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UNIVERSITY OF FINANCE – MARKETING

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**THE IMPACT OF HOMOPHILY AND STORYTELLING
IN VIDEO MARKETING ON PURCHASE INTENTION:
THE ROLES OF AFFECTIVE INVOLVEMENT,
PERCEIVED STORY CREDIBILITY, AND PRODUCT TYPE**

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Research problems

Video marketing has become an important tool in modern marketing strategies. According to Wyzowl (2026), the proportion of businesses using video marketing increased from 61% in 2016 to 91% in 2026. In Vietnam, spending on video advertising reached approximately USD 253.8 million in 2024 and is expected to continue increasing in the coming years (Statista, 2024), highlighting the growing importance of video in corporate communication activities. Social media has also become an important channel through which consumers search for information and make purchase decisions. Among these platforms, TikTok is one of the fastest-growing, with 1.562 billion monthly active users worldwide; 44.9% of users use the platform to search for or research brands (We Are Social, 2024a). In Vietnam, TikTok has 67.72 million users who can be reached through advertising, equivalent to 68.3% of the population (We Are Social, 2024b), making it an important platform for businesses to implement video marketing activities. At the same time, storytelling has increasingly been regarded as an effective communication strategy for creating emotional connections, building trust, and increasing consumer engagement (Anaza et al., 2020; Chang, 2025). With its ability to combine images, sound, and motion, video is considered a suitable medium for conveying stories and improving communication effectiveness (Akgün et al., 2015; Luo et al., 2025). Purchase intention is an important indicator for evaluating the effectiveness of video marketing, as it reflects the likelihood of consumers engaging in future purchase behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004). Therefore, examining the factors that influence purchase intention in video marketing is not only academically relevant but also provides a basis for businesses to develop more effective communication strategies.

A review of previous studies shows a growing body of research examining the impact of video on purchase intention, with attention given to various aspects, including video characteristics, content creators, consumer perceptions, trust, emotions, and experiences. However, existing studies have mainly approached the issue through specific video formats or individual components, while the consideration of storytelling as a communication strategy comprising specific dimensions remains limited (Sulestarini et al., 2020). Similarly, although homophily has been established as an important factor in encouraging purchase intention, existing studies have mostly been conducted within individual platforms or countries and have not combined homophily with other communication factors to enhance the explanatory power of the research models (Muda & Hamzah, 2021; Zhang et al., 2024). In addition, previous studies have identified credibility as an important cognitive mechanism explaining the impact of video on purchase intention, but there is still no consensus regarding the object whose credibility is being assessed. Moreover, cognitive and emotional responses have not been sufficiently integrated within the same research model (Javed et al., 2024; Minh et al., 2024). The moderating role of product type has also been examined only in a limited number of relationships and therefore requires further investigation in the context of video marketing (Ding et al., 2025).

Considering the practical use of video marketing by businesses, the importance of examining behavioral intentions, the roles of storytelling and homophily as antecedent factors, the mediating mechanism of credibility, the need to integrate cognitive and emotional responses, and the role of moderating conditions in video marketing communication, this study draws on the S-O-R theory, the ELM, and relevant empirical findings. Accordingly, the study examines the effects of homophily and storytelling in video marketing on consumers' purchase intention, with product type as a moderator and affective involvement and perceived story credibility as mediators.

1.2. Objectives and research questions

1.2.1 Objectives

This study examines the effects of homophily and storytelling in video marketing on consumers' purchase intention, with product type as a moderator and affective involvement and perceived story credibility as mediators. the study thereby contributes to the development of the underlying theoretical perspectives and provides several

managerial implications for businesses and content creators seeking to increase consumers' purchase intention through video marketing communication.

The specific research objectives are as follows:

- (1) To assess the effects of homophily and storytelling on consumers' affective involvement in video marketing communication;
- (2) To assess the effects of homophily and storytelling on perceived story credibility in video marketing communication;
- (3) To assess the effects of affective involvement and perceived story credibility on consumers' purchase intention in video marketing communication;
- (4) To assess the mediating roles of affective involvement and perceived story credibility in the relationships between homophily, storytelling, and consumers' purchase intention in video marketing communication;
- (5) To assess the moderating role of product type in the relationships between storytelling, homophily, and perceived story credibility and affective involvement in video marketing communication;
- (6) To identify the contributions of the research findings to the S-O-R theory and the ELM in explaining the impact of video marketing on purchase intention;
- (7) To propose managerial implications for businesses and content creators to increase consumers' purchase intention through video marketing communication.

1.2.2 Research questions

- (1) How do homophily and storytelling affect consumers' affective involvement in video marketing communication?
- (2) How do homophily and storytelling affect perceived story credibility in video marketing communication?
- (3) How do affective involvement and perceived story credibility affect consumers' purchase intention in video marketing communication?
- (4) Do affective involvement and perceived story credibility mediate the relationships between homophily, storytelling, and consumers' purchase intention in video marketing communication?
- (5) How does product type moderate the relationships between storytelling, homophily, perceived story credibility, and affective involvement in video marketing communication?
- (6) How do the research findings contribute to the development of the S-O-R theory and the ELM in explaining the impact of video marketing on purchase intention?
- (7) What managerial implications can be drawn for businesses and content creators to increase consumers' purchase intention through video marketing communication?

1.3 Research subjects and scope

Research subject: The effects of homophily and storytelling on affective involvement ; the effects of storytelling and homophily on perceived story credibility; the effects of affective involvement and perceived story credibility on purchase intention; and the moderating role of product type in the relationships between storytelling, homophily, perceived story credibility, and affective involvement .

Research period: From 2024 to 2026.

Survey participants: Social media users on the video-based platform TikTok, aged 18 or above, who currently use TikTok, agree to participate in the survey, and have previously watched product-related storytelling videos.

