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RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Impact of Information Encountering on Impulsive Purchase Behavior in Douyin: An S-O-R Model Approach

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the relationship between information encounters and impulsive purchase behavior on Douyin. By integrating the information encountering framework with the S-O-R model, the research seeks to understand how exposure to merchandise short-video information influences impulsive buying decisions. The goal is to identify the key factors that drive users from noticing to engaging with product information, ultimately leading to impulsive purchases. The research methodology involved surveying 468 eligible participants, who were collected via convenience sampling to gather data on their experiences with information encountering and impulsive purchasing on Douyin. The data was analyzed using Partial Least Square - Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM), a statistical technique suitable for complex models with latent variables. The study's findings indicate that the quality, credibility, usefulness, and visual effects of merchandise short-video information significantly influence the noticing stage of information encountering, which in turn affects impulsive purchase behavior. The study's result indicated that the framework of information encountering is also valid on Douyin. The study also found that users are inclined to make impulsive purchases during the noticing, stopping, and examining stages of information encounters. These insights highlight the importance of video content attributes in capturing and retaining consumer attention, which can lead to increased purchasing likelihood. The study concludes that integrating the information encountering framework with the S-O-R model provides a theoretical foundation to understand consumer behavior in the context of social media platforms like Douyin. The research contributes to consumer behavior theory by extending it to the digital age and enriching the information encountering framework. Practically, it suggests that enhancing video information highlights can optimize marketing strategies and stimulate consumer purchasing. This research offers valuable insights for academics and marketing practitioners, aiding in developing more effective digital marketing campaigns that resonate with consumers' impulsive buying tendencies.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research background

As the world's largest industrial country, China has a growing problem of overcapacity in industrial products, with many traditional manufacturing industries facing a considerable imbalance between inventory pressures and lack of market demand (Ge et al., 2024). To solve this problem, e-commerce and social media platforms, especially short-video platforms like Douyin, play a crucial role. These platforms break the limitations of traditional media in disseminating information, which not only enriches consumers' access to information and entertainment but also dramatically promotes the sale of goods. On Douyin, there are a large number of short videos of product sales interspersed with

short videos shared by users, trying to attract users to complete the consumption behavior through various ways (Wang, 2024). However, Douyin and other short video platforms recommend products through many short videos to stimulate consumers' desire to buy. While achieving sales growth, they also bring about many problems of impulsive consumption by users, making users buy many products they do not need.

Impulsive purchase is usually an unplanned purchase behavior motivated by an external stimulus (Hussain et al., 2024). The short videos of Douyin tend to be highly attractive and infectious, which can quickly stimulate users' desire to purchase, leading to an increase in impulsive purchase behavior (Duc et al., 2024). This phenomenon is particularly evident among younger users. Young users are not only more adapted to obtaining information through social media, but they are also more accustomed to online shopping. Most of them cannot judge their own needs, so they are more likely to discover and purchase products through information pushed through social media and are more likely to make impulsive purchases (Nyrhinen et al., 2023).

Social media platforms like Douyin push content that may interest users through an algorithmic recommendation system. This way of acquiring information by mobile Internet users is very much in line with Erdelez's (2000) description of the phenomenon of information encountering: i.e., users encounter information by chance during browsing rather than actively searching for it. In other words, in today's Internet era, how users acquire information through social media platforms has surpassed the traditional active information acquisition behavior to become mainstream. Platforms such as Douyin, which use information encountering to acquire information, have not only changed the way consumers acquire information but also reshaped their purchasing decision-making process.

Although social media platforms such as Douyin can be considered the central place to access information by way of information encountering, there is a relative paucity of research related to impulse consumption on short-video platforms such as Douyin framed by information encountering. To gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between impulse consumption and information encountering among young people on Douyin, this study combines the S-O-R model, aiming to explore the relationship between information encountering and impulse consumption on Douyin. The S-O-R model is a model for understanding consumer behavior, focusing on the three elements of Stimulus, Organism, and Response relationship between them (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). This study will analyze the information factors that attract users' attention to the information encountered information on Douyin when they stumble upon short video information aimed at selling products, whether the traditional information encountering framework is still applicable to the Douyin as well as the relationship between the individual's reaction and impulsive purchase behavior in the information encountering framework. Through this study, it is hoped that new perspectives can be provided for understanding users' consumption behaviors in the short-video era, and the relationship between information encountering and impulse consumption can be explored more deeply, providing theoretical support for platform optimization, product recommendation, and consumption guidance.

1.2 Research questions

Combining the S-O-R theory with information encountering, this study selects five information factors, namely information quality, information credibility, information interestingness, information usefulness, and information visual effect, as the stimulus phase, aiming to explore whether these information factors trigger users to encounter information by chance in mobile social media consumption. Although these factors are associated with information encountered in studies of short video platforms, they have not been fully explored in the context of impulsive purchases.

The framework for information encountered information proposed by Erdelez (2004) consists of five elements: noticing, stopping, checking, capturing, and returning. In this framework, the user organism itself generates a series of evolutions and, ultimately, a response behavior. According to the information encountering framework, the process of users encountering product video information on Douyin and completing consumption can be used to distinguish between rational and impulsive purchases. Rational purchase requires the user to go through all five steps, whereas impulsive purchase occurs when these steps are not fully completed.

In Douyin's consumption behavior, users may trigger information encountering by noticing product video information while killing time. Next, the user stops to watch the video, shows interest in the product, and further examines product details such as price and quality. At this examining stage, the user evaluates whether the product meets his/her needs and thus decides whether to make a purchase. After making a purchase, the user returns to the info coupon, potentially triggering the next turn of information encountered.

Therefore, in conjunction with Erdelez's information encountering framework, the capturing stage is particularly important if the user's consumption behavior on Douyin is rational. In this stage, users match product features with their own needs and eventually realize rational purchases. This study aims to explore the applicability of the framework to impulsive consumption in Douyin, with a particular focus on the feasibility of the three stages of noticing, stopping, and capturing.

