terrorism, consumer behavior during disease outbreaks has

been less studied. There are two notable consumption behaviors during outbreaks: purchasing necessities and obtaining protective equipment to curb infection inside and outside the home. During the H1N1 and Influenza A outbreaks purchasing protective items and food which included stockpiling goods (Goodwin et al., 2009). Adversely during the SARS outbreak in China consumers altered leisure activities, modes of transportation, and places they visited (Wen et al., 2005).

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic was a disruptive event that impacted human life and economies on a global scale. COVID-19 was characterized by its persistence lasting more than two years (WHO, 2022). Unlike other consumer behavior changes in previous disease outbreaks, COVID-19 saw a significant technological advancement in digital transformations around the world along with purchasing protective gear and leisure goods (Abdel-Basset et al., 2021).

COVID-19 affected macro forces including ecological, political-legal, economic, and socio-culture environments. COVID-19 was most notable in impacting technological and politico-legal environments. Technology advanced exponentially as businesses, employees, and consumers were forced to adapt to the new reality of COVID-19. The adoption of new technology in the transition to e-commerce and business platforms eased shortages and provided additional resources to purchase goods and services (Baicu et al., 2020). Simultaneously, social media usage increased worldwide as individuals interacted and socialized virtually (Pillai et al., 2020; Statista Research Department, 2022; & McClain, 2021).

The politico-legal environment highly impacted economic performances. Governments

enforced laws and regulations that included lockdowns, social distancing, and environmental service closures (Yoo et al., 2020). However, not all governments globally or nationally enforced these lockdown measures (Sheridan et al., 2020). These measures impacted specific sectors and products in the retail space including food and consumer packaged goods that saw an increase in sales (Anastasiadou et al., 2020; Prentice et al., 2020). Some countries and cities saw the strength of trust in the government institutions. Increased confidence in the government by consumers was reflected by less fear of food shortages and less likelihood of engaging in panic buying.

Several micro-environmental factors including interaction with family, friends, society, the media, and companies through technology and digital media became more important during COVID-19. The pandemic provoked fear, loneliness, isolation, and the lack of in-person socialization. The lack of socialization during COVID-19 was due to the closure of non-essential businesses which shifted workers and businesses to work from home. (Liu et al., 2020). Consumers through passive or active seeking measures use information to inform decisions. Social media was a common source of information during the pandemic, and usage increased 21% globally (Dixon, 2022). Highly searched topics on social media included food acquisition and storage, health issues, social distancing, and economic issues (Laguna et al., 2020). The adaption to new technology was vital especially for small businesses allowing them to survive through newly adapted organizational and supply chain technologies and communicating with consumers (LaBerge et al., 2020).

Information during Times of a Disaster

Information is crucial during a time of disaster, and the COVID-19 pandemic was a

unique disaster that had no boundaries and impacted every individual and society around the globe.

COVID-19 information was available through the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website, however many individuals turned to social media platforms instead to seek up to date pandemic related information (Abd-Alrazaq et al., 2020; Farooq et al., 2020). This increase in social media was due to the convenience and availability of up-to-date information (Liu et al., 2011). Social media is convenient because it is easily accessible on mobile devices that provide up-to-date information. Individuals relied on social media for easy access to COVID-19 related health information to evaluate health-related risks (Abbas et al., 2021). Consuming health-related information and offering peer-to-peer support during a time of isolation. Support on social media evokes a sense of caring for others in the network.

According to World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, “We’re not just fighting an epidemic; we’re fighting an infodemic” (Nagler et al., 2020). The term “infodemic” was coined through the progression of the COVID-19 pandemic and is a plethora of information that may or may not be reliable. (WHO, 2020). The idea of an infodemic is not new but is now more complex with the accessibility to technology.

Previous outbreaks of SARS, MERS, influenza, and Ebola have not seen as much digital consumption as the COVID-19 pandemic but also saw quick dissemination of information (Banerjee et al., 2021). During the pandemic, lockdowns forced many people in the United States to stay at home often relying on social media and broadcast television as information sources. Facebook was the most used platform with 78.1% of adults in the United States turning to the social media site for pandemic related information (Tankovska, 2021).

Misinformation can be defined as information that is false or inaccurate and not supported by scientific evidence (Chou, 2018). Global consumption of misinformation increased during the pandemic as consumers learned about the Coronavirus (Volkmer, 2021). Facebook is the center of controversy for the proliferation of misinformation due to its AI powered algorithm. Joaquin Quiñonero Candela, a director of AI at Facebook explained that Facebook's algorithm is not designed to filter false information but instead was designed to boost posts that create the most engagement (Hao, 2021). Misinformation can proliferate quickly and be spread further through the connectedness of social media due to these existing algorithms (Van der Meer, 2020). The WHO and the CDC tried to combat the spread of misinformation through social media postings as well as social media toolkits for other health agencies and civilians (WHO, 2020; NCIRD, 2021).

Misinformation is a topic that is not lost to consumers who use online social media platforms. Although some customers are aware of the spread of false information on the internet, they are not immune to its influence (Ecker, 2010). According to a 2020 study, two-thirds of 1,054 respondents reported exposure to misinformation between January and April 2020 (Lee et al., 2020). The study also found that the increased exposure to social media usage and concern for misinformation reflected high levels of anxiety and depression among respondents. Negative emotions resulting from misinformation or information overload has been studied in previous literature in social media user's emotional response (Sashittal et al., 2021). The resulting emotions from misinformation or information overload have yet to be studied in relation to consumer behavior when shopping by viewing video content on social media sites.

Consumer Behavior Changes during COVID-19

The pandemic led to consumer behavioral changes due to factors that included supply chain issues resulting in product and service shortages, the closing of non-essential businesses, and consumers spending more time in their homes. Consumption not only is habitual but also contextual. Four major contexts that disrupt consumer habits are: (1) Change in social context, (2) Change in technology, (3) Rules and regulations, and (4) Natural disasters. All four of these apply in the context of COVID-19.

Motivations reflect how one reacted and coped with the pandemic and the impacts on behavior, consumption patterns, and purchasing behaviors among consumers (Yang et al., 2020). Utilitarian motivation can be reactionary to prepare oneself with information or supplies that contribute to a problem-solving reaction. Whereas hedonic motivations can include escapism, entertainment, and discovery of new hobbies, products, and media that are more pleasure seeking or diversionary in nature (Yang et al., 2020; Frommeyer et al., 2020; Chen et al., 2021; Sumarliah et al., 2021).

Consumption is time and location bound. Over time consumers build habits of what to consume and when and where consumption happens. This concept of developing habits over time also applies to shopping, searching for information and post consumption waste disposal. Eight major consumer behavior changes happened during the pandemic: hoarding, improvisation, pent-up demand, embracing digital technology, store comes home, blurring of work-life boundaries, reunion of friends and family, and discovery of talent (Sheth, 2020).

Hoarding

COVID-19 may be remembered by the toilet paper stockouts in the United States.

However, the toilet paper stockouts often were associated with panic buying which is a result of a stockout or shortage (David et al., 2021; Leung et al., 2021). Hoarding is defined as stockpiling essential products for daily consumption that results in temporary stockouts and shortages (Sheth, 2020). Main products included toilet paper, bread, water, meat, disinfecting and cleaning products (Mahase et al., 2020; David et al., 202; Baddeley, 2020).

Improvisation

Improvisation included consumers learning to adapt when constraints are placed upon them. Old habits are discarded, and new ways of consumption are invented during improvisation periods (Sheth, 2020). Improvisation impacted everyone from consumers, retailers, and governmental entities around the world. Industries adapted online at an astounding rate from their pre-pandemic forecasts. In 2020, online deliveries advanced 10 years in 8 weeks. The telemedicine industry grew 10 times as large in 15 days; remote learning gained 250 million students in two weeks; online entertainment advanced seven years in five months; and remote working gained 20 times the amount of users in months (Kohli, 2020; LaBerge et al., 2020; IFC, 2021). COVID-19 was characterized by the creativity and resilience of customers as seen with events such as weddings and funeral services (sidewalk weddings and zoom funeral services). Improvisation can also lead to location centric consumption (e.g, telehealth, education) (Imber-Black, 2020; Sheth, 2020).

Pent-up Demand

In a time of crisis and uncertainty, there is a tendency to postpone purchase and consumption of discretionary products or services especially large ticket items such as cars,

homes, and appliances (Sheth, 2020; Scopelliti, 2021). The United States provided three stimulus payments to eligible citizens: \$1,200 in April 2020, \$600 in December 2020/January 2021, and \$1,400 in March 2021 (USA Gov, 2022). The stimulus payments were given by the IRS to provide economic relief. These payments shifted previous disease outbreak behaviors of not purchasing durable goods. Stimulus checks were linked to the increased durable goods spending during COVID-19 higher than in any previous disease outbreak (Tauber, 2021).

Embracing Digital Technology

Necessity drove adaptation of new technology and applications during COVID-19. The most notable application of the pandemic was Zoom (Sheth, 2020), adopted by schools, businesses, and telemedicine. Zoom also was widely adopted by users to engage with friends and family during periods of lockdown (Davies et al., 2021; Williams, 2021; Arif, 2021; Chung, 2020). Globally COVID-19 accelerated digitization of customer interactions with retailers three years ahead of forecasts for 2020 (LaBerge, 2020).

Store Comes Home

During lockdowns and restrictions on non-essential activities, retailers responded to customer needs by increasing delivery services and meeting the consumer at home (Sheth, 2020). Many services such as home delivery of groceries and Buy Online Pickup in Store (BOPIS) are not new services but were utilized ten times more than during the previous year (Kohli, 2020). Some creators, artists and museums got creative in delivering in-home experiences not previously available (e.g., museums virtual tours, and concerts) (Levin, 2021; Diebner, 2020). Technology growth during COVID-19 allowed retailers to utilize technologies such as

augmented reality (AR) on ecommerce mobile applications in clothing, cosmetics, and home furnishing categories to allow customers a 'try before you buy' or 'see in home' option at their fingertips (Papagiannis, 2020).

Blurring of Work-Life Boundaries

Remote work increased during the pandemic blurring the traditional demarcation between home and work (Sheth, 2020). Consumers purchased home furnishings to adapt home spaces for workspaces. Some customers endeavored to establish routines that separated work and home life including making home improvements and scheduling walks (Schmidt, 2021; Simionato, 2022; Easwaramoorthy et al., 2022)

Reunion of Friends and Family

Increasingly consumers contacted friends and family living close by and at a distance to connect, confirm their wellbeing, and to share pandemic stories and experiences (Sheth, 2020). Individuals used a variety of methods to engage with family and friends including Zoom, phone calls, texting, emails, letters, and online social media platforms (Monin et al., 2020; Beogo et al., 2022).

Talent Discovery

Consumers often adjusted to the new work/life reality by experimenting with different hobbies including cooking, baking bread, continuous learning, and crafting to name a few (Fullana, 2020). Some consumers discovered new talents for entertainment or as entrepreneurs selling products they produced (Sheth, 2020). Utilizing and having hobbies helped people manage uncertainty and stress during the lockdown (Mansourian, 2021).

Social Commerce

U.S. retailers were disproportionately affected by the stay-at-home orders for non-essential businesses and their employees affecting approximately 306 million (95%) of U.S. consumers (Zhang et al., 2020). The United States saw a 129% increase in consumers using ecommerce or social commerce than (Zhang et al., 2020). The pandemic shifted the U.S. retail landscape impacting both ecommerce and social commerce (Zhang et al., 2020). Ecommerce is defined as electronic commerce or internet commerce and refers to the buying and selling of goods or services using the internet, and the transfer of money and data to execute these transactions (Business encyclopedia, n.d.).

The term social commerce first appeared in 2005 on Yahoo! and referred to expressing opinions and ratings by internet users on products as well as sharing product information. Today social commerce is defined as a type of electronic commerce that allows consumers to participate in marketing activities and the sale of products or services through a social network and platform (Liao, 2021). There are two types of social commerce. Some social commerce begins on websites such as Amazon that is equipped with web 2.0 that facilitates user generated content. This type of social commerce is limiting because consumers are unable to tag or private message others, instead consumers can only rate, review, or post photos or videos as reviews. The second type of social commerce takes place on social networking sites (SNS) that integrate e-commerce. On these SNSs consumers access channels to establish connections and motivate content creation among other consumers. Social commerce via SNSs allow consumers to participate in collaborative activities that include content creation and information sharing (Li, 2019).

