Augmenting TikTok shop adoption: The mediating role of Key Opinion Consumers (KOCs) in live streaming, video content, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) recommendations

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ABSTRACT

There is a growing trend of social media networks transitioning into channels primarily focused on providing entertainment content. This research used the Uses and Gratifications (U&G) theory to examine the manner in which individuals transition from other platforms to TikTok with regard to their engagement in entertainment and self-publishing of videos. Key Opinion Consumers (KOCs) are individuals who provide evaluations from the consumer's perspective. This emerging trend involves the creation of online review videos, which aligns with the evolving nature of e-commerce platforms. An online survey was administered to enlist a total of 251 individuals who are active users of the social media platform TikTok. The recruitment process included an online network sampling approach. The results of our study indicate that factors such as video lengths, live streaming, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) algorithms for recommendation have a substantial impact on the use of TikTok. The findings indicate that KOCs play a crucial role in mediating TikTok use patterns and uptake. This research enhances the comprehension of media use within the framework of uses and gratification, both in terms of theoretical and empirical aspects.

1. Introduction

TikTok experienced an unprecedented surge in user adoption during the first quarter of 2020, acquiring 315 million new installs across the App Store and Google Play (Tower Sensor, 2020). TikTok is a contemporary online video-sharing application that offers opportunities for self-expression, a feeling of accomplishment, social engagement, and escapism (Omar, 2020). TikTok's recommendation algorithm employs Artificial Intelligence (AI) to provide users with personalized content suggestions based on their preferences and interests, thereby assisting them in creating the best possible videos (Kang & Lou, 2022). In addition, it integrates a number of technological advances, such as the capacity to generate recordings, use hashtags, apply filters, and employ machine learning algorithms. Through an online training system, Monolith, TikTok's extensive recommendation engine, excels at adapting quickly to changes in user preferences (Hurley, 2022). TikTok primarily provides concise content types, including short clips and live videos with a maximum duration of 60 seconds. In contrast, Facebook permits far longer films, allowing up to 240 minutes for live videos and unlimited duration for traditional post-videos (Taylor & Choi, 2022). These features significantly facilitate the content creation process for consumers. However, previous studies have not deeply considered the efficacy of TikTok Artificial Intelligence (AI) algorithms for recommendation in attracting followers hourly.

Previous research has been conducted on the phenomenon of the TikTok store with the aim of examining the determinants that significantly impact individuals' inclination to use this platform in contrast to its predecessors (Escamilla-Fajardo et al., 2021). TikTok has been the subject of studies in several domains, including marketing, tourism, education, and sports. Marketing research studies are concerned with the information conveyed via video content and the level of attractiveness associated with the videos that influencers produce (Barta et al., 2023; Escamilla-Fajardo et al., 2021; Indrawati et al., 2023). In the realm of tourism, scholarly investigations mostly center on the allure and impact of visual media, particularly videos (Zhou et al., 2023). The study in the field of education centers on the examination of how films effectively transmit motivation to those who watch them (Escamilla-Fajardo et al., 2021; Kramer, 2021). The current research lacks investigation into videos of the TikTok platform for video creation, as well as the variables influencing consumer acceptance of such videos.

The determinants that influence individuals to see promotional videos on TikTok and develop intentions to make purchases remain unclear (Liu et al., 2022). The wide range of material and brevity of videos on TikTok contribute to its widespread popularity, resulting in a huge number of participants. Furthermore, TikTok offers a plethora of additional features and tools compared to other platforms, enhancing user convenience and enabling them to create videos according to their desired specifications. TikTok's AI recommendation algorithm diverges from that of Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram, resulting in the presentation of recommended material that aligns with user preferences. The use of videos as the primary medium on the site enhances its marketability due to the multifaceted nature of engagement, including audio, and visual outlook. The platform exhibits a broad array of KOCs. The material they produce not only alleviates boredom among followers but also has the potential to engender addiction due to its entertaining nature, comedy, and emotional resonance. Furthermore, it is worth noting that live streaming is a notable advantage of the TikTok platform (Barta et al., 2023). However, prior research has not shown a causal relationship between the synergistic integration of the aforementioned elements and the inclination of followers to express interest in and make purchases of items and services promoted on this particular platform (Gilal et al., 2020). This research aims to investigate the many characteristics of TikTok, along with its competitive advantages, including videos, AI recommendation algorithms, and live streaming, in terms of their effectiveness in suggesting products and services.