Research platform: The social media platform TikTok. The study selects TikTok as the research setting for four main reasons. First, TikTok has a large and rapidly growing user base, with more than 1.5 billion active users worldwide and approximately 76.1 million users aged 18 and above in Vietnam at the end of 2025 (We Are Social, 2024a; 2025). The platform is also increasingly used to search for product information and support purchase decisions

(We Are Social, 2024a). Second, TikTok focuses primarily on short-form video content and has a high level of user engagement, making it suitable for examining the effects of video on consumer perceptions and behavior (Rizomyliotis et al., 2024; Xiao et al., 2023). Third, the platform provides favorable conditions for brands and creators to integrate products into experience-based, relatable, and emotionally engaging stories, making it appropriate for examining the role of Storytelling in marketing communication (Dao, 2025; Mussa, 2023). Fourth, the TikTok ecosystem connects content interaction with shopping activities through features such as comments, sharing, video saving, live streaming, and in-platform purchasing, thereby providing a suitable setting for examining the formation of consumers' Purchase intention (Xiao et al., 2023; Minh et al., 2024).

Product groups examined: The products are classified into two groups based on their level of involvement: high-involvement and low-involvement products. The groups include: (1) High-involvement products, comprising mobile phones, electronic devices and components; automobiles, motorcycles, spare parts, and related services such as train, bus, and air tickets; and financial and insurance services, including bank cards, credit cards, loans, and investment products; and (2) Low-involvement products, comprising household goods; personal care and beauty products; toys; and food products.

1.4 Research methodology

This study employs a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. The qualitative method is used to refine the measurement scales, while the quantitative method is employed to assess the quality of the measurement scales and test the research hypotheses.

1.5 Significance of the study

1.5.1 Theoretical significance

This study contributes to addressing and further developing several theoretical gaps in the existing literature on the impact of video marketing on purchase intention, as follows:

First, the study introduces storytelling as a form of communication strategy and examines it as a direct antecedent of the effects of video marketing. This helps improve the explanatory power of research on the effectiveness of video marketing communication. In addition, the study approaches homophily with the character in the story, which is consistent with the characteristics of storytelling communication, where the character is central to the process of conveying the message. This perspective helps clarify the role of homophily and broadens the scope of its application across different communication settings.

Second, the study contributes to understanding the mechanisms underlying the effects of video marketing from both cognitive and emotional perspectives. In particular, it examines another dimension of credibility, namely perceived story credibility, reflecting a shift from evaluating the communication source to evaluating the communication message. The study also considers an emotional state involving viewers' connection with and immersion in the emotions conveyed through the video. This perspective is consistent with Storytelling as a communication strategy, in which communication effectiveness is influenced by emotional connection.

Third, the study specifies the role of involvement by examining two groups of products rather than assessing involvement in general or focusing on only one or several specific products. This approach helps clarify the role of involvement as an information filter in shaping consumers' information processing. Existing studies have examined both product type and involvement as factors explaining differences in the effectiveness of communication on Purchase intention. However, the findings remain inconsistent across studies, and these two research directions have largely developed independently. Examining product type based on involvement not only builds on the role of involvement in information processing but also incorporates product characteristics to identify the conditions under which video Storytelling is more effective. In this way, the study provides a more specific perspective on involvement by clarifying the effectiveness of video marketing for products with high and low levels of involvement..

1.5.2 Practical Significance

This study provides a basis for businesses and content creators to develop video marketing communication strategies aimed at increasing consumers' purchase intention. The findings suggest that businesses should pay particular attention to storytelling, including story development, character selection, images, and sound, while combining product information with content that is authentic, coherent, and relevant to consumers to enhance affective involvement and perceived story credibility. Accordingly, marketing managers and content creators can refine their communication strategies by designing storytelling and selecting communicators in ways that are appropriate to their communication objectives. At the same time, the study provides a basis for businesses to consider adjusting their strategies across product groups; specifically, when the objective is to enhance perceived story credibility, greater emphasis can be placed on storytelling for low-involvement products and homophily for high-involvement products. However, such adjustments may not be necessary when the communication objective is to create affective involvement.

1.6 Structure of the dissertation

The dissertation is structured into five chapters as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Theoretical background and research model

Chapter 3: Research methodology

Chapter 4: Research findings and discussion

Chapter 5: Conclusions and contributions of the study

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH MODEL

2.1 Related concepts

Video marketing: Refers to the process of using video to communicate about a brand, product, or service. Businesses can use video at any stage of the customer journey (Wyzowl, 2026).

Storytelling: From the perspective of the information sender, storytelling refers to the process of sharing knowledge, experiences, or experiential values in a narrative form, making the content easier for recipients to understand and remember (Kim et al., 2020). From the perspective of the information recipient, storytelling refers to the extent to which recipients are attracted by the way a story is told (Mao & Li, 2022). This study adopts the perspective of Kim et al. (2020) to identify communication content that uses storytelling and the perspective of Mao and Li (2022) to assess the recipient's perspective.

Product storytelling video: Refers to a form of product storytelling that uses video to present information, with the content designed to create an emotional connection with the audience through storytelling (Roy, 2025). Based on the storytelling structure proposed by Escalas (2003), a product storytelling video follows a structure comprising: (1) Temporal sequence: events in the story unfold with a beginning, development, and ending; and (2) Causal relationships: events in the story are connected through cause-and-effect relationships.

Components of storytelling: This study approaches the measurement of storytelling as a second-order construct using the reflective-formative model proposed by Li et al. (2025). Accordingly, storytelling comprises eight components: character attractiveness, story interestingness, character sincerity, story coherence, information richness, image clarity, communication fluency, and sound effects.

Homophily: This study adopts the perspective proposed by McCroskey et al. (1975) and extended by Muda and Hamzah (2021) in the digital context. Homophily refers to attitudinal homophily and reflects the perceived homophily in interests, viewpoints, and experiences shared by a source, where the source is the person who provides the information. To identify the specific target of homophily, this study follows the approach of Li et al. (2025) in

storytelling communication and focuses on the character who appears directly in the video. Thus, the source in this study refers to the characters who directly convey information and appear in the product storytelling video.