Online shopping became the only means for consumers to satisfy some consumption needs. Understanding e-commerce consumption during the COVID-19 crisis is important for three reasons. First, circumstances related to the pandemic will affect consumer behavior in the long term, and secondly e-commerce companies must understand these changes and adjust their business model to stay competitive. Therefore, the role of established drivers of e-commerce purchase behavior during a global crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic must be clarified. Second, there is a lively public debate on how to address the pandemic at the global, national, and individual levels. However, it remains unclear whether external influences, such as media reports on the current economic situation and calls for unified action during this crisis, shape consumer behavior. Third, measures of social distancing, such as quarantining, must be investigated to understand how they affect behavioral patterns (Frommeyer et al., 2020).

E-commerce accelerated exponentially during the COVID-19 pandemic, and retailers diligently built, improved, and promoted their online stores. Small retailers that had not previously engaged in online commerce pre-pandemic developed temporary solutions to sell their products online, e.g., by posting products on social media sites and by offering product pick-up or delivery services (OCED, 2020). Others offered discounts for their online channels and started promotional campaigns on social media (Koch et al., 2020). Investigating consumers' online purchase motivations during the pandemic may improve retailers' success moving post pandemic (Frommeyer et al., 2020).

Researchers suggest that ecommerce purchases during the pandemic were due, at least in part, to hedonic motivations (Frommeyer et al., 2020). Furthermore, research indicates that external normative pressures such as media reports impact consumer behavior, while pressures

stemming from the close social networks of families and friends do not. Additionally, among individuals practicing social distancing, Gen Z and women showed higher levels of hedonic motivation to engage in online shopping during the pandemic (Frommeyer et al., 2020).

Social Media

Social media sites are used by almost all age groups in the United States. Usage of social media sites varies by age group with 84% of consumers aged 18-29 years recording use of social media sites, followed by 81% of those aged 30 to 49 years, 73% of those aged 50 to 64 years, and the smallest group of social media use was 45% by those aged 65 and older (Anderson & Auxier, 2021). Four in ten consumers said social media sites were important to keep in contact with family and friends during the pandemic (McClain et., al. 2021). The pandemic prompted a shift in attitudes boosting consumers to call for more transparency and authenticity on social media sites (Molla, 2021).

During the pandemic, age groups differed in how they used social media. The generations are defined by age groups; Generation Z are born between 1996 onward; Millennials were born between 1981-1996; Generation X were born between 1965-1980; and Baby Boomers were born between 1946-1964 (Pew Research Center, 2018). Fifty percent of Generation Z consumed news on social media followed by 41% of Millennials, 30%, Generation X, and 8% Baby boomers. Information consumption on network/cable television by generation was reversed with 12% of Generation Z consuming news on network/cable television, followed by 16% of Millennials, 34% of Generation X and 58% of Baby boomers (Arbanas et al, 2021).

Social media users can be categorized as active or passive according to the way they engage on the platform. Active social media users engage with social media content (i.e., share,

like, comment, or post content on social media). Passive social media users only consume content (i.e., read posts or watch videos on social media). During the pandemic many social media users felt the effects of staying at home during early months of quarantine in the United States. There was a difference in age groups in relation to well-being and loneliness. Research on the effect of social media use on the wellbeing of users varies. Wetzal et al. (2021) suggested that younger active social media users during the pandemic saw higher rates of loneliness and well-being, in contrast to older adults. Conversely, Lee et al. (2020) contended that active social media users are more likely to have better psychological health than passive social media users.

Short-Form Video Content

Short-form video content became popular in 2010 with videos lasting less than ten minutes. Now, applications like TikTok that utilizes videos as short as 15 seconds are penetrating the social media industry. Social media users indicate a preference for the convenience of short-form video content (Wang, 2020). Previous studies of short-form content focus on content from applications such as Snapchat, Instagram and Facebook stories which disappear after a certain amount of time. However, applications such as TikTok are emerging as major players in the social media space that utilize short-form content that can be searched for in the application, saved, and re-watched at a later point by the user (Schellewald, 2021). There is a shift in social media user's consumption of content online. More users are beginning to consume shorter forms of digital content reflecting contemporary social media user's fast-paced lifestyle and changing trends and preferences. This type of short-form content, or "snack" content can include text, images, videos, programs, and news in short periods. This is

most often found among digital native generations such as Millennials, and Generation Z. These users are consuming more short-form content due to shorter attention spans and preferences for concise content (Nam et al., 2021).

The culture surrounding short-form content is seen in the modern mobile-dependent society where contents are reduced in shorter forms to be shared on the internet. Short-form content is currently centered around video content and can include web entertainment series, web dramas, user-created videos, and micro-news stories (Nam et al., 2021). A study of 2,000 citizens in the United States indicated that 84% of participants reported spending more or the same amount of time in consuming short-form video during the pandemic. Participants indicated the short-form videos improved their mood, inspired ideas for projects, provided a source of information, and a way to escape from their current state (PRNewswire, 2020).

Short-form video content is defined as videos lasting less than 10 minutes. Short form videos were present online on social media platforms before the pandemic. However, the pandemic served as a catalyst for accelerated growth of the medium, with 84% of audiences spending the same or increased amount of time watching short-form videos, oftentimes used as a catalyst to adjust to and cope with disruptions to everyday life (Enberg, 2022). Thirty percent of U.S. participants reported watching positive online video content to improve their mood, while 26% sought inspiration for ideas and projects, and 19% found relief from the news of the day. Since lockdown restrictions were set in place, statistics show that more than two-thirds of consumers in the U.S. (69%) are spending between 30 minutes to three hours watching short online video content (PRN Newswire, 2020).

TikTok

TikTok is a free application found in mobile application stores as well as through the TikTok website (D'Souza, 2021) that allows users to create content with no previous skills needed to participate in the application (Weinand, 2021). TikTok is currently the most downloaded app with more than 2 billion downloads (Schellewald, 2021).

TikTok's success is credited to the app's specific algorithm. Social media algorithms often are based on either social or interest graphs. Social media applications present information in the user's feed based on what the algorithm knows about the user. Social graphs are based on the social circle that surrounds the user and follows the idea that the user is more likely to like something based on what their friends or family members like. Interest graphs on the other hand present the user with content based on their personality (Jain, 2020). TikTok utilizes interest graphs based on the consumer's habits on the application itself. The algorithm observes and reinforces user's habits on the basis of what videos users watch, how long the user watches the video, likes, leaving comments, reading the comments section, and sharing videos to others on and outside of the application. This algorithm allows information to be presented to both active and passive users on the platform. Consumers are not required to engage in conversation in the comments of videos, rather the application rewards longer watch times and time spent reading comments, or looking at profiles (Schellewald, 2021).

TikTok users are active users if they participate in contribution, enhancement, and creation of content on the social media application. Passive users' minimal level of engagement on the TikTok app is consuming (not interacting) content. TikTok allows users to react to the content uploaded by other users by liking, commenting, forwarding, following, and adding

favorite videos into collection files. Enhancement is a higher level of engagement that describes users that proactively use different functions to enhance the video quality of TikTok content by adding special visual effects, background music, or subtitles. Enhancement reflects greater knowledge of and interest in the app. Creation is the highest level of engagement and describes TikTok users that create short-form videos, stream live video, interact with their favorite creators by making similar videos, send private messages to creators, or transfer funds to the creator while watching live streams (Wang, 2020).

TikTok facilitates social commerce via links that connect users to brand ecommerce websites. Linking users to ecommerce sites means that TikTok can inspire purchases transacted off-platform. During COVID-19 the hashtag #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt became popular and has over 11 billion videos and counting (Bucknell et al., 2020). Most TikTok shoppers (71.2%) shop through discovery when they stumble across something on their feed. TikTok users shop on the platform, search for information, follow influencer recommendations, or actively seek products in the feed. TikTok does not have the largest shopper base among social media but its shoppers are highly engaged. Almost 21% of TikTok shoppers buy products on TikTok “all the time,” while almost 50% of sometimes purchase products. The anticipated Shopify collaboration with TikTok will begin to open doors for in-app storefronts, product links, collection ads, showcase ads, and even live shopping (Enberg, 2022).

Social media sites may be intended for hedonic purposes, but users may adapt the social media site to include utilitarian tasks as well (Pöyry, 2013). An example of this change is seen on Facebook which started to connect and entertain college students and has since launched a marketplace tool for users to sell and buy items (Griffin, 2017). Facebook is no longer strictly a

platform used for hedonic purposes but also for utilitarian tasks. Furthermore, external resources to the user may contribute to how the person consumes or contributes to the social media site. An example of an external influence could be the pandemic that pushed 78.1% of adults in the United States to turn to social media sites for pandemic related information (Tankovska, 2021). Social media sites often mix hedonic and utilitarian values on the platform and these motivations can change over time (Kim et al., 2012; Izogo et al., 2020; Wang, 2022).

Studies suggest that utilitarian motivation has the strongest positive impact on consumers' attitudes toward sponsored content that provides utilitarian values such as credible information or information that contributes to product purchases (Köse et al., 2018; Irshad et al., 2019). Consumers with hedonic motivations seek entertainment and have a strong relationship with the authentic feel of User-Generated Content (Irshad et al., 2019; Malik, 2020). TikTok was created with the intent for content creators (i.e., both users and brands/companies) to create a variety of content (Anderson, 2020). The variety of content can possess both utilitarian and hedonic value to the TikTok user. The top content categories on TikTok are music videos (38%), comedy (36%), cooking or baking (33%), and DIY or crafting videos (29%) (PRNewswire, 2020).

Theoretical Foundation

The theoretical foundation for this study is based on the Mehrabian-Russel stimulus-organism-response (SOR) theory (Mehrabian et al., 1974). The SOR theory suggests that behavior is a result of the interaction of a stimulus and a response, and that behavior cannot exist without a stimulus. The initial theory was published based on the findings that a stimulus will result in a different response depending on the state of the individual or organism

(Mehrabian, 1974). The proposed environment begins with a stimulus that affects the organism. This organism is associated with the consumer’s cognitive and affective processes that lead to the behavioral response. Subsequently, the SOR theory has been adapted and extended and is often used in marketing research to understand how consumers react to environmental stimuli (Xu et al., 2014). Kumar et al. (2020) used SOR to explain moderators of consumer behaviors and found that the model is useful for explaining how external stimuli (S) can affect consumers’ (O) affective and cognitive processes, thus, impacting consumer behaviors (R). As such, S-O-R Theory provides justification for how the COVID-19 pandemic can change consumers’ perceptions and behaviors (Mason, 2020). See Figure 1.

