

IMPULSIVE CAR BUYING AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION : SHORT VIDEO ENGAGEMENT IN-STORE INTERACTION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL INTENT

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Abstract

Impulsive car buying has become a significant phenomenon in the automotive industry, with psychological intent, in-store interactions, and short video engagement playing crucial roles in influencing consumer Behaviour. This study explores the relationship between these factors and their impact on customer satisfaction. Psychological intent, driven by emotional and cognitive factors, often guides consumers toward quick, unplanned purchases, particularly when combined with engaging in-store experiences. Interactive and personalized customer service in dealerships has been shown to heighten emotional connections, further driving impulsive decisions. Additionally, the rise of short video content, particularly on social media and digital platforms, has transformed the way potential buyers engage with automotive brands. The visual appeal, coupled with time-efficient storytelling, creates an immediate connection that often leads to spur-of-the-moment decisions. This paper examines how these elements synergize to create a comprehensive customer journey that boosts both satisfaction and impulsivity in car purchases. By integrating psychological theories of consumer Behaviour with modern digital marketing tactics, the study sheds light on how car dealerships can leverage these strategies to enhance their sales processes and customer relationships. The findings suggest that understanding and optimizing the interplay of psychological intent, in-store engagement, and short video marketing is key to enhancing customer satisfaction and driving impulsive purchases.

Key words: Impulse Spending, Consumer Satisfaction, In-Store Interaction, Psychological Intent, Short Video Use.

Introduction

The automotive sales industry, characterized by the intrinsic high value of vehicles, limited physical distribution channels, and regional disparities in pricing, has traditionally required a multifaceted approach to acquiring vehicle-related information. This challenge is heightened by the growing consumer demand for transparency in the car buying process (Wang et al., 2020). In the age of digital transformation, consumers increasingly rely on online platforms for car-related information, which includes detailed vehicle specifications, user-generated reviews, and comparative pricing analyses (Pang & Ruan, 2019). The integration of big data analytics and artificial intelligence has revolutionized the creation and consumption of short video content, aligning with modern mobile usage patterns. The rapid rise of platforms such as TikTok and Kuaishou has not only amplified the reach of short videos but has also significantly influenced the way automotive information is acquired and marketed (C. Zhang, Pan, & Zhao, 2019). Initially, automotive manufacturers gravitated toward using short video marketing strategies, recognizing the enhanced visual impact and immersive online experiences this medium offers. Studies indicate that exposure to short video marketing triggers impulsive purchasing Behaviour among viewers (Gao, Zeng, & Cheng, 2021). Automotive brands such as SAIC Volkswagen, BYD, and Geely Enterprises have invested heavily in short video marketing due to its potential to connect with a broad user base. Furthermore, the proliferation of short video platforms has eroded traditional barriers to automotive information. The advent of user-generated automotive reviews, coupled with the interactive nature of short video platforms, has provided consumers with a comprehensive and transparent understanding of vehicle performance and user feedback. This has positively influenced consumer satisfaction and decision-making (Cheng et al., 2020). However, the emergence of misleading content such as false pricing, exaggerated claims, and unverified product features presents a risk that may skew consumer decision-making and information acquisition (Meng et al., 2019). Thus, the ascendancy of short video platforms in the automotive sector signals a shift in consumer Behaviour, particularly concerning impulsive purchasing decisions and overall satisfaction. Despite the growing body of literature on the impact of short video consumption on consumer Behaviour, research on its effects specifically in the automotive industry remains sparse. The influence of short video content on impulsive buying Behaviour and shopping satisfaction in this sector has yet to be explored in depth (Xin et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2019). Moreover, the unique role of in-store interactions in the car purchasing process remains underexplored, particularly the differing impacts of open versus problematic communication styles between consumers and sales personnel (Rehman et al., 2019). To address these gaps, this study investigates the interplay between short video usage, in-store interaction quality, and consumer psychology in the automotive buying process, aiming to provide both theoretical and practical insights into this rapidly evolving landscape.