Affective involvement : Crespo et al. (2022) suggest that affective involvement reflects the extent to which an individual perceives a message as relevant to them based on the fit between the emotional appeal of the message and their self-image, thereby connecting their emotions with those conveyed by the message. Emotion is not limited to the recipient's emotional state but also involves becoming immersed in the emotions conveyed by the message (Zaichkowsky, 1994).

Perceived story credibility: Chang (2025) defines story credibility as the extent to which recipients perceive a story as authentic and trustworthy and considers it an important component determining the effectiveness of storytelling communication. Building on these perspectives, this study conceptualizes perceived story credibility as the extent to which consumers perceive the story presented in the video as authentic and trustworthy overall.

Product classification: Based on the classification approaches of Cheong and Cheong (2020) and Petty and Cacioppo (1986), combined with the product classification used by FastMoss (n.d.) for TikTok data analytics, this study divides products into two groups according to their level of involvement: high-involvement and low-involvement products. (1) High-involvement products include mobile phones, electronic devices and components; automobiles, motorcycles, spare parts, and related services such as train, bus, and air tickets; and financial and insurance services, including bank cards, credit cards, loans, and investment products. (2) Low-involvement products include household goods; personal care and beauty products; toys; and food products.

Purchase intention: According to Schiffman and Kanuk (2004), Purchase intention refers to the likelihood that consumers will engage in a purchase behavior toward a particular product. From a behavioral psychology perspective, Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) argue that behavioral intention is a central factor and a reliable indicator of actual behavior. Purchase intention reflects not only a temporary psychological state but also a behavioral tendency based on an overall evaluation of the product (Chang, 2025).

2.2 Theoretical Foundations of the Study

This study adopts the S-O-R theory to establish the overall structure of the research model and the ELM to provide a more detailed explanation of the relationships among the components of the model. Specifically:

Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) theory: The S-O-R theory was proposed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974) in the field of environmental psychology to explain individual behavior in response to environmental stimuli. The S-O-R theory is adopted as the overarching analytical framework for identifying the components of the research model. Specifically, the stimuli include Storytelling and Homophily, the organism comprises affective involvement and perceived story credibility, and the behavioral response is Purchase intention.

Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM): The ELM was developed by Petty and Cacioppo (1986) to explain how individuals process information and form attitudes when exposed to persuasive messages, and why the same persuasive message may lead to different outcomes. In this study, the ELM is applied to provide a more detailed explanation of how the organism components generate cognitive and emotional responses that subsequently shape purchase intention through two persuasion routes, as well as how involvement moderates these relationships across two groups of products with high and low levels of involvement.

2.3 Review of studies on the impact of video on purchase intention

The purpose of this step is to provide an overall picture of existing research, identify the limitations that remain, and examine the directions suggested for future research, thereby establishing a basis for identifying the research gaps. This process was conducted using a systematic review method based on the guidelines proposed by Khan et al. (2003), which were integrated with the PRISMA guidelines and consisted of five steps: (1) Identifying the review objectives; (2) Searching for relevant studies; (3) Assessing and screening the relevant studies; (4)

Extracting data; and (5) Analyzing and reporting the review findings. The review results show that existing studies on the impact of video on Purchase intention have focused on six main groups of components, including:

(1) *Video information*: This group includes components related to information characteristics, information formats, and information content, which have been shown to play an important role in shaping purchase intention. In particular, information characteristics contribute to increasing consumers' perceptions and forming their attitudes toward video content, thereby enhancing purchase intention. These characteristics include completeness, timeliness, and credibility (Ding et al., 2025; Trivedi et al., 2020), as well as diversity, coherence, emotionality, and practicality (Hu et al., 2025). Different information formats have also been found to significantly increase purchase intention, including digital advertising videos (Stewart et al., 2019), videos containing QR codes, and virtual reality formats (Brand, 2025; Leung et al., 2020). Video content has likewise been shown to influence purchase intention, including tourism information (Chudamani et al., 2024), product review information (Stewart et al., 2019), and brand-related information (Lee et al., 2024a). However, information about free trials was found to have no significant effect on purchase intention (Wang et al., 2023).

(2) *Viewer perceptions*: This group includes components that reflect how viewers perceive and evaluate information, content creators, and platforms in relation to their purchase intention. Previous studies have examined various dimensions of viewer perceptions, such as perceived homophily with the brand (Holmes, 2021), perceived homophily with the source (Muda & Hamzah, 2021), perceptions of different aspects of content creators (Shen & Wang, 2024), and perceived usefulness and ease of use (Ngo et al., 2025). These components have generally been found to have positive effects on purchase intention. However, some perceptual factors have been shown to negatively affect purchase intention, such as perceived paid advertising (Hewei, 2022) and perceived value and cost (Wang et al., 2023), while perceived social presence has been found to have no significant effect on purchase intention (Jiang & Chen, 2025). Viewer perceptions have also been examined as key mediating factors that reflect how viewers receive, process, and interpret information from videos, content creators, or technical features. These perceptions encompass various aspects, including perceived homophily, value, and cost (Chudamani et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2023), credibility (Elhajjar & Itani, 2025), and product involvement (Yin et al., 2024).

(3) *Content creators*: Most factors related to content creators, including streamers, bloggers, hosts, and influencers, have been found to significantly influence Purchase intention. These factors include homophily and connectedness with viewers (Zhang et al., 2024; Su et al., 2022); demographic characteristics, physical appearance, voice, and level of self-disclosure (Elhajjar & Itani, 2025; Su et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2024); as well as responsiveness, humor appeal, and social appeal (Shen & Wang, 2024; Lee & Watkins, 2016). However, recognizing the advertising intentions of content creators reduces the effect of emotional attachment on purchase intention (Zhang et al., 2024). In addition, non-influencer content creators have been found to have higher credibility than influencers (Elhajjar & Itani, 2025), while no significant difference has been found between virtual and human streamers in increasing Purchase intention (Yan et al., 2024).