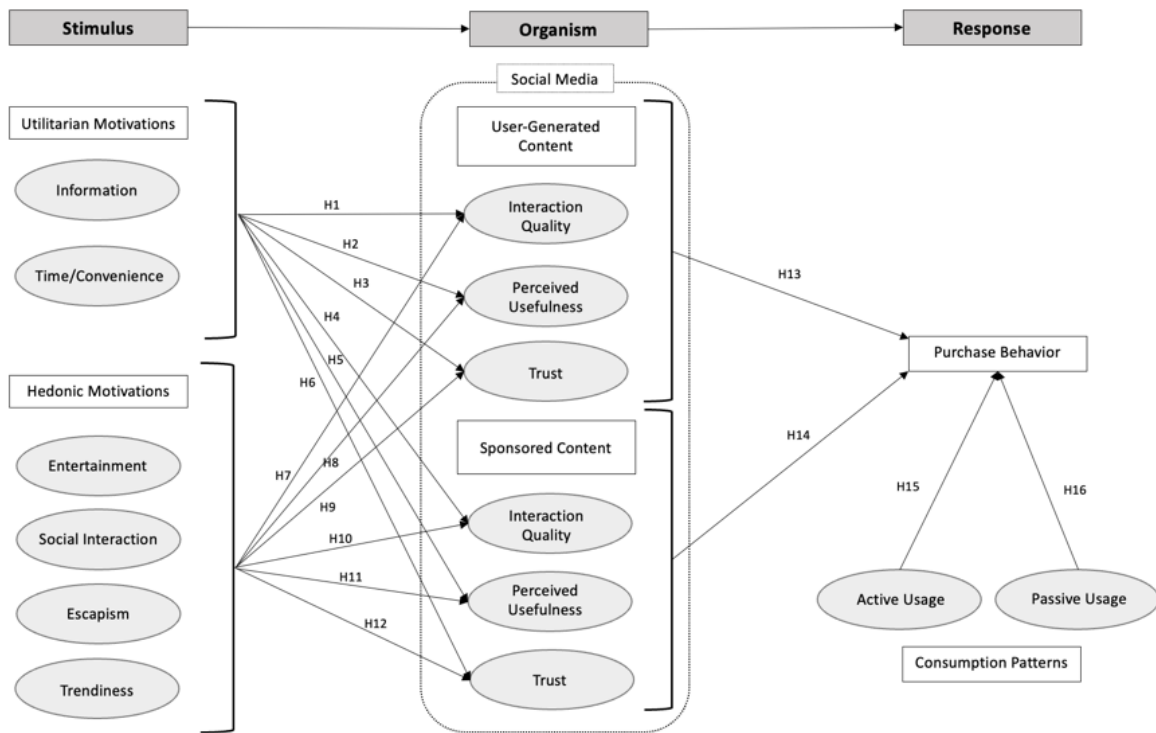


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Consumer Motivations

There are two types of shopping motivations that are well supported in consumer

behavior studies, utilitarian and hedonic motivations (Babin et al., 1994). Motivation reflects the distinction between performing an act "to get something" as opposed to doing it because "you love it" (Triandis 1977). The motivations to use social media can reflect various reactions and coping mechanisms during COVID-19 (Yang et al., 2020).

Utilitarian Motivations

Social media sites contributed to rapid dissemination of educational content and information about the COVID-19 virus from sponsored platforms such as the World Health Organization and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Dissemination of scientific literature on social media sites showed an increase in the number of downloads, queries, and citations of these articles (González-Padilla, 2020). Sponsored content on social media during COVID-19 not only included educational content from primary sources but also branded content from retailers and influencers. In the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak, shelter in place orders sponsored content was leveraged in three ways 1) by government led scientific entities to spread information related to COVID-19, 2) by retailers for both profit led initiatives (marketing and advertisements) and for good (with charitable giving and uplifting, health-promoting campaigns) 3) influencers (related to their income through paid advertisements and collaborations with companies) (Unni, 2021).

E-commerce was critical for consumers during the COVID-19 pandemic for two important reasons. First, under such circumstances, online shopping provided the most convenient means to purchase products and services. Second, online shopping was useful because it lowered a consumer's risk of infection by preventing contact with other people (Markenson, 2020). Both ecommerce and social commerce provide a means of user-generated

content that consumers sought during the pandemic (Manuel et al., 2022). Previous studies have found that consumers find searching user-generated content as a purposeful means of research in the consumer buying journey to view product information, images, and reviews generated by users (Geng et al., 2021).

H1 a-b: Utilitarian motivation (a. Information, b. Time/Convenience) will have a positive effect on interaction quality of UGC.

H2 a-b: Utilitarian motivation (a. Information, b. Time/Convenience) will have a positive effect on perceived usefulness of UGC.

H3 a-b. Utilitarian motivation (a. Information, b. Time/Convenience) will have a positive effect on trust of UGC.

H4 a-b: Utilitarian motivation (a. Information, b. Time/Convenience) will have a positive effect on interaction quality of sponsored content.

H5 a-b: Utilitarian motivation (a. Information, b. Time/Convenience) will have a positive effect on perceived usefulness of Sponsored content

H6 a-b. Utilitarian motivation (a. Information, b. Time/Convenience) will have a positive effect on trust of Sponsored content

Hedonic Motivations

Social media began as a website intended for user's entertainment and fueled by hedonic motivations with the social media feeds including only user-generated content. These social media sites have grown into sites that provide access to information and products that can meet the needs of consumers motivated utilitarian needs or hedonic desires (Frommeyer et al., 2020, Ernst, 2015).

Hedonic motivations, more than utilitarian motivations, fueled purchase intentions from social media sites early in the pandemic (Frommeyer et al., 2020). This finding can be explained by the limited opportunities available to engage in leisure activities during the lockdown.

Consumers shopped online for enjoyment purposes and to considered online shopping a distraction or leisure activity (Frommeyer et al., 2020). Other research found a positive relationship between online shopping and motivational variables such as arousal and pleasure (Fiore, 2005). With schools, universities, and recreational facilities closed during the pandemic shutdown, generation Z consumers had few opportunities to enjoy their free time, which might explain the higher importance of hedonic motives for these individuals compared to those of other generations (Frommeyer et al., 2020). Retailers and brands that leverage social media have seen the value in user-generated content has in creating exciting and entertaining consumer experiences (Sethna, 2017). Likewise sponsored content is leveraged through retailers and brands as sponsored content utilizing advertisements, influencers, and up-to-date online trends that entice the social media user (Gross et al., 2022). Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H7 a-d: Hedonic motivations (a. Entertainment, b. Social Interaction, c. Escapism, and d. Trendiness) will have a positive effect on interaction quality of UGC.

H8 a-d: Hedonic motivations (a. Entertainment, b. Social Interaction, c. Escapism, and d. Trendiness) will have a positive effect on perceived usefulness of UGC.

H9 a-d: Hedonic motivations (a. Entertainment, b. Social Interaction, c. Escapism, and d. Trendiness) will have a positive effect on trust of UGC.

H10 a-d: Hedonic motivations (a. Entertainment, b. Social Interaction, c. Escapism, and d. Trendiness) will have a positive effect on interaction quality of sponsored content.

H11 a-d: Hedonic motivations (a. Entertainment, b. Social Interaction, c. Escapism, and d. Trendiness) will have a positive effect on perceived usefulness of sponsored content

H12 a-d: Hedonic motivations (a. Entertainment, b. Social Interaction, c. Escapism, and d. Trendiness) will have a positive effect on trust of Sponsored content.

There is a paucity of research examining motivations to consume user-generated content or sponsored content on social media. Researchers have investigated user-generated

content and sponsored content broadly as precursors for shopping pre-pandemic (Cham et al., 2022; Choi et al., 2017). The literature review for this study revealed no research studies related to users' motivations to use UGC or sponsored content during the pandemic.

Social Media Content

Social media platforms use two major types of content, User-Generated Content (UGC) and sponsored content. UGC is any kind of content produced by a user of free communicative spaces (i.e., online platforms or SNS), made accessible publicly (Raza et. al, 2021). In this study, TikTok users are categorized as active or passive users depending upon their level of engagement. Previous studies have established a positive relationship between user-generated content (UGC) and purchasing behavior (Müller, 2019). User-generated short-form video content has previously been found to be more authentic feeling for consumers creating a strong relationship to positive purchase behavior (Halim, 2022).

H13 a-c: User Generated short-form video content (a. Interaction Quality, b. Perceived Usefulness, c. Trust) is positively related to purchasing behavior.

Sponsored content is defined by the intentional incorporation of brands, products, or persuasive messages into traditionally noncommercial, editorial content (Müller, 2019). The United States Federal Trade Commission has enforced brands and social media influencers to disclose endorsements on social media applications. This means that the FTC requires brands and influencers to disclose products or services if the user or brand posting has financial, employment, personal, or family relationship with the promoted object. These promotions must be labels with words such as "AD," "brand partner," "sponsored," "collab," "spon," and "advertisement" (FTC, 2019). Previous studies have not found that there is a direct negative

brand attitude for sponsored content but have shown that when content is disclosed as sponsored content users have negative attitudes towards brands (van Reijmersdal et al., 2016; Müller, 2019). Although brand attitudes have strongly been associated with studies involving sponsored content this does not impact purchasing behavior. Overall previous studies have found that sponsored content has a positive effect on social media consumers (Kim et al., 2021; Huges et al., 2019). Previous studies show that sponsored content was seen to indicate a positive relationship to purchasing behaviors especially through popular trends, personalization, and use of influencers (Chu et al., 2022).

H14 a-c: Sponsored content (a. Interaction Quality, b. Perceived Usefulness, c. Trust) is positively related to purchasing behavior.

Consumption Patterns and Purchasing Intention

Social media consumption patterns can be broadly described as active (e.g., interacting directly with others by posting content or commenting others' content) and passive (e.g., reading, watching, and consuming others' content) social media users (Verduyn et al., 2017; Triffiro & Gerson, 2019; Unni, 2021). Passive social media users are less involved in social media sites but comprise the silent majority on these platforms and are more likely to be highly selective in content to inform purchase decisions. Passive social media users are more likely to trust information from a friend or trusted source to make a purchasing decision. (Bigne et al., 2020). There are no studies, if any, published regarding active and passive users of social media related to purchase intention during the pandemic.

Shopify parented with TikTok in 2021 to launch in-app shopping experiences to promote product discovery in response to the demand among Shopify's merchants for TikTok installs

(Lee, 2021). TikTok has also implemented features like the 'collections ads' where when a consumer clicks on a tagged product they can see similar products or other products linked by the user (Malick, 2022). Not all users of TikTok shop on the app, some use it as inspiration to go to a brick-and-mortar store or shop on the retailer's e-commerce site. TikTok's influence has perpetrated stores with large retailers such as Barnes & Noble using displays such as #BookTok which are similar to previous advertisements in the store related to 'As seen on TV' (Pisani, 2021). In considering the shopping capability of TikTok and consumer usage, this study proposes that the active social media usage is positively related with consumer purchasing intention of products linked and recommended by social media users.

H15: Active social media usage is positively related with purchase intention (that is recommended by social media users).

H16: Passive social media usage is positively related with purchase intention (that is recommended by social media users).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the methodology that was used in the exploratory study. This section includes the procedures for the research design, sample and data collection, and instrument development.

Research Design

This quantitative, exploratory study is non-experimental and cross-sectional in design. Future studies can replicate the study outside of the COVID-19 context to confirm findings and changes in consumer motivations and social media trends. The design includes a quantitative survey with a pre-test to test validity.

Sample and Data Collection

Institutional Review Board approval for the protection of human subjects was attained prior to data collection and analyses. Data collection used a snowball technique by sending the survey link to contacts inviting them to participate in the survey and asking they post the link on their TikTok, Facebook, and Instagram sites. The researcher will request contacts to post the survey link on TikTok, Facebook, and Instagram to invite their contacts on these social media platforms to participate in the study by completing the survey and posting it on their social media sites. The focus of this study is social media; thus, it is appropriate that social media be used to collect data. The instrument was created using Qualtrics software. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics including reliability tests factor analysis and multiple regression analysis on SPSS software. Descriptive statistics analyzed demographic

characteristics. Inferential statistics were used to test relationships between variables. Single and multiple regression analysis were used to test the hypotheses. Factor Analysis was used to identify the relationship between variables in the collected data set.

Instrument Development

The instrument was developed using existing scales drawn from relevant literature. Based on the literature review, constructs in this study included utilitarian motivations (i.e., information, time/convenience), hedonic motivations (i.e., entertainment, social interaction, escapism, trendiness), user-generated content (i.e., interaction quality, perceived usefulness, and trust), sponsored content (i.e., interaction quality, perceived usefulness, and trust), consumption patterns (i.e., general consumption, rabbit-holing, active usage, and passive usage), and purchasing behavior (i.e., purchase intention).

The online self-administered instrument included one screening item to help ensure participants had interacted with the social media platform that was being tested, TikTok. The screening question was “Have you used TikTok?” Participants that responded negatively to either item received the following message: “Thank you for your participation and have a great day!” Participants who responded positively to the question were offered the opportunity to continue with the study.