In summary, the research objectives of this study include:

To analyze whether information quality, information credibility, information interestingness, information usefulness, and information visual effect affect users' chances of triggering information encountering in Douyin, respectively.

To examine whether the information encountering framework proposed by Erdelez is still valid in the Douyin environment.

To examine whether the three stages of noticing, stopping, and checking in the information encountering framework trigger users' impulsive consumption behavior.

With the above research objectives, this study proposes the following research questions:

RQ1: What information factors influence users to trigger information encountering in Douyin?

RQ2: Is the information encountering framework still valid in Douyin?

RQ3: Does the Noticing, Stopping, and Examining stage in the information encountering framework trigger impulse consumption?

1.3 Research hypothesis and model

This study delves into the role of information factors on Douyin, a Chinese short-video platform, in triggering impulsive purchases. It focuses on five key factors — information quality, credibility, usefulness, interest, and visual effect — and their influence on the initial stages of information encounter. These factors are hypothesized to significantly impact a user's likelihood of encountering and engaging with product-related short video content, potentially leading to impulsive buying decisions. The study builds upon Erdelez's framework of information encountering, which encompasses the stages of noticing, stopping, examining, capturing, and returning. As mentioned in the research questions part, this research considers only the whole information encountering process conducted, which could be called rational purchase. Therefore, in the noticing, stopping, and examining stages, users are still uncompleted in capturing product information and matching it with their needs, which is called impulsive purchase. By evaluating how these factors influence the progression through these stages, the research aims to understand the dynamics of impulsive purchasing behavior on mobile social media platforms.

Hence, this research proposed the following hypothesis:

H1a: Information quality triggers the noticing phase of information encountering when a user encounters short video information of a commodity on Douyin.

H1b: Information credibility triggers the noticing phase of information encountering when users encounter short video information about goods on Douyin.

H1c: Information usefulness triggers the noticing phase of information encountering when users encounter short video information about goods on Douyin.

H1d: Information interesting triggers the noticing stage of information encountering when users stumble upon short video information about goods on Douyin.

H1e: The information visual effect triggers the noticing stage of information encountering when users stumble upon short-video information of goods on Douyin.

H2a: The noticing phase triggers the stopping phase when users stumble upon product information on Douyin.

H2b: The stopping phase triggers the examining phase when users stumble upon product information on Douyin.

H3a: Users still in the noticing stage will trigger impulsive purchases.

H3b: Users still in the stopping stage will trigger impulsive purchases.

H3c: Users still in the examining stage will trigger impulsive purchases.

In summary, the research model of this study is shown below in Figure 1:

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review explores how mobile Internet social media, particularly short video platforms such as Douyin, have changed information dissemination and consumer habits and the relationship between impulsive purchase behavior and the theoretical framework of information encountering. It analyses how social media content attracts users' notice and influences consumption decisions while highlighting the importance of Douyin in brand marketing and product promotion. In addition, psychological and social factors of impulsive purchases are discussed, as well as the impact of information encountered on impulsive purchase behavior in the social media environment.

2.1 Mobile social media and Douyin

The development of mobile Internet social media has greatly changed people's access to information and consumption habits. In particular, the rise of short video platforms such as Douyin, which are fast, intuitive, and entertaining, has quickly gained popularity among a wide range of users. Douyin is a short-video software founded by ByteDance in 2016, mainly for Chinese users, with 474 million active users (Xinhua, 2024). According to the 2024 Social & KOL Marketing Trend Report, social media content not only occupies users' attention but also builds a new consumption field. Douyin has become a new bridge between brands and young consumers by stimulating consumer demand with its 'interest content' and guiding users to 'discovery,' which shortens the path of consumer decision-making. Users rely more and more on social media to make consumption decisions, and social media has become a key platform to shorten the communication link between brands and consumers. Data from AiMedia Consulting shows that 74.2% of consumers would choose Douyin/Jittery Extreme as a short video platform, indicating that Douyin has a very high preference among users.QuestMobile data also points out that Douyin's per capita single-day usage time has risen to 115.2 minutes, reflecting the high degree of stickiness that users have towards the platform. This stickiness not only reflects users' preference for content but also Douyin's influence in shaping consumption habits. Users' behavioral factors on Douyin are related to time, scene, mode, interaction and creation, etc. Their usage behaviors show fragmentation during the day and peak characteristics at night, and the three modes of recommendation, searching, and passive viewing co-exist. These behavioral characteristics directly affect consumers' purchase decisions and brand preferences, making Douyin an important channel for brand marketing and product promotion. To sum up, mobile Internet social media, especially Douyin, has not only changed the way of information dissemination but also provided new marketing channels and value co-creation opportunities for content creators and enterprises and profoundly influenced and shaped consumers' consumption habits.

2.2 Impulsive purchase

Impulsive purchases, as opposed to rational purchases, are spontaneous, unplanned consumer purchases usually driven by emotional and situational factors (Hussain et al., 2024). Impulsive purchases are primarily influenced by emotions, personality traits, and contextual factors such as credit availability and shopping environment (Hamza et al., 2024). Piron (1991) states that impulsive purchasers browse without the intention of purchasing a specific item or visiting a specific shop. When consumers browse, they are exposed to various stimuli that trigger their desire to make an impulsive purchase. Impulsive buyers tend to make purchase decisions instantly, without seeking additional information or comparing alternatives. Following such decisions, they may face either positive or negative outcomes. This behavior is driven by a combination of internal and external factors that stimulate impulsive purchasing tendencies.