Review of Literature

The Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model offers a robust framework for understanding consumer Behaviour and decision-making processes (Laos-Espinoza et al., 2019). In this model, Stimulus (S) refers to external factors such as marketing and information exposure, Organism (O) encompasses the psychological mechanisms through which consumers process these stimuli, and Response (R) reflects the Behavioural actions taken by consumers based on their psychological responses (Cuong, 2019). This model is particularly useful in analyzing how short video content impacts consumer Behaviour, as it accounts for the external stimuli (e.g., short video content), internal psychological processes (e.g., emotional responses), and resultant Behaviours (e.g., impulsive purchasing). Short video content offers distinct advantages over traditional media by enhancing product information delivery, fostering user interaction, and increasing communication efficiency (Cho, Jeong, & Park, 2019). Automotive reviews and consumer-generated content often found in these videos serve as a more objective basis for product evaluation, which can influence impulsive buying Behaviour (Pang & Ruan, 2019). The social evaluation functions of these videos provide consumers with insights into vehicle performance, which can significantly shape their psychological experiences and purchasing intentions (Dr.Naveen Prasadula 2021). This increased transparency contributes to consumer satisfaction by aligning their expectations with the reality of the product (Qin et al., 2019). Impulsive buying Behaviour, characterized by unplanned purchasing triggered by immediate stimuli or psychological urges, is heavily influenced by short video marketing. The visual and interactive nature of short videos induces strong psychological responses that can shift consumer intent from casual interest to impulsive action (Ngo et al., 2019). Similarly, the satisfaction of consumers is influenced by the accuracy of the product information presented in short videos, with discrepancies between video content and actual product performance leading to reduced satisfaction (Luo et al., 2020).

Mediating Role of Psychological Intent and On-Site Interaction

Psychological intent, shaped by short video content, significantly influences consumer decision-making. The vivid, engaging nature of short videos fosters heightened anticipation and emotional connection to the products, which in turn promotes impulsive buying Behaviour (Pang & Ruan, 2019). The credibility and transparency of short video content can also help mitigate the effects of misleading information, allowing consumers to make more informed decisions (Chen et al., 2020). In-store interactions further affect consumer Behaviour by reinforcing or contradicting the expectations set by short video content. On-site communication, whether open and transparent or problematic and misleading, plays a crucial role in shaping consumer satisfaction and purchase intentions (Farooq et al., 2019). Effective on-site communication ensures that consumers' psychological expectations align with their actual purchasing experience, thereby enhancing satisfaction and reducing the likelihood of impulsive purchases driven by misinformation (Sun et al., 2021).

3. RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY

This study examines the target customer demographics of six new energy vehicle retailers in Northeast China from April to October 2020. A series of three follow-up surveys were

conducted with respondents at one month (T1), three months (T2), and six months (T3) after the launch of a new energy vehicle model in China. During the T1 phase, 483 consumers participated in the questionnaire survey, yielding a valid sample of 288 men (59.62%) and 195 women (40.37%). The average age of the participants was 36.86 years, with a standard deviation of 1.39 years, and the age range extended from 22 to 58 years, although 19 respondents did not provide age information. In the subsequent T2 phase, 421 participants were tracked successfully, representing 87.16% of the initial sample. In the T3 phase, 407 consumers completed the survey, accounting for 84.27% of the original participant group. Attrition rate analysis indicated no significant differences between the demographics of participants who dropped out and those who remained, with the exception of sex. Specifically, gender differences were statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 16.17$, $P < 0.001$), while other factors such as age, family income, communication patterns, and psychological expectations did not demonstrate significant disparities. Key variables, including short video usage, effectiveness of live interactions, challenges associated with live interactions, psychological expectations, impulsive consumption behaviour, and consumer satisfaction also did not show significant differences. A detailed sample distribution is provided in Table 1. Moreover, despite some degree of sample attrition during the study, the lack of significant differences in the key variables between the lost and retained samples bolsters the reliability of our findings. All participants provided informed consent before their participation in the study.