Key Opinion Consumers (KOCs) are seen as reliable purveyors of knowledge by their adherents, and their endorsements possess more sway compared to celebrities or other influencers (He & Jin, 2022). Furthermore, KOCs have the potential to create sales figures that surpass typical influencers by up to tenfold (Argyris et al., 2020). KOCs have shown a higher level of efficacy in terms of enhancing brand recognition and fostering engagement compared to conventional influencers. The algorithm used by TikTok is specifically intended to provide users with material that aligns with their individual interests and preferences (Peng, 2023; Taylor & Choi, 2022). This implies that the videos produced by KOCs have a higher probability of reaching those who already possess an inclination towards the items or services being endorsed. The Shop platform offered by TikTok facilitates convenient in-app product purchases for consumers. When users see a KOC video and express interest in the featured product, they have the convenient option to make a purchase without exiting the application (He & Jin, 2022). KOCs have a substantial influence on the TikTok Shop platform, resulting in considerable sales generation, heightened brand recognition, and enhanced user engagement.

A KOC creates a TikTok video evaluating a new product by describing its features and benefits. Share their own personal product experience and give an honest evaluation of the

product, indicating whether they would recommend it to their followers. The impact of videos originating from KOCS or its live-streaming content has not been thoroughly examined in prior academic investigations pertaining to TikTok. This research further examines the regulatory function of Key Opinion Consumers (KOCs) in facilitating purchase intention, approval of usage, and future purchases. The primary focus is to understand the impact of these factors on users' desire to use and accept this emerging platform. Thus, we proposed the following research questions:

- What are the factors influencing individuals' decision to follow KOC on TikTok that engender user preference and drive platform adoption?

- What is the mediator role of Key Opinion Consumers (KOCs) in influencing the purchase decision and uptake of TikTok?

Table 1

Previous Studies in TikTok Shop

Authors	Antecedents	Consequences	Mediators/ Moderators	Theory	Method
Indrawati et al. (2023)	Information quality Information quantity Information credibility	Information usefulness Information adoption Purchase intention		Acceptance Model (IAM) of Sussman and Siegal (2003).	Quantitative method approach A survey strategy
Urman and Makhortykh (2023)	Performance expectancy Entertainment Tie strength	Consumer engagement behavior (Likes, Comments, Shares)	Product type Controls (Time span, Video length, Speaking rate, Follower number, price)	U&G theory (Katz et al., 1973) Signaling theory (Spence, 1973)	Transformed the videos into text and cleaned all the textual data Calculated the values of each variable for all samples
Escamilla-Fajardo et al. (2021)	Short Videos Rhythm Coordination and expression Originality - Creativity Use of effects Artistic staging	Social media learning Social media purpose		Social media in higher education	Quantitative analysis
Barta et al. (2023)	Originality Quality Quantity Humour	Intention to follow the account Intention to follow the advice	Hedonic experience Opinion leadership	Social media influencers The SOR model (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974)	a questionnaire-based, quantitative empirical study

Authors	Antecedents	Consequences	Mediators/ Moderators	Theory	Method
Zhou et al. (2023)	Performance expectancy Effort expectancy Social influence Facilitating conditions Hedonic motivation Habit Perceived trust	Behavioral intention Actual behavior		UTAUT2 model (Venkatesh et al., 2003)	Questionnaire design

Source. The Authors

2. Uses and gratification theory and hypothesis

The Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) is a theoretical framework within the field of mass communication that aims to analyze the active involvement of the audience in the process of decision-making and goal-setting while engaging with media content (Nabi & Oliver, 2009). The theory of uses and gratifications (UGT) explores the intentional selection of media by users to fulfill certain goals, such as acquiring information, seeking relaxation, engaging in social interactions or companionship, seeking distraction, or seeking an escape (Papacharissi & Rubin, 2000).

UGT can apply traditional media with news, TV programs, and social media with the significant development of Internet. UGT can help explain why individuals read newspapers, TV news, and Internet news and what they get from it. Entertainment media helps people relax, escape, and discover new worlds. UGT can help explain why individuals watch movies, TV programs, and play video games and what they get out of it. UGT can help explain why individuals use Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram and what they get out of it (Omar, 2020). UGT enhances the user experience by developing novel functionalities that facilitate seamless connectivity with friends and family, efficient sharing of information and ideas, and the establishment and nurturing of interpersonal connections.

TikTok and livestreaming may help consumers unwind, as there are humorous videos, music, and livestreams from well-known producers (O'Donnell et al., 2023). Consequently, users enjoy using Tiktok, and brands can strengthen their relationships with customers through Tiktok by distributing entertaining content that customers enjoy (Falgoust et al., 2022). Similarly, Menon (2022) identified the following categories of Instagram gratifications: disclosure, peer influence, trend influence, self-promotion, distraction, habitual activity, and social interaction. Du et al. (2022) identified social interaction, archiving, self-expression, peeping, and escape as the primary motivations for using TikTok.