With the development of social media, especially the popularity of portable devices such as mobile phones, merchants have rapidly shifted their sales channels from offline physical shops to online mobile social media, inducing users to consume and even make impulsive purchases by disseminating product information (Susmitha et al., 2024). Social media is more likely to trigger impulsive purchases than traditional offline channels. Previous studies have categorized the factors of impulsive purchase into internal and external factors (e.g., Gantulga & Dashrentsen, 2023; Hussain et al., 2024). In conjunction with the topic of this study, the literature review focuses only on the influence of informational factors on impulse spending:

On social media, users usually focus on the interesting and easy-to-use nature of information when passing the time to stay in a pleasant mood (Turel & Serenko, 2012; Ramírez-Correa et al., 2019). Mood plays a crucial role in impulsive purchases, and pleasant emotions can motivate users to make spontaneous purchases (Hussain et al., 2024). The quality of information and visual impact enhance the attractiveness of the content, thus promoting impulsive purchases. In addition, clear product descriptions and easy navigation also help to enhance this buying behavior (Susmitha et al., 2024). The source's credibility is equally important, and the appeal and expertise of social media influencers can inspire consumers, leading to impulsive purchases (Yang et al., 2024). Authentic social media recommendations build trust, which is essential for encouraging impulsive purchases (Liu et al., 2023). Consumers' trust in celebrity posts, observational learning, and the importance of interaction and authentic content are all critical factors in stimulating impulsive purchases on social media (Zhu et al., 2022). Finally, information exchange and timeliness of information significantly contribute to impulsive purchase behavior by enhancing consumers' curiosity and attention (Zhang et al., 2023).

In summary, although many studies have explored the relationship between information factors and impulsive purchase, there is still a paucity of studies using information encountering as a framework. Therefore, exploring the relationship between information factors and impulsive purchase in the framework of information encountering has essential research value and practical significance. This study aims to fill this research gap by analyzing how information factors on Douyin influence users' impulsive purchasing behavior in the context of information encounters, providing a new perspective for understanding and predicting impulsive purchases in the social media environment.

2.3 Information encountering

Information encountering, also known as passive information acquisition. Active information seeking was at the center of information studies until the end of the twentieth century, referring to people actively acquiring information from sources such as books (Oswald et al., 2019). In contrast, passive information acquisition refers to the incidental acquisition of information with low expectations and involvement. Until the end of the 20th century, there was a lack of empirical research on passive information acquisition (Williamson, 1998). The concept of 'information encountering' was first proposed by Erdelez (1995), and passive information acquisition has only formally entered into the researchers' view. She defined information encountering as 'the unforgettable experience of discovering useful or interesting information by accident.' Wilson (1999) uses the term 'passive attention' to describe the process of inadvertently finding useful or interesting information. In addition, Wilson (1999) proposed "passive search," i.e., stumbling upon relevant information while searching for it. Foster and Ford (2003) use the term "accidental discovery of information" and propose two approaches: (1) accidental discovery of information whose existence and location is accidental rather than its value and (2) accidental discovery of information whose value is also accidental.

Although there is no uniform definition of information encountering, the above representative concepts and definitions show that despite the differences in the definitions and elaborations of different scholars, they all emphasize the essential characteristics of users' "low involvement" and "low expectations" in the process of information encountering. Erdelez and Makri (2020) suggested that information encountering is the preferred term for accidental discovery in the context of information access and redefined and expanded its scope. In addition, many studies have explored the concept of information encountering based on the concept of information encountering. Therefore, this study also adopts the term 'information encountering' to refer to passive information acquisition. Many previous studies have explored the influencing factors that trigger information encounters. These studies have been categorized into three aspects: information factors,

environmental factors, and personal factors (Su & Zheng, 2021). This study explores the role of short videos on Douyin as information factors in triggering information encountering and generating impulse consumption. It also reviews previous studies on information factors.

2.4 Theoretical frameworks of information encountering

Theoretical frameworks have been developed to understand better the contingent nature of information encountering, like McCay-Peet and Toms (2010). Erdelez (2004) identifies the five components of noticing, stopping, examining, extracting, and returning as elements of the process by which information encountering occurs. Each information-encountering behavior does not necessarily include these five elements. Attention is the perception and cognition of the information encountered; parking is the interruption of the initial information search activity and immersion in the encountered information; testing is the assessment of the usefulness of the encountered information; plucking is the problem-solving of the encountered information, which can be selected and saved; and returning is the continuation of the initial task. The theoretical diagram is shown below in Figure 2:

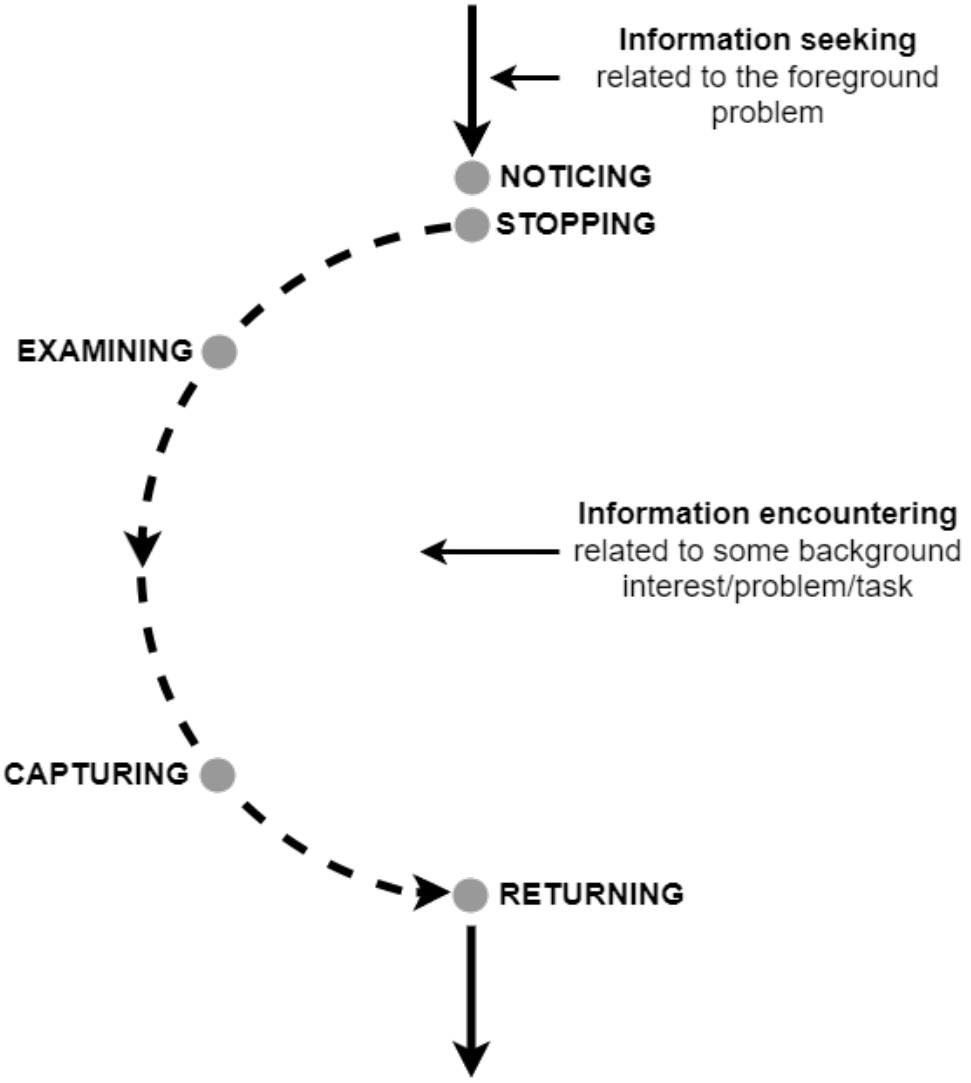

Figure 1: Information encountering model

Source: Adapted from Erdelez (2004)

Most of the subsequent frameworks for information encountering (e.g., Jiang et al., 2021; Tian et al., 2018; Chen, 2021) have made further explorations based on this framework, but most of the studies have further explored the relationship in the information domain-based on Erledez's framework, and have not extended the exploration of the related domains into consumer behavior. To sum up, this study will adopt the term 'information encountering' and combine it with Erdelez's information

encountering model to explore its performance on Douyin and its impact on impulsive purchase behavior to provide a theoretical basis for understanding information encountering in mobile social media.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 S-O-R model

The S-O-R model, which stands for Stimulus-Organsim-Response, is a framework that explains how external stimuli influence an individual's internal processes and subsequent behavior. The model is significant for understanding consumer behavior, where stimuli such as marketing cues influence cognitive and emotional states to produce specific responses in shopping behavior (Choudhary & Sharma, 2022). The S-O-R model, introduced by Woodworth in 1928, has been widely applied in retail settings to explain consumer decision-making. It categorizes stimuli as factors influencing internal states, organisms as the cognitive and emotional processes, and responses as the resulting behaviors. The model highlights the importance of understanding how environmental factors and emotional states impact consumer behavior. The S-O-R model has been applied in various research domains, such as retail settings, to explain consumer decision-making processes (Chebat & Michon, 2003); there have been studies analyzing how marketing strategies can be tailored to influence consumer emotions and attitudes and, ultimately, purchase behavior (Williams, 2024).

This study combines the S-O-R model to investigate the influencing factors of product video information on Douyin that triggers users to notice the video within the framework of information encountering and whether the noticing, stopping, and examining phases of the information encountering already can trigger impulsive purchases by users which designed as a survey-based correlational study using quantitative method. A correlational study examines the connection between two or more variables, making a quantitative approach appropriate as it facilitates analysis with a large sample size. (Curtis et al., 2016). The research model and hypothesis are shown in Figure 2.

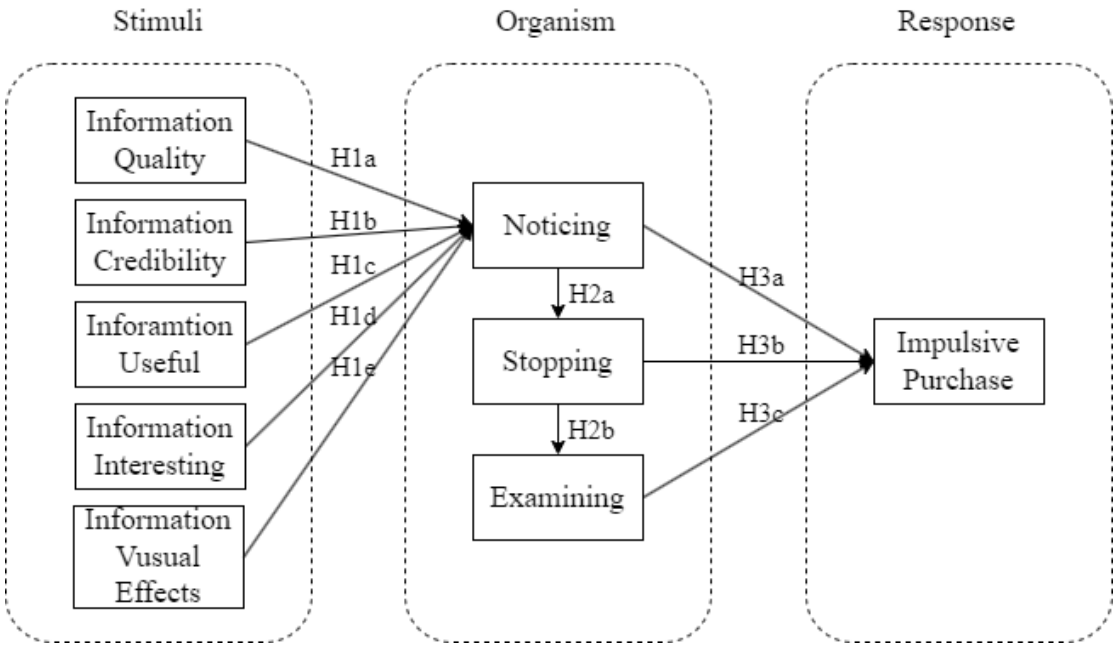

Figure 2: Research model and hypothesis

3.2 Participant and sample size

This study uses the research platform of Douyin, a Chinese social media app. The target participants for this study are Douyin users from China who are between the ages of 18 and 29 and have experienced impulse spending. According to Arnett (2010), individuals aged 18-29 are classified as youth. This demographic, also known as young people or emerging adults, is characterized by unique socio-economic, health, and cultural traits, distinguishing them as a specific group. The number of Doyin users is too large because estimating the minimum sample size based on the number of

predictors is a relatively reasonable choice (Kline, 2015; Ringle et al., 2018; Hair et al., 2020). G power analysis was utilized in this study to calculate the minimum required sample size, which was determined to be 153 samples (Cheah et al., 2020) with a medium effect size, 95% confidence level, 0.5% estimation error, and seven predictors, as shown below:

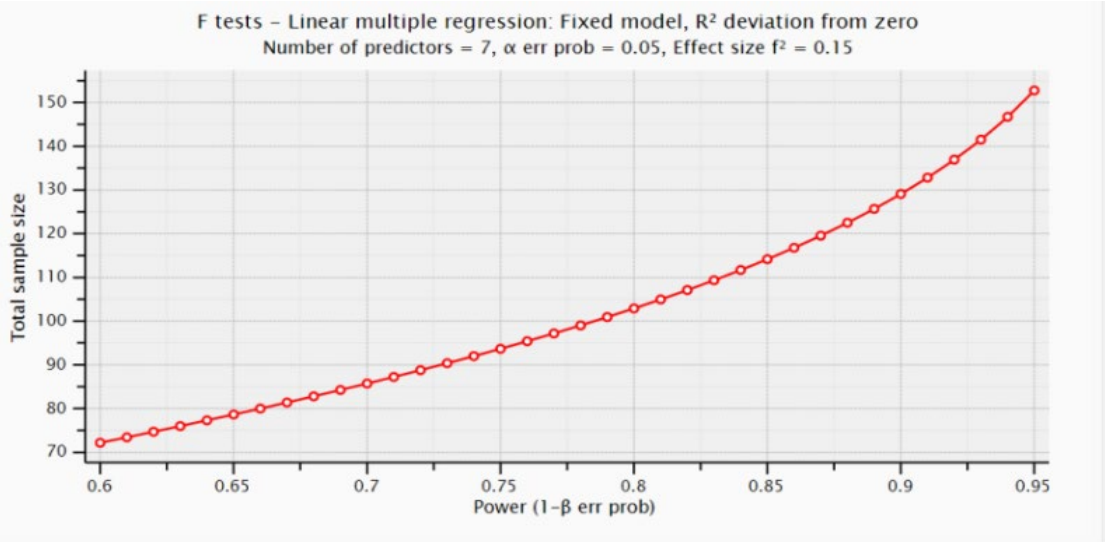

Figure 3: Estimated Minimum Sample Size (G Power Output)

3.3 Data collection

The data collection for this study involved disseminating a questionnaire for which a professional questionnaire platform was used to distribute the questionnaire to different users' mobile phones. Biernacki and Waldorf (1981) mentioned that Ensuring respondents' eligibility is crucial to prevent response errors. To reduce the margin of error, participants were asked a preliminary question about their purchase experience on Douyin to confirm their suitability for the study. Only those who answered affirmatively were allowed to proceed with the questionnaire. The questionnaire was structured into two sections: the first gathered basic demographic information, while the second focused on nine variables, each measured with three questions, totaling 27 questions. These questions employed a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree). The variables in the questionnaire were categorized into three groups, with the first group consisting of six information factors: information quality, information credibility, information usefulness, information interest, and information visualization. The second one is an impulse purchase. The above factors have a positive relation with triggering information encountering, which is based on previous studies. The last one is the noticing, stopping, and examining stages in the information encountering framework, which was designed on their own according to the information encountering the framework and based on previous studies. The variables' references are shown in Table, and specific questions are shown in Appendix I.

Table 1: References for variables design

Variable	Definition	Reference
Information Quality	Information that is accurate, clear, and relevant.	Jiang et al., 2021
Information Credibility	Information that is distributed through trusted intermediaries, such as individuals and institutions.	Hosseini & Moeini, 2022
Information Usefulness	Information that meets user needs and is practical.	Ngo et al., 2024
Information Interesting	Information that is happy and enjoyable.	Yang & Rim, 2014
Information Visual Effect	Information that meets user needs and is practical.	Makri and Buckley, 2019
Impulsive Purchase	Unplanned purchase decisions made by consumers.	Li & Jongbin, 2024

Noticing	The users notice a piece of information because of certain characteristics	Erdelez, 2004
Stopping	The users spend a certain amount of time viewing the information.	
Examining	Users examine the value of the information.	

3.4 Data analysis tools and techniques

Three software tools were employed for the complete data analysis process. M.S. Excel 2016 was used for data coding and handling missing responses. SPSS 24.0 was utilized to analyze the respondents' demographic profiles, test data distribution normality, and perform correlation analysis. Smart PLS 4.0 was used to evaluate the reliability and validity of measurement items, conduct structural equation modeling, and test the hypotheses. Structural equation modeling was performed using Smart PLS due to its ability to manage complex research models and constructs with single and multiple measurement items (Hair et al., 2020).

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Respondents' demographic

There were a total of 511 participants in this study, and after screening the data that did not meet the requirements of the study and were filled out irregularly, a total of 468 data were obtained, with an acquisition rate of 91.6 percent, which meets the minimum sample size requirements obtained through G power. At the gender level, there were 261 male participants (55.8%) and 207 female participants (44.2%). At the age level, there were as many as 352 participants aged 18-23 years, or 75.2 percent, and only 116 participants aged 24-29 years, or 24.8 percent. This shows that the young group of 18-24 years old is the main force of Douyin users.

