



**AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL
MEDIA MARKETING ON CONSUMER PURCHASE INTENTION
BASED ON THE SOR THEORY**

**LI XUANRU
6317195032**

**AN INDEPENDENT STUDY SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
SIAM UNIVERSITY
2025**



**AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL
MEDIA MARKETING ON CONSUMER PURCHASE INTENTION
BASED ON THE SOR THEORY**

LI XUANRU

This Independent Study Has Been Approved as a Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Business Administration

Advisor: *Chao Qiu*
(Assoc. Prof. Dr. Qiu Chao)

Date: *1* / *8* / *2025*

..... *J. Jomphon*
(Associate Professor Dr. Jomphon Mongkhonvanit)
Dean, Graduate School of Business Administration

Date *18* / *12* / *2025*
Siam University, Bangkok, Thailand

Title: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON CONSUMER PURCHASE INTENTION BASED ON THE SOR THEORY

By: Li Xuanru

Degree: Master of Business Administration

Major: International Business Management

Advisor:

.....
(Assoc. Prof. Dr. Qiu Chao)

.....

ABSTRACT

With the rise of social media operating models against the backdrop of the e-commerce economy, more and more consumers enjoy and are accustomed to searching for target products and shopping on familiar social media platforms. Based on the SOR theory, this study explored the impact of trust, perceived value, interaction, and attention degree in social media marketing on consumers' flow experience and risk perception, as well as how these factors further influence consumers' purchase intention. The objectives of the study were: 1) To analyze the impact mechanism of social media marketing and flow experience on consumer purchase intention. 2) To explore the moderating effect of consumer risk perception on purchase intention.

The study used a quantitative research method to explore the relationship between variables, conducting a questionnaire survey, and employed the SPSS 23.0 software for data analysis. The sample size was 1,300 respondents, surveyed on social media platforms (TikTok, Kuaishou, Little red book, Bilibili, and Weibo), with the data collection period from January 1, 2024, to February 15, 2024, resulting in 1265 valid questionnaire with a response rate of 97.3%.

The results indicated that consumers' attention degree, interaction, perceived value, and trust in social media influencers positively affect their flow experience, and that consumers' flow experience significantly enhance their purchase intention. However, consumers' risk perception negatively moderates the relationship between flow experience and purchase intention; when risk perception is high, the impact of flow experience on purchase intention weakens. This suggests that high-risk situations can diminish the positive influence of flow experience on purchasing decisions.

Therefore, to better promote consumers' purchase intention, businesses can enhance consumer attention degree by improving interaction and flow experience, such as utilizing live sales and AR technology for virtual try-ons, to reduce consumer

uncertainty. The output of high-quality content and multi-channel distribution strategies can increase brand attention and perceived value, stimulating consumers' purchase intention. Finally, in response to the current trust crisis among consumers on social media platforms, the government and platform providers can strengthen regulatory systems and secure transaction measures to protect consumer rights, thereby promoting healthy consumption behavior in the social media environment.

Keywords: social media marketing, flow experience, risk perception, consumer purchase intention.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Associate Professor Dr. Jidapa Chollathanrattanapong, for her unwavering support, invaluable guidance, and insightful feedback throughout this research journey. Her expertise and encouragement have been instrumental in shaping this dissertation.

I am immensely grateful to the faculty and staff of Siam University for creating an enriching academic environment and providing the necessary resources to pursue this work. A heartfelt thank you goes to my friends and peers, for their camaraderie, constructive discussions, and motivation during this endeavor.

Finally, I am profoundly thankful to my family for their unwavering support, patience, and encouragement. Their belief in my potential has been my greatest source of strength throughout this journey.

This independent study is a testament to the collective contributions of many individuals, and I am truly grateful to each one who played a part in this achievement.

Li Xuanru

DECLARATION

*I, LI XUANRU, as a result of this, certify that the work embodied in this, independent study entitled "**An Empirical Study of the Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Purchase Intention Based on the SOR Theory**" is a result of original research and has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.*



(Li Xuanru)

Jan 3, 2025

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|------|
| ABSTRACT..... | I |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENT | III |
| DECLARATION..... | IV |
| CONTENTS..... | V |
| LIST OF TABLES | VII |
| LIST OF FIGURES | VIII |
| Chapter 1 Introduction | 1 |
| 1.1 Background of the Study | 1 |
| 1.2 Questions of the Study | 3 |
| 1.3 Objectives of the Study | 3 |
| 1.4 Scope of the Study | 4 |
| 1.5 Significance of the Study | 4 |
| 1) Theoretical Significance | 4 |
| 2) Practical Significance..... | 6 |
| 1.6 Definition of Key Terms | 7 |
| 1.7 Limitation of the Study | 9 |
| Chapter 2 Literature Review | 11 |
| 2.1 Introduction..... | 11 |
| 2.2 Literature Review..... | 11 |
| 2.2.1 Social Media Marketing..... | 11 |
| 2.2.2 Flow Experience | 14 |
| 2.2.3 Risk Perception | 15 |
| 2.2.4 Customer Perceived Value | 17 |
| 2.2.5 Consumer Purchase Intention | 18 |
| 2.2.6 SOR Theory | 19 |
| 2.4 Conceptual Framework..... | 20 |
| Chapter 3 Research Methodology | 22 |
| 3.1 Research Design..... | 22 |
| 3.2 Population and Sample | 23 |
| 3.3 Hypothesis..... | 23 |
| 3.4 Research Instrument..... | 24 |
| 3.4.1 Attention Degree Scale | 24 |
| 3.4.2 Interaction Scale..... | 25 |
| 3.4.3 Perceived Value Scale | 25 |

| | |
|---|----|
| 3.4.4 Trust Scale..... | 26 |
| 3.4.5 Risk Perception Scale | 26 |
| 3.4.6 Flow Experience Scale..... | 27 |
| 3.4.7 Purchase Intention Scale | 27 |
| 3.5 Reliability and Validity Analysis | 28 |
| 3.6 Data Collection | 30 |
| 3.7 Data Analysis | 30 |
| Chapter 4 Findings | 31 |
| 4.1 Introduction..... | 31 |
| 4.2 Descriptive Statistics of Sample | 31 |
| 4.3 Results of the Study | 32 |
| 4.3.1 Correlation Analysis..... | 32 |
| 4.3.2 Model Fitting and Path Test Results | 34 |
| 4.3.3 Moderating Effect Test..... | 36 |
| 4.4 Discussion | 36 |
| 4.4.1 Findings..... | 36 |
| 4.4.2 Relationship of the Findings to Previous Research | 37 |
| 4.4.3 Explanation of Unexpected Results | 37 |
| Chapter 5 Conclusion and Recommendation | 39 |
| 5.1 Conclusion | 39 |
| 5.1.1 The impact mechanism of social media marketing on consumer purchase intention | 39 |
| 5.1.2 The negative moderating effect of consumers' risk perception on purchase intention | 39 |
| 5.2 Recommendation | 40 |
| 5.2.1 Building trust and enhancing customer perceived value to boost purchase intention on social media marketing platforms | 40 |
| 5.2.2 Enhancing interaction, attention degree and flow experience to increase consumer engagement..... | 41 |
| 5.2.3 Building a regulatory and secure transaction system to reduce shopping risks on social media platforms..... | 42 |
| 5.3 Further Study | 42 |
| 5.3.1 Exploring Social Media Marketing from the Perspective of Expanding E-commerce Platforms and Cross-Cultural Consumer Engagement..... | 42 |
| 5.3.2 Leveraging Diverse Research Methods to Enhance Social Media Marketing and Boost Purchase Intention..... | 43 |
| References | 45 |
| Appendix..... | 49 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | |
|--|----|
| Table 3. 1 Attention Degree Scale..... | 24 |
| Table 3. 2 Interaction Scale..... | 25 |
| Table 3. 3 Perceived Value Scale | 25 |
| Table 3. 4 Trust Scale..... | 26 |
| Table 3. 5 Risk Perception Scale..... | 26 |
| Table 3. 6 Flow Experience Scale..... | 27 |
| Table 3. 7 Purchase Intention Scale | 28 |
| Table 3. 8 Reliability Test | 28 |
| Table 3. 9 KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Results | 29 |
| Table 4. 1 Demographic Characteristics of Sample..... | 31 |
| Table 4. 2 Standard Deviation and Correlation Analysis Results | 33 |
| Table 4. 3 T-test Results..... | 34 |
| Table 4. 4 Model Fitting Index | 34 |
| Table 4. 5 Structural Equation Model Test Results | 35 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| Figure 1 Conceptual Framework | 21 |
|-------------------------------------|----|



Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

The rapid development of internet technology has significantly transformed the way information is exchanged and business transactions are conducted. According to the 44th statistical report from the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), as of December 2023, the five major new media platforms—Tiktok, Kuaishou, Little Red Book, Bilibili, and Weibo—have collectively reached an active user base of 1.088 billion, with a penetration rate of 88.9%. Among these platforms, Tiktok leads the way with an impressive 743 million monthly active users, demonstrating a year-on-year growth rate of 5.1%. Weibo and Kuaishou, which belong to the second tier, have recorded monthly active users of 485 million and 457 million, respectively. Interestingly, while Weibo has experienced a slight year-on-year decline of 1.2%, Kuaishou's user base has grown by 5.1%. Bilibili and Little Red Book, which rank in the third tier, boast monthly active users of 210 million and 199 million, with year-on-year growth rates of 6.7% and an impressive 20.2%, respectively (Kim & Wang, 2024). This data underscores the pervasive influence of social media platforms in modern society.

These platforms have become primary channels for internet users to exchange information, interact socially, and shop online. The growing integration of social media with e-commerce has led to substantial economic implications. For instance, the transaction volume in the social media market has reached a staggering 42.9 trillion, making it a crucial indicator of consumer shopping behavior (Huang et al., 2023). This integration has also facilitated the rise of social media influencers, who have transformed traditional advertising paradigms by creating original and engaging video content. These influencers build personal brands, attract significant followings, and share information that resonates with their audience. Unlike traditional advertising, the content produced by influencers is often perceived as authentic and trustworthy, as it is not solely driven by commercial interests (Du & Lin, 2022). This trustworthiness gives social media platforms inherent marketing advantages, making them a vital tool for brand promotion in the digital age. The effectiveness of social media advertising lies in its ability to target specific demographics and deliver personalized messages. Social media influencers play a pivotal role in this ecosystem. By sharing relatable and credible content, influencers establish a connection with their audience, which can significantly impact consumer decision-making. This dynamic has led companies to increasingly leverage influencers to endorse products and

services. For instance, influencers on platforms like Tiktok and Little Red Book often collaborate with brands to showcase products through storytelling and demonstration. Such content not only educates consumers about the product but also creates an emotional connection, encouraging purchase intention (Luo et al., 2024).

One of the most notable advantages of social media marketing is its capacity to rapidly disseminate information to a wide audience. With millions of active users, platforms like Tiktok and Weibo can amplify a brand's message in a matter of hours. Moreover, the interactive nature of social media allows for real-time feedback, enabling companies to gauge consumer sentiment and adjust their strategies accordingly. For example, Bilibili's interactive video features allow users to comment and engage directly with content, fostering a sense of community and enhancing user experience (Ehigiamusoe et al., 2024). This interactive engagement not only builds brand loyalty but also drives consumer advocacy, as satisfied users are more likely to recommend products to their peers. Despite its advantages, social media marketing is not without challenges. One significant concern is the perception of consumer risk. With the proliferation of sponsored content, consumers may question the authenticity of influencers' endorsements (Xie et al., 2025). This skepticism can impact their willingness to trust the advertised product or service. Furthermore, the rise of fake influencers and fraudulent activities on social media platforms has further complicated the landscape. To address these issues, it is essential for companies to maintain transparency in their marketing efforts and collaborate with influencers whose values align with their brand. The influence of social media marketing extends beyond consumer behavior to broader social and economic development (Ghazali et al., 2023). By promoting consumption, social media platforms contribute to economic growth and job creation. For instance, the rise of influencer marketing has given birth to an entire ecosystem of professionals, including content creators, digital marketers, and analytics experts. Additionally, social media platforms provide small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with an affordable and effective way to reach their target audience, leveling the playing field with larger corporations. In light of these developments, understanding the internal mechanisms influencing consumer risk perception and purchase intention on social media has become a critical area of research (Du & Lin, 2022). This study proposes hypotheses to construct a theoretical model that examined the mechanism. By analyzing factors such as trust, perceived value, and attention degree, the study aims to provide insights into how companies can optimize their social media marketing strategies. For example, fostering long-term partnerships with influencers and prioritizing authentic storytelling can help mitigate consumer risk perception and enhance purchase intention.