The utilitarian motivation of information was measured by 7 items (Gvili et al., 2020) and 5 items (Yang et al., 2021) and the value of time/convenience was measured by 7 items (Gvili et al., 2020). The hedonic motivation of entertainment was measured by 5 items (Buzeta et al., 2020) and 7 items (Chavez, 2020), social interaction was measured by 5 items (Buzeta et al., 2020), escapism was measured by 5 items (Scherr et al., 2020), and trendiness was

measured by 5 items (Scherr et al., 2020). User-generated content and sponsored content shared in their values of interaction quality which was measured by 5 items (Geng et al., 2021), perceived usefulness was measured by 5 items (Geng et al., 2021), and trust was measured by 7 items (Gvili et al., 2020) and 5 items (Choi et al., 2017). Consumption patterns included general consumption which was measured using 5 items (Cai et al., 2020), rabbit-holing was measured by 3 items (Sashittal, 2021), active usage was measured using 5 items (Butzeta et al., 2020), and passive usage measured using 5 items (Butzeta et al., 2020). Lastly, purchasing behavior used purchase intention was measured by 3 items (Yang et al., 2021) (Geng et al., 2021). The compiled (Likert) scales from previous literature were used to create a survey that measured all items (aside from demographics) using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly agree* (5) to *strongly disagree* (1) (see Table 1).

Table 1: List of Measures

Construct	Reference	Reliability	Items
Utilitarian Motivations			
Information	Gvili et al., 2020	$\alpha = 0.82$	I enjoyed searching for information on TikTok
	Yang et al., 2021	$\alpha = 0.81$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I used TikTok to learn I used TikTok to get new ideas I used TikTok to get information
Time/ Convenience	Gvili et al., 2020	$\alpha = 0.83$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TikTok reduced the time I spent searching for information TikTok helped me find better offers and solutions.
Hedonic Motivations			
Entertainment	Buzeta et al., 2020	$\alpha = 0.842$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I use TikTok because it is entertaining I use TikTok because it relaxes me I use TikTok because it is fun
	Chavez, 2020	$\alpha = 0.85$	I used TikTok because it passed the time, particularly when I was bored.
Social Interaction	Buzeta et al., 2020	$\alpha = 0.755$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I interacted with people like me on TikTok. I used TikTok to belong to a group with the same interests as mine I made connections to other people on TikTok
Escapism	Scherr et al., 2020	$\alpha = 0.747$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I used TikTok so that I can get a break from what I am doing I used TikTok when I didn't want to work or study I used TikTok to forget unpleasant things from work, school, or life
Trendiness	Scherr et al., 2020	$\alpha = 0.759$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I used TikTok because it was cool I used TikTok because everyone else was using it
User-Generated Content (UGC)			
Interaction quality	Geng et al., 2021	$\alpha = 0.741$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UGC gave me a sense of communicating product information with others UGC interested me
Perceived usefulness	Geng et al., 2021	$\alpha = 0.752$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UGC was easily accessible UGC Saved me time

(table continues)

Construct	Reference	Reliability	Items
Trust	Gvili et al., 2020	$\alpha = 0.81$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I trusted the UGC I found on TikTok
	Choi et al., 2017	$\alpha = 0.769$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UGC was appropriate for evaluating available product choices UGC addressed my needs and preferences UGC was knowledgeable about the product
Sponsored Content			
Interaction quality	Geng et al., 2021	$\alpha = 0.741$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sponsored content gave me a sense of communicating product information with others Sponsored content interested me
Perceived usefulness	Geng et al., 2021	$\alpha = 0.752$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sponsored content was easily accessible Sponsored content saved me time.
Trust	Gvili et al., 2020	$\alpha = 0.81$	I trusted the Sponsored Content I found on TikTok.
	Choi et al., 2017	$\alpha = 0.769$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sponsored Content was appropriate for evaluating available product choices Sponsored Content addressed my needs and preferences Sponsored Content showed knowledge about the product
Consumption Patterns			
General consumption	Cai et al., 2020	$\alpha = 0.88$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am proud to tell people I am on TikTok I felt out of touch when I hadn't logged onto TikTok for a while I felt a part of the TikTok Community On average, approximately how many minutes per day have you spent on TikTok? 1=less than 30, 2=30-60, 3=60-120, 4=120-180, 5= more than 180
Rabbit holing (over-usage)	Sashittal et al., 2021	$\alpha = 0.792$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I clicked through TikTok videos aimlessly It was very difficult for me to stop watching TikTok videos endlessly
Active usage	Buzeta et al., 2020	$\alpha = 0.937$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I posted my own videos (deliberately) I commented on Sponsored Content related videos I liked Sponsored Content related TikTok posts I shared Sponsored content related TikTok posts with others I commented on User-generated content related videos I commented on User-generated content related videos I shared User-generated content related TikTok posts with others

(table continues)

Construct	Reference	Reliability	Items
Passive usage	Buzeta et al., 2020	$\alpha = 0.909$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I watched Sponsored content related pictures or graphics • I followed Sponsored content related users and brands • I watched User-generated content related pictures or graphics • I followed User-generated content related users and brands
Purchasing Behavior			
Purchase intention	Yang et al., 2021	$\alpha = 0.89$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My intention was to buy the product endorsed by my favorite TikTok influencer or brand
	Geng et al., 2021	$\alpha = 0.770$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am willing to buy products recommended by other users (UGC) • I'll recommend to others the products recommended in the User-Generated Content

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This study used a quantitative, exploratory approach. An online instrument was developed using Qualtrics software to measure the impact of participants' utilitarian values (time, convenience, and information) and hedonic values (entertainment, social interaction, escapism, and trendiness) on user-generated content (interaction quality, perceived usefulness, and trust) and sponsored content (interaction quality, perceived usefulness, and trust). Descriptive data also were elicited including frequency of TikTok usage and demographic characteristics of gender, age, education, ethnicity, and income. Data analysis included frequency distribution, descriptive statistics, factor analysis, and multiple regression analysis using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Sample and Data Collection

A total of 410 online surveys were collected. Participants that did not complete the survey and those that lacked TikTok experience were eliminated for the further analysis. The resulting 289 instruments were retained for further analyses. Demographics for the sample are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Demographics and External Characteristics of participants (N = 289)

Variables		Freq	%
Gender	Male	46	15.9
	Female	229	79.2
	Non-binary/ Third gender	12	4.2
	Prefer not to say	2	0.7
Age	18-26	197	68.2
	27-41	79	27.3

(table continues)

		Variables	Freq	%
		42-57	5	1.7
		58-76	7	2.4
		More than 76	1	0.3
Ethnicity		Caucasian	179	61.9
		African American/Black	19	6.6
		Latino or Hispanic	34	11.8
		Asian	23	8.0
		Native American	1	0.3
		Two or More	22	7.6
		Other/Unknown	6	2.1
Education		High School degree or equivalent	13	4.5
		In College	96	33.2
		Bachelor's degree	120	41.5
		Master's degree	45	15.6
		Doctoral	12	4.2
		Other	3	1.0
Employment Status		Employed full time (40+ hours a week)	138	47.8
		Employed part time (< 40 hours a week)	79	27.3
		Unemployed (currently looking or work)	22	7.6
		Unemployed (not currently looking for work)	35	12.1
		Retired	1	0.3
		Self-employed	14	4.8
TikTok use per day (Pandemic onset = March 2020)	Prior to the pandemic	Less than one hour	234	81.0
		One to three hours	45	15.6
		Three hours or more	10	3.5
	During the pandemic	Up to half an hour	44	15.2
		Up to one hour	42	14.5
		Up to 1.5 hours	43	14.9
		Up to 2 hours	56	19.4
		Up to 3 hours	61	21.1
		More than 3 hours	43	14.9

The majority of participants were Caucasian (61.9%) and female (79.2%) followed by males (15.9%), and non-binary/third gender (4.2%). The majority (68.2%) identified as Generation Z (18-26 years), while Millennials (27-41 years) comprised of 27.3% of the sample,

followed by Baby Boomers (58-76 years) representing 2.4% of the sample, Generation X (42-57 years), and the Silent Generation represented 0.3% of the collected sample (more than 76 years) (Pew Research Center, 2018). The participants samples had varying ranges of education with majority holding a bachelor's degree (41.5%) while 33.2% of participants were still in college, those with master's degrees comprised 15.6% of the sample, while those holding a high school degree or equivalent (4.5%), doctoral degrees (4.2%) and other such as trade school or certificate holders (1%) made up the remaining sample. The highest percentage (47.8%) of the sample was employed full time followed by those employed part time (27.3%) with retirees representing the least amount of the sample at 0.3%.

Prior to the pandemic, 81% of participants used TikTok less than one hour per day, followed by one to three hours per day (15.6%), and three or more hours per day (3.5%). TikTok usage increased as the pandemic continued. The highest percentage (21.1%) used TikTok up to three hours per day, followed by 19.4% using for two hours per day, 15.2% up to 1.5 hours per day. There was nearly a uniform distribution in the daily use of TikTok among all users. This included users with more than 3 hours (14.9%), 1.5 hours (14.9%), and one hour (14.5%).

Content Reliability

Reliability is the degree to which measures are free from error and therefore yield consistent results (Pattern, 2009). Cronbach's alpha is an index of reliability, which determines the internal consistency (Santos, 1999). Cronbach's alpha was used to determine reliability of the measurement scales. Internal consistency of all the scales was within acceptable range, from 0.75 to 0.90. A Cronbach's alpha of 0.50 or higher is deemed acceptable in preliminary

research (Nunnally, 1967). All scales were found to be internally consistent; therefore, no items were changed or deleted. See Table 3.

Table 3: Reliability Test (*N* = 289)

Variable	Cronbach α
Utilitarian Motivations (6 items)	0.858
Information (4 items)	0.838
Time/Convivence (2 items)	0.636
Hedonic Motivations (12 items)	0.786
Entertainment (4 items)	0.771
Social Interaction (3 items)	0.830
Escapism (3 items)	0.727
Trendiness (2 items)	0.744
User-Generated Content (8 items)	0.858
Interaction Quality (2 items)	0.655
Perceived Usefulness (2 items)	0.512
Trust (4 items)	0.807
Sponsored Content (8 items)	0.846
Interaction Quality (2 items)	0.690
Perceived Usefulness (2 items)	0.262
Trust (4 items)	0.798
Consumption Patterns (17 items)	0.830
General Consumption (4 items)	0.629
Rabbit holing/over-usage (2 items)	0.661
Active Usage (7 items)	0.712
Passive Usage (4 items)	0.674
Purchasing Behavior (3 items)	0.790

Statistical Analysis

Data analysis included frequency distributions, descriptive statistics factor analyses, and multiple regression analyses using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 29.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

The multi-item scales that measured utilitarian motivations, hedonic motivations, user-generated content, sponsored content, consumption patterns, and purchasing behavior were subjected to factor analysis with varimax rotation to identify any underlying dimensions.

Internal reliability of the scales was tested using Cronbach's alpha and were deemed reliable with a range from 0.786 to 0.959 (see Table 3). Exploratory factor analysis of the scales to measure utilitarian motivations, hedonic motivations, user-generated content, sponsored content, consumption patterns, and purchasing behavior revealed eleven underlying dimensions. A factor loading items ranged from 0.601 to 0.831(see Table 4).

The first factor, labeled sponsored content ($\alpha = 0.87$) explained 8.95% of the variance and included 7 of the 44 items that measured items relating to sponsored content on social media. The items included "Sponsored content was appropriate for evaluating available product choices," "Sponsored content saved me time," "I trusted the sponsored content I found on TikTok," "Sponsored content interested me," "Sponsored content addressed my needs and preferences," "Sponsored content gave me a sense of communicating product information with others," and "Sponsored Content showed knowledge about the product."

The second factor, labeled utilitarian motivation ($\alpha = 0.87$) explained 16.4% of the variance and included 6 of the 44 total items. The items included "I used TikTok to learn," "I used TikTok to get information," "TikTok reduced the time I spent searching for information," "I used TikTok to get new ideas," "I enjoyed searching for information on TikTok," and "TikTok helped me find better offers and solutions."