KOCs often utilize live streaming to advertise items and services that they like and use. UGT may also be utilized to create more successful marketing tactics for KOC, livestreaming, and TikTok. Businesses may build campaigns that are more likely to appeal to their target audience and engage with them on an emotional level by knowing the gratifications that consumers seek from KOCs, live streaming, and TikTok. Currently, live streaming and the KOC role have altered the purchasing behavior of youthful consumers, who have embraced them. However, there is still a paucity of research identifying the most important TikTok selling factors.

2.1. Video length

The use of social media as a communication platform for interactions between brands and consumers (Bailey et al., 2021). In addition to conventional methods of information dissemination like written texts or audio-visual materials, recent research has shown that short movies with a duration of one minute or less have emerged as a very promising medium (Hanafizadeh et al., 2021). As individuals navigate increasingly busy lifestyles, there is a growing inclination to seek expedited means of entertainment and information consumption. Platforms that cater to brief video content, such as TikTok, have the ability to effectively target viewers and meet their informational demands within an acceptable timeframe (Wahid et al., 2023). There is a positive correlation between the duration of product videos seen by consumers and their likelihood of making a purchase, with those who view longer movies exhibiting a higher propensity to engage in product acquisition compared to those who view shorter videos (Barta et al., 2023; Indrawati et al., 2023). The results of the study indicate that those who were exposed to a longer movie were more inclined to retain the information presented in the videos and then engage in behaviors based on that knowledge (Munaro et al., 2021). The duration of a video may serve as a potent mechanism for shaping customer behavior. When producing a promotional video for a product or service, it is crucial to ensure that the video has sufficient length to effectively convey information and exert persuasive influence (Cao et al., 2021). Ensure that the video adheres to an appropriate duration and maintains a concise and focused approach. Individuals possess limited attention spans, thereby emphasizing the need to efficiently and expeditiously convey one's message (Wang, 2020; Zhang et al., 2019). Thus, we proposed the following hypothesis:

H1: Video length positively influences behavioral intention

2.2. AI recommendation algorithm

Algorithms refer to computational techniques that are used to transform input data into the intended output. There is a growing trend where algorithmic selection is progressively replacing human-based selection on various platforms. The algorithm has been specifically created to provide viewers with films that are very likely to capture their attention. The TikTok algorithm considers several elements in its decision-making process for determining the films to present to users. Variables such as user interactions, including video likes, shares, and account follow, are considered in this context (Liao et al., 2021). Furthermore, the analysis also incorporates the information associated with the video, including elements such as the description, audio content, and hashtags (Li, 2019). This phenomenon may result in consumers dedicating a greater amount of time to the platform and displaying a higher propensity to interact with the material presented to them (Bailey et al., 2021). TikTok employs several persuasive techniques, including humor, storytelling, and emotional appeals, in order to exert influence on its users (Hautea et al., 2021). These methodologies have the potential to enhance the perception of a product. The inclusion of clickable links and call-to-action language inside the TikTok platform facilitates expedient user access to supplementary information or the initiation of transactions (O'Donnell et al., 2023). TikTok employs concise video content, interactive functionalities, and entertaining challenges as mechanisms to sustain user engagement (Cheng et al., 2021). TikTok employs targeted suggestions, warnings, and incentivization strategies to enhance user engagement. Thus, we proposed the following hypothesis:

H2: AI recommendation algorithm positively influences behavioral intention

2.3. Live streaming

The domain of live streaming commerce is now regarded as very promising and competitive, with significant potential for growth. The popularity of live streaming systems may be attributed to the wide range of multimedia elements they provide (Wongkitrungrueng et al., 2020). The use of live streaming enables companies and enterprises to effectively showcase their products or services in a manner that is both intimate and captivating (Men et al., 2023). Live streaming enables companies and enterprises to engage with their consumers in real-time interactions (Giertz et al., 2022). This practice has the potential to foster a sense of community and establish trust between brands, enterprises, and their respective client bases. Live streaming has the potential to serve as a promotional tool for goods or services, facilitate the provision of discounts, and facilitate the organization of competitions (Labanauskaitė et al., 2020). Live streaming, in fact, enables brands and enterprises to get contact information from people who express interest in their goods or services (Labanauskaitė et al., 2020). Live streaming has the potential to serve as an educational tool for users, offering insights into various goods or services, facilitating customer assistance, and providing entertainment value (Escamilla-Fajardo et al., 2021). The live streaming industry is likely to be financially lucrative due to its ability to effectively meet customers' needs for knowledge, emotional connection, and social interaction. The use of a chat box facilitates real-time engagement between viewers and broadcasters, potentially influencing the stream and its transmission (Barta et al., 2023; Zhou et al., 2023). This phenomenon may result in an increased propensity among users to take various actions, such as making a purchase of a product or service, subscribing to a brand or company, or actively interacting with the material produced by the brand or business (Indrawati et al., 2023). Thus, we proposed the following hypothesis:

H3: Live streaming positively influences behavioral intention

2.4. Behavioral intention

The process of adopting new technology, particularly e-commerce, has been shown to be a multi-level achievement. Previous research has used several models, such as UGT, to investigate the elements that influence the adoption and utilization of online purchases (Erjavec & Manfreda, 2022). The UGT framework was chosen as the theoretical foundation for our research on the business aspects of TikTok Shop. The anticipation of consumer adoption is a distinct area of focus within the realm of new technology development. The study model of adoption has been extensively examined across several domains of technology, including but not limited to online banking, computer management security, health systems, and learning systems. Based on previous theoretical frameworks, it has been posited that user perceptions have an influence on behavioral intention, thereby impacting the frequency with which individuals make choices. The UGT model demonstrates the favorable influence of behavioral use intention on the using adoption. Thus, we proposed the following hypothesis:

H4: Behavioral intention positively influences using adoption

2.5. Key opinion consumers

When Key Opinion Consumers (KOCs) endorse a product or service on TikTok, it leads to increased visibility among consumers. Sponsorships by KOC have a substantial reach across audiences owing to the extensive following of their platforms (De Jans et al., 2020). Consequently, individuals are more inclined to perceive the suggested products or services.

Consumers are more inclined to place faith in a product or service when it receives an endorsement from KOCs (Tseng & Wang, 2023). They have the potential to exert influence on their respective followers, potentially motivating them to make purchases of the items and services that are being endorsed (Xiong et al., 2021). KOCs have the ability to include product links in their recommendations. The provided hyperlinks direct users to either the official website of a corporation or a designated webpage designed to capture user attention upon arrival. Subsequently, this methodology may be used to gather contact details from those who express interest. KOCs endorsements serve the purpose of informing, entertaining, and providing assistance to consumers. This phenomenon has the potential to drive individuals to become subscribers to a brand or corporation, actively participate in its content, or make purchases of its products or services (Dolega et al., 2021). Thus, we proposed the following hypothesis:
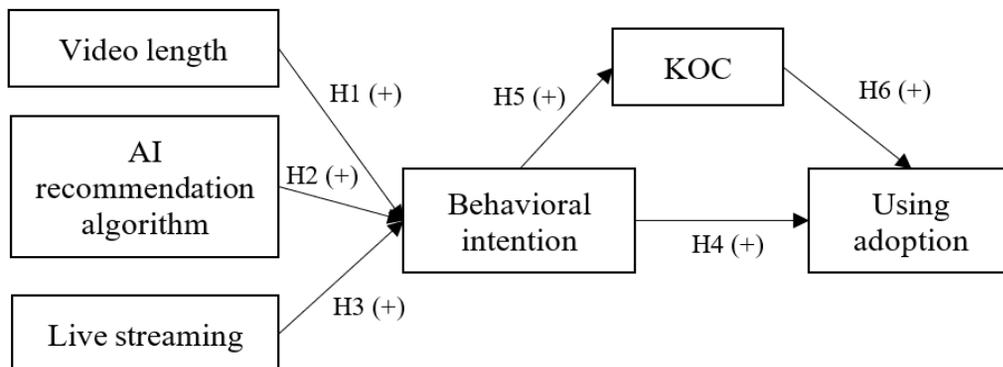
H5: KOCs positively influence behavioral intention

H6: KOCs positively influence using adoption

H7: KOCs mediate the relationship between behavioral intention and using adoption

Figure 1

Research Model

Source. The Authors

3. Methodology

3.1. Data collection

The questions included in the scale have been derived from the existing literature in order to establish dependability. However, some modifications were made to align them with the specific focus of our study. The purpose of this section is to assess the prevalence of TikTok platforms among Generation Z and the underlying causes that contribute to the rapid virality of TikTok. TikTok users constitute over 50% of the total user base across the four platforms, namely Shopee, Lazada, Tiki, and TikTok Shop. The survey respondents consist of individuals aged between 18 and 25 who reside in Vietnam. A total of 336 answers were obtained for this survey. The study conducted by means of online questionnaires yielded a total of 336 replies, out of which 251 were deemed legitimate. The selection of valid responses was determined by the user's prior experience with both TikTok and TikTok Shop.