In conclusion, social media marketing has emerged as a powerful tool for influencing consumer behavior and driving economic growth. By leveraging the unique characteristics of social media platforms, companies can build stronger connections with their audience, enhance brand visibility, and foster trust. How to better utilize the characteristics of social media marketing to promote social and economic development has become a hot topic of interest across various sectors. This study proposes hypotheses to construct a theoretical model to study the internal mechanisms influencing consumer risk perception and purchase intention in social media, aiming to assist companies in better conducting product marketing and promoting social consumption and economic growth.

1.2 Questions of the Study

Through the observation of a large number of influencer videos on various social media platforms, it has been discovered that while the emergence and proliferation of social media advertising may lead to users' skepticism toward influencers and even prompt them to "unfollow," many influencers still manage to maintain stable brand collaborations and a substantial base of loyal followers. From an informational perspective, social media advertising essentially involves the transmission of promotional messages by social media influencers, often delivered through their unique and personal interpretation. Consequently, the process by which users engage with social media advertisements is not merely about receiving marketing messages; it also entails processing the content of the advertising information as well as evaluating the additional cues and context provided by the influencer as the source. However, there are still some problems in the social media marketing area as follow:

(1) What role does the impact mechanism of social media marketing play on consumer purchase intention?

(2) How does the moderating effect of consumers' risk perception affect purchase intention?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

By reviewing domestic and international literature, this study summarizes the qualitative and quantitative research on the factors influencing consumer purchases on existing social media platforms. It combines the SOR theory, characteristics of consumer flow experience, and risk perception to explore the factors affecting consumer purchasing behavior, and formulates corresponding marketing strategies for

social media platforms based on these influencing factors. The main objectives of this research are as follows:

- 1) To explore the impact mechanism of social media marketing factors and flow experience on consumer purchase intention.
- 2) To explore the moderating effect of consumer risk perception on purchase intention.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The selection of the research scope included consumers from five major social media platforms: Tiktok, Kuaishou, Little Red book, Bilibili, and Weibo. These five platforms have an active user base of 1.088 billion, with a penetration rate of 88.9%, ensuring the diversity and representativeness of the research sample (Singh, 2024). The research included both heavy and light users from different platforms to observe the impact of user activity levels on purchasing intention. Through this selection, the study aims to comprehensively explore the effects of social media marketing across different user groups, providing insights for marketing strategies.

1.5 Significance of the Study

1) Theoretical Significance

A. Application of SOR Theory in Social Media Marketing. The Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) theory to analyze the dynamic interplay between social media marketing and consumer behavior. Within this framework, social media marketing functions as the external stimulus (S), encompassing elements such as advertising content, influencer endorsements, and interactive campaigns. These stimuli are crafted to attract consumer attention, evoke emotional responses, and drive engagement. The consumer's flow experience—marked by a state of immersive and enjoyable interaction with the content—and risk perception are viewed as the organism's self-experience (O). This component reflects the internal cognitive and emotional processes that occur when consumers are exposed to various marketing strategies. Finally, purchase intention serves as the psychological and behavioral response (R), representing the outcome of how these internal processes influence consumers' decisions to buy products or services (Li et al., 2024).

By employing the SOR model, this study offers a systematic approach to understanding how external marketing efforts translate into consumer actions. It

highlights the dual role of flow experience and risk perception as mediating factors, showing that while an engaging and immersive marketing experience can enhance purchase intention, heightened risk perception may act as a deterrent. This nuanced view enriches the application of the SOR theory within the domain of consumer behavior by addressing the complexities of digital interaction in a social media context. Furthermore, this research bridges theoretical concepts with practical implications, shedding light on how modern marketing techniques influence consumer psychology and decision-making processes in ways that differ from traditional advertising models.

B. Exploring Risk Perception Mechanisms in Social Media Marketing. Compared to conventional advertising approaches, social media platforms present consumers with an information environment that is far more diverse, dynamic, and interactive. Users encounter a vast array of content, ranging from product reviews and user-generated posts to influencer endorsements and targeted advertisements. This diversity, coupled with the inherently participatory nature of social media, introduces new dimensions to the way consumers process information and form perception of trust and risk. Understanding the mechanisms underlying risk perception in this context is essential for unraveling how different content and dissemination methods evoke distinct psychological responses. In the context of social media marketing, risk perception may stem from concerns over the credibility of information, the authenticity of influencer endorsements, or potential security issues related to transactions. For instance, the prevalence of misleading claims, sponsored content without clear disclosures, or instances of fraudulent activity can significantly heighten consumer skepticism and aversion. At the same time, the highly interactive nature of social media allows consumers to seek reassurance by engaging in discussions, reading reviews, or observing others' experience. This interactive process can either mitigate or exacerbate risk perception depending on the quality and consistency of the information encountered.

Studying these mechanisms provides valuable insights into how specific aspects of social media marketing—such as the tone of communication, the use of visual storytelling, and the level of interactivity—affect consumer psychology and behavior. By examining the interplay between content, platform features, and user engagement, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the psychological underpinnings of consumer behavior in a digital age. It also highlights the importance of balancing engaging content with transparency and trustworthiness to reduce perceived risks and enhance purchase intention. Ultimately, this study not only advances theoretical knowledge by combining SOR theory with insights into risk perception but also offers

practical guidance for marketers. By tailoring strategies to address the unique challenges and opportunities of social media marketing, brands can foster more meaningful connections with consumers and navigate the complex landscape of digital trust and engagement effectively.

2) Practical Significance

A. Reducing Consumer Risk Perception and Building Trust. With the rapid development of social media platforms, businesses increasingly rely on these platforms for marketing and promotion to engage their target audiences. Social media offers unparalleled opportunities for brands to reach consumers through personalized content, interactive features, and influencer collaborations. While this provides consumers with the convenience of accessing diverse information and engaging directly with brands, it also introduces heightened risks and uncertainties. Concerns such as misleading advertisements, undisclosed sponsorships, and potential privacy breaches may undermine consumer confidence in social media marketing efforts.

This study addresses these challenges by integrating the concept of consumer risk perception into the context of social media marketing. It identifies effective strategies for businesses to mitigate perceived risks, such as enhancing transparency in influencer partnerships, providing clear and verifiable product information, and employing secure transaction mechanisms. For example, brands can adopt authentic storytelling and user-generated content to create relatable and trustworthy narratives, reducing the psychological distance between consumers and marketed products. Additionally, interactive features like live demonstrations and Q&A sessions can allow consumers to clarify doubts in real-time, fostering trust through direct engagement.

By implementing such strategies, businesses can not only alleviate consumer concerns but also establish themselves as credible and reliable entities in the competitive social media landscape. A reduction in risk perception translates to an increase in consumer trust, which in turn leads to stronger purchase intention and higher brand loyalty. This research thus provides actionable insights for brands to navigate the complexities of digital trust-building, ensuring they remain competitive and relevant in an ever-evolving market environment.

B. Enhancing Consumer Trust and Perceived Value Across Platforms. As social media platforms continue to diversify in functionality and user demographics, businesses must tailor their marketing strategies to suit the unique characteristics of each platform. This study underscores the importance of platform-specific approaches to enhancing consumer trust and perceived value during promotional campaigns. For

instance, platforms like Instagram and TikTok, which emphasize visual content and entertainment, may require businesses to focus on creative, visually appealing advertisements and collaborations with influencers who resonate with the platform's audience. On the other hand, platforms like LinkedIn may call for more professional and informative content to appeal to a business-oriented user base. This research offers a foundational understanding of how businesses can leverage platform-specific features to build trust and enhance perceived value. For example, using tools like detailed product reviews, interactive polls, or exclusive promotional offers can make consumers feel valued and engaged. These efforts not only encourage positive psychological associations with the brand but also create a sense of exclusivity and relevance, further strengthening consumer-brand relationships. Additionally, maintaining consistency in messaging across platforms while adapting the tone and content to suit individual platform cultures can help brands establish a unified yet versatile presence.

By applying the insights from this study, businesses can achieve a win-win outcome for both brands and social media platforms. For brands, aligning marketing strategies with consumer psychological needs ensures higher engagement, increased trust, and ultimately, better sales performance. For social media platforms, well-executed marketing campaigns contribute to a vibrant ecosystem where users find value and satisfaction, fostering long-term user retention. In a broader sense, this research holds significant practical reference value by helping brands optimize their marketing strategies, enhance consumer satisfaction, and strengthen their competitiveness in the digital marketplace.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

Social media marketing is a strategic marketing approach that involves businesses, brands, or individuals promoting products or services through various social media platforms such as WeChat, TikTok, and Little Red Book. This approach capitalizes on the high interaction, personalization, and extensive user base that these platforms provide.

In social media, "attention degree" refers to the level of engagement and visibility a piece of content or a user receives. It's a measure of how much attention is focused on a specific entity within the platform's ecosystem. This is measured by various factors like likes, shares, comments, retweets, follows, and time spent viewing content (Adamis et al., 2025).

Social media interaction means the dynamic process of engaging, connecting, and communicating with others on social media platforms. It involves various actions,

such as sharing content, commenting, liking, following, messaging, and participating in discussions (Ehigiamusoe et al., 2024). These interactions foster connections, build relationships, and enable the exchange of ideas, information, and emotions in the digital realm.

Perceived value in social media refers to a user's subjective assessment of the benefits they derive from using social media platforms, encompassing factors like emotional connection, informational value, and entertainment. Higher perceived value leads to greater satisfaction, emotional engagement, and potentially stronger attachments to the platform and its content (Du & Lin, 2022).

Trust in social media is important because it impacts what people pay attention to in the media landscape and how they engage with information. People tend to rely on stories or sources they trust or view as credible. Levels of trust can affect how people receive and interpret information. Likewise, those who trust news in social media are more likely to pay for information and more likely to engage with the news in ways such as sharing the information with others (Li et al., 2024). Since the concept of “trust” can mean different things to different people and is often not precisely defined by researchers, scholars have developed multidimensional scales to assess media credibility that include factors such as accuracy, completeness, fairness, and bias (Chen et al., 2025).

Flow experience refers to a heightened state of concentration, energy, and focus when engaging in a specific activity or even in various daily activities such as watching a movie and playing sports (Zhang et al., 2023). Flow experience is a cognitive condition that accounts for seamless responses and interactivity in online environments, a person's inner pleasure experience, loss of their self-awareness, and self-reinforcement (Sengoz et al., 2024). A person in a flow experience is immersed in activities, obtaining a higher level of concentration and pleasure, indicating the seamless action occurring when performing a specific task. This flow experience is a mixture of a psychological state in which users can become completely involved within a stimulus without noticing potential threats and negative experiences (Streibel et al., 2024).

Risk perception refers to an individual's subjective judgment about the severity and probability of risks associated with certain behaviors, decisions, or events. While objective risk involves measurable factors (such as the likelihood of harm), risk perception addresses how individuals perceive these risks, which may differ significantly from reality (Novendah et al., 2024).

Customer Perceived Value (CPV) represents the consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product or service based on their perception of what they receive

versus what they give up (McClelland, 1973). It is a subjective evaluation of the benefits and costs associated with a product or service in comparison to alternatives, and it plays a crucial role in shaping consumer decision-making, satisfaction, and loyalty.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

The study selected social media marketing and consumer purchase intention as the object of the study, and constructed hypotheses based on existing literature and theories. Data were mainly collected through the distribution of questionnaires online and offline. The study aimed to analyze the data and empirically verify the model's rationality, draw conclusions, and conduct relevant discussions. Despite adhering to a rigorous academic spirit during the study process, due to the relatively short development time of social media marketing, and the novelty of the topic, with only a few scholars having conducted related study, there is a relatively limited amount of relevant literature to reference. Therefore, this study still has some shortcomings. The following are some reflections on this study:

1) The study sample is limited. The study focused on blind-box consumers and collected 1265 valid samples. Although the data met the basic requirements for analysis, it is undeniable that the sample size is insignificant among the social media platform consumers. The more abundant the sample size, the more convincing the analysis results. Additionally, the online survey method used in this study is difficult to guarantee in terms of targeting and authenticity compared to traditional survey methods, which may lead to errors in the study results.