Table 4: Exploratory Factor Analysis

Factor	Scale Item	F.L.^a	E-Value^b	E.V.^c	α^d
Sponsored Content	Sponsored Content was appropriate for evaluating available product choices.	.748	8.950	8.950	0.867
	Sponsored content saved me time.	.746			
	I trusted the Sponsored Content I found on TikTok.	.739			
	Sponsored content interested me.	.717			
	Sponsored Content addressed my needs and preferences.	.706			
	Sponsored content gave me a sense of communicating product information with others.	.679			
	Sponsored Content showed knowledge about the product.	.657			
Utilitarian Motivations	I used TikTok to learn.	.828	7.450	16.400	0.858
	I used TikTok to get information.	.732			
	TikTok reduced the time I spent searching for information.	.709			
	I used TikTok to get new ideas.	.672			
	I enjoyed searching for information on TikTok.	.660			
	TikTok helped me find better offers and solutions.	.624			
User-Generated Content	UGC was appropriate for evaluating available product choices.	.714	7.393	23.792	0.842
	UGC addressed my needs and preferences.	.651			
	UGC interested me.	.637			
	UGC was knowledgeable about the product.	.630			
	I trusted the UGC I found on TikTok.	.608			
	UGC gave me a sense of communicating product information with others.	.603			
Interaction with User-Generated Content	I liked User-generated content related TikTok posts.	.796	6.836	30.629	0.846
	I watched User-generated content related pictures or graphics.	.768			
	I followed User-generated content related users and brands.	.761			

(table continues)

Factor	Scale Item	F.L. ^a	E-Value ^b	E.V. ^c	α^d
	I shared User-generated content related TikTok posts with others.	.756			
Connection	I made connections to other people on TikTok.	.810	5.576	36.205	0.831
	I used TikTok to belong to a group with the same interests as mine.	.791			
	I interacted with people like me on TikTok.	.765			
Hedonic Motivations	I used TikTok because it relaxed me.	.746	4.738	40.943	0.742
	I used TikTok because it was fun.	.724			
	I used TikTok because it was entertaining.	.601			
Interaction with Sponsored Content	I liked Sponsored Content related TikTok posts.	.682	4.668	45.611	0.741
	I commented on Sponsored Content related videos.	.658			
	I shared Sponsored content related TikTok posts with others.	.607			
Time-passing	I used TikTok so that I could get a break from what I was doing.	.703	4.321	49.933	0.718
	I used TikTok when I didn't want to work or study.	.687			
	I used TikTok to forget unpleasant things from work, school, or life.	.648			
Over-usage	It was very difficult for me to stop watching TikTok videos endlessly.	.633	4.155	54.088	0.536
	I felt out of touch when I hadn't logged onto TikTok for a while.	.607			
Consumption Patterns	I am willing to buy products recommended by other users (UGC).	.711	3.694	57.782	0.790
	I'll recommend to others the products recommended in the User-Generated Content.	.650			
	My intention was to buy the product endorsed by my favorite TikTok influencer or brand.	.623			
Trendiness	I used TikTok because it was cool.	.831	3.230	61.012	0.745
	I used TikTok because everyone else was using it.	.827			

Note: Factor loadings over .60 are described; ^aFactor loading; ^bEigenvalue; ^cExplained variance; ^dCronbach's alpha

The third factor, labeled user-generated content ($\alpha = 0.84$) explained 23.79% of the variance and included 6 of the 44 total items. The items included “UGC was appropriate for evaluating available product choices,” “UGC addressed my needs and preferences,” “UGC interested me,” “UGC was knowledgeable about the product,” “I trusted the UGC I found on TikTok,” and “UGC gave me a sense of communicating product information with others.”

The fourth factor, labeled interaction with user-generated content ($\alpha = 0.85$) explained 30.63% of the variance and included 4 of the 44 total items. The items included “I liked User-generated content related TikTok posts,” “I watched User-generated content related pictures or graphics,” “I followed User-generated content related users and brands,” and “I shared User-generated content related TikTok posts with others.”

The fifth factor, labeled connection ($\alpha = 0.83$) explained 36.21% of the variance and included 3 of the 44 total items. The items included “I made connections to other people on TikTok,” “I used TikTok to belong to a group with the same interests as mine,” and “I interacted with people like me on TikTok.”

The sixth factor, labeled hedonic motivation ($\alpha = 0.74$) explained 40.94% of the variance and included 3 of the 44 total items. The items included “I used TikTok because it relaxed me,” “I used TikTok because it was fun,” and “I used TikTok because it was entertaining.”

The seventh factor, labeled interaction with sponsored content ($\alpha = 0.74$) explained 45.61% of the variance and included 3 of the 44 total items. The items included “I liked Sponsored Content related TikTok posts,” “I commented on Sponsored Content related videos,” and “I shared Sponsored content related TikTok posts with others.”

The eighth factor, labeled time-passing ($\alpha = 0.72$) explained 49.92% of the variance and

included 3 of the 44 total items. The items included “I used TikTok so that I could get a break from what I was doing,” “I used TikTok when I didn't want to work or study,” and “I used TikTok to forget unpleasant things from work, school, or life.”

The ninth factor, labeled rabbit-holing/over-usage ($\alpha = 0.56$) explained 54.08% of the variance and included 2 of the 44 total items. The items included “It was very difficult for me to stop watching TikTok videos endlessly” and “I felt out of touch when I hadn't lofted onto TikTok for a while.”

The tenth factor, labeled consumption patterns ($\alpha = 0.79$) explained 57.78% of the variance and included 3 of the 44 total items. The items included “I am willing to buy products recommended by other users (UGC),” “I'll recommend to others the products recommended in the User-Generated Content,” and “My intention was to buy the product endorsed by my favorite TikTok influencer or brand.”

The eleventh factor, labeled trendiness ($\alpha = 0.75$) explained 61.01% of the variance and included 2 of the 44 total items. The items included “I used TikTok because it was cool” and “I used TikTok because everyone else was using it.” The twelfth factor was deleted because only one single factor was loaded, “Sponsored Content was easily accessible.”

Hypothesis Testing: Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression analysis was used to test the hypothesized relationships of H1 through H16. Multiple regression is used to determine relationships between two or more independent variables and one dependent variable. The independent variable is the predictor variable while the dependent variable is the outcome variable, all variables must be ordinal.

Multiple regression determined relative importance as well as the significance of the

relationship between the stimulus, organisms, and response. Multicollinearity was detected by examining the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). A VIF value above 5 was used as a cut-off measure, showing multicollinearity problems among independent variables. All VIF values among independent variables in multiple regression models in this study were within an acceptable range.

Hypothesis 1

Utilitarian motivation (a. Information, b. Time/Convenience) had a positive effect on interaction quality of UGC.

The variables information and time/convenience make up the construct, utilitarian motivations, which was used as the independent variables. The dependent variable was interaction quality which is a variable of the construct User-Generated Content. The results show there is a significant positive relationship between the Utilitarian motivation information and interaction quality of user-generated content ($F = 22.018$, $R^2 = 0.133$, $p < 0.001$), supporting the hypothesis. The most powerful and only significant predictor is information ($\beta = 0.359$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was supported.

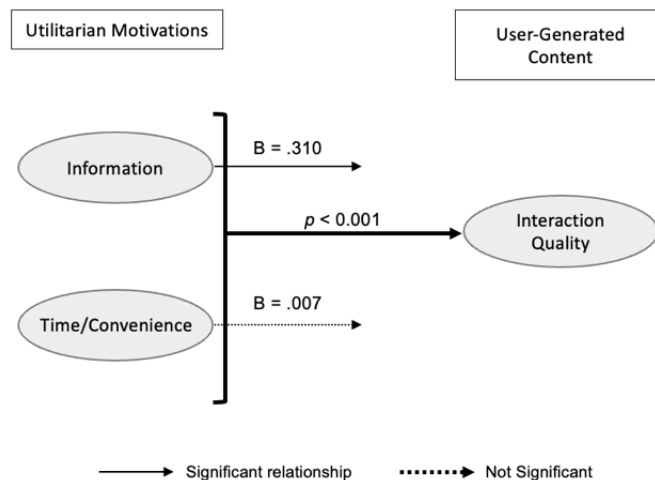


Figure 2: H1 results

Hypothesis 2

Utilitarian motivation (a. Information, b. time/convenience) positively affected perceived usefulness of UGC.

The variables information and time/convenience make up the construct, utilitarian motivations, which was used as the independent variables. The dependent variable was perceived usefulness which is a variable of the construct User-Generated Content. The results show there is a significant positive relationship between the Utilitarian motivation information and perceived usefulness of user-generated content ($F = 32.395$, $R^2 = 0.180$, $p < 0.001$). The most powerful and only significant predictor of is Information ($\beta = 0.336$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was supported.

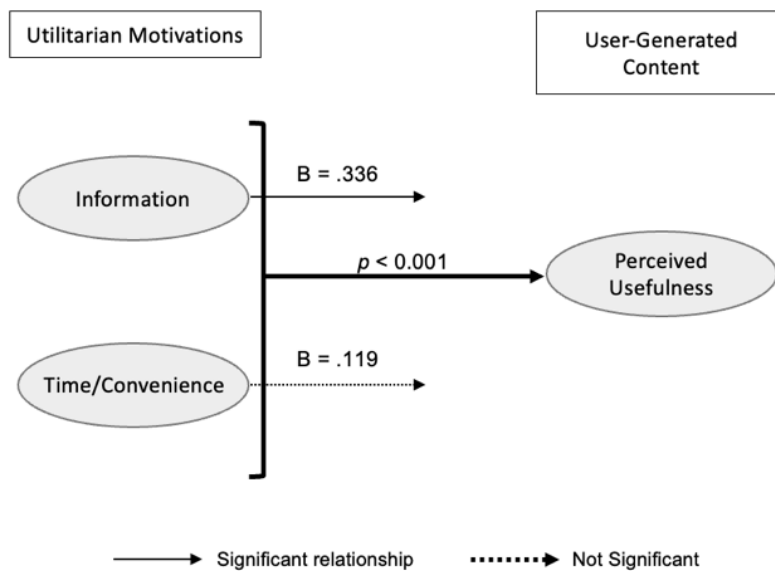


Figure 3: H2 results

Hypothesis 3

Utilitarian motivation (a. Information, b. Time/Convenience) positively affected trust of UGC.

The variables information and time/convenience make up the construct, utilitarian

motivations, which was used as the independent variables. The dependent variable was trust which is a variable of the construct User-Generated Content. The results show there is a significant positive relationship between the Utilitarian motivation information and time/convivence with trust of user-generated content ($F = 53.156$, $R^2 = 0.271$, $p < 0.001$) supporting the hypothesis. The most powerful predictor is information ($\beta = 0.351$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, Hypothesis 3 was supported.

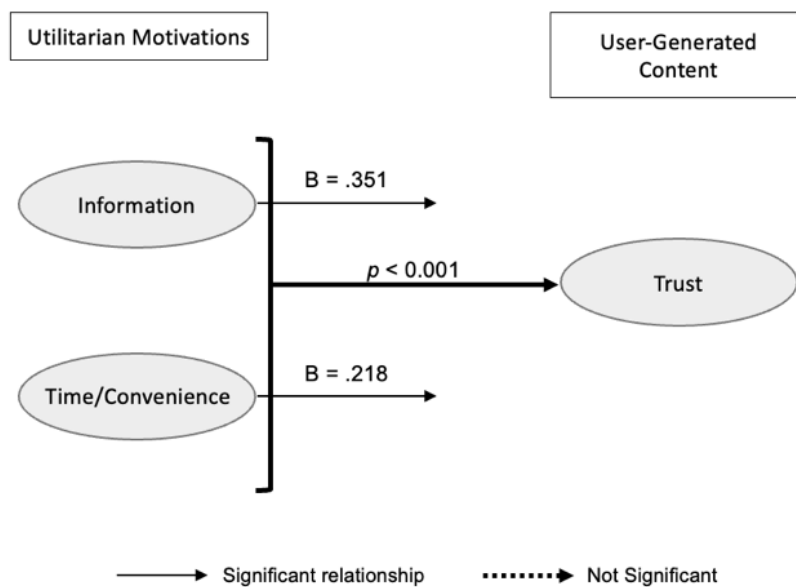


Figure 4: H3 results

Hypothesis 4

Utilitarian motivation (a. Information, b. Time/Convenience) positively affected trust of sponsored content.