4.2 Reliability and validity

Cronbach's alpha (C.A.) and Composite Reliability (C.R.) were utilized to evaluate the construct reliability, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was utilized to evaluate the construct reliability, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was used to measure discriminant validity, as indicated in Table I. Cronbach's alpha coefficients are relatively conservative measures of reliability, and there is a tendency for their values to underestimate the level of internal consistency. On the contrary, the values of the combined reliability usually tend to overestimate the level of internal consistency. Therefore, it is expected to report both Cronbach's alpha coefficient and combined reliability to assess model reliability. According to Gliem et al. (2003), a C.A. value higher than 0.9 is excellent, between 0.8 to 0.9 is good, between 0.7 to 0.8 is acceptable, between 0.6 to 0.7 is questionable, higher than 0.5 is poor, and a value below 0.5 is considered unacceptable. The statistical value of C.A. in the present study was found to be above 0.8, which indicates good reliability. Hair et al. (2020) indicated that a C.R. value greater than 0.7 is acceptable, and all the C.R. values were found above 0.8. Whereas Hair et al. (2020) recommended that an AVE value should be above 0.5, and in the present study, all the AVE values were found above 0.7, which denotes the acceptance of the AVE value. In addition, the statistical outcome revealed that all the values of outer loadings were above 0.7.

Table 1: Construct reliability and validity

Variable	Items	Loadings	CA	CR	AVE
Information Quality	IQ1	0.899	0.859	0.869	0.780
	IQ2	0.873			
	IQ3	0.877			
Information Credibility	IC1	0.900	0.851	0.855	0.771
	IC2	0.878			
	IC3	0.855			
Information Usefulness	IU1	0.864	0.841	0.841	0.759
	IU2	0.875			
	IU3	0.873			
Information Interesting	II1	0.854	0.831	0.840	0.746

	II2	0.863			
	II3	0.874			
Information Visual Effect	IVE1	0.893	0.848	0.848	0.767
	IVE2	0.885			
	IVE3	0.849			
Noticing	NO1	0.883	0.840	0.841	0.758
	NO2	0.865			
	NO3	0.864			
Stopping	ST1	0.853	0.819	0.830	0.733
	ST2	0.877			
	ST3	0.838			
Examining	EX1	0.865	0.844	0.846	0.762
	EX2	0.873			
	EX3	0.881			
Impulsive Purchase	IP1	0.875	0.860	0.861	0.781
	IP2	0.879			
	IP3	0.897			

Discriminant validity is used to assess the correlation between different latent variables. There are two main types of discriminant validity measures. Hetero trait - Mono trait (HTMT) analysis was performed to examine the discriminant validity of the current study. Henseler et al. (2014) stated that acceptable Hetero trait - Mono trait (HTMT) values should be less than 0.85 or 0.9; we applied the more rigorous value of 0.85. Table 2 indicates that discriminant validity was acceptable.

Table 2: Hetero trait-Mono trait (HTMT)

	IQ	**IC**	**IU**	**II**	**IVE**	**NO**	**ST**	**EX**	**IP**
IQ									
IC	0.519								
IU	0.427	0.513							
II	0.483	0.522	0.503						
IVE	0.494	0.522	0.444	0.459					
NO	0.504	0.528	0.521	0.543	0.495				
ST	0.492	0.539	0.537	0.512	0.517	0.484			
EX	0.391	0.422	0.405	0.384	0.348	0.361	0.412		
IP	0.52	0.55	0.497	0.486	0.544	0.545	0.522	0.372	

Note: IQ = Information Quality; IC = Information Crebility; IU = Information Usability; II = Information Interesting; Information Visual Effects; NO = Noticing; ST = Stopping; EX = Examining; IP = Impulsive Purchase

4.3 Examination of common method bias

All data in this study were collected from a single source, so common method bias (CMB) could exist. Two approaches are recommended to assess CMV in partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM): full collinearity assessment based on variance inflation factors (VIFs) (Kock, 2015) and the correlation matrix procedure. First, following suggestions from Kock and Lynn (2012) and Kock (2015), all variables must be regressed against a standard variable; if the VIF ≤ 3.3, then no bias exists in single-source data. Second, based on the correlation matrix procedure, the values of correlations among constructs should be less than 0.9 to indicate a lack of CMB. The VIFs for all constructs in this study were 1.763-2.430; the correlations were less than 0.5. Therefore, CMB was not a problem.

4.4 Assessment of the structural model

The assessment of the structural model has been performed by evaluating the value of the coefficient of determinants (R2), effect size (f2), and predictive relevance (Q2).

The coefficient of determination (R2) value is indicated in Table 3. The R2 values of the current study are 0.121, 0.307, 0.362, and 0.164, respectively. Cohen (2013) indicated that R2 values less than 0.02 were weak, 0.02 to 0.13 were weak, 0.13 to 0.26 were moderate, and above 0.26 were substantial. As a result, the present model's statistical outcome is substantially acceptable (Cohen & Levin, 1989). The minimum value of 0.121 is close to 0.13, and all other values are more significant than 0.13, giving relatively satisfactory results.

Table 3: R-square

	R-square	**R-square adjusted**
NOTICING	0.362	0.356
STOPPING	0.164	0.162
EXAMINING	0.121	0.119
IMPULSIVE PURCHASE	0.307	0.302

Table 4 shows the f2 value of the present study, and the f2 value assists in assessing the effect size of the predictor variables. Cohen (2013) denoted that an f2 value above 0.34 indicates a large effect size, an f2 value between 0.14 and 0.34 indicates a medium effect size, and an f2 value below 0.14 and above 0.01 represents a small effect size. The statistical outcome of the current study shows that all five factors of information have a small effect on the information encountering noticing; both paths of the information encountering framework have a medium effect; and of the three factors of the information encountering framework, Noticing and Stopping also have a medium effect on Impulsive purchase Examining only has a small effect on Impulsive purchase.

Table 4: f-square

Loading	**f-square**
IQ -> NO	0.027
IC -> NO	0.023
IU -> NO	0.036
II -> NO	0.041
IVE -> NO	0.022
NO -> ST	0.196
ST -> EX	0.138
NO -> IP	0.116
ST -> IP	0.082
EX -> IP	0.02

Note: IQ = Information Quality; IC = Information Crebility; IU = Information Usability; II = Information Interesting; IVE = Information Visual Effects; NO = Noticing; ST = Stopping; EX = Examining; IP = Impulsive Purchase

Table 5 presents the current study's Q2 value, which represents whether a path model contains predictive relevance or not. Chin (1998) stated that Q2 values above zero (0) indicate the presence of predictive relevance in the model. The current study's Q2 value indicates that all the values are between 0.115 and 0.265, which indicates that the model contains predictive relevance.