(4) *Video techniques*: A wide range of technical aspects has been examined, including timing and advertising duration (Lin et al., 2023; Holmes, 2021), video quality (Gu et al., 2022; Sang et al., 2024), visibility and information recommendations (Yin et al., 2024), advertising placement (Lee et al., 2024b), color, lighting, sound, and visual elements (Chen et al., 2022; Kang et al., 2020), advertising format (Wang & Huang, 2022), interactive presentation format (Yi et al., 2015), and interactivity (Stewart et al., 2019). These components have generally been confirmed to have positive effects on purchase intention.

(5) *Emotions, experiences, and interactions*: This group refers to factors associated with viewers' experience while watching videos, including the formation of emotions and satisfaction. In particular, viewers' emotional states and enjoyment (Tzafilkou et al., 2023; Wu & Chen, 2024); social presence, parasocial interaction, and interactive

narration (Huang et al., 2022; Yin et al., 2023; Yin et al., 2024); and experiential feelings associated with the need for imagination (Sulestarini et al., 2020) have made significant contributions to explaining Purchase intention. However, some factors have not been found to have a direct effect on purchase intention, including immersion tendency and emotional engagement (Lee et al., 2020), uses and gratifications, and social presence (Jiang & Chen, 2025).

(6) *Trust and attitudes*: This group mainly comprises mediating factors that reflect viewers' evaluations of trust and their responses when exposed to video communication. Key components include trust in information, products, and information sources (Ding et al., 2025; Muda & Hamzah, 2021), as well as attitudes toward videos, advertisements, websites, and content creators (Trivedi et al., 2020; Sulestarini et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2020). These factors can have direct effects on purchase intention while also serving as mediating mechanisms through which information, content creators, video techniques, and other factors influence viewers' purchase intention.

2.4 Identification of research gaps

The review of studies on the impact of video on purchase intention reveals several important gaps that require further investigation to broaden the scope of application and clarify the underlying mechanisms. This study focuses on three main research gaps.

First, although many studies have established the role of video in influencing consumers' purchase intention, existing research has mainly focused on the characteristics of specific video formats, such as advertising videos, short-form videos, livestreaming, and virtual reality videos, together with information factors, characteristics of communicators, and message presentation formats (Stewart et al., 2019; Huang et al., 2022; Ding et al., 2025). According to Luo et al. (2025), these types of video primarily reflect differences in communication formats, whereas video effectiveness also depends on the communication strategies embedded within the content. Storytelling, in particular, is considered a strategy that can increase attention, create emotional resonance, and enhance the persuasiveness of messages (Luo et al., 2025; Dao, 2025). However, research examining the role of storytelling in video marketing communication remains limited. Although some studies have addressed aspects of storytelling or narration, such as interactive narration, narrative structure, and narrative transportation (Gu et al., 2022; Wang & Huang, 2022; Sulestarini et al., 2020), these studies have mainly treated such elements as characteristics of communication content, compared different types of stories or storytelling formats (Kim et al., 2024; Reyes & Abad, 2026), or examined storytelling through entertainment, attractiveness, and usefulness while making products appear more natural and authentic in videos (Dao, 2025). Therefore, the role of storytelling as a direct antecedent in the formation of purchase intention from video content has not yet been fully explored. At the same time, previous research suggests that storytelling can enhance empathy, activate emotions, change beliefs, and encourage positive consumer behavioral responses (Farivar & Wang, 2022; Lee et al., 2024). Video is also considered a communication format that can present stories in a vivid and comprehensive manner through the combination of images, sound, and motion (Akgün et al., 2015). Although storytelling has been studied across various fields and forms of communication, studies directly examining its role in video marketing communication and consumers' purchase intention remain limited. Therefore, further research is needed to examine storytelling as a direct antecedent in the process through which video influences consumers' purchase intention.

Second, existing studies have approached credibility from different perspectives, including influencer credibility, source credibility, content credibility, perceived credibility, and credibility of reviews presented in videos (Saima & Khan, 2021; Penttinen et al., 2022; Brand & Reith, 2022; Javed et al., 2024). Although these studies consistently highlight the important role of credibility in shaping attitudes and purchase intention, the dimensions examined have primarily focused on the communicator or the information being conveyed. Moreover, the mechanisms through which credibility influences consumer responses remain inconsistent across studies and reflect

only certain aspects of the broader concept (Javed et al., 2024). In storytelling communication, credibility does not arise solely from the storyteller or individual pieces of information but is also associated with the authenticity, consistency, and trustworthiness of the story as a whole (Wathen & Burkell, 2002). Recent studies suggest that story credibility plays an important role in building trust, increasing recipient engagement, and encouraging positive behavioral responses (Simmons, 2019; Chang, 2025). However, research on credibility in video marketing communication has continued to focus mainly on the source or information content, while the credibility of the story itself has received limited attention. Although Mao and Li (2022) addressed credibility in relation to storytelling, their study focused only on written storytelling reviews in the healthcare service context and therefore does not capture the characteristics of product storytelling videos. Accordingly, a research gap remains regarding the examination of perceived story credibility as a mechanism explaining the effect of video marketing communication on consumers' purchase intention.

Third, a theoretical gap remains concerning the moderating role of product type based on involvement. previous studies indicate that both product type and involvement can moderate the effectiveness of communication on Purchase intention, but their findings remain inconsistent. While Lin et al. (2012) and Li and Meshkova (2013) found that the moderating role of product type varies according to the form of communication, Ding et al. (2025) and Javed et al. (2024) also reported different findings regarding the effect of involvement based on the ELM. At the same time, these two research streams have remained relatively separate: research on product type has primarily focused on product characteristics, whereas research on involvement has emphasized consumers' information-processing processes. In the context of storytelling communication, some studies suggest that the effectiveness of storytelling may vary across product types (Shruthi & Sathish, 2024; Dias & Cavaleiro, 2022; Yang & Kang, 2021), but these propositions have not yet been tested in video marketing communication. Therefore, a gap remains in assessing the moderating role of product type based on involvement in the relationship between video storytelling and purchase intention, thereby clarifying whether the effectiveness of storytelling videos differs between products with high and low levels of involvement.