The variables information and time/convivence make up the construct, utilitarian motivations, which was used as the independent variable. The dependent variable was trust which is a variable of the construct User-Generated Content. The results show there is a significant positive relationship between the Utilitarian motivation time/convivence with trust

of user-generated content ($F = 5.497$, $R^2 = 0.037$, $p < 0.005$) supporting the hypothesis. The most powerful and only significant predictor is time/convenience ($\beta = 0.185$, $p < 0.017$). Therefore, Hypothesis 4 was supported.

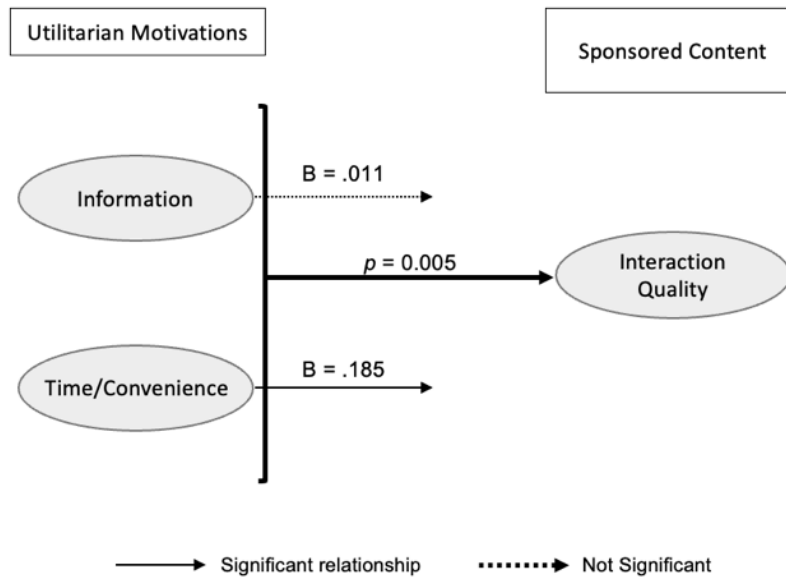


Figure 5: H4 results

Hypothesis 5

Utilitarian motivation (a. Information, b. Time/Convenience) positively affected perceived usefulness of Sponsored content

The variables information and time/convenience make up the construct, utilitarian motivations, which was used as the independent variables. The dependent variable was perceived usefulness which is a variable of the construct Sponsored Content. The results show there is a significant positive relationship between the Utilitarian motivation time/convenience with perceived usefulness of the sponsored content ($F = 4.180$, $R^2 = 0.028$, $p < 0.016$) supporting the hypothesis. The most powerful and only significant predictor is time/convenience ($\beta = 0.191$, $p < 0.014$). Therefore, Hypothesis 5 was supported.

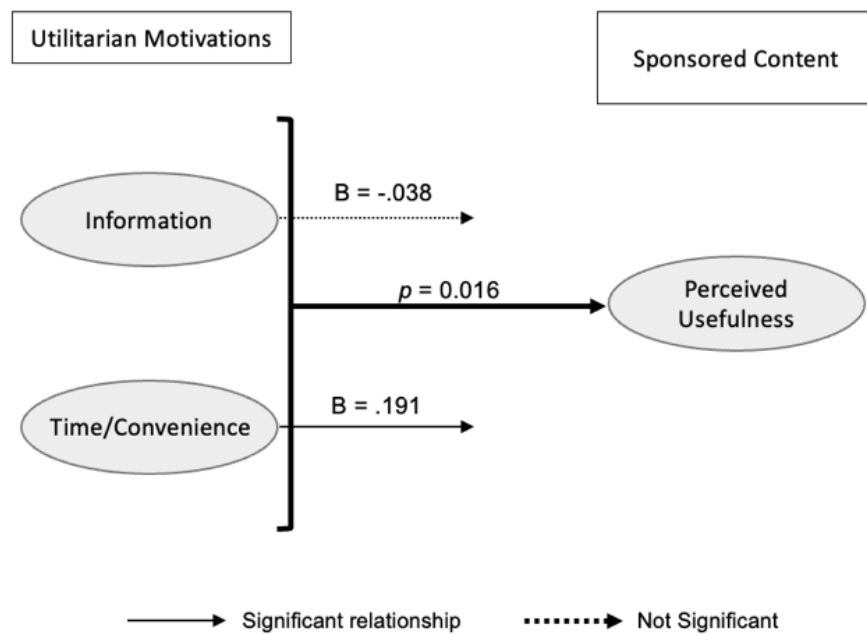


Figure 6: H5 results

Hypothesis 6

Utilitarian motivation (a. Information, b. Time/Convenience) positively affected trust of Sponsored content

The variables information and time/convenience make up the construct, utilitarian motivations, which was used as the independent variables. The dependent variable was trust which is a variable of the construct Sponsored Content. The results show there is a significant positive relationship between the Utilitarian motivation time/convenience with perceived usefulness of the sponsored content ($F = 9.238$, $R^2 = 0.061$, $p < 0.001$), supporting the hypothesis. The most powerful and only significant predictor is time/convenience ($\beta = 0.260$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, Hypothesis 6 was supported.

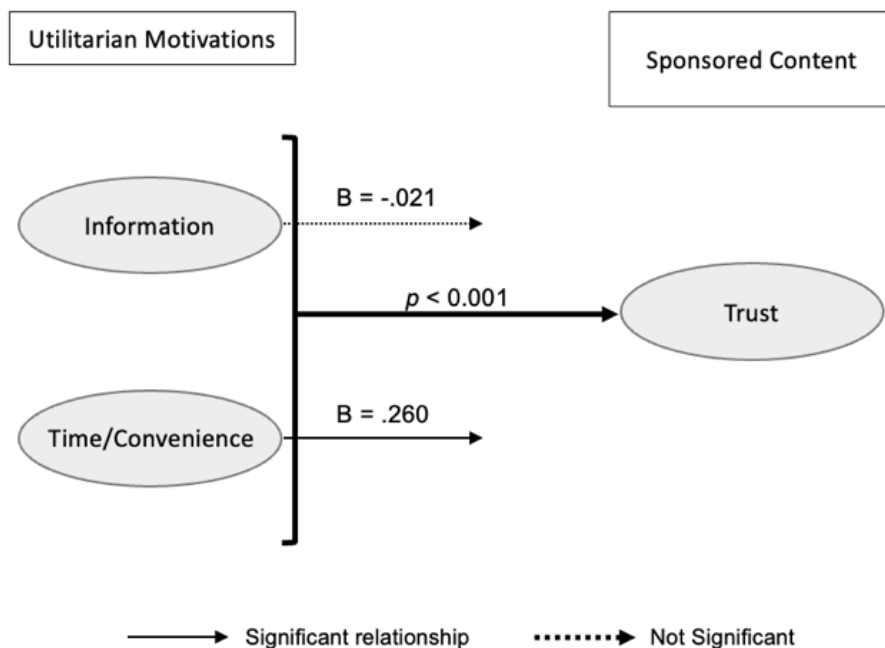


Figure 7: H6 results

Hypothesis 7

Hedonic motivations (a. Entertainment, b. Social Interaction, c. Escapism, and d. Trendiness) positively affected interaction quality of UGC.

The variables entertainment, social interaction, escapism, and trendiness make up the construct, hedonic motivations, which was used as the independent variable. The dependent variable was interaction quality which is a variable of the construct User-Generated Content. The results show there is a significant positive relationship between the Hedonic motivations social interaction, escapism, and trendiness with interaction quality of the user-generated content ($F = 20.243$, $R^2 = 0.222$, $p < 0.001$), supporting the hypothesis. The most powerful predictor is social interaction ($\beta = 0.238$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, Hypothesis 7 was supported.

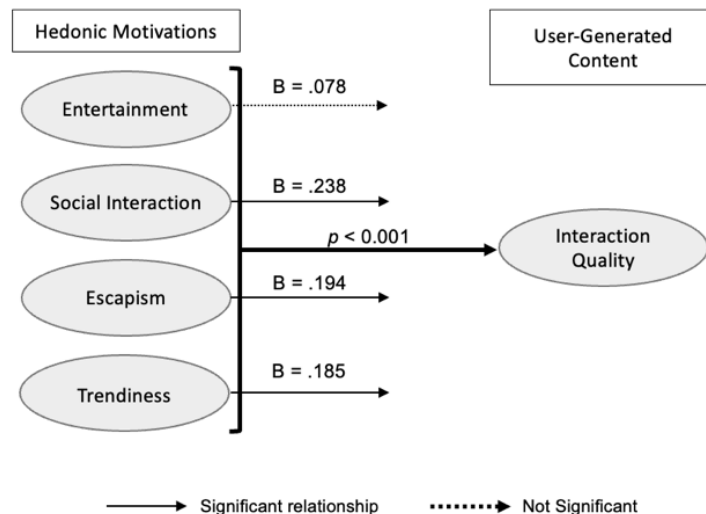


Figure 8: H7 results

Hypothesis 8

Hedonic motivations (a. Entertainment, b. Social Interaction, c. Escapism, and d. Trendiness) positively affected on perceived usefulness of UGC.

The variables entertainment, social interaction, escapism, and trendiness make up the construct, hedonic motivations, which was used as the independent variable. The dependent

variable was perceived usefulness which is a variable of the construct User-Generated Content. The results show there is a significant positive relationship between the Hedonic motivations entertainment and social interaction with perceived usefulness of the user-generated content ($F = 13.262$, $R^2 = 0.157$, $p < 0.001$), supporting the hypothesis. The most powerful predictor is entertainment ($\beta = 0.260$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, Hypothesis 8 was supported.

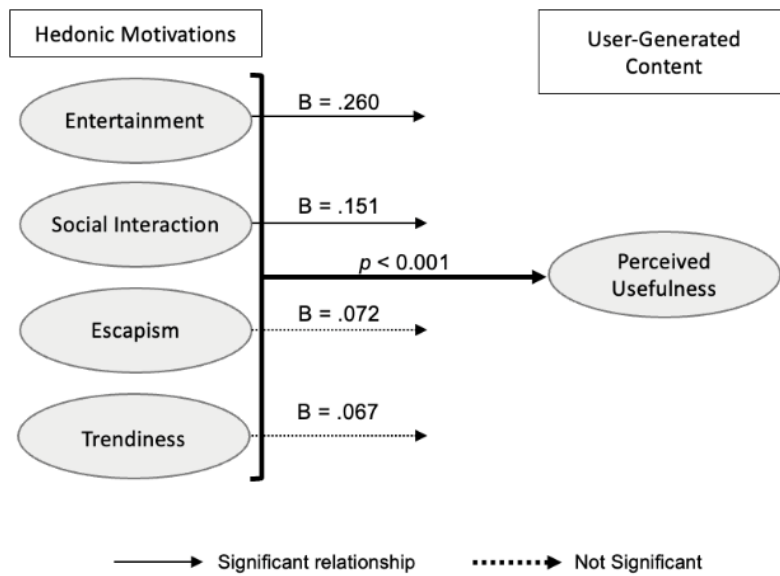


Figure 9: H8 results

Hypothesis 9

Hedonic motivations (a. Entertainment, b. Social Interaction, and c. Escapism, d. Trendiness) positively affected on trust of UGC.

The variables entertainment, social interaction, escapism, and trendiness make up the construct, hedonic motivations, which was used as the independent variable. The dependent variable was trust which is a variable of the construct User-Generated Content. The results show there is a significant positive relationship between the Hedonic motivations entertainment, social interaction, and escapism with trust of the user-generated content ($F =$

22.943, $R^2 = 0.244$, $p < 0.001$), supporting the hypothesis. The most powerful predictor is entertainment ($\beta = 0.229$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, Hypothesis 9 was supported.