2) The study methods are limited. Due to limited knowledge and capabilities, the empirical part of the study only relied on a questionnaire survey, which may not fully reflect the characteristics of the study subjects. As social media marketing is a complex marketing method, different types of data present varying characteristics and corresponding audience groups. There are still many factors to be explored, such as demographic differences and price mechanism. It is hoped that future study can explore more potential influencing factors based on the development trend of social media marketing economy, improve the model, and cover a larger sample size to further enrich the study findings.

However, for every new marketing model, there will be a double-edged effect. If company brands want to achieve substantial development in social media marketing, they should also consider the potential risks. This study explores only the positive experience that social media marketing brings to consumers, without delving into the possible negative effects and the impact on brands. Future scholars can incorporate

these factors into their study and comprehensively interpret the essence of social media marketing.



Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Social media marketing significantly influences consumer purchase intention by shaping various psychological and behavioral factors. Studies have shown that attention degree plays a critical role, as consumers who actively follow brands or influencers on social media are more likely to notice and engage with promotional content, thereby increasing their purchase intention. Trust is another vital factor. Social media marketing influencers and brands that are perceived as authentic and transparent build stronger trust among their followers, which is essential for reducing skepticism and encouraging purchases (Xin et al., 2024). Perceived value, both functional and emotional, also plays a role on purchase intention. When consumers perceive social media content as valuable, whether through discounts, exclusive content, or entertainment, their likelihood of purchasing increases (Abbasi et al., 2024). Lastly, flow experience, defined as the immersive and enjoyable interaction with social media platforms, creates a positive emotional state that influences consumers' decision-making processes (Johansson & Kask, 2017). Together, these factors highlight the multifaceted impact of social media marketing on consumer purchase intention.

2.2 Literature Review

2.2.1 Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing is a strategic marketing approach that involves businesses, brands, or individuals promoting products or services through various social media platforms such as WeChat, TikTok, and Little Red Book. This approach capitalizes on the high interaction, personalization, and extensive user base that these platforms provide. By producing creative and engaging content, they foster trust and loyalty among their audience, often bridging the gap between brands and consumers. Their personal influence allows them to convey the brand's message in an authentic and relatable manner, which is crucial in building lasting relationships with customers. The effectiveness of social media marketing can be measured using several reference dimensions, including attention degree, interaction, perceived value, and trust (Novendah et al., 2024).

Attention degree refers to the extent to which audiences notice and engage with marketing content. In the fast-paced environment of social media, capturing and maintaining user attention is critical. Eye-catching visuals, compelling narratives, and interactive elements are some of the strategies employed to achieve this goal. Interaction is another vital dimension. Social media platforms thrive on two-way communication, allowing brands to engage directly with their audience. Features such as comments, likes, shares, and direct messaging enable real-time feedback and foster a sense of community. This interactive nature not only strengthens the relationship between brands and consumers but also provides valuable insights into consumer preferences and behavior (Zhou et al., 2024).

Interaction in social media marketing refers to the engagement between brands and consumers through various forms of communication on social media platforms, such as likes, comments, shares, and direct messages. It plays a crucial role in shaping consumer perception and behaviors, fostering a sense of community and connection that can lead to increased brand loyalty, customer satisfaction, and higher purchase intention. Types of interaction include reactive interaction, where brands respond to consumer comments, and proactive interaction, where brands initiate conversations through polls or contests. Theoretical frameworks support the significance of interaction, such as Social Exchange Theory, which posits that consumers engage when perceived benefits outweigh costs; used and Gratifications Theory, which explains consumer behavior based on fulfilling specific needs; and Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), which suggests that engaging content encourages deeper processing of brand messages. Research shows that higher levels of interaction positively correlate with consumer engagement and purchase intention, as positive interaction enhance feelings of connection and community, resulting in greater visibility and favorable attitudes toward brands (Mosca et al., 2023). However, managing interaction also poses challenges, including handling negative feedback constructively and maintaining consistency across platforms. Ultimately, interaction is a multifaceted concept that significantly influences consumer behavior and marketing success in the digital age.

Perceived value plays a crucial role in influencing consumer decisions, serving as a significant determinant of whether a consumer will engage with a brand or make a purchase. Social media marketing provides brands with a unique opportunity to showcase the distinct benefits and advantages of their products or services through informative and entertaining content, such as eye-catching visuals, engaging videos, and user-generated content that resonates with the target audience. When users perceive high value in what is offered, they are more likely to engage with the brand

and develop a stronger emotional connection. This connection can be enhanced through storytelling techniques that highlight the brand's mission and the positive impact of its products on consumers' lives, alongside testimonials from satisfied customers that build trust and credibility. Furthermore, social media platforms foster community discussions where consumers exchange opinions and share experience, amplifying perceived value through social proof and creating a sense of belonging. Promotional strategies like limited-time offers and exclusive content also enhance perceived value, as consumers feel they are receiving something valuable, thereby increasing their likelihood to purchase (Qiu et al., 2023). Ultimately, the combination of engaging content, emotional storytelling, community building, and strategic promotions creates a compelling perceived value proposition that encourages consumer engagement and drives purchasing decisions, making social media marketing a powerful tool for brands to influence behavior and enhance market presence.

Trust is arguably the cornerstone of successful social media marketing, serving as the bedrock upon which strong, enduring relationships between brands and consumers are built. In the often-noisy and skeptical landscape of social media, building trust requires a multifaceted approach characterized by consistent, transparent, and authentic communication. It's not merely about disseminating promotional messages but fostering a genuine connection that resonates with consumers on a personal level (Li et al., 2024). Brands that demonstrate a clear and unwavering commitment to their customers' needs, values, and concerns are far more likely to cultivate a loyal following that not only supports their products or services but also advocates for them within their own networks. This involves actively listening to feedback, promptly addressing concerns, and consistently delivering on promises. Furthermore, transparency in operations and ethical practices significantly contributes to building trust; consumers are increasingly discerning and demand accountability from the brands they choose to support (Mosca et al., 2023). The influence of trusted content creators and influencers further reinforces this trust, as their endorsements and recommendations often carry more weight than traditional advertising methods. These trusted figures act as mediators, translating brand messaging into relatable content that resonates with their followers, who value their opinions and expertise (Singh, 2024). Therefore, brands that strategically partner with credible influencers and consistently engage in transparent, authentic dialogue with their audience are best positioned to establish trust, cultivate loyalty, and ultimately achieve sustained success in the ever-evolving social media ecosystem (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2025). This comprehensive approach to building trust

transforms potential customers into brand advocates, fostering long-term relationships and driving organic growth.

In addition to these dimensions, social media marketing offers several unique advantages. It allows businesses to respond quickly to market trends and consumer demands, ensuring that their strategies remain relevant and effective. Moreover, the global reach of social media platforms provides an unparalleled opportunity to expand into new markets and connect with diverse audiences. In conclusion, social media marketing has become an indispensable tool for businesses seeking to enhance their market competitiveness and foster user loyalty. Its ability to disseminate information rapidly, engage audiences through diverse content, and target specific demographics with precision sets it apart from traditional marketing methods. By leveraging the influence of content creators and focusing on key dimensions such as attention, interaction, perceived value, and trust, brands can build meaningful relationships with their audience and drive long-term success.

In the last decade, social media influencer (SMI) marketing industry has rapidly emerged as a vital sector in marketing, witnessing widespread adoption among industry professionals. By 2024, expenditure on influencer marketing reached \$35 billion, with forecasts indicating a further 10 % annual growth until 2029. Notably, 65 % of marketers implemented influencer marketing strategies in the previous 12 months, having a 71 % satisfaction rate (Li et al., 2024). Marketing through social media influencers has become essential in brands' strategies. As the influencer marketing industry has rapidly evolved, it has garnered significant research interest (Omeish et al., 2024). Besides defining and conceptualizing the phenomenon, one research stream has focused on empirically investigating the determinants of SMI marketing effectiveness. Over the past five years, numerous empirical studies of SMI marketing effectiveness have emerged. Each of these papers applied single theories, such as Persuasion Theory (Kim & Wang, 2024), the elaboration likelihood model, or source credibility, from which they derived a countable number of predictors of SMI marketing effectiveness. Various studies have explored how account characteristics, such as the number of followers or SMIs, impact influencer marketing effectiveness (Ong et al., 2024). Researchers have also examined SMI attributes such as attractiveness, and authenticity in influencing perceptions of SMIs as opinion or taste leaders, thereby enhancing their influence.

2.2.2 Flow Experience

A flow experience refers to a state in which consumers achieve a heightened sense of participation and realism while interacting with content on social media

platforms. This immersive state is often facilitated by advanced technologies such as augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), and interactive videos. Additionally, creatively designed content that captures users' attention can contribute to this experience. The core objective of a flow experience is to make consumers feel deeply "immersed" while engaging with the content, enabling them to better understand and experience the unique characteristics of a brand or product (Yang & Li, 2023).

These innovations create a dynamic and personalized interaction, significantly enhancing engagement. One of the most significant benefits of flow experience is their ability to deepen brand memory and forge emotional connections with consumers. By actively involving users in experience that feel both relevant and engaging, brands can ensure that their message resonates more strongly and stays top of mind. Immersive content allows users to "live" the brand's story, making it not just something they see but something they feel and remember (Vanhala et al., 2020).

Another critical outcome of flow experience is the increase in purchase intent and loyalty. When consumers are immersed in experience that align with their interests and needs, they are more likely to develop positive associations with the brand (Du & Lin, 2022). For example, a virtual reality experience that simulates a travel destination can evoke emotional excitement, prompting users to book a trip. Similarly, interactive campaigns that focus on gamification can encourage users to repeatedly engage with the brand, leading to stronger loyalty over time. Flow experience also empower brands to showcase products in unique and compelling ways. For instance, AR-powered "product previews" allow users to visualize how furniture fits in their homes or how a new car looks in their driveway. Such interaction make the product more tangible and reduce uncertainties, thereby increasing consumer confidence in their purchasing decisions (Laradi et al., 2024).

2.2.3 Risk Perception

Risk perception theory attempts to understand how and why people assess risk, and how these assessments influence their choices and behaviors. Different models and frameworks have been developed over time to explain risk perception, taking into account psychological, cultural, and social factors (Zhao et al., 2024). In this discussion, several prominent theories and approaches that shape the understanding of risk perception are explored.

Psychometric Paradigm

One of the foundational theories in risk perception is the psychometric paradigm, introduced by Paul Slovic in the 1970s. According to Slovic (1987), individuals often rely on intuition and emotional responses to assess risks, which can lead to judgments

that are inconsistent with statistical probabilities. The psychometric paradigm also highlights how people are often more concerned about risks that involve personal harm, especially when the consequences are immediate, visible, and potentially irreversible (Dudasova et al., 2021).

Cultural Theory of Risk

Another significant theory that contributes to our understanding of risk perception is the cultural theory of risk, developed by Mary Douglas and Aaron Wildavsky in the 1980s. According to this theory, risk perception is deeply influenced by the cultural values and social norms of a community. People in different cultural settings perceive and respond to risks differently because their values shape how they interpret threats and uncertainties (Scott & Bruce, 1994). Cultural theory emphasizes that risk perception is not purely individual but is shaped by group values and social identity. Different communities and subcultures may therefore have vastly different perception of the same risk based on their shared beliefs and norms.

Perceived Risk and Consumer Behavior

In the context of marketing and consumer behavior, perceived risk refers to the subjective assessment of the uncertainty and potential negative outcomes associated with purchasing or using a product or service. Consumers often rely on heuristics (mental shortcuts) to assess risk when making decisions. These heuristics are influenced by personal experience, social influences, and the perceived trustworthiness of brands and sources of information. Marketers often attempt to reduce perceived risk by offering guarantees, testimonials, and other forms of reassurance to consumers (Johansson & Kask, 2017).

Risk Perception and Communication

Effective risk communication is crucial in addressing public concerns about safety, health, and environmental issues. Risk perception theory has important implications for how risks should be communicated to the public. Research suggests that people are more likely to respond positively to risk communication when it is framed in a way that aligns with their values, emotions, and cultural background (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2015). For instance, messages about climate change that emphasize the potential threats to future generations or biodiversity may resonate more with individuals who value environmental protection. On the other hand, emphasizing economic or technological solutions may be more effective with individuals who prioritize individualism and economic growth.