2.5 Hypothesis development and research model

Based on the theoretical foundations of the S-O-R theory and the ELM, the findings of previous studies, and the study's contributions toward addressing the research gaps identified above, this study proposes the following hypotheses and research model:

- H1: Storytelling has a positive effect on consumers' affective involvement .
- H2: Homophily has a positive effect on consumers' affective involvement .
- H3: Storytelling has a positive effect on perceived story credibility.
- H4: Homophily has a positive effect on perceived story credibility.
- H5: Affective involvement has a positive effect on purchase intention.
- H6: Perceived story credibility has a positive effect on purchase intention.
- H7a: Product type moderates the relationship between storytelling and affective involvement .
- H7b: Product type moderates the relationship between storytelling and perceived story credibility.
- H7c: Product type moderates the relationship between homophily and affective involvement .
- H7d: Product type moderates the relationship between homophily and perceived story credibility.
- H8: Affective involvement mediates the relationship between homophily and purchase intention.
- H9: Affective involvement mediates the relationship between storytelling and purchase intention.
- H10: Perceived story credibility mediates the relationship between homophily and purchase intention.
- H11: Perceived story credibility mediates the relationship between storytelling and purchase intention.

Based on the synthesis of the proposed hypotheses, the research model is presented as follows:

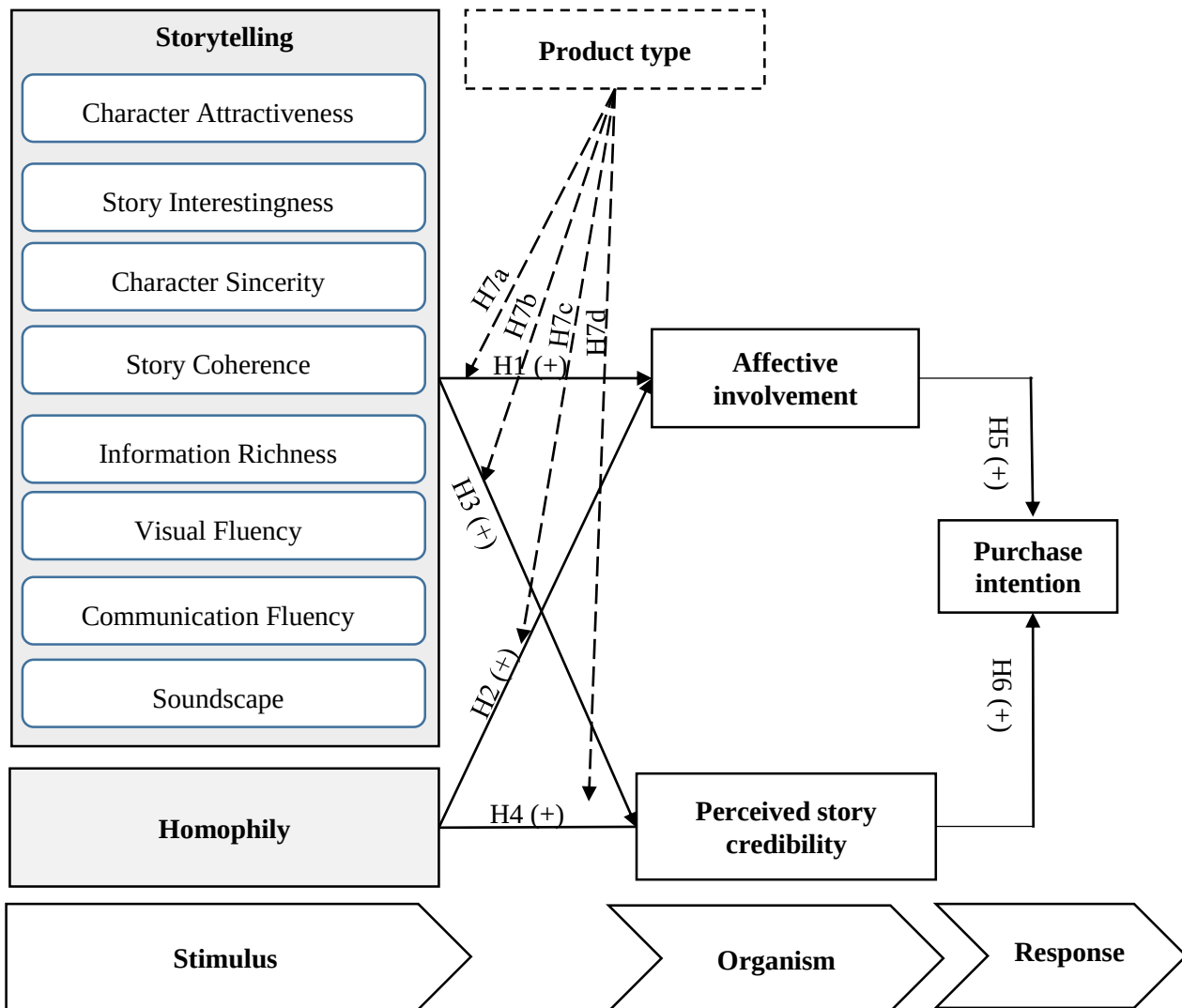


Figure 2.1: Proposed Research Model

Source: Author's proposal, 2025

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN

This study employs a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. The qualitative method is used to refine the measurement scales in terms of conceptual meaning, wording, research context, target respondents, and the clarity and comprehensibility of the items. The quantitative method serves as the primary approach for testing the research hypotheses.