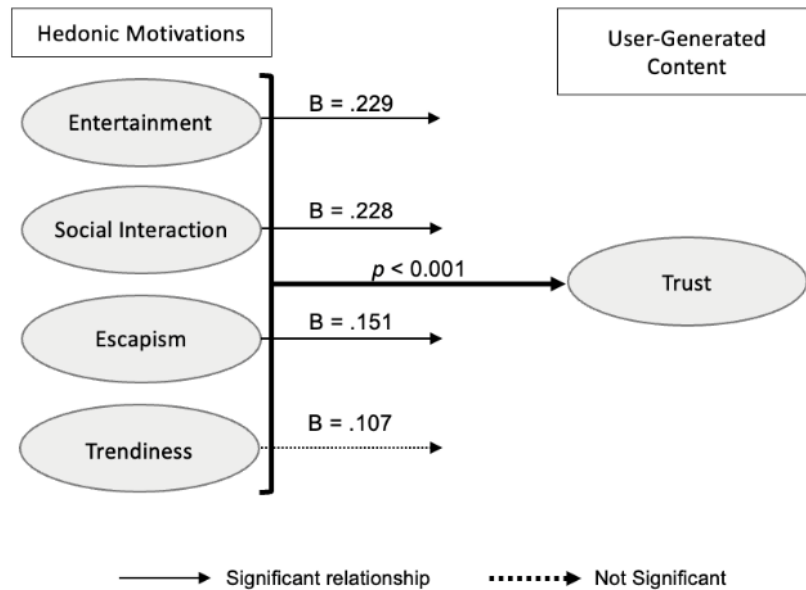


Figure 10: H9 results

Hypothesis 10

Hedonic motivations (a. Entertainment, b. Social Interaction, and c. Escapism. Trendiness) positively affected interaction quality of sponsored content.

The variables entertainment, social interaction, escapism, and trendiness make up the construct, hedonic motivations, which was used as the independent variable. The dependent variable was interaction quality which is a variable of the construct Sponsored Content. The results show there is a significant positive relationship between the Hedonic motivations trendiness with trust of the Sponsored content ($F = 5.268$, $R^2 = 0.069$, $p < 0.001$), supporting the hypothesis. The most powerful and only significant predictor is trendiness ($\beta = 0.158$, $p < 0.009$). Therefore, Hypothesis 10 was supported.

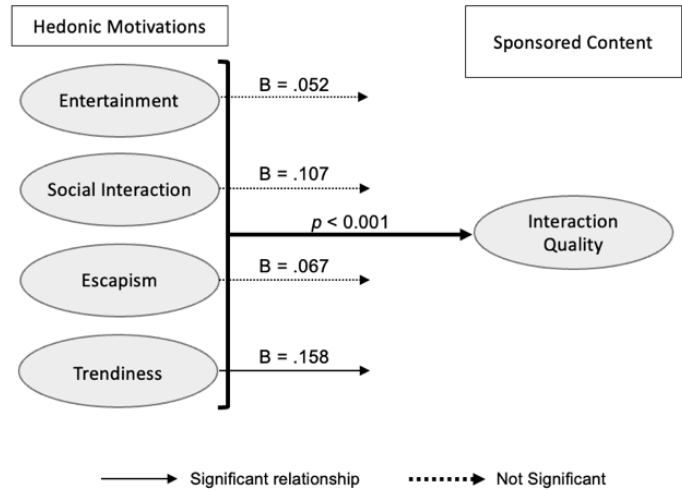


Figure 11: H10 results

Hypothesis 11

Hedonic motivations (a. Entertainment, b. Social Interaction, and c. Escapism. Trendiness) positively affected perceived usefulness of sponsored content.

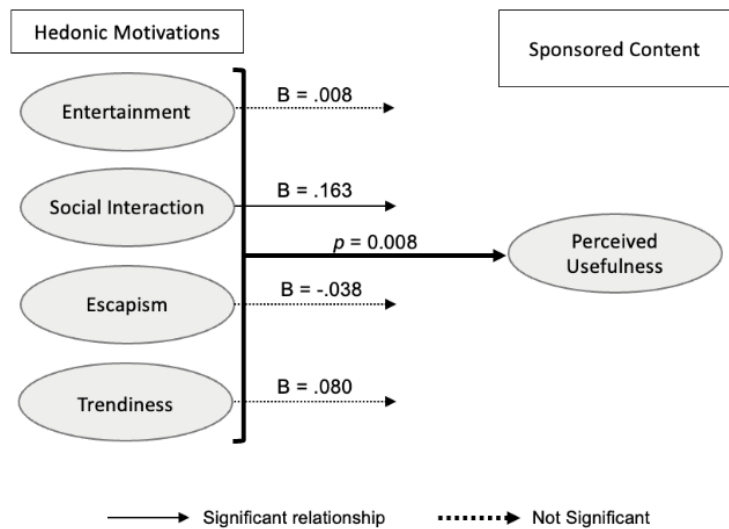


Figure 12: H11 results

The variables entertainment, social interaction, escapism, and trendiness make up the construct, hedonic motivations, which were used as the independent variables. The dependent variable was perceived usefulness which is a variable of the construct Sponsored Content. The results show there is a significant positive relationship between the Hedonic motivations social

interaction with trust of the Sponsored content ($F = 3.542$, $R^2 = 0.048$, $p < 0.008$), supporting the hypothesis. The most powerful and only significant predictor is trendiness ($\beta = 0.163$, $p < 0.007$). Therefore, Hypothesis 11 was supported.

Hypothesis 12

Hedonic motivations (a. Entertainment, b. Social Interaction, and c. Escapism. Trendiness) positively affected trust of Sponsored content.

The variables entertainment, social interaction, escapism, and trendiness make up the construct, hedonic motivations, which was used as the independent variable. The dependent variable was trust which is a variable of the construct Sponsored Content. The results show there is a significant positive relationship between the Hedonic motivations social interaction and trendiness with trust of the Sponsored content ($F = 5.688$, $R^2 = 0.074$, $p < 0.001$), supporting the hypothesis. The most powerful predictor is trendiness ($\beta = 0.161$, $p < 0.007$). Therefore, Hypothesis 12 was supported.

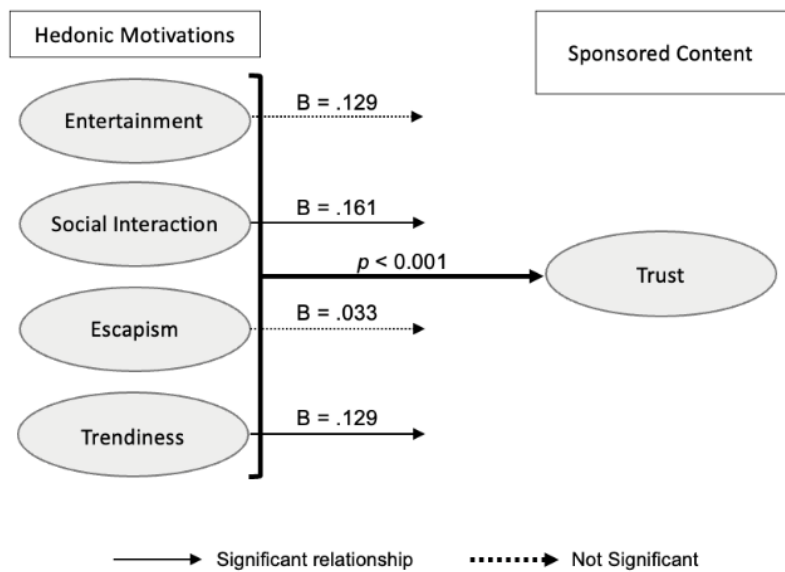


Figure 13: H12 results

Hypothesis 13

User Generated short-form video content (a. Entertainment, b. Social Interaction, and c. Escapism. Trendiness) was positively related to purchasing behavior.

After testing the relationship between the organism state; user-generated content (Interaction Quality and Trust) was found to have a significant positive relationship to purchasing behavior ($F = 43.465$, $R^2 = 0.315$, $p < 0.001$), supporting the hypothesis. The variables trust, perceived usefulness, and interaction quality make up the construct, User-Generated Content, which was used as the independent variable. The dependent variable was Purchasing behavior. The most powerful predictor was trust ($\beta = 0.435$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, Hypothesis 13 was supported.

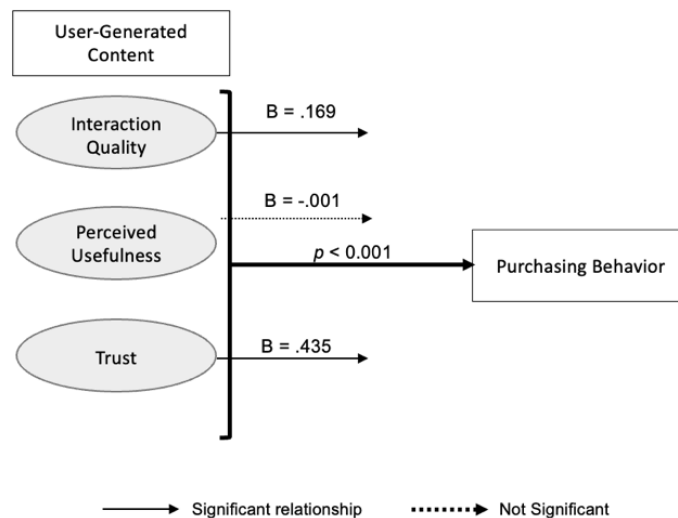


Figure 14: H13 results

Hypothesis 14

Sponsored short-form video content (a. Entertainment, b. Social Interaction, and c. Escapism. Trendiness) was positively related to purchasing behavior.

Sponsored content was found to have a significant positive relationship to purchasing behavior ($F = 11.800$, $R^2 = 0.111$, $p < 0.001$), supporting the hypothesis. The variables trust,

perceived usefulness, and interaction quality make up the construct, User-Generated Content, which was used as the independent variable. The dependent variable was Purchasing behavior. The most powerful and only significant predictor was trust ($\beta = 0.287$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, Hypothesis 14 was supported.

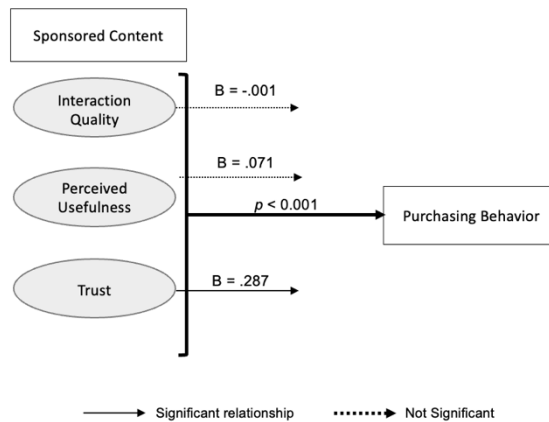


Figure 15: H14 results

Hypotheses 15 and 16

Active social media usage was positively related with purchase intention (that was recommended by social media users).

Passive social media usage was positively related with purchase intention (that is recommended by social media users).

Active social media usage was found to have a significant positive relationship to purchasing behavior ($F = 59.501$, $R^2 = 0.172$, $p < 0.001$), supporting the hypothesis. The variable active social media usage ($\beta = 0.414$, $p < 0.001$) was used as the independent variable. The dependent variable was Purchasing behavior. Therefore, Hypothesis 15 was supported.

The final hypothesis found that passive social media usage was found to have a significant positive relationship to purchasing behavior ($F = 85.968$, $R^2 = 0.230$, $p < 0.001$), supporting the hypothesis. The variable passive social media usage (beta = 0.480, $p < 0.001$)

was used as the independent variable. The dependent variable was Purchasing behavior. Therefore, Hypothesis 16 was supported.