Table 1 Demographic characteristics of the participants		
Variable	Characteristics	
Age, M (SD)	35.65	1.66
Gender, n (%)		
Male	239	58.42
Female	168	41.18
Grade, n (%)		
21-30	136	33.22
31-40	125	30.51
41-50	127	31.21
>50	19	4.67
Monthly income (RMB), n (%)		
<1000	15	3.69
1001-4000	125	30.71
4001-8000	152	37.35
8001-12,000	82	20.15
>12,001	33	8.1

Note: Percentages do not always equal 100 because of rounding; values may not always sum to the sample size because of missing data.

Measures

Short Video Use

The analysis of short video utilization encompasses three sub-tables: short video marketing, social evaluation of products, and credibility of short video content. (1) Short Video Marketing: The marketing component was derived from the short video usage evaluation

scale revised by Liu et al. (Q. Liu, Yu, & Yang, 2020), which has been tailored to reflect the usage characteristics of short videos among the targeted automotive consumer groups. All the newly introduced items employ on a 5-point Likert scale. Ultimately, the scores corresponding to each item were standardized and averaged for further analysis. The reliability of the integrated scale was commendable, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.75 recorded at T1, indicating good internal consistency.

Psychological Intention

The psychological intention scale primarily draws upon the framework established by Vazquez et al. (Vazquez, Patel, Alvidrez, & Siliceo, 2021). This scale was designed to assess the psychological expectations index, specifically evaluating the self-disclosure behaviours of consumer groups. It encompasses a total of 12 items, each rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 0 to 4, where 0 denotes "completely inconsistent" and 4 signifies "completely consistent." In this study, the scale demonstrated strong internal reliability, as evidenced by a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.82 T2.

On-Site Interaction

This study utilized a consumer communication scale that is grounded in the interpersonal relationship communication scale developed by Zhen et al. (Zhen, Yao, & Zhou, 2021). The scale comprises two subscales, each consisting of 10 items designed to assess the extent to which consumers are motivated to communicate with offline retail stores. The results indicated that both the positive field interaction subscale (Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.73) and the problematic field interaction subscale (Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.72) exhibited good reliability.

Impulsive Consumption Behaviour

The impulse purchase intention scale utilized in this study primarily refers to the framework established by Gao et al. (Gao et al., 2021). This scale employs a 5- point Likert scale ranging from 0 (indicating complete non-conformity) to 4 (indicating complete conformity). It is organized into four dimensions: situational factors, personal characteristics, product characteristics, and social influence. In this study, the scale demonstrated excellent reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.912 at T3.

Consumer Satisfaction

To assess consumer satisfaction levels, this study employs the consumer satisfaction scale developed by Bortolotti et al. (Bortolotti, Moreira Junior, Bornia, Sousa Júnior, & Andrade, 2012). This scale is based on a 6-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from 0 (indicating no change) to 5 (indicating a significant change). Higher scores reflect greater consumer satisfaction. In this analysis, the scale exhibited good internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.82 at T3.

3.3 Data Analysis

Data analysis was performed using SPSS version 20 and Mplus version 7.4. To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire results, we performed a Harman single- factor test to evaluate potential common method biases. We aggregated the questionnaire data collected at three different time points and conducted exploratory factor analysis. The results revealed that the proportion of variance explained by a single factor was 12.66%, 12.72%, and 17.23% in the first, second, and third rounds of the questionnaire, respectively. All these percentages are substantially below the theoretical threshold of 40%, a finding that bolsters the credibility of

our results by indicating that our data are not significantly influenced by common method bias.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Correlation analysis of research variables

The correlation analysis revealed (see Table 2) that consumer satisfaction exhibited a significant positive correlation with both social evaluation and positive on-site interaction in short videos. Conversely, there was a significant negative correlation with short video marketing, whereas no significant correlation was observed with short video content credibility, positive on-site interaction, problematic on-site interaction, and psychological expectations. Impulsive consumption behaviour is negatively correlated with short video credibility, social evaluation of short videos, and problematic on-site interaction, but it shows a positive correlation with short video marketing, positive on-site interaction, and psychological expectations. Additionally, short video marketing displayed a significant negative correlation with positive field interaction and psychological expectations, along with a significant positive correlation with problematic field interaction. Social evaluation of short videos has a negative correlation with problematic field interactions and a positive correlation with psychological expectations. Furthermore, short video content credibility was significantly positively correlated with positive field interaction and negatively correlated with problematic field interaction. Positive field interactions correlate positively with psychological expectations and negatively with problematic field interactions. Finally, a significant negative correlation was found between problematic field interactions and psychological expectations.