The research process consists of five stages: (1) identifying the research problem and developing the research model; (2) identifying and refining the measurement scales; (3) conducting a preliminary quantitative study; (4) conducting the main quantitative study; and (5) discussing the findings and identifying the study's contributions. The details are presented below:

3.1 Identifying the research problem and developing the research model

Based on an analysis of the practical development of video marketing and the research context concerning the impact of video on purchase intention, the research gaps were identified. Drawing on the S-O-R theory, the ELM, and relevant prior studies, the author developed the research hypotheses and proposed a model examining the effects of Homophily and Storytelling in videos on consumers' Purchase intention, with Affective involvement and Perceived story credibility as mediators and Product type as a moderator.

3.2 Identifying and refining the measurement scales

After being adopted from previous studies, the measurement scales were translated using a back-translation procedure to ensure that the adapted items retained their original meaning in the source language (English). The scales were then assessed in terms of semantic appropriateness, research context, target respondents, and conceptual meaning through in-depth interviews with seven experts. Subsequently, the scales were evaluated for clarity and comprehensibility through a pretest involving eight respondents with characteristics similar to those of the target population. The results were consolidated and used as the basis for refining the measurement scales.

3.3 Preliminary quantitative study

This stage was conducted to assess the quality of the measurement scales. Primary data were collected through an online questionnaire using a Google Forms survey link and analyzed with SmartPLS 4.1.0.0. The assessment covered the measurement models for reflective latent variables, as well as the higher-order constructs and second-order construct. The preliminary quantitative results indicated that all indicators in the reflective measurement models and the measurement model of the second-order construct achieved acceptable reliability and convergent validity, as well as discriminant validity.

3.4 Main quantitative study

This stage was conducted to test the research hypotheses. Primary data were collected online through a Google Forms survey link from TikTok users aged 18 or above who agreed to participate in the survey and had previously watched product storytelling videos. After collection, the data were screened, coded, and analyzed using PLS-SEM in SmartPLS 4.1.0.0. The analysis included the assessment of the measurement model, structural model, and moderating effects.

3.5 Discussing the findings and identifying the study's contributions

Based on the results obtained in Stage 4, the author discussed the findings by identifying similarities and differences between the results and those of previous studies, as well as highlighting the study's new findings. These findings were then used to identify the study's theoretical contributions to strengthening and extending understanding of the impact of video on consumers' Purchase intention. In addition, the study proposes several managerial implications for marketing managers and content creators regarding video content design, the selection of appropriate Storytelling approaches, and the use of Homophily to enhance consumers' Purchase intention through video marketing communication.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Characteristics of the research sample

The survey yielded 659 responses. After screening out invalid questionnaires, including respondents under 18 years old, those who did not agree to participate, those who had never watched product storytelling videos, and those who selected the same response option for all questions, 564 valid responses remained, representing 85.58% of the total responses. This sample size exceeds the recommended minimum of 282 observations. Therefore, the sample size was considered sufficient for the subsequent analysis.

The sample consisted predominantly of younger TikTok users, with respondents aged 18–24 accounting for 42.91% and those aged 25–35 accounting for 34.40%. Female respondents represented 54.79% of the sample, compared with 45.21% for males. In terms of income, respondents earning below VND 5 million and those earning VND 5–10 million accounted for the largest proportions. Students (35.64%) and office workers (32.45%) were the two main occupational groups, while 75.18% of respondents held a university degree.

Most participants used TikTok for both entertainment and shopping purposes (68.62%) and accessed the platform daily or 4–6 days per week (89.54%). In terms of purchasing behavior, 93.26% reported making purchases on TikTok fewer than five times per month. Regarding product type, product storytelling videos featuring low-involvement products accounted for 61.88% of the sample, compared with 38.12% for high-involvement products. Overall, the sample structure was relatively consistent with the characteristics of TikTok users in Vietnam, particularly the predominance of younger users with relatively frequent platform use and shopping experience.

4.2 Common method bias assessment

Because the data were collected through self-reported measures from the same respondents at a single point in time, the study applied several procedural remedies to control for common method bias (CMB), following Podsakoff et al. (2003). These measures included refining the measurement scales through qualitative and preliminary studies, ensuring respondent confidentiality, randomizing the order in which statements were presented, and displaying the survey progress.

In addition, Harman's one-factor test was conducted. The results showed that the single factor accounted for 38.11% of the total variance, which was below the 50% threshold. Therefore, CMB was not considered a serious concern in the research data.

4.3 Assessment of the measurement model

4.3.1 Assessment of the measurement model for reflective constructs

The measurement model comprises four reflective latent constructs: affective involvement, perceived story credibility, homophily, and purchase intention. The assessment of these constructs aims to examine the reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of the measurement scales. The assessment includes outer loadings, composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), and the heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT).

The results show that all observed variables for the four reflective latent constructs have outer loadings ranging from 0.756 to 0.842, while the composite reliability values range from 0.770 to 0.829, all exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. The AVE values range from 0.631 to 0.795, also exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.50. Therefore, the measurement scales demonstrate satisfactory reliability and convergent validity according to the criteria proposed by Hair et al. (2022).

The HTMT values among the reflective latent constructs range from 0.810 to 0.897. Three pairs of constructs have HTMT values below 0.85. The other three pairs have HTMT = 0.852, HTMT = 0.897, and HTMT = 0.852 slightly exceed the more stringent threshold of 0.85 suggested by Henseler et al. (2016), but remain below 0.90, which is considered acceptable according to Hair et al. (2022). To provide additional evidence of discriminant validity, the Fornell–Larcker criterion was also assessed. The results indicate that the square root of the AVE for each construct is greater than its correlations with the other constructs, satisfying the criterion proposed by Fornell and Larcker (1981). Therefore, the measurement scales demonstrate adequate discriminant validity.

4.3.2 Assessment of the higher-order measurement model

In the research model, storytelling is specified as a second-order construct with a reflective–formative measurement specification. Therefore, a two-stage approach using the latent variable score method was employed to assess the quality of the higher-order measurement model.