Risk perception is a complex and multifaceted concept that influences individual and collective decision-making. It is shaped by a combination of psychological, cultural, and emotional factors, which often lead people to perceive risks in ways that

diverge from objective probabilities (Merino et al., 2022). Theories such as the psychometric paradigm, cultural theory of risk, affect heuristic, and consumer behavior frameworks all contribute to a deeper understanding of how individuals assess and respond to risk. By recognizing these underlying influences, policymakers, marketers, and communicators can design more effective strategies to manage risk perception and influence behavior.

2.2.4 Customer Perceived Value

The theory of Customer Perceived Value (CPV) includes various dimensions that influence how customers perceive value in a specific context. These dimensions include: product quality, price, customer service and support, brand image and reputation, convenience, experience. Customer perceived value plays a central role in consumer decision-making. It serves as the cognitive basis for evaluating alternatives in a competitive marketplace. When making decisions, consumers subconsciously calculate the perceived benefits they expect to receive from a product, and weigh them against the sacrifices (primarily price) required to obtain it (McClelland, 1973).

The influence of CPV is especially significant in high-involvement purchases, where customers invest considerable time and effort in the decision-making process. These decisions are often based on a thorough evaluation of the perceived value of competing products or services. In contrast, for low-involvement purchases, consumers may rely more on heuristics and emotional responses rather than detailed evaluations of value (Qiu et al., 2023). Furthermore, CPV plays an integral part in customer satisfaction and loyalty. When customers perceive that the value they receive exceeds or aligns with the cost, they are more likely to be satisfied with their purchase, leading to higher retention rates and the potential for future purchases. This perceived value also influences brand loyalty—customers who consistently perceive high value from a particular brand are more likely to return and become repeat buyers.

Customer Perceived Value (CPV) theory provides valuable insights into how customers evaluate products and services and how businesses can create, communicate, and deliver value to enhance customer satisfaction, loyalty, and long-term success (Gustina et al., 2024). By considering various dimensions of value—including functional, emotional, social, and monetary factors—businesses can better understand what drives consumer decision-making and build strategies to increase perceived value. In today's competitive marketplace, optimizing CPV is not just an option but a necessity for businesses seeking to foster stronger relationships with their customers and differentiate themselves from their competitors (Camilleri & Filieri, 2023).

2.2.5 Consumer Purchase Intention

The study of consumer purchase intention mainly revolves around three aspects: first, the internal energy that stimulates consumers, i.e., how their personal internal energy and behavior originate; second, the goal-oriented nature of consumer responses, i.e., what consumers choose from various behaviors with different characteristics; and third, the system-oriented nature of consumer behavior, i.e., how their behavior is sustained.

A. Instinctive Mode

Humans have physiological instincts such as hunger, temperature regulation, rest, and activity to maintain and prolong life. Motivation driven by these physiological instincts is called the instinctive mode. It includes motivations to sustain life, protect life, and prolong life. Purchasing behavior driven by the desire to satisfy physiological needs exhibits regularity, repetitiveness, and habitual characteristics (Frommeyer et al., 2022). For example, purchasing food and beverages to satisfy hunger is driven by the motivation to sustain life; buying clothing and shoes to ward off cold is driven by the motivation to protect life; purchasing books and magazines to gain knowledge and expertise is driven by the motivation to develop life.

B. Psychological Mode

Behavioral motivations caused by cognitive, emotional, and volitional psychological processes are referred to as the psychological mode. It includes several types of motivations:

1) Emotional Motivations

Motivations triggered by human emotions such as joy, anger, sorrow, desire, love, hate, and fear. For example, purchasing audio products to enhance family joy, or buying a cake and candles for a birthday. These motivations are often influenced by external stimuli and the purchased items are not essential or urgent, and are not planned or considered in advance. Purchasing behavior driven by emotional motivations exhibits impulsiveness and situational characteristics (Etse & Adu-Aboagye, 2025).

2) Affectionate Motivations

Motivations triggered by higher human emotions such as moral sense, group sense, and aesthetic sense. For example, purchasing cosmetics out of a desire for beauty, or buying gifts for social interaction. Purchasing behavior driven by these motivations generally exhibits stability and depth (Ogiemwonyi et al., 2023).

3) Rational Motivations

Motivations based on consumers' objective understanding of products, arising

from comparative analysis. These motivations are planned, involve thorough consideration, and are preceded by study. For example, after comparing the quality, price, and warranty period, some consumers decide to purchase a Haier washing machine from among various brands. Purchasing behavior driven by rational motivations exhibits objectivity, planning, and control (Bigler et al., 2023).

4) Patronage Motivations

Motivations based on emotional and rational experience, leading to a special trust and preference for specific stores, brands, or products, prompting consumers to repeatedly and habitually make purchases (Johansson & Kask, 2017). For example, some consumers have consistently used a particular brand of toothpaste for decades, or always shop at specific stores. Purchasing behavior driven by these motivations exhibits experiential and repetitive characteristics.

2.2.6 SOR Theory

The SOR theory, short for Stimulus-Organism-Response, was proposed by psychologists Mehrabian and Russell and has become a foundational framework for understanding consumer behavior. This theory suggests a linear process where external stimuli (S) influence an individual's internal state (O), ultimately resulting in specific behavioral responses (R). According to Price et al. (2024), this framework is particularly effective in exploring the dynamic interaction between environmental factors and human behavior. Stimuli encompass external environmental elements, including marketing strategies, product attributes, and information presented to consumers. These stimuli act as triggers that capture attention, evoke emotions, or stimulate cognition. The "organism" in the theory refers to the individual's internal state, which mediates the effect of external stimuli (Maduku, 2024). This internal state includes emotional responses such as pleasure, arousal, or dominance, as well as cognitive processes like perception, memory, and attitudes. For instance, a visually appealing advertisement (stimulus) might evoke positive emotions, shaping a consumer's perception of the product and enhancing their likelihood of engagement. Yin et al. (2024) noted that understanding these internal mechanisms is critical, as they serve as the bridge between external stimuli and subsequent behavioral responses.

Finally, the "response" in the SOR framework refers to observable outcomes, such as purchasing behavior, brand loyalty, or changes in attitude. These responses are the direct results of the interplay between the stimuli and the individual's internal processing. In the context of marketing, behavioral responses might include clicking on an advertisement, sharing a product review, or making a purchase decision

(Sae-tae & Wang, 2024).

In the realm of social media marketing, the SOR theory provides valuable insights into consumer behavior by analyzing how digital content interacts with users' psychological states to influence their decisions. Social media platforms, with their ability to deliver highly tailored and engaging content, act as a significant stimulus (Ogiemwonyi et al., 2023). For instance, visually captivating imagery, influencer endorsements, or interactive campaigns can elicit strong emotional reactions, such as excitement or trust. These emotional and cognitive reactions, representing the "organism," play a pivotal role in shaping user attitudes and intention. Ultimately, this leads to behavioral responses, such as liking a post, sharing content, or purchasing a product. The SOR model highlights the importance of understanding the complex interplay between external stimuli and individual psychological processes, making it a powerful tool for developing effective marketing strategies that resonate with consumers on a deeper level (Rinot Levavi et al., 2023).

2.4 Conceptual Framework

Johansson and Kask (2017) proposed that in the SOR theory model, individual attitudes and psychological feelings undergo corresponding changes in response to external stimuli, and these changes in attitude influence individual behavior or willingness. In this study, the stimulus variables (S) include consumers' attention to social media influencers, interaction, perceived value, and trust; the organism variables (O) refer to the corresponding flow experience and risk perception that consumers have under the aforementioned stimulus conditions; the response variables (R) are the purchase intention responses based on changes in consumer experience and perception.

Based on the above theoretical foundation and assumptions, this study proposes the following theoretical model as shown in Figure1.

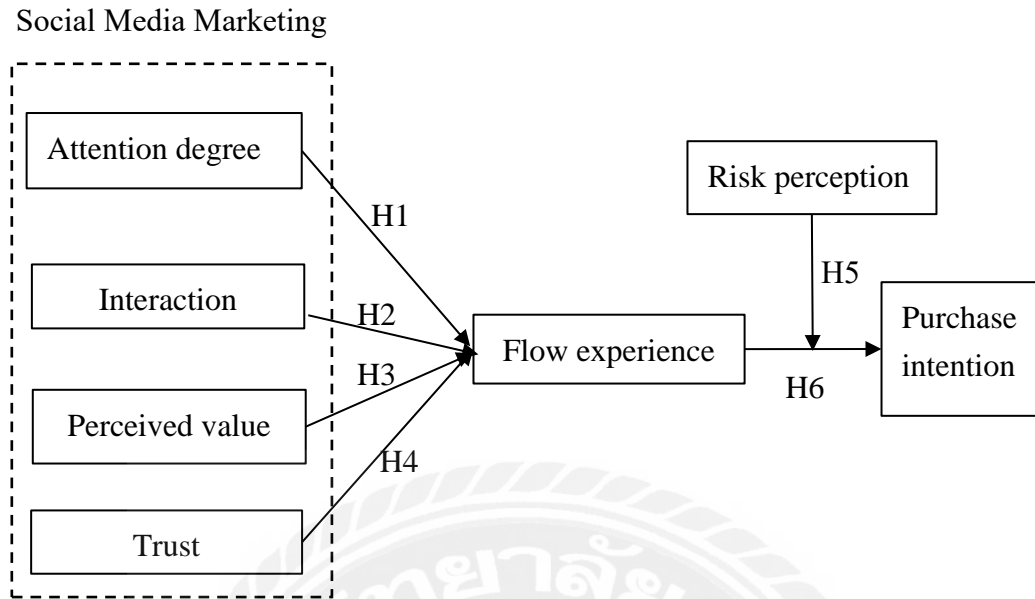


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Based on the theoretical framework of this study, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Attention degree to social media marketing influencers has a significant positive impact on consumers' flow experience.

H2: Interaction to social media marketing influencers has a significant positive impact on consumers' flow experience.

H3: Perceived value of social media marketing influencers has a significant positive impact on consumers' flow experience.

H4: Trust in social media marketing influencers has a significant positive impact on consumers' flow experience.

H5: Consumers' risk perception negatively moderates the relationship between flow experience and purchase intention.

H6: Consumers' flow experience has a significant positive impact on purchase intention.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The research variables of this study are social media marketing, flow experience, and purchase intention, with risk perception as a moderator. Social media marketing includes four dimensions: attention degree, interaction, perceived value, and trust (Le & Ngoc, 2024). During the literature review process, it was found that researchers have classified the dimensions of each variable differently due to variations in research subjects and contexts. This study used established and validated scales for measurement. Data were collected and analyzed through a questionnaire survey, and research conclusions summarized. This study employed Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) as a quantitative research method to investigate the factors influencing consumer purchase intention across five major social media platforms: TikTok, Kuaishou, Little Red Book, Bilibili, and Weibo. The research design included several key components: data collection, sample selection, variable identification, and analysis. The primary data collection method involved an online questionnaire distributed through various digital channels, leveraging convenience sampling to ensure accessibility for participants. This approach allowed the researchers to gather a substantial number of responses efficiently from individuals active on these social media platforms.

In terms of variables, the study identifies six independent variables that are hypothesized to influence consumer purchase intention: attention, interaction, perceived value, trust, flow experience, and risk perception. Attention pertains to how consumers notice promotional content on social media, while interaction evaluates the level of engagement between users and brands. Perceived value assesses consumers' evaluations of the benefits received compared to costs, whereas trust examined consumer's confidence in brands operating within social media environments. Flow experience captures the immersive nature of user engagement with content, and risk perception focused on consumers' assessments of potential risks associated with online purchasing.

The dependent variable for this research is consumer purchase intention, which reflects the likelihood of consumers making purchases based on their experience and interaction on social media platforms.

3.2 Population and Sample

The population of this study consists of consumers who actively engage with 5 major social media platforms in China: Tiktok, Kuaishou, Little Red book, Bilibili, and Weibo. These five platforms have an active user base of 1.088 billion, with a penetration rate of 88.9%, ensuring the diversity and representativeness of the research sample. (Ali Abumalloh et al., 2025) These platforms dominate the Chinese digital landscape, offering diverse features ranging from messaging and short video sharing to social networking and e-commerce, reflecting the varied social and consumer behaviors in the country.