Table 2 Correlation analysis among research variables

	Category	M±SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	T3 Consumer satisfaction	53.25±20.55	1							
2	T3 Impulse spending	24.21±15.86	0.093	1						
3	T1 Short video	28.35±7.22	-	0.162*	1					
	marketing		0.252*	*						
4	T1 Social evaluation in short videos	30.42±3.72	0.151*	-0.251*	0.053	1				
5	T1 Short video content credibility	34.35±5.35	0.068	-0.162*	0.039	0.062	1			
6	T2 Positive on-site interaction	32.33±5.87	0.137*	0.188*	-0.290*	0.051	0.137*	1		

7	T2 Problematic live interaction	25.32±8.21	0.042	-0.255*	0.325*	-0.396*	-0.144*	-0.172*	1	
8	T2 Psychological expectation	31.35±6.35	0.055	0.225*	-0.181*	0.320*	0.068	0.128*	-0.163*	1

Notes: *P<0.05, **P<0.01.

4.2 Main effect test

From an overall perspective: (1) The utilization of short videos exerts a significant negative impact on consumers' impulsive purchase intentions, with a path coefficient of -0.456 ($P \leq 0.001$). This indicates that, within the short video marketing context, increased information transparency contributes to a reduction in consumers' impulse purchase intentions. This phenomenon may occur because highly transparent information empowers consumers, enabling them to evaluate the true value of products or services more rationally, thereby diminishing the likelihood of impulsive buying behaviour. Furthermore, transparent information offers consumers a comprehensive basis for decision making, allowing for a more in-depth analysis of product characteristics and potential risks, which ultimately enhances the quality of their decisions. Additionally, improvements in information transparency may lower consumers' perceptions of uncertainty regarding the outcomes of their purchases and mitigate perceived risks, both of which are key factors contributing to reduced willingness to make impulsive purchases. The use of short videos also has a significant negative impact on consumer satisfaction, with a path coefficient of -0.346 ($P \leq 0.001$). The decline in satisfaction can be attributed to several factors. First, increased information transparency may lead to information overload, where excess information causes confusion and stress among consumers, thereby reducing overall satisfaction. Second, transparent information can elevate consumer expectations, and when actual product performance fails to meet these heightened expectations, satisfaction declines naturally. Moreover, a multitude of choices can result in "choice overload," leaving consumers feeling overwhelmed during the decision-making process, which adversely affects the purchasing experience. Regarding the sub-dimensions of the influence of short video usage, the main effect path test results, as shown in Table 3, indicate that short video marketing positively affects impulsive consumption behaviour. By contrast, the social evaluation and credibility of short videos negatively influence consumers' impulsive consumption behaviours. Additionally, consumer satisfaction is adversely affected by short video marketing and short video credibility, whereas social evaluation of short videos has a positive impact on consumer satisfaction.

Table 3 Main effect test results

Path	Effect size	S.E.	P	95%CI
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T1 short video marketing →T3 impulsive consumption behaviour	0.221	0.006	0.829	-0.016~0.023
Social evaluation in T1 short video →T3 impulsive consumption behaviour	-0.124	0.045	0.644	-0.082~0.044
T1 short video credibility →T3 impulsive consumption behaviour	-0.252	0.054	0.114	-0.135~0.025
T1 Short video Marketing →T3 Consumer satisfaction	-0.111	0.003	0.525	-0.026~0.023
Social evaluation in T1 short video →T3 Consumer satisfaction	0.224	0.022	0.431	-0.031~0.024
T1 Short video credibility →T3 Consumer satisfaction	-0.152	0.034	0.013	-0.024~0.013