Table 5: Q-square

	SSO	**SSE**	**Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)**
STOPPING	1404	1242.666	0.115
NOTICING	1404	1032.12	0.265
EXAMINING	1404	1279.698	0.089
IMPULSIVE PURCHASE	1404	1075.568	0.234

4.5 Results

Table 6 indicates the result of the current study's hypotheses test. There are ten hypotheses in the current study, and the statistical outcome of the hypotheses test indicates that all the t values are more than 4.537 and the p values are 0 (as mentioned in Table 12 and Figure 3). Greenland et al. (2016) mentioned that the hypothesis is accepted when the t-value is above 1.96 and the p-value is below 0.05. At this moment, all the hypotheses of the current study are accepted.

Table 6: Hypotheses test result

	Original sample (O)	**Sample mean (M)**	**Standard deviation (STDEV)**	**T values**	**P values**	**Results**
IQ -> NO	0.158	0.159	0.043	3.675	0.000	Accepted
IC -> NO	0.149	0.150	0.043	3.471	0.001	Accepted
IU -> NO	0.180	0.179	0.043	4.165	0.000	Accepted
II -> NO	0.195	0.194	0.044	4.422	0.000	Accepted
IVE -> NO	0.142	0.142	0.044	3.247	0.001	Accepted
NO -> ST	0.405	0.406	0.050	8.166	0.000	Accepted
ST -> EX	0.348	0.348	0.048	7.209	0.000	Accepted
NO -> IP	0.316	0.316	0.044	7.150	0.000	Accepted
ST -> IP	0.270	0.271	0.046	5.834	0.000	Accepted
EX -> IP	0.129	0.128	0.040	3.234	0.001	Accepted

4. DISCUSSIONS

Combining the S-O-R theory with information encountering, this study selects five information factors, namely information quality, information credibility, information interestingness, information usefulness, and information visual effect, as the stimulus phase, aiming to explore whether these information factors trigger users to encounter information by chance in mobile social media consumption. Although these factors are associated with information encountered in studies of short video platforms, they have not been fully explored in the context of impulsive purchases.

The framework for information encountered information proposed by Erdelez (2004) consists of five elements: noticing, stopping, examining, capturing, and returning. In this framework, the user organism itself generates a series of evolutions and, ultimately, a response behavior. According to the information encountering framework, the process of users encountering product video information

on Douyin and completing consumption can be used to distinguish rational purchases from impulsive purchases. Rational purchase requires the user to go through all five steps, whereas impulsive purchase occurs when these steps are not fully completed.

In Douyin's consumption behavior, users may trigger information encountering by noticing product video information while killing time. Next, the user stops to watch the video, shows interest in the product, and further examines product details such as price and quality. At this examining stage, the user evaluates whether the product meets his/her needs and thus decides whether to make a purchase. After making a purchase, the user returns to browse for information, potentially triggering the next purchase. Therefore, in conjunction with Erdelez's information encountering framework, the capturing stage is particularly important if the user's consumption behavior on Douyin is rational. In this stage, users match product features with their own needs and eventually realize rational purchases. This study aims to explore the applicability of the framework to impulsive consumption in Douyin, with a particular focus on the feasibility of the three stages of noticing, stopping, and capturing.

Individuals' willingness to consume has been an important topic in economics and has been the subject of extensive researchers' attention, with a large number of scholars in different fields combining other domains with a willingness to consume (e.g., Magdalena et al., 2015; Greenland et al., 2016). Impulse buying is an important phenomenon in consumer behavior. With the rapid development of mobile devices and social media, social media has rapidly become an important channel for merchandising, and video information related to merchandising and video information spontaneously shared by users on streaming media platforms represented by Douyin are intertwined to stimulate users' desire to buy. Unlike text and picture information, video information has a stronger impact on the screen and is more capable of generating a sense of immersion in the user; moreover, the characteristics of the goods displayed through the video are more comprehensive, and the creators of the video information on the goods will intersperse a variety of creative ideas in an attempt to attract the user to purchase; in addition, due to the characteristics and algorithms of the video platform, the recommendation of the video makes the user always curious about the next video, which stimulates the user's continuous browsing of the video desire (Poleac & Gherguț-Babii, 2024). This is essentially a typical information encountering scenario, where the user acquires useful or interesting information in a state of low expectation and low engagement, stimulating the user's desire to buy. Researchers in the information field have explored the relationship between social media and impulse purchase (Erdelez & Makri, 2020). The rapid development of social media has further stimulated impulse buying, and the psychological mechanisms by which users make purchases on social media have revealed that informational, emotional, environmental, and social factors influence consumers' immediate decisions (Rukmana et al., 2024). This study found that although some studies have explored the factors influencing impulsive purchases on mobile Internet social media (literature), few studies have linked impulsive purchases to information encountering, verified whether informational factors triggered information encounters in social media, whether the information encountering process is still relevant, and whether the information encountering framework has explored the relationship between the information encountering process and impulsive purchases through a Relationship.

This study explored the information factors that influence the triggering of information encountering on Douyin, the feasibility of the information encountering framework on Douyin in the noticing, stopping, and examining phases, and whether impulse purchases can be triggered in any of the above three phases. The results show that five information factors, namely, information quality, information credibility, information usefulness, information interestingness, and information visual effect, are positively correlated with the noticing stage of information encountering ($t=3.675$, $p=0.000$; $t=3.471$, $p=0.001$; $t=4.165$, $p=0.000$; $t=4.422$, $p=0.000$; $t=3.247$, $p=0.001$). On Douyin, the three stages remain sequentially triggered in the first three stages of information encounters. Users attracted by some information factor and noticing the information encountered information will stop temporarily to try to have a general understanding of the goods ($t=8.166$, $p=0.000$), and after stopping and observing the information encountered information, they will continue examining various details of the information to measure the value of the goods ($t=7.209$, $p=0.000$). This demonstrates that the information framework proposed by Erdelez still has explanatory strength in mobile Internet social media represented by Douyin. Finally, the relationships between users'