3.2. Measurements

The scales were adapted from previous studies and modified to fit our context. Video Length (VL) was adopted from Cao et al. (2021). AI recommendation algorithm (AI) was

adopted by Nilashi et al. (2016), Zarouali et al. (2021). KOC/KOL endorsement (KK) was adopted from Zhang et al. (2019). Live Streaming (in-feed advertising) (LS) was adopted from Wu et al. (2022). Behavioral Intention (BI) was adopted by Balakrishnan et al. (2022). Using Adoption (AT) was adopted by Mehra et al. (2021). All items used 5-points Liker scale (1-strongly disagree, 5-strongly agree). The detailed items are presented in Table 2.

4. Data analysis and results

4.1. Demographic information

Of the total sample size of 251 individuals, 38.2% were classified as male, while 61.4% were classified as female. A marginal proportion of 0.4% of participants identified themselves as members of alternative gender classifications (for example, LGBTQ+ classification). The demographic majority of the study's participants falls between the ages of 18 and 22, comprising 85.3% of the whole sample. Subsequently, the subsequent age group consists of individuals between the ages of 15 and 18, accounting for 11.5% of the total sample. A small proportion of participants, namely 2.4%, are within the age range of 22 to 25. Moreover, those falling under the age bracket of 10 to 15 years had the least significant participation, comprising just 0.8% of the whole aggregate. It is apparent that a significant proportion of the people under consideration are in the first phases of their lifespan. Accordingly, our study results are ensured to remain reliable and consistent among the variables.

Additionally, financial ability is also an important spot that relates to the variation of the study results. With regards to monetary matters, the survey findings indicate that a total of 130 participants (constituting 51.8% of the sample) reported a monthly income that fell below 05 million VND. Furthermore, a total of 57 participants, accounting for 22.7% of the sample, said that their monthly earnings were within the range of 05 to 10 million VND. Conversely, a mere 05 individuals, constituting 2.0% of the respondents, reported a monthly income between 10 and 15 million VND. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that the demographic subgroup characterized by a monthly income above 15 million VND accounted for the smallest proportion, comprising around 1.2% of the whole sample. Moreover, a considerable proportion of the participants, namely 56 persons, indicated a lack of income, constituting 22.3% of the surveyed population.

4.2. Measurement model assessment

Based on the results shown in Table 2, it is evident that the majority of the scales, with the exception of the creative content scale, demonstrated Cronbach's Alpha values over the threshold of 0.7. The research team opted to eliminate the variable pertaining to creative content from the research model. All factor loadings in the standardized model satisfy the necessary requirements, and the composite reliability and Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of all constructs are above the minimal threshold, suggesting a high level of internal consistency and reliability. The convergent validity is considered satisfactory as all of the evaluation criteria for Average Variance Extracted (AVE) surpass the prescribed levels. 0.5.

Table 2

Reliability and Validity Assessment

Variables	Factor loadings (> 0.5)	A (0.7)	CR (0.7)	AVE (0.5)
Video Length (VL)		0.704	0.835	0.628
VL1: I was mentally involved in the short videos for shopping or reviewing on TikTok.	0.786			
VL2: I could visualize the products on TikTok Shop through the brief videos on TikTok.	0.777			
VL3: I could easily hold the use of products that I am going to purchase. through the short video on TikTok.	0.813			
AI recommendation algorithm (AI)		0.711	0.839	0.635
AI1: The videos that algorithms recommend to me on TikTok depend on my online behavior on that platform.	0.766			
AI2: The recommended videos matched my preferences.	0.837			
AI3: The quality of the recommendation is the same as I wanted.	0.784			
Key Opinion Consumer (KOC)		0.794	0.858	0.547
KK1: This KOC serves as a model forothers.	0.727			
KK2: This KOC is in one step ahead ofother.	0.749			
KK3: This KOC offers an interesting video on TT that suggests new ideas.	0.732			
KK4: This KOC influences other people's opinions.	0.736			
KK5: Following this KOC will help me have more trustworthy sources of information.	0.753			
Live Streaming (in-feed advertising) (LS)		0.788	0.862	0.610
LS1: Live streaming creates a bridge for information transmission in virtual spaces by which I can evaluate the quality of products.	0.767			
LS2: Live streaming provides me with opportunities to communicate with sellers.	0.823			
LS3: Live streaming provides me with opportunities to communicate with other viewers.	0.811			
LS4: Live streaming enables me to feel part of the Tiktok.	0.718			
Behavioral Intention (BI)		0.830	0.887	0.662
BI1: I intend to use TikTok Shop in thefuture.	0.807			
BI2: I plan to continue to use TikTok Shop frequently.	0.812			
BI3: If I am going to purchase online. I will consider TikTok Shop.	0.782			