Multi-mediation model test

To further explore the mechanism of short video use on impulse consumption behaviour and consumer satisfaction, based on the hypotheses and relevant analysis results, this study constructed a multiple mediation effect model, as shown in Figure 1. The model was tested, and the results showed that the model fit the data perfectly. Further path analysis shows that T1 short video marketing can negatively predict the psychological expectations of T2 consumers ($\beta = 0.368$, $P < 0.001$). The effects on T2 benign field interaction and problematic field interaction were not significant ($\beta = 0.002$, $P < 0.001$; $\beta = -0.011$, $P < 0.001$). Social evaluation in T1 short video can positively predict T2 consumers' psychological expectations, positive on-site interaction and problematic on-site interaction ($\beta = 0.116$, $P < 0.001$; $\beta = 0.215$, $P < 0.001$; $\beta = 0.105$, $P < 0.001$). T1 short video credibility can positively predict psychological expectations and problematic live interaction ($\beta = -0.015$, $P > 0.05$; $\beta = 0.023$, $P > 0.05$). T2 positive field interaction can positively predict T2 psychological expectation and impulsive consumption ($\beta = 0.133$, $P < 0.05$; $\beta = 0.118$, $P < 0.001$), but the predictive effect on T3 consumer satisfaction is not significant ($\beta = 0.022$, $P > 0.05$); T2 psychological expectation can significantly positively predict T3 impulse consumption behaviour ($\beta = 0.212$, $P < 0.05$), but has no significant predictive effect on T3 consumer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.002$, $P > 0.05$). T2 problematic field interaction can negatively predict T3 consumer satisfaction and impulsive consumption behaviour ($\beta = -0.112$, $P < 0.05$; $\beta = -0.135$, $P < 0.01$), had no significant predictive effect on T2 psychological expectations ($\beta = -0.046$, $P > 0.05$). Based on the above results, this study conducted a bias-corrected bootstrap test on the significance of the mediation effect predict problematic live interaction ($\beta = 0.185$) (La Vecchia, Moor, & Scaillet, 2021); the results are $P < 0.001$, but has no significant impact on consumer shown in Table 4.

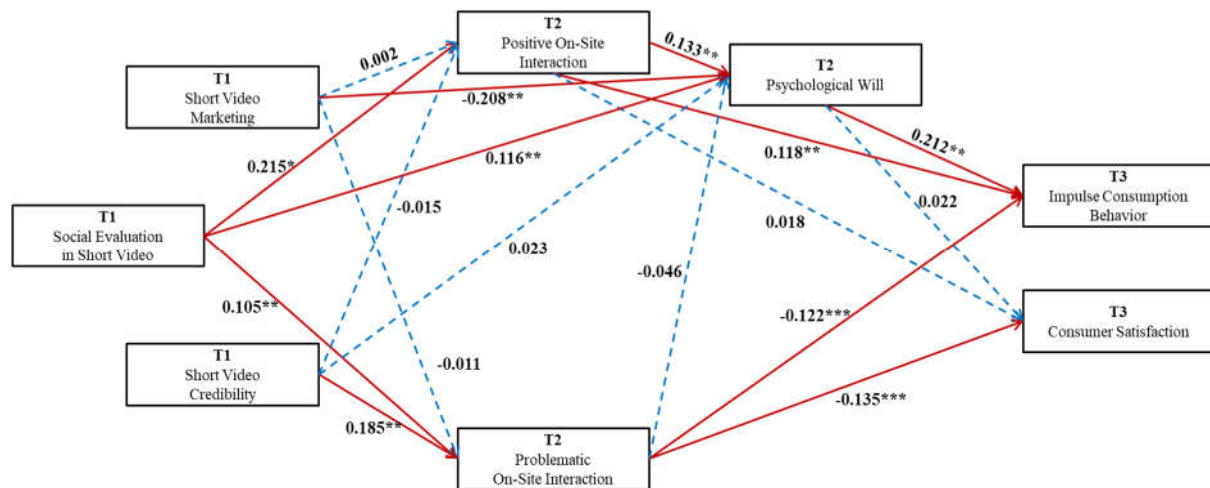


Figure 1. Multiple mediation effect path diagram

Table 4 The result of path test of mediating effect

Path	S.E.	P	95%CI
T1 short video usage →T2 psychological expectation →T2 impulsive consumption behaviour	0.006	0.829	- 0.016~0.023
T1 short video usage →T2 benign on-site interaction →T3 impulsive consumption behaviour	0.045	0.644	- 0.082~0.044
T1 short video usage →T2 problematic live interaction →T3 impulsive consumption behaviour	0.054	0.013	-0.135~ 0.025
T1 short video use →T2 benign on-site interaction →T2 psychological expectation →T3 impulsive consumption behaviour	0.030	0.020	-0.038~ 0.003