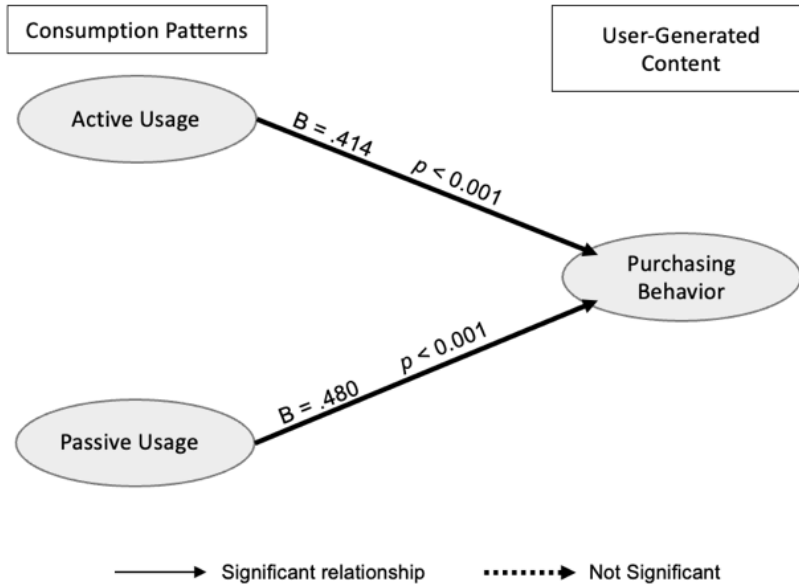


Figure 16: H15 and H16 results

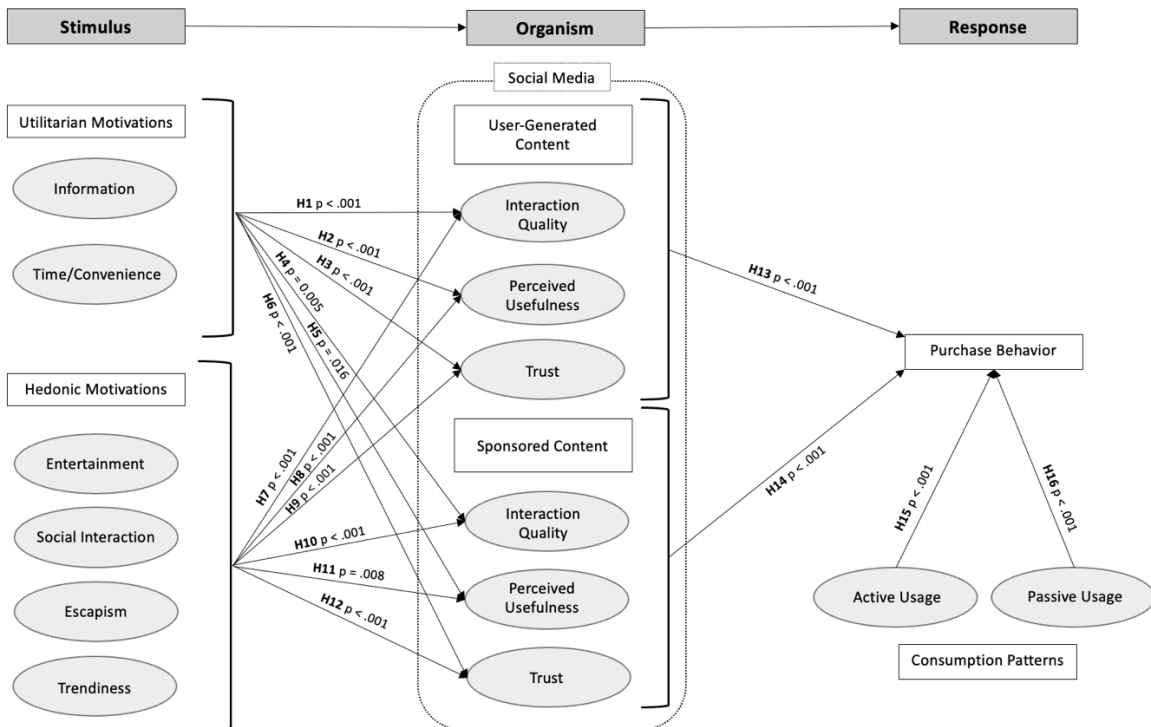


Figure 17: Consequent relationships

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

All hypotheses in the study were supported through multiple regression analyses and are made more interesting by the variable relationship among the hypotheses.

When testing H1 – H6, H3 is the only hypothesis that both variables information, and time/convenience were significant contributing to the positive relationship with User-Generated Content. This could be explained by the massive amount of information published and consumed. As consumers have consumed more information, they have become more aware of untrustworthy content. User-generated content also is, for the most part, unregulated in the United States in free communicative spaces (Raza et. al, 2021). During the pandemic, consumers could have been overwhelmed with the amount of content online when seeking up-to-date information. In situations such as these it could help understand why these users may turn to Sponsored content for information from a source, they feel is more credible.

Time/convenience also contributed to the positive impact of user-generated content. Having time to search for information among user-generated content can be a friction point for some users who want to address a specific need but are faced with troves of information. These users want quick solutions, and this relationship could contribute to knowledge about the rise of TikTok as a search engine. TikTok is more recently being discussed as the ‘new’ search engine because it appeals to users with short-attention spans seeking quick content delivered visually (Southern, 2022). As user-generated content dominates the TikTok platform which is credited as a rising search engine it is interesting that this did not impact the findings of utilitarian motivations on trust of User-generated content. As TikTok continues to grow it would be

worthwhile to examine user's utilitarian motivations to use the platform as the effects of the pandemic wane.

An interesting note is that trust was the most powerful predictor in the positive relationship between sponsored content and purchasing behavior. Further studies are important to better understand the source of that trust, including previous purchases from the source, recommendation from a friend or family member, or sponsored content. This was especially interesting because distrust and worry about misinformation dissemination was a focal point of the pandemic. Future studies could investigate reasons for the distrust.

Although the variable sponsored content was broadly defined in this study, future studies could investigate the impacts of various types of sponsored content. In the context of this study sponsored content could mean any content from commercial and noncommercial uses for example a news outlet and/or a brand ad or sponsor. Social media users have negative attitudes towards brands when content disclosed as sponsored content (van Reijmersdal et al, 2016 & Müller, 2019). A deeper understanding of types of sponsored content could reveal what leads to the trust by the user.

Active usage of TikTok was positively related to purchasing behavior while passive TikTok usage was negatively related to purchasing behavior. Active social media users were measured using items such as posting, commenting, sharing, and liking posts on TikTok. Passive social media users were measured using items such as watching and following posts on TikTok.

Passive social media users are an interesting group that have not been strictly associated with high or low purchasing behavior although the study does find that passive social media usage was positively affecting purchasing behavior. Consumer behavior most often

is associated with relative to purchase intention, but as this study passive users had a stronger relationship to purchasing behavior. The increasing use of TikTok by participants in this study and the effect on purchasing behavior warrants further study.

Research Implications

This study is one of only a few, if any others, investigating active and passive social media users and purchase behavior. Most active/passive user research is related to mental health. A study could be conducted related to the complexities of external and internal factors impacting each relationship. For example, this study found that passive social media usage had a stronger relationship to purchasing behavior (than active usage) which is contradictory to previous literature. External factors of passive usage such as consuming home renovation content or internal factors such as mental health could help further understand the complexity of this strong relationship.

Practical Implications

One of the most practical implications of the study is the contribution to government, public, and private agencies that convey important information especially during times of disasters. Understanding social media information consumption motivations and how they relate to purchase behavior or information use could help these entities develop more effective communications. This study can help to understand how motivations and types of content impact purchasing behavior. Furthermore, the study shows retailers that both UGC and sponsored content affected purchase intention. The retail industry also should engage with passive TikTok users to drive more purchasing behavior.

Limitations

Limitations include the exploratory nature of the study and findings may not be generalizable. A limitation of this study was the cross-sectional approach. The snowball technique in collecting data may lead to a skew in participants in geography, demographics, and/or personal motivations. A more diverse group of participants may have resulted in different findings. Finally, collecting data that relied on a participant's memory may have skewed the results.

Future Research

This study using a qualitative design may lead to a depth of understanding not possible in a quantitative study. It would be interesting to understand the interaction with short-form content on other social media platforms where it is mixed among stagnant and long-form content. TikTok was a convenient means of testing short-form content because the application exclusively uses short-form content. Participants who may have a limited understanding of what short-form content was could participate without risking the validity of testing. A study using a platform that supports mixed content could examine the relationship in a different environment. Future research could compare how agencies in different countries, communities, or areas share important and necessary information in a crisis in contemporary times on social media platforms. A study investigating the impact of TikTok as a search engine on purchasing intentions may also be warranted.

APPENDIX
MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSES

H1-16	Independent Variables	Dependent Variables	β	VIF	R ²	F	Sig
H1	Utilitarian Motivations	User-Generated content			.133	22.018	P < 0.001
	a. Information	Interaction Quality	.310	1.752			< .001
	b. Time/convivence		.077	1.752			.292
H2	Utilitarian Motivations	User-Generated content			.180	31.395	< 0.001
	a. Information	Perceived Usefulness	.336	1.752			< 0.001
	b. Time/convivence		.119	1.752			.093
H3	Utilitarian Motivations	User-Generated content			.271	53.156	< .001
	a. Information	Trust	.351	1.752			< .001
	b. Time/convivence		.218	1.752			0.001
H4	Utilitarian Motivations	Sponsored content			.037	5.497	.005
	a. Information	Interaction Quality	.011	1.752			.886
	b. Time/convivence		.185	1.752			.017
H5	Utilitarian Motivations	Sponsored content			.028	4.180	.016
	a. Information	Perceived Usefulness	-.038	1.752			.625
	b. Time/convivence		.191	1.752			.014
H6	Utilitarian Motivations	Sponsored content			.061	9.238	< .001
	a. Information	Trust	-.021	1.749			.786
	b. Time/convivence		.260	1.749			< .001
H7	Hedonic Motivations	User-Generated content			.222	20.243	< .001
	a. Entertainment	Interaction Quality	.078	1.451			.220
	b. Social Interaction		.238	1.080			< .001
	c. Escapism		.194	1.481			.002
	d. Trendiness		.185	1.110			< .001
H8	Hedonic Motivations	User-Generated content			.157	13.262	< .001
	a. Entertainment	Perceived Usefulness	.260	1.451			< .001
	b. Social Interaction		.151	1.080			.008

H1-16	Independent Variables	Dependent Variables	β	VIF	R ²	F	Sig
	c. Escapism		.072	1.481			.277
	d. Trendiness		.067	1.110			.244
H9	Hedonic Motivations	User-Generated content			.244	22.943	< .001
	a. Entertainment	Trust	.229	1.451			< .001
	b. Social Interaction		.228	1.080			< .001
	c. Escapism		.151	1.481			.017
	d. Trendiness		.107	1.110			.050
H10	Hedonic Motivations	Sponsored content			.069	5.268	< .001
	a. Entertainment	Interaction Quality	.052	1.451			.447
	b. Social Interaction		.107	1.080			.072
	c. Escapism		.067	1.481			.334
	d. Trendiness		.158	1.110			.009
H11	Hedonic Motivations	Sponsored content			.048	3.542	.008
	a. Entertainment	Perceived Usefulness	.008	1.451			.207
	b. Social Interaction		.163	1.080			.007
	c. Escapism		-.038	1.481			.593
	d. Trendiness		.080	1.110			.193
H12	Hedonic Motivations	Sponsored Content			.074	5.688	< .001
	a. Entertainment	Trust	.129	1.451			.063
	b. Social Interaction		.161	1.080			.007
	c. Escapism		-.033	1.481			.640
	d. Trendiness		.129	1.110			.033
H13	User-Generated Content	Purchasing Behavior			.315	43.645	< .001
	a. Interaction Quality		.169	2.188			.021
	b. Perceived Usefulness		-.001	1.840			.988
	c. Trust		.435	1.922			< .001

H1-16	Independent Variables	Dependent Variables	β	VIF	R ²	F	Sig
H14	Sponsored Content	Purchasing Behavior			.111	11.800	< .001
	a. Interaction Quality		-.001	1.878			.987
	b. Perceived Usefulness		.071	1.580			.313
	c. Trust		.287	2.127			< .001
H15	Active Usage	Purchasing Behavior	.414	1.000	.172	59.501	< .001
H16	Passive Usage	Purchasing Behavior	.480	1.000	.230	85.968	< .001

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