Variables	Factor loadings (> 0.5)	A (0.7)	CR (0.7)	AVE (0.5)
BI4: I will recommend others to use TikTok Shop.	0.853			
Using Adoption (AT)		0.774	0.869	0.690
AT1: I use the TikTok Shop after it is launched in the market or updated.	0.797			
AT2: I would update the latest version of TikTok Shop whenever I get a notification in my phone for a software update.	0.879			
AT3: I will continue using TikTok Shop in the future.	0.813			

Note. VL: Video Length; AI: AI recommendation algorithm; CC: Creative Content; KK: KOC/KOL endorsement; LS: Live Streaming (in-feed advertising); BI: Behavioral Intention; AT: Adoption; CR: composite Reliability; AVE: Average Variance Extracted
Source. Data analysis result of the research

Discriminant validity

For the Fornell-Larcker test to be considered valid (see Table 3) (Fornell & Lacker, 1981), the cross-loading matrix of each construct must be less than the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). In order to assess discriminant validity, a bootstrapping technique was used to generate 5,000 samples (Chin et al., 2003). The maximum likelihood estimates were then derived from these samples. Table 3 displays the outcomes of the correlation analysis and the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). In conclusion, the results of the study provide strong evidence in favor of the measuring framework's high level of discriminant validity. The Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) values for the relationships between the independent variables, as well as between the independent variables and the dependent variable, are all below 0.9 (Table 4) (Ab Hamid et al., 2017). All Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values in the dataset are below the threshold of 3 (Table 5). Hence, there is no multicollinearity among the variables.

Table 3

Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	AI	AT	BI	KOC	LS	VL
AI						
AT	0.701					
BI	0.693	0.897				
KOC	0.826	0.718	0.682			
LS	0.560	0.704	0.813	0.672		
VL	0.860	0.701	0.750	0.753	0.584	

Note. VL: Video Length; AI: AI recommendation algorithm; KK: KOC/KOL endorsement; LS: Live Streaming (in-feed advertising); BI: Behavioral Intention; AT: Adoption
Source. Data analysis result of the research

Table 4

Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

	AI	AT	BI	KOC	LS	VL
AI	0.797					
AT	0.520	0.831				
BI	0.536	0.721	0.814			
KOC	0.620	0.567	0.563	0.739		
LS	0.433	0.565	0.668	0.546	0.781	
VL	0.608	0.516	0.576	0.564	0.444	0.792

Note. VL: Video Length; AI: AI recommendation algorithm; KK: KOC/KOL endorsement; LS: Live Streaming (in-feed advertising); BI: Behavioral Intention; AT: Adoption
Source. Data analysis result of the research

Table 5

Inner Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) Values

	AI	AT	BI	KOC	LS	VL
AI			1.675			
AT						
BI		1.463		1.000		
KOC		1.463				
LS			1.315			
VL			1.696			

Note. VL: Video Length; AI: AI recommendation algorithm; KK: KOC/KOL endorsement; LS: Live Streaming (in-feed advertising); BI: Behavioral Intention; AT: Adoption
Source. Data analysis result of the research

Structural model assessment

The evaluation of the structural framework involves the use of R^2 values, computation of path loadings, and assessment of overall model fitting. The P-value and Tucker-Lewis coefficient are two commonly used metrics for assessing the overall adequacy of a model (Hair et al., 2014). The recommended values for these indicators are as follows: The p-value is less than 0.05. The bootstrap approach was used to compute route loadings, p-values, and T-statistics for the hypothetical associations. These factors include video length (H1: $\beta = 0.259$, $p < 0.001$), AI recommendation (H2: $\beta = 0.171$, $p < 0.004$), live streaming (H3: $\beta = 0.479$, $p < 0.001$), behavioral intention (H4: $\beta = 0.587$, $p < 0.001$), and KOC (H5$_{BI \to KOC}$: $\beta = 0.563$, $p < 0.001$; H6$_{KOC \to AT}$: $\beta = 0.237$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, the findings confirm that KOC can enhance the relationship between behavioral intention and using adoption (H7: $\beta = 0.134$, $p < 0.001$) (see Table 6). The structural model accounts for 56% of participants' behavioral intentions and 55.7% of their using adoption, in that KOC can explain 31.6% of using adoption.