DISCUSSION

Regarding the effect of promotional videos on customer actions, this viewpoint also differs from conventional wisdom. We have taken into account the important function of social appraisal in our research, which has not been done before and has shown subtleties that other studies have missed (Yin et al., 2020). As a result, marketing campaigns should concentrate on learning what customers want and working to make their purchasing experience better. Additionally, there is a strong positive correlation between customer satisfaction and favourable social appraisal and constructive on-site contact, according to the study. The results of this study indicate that positive social feedback has the potential to increase customer satisfaction by strengthening their trust and participation. Short video marketing strategies, positive live interactions, psychological expectations, and social evaluation of the content were positively correlated with impulsive consumption, whereas problematic live interactions, impulsive consumption, and credibility of the content were negatively correlated. In contrast to successful marketing tactics and surroundings that match psychological expectations, our findings suggest that high-quality short video content and pleasant social feedback may reduce impulsive consumption. Our study fills a gap in the

literature by demonstrating the importance of positive buying advice provided via short films and addressing the limitations of previous research on the effect of such movies on consumption decision-making (Feng et al., 2020; Shen & Wang, 2020). For example, after receiving mixed reviews when it first came out, the Chery Arezer 8 model eventually became more popular with consumers because to the good ratings shown in promotional films. This change exemplifies the power of positive short video content to boost demand in the market and shape consumer tastes. Furthermore, the research found that short video marketing was positively connected with problematic on-site interaction but negatively correlated with good on-site interaction and psychological expectations. According to this research, customers' psychological expectations and the likelihood of good encounters may be dampened by overly promotional campaigns. Concurrently, high-credibility short video content may successfully encourage pleasant interactions, leading to improved customer satisfaction and trust, while good social assessment can boost brand image and psychological expectations. This study deviates significantly from conventional wisdom, which has traditionally focused on studying only one mechanism of action associated with short movies (D. He et al., 2020; L. Yang et al., 2020), by illuminating the mediating roles of on-site interaction and psychological intention. Sellers of automobiles would do well to shape and improve consumption recommendations by integrating the on-site phases of consumption with multichannel psychological expectations. The importance of short video material in enhancing social evaluation is emphasised in our research, since it is a significant aspect affecting customers' purchase choices.

CONCLUSION

With a focus on the mediating roles of on-site interaction and psychological anticipation, this study investigates the effects of short video usage on impulsive consumption and consumer satisfaction from a longitudinal tracking perspective. The goal is to address the unique format of the automobile sales process. Positive social evaluations and successful interactions may increase customer happiness, whereas a straight sales orientation in short video marketing reduces it, according to the research. There is a positive correlation between impulsive buying and psychological expectations, pleasant encounters, and marketing methods, and a negative correlation with content credibility and social appraisal. An over-reliance on short films may lead to a decrease in pleasant relationships and psychological expectations. In addition, confidence in the brand and favourable social reviews may go a long way, and constructive interactions can raise psychological expectations. Customers' tendency to buy on impulse may be reduced by the use of short movies by making information more transparent. On the other hand, information overload may reduce customer satisfaction. Consumers' intents for impulsive purchase, overall pleasure, and short video use are substantially mediated by psychological expectations and on-site communication, according to this study. So, to enhance the customer experience, marketers should focus on content quality and interaction effect. Recognising the limits of this inquiry is crucial, despite the significant insights it delivers. Due to the small sample size, the results may not be applicable to a broader population. Second, caution is required when extending these findings to other

customer types and product categories due to the unique characteristics of the car industry and short video platforms compared to other information channels. Finally, since it relies on current data, this analysis cannot reliably anticipate future trends or establish unambiguous causal linkages.

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