In the first stage, the measurement model included eight first-order dimensions: character attractiveness, story interestingness, character sincerity, story coherence, information richness, image clarity, communication fluency, and sound effects. The measurement model for these first-order dimensions was then assessed. In the second stage, the latent variable scores of these eight dimensions were used as indicators of the second-order formative construct, followed by an assessment of the measurement model for the higher-order construct..

4.3.3 Assessment of the measurement model for the component dimensions

Since the component dimensions of storytelling are specified as reflective latent constructs, their measurement models were assessed using outer loadings, composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), and HTMT. The results show that all observed variables across the component dimensions have outer loadings ranging from 0.719 to 0.845. The composite reliability values range from 0.726 to 0.822, all exceeding 0.70, while the AVE values range from 0.582 to 0.687, all above 0.50. Accordingly, the measurement scales for all eight dimensions demonstrate satisfactory reliability and convergent validity based on the criteria proposed by Hair et al. (2022). The HTMT values among the component dimensions range from 0.590 to 0.860, with most pairs having HTMT values below 0.85. One pair has HTMT = 0.860, exceeds the stringent threshold of 0.85 suggested by Henseler et al. (2016), but remains below 0.90, which is considered acceptable according to Hair et al. (2022). Therefore, all component dimensions can be considered to demonstrate adequate discriminant validity.

Overall, the outer loading, CR, AVE, and HTMT values meet the recommended thresholds. The measurement scales for the component dimensions of Storytelling therefore achieve satisfactory reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity, allowing the assessment of the higher-order measurement model to proceed.

4.3.4 Assessment of the higher-order measurement model

The second-order construct Storytelling is specified as a formative construct measured by the scores of its eight component dimensions. The assessment of this measurement model involves evaluating convergent validity through redundancy analysis, examining multicollinearity, and assessing the statistical significance of the outer weights and outer loadings.

The second-order formative construct is represented by Kechuyen-second-order, while Kechuyen_global item is a single-item global measure. The results show that the path coefficient from Kechuyen-second-order to Kechuyen_global item is 0.783 (> 0.70), with an R^2 value of 0.613 (> 0.50). These results provide evidence of convergent validity for the second-order formative construct of Storytelling; The results also indicate that the VIF values for the eight component dimensions range from 1.716 to 2.474, all below 3. Therefore, there is no evidence of problematic multicollinearity among the components forming the second-order construct; The Bootstrapping results show that most outer weights are statistically significant, with p-values below 0.05. For two components, namely sound effects and information richness, the outer weights are not statistically significant. However, their outer loadings are both above 0.50. Thus, all eight components of Storytelling demonstrate sufficient relative and absolute importance and are retained in the research model.

4.4 Assessment of the structural model

The structural model was assessed following the guidelines of Hair et al. (2022), including: (1) assessing multicollinearity (VIF); (2) assessing the statistical significance and magnitude of the path coefficients; (3) assessing the coefficient of determination (R^2); (4) assessing the effect size (f^2) of the exogenous constructs; and (5) assessing predictive accuracy (Q^2). The main results of the structural model assessment are summarized below.

4.4.1 Assessment of multicollinearity

The results show that all Inner VIF values range from 1.687 to 1.990, which are below the threshold of 3. Therefore, there is no evidence of substantial multicollinearity among the exogenous latent constructs in the structural model.

4.4.2 Assessment of the statistical significance and magnitude of the path coefficients

The research model includes hypotheses concerning direct, mediating, and moderating relationships. The hypothesis testing procedures and results are presented below.

4.4.2.1 Assessment of direct effects

The results show that all 95% confidence intervals (CI 2.5%–97.5%) for the path coefficients do not include zero, indicating that all direct effects are statistically significant at the 5% level. All hypotheses concerning the direct relationships among the constructs in the research model are supported, with p-values of 0.000 (< 0.05). Specifically, Storytelling has positive effects on affective involvement ($\beta = 0.587$) and Perceived story credibility ($\beta = 0.274$). The effect of storytelling on affective involvement is considerably stronger, suggesting that emotional connection represents a particularly prominent pathway through which storytelling content influences consumers. Homophily also has positive effects on affective involvement ($\beta = 0.257$) and perceived story credibility ($\beta = 0.524$). This result indicates that homophily contributes more strongly to consumers' perceptions of story credibility than to their emotional responses. In addition, both affective involvement ($\beta = 0.444$) and perceived story credibility ($\beta = 0.373$) have positive effects on purchase intention. Affective involvement has the stronger effect, indicating that eliciting emotional responses plays a relatively more important role in encouraging consumers' Purchase intention.

4.4.2.2 Assessment of Mediating Effects

The Bootstrapping results show that all indirect effects are statistically significant, with the 95% confidence intervals (CI 2.5%–97.5%) not containing zero and p-values < 0.05 . Specifically, storytelling has an indirect effect on purchase intention through perceived story credibility ($\beta = 0.102$) and affective involvement ($\beta = 0.260$), with the effect through affective involvement being stronger. Similarly, homophily has an indirect effect on purchase intention through perceived story credibility ($\beta = 0.195$) and affective involvement ($\beta = 0.114$), with the pathway through perceived story credibility being stronger.

To determine the nature of the mediating effects based on Zhao et al. (2010), this study additionally included direct paths from storytelling and homophily to purchase intention in the testing process. These paths were not included in the original hypothesized model but were added to determine the type of mediation based on the statistical significance of the regression coefficients rather than the magnitude of the beta coefficients. The results show that all four indirect effects are statistically significant. At the same time, the direct effects of storytelling ($\beta = 0.319$; $p < 0.001$) and homophily ($\beta = 0.221$; $p < 0.001$) on purchase intention remain statistically significant. According to Zhao et al. (2010), when both the direct and indirect effects are statistically significant and have the same direction, the mediating variable is classified as complementary mediation. Therefore, perceived story credibility and affective involvement both play complementary mediating roles in the relationships between storytelling, homophily, and purchase intention. This finding indicates that perceived story credibility and affective involvement explain only part of the mechanisms through which storytelling and homophily influence purchase intention, rather than fully explaining these relationships. Thus, storytelling and homophily not only enhance purchase intention by increasing perceived story credibility and affective involvement, but may also influence purchase intention through other mechanisms not examined in the research model. Accordingly, perceived story credibility and affective involvement represent important psychological mechanisms, but they are not the only mechanisms explaining the effects of storytelling and homophily on purchase intention.