noticing, stopping, and examining stages and impulsive purchases were all positive and significant (t=7.150, p=0.000; t=5.834, p=0.000; t=3.234, p=0.001). Summarising and analyzing the above findings, Douyin, through its algorithm, recommends video information containing information factors that users pay attention to, stimulates users to notice the current information through the various information factors shown in the video, and relies on the convenience of mobile payment to induce users to complete the payment and form impulsive purchases before gauging whether the value of the goods matches their own needs. If the user is not impressed and completes the purchase in the noticing stage, the user will enter the stopping stage. In this stage, the user is attracted to the various factors of the product video and begins to stay for some time, eventually completing the purchase. The user will learn more about the product in the stopping stage than in the noticing stage but will still complete the purchase behavior without considering the value of the product itself; if the user still does not complete the purchase behavior in this stage, the user will enter the reviewing stage of information exposure. In this stage, the user will begin to peel off the video information factor that attracts the user to stop, observe the parameters of the commodity in detail, and complete the purchase behavior.

However, it should be noted that although the user begins to measure the value of the product at this stage, only by the high value of the product to complete the purchase has not yet entered the capture of the value of the product suitable for their part, and therefore still belongs to the category of impulsive purchase. When users perceive the value of the product and begin to grasp whether there are product features that meet their needs, then it is considered a rational purchase, but this stage has also been removed from the scope of the impulsive purchase, so it is no longer within the scope of this study, and it is necessary to design the corresponding model for further research. This also provides a research perspective for future studies.

This study makes several theoretical contributions. First, it extends the theory of consumer behavior, especially in the context of the increasing popularity of digital and social media. By analytically combining information encountering with impulsive purchase, this study explores how information encountering is triggered by product video information on streaming media platforms such as Douyin, revealing how information factors influence consumers' noticing and purchasing decisions and providing a new perspective for understanding consumer behavior in the new media environment. Second, this study enriches the theory of information encountering through empirical research and verifies the applicability of the information encountering process in Douyin. The study not only confirms the role of information quality and credibility in triggering information encountering but also explores the impact of different stages of information encountering on impulsive purchasing, providing empirical support for the further development of information encountering theory in social media.

This study offers several practical contributions. Firstly, this study shows that information quality, credibility, usefulness, interest, and visual effect of merchandise video information on social media platforms can trigger the noticing stage of information encountering. This means that companies can enhance the above aspects of video information on Douyin to attract users' notice, optimize marketing strategies, increase the attractiveness and effectiveness of advertising and promotional content, and further stimulate users' desire to purchase. Second, based on the information encountering framework, this study reveals how the psychological mechanism of impulsive purchase in the social media environment influences consumers' immediate decision-making. From the consumers' perspective, this provides empirical guidance on how consumers can improve their self-control and prevent the spread of inaccurate information.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Key findings

This study explores the influence of information encountering on impulsive purchase behavior within the context of Douyin, a prominent short-video platform in China, employing the S-O-R (Stimulus-Organism-Response) model. The research identifies five critical factors—information quality, credibility, usefulness, interest, and visual effect - that significantly influence the initial stages of information encountering, namely noticing, stopping, and examining.

The findings indicate that high-quality, credible, and visually appealing video content effectively attracts users' attention, thereby increasing the probability of impulsive purchases. In particular, the study illustrates that users are more inclined to engage in impulsive purchasing when they encounter product information through short videos, as these factors stimulate the noticing stage of the information encountering process. Furthermore, the sequential relationship between the stages - where noticing leads to stopping, which in turn prompts examining - highlights the dynamic process by which users engage with product information.

Furthermore, the research validates the applicability of Erdelez's information encountering framework in the context of Douyin, substantiating its significance in comprehending consumer behavior in social media settings. The integration of the S-O-R model with information encountering provides a robust theoretical framework for elucidating the influence of external stimuli on internal cognitive processes and subsequent purchasing behaviors. These insights contribute to the theoretical discourse on consumer behavior in digital marketing and offer practical implications for marketers aiming to optimize video content strategies to enhance consumer engagement and drive impulsive purchases.

6.2 Limitations

First, the sample was drawn from Douyin users in China, which may not be representative of all other national social media platforms or consumer groups, thus limiting the generalisability of the findings. Second, the study focused on the noticing, stopping, and checking phases of the information exposure process while ignoring the capturing and returning phases, which may contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior. Finally, the study mainly examined factors such as information quality, credibility, usefulness, interest, and visual effects and failed to cover other variables that may influence impulsive purchases, such as users' psychological states and individual differences. Future research could overcome these limitations by selecting a different sample size to include other countries or a more diverse group of social media users, as well as incorporating other factors that may influence impulsive purchase decisions.

6.3 The scope for further research

This study opens up new horizons for future research. Firstly, it reveals the link between information encountering and impulsive purchasing and suggests new ways to explore impulsive purchasing in depth within the framework of information encountering. This not only provides new research topics for academic researchers but also indicates how marketing practitioners can use social media platforms more efficiently for merchandising strategies. Secondly, this study focuses on three key stages related to impulsive purchase during information encountering on the Douyin platform - noticing, stopping, and examining stages - and analyses the interaction of these stages and their impact on impulsive purchase under the framework of information encountering, to clarify the boundaries between impulsive purchase and rational purchase in the framework of information encountering The boundary between impulsive and rational buying in the information eventuality framework is clarified. Future research can further explore the links between other stages of information encountering and rational consumption and, through experiments and field studies, more comprehensively grasp the dynamic process of information encountering and its far-reaching impact on consumer behavior.

In addition, future research could delve into how individual differences, such as age, gender, and personality traits, modulate the relationship between information encountering and impulsive purchase. This will help to develop more precise marketing strategies to more effectively leverage the phenomenon of information encountering impulsive purchasing behavior. Through these studies, we can gain a deeper understanding of the impact of information on consumers' decision-making process and provide richer theoretical support and practical guidance for social media marketing.

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