Table 6

Hypotheses Results

Ho	Relationships	Coefficient	St.dv	T-values	P values	Results
H1	VL → BI	0.259	0.058	4.481	0.000	Approved
H2	AI→ BI	0.171	0.059	2.883	0.004	Approved
H3	LS → BI	0.479	0.052	9.165	0.000	Approved
H4	BI → AT	0.587	0.056	10.436	0.000	Approved
H5	BI → KOC	0.563	0.056	10.035	0.000	Approved
H6	KOC → AT	0.237	0.057	4.161	0.000	Approved
H7	BI → KOC → AT	0.134	0.037	3.589	0.000	Approved

Note. VL: Video Length; AI: AI recommendation algorithm; KK: KOC/KOL endorsement; LS: Live Streaming (in-feed advertising); BI: Behavioral Intention; AT: Adoption
Source. Data analysis result of the research

5. Discussion and conclusion

The investigation findings may reveal more aspects that may enhance UGT for followers, allowing KOC and TikTok to develop even further. According to the findings of the video duration investigation, the AI recommendation system may both boost planned buying behavior and decrease it. The findings of this study align with the outcomes of the UGT model, indicating that live streaming, video length, and AI recommendation can satisfy the needs and wants of online consumers (Balakrishnan et al., 2022; Erjavec & Manfreda, 2022). The competitive considerations that drive user adoption of TikTok stem from the platform's inherent capabilities. Firstly, the duration of videos is a significant factor to consider, as individuals want concise, substantial, and captivating material.

As previous studies found, short-form videos are a terrific resource for any kind of skill development, learning, or information gathering in any other sense because of their rich information content and capacity to convey information when compared to virtually any other media like text, audio, or photos. Therefore, short video platforms have gained prominence among Gen Z and are a desirable choice for searching reviews. Secondly, the algorithm used by TikTok bears striking resemblance to those of other platforms, thereby diminishing its potential for significant effect (Tseng & Wang, 2023). TikTok excels in the domain of live streaming, using its video-centric nature to enhance sales via real-time, interactive engagements and prompt responses (Hua & Chiu, 2022). Consumers have the convenience of purchasing desired products or services from the comfort of their own homes through a range of social media channels (Barta et al., 2023; Indrawati et al., 2023; Zhou et al., 2023). Finally, regarding the mediator role of KOC, the TikTok platform is conducive to the proliferation of KOCs due to its abundance of specialized activities and the presence of small groups. The individuals known as KOC possess a substantial and devoted group of supporters, hence contributing to the augmentation of followers and transactions on the TikTok platform (Ren et al., 2023). Moreover, TikTok has a wide array of materials, resulting in a broad user base that is contingent upon individual preferences and interests.

5.1. Theoretical implications

The present study included the construction and evaluation of a model aimed at elucidating the relationships between several factors associated with the perceived competitive advantage of TikTok Shop. Specifically, the factors examined were video length, AI recommendation algorithm, KOC endorsement, and live streaming. The ultimate objective was to investigate the impact of these factors on behavioral intention and adoption of the platform. In this research, the UGT was used to investigate the underlying factors that drive customers' satisfaction in buying activities on TikTok Shop.

The primary driving factor for TikTok users in our sample was the duration of videos, which aligns with existing work that emphasizes the importance of this feature. The study investigated the role of video duration on behavioral intention, specifically highlighting the favorable relationship between video length and behavioral intention. Prior research has demonstrated that short-form videos possess significant value in facilitating skill development, learning, and information acquisition (Xiong et al., 2021). This is attributed to their ability to effectively convey rich information content, surpassing other media formats such as text, audio, and photos. Hence, short video platforms have garnered significant attention among Generation Z and have emerged as a preferred option for accessing feedback. The pleasure of customers' shopping experiences includes the provision of time-efficient and cost-effective items as well as the delivery of a great consumer experience.

The use of live e-commerce shopping enables clients to efficiently choose reliable items by considering suggestions provided by sales agents, significantly enhancing the efficacy of their purchasing process. In previous years, the presentation of products on static websites elicited apprehension among consumers due to the absence of organic and interactive engagement between customers and suppliers. TikTok Shop offers consumers an integrated in-app purchasing system that enables the acquisition of items without the need to use a web browser or access an external eCommerce platform. Furthermore, an essential component of the TikTok Shop platform is its capacity to establish connections with tagged items shown in TikTok videos.