4.4.2.3 Assessment of Moderating Effects

Product type is a categorical variable; therefore, its moderating role was assessed using the Multi-Group Analysis (MGA) procedure. Product type was divided into two groups: highly relevant products (lienquancao) and low-involvement products (lienquanthap). Before conducting the MGA, measurement invariance was assessed using the Measurement Invariance of Composite Models (MICOM) procedure proposed by Henseler et al. (2016), which consists of three steps: (1) Assessment of configural invariance; (2) Assessment of compositional invariance; and (3) Assessment of equality of composite means and variances. Only Steps 1 and 2 need to be established to allow comparisons of path coefficients between groups.

At Step 1, the measurement indicators for the constructs in the two models representing highly relevant and low-involvement product groups were processed using the same data-preprocessing procedures. The algorithm settings for the permutation test in Step 2 were also identical, with 5,000 permutations, a two-tailed test, and a 5% significance level. Thus, the models for the two groups achieved configural invariance, allowing the analysis to proceed to Step 2. The permutation test results in Step 2 show that the estimates obtained from the original data do not differ significantly from the permutation distributions, with p-values ranging from 0.103 to 0.864, all of which are greater than 0.05. Therefore, compositional invariance was also established, satisfying the requirements for comparing path coefficients between the two groups.

The MGA results assessing the moderating role of product type (1= high – involvement, 2= low – involvement) across the four hypotheses indicate significant differences in the effects between the highly relevant and low-involvement product groups for some relationships in the model. The MGA results show that product type moderates two relationships. Specifically, product type moderates the relationship between storytelling and purchase intention (H7b: $p = 0.004$), with a stronger effect for low-involvement products; and moderates the relationship between homophily and purchase intention (H7d: $p = 0.019$), with a stronger effect for highly relevant products. In contrast, product type does not moderate the relationship between storytelling and affective involvement (H7a: $p = 0.074$) or between homophily and affective involvement (H7c: $p = 0.226$). Thus, H7b and H7d are supported, whereas H7a and H7c are not supported.

4.4.3 Assessment of the coefficient of determination

The results show that the R^2 value for purchase intention is 0.548, indicating that the independent variables in the model explain 54.8% of the variance in purchase intention. The R^2 values for affective involvement and perceived story credibility are 0.623 and 0.552, respectively, corresponding to 62.3% and 55.2% of the variance explained in these two constructs. The adjusted R^2 values are relatively close to the corresponding R^2 values, indicating that the model is stable and is not substantially affected by the number of independent variables. Thus, the R^2 and adjusted R^2 values indicate that the research model has a substantial explanatory power for the endogenous constructs.

4.4.4 Assessment of the effect size of the independent variables

The results indicate that the effect sizes of the independent variables range from low to high. Specifically, the relationship between storytelling and affective involvement ($f^2 = 0.459$) has a large effect size, indicating that storytelling plays an important role in creating emotional connections with viewers. Three relationships—homophily and perceived story credibility ($f^2 = 0.307$), affective involvement and purchase intention ($f^2 = 0.258$), and perceived story credibility and purchase intention ($f^2 = 0.183$)—have medium effect sizes, reflecting the substantial roles of these variables in the research model. The relationships between storytelling and perceived story credibility ($f^2 = 0.084$) and between homophily and affective involvement ($f^2 = 0.088$) have small effect sizes. This indicates that although these relationships are statistically significant, their contributions to the explanatory power of the model are relatively limited.

4.4.5 Assessment of predictive accuracy

The results of the Q^2 assessment show that all endogenous constructs have Q^2 values greater than zero, including affective involvement ($Q^2 = 0.386$), perceived story credibility ($Q^2 = 0.371$), and purchase intention ($Q^2 = 0.332$). According to Hair et al. (2022), these results indicate that the model has predictive relevance for all endogenous constructs, with a moderate level of predictive power. Among these constructs, the model demonstrates the highest predictive capability for affective involvement, followed by perceived story credibility and purchase intention, thereby confirming the predictive relevance of the research model.

4.5 Consumers' evaluation of the research constructs

The descriptive statistics show that all constructs in the research model received relatively high evaluations from respondents, with mean values ranging from 3.9849 to 4.1939 on a five-point scale. Among the components of storytelling in videos, communication fluency received the highest mean score (Mean = 4.1939; SD = 0.66270), followed by sound effects (Mean = 4.1909; SD = 0.68189), character attractiveness (Mean = 4.1826; SD = 0.61438), information richness (Mean = 4.1407; SD = 0.65646), story coherence (Mean = 4.1330; SD = 0.62390), image clarity (Mean = 4.1330; SD = 0.70175), and character sincerity (Mean = 4.1005; SD = 0.66885). Meanwhile, story interestingness had the lowest mean score (Mean = 3.9849; SD = 0.67776), although it remained above the neutral point of the scale.

Affective involvement had a mean score of 4.1272 (SD = 0.66345), purchase intention reached 4.1263 (SD = 0.66261), homophily was 4.0293 (SD = 0.73303), and perceived story credibility was 3.9988 (SD = 0.71329). At the same time, the standard deviations of all constructs were below 1, indicating relatively low dispersion in respondents' evaluations and a considerable degree of consistency in their perceptions of the research constructs. Overall, these results indicate that consumers tend to evaluate the constructs within the research model favorably. However, the mean scores have not reached the maximum value of the scale (5), suggesting that consumers' perceptions of these factors can still be improved. Therefore, businesses should continue to enhance the quality of video content and storytelling, while strengthening homophily, perceived story credibility, and affective involvement among viewers in order to increase consumers' purchase intention.