Therefore, the population for this study was about 1.088 billion. The study used a random sampling method to distribute questionnaire. The sampling size needed to be justified. Different scholars referred to different calculation methods for the appropriate size of the sample. In this study, the sample size was acquired from the simplified formula suggested by Sueoka and Yamane (1967). The equation is $n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$; Where n is the target sample size, N is the known population size, based on the above data, N is equal to 1.088 billion, and e is the level of precision or acceptable sampling error (which is the 95% confidence level, and a 5% margin of error is employed in this study). As a result of applying the formula, the sample size was 1300 respondents, and the study collected 1300 respondents for the convenience of calculation.

3.3 Hypothesis

Based on the literature review of factors that affect consumer purchase intention in social media marketing, this study proposes that attention degree, interaction, trust and customer perceived value in social media marketing influence consumer purchase intention, and consumer risk perception has a moderator role in the relationship between flow experience and consumer purchase intention. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Attention degree to social media marketing influencers has a significant positive impact on consumers' flow experience.

H2: interaction to social media marketing influencers has a significant positive impact on consumers' flow experience.

H3: Perceived value to social media marketing influencers has a significant positive impact on consumers' flow experience.

H4: Trust in social media marketing influencers has a significant positive impact

on consumers' flow experience.

H5: Consumers' risk perception negatively moderates the relationship between flow experience and purchase intention.

H6: Consumers' flow experience has a significant positive impact on consumers' purchase intention.

3.4 Research Instrument

The questionnaire is structured into two main sections: the first section gathers basic demographic information about respondents, including gender, age, education level, income level and frequency of purchase. The second section utilizes a 5-point Likert scale for measuring each of the identified variables, including a total of 26 items aimed at capturing the nuances of consumer behavior. To analyze the collected data, Partial Least Squares (PLS) version 7.0 were used to conduct the SEM analysis, allowing for an assessment of the relationships between the independent variables and consumer purchase intention. This comprehensive approach ensured that the study not only gathered relevant data but also provided insights that can inform marketing strategies and enhance understanding of consumer behavior in the digital age.

3.4.1 Attention Degree Scale

Attention degree means the influencer having a large number of followers on social media platforms, holding a dominant and influential position in the brand field they have established and having a certain reputation on social networks. This also includes the influencer being quite popular on social media platforms. A total of 4 items were designed for this study, as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3. 1 Attention Degree Scale

| Dimension | Items | Source |
|-----------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Attention Degree (AD) | The social media influencer has a large number of followers on social media platforms. | (Nieves-Pavón et al., 2023) |
| | The social media influencer holds a dominant and influential position in the brand's field. | |
| | The social media influencer has a certain reputation on social networks. | |
| | The social media influencer is popular on social media platforms. | |

3.4.2 Interaction Scale

Interaction refers to the reciprocal actions or communications between individuals, groups, or systems, often characterized by the exchange of information, behaviors, or resources. It is a key concept in fields such as sociology, psychology, and communication studies, where it is understood as a process through which individuals influence one another's attitudes, behaviors, or perception (Goffman, 1959). In social interaction, individuals engage in both verbal and non-verbal exchanges that are influenced by contextual factors such as power dynamics, social norms, and emotional states (Scott & Bruce, 1994).

Table 3. 2 Interaction Scale

| Dimension | Items | Source |
|--------------------|--|-------------------|
| Interaction (I) | The social media influencer frequently interacts with fans during live streams. | (Yang & Li, 2023) |
| | I am willing to participate in the social media influencer's live stream interaction. | |
| | I am willing to watch the social media influencer's interaction with others during live streams. | |

3.4.3 Perceived Value Scale

Perceived value refers to the consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product or service, based on the perception of what is received versus what is given. It involves an evaluation of both tangible and intangible benefits relative to the sacrifices or costs (Gustina et al., 2024). This concept integrates both functional and emotional dimensions, considering factors such as price, quality, convenience, and the overall experience associated with a purchase. In the context of social media marketing, influencers can significantly impact perceived value by promoting products that align with consumers' needs and desires, creating an emotional connection, and enhancing brand trust (Merino et al., 2022).

Table 3. 3 Perceived Value Scale

| Dimension | Items | Source |
|-------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| Perceived Value (PV) | The product offers a high level of value compared to its price. | (Abbasi et al., 2024) |
| | The product provides more benefits than I expected. | |
| | The product enhances my overall well-being or satisfaction. | |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | The social media influencer brings positive impact to their self-created brand. | |
|--|---|--|

3.4.4 Trust Scale

Trust is a multifaceted psychological and social construct that involves the willingness to rely on others in situations where outcomes are uncertain. It is typically defined as the expectation that another party will act in a way that is beneficial or at least not harmful to one's interests (Scott & Bruce, 1994). It is often conceptualized in two dimensions: cognitive trust, which is based on the belief in another party's reliability, and affective trust, which stems from emotional bonds and feelings of goodwill. The specific measurement items are shown in Table 3.4.

Table 3. 4 Trust Scale

| Dimension | Item | Source |
|-----------|--|----------------------|
| Trust (T) | I trust the social media influencer's product information. | (Mosca et al., 2023) |
| | This social media influencer is trustworthy. | |
| | I believe the product statements and commitments made by the social media influencer's shop. | |

3.4.5 Risk Perception Scale

Risk perception refers to the consumer's perception of the uncertainty and potential negative consequences of a purchase decision. It is a multidimensional construct that involves various types of risk, including financial, functional, social, psychological, and physical risks (Dudasova et al., 2021). Consumers typically assess these risks when evaluating products or services, particularly in contexts where the product is unfamiliar or the purchase is significant.

The type and level of perceived risk may vary depending on the consumer's previous experience, the complexity of the product, and the amount of information available. In the context of social media, influencers and brand communication strategies play a key role in mitigating or exacerbating perceived risk by offering testimonials, guarantees, or product demonstrations (Dudasova et al., 2021).

Table 3. 5 Risk Perception Scale

| Dimension | Items | Source |
|-----------|--|------------|
| Risk | I feel uncertain about the quality of the product. | (Erkutlu & |

| | | |
|--------------------|---|------------------|
| Perception (RP) | I am concerned that purchasing this product could result in a financial loss. | Chafra, 2015) |
| | I worry that the product may not meet my expectations. | |
| | I am unsure whether purchasing the product will lead to social embarrassment. | |

3.4.6 Flow Experience Scale

Flow experience is a tool used to measure and assess an individual's subjective experience of "flow," a psychological state of deep absorption and enjoyment in an activity. Flow experience is valuable in understanding how individuals experience optimal engagement and performance.

Table 3. 6 Flow Experience Scale

| Dimension | Items | Source |
|----------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Flow Experience (FE) | The price I pay is worth the products and services I receive. | (Zhang et al., 2023) |
| | The social media influencer's live-streamed products are reliable, with a wide variety and many options. | |
| | Purchasing the social media influencer's live-streamed products makes me feel happy. | |
| | The social media influencer's live-streamed products are suitable for me to display my inner image. | |
| | By purchasing the social media influencer's live-streamed products, I can gain recognition from others. | |

3.4.7 Purchase Intention Scale

The dependent variable in this study is the consumer's purchase intention, specifically focusing on the context of blind-box purchases, a growing trend in consumer behavior. Purchase intention refers to the likelihood that a consumer will decide to buy a product or service, influenced by factors such as perceived value, emotional appeal, and the level of trust in the brand (Du & Lin, 2022). For this study, the measurement items, reflecting specific aspects of purchase intention, are presented in Table 3.7.

Table 3. 7 Purchase Intention Scale

| Dimension | Item | Source |
|---------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Purchasing Intention (PI) | I am willing to buy products while watching this social media influencer's live stream. | (Johansson & Kask, 2017) |
| | I am willing to recommend my friends to watch this social media influencer's live stream or purchase products from their live stream. | |
| | In the near future, I will choose (or continue to choose) to purchase products from this social media influencer's live stream. | |

3.5 Reliability and Validity Analysis

This study used SPSS 23.0 to examine the factor conditions of the survey data. The results indicate that the loading coefficients of all variables in this study are greater than 0.7, and they all reach a significance level of 0.001, indicating that the data has validity and reliability, and the scale has good convergent validity. This study involves seven variables, and the AVE values of the relationships between the variables are all greater than 0.7 and significant, which suggests that the data in this research has good convergent validity. Composite reliability (CR) is an indicator of the internal consistency of the variables within the structural model, calculated from the standardized regression weights in the CFA model. When CR is greater than 0.7, the latent variables have good composite reliability. The results of the composite reliability verification in this study show that the minimum CR value is 0.703. In the formal survey, the square root of the AVE for each latent variable is greater than the square root of other correlations, with the minimum average variance extracted (AVE) square root being 0.83, which is greater than the maximum correlation coefficient of 0.59, indicating that the questionnaire has good discriminant validity.

Table 3. 8 Reliability Test

| Variable | AVE | CR | α |
|----------|-------|-------|----------|
| AD | 0.768 | 0.836 | 0.702 |
| I | 0.783 | 0.915 | 0.734 |
| PV | 0.775 | 0.834 | 0.698 |
| T | 0.765 | 0.920 | 0.945 |
| RP | 0.721 | 0.756 | 0.704 |
| FE | 0.738 | 0.785 | 0.823 |

| | | | |
|----|-------|-------|-------|
| PI | 0.768 | 0.713 | 0.767 |
|----|-------|-------|-------|

Note: AD: Attention degree; I: Interaction; PV: Perceived value; T: Trust; RP: Risk perception; FE: Flow experience; PI: Purchase intention.

Validity analysis is used to measure the degree of closeness between the results and the expected goals, that is, to measure whether the questionnaire items can accurately measure the characteristics or functions that are intended to be measured. KMO and Bartlett's sphericity test are commonly used methods to assess the degree of correlation in sample data, and can further verify whether the data is suitable for factor analysis. According to the validity measurement standards provided by Kaiser, if the KMO value is above 0.7, the sample data can be used for factor analysis; if the KMO value is between 0.8 and 0.9, it is very suitable for factor analysis. In Bartlett's sphericity test, if the test result Sig. is less than 0.05, meaning the p-value is less than 0.05, it indicates that there is correlation between variables, and the data can be subjected to factor analysis. As shown in Table 3.9, the pre-survey sample data has a KMO value of 0.845, which is greater than 0.8, and a Sig. value of 0.000, less than 0.05, indicating suitability for further factor analysis (Johansson & Kask, 2017). This study used confirmatory factor analysis to test the structural validity of each variable, and used reliability analysis to test the internal consistency of each variable. The results in Table 3.9 demonstrate that the data are well-suited for factor analysis. The KMO value of 0.845 indicates a high degree of sampling adequacy, while the significant result from Bartlett's test suggests that the variables are suitably correlated. The findings justify proceeding with further analysis, such as exploratory or confirmatory factor analysis, to uncover the underlying structure of the data. Thus, the data can be utilized to explore the relationships among the variables effectively and derive meaningful conclusions regarding consumer behavior related to the study.

Table 3. 9 KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Results

| | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|----------|
| KMO sampling adequacy measure | | .845 |
| Bartlett's test of sphericity | approx. chi-square | 3463.523 |
| | degrees of freedom | 415 |
| | sig. | .000 |

In summary, the composite reliability and structural validity of the questionnaire's structural model are relatively good, with a high degree of fit to the actual data, and the rationality of the questionnaire and dimension settings. In addition to testing the reliability and validity of the variables, it is also necessary to measure the variance inflation factor (VIF) of the variables to ensure that multicollinearity is not a major issue in the analysis. According to the conclusions drawn by Petter and his

colleagues, the VIF value should be less than 5, ideally less than 3.3. In this study, the standard VIF values for all variables were calculated to be 3.3, indicating that there is no multicollinearity among them.

3.6 Data Collection

The independent variables of this study include attention degree, interaction, perceived value, trust, risk perception, and flow experience, with the dependent variable being consumer purchasing intention. The scales of this study were determined based on existing scholars' established scales. The survey questionnaires were will be distributed at Tiktok, Kuaishou, Little Red book, Bilibili, and Weibo, from Oct 1, 2024, to Oct 30, 2024. The target sample size was set at 1,300 respondents. Prior to the formal survey, a pre-survey was conducted. In the formal survey, a total of 1300 questionnaires were collected, invalid questionnaires were excluded, and ultimately 1265 valid questionnaires were obtained, resulting in a response rate of 97.3%. This elevated response rate reflected strong engagement with the survey among the selected demographic.