TikTok's recommendation method, which is based on Artificial Intelligence (AI), sets it apart from other platforms. This algorithm facilitates the ability of TikTok to predict and anticipate the preferences of its users, enabling the platform to provide information that is pertinent to their interests. The algorithm used by TikTok encompasses a wider range of characteristics in comparison to other social media networks. The factors include the user's past patterns of engagement, the films they have saved for future reference, and even the auditory material they have absorbed. This is accomplished by the use of several tactics, such as showcasing films that have similarities to those previously seen by viewers as well as exhibiting movies that are meant to elicit an emotional response. The algorithm used by TikTok has a notable degree of effectiveness in fostering user engagement, as seen by the development of likes, comments, and shares. As a result, the algorithm used by TikTok successfully optimizes user engagement by curating videos that have a higher likelihood of captivating and sustaining their attention.

Key Opinion Consumers (KOCs) have a significant impact on the buying intentions and purchasing behavior of users on the TikTok Shop platform. One primary factor contributing to this phenomenon is the negative experiences individuals have had with items endorsed by Key Opinion Consumers (KOCs) (Xiong et al., 2021). These endorsements often include financial sponsorship, leading to concerns of dishonesty and a consequent erosion of confidence.

Consequently, TikTok is highly engaging and interactive due to the presence of images, audio, and influencers, expanding factors for UGT theory and contributing to the trend. social media platforms in order to increase consumer satisfaction.

5.2. Practical implications

The results of this study are expected to have valuable implications for professionals in the field. As shown in our comprehensive findings, in order to optimize audience satisfaction and conversion rates, TikTok should prioritize key variables that significantly influence Gen-Z's inclination towards TikTok shops. These factors include video duration, and live-streamings. Based on these results, it is advisable for sellers on the TikTok store to carefully examine the most effective approach to developing concise video content that reviews items or showcases their online store while including elements of entertainment.

The utilization of live streaming has been prevalent for an extended duration, and it is undeniably more advantageous on the TikTok Shop site compared to other platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, and others. These approaches range from the creation of imaginative and meticulously structured content to the use of celebrity imagery as a means to augment impact. In addition to sales, live streamings can include a variety of activities to engage with followers, share life experiences, create intimacy, and increase interaction with followers. Live broadcasts should generate more engaging scenarios and increase entertainment value. Entertainment is the driving force behind TikTok's meteoric rise. Therefore, TikTok should produce more Livestream content to increase viewer interest. KOCs should also be categorized into distinct categories of personas, customer files, and followers so that when brands employ KOCs live or sell to them, they can select the KOC whose personas align with the brand's image and target customer file. Complex products, such as electronics, may require lengthier live streams than basic products, such as apparel.

With rapid and simple video creation, as well as image and audio modification, this attracts a large number of participants who produce a variety of content. TikTok continued to develop video editing contests using TikTok tools for a brief period of time. This encourages brands to participate in advertising their products and services, as well as users. With the use of trending rewards, the contest will attract more brands and attract more users, thereby expanding its coverage.

Based on keywords and followers' searches, algorithms must be continuously upgraded based on likes, shares, remarks, and blocks. It is crucial to indicate the customer's reaction to the videos' content based on their comments. There may be videos with a large number of views that are negative; therefore, more text mining is required to evaluate videos in order to recommend pertinent, positive content to followers and benefit the community. AI can be used by KOCs to recommend products to consumers based on their past purchases or their interests. Using AI, brands can target advertisements to viewers who have expressed interest in a particular product or who have previously viewed similar livestreams. KOCs are utilizing chatbots enabled by AI to answer consumers' queries and process orders in real time.

5.3. Limitation and future research

During the course of the examination, certain restrictions have been identified. The current challenge may be ascribed to the limited availability of gathered data and the sufficiency of the participants' replies, such as the inattention of respondents, unenthusiastic answers, etc. The research focused on examining the influence of TikTok, including its overall effect as well

as its TikTok Shop functionality, on Generation Z. In line with prior research, elements like Content Creativity, Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based algorithms, and Key Opinion Leaders have exerted influence on the behaviors shown by people belonging to Generation Z on the social media platform TikTok. Therefore, it is essential for future study attempts to meticulously gather data with a significantly bigger sample size and diligently track the participants' behaviors over an extended duration to attain a more comprehensive comprehension of the genuine impacts.

In summary, we highly advocate for more research efforts focused on investigating new aspects within the field of study. Numerous elements have been found within scholarly literature that have an impact on user behavior and experience. Several elements have been identified in the literature as influential in this context. These factors include interface design (Peng, 2023), the use of vertical display as opposed to horizontal axis, which is a departure from conventional video platforms (Xiao et al., 2023), and individual traits (Xu et al., 2022). When making a direct comparison between TikTok or TikTok Shop and its rivals, it is expected that the ensuing impact would be more easily distinguishable. This choice has considerable possibilities in terms of improving future studies.

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