3.7 Data Analysis

This study used quantitative methods to analyze data from the questionnaires, primarily utilizing SPSS 23.0 software. The study analyzed the relationship between social media marketing, flow experience, and purchases intention, employing correlation analysis and T-tests to explore the key factors influencing consumer purchasing decisions.

Chapter 4 Findings

4.1 Introduction

A total of 1295 valid samples were collected in this study, meeting the sample size requirements. This study used SPSS 23.0 for structural equation modeling and path analysis, with attention degree, trust, perceived value and interaction as independent variables, purchase intention as a dependent variable, flow experience as a variable impacting on purchase intention, and risk perception as a moderator.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics of Sample

Based on 1295 questionnaires, this study conducted an analysis using statistical software and obtained the following statistical results for the demographic characteristics of sample as shown in Table 4.1:

Table 4. 1 Demographic Characteristics of Sample

| Variable | Item | Percentage(%) |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| Gender | Male | 41.2% |
| | Female | 58.8% |
| Age | <13 years old | 18% |
| | 14-18 years old | 37% |
| | 19-27 years old | 39% |
| | 28-35 years old | 4% |
| | 36 years old and above | 2% |
| Education level | Junior high school and below | 3% |
| | High School | 14.3% |
| | Bachelor | 56.7% |
| | Master and Doctoral | 26% |
| Income level (¥/Year) | 19999 and below | 1% |
| | 20000-50000 | 5% |
| | 50001-100000 | 28% |
| | 100001-200000 | 45% |
| | Above 200000 | 11% |

| | | |
|---|-------------|-----|
| The frequency of purchasing behavior in social media marketing platforms (every year) | < 3 times | 2% |
| | 4-10 times | 12% |
| | 11-20 times | 23% |
| | >20 times | 63% |

Among the 1,265 valid questionnaires, the gender distribution shows that males account for 41.2% and females for 58.8%, indicating a higher proportion of females; In terms of age, young people under 27 years old account for a larger proportion of blind box consumption, accounting for 94%, and above 27 account for only 6%, This indicates that the main consumers who like blind box products are young people, generally aged 27 and below; In terms of education level, respondents of high school account for 14.3%, respondents of junior high school and below account for 3%, respondents of a bachelor's degree account for 56.7% , respondents of a master's and doctor degree account for 26%; In terms of income level, respondents with an annual income of less than 20,000 account for 1% of the sample, the most percentage is 45% for 100001-200000.

In terms of the frequency of purchasing in social media marketing platforms, 2% of respondents purchase less than 3 times a year, 12% purchase 4-10 times, 23% purchase 11-20 times, and 63% purchase more than 20 times. It can be seen that the purchasing frequency is very high, so it already becomes a tendency shopping in social media platforms.

4.3 Results of the Study

4.3.1 Correlation Analysis

The analysis reveals significant positive correlations among Social Media Marketing (SMM), Flow Experience (FE), and Purchase Intention (PI). In the mean, standard deviation and correlation analysis, as shown in Table 4.2, data from 1,265 valid questionnaires were processed using SPSS 23.0 software.

As shown in the Table 4.2, the results showed that the Pearson correlation

coefficient between different variables were all correlated and significant, indicating a significant strong positive correlation between variables. Conversely, risk perception shows negative correlations with attention degree ($\beta = -0.38$, $p < 0.01$), interaction ($\beta = -0.53$, $p < 0.05$), perceived value ($\beta = -0.31$, $p < 0.05$), trust ($\beta = -0.86$, $p < 0.01$), flow experience ($\beta = -0.36$, $p < 0.01$), and purchase intention ($\beta = -0.49$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates that lower perception of risk may undermine the effectiveness of social media marketing and diminish user immersion, thereby reducing purchase intention.

Furthermore, the mean values reflect a generally positive trend in social media marketing, flow experience, and purchase intention, while the lower average for risk perception (mean=1.830, SD=0.745) suggests a lack of confidence in brand reputation among consumers. The standard deviations indicate varying degrees of response, particularly in flow experience, highlighting significant differences in user experience. Overall, enhancing risk perception can significantly improve the effectiveness of social media marketing, user immersion, and ultimately, purchase intention.

Table 4. 2 Standard Deviation and Correlation Analysis Results

| Variable | AD | I | PV | T | FE | PI | RP | SD |
|----------|---------|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|----|-------|
| AD | 1 | | | | | | | 0.532 |
| I | 0.54* | 1 | | | | | | 0.687 |
| PV | 0.32* | 0.26* | 1 | | | | | 0.634 |
| T | 0.76** | 0.38* | 0.75* | 1 | | | | 0.804 |
| FE | 0.65** | 0.45* | 0.62* | 0.81* | 1 | | | 0.866 |
| PI | 0.70** | 0.21* | 0.58* | 0.76** | 0.75** | 1 | | 0.673 |
| RP | -0.38** | -0.53* | -0.31* | -0.86** | -0.36** | -0.49** | 1 | 0.745 |

Note: *p value<0.05, **p value<0.01 (two-tailed); *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed); **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). AD: Attention Degree; I: Interaction; PV: Perceived Value; T: Trust; FE: Flow Experience; PI: Purchase Intention; RP: Risk Perception.

In the T-test, as shown in Table 4.3, participants were divided into two groups based on their risk perception. The results showed a significant difference between the high-risk perception group (mean = 3.45, standard deviation = 1.12) and the low-risk perception group (mean = 4.10, standard deviation = 1.05), with a T-value of -4.56 and a p-value of less than 0.01. This result indicates that consumers with low risk perception have significantly higher purchase intention than those with high risk perception, reflecting the important impact of risk perception on purchasing decisions.

Table 4. 3 T-test Results

| Variable | Sample Size (n) | Mean | Standard Deviation | t | p |
|----------|-----------------|------|--------------------|-------|-------|
| High RP | 632 | 3.45 | 1.12 | -4.56 | <0.01 |
| Low RP | 633 | 4.10 | 1.05 | | |

Note: $p < 0.01$ indicates significant correlation; RP: Risk Perception.

In summary, the results of the correlation analysis and T-test reveal the significant impact of social media marketing and flow experience on consumers' purchase intention, while risk perception plays a crucial moderating role in this process. These findings provide important theoretical support for optimizing social media marketing strategies and emphasize the importance of considering consumers' risk perception in marketing activities.

4.3.2 Model Fitting and Path Test Results

As shown in Table 4.4, the results are within the recommended range, indicating that the model fits well. The analysis of the model fit indices presented in Table 4.4 indicates that the model demonstrates good fit to the data. The λ^2/df value of 1.059 is well below the recommended threshold of 2, suggesting a strong model-data fit. The RMSEA value of 0.037 is significantly lower than the acceptable limit of 0.08, indicating excellent approximation error. Additionally, the GFI of 0.95 and AGFI of 0.92 both exceed the recommended value of 0.9, further supporting the model's adequacy. The CFI of 0.93 and NFI of 0.91 also surpass the 0.9 threshold, signifying the model's superior fit relative to baseline models. Lastly, the NNFI value of 0.96 reinforces the overall conclusion that the model exhibits strong fit characteristics. In summary, all fit indices confirm that the model is well-suited for describing the data features effectively.

Table 4. 4 Model Fitting Index

| Fitting coefficient | λ^2/df | RMSEA | GFI | AGFI | CFI | NFI | NNFI |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Recommended value | <2 | <0.08 | >0.9 | >0.9 | >0.9 | >0.9 | >0.9 |
| Measurement results | 1.059 | 0.037 | 0.95 | 0.92 | 0.93 | 0.91 | 0.96 |

The path coefficients of the model were tested. The standardized path coefficients and hypothesis test results are shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4. 5 Structural Equation Model Test Results

| Hypothesis | Standardized path coefficient | P value | Result |
|--|-------------------------------------|---------|-----------|
| H1: Attention to social media marketing influencers has a significant positive impact on consumers' flow experience. | 0.43** | <0.01 | Supported |
| H2: Interaction with social media marketing influencers has a significant positive impact on consumers' flow experience. | 0.56** | <0.01 | Supported |
| H3: Perceived value of social media marketing influencers has a significant positive impact on consumers' flow experience. | 0.75*** | <0.001 | Supported |
| H4: Trust in social media marketing influencers has a significant positive impact on consumers' flow experience. | 0.37** | <0.01 | Supported |
| H5: Consumers' risk perception negatively moderates the relationship between flow experience and purchase intention. | -0.25* | <0.05 | Supported |
| H6: Consumers' flow experience has a significant positive impact on consumers' purchase intention. | 0.64** | <0.01 | Supported |

Through data analysis shown in Table 4.5, this study identifies a total of six hypothesis paths, all of which are valid.

Hypothesis 1 ($\beta = 0.43$, $P < 0.01$) is valid, indicating that the attention degree given to social media marketing influencers has a significant positive impact on consumers' flow experience. Consumers shopping from influencers they pay more attention to will significantly enhance their flow experience, recognizing the influencer's personal charm, professionalism, and the credibility of the products.

Hypothesis 2 ($\beta = 0.56$, $P < 0.01$) is valid, showing that the interaction with social media marketing influencers significantly positively affects consumers' flow experience. The more consumers interact with social media influencers, the more likely they are to gain a pleasurable shopping experience, increase their understanding of the products, and enhance their flow experience.

Hypothesis 3 ($\beta = 0.75$, $P < 0.001$) is valid, indicating that the perceived value of social media marketing influencers significantly positively affects consumers' flow

experience. When consumers believe that the products and services promoted by social media influencers align with their perceived value (including aesthetics, practicality, cost-effectiveness, etc.), it enhances the adaptability dimension of the flow experience.

Hypothesis 4 ($\beta = 0.37$, $P < 0.01$) is valid, showing that the trust in social media marketing influencers significantly positively affects consumers' flow experience. The more consumers trust the influencers, the more their flow experience increases.

Hypothesis 6 ($\beta = 0.14$, $P < 0.001$) is valid, indicating that consumers' flow experience significantly positively affect their purchase intention. The more consumers invest in their flow experience, the stronger their purchase intention becomes.

4.3.3 Moderating Effect Test

To verify the moderating effect of risk perception, this study used SPSS 23.0 software and employed hierarchical regression analysis (HRM). Hierarchical regression is a stepwise variable introduction technique that clearly demonstrates the unique contribution of each variable to the outcome variable, thereby helping researchers better understand the moderating role of risk perception in the model. To explore the moderating role of risk perception in this relationship between flow experience and purchase intention, a regression analysis was conducted.

Hypothesis 5 ($\beta = -0.25$, $P < 0.05$) is valid, indicating that consumers' risk perception negatively moderates the relationship between flow experience and purchase intention. When risk perception is high, the impact of flow experience on purchase intention weakens. This suggests that in high-risk situations, consumers may pay less attention to the flow experience, leading to a reduced influence of the flow experience on purchasing decisions.

4.4 Discussion

4.4.1 Findings

The findings of this study highlight the intricate dynamics between social media marketing, flow experience, and consumer purchase intention. The significant positive correlations observed between social media marketing (SMM), including attention, interaction, perceived value, and trust, and purchase intention (PI), as well as between flow experience (FE) and purchase intention, underscore the effectiveness of engaging marketing strategies in enhancing consumer behavior. Specifically, the

results reveal that higher levels of attention, interaction, perceived value and trust, as indicated by the significant loading factors, contribute meaningfully to the flow experience. This immersive engagement not only captivates consumers but also significantly increases their likelihood of making purchases.

Additionally, the negative correlations identified between risk perception (RP) and the other variables indicate that heightened perception of risk can undermine the beneficial effects of social media marketing and flow experience. Consumers who perceive high risks associated with a brand or product are less likely to engage positively with marketing efforts or to experience the immersive state that encourages purchasing behavior. This insight is pivotal for marketers, suggesting that addressing risk factors is crucial for optimizing marketing effectiveness.

4.4.2 Relationship of the Findings to Previous Research

These findings align well with existing literature that emphasizes the importance of engagement and emotional experience in the consumer decision-making process. Previous studies have established that social media marketing can significantly influence consumer attitudes and behaviors. The demonstration of strong correlations between SMM, FE, and PI in this study corroborates earlier research indicating that effective marketing strategies enhance consumer engagement and drive purchase intention. Furthermore, the relationship between flow experience and purchase intention is consistent with consumer behavior theories that suggest positive emotional states foster favorable purchasing decisions (Johansson & Kask, 2017). The study's findings extend this understanding by highlighting the moderating role of risk perception, adding a nuanced perspective to the existing body of knowledge.

4.4.3 Explanation of Unexpected Results

While the findings largely corroborate existing literature, the negative moderating effect of risk perception on the relationship between flow experience and purchase intention warrants further exploration. Although it was anticipated that an enjoyable flow experience would universally promote purchase intention, the study indicates that high levels of risk perception can attenuate this effect. This suggests that even in scenarios where consumers are engaged and enjoying their experience, underlying fears regarding product reliability, brand reputation, or potential financial loss can significantly dampen their willingness to purchase. This unexpected result emphasizes the dual importance of creating engaging marketing content while also actively addressing consumer concerns regarding risks. Marketers may need to

incorporate strategies that foster trust and security, such as transparent communication, user reviews, and guarantees, to mitigate risk perception and fully leverage the benefits of an engaging flow experience.

In conclusion, this study elucidates the complex interplay between social media marketing, flow experience, purchase intention, and risk perception. The findings provide valuable insights for marketers seeking to enhance consumer engagement and drive purchasing behavior, highlighting the need for strategies that not only promote immersive experience but also address and alleviate consumer risks. Future research could further explore these dynamics, particularly in varying contexts and across different consumer demographics, to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing online purchasing decisions.



Chapter 5 Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

5.1.1 The impact mechanism of social media marketing on consumer purchase intention

Social media marketing has become a vital tool for businesses to engage with consumers and influence their purchasing behavior. This study theoretically hypothesized the mechanisms through which social media marketing impacts consumers' purchase intention, aiming to construct a comprehensive theoretical model that elucidates the key influencing factors. By delving into the interplay between social media marketing content, consumers' flow experience, and risk perception, this research sought to uncover the pathways by which marketing efforts translate into trust and eventual purchase decisions.

The concept of flow experience is central to understanding how compelling and interactive social media content captures consumers' attention. Engaging content can foster a sense of enjoyment and absorption, which positively influences consumers' attitudes toward a brand. Conversely, risk perception, which encompasses concerns about product quality, data security, and transactional safety, often acts as a barrier to purchase intention. This study examined how social media marketing strategies can effectively mitigate these perceived risks. By analyzing these elements, the study identifies which marketing methods — such as influencer endorsements, user-generated content, or interactive campaigns — are most effective in reducing risk perception and enhancing trust.

Ultimately, this study provides valuable insights for marketers seeking to optimize their social media strategies. By understanding the psychological and emotional triggers that drive purchase intention, businesses can tailor their approaches to build stronger consumer relationships, foster trust, and achieve greater marketing success in the digital era.

5.1.2 The negative moderating effect of consumers' risk perception on purchase intention

This study also examined the critical role of consumers' risk perception in shaping their purchase intention within the social media marketing environment. Specifically, it verified the negative moderating effect of risk perception on the relationship between flow experience and purchase intention. The findings reveal that

higher levels of perceived risk reduce the positive influence of flow experience on purchase intention, while lower levels of risk perception significantly enhance consumers' likelihood of making a purchase. Risk perception, in this context, refers to the concerns consumers may have about product quality, data privacy, financial security, or the authenticity of information presented through social media platforms. These concerns can act as psychological barriers, preventing consumers from fully engaging with a brand or making purchase decisions, even when they experience flow states of deep engagement and immersion with the marketing content. For instance, an engaging advertisement or interactive campaign may generate interest and enjoyment, but if consumers perceive high risks, their willingness to purchase diminishes.

The study further explored how different consumer groups, characterized by varying levels of risk perception, respond to social media marketing. By segmenting consumers based on their risk sensitivity, it identified the factors that most effectively enhance purchase intention for each group. These insights provide actionable guidance for brands looking to design targeted marketing strategies. For example, for consumers with high-risk perception, strategies such as offering transparent product information, robust customer reviews, secure payment options, or guarantees may alleviate concerns and foster trust. By understanding how to reduce risk perception and leverage flow experience effectively, brands can enhance the overall efficacy of their social media marketing strategies. This study thus offers valuable implications for creating tailored campaigns that not only engage consumers but also address their concerns, ultimately driving purchase behavior in a competitive digital marketplace.

5.2 Recommendation

5.2.1 Building trust and enhancing customer perceived value to boost purchase intention on social media marketing platforms

Trust and customer perception are critical factors in driving purchase intention on social media marketing platforms. Strategies that enhance these elements can significantly improve consumer engagement and conversion rates.

From the perspective of trust, live-streaming sales present an effective approach. Real-time interaction through Q&A sessions and promotional discussions allow consumers to gain a comprehensive understanding of products, fostering transparency and credibility. By demonstrating product features and answering consumer concerns on the spot, brands can reduce skepticism and build trust. Additionally, incorporating features like user testimonials and expert endorsements during live streams further

enhances the perception of authenticity and reliability. Interactive campaigns on platforms like Douyin (TikTok) also contribute to trust-building. Encouraging user-generated content, such as sharing product experience or showcasing skills in short videos, creates a sense of community and genuine engagement. Consumers are more likely to trust the opinions and endorsements of their peers, as these are perceived to be unbiased and relatable. This peer-driven trust positively influences purchase intention.

From the perspective of customer perception, enhancing flow experience is pivotal. Interactive features like limited-time offers and lottery activities during live streams create a sense of urgency and excitement, heightening the overall shopping experience. The joy and immersion consumers experience during these events not only enhance their perception of the brand but also increase their willingness to purchase.

Moreover, data indicates that increased user engagement correlates directly with brand awareness and influence. Campaigns that actively involve users, as seen with a cosmetics brand encouraging short video content, improve brand perception by making consumers feel valued and involved. This active participation transforms passive viewers into engaged customers, driving both immediate sales and long-term loyalty. By focusing on trust-building measures and optimizing customer perception, brands can effectively enhance purchase intention on social media platforms.

5.2.2 Enhancing interaction, attention degree and flow experience to increase consumer engagement

Utilizing live streaming sales can enhance interaction, allowing consumers to gain a deeper understanding of products through real-time Q&A and promotional interaction. Additionally, interactive features such as limited-time offers and lottery activities can be incorporated, enabling consumers to experience the joy of shopping during the live stream, further enhancing the flow experience. In digital age, social media marketing on Douyin (TikTok) has become a typical case of brand communication. According to data from i Research, a 10% increase in user engagement can lead to a 15% increase in brand awareness (Xin et al., 2024). This indicates that brands can significantly enhance their exposure and influence on the Douyin platform through effective user engagement. For example, a well-known cosmetics brand launched a user participation campaign on Douyin, encouraging users to share their experience with the products. Users not only actively interacted in the comments section but also showcased their makeup skills through short videos. This approach not only enhanced users' sense of participation but also attracted a large

number of potential customers, ultimately resulting in a significant increase in sales.

5.2.3 Building a regulatory and secure transaction system to reduce shopping risks on social media platforms

The regulation of social media marketing remains relatively weak, creating a complex environment for both businesses and consumers. In cases where illegal or prohibited items are not sold, significant public harm is avoided, and no widespread complaints arise, regulatory authorities tend to adopt a hands-off approach. While this leniency provides room for the rapid growth and innovation of social media marketing, it has also inadvertently led to a trust crisis among consumers. Issues such as false advertising, lack of accountability, and insufficient transparency have become increasingly prevalent, undermining consumer confidence in online transactions. To address these challenges, regulatory authorities must implement comprehensive measures to strengthen the governance of social media marketing. First, clear qualification requirements and certification systems for social media marketers should be established to ensure professionalism and accountability. Additionally, stringent information security measures are essential to protect consumers' personal data and online safety. Credit rating systems can be introduced to evaluate the reliability of marketers and platforms, encouraging responsible practices. Furthermore, third-party payment systems with robust security protocols should be mandated to enhance transactional safety and reduce the risks of fraud.

By enforcing stricter regulations and enhancing oversight, authorities can create a safer and more trustworthy environment for consumers. These measures will not only rebuild consumer trust but also promote the sustainable development of the social media marketing industry.

5.3 Further Study

5.3.1 Exploring Social Media Marketing from the Perspective of Expanding E-commerce Platforms and Cross-Cultural Consumer Engagement

As e-commerce platforms continue to expand globally, social media marketing plays a pivotal role in connecting brands with consumers across different cultural and national contexts. A deeper exploration of this field should consider factors such as consumer attention, interaction, perception, and trust, all of which are critical in influencing purchase decisions. Attention degree is the foundation of effective social media marketing. Platforms need to tailor content to resonate with diverse cultural

preferences, leveraging localized trends, visuals, and language to capture the interest of target audiences. Interaction, facilitated through features like real-time Q&A, user-generated content, and gamified activities, fosters engagement and creates a sense of community, which is crucial for building long-term relationships with international consumers. Consumer perceived value is shaped by cultural values and expectations, influencing how marketing messages are received. For instance, in some cultures, emotional appeals may work better, while others may prioritize product functionality and reliability. Addressing these nuances can enhance the effectiveness of marketing campaigns.

By incorporating these factors, future research can provide valuable insights into how social media marketing strategies can be optimized for global e-commerce success.

5.3.2 Leveraging Diverse Research Methods to Enhance Social Media Marketing and Boost Purchase Intention

Employing a variety of research methods can provide deeper insights into optimizing social media marketing strategies to increase consumer purchase intention. Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method approaches each offer unique advantages in understanding consumer behavior and improving marketing effectiveness. Qualitative research, including focus groups and in-depth interviews, provides valuable insights into consumer motivations and emotions. Through these methods, marketers can explore how social media content resonates with audiences and uncover the psychological triggers behind purchase decisions. Mixed-method approaches combine the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methods, offering a comprehensive understanding of social media marketing effectiveness. Analyzing metrics such as click-through rates alongside consumer sentiment data can help brands refine their strategies.

By leveraging diverse research methodologies, marketers can design more targeted campaigns that address trust, engagement, and consumer perception, ultimately driving higher purchase intention.

In conclusion, the future research directions highlight the need for a more detailed understanding of consumer behavior within the context of social media marketing and purchase intention. By examining the dynamics of consumer perceived value in relation to social media content and assessing the impact of social and environmental factors, scholars and practitioners can contribute to a more comprehensive body of knowledge. This expanded understanding will not only enrich academic discourse but also provide practical insights for businesses leveraging social

media marketing, helping them develop more informed and effective strategies to influence consumer purchase intention. As the social media landscape continues to evolve, these insights will guide companies in navigating the complex and dynamic factors that shape consumer behavior, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of their marketing efforts.



References

- Abbasi, A. Z., Qummar, H., Bashir, S., Aziz, S., & Ting, D. H. (2024). Customer engagement in Saudi food delivery apps through social media marketing: Examining the antecedents and consequences using PLS-SEM and NCA. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 81, 104001.
- Adamis, A. M., Walske, S., & Olatunji, B. O. (2025). Attention Mechanisms of Social Anxiety in Daily Life: Unique Effects of Negative Self-Focused Attention on Post-Event Processing. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, 104759.
- Ali Abumalloh, R., Halabi, O., & Nilashi, M. (2025). The relationship between technology trust and behavioral intention to use Metaverse in baby monitoring systems' design: Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) theory. *Entertainment Computing*, 52, 100833.
- Bandyopadhyay, T., Woszczynski, A. B., & Crowell, D. (2025). Musical attributes, cultural dimensions, social media: Insights for marketing music to consumers. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 82, 104103.
- Bigler, T., Kammermann, M., & Baumann, P. (2023). A matheuristic for a customer assignment problem in direct marketing. *European Journal of Operational Research*, 304(2), 689-708.
- Camilleri, M. A., & Filieri, R. (2023). Customer satisfaction and loyalty with online consumer reviews: Factors affecting revisit intentions. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 114, 103575.
- Chen, J., Cai, W., Luo, J., & Mao, H. (2025). How does digital trust boost open innovation? Evidence from a mixed approach. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 212, 123953.
- Du, G., & Lin, Y. (2022). Brand connection and entry in the shopping mall ecological chain: Evidence from consumer behavior big data analysis based on two-sided markets. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 364, 132663.
- Dudasova, L., Prochazka, J., Vaculik, M., & Lorenz, T. (2021). Measuring psychological capital: Revision of the Compound Psychological Capital Scale (CPC-12). *PLOS ONE*, 16(3), e0247114.
- Ehigiamusoe, K. U., Dogan, E., Ramakrishnan, S., & Binsaeed, R. H. (2024). How does technological innovation moderate the environmental impacts of economic growth, natural resource rents and trade openness? *Journal of Environmental Management*, 371, 123229.
- Erkutlu, H., & Chafra, J. (2015). The Effects of Empowerment Role Identity and Creative Role Identity on Servant Leadership and Employees' Innovation Implementation Behavior. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 181, 3-11.
- Etse, D., & Adu-Aboagye, A. (2025). Effect of green organisational climate on green purchasing: The roles of employee green behavioural intentions and corporate environmental communication. *Sustainable Futures*, 9, 100419.
- Frommeyer, B., Wagner, E., Hossiep, C. R., & Schewe, G. (2022). The utility of

- intention as a proxy for sustainable buying behavior – A necessary condition analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, 143, 201-213.
- Ghazali, M. T., Ghani, M., Azri, S., et al. (2023). Validation of a Scale for the Measurement of Employee Competency in Relation to Succession Planning Amongst Administrators in Higher Education Institutions. *International Journal of Professional Business Review*, 8, 1-26.
- Gustina, A., Nurmasari, N. D., & Liu, J. S. C. (2024). Open innovation between university-industry: A review of research trends and practices. *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity*, 10(4), 100419.
- Huang, Y.-F., Lin, H.-C., & Lee, H.-M. (2023). Innovation in manufacturing SMEs during the COVID-19 pandemic: How does environmental dynamism reinforce employee proactive behavior? *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 187, 122247.
- Johansson, T., & Kask, J. (2017). Configurations of business strategy and marketing channels for e-commerce and traditional retail formats: A Qualitative Comparison Analysis (QCA) in sporting goods retailing. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 34, 326-333.
- Kim, D., & Wang, Z. (2024). Social media influencer vs. virtual influencer: The mediating role of source credibility and authenticity in advertising effectiveness within AI influencer marketing. *Computers in Human Behavior: Artificial Humans*, 2(2), 100100.
- Laradi, S., Elfekair, A., Alrawad, M., Hashim, M., & Derouez, F. (2024). Leveraging capabilities of social media marketing for business success. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, 16, 100524.
- Le, T.-M. H., & Ngoc, B. M. (2024). Consumption-related social media peer communication and online shopping intention among Gen Z consumers: A moderated-serial mediation model. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 153, 108100.
- Li, X., Wang, Q., Yao, X., Yan, X., & Li, R. (2024). How Do Influencers' Impression Management Tactics Affect Purchase Intention in Live Commerce? – Trust Transfer and Gender Differences. *Information & Management*, 104094.
- Luo, Z., Guo, J., Benitez, J., Scaringella, L., & Lin, J. (2024). How do organizations leverage social media to enhance marketing performance? Unveiling the power of social CRM capability and guanxi. *Decision Support Systems*, 178, 114123.
- Maduku, D. K. (2024). Social media marketing assimilation in B2B firms: An integrative framework of antecedents and consequences. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 119, 27-42.
- McClelland, D. (1973). Testing for Competence Rather Than Intelligence. *The American psychologist*, 28, 1-14.
- Merino, C., Fernández Arata, M., Fuentes-Balderrama, J., Chans, G., & Toledano-Toledano, F. (2022). Research Perceived Competency Scale: A New Psychometric Adaptation for University Students' Research Learning.

- Sustainability*, 14, 12036.
- Mosca, S., Lin, Q., Stokes, R., et al. (2023). Innovative method for rapid detection of falsified COVID-19 vaccines through unopened vials using handheld Spatially Offset Raman Spectroscopy (SORS). *Vaccine*, 41(47), 6960-6968.
- Nieves-Pavón, S., López-Mosquera, N., & Jiménez-Naranjo, H. (2023). The factors influencing STD through SOR theory. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 75, 103533.
- Novendah, I., Prasetyo, Y. T., Chen, Y.-A., et al. (2024). Exploring house purchase intention considering typhoon and earthquake disaster experiences in Taoyuan, Taiwan: An extended theory of planned behaviour approach. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 115, 105068.
- Ogiemwonyi, O., Alam, M. N., Alshareef, R., Alsolamy, M., Azizan, N. A., & Mat, N. (2023). Environmental factors affecting green purchase behaviors of the consumers: Mediating role of environmental attitude. *Cleaner Environmental Systems*, 10, 100130.
- Omeish, F., Al Khasawneh, M., & Khair, N. (2024). Investigating the impact of AI on improving customer experience through social media marketing: An analysis of Jordanian Millennials. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, 15, 100464.
- Ong, Y. X., Sun, T., & Ito, N. (2024). Understanding followers' processing and perceptions of social media influencer destination marketing: Differences between #Millennials and #GenZs. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 60, 194-207.
- Price, E., Saulnier, V., Kalvass, J. C., et al. (2024). AURA: Accelerating drug discovery with accuracy, utility, and rank-order assessment for data-driven decision making. *Journal of Pharmaceutical Sciences*.
- Qiu, T., Chen, X., Su, D., & Wang, L. (2023). Data-driven adaptive assembled joints decision-making model for prefabricated underground stations. *Tunnelling and Underground Space Technology*, 140, 105284.
- Rinot Levavi, L., Friedmann, E., Kalagy, T., & Cohen, C. (2023). Applying the SOR framework to mitigate single-use plastic tableware consumption and why does it work? Solving the dissonance with an extended SOR framework. *Journal of Environmental Management*, 348, 119344.
- Sae-tae, K., & Wang, Q. (2024). Satisfied but no payment: The impact of perceived value on continuance intention and purchase intention in music streaming services. *Telematics and Informatics Reports*, 16, 100179.
- Scott, S. G., & Bruce, R. A. (1994). Determinants of innovative behavior: A path model of individual innovation in the workplace. *Academy of management journal*, 37(3), 580-607.
- Sengoz, A., Cavusoglu, M., Kement, U., & Bayar, S. B. (2024). Unveiling the symphony of experience: Exploring flow, inspiration, and revisit intentions among music festival attendees within the SOR model. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 81, 104043.
- Singh, P. (2024). Beyond the basics: Exploring the impact of social media marketing

- enablers on business success. *Heliyon*, 10(5), e26435.
- Streibel, L., Jordan, P., & Zaeh, M. F. (2024). Data-Driven Approach for Decision-Making in Reactive Disassembly Planning to Enable Case-Based Reasoning. *Procedia CIRP*, 130, 1117-1123.
- Sueoka, N., & Yamane, T. (1967). [87] Fractionation of aminoacyl-sRNA on methylated albumin column. In *Methods in Enzymology* (Vol. 12, pp. 658-660): Academic Press.
- Vanhala, M., Lu, C., Peltonen, J., Sundqvist, S., Nummenmaa, J., & Järvelin, K. (2020). The usage of large data sets in online consumer behaviour: A bibliometric and computational text-mining-driven analysis of previous research. *Journal of Business Research*, 106, 46-59.
- Xie, C., Yang, N., Wang, Y., & Zhang, M. (2025). Firm's openness and innovation radicalness within R&D networks: Reconciling the openness paradox through the network pluralism view. *Technovation*, 141, 103163.
- Xin, M., Liu, W., & Jian, L. (2024). Live streaming product display or social interaction: How do they influence consumer intention and behavior? A heuristic-systematic perspective. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 67, 101437.
- Yang, M., & Li, Z. (2023). The influence of green human resource management on employees' green innovation behavior: The role of green organizational commitment and knowledge sharing. *Heliyon*, 9(11), e22161.
- Yin, M., Jiang, S., & Niu, X. (2024). Can AI really help? The double-edged sword effect of AI assistant on employees' innovation behavior. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 150, 107987.
- Zhang, W., Zhang, W., & Daim, T. U. (2023). Investigating consumer purchase intention in online social media marketing: A case study of Tiktok. *Technology in Society*, 74, 102289.
- Zhao, L., Yang, W., Wang, Z., Liang, Y., & Zeng, Z. (2024). Long-term safety evaluation of soft rock tunnel structure based on knowledge decision-making and data-driven models. *Computers and Geotechnics*, 169, 106244.
- Zhou, X., Hao, X., Chen, Y., et al. (2024). Social Media Marketing Strategies for Electronic Cigarettes: Content Analysis of Chinese Weibo Accounts. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 26.

Appendix

Questionnaire

An Empirical Study on the Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Purchase Intention-Based on the SOR Theory

Gentlemen/Madams:

Greetings! Thank you very much for participating in this questionnaire. This is a questionnaire for “An Empirical Study of the Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Purchase Intention-Based on the SOR Theory”. Your support and cooperation will facilitate this study in making targeted management recommendations.

Here are three assurances that this study makes to you, so please feel free to fill in the answers:

1. This questionnaire is purely for academic research and does not contain any other illegal use;
2. The questionnaire will be filled in anonymously, and the data will be kept completely confidential and will not be disclosed to the public;
3. Write relevant research papers, reporting only overall trends, not individual data.

All the questions in this questionnaire are not divided into [right] and [wrong]; please read the instructions for each section first, and then judge the questions and choose the corresponding options according to your true feelings.

Thanks again for your co-operation. We wish you good health and success in your endeavors!

Part I: Basic personal information

1. What is your gender?
A. Male B. Female
2. What is your age?
A. <13 years old B. 14-18 years old C. 19-27 years old D. 28-35years old E. 36 years old and above
3. What is your highest level of education?
A. Junior high school and below B. High School C. Bachelor D.Master and Doctor
- 4.What’ s your income (every year/¥)?
A. Above 200000 B.200000-100001C.100000-50001 D.50000-20000 E. 19999

and below

5.How often do you buy a product from social media platform(every year)?

A.< 3 times B. 4-10 times C. 11-20 times D.>20 times

In all the following sections, please compare the degree of compliance between the linguistic description of each sentence and the situation, and put a tick on the corresponding value, with one indicating "Strongly disagree," two indicating "Not quite agree," 3 indicating "Not sure," 4 indicating "Comparatively agree," and five indicating "Strongly agree." One means "strongly disagree," 2 means "not quite agree," 3 means "not sure," 4 means "quite agree," and five means "strongly agree."

Part 2: Each of the following narratives is about social media marketing and consumer purchase intention ; please judge your [level of agreement] with the following behaviors or scenarios by ticking the appropriate numbers.

| No. | Item | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | The social media influencer has a large number of followers on social media platforms. | | | | | |
| 2 | The social media influencer holds a dominant and influential position in the brand's field. | | | | | |
| 3 | The social media influencer has a certain reputation on social networks. | | | | | |
| 4 | The social media influencer is popular on social media platforms. | | | | | |
| 5 | The social media influencer frequently interacts with fans during live streams. | | | | | |
| 6 | I am willing to participate in the social media influencer's live stream interaction. | | | | | |
| 7 | I am willing to watch the social media influencer's interaction with others during live streams. | | | | | |
| 8 | The product offers a high level of value compared to its price. | | | | | |
| 9 | The product provides more benefits than I expected. | | | | | |
| 10 | The product enhances my overall well-being or satisfaction. | | | | | |
| 11 | The social media influencer brings positive impact to their self-created brand. | | | | | |
| 12 | I trust the social media influencer's product information. | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|----|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| 13 | This social media influencer is trustworthy. | | | | | |
| 14 | I believe the product statements and commitments made by the social media influencer's shop. | | | | | |
| 15 | I feel uncertain about the quality of the product. | | | | | |
| 16 | I am concerned that purchasing this product could result in a financial loss. | | | | | |
| 17 | I worry that the product may not meet my expectations. | | | | | |
| 18 | I am unsure whether purchasing the product will lead to social embarrassment. | | | | | |
| 19 | The price I pay is worth the products and services I receive. | | | | | |
| 20 | The social media influencer' s live-streamed products are reliable, with a wide variety and many options. | | | | | |
| 21 | Purchasing the social media influencer' s live-streamed products makes me feel happy. | | | | | |
| 22 | The social media influencer' s live-streamed products are suitable for me to display my inner image. | | | | | |
| 23 | By purchasing the social media influencer' s live-streamed products, I can gain recognition from others. | | | | | |
| 24 | In the near future, I will choose (or continue to choose) to purchase products from this social media influencer's live stream. | | | | | |
| 25 | I am willing to buy products while watching this social media influencer's live stream. | | | | | |
| 26 | I am willing to recommend my friends to watch this social media influencer's live stream or purchase products from their live stream. | | | | | |

This is the end of the questionnaire. Thank you again for your support, and wish you have a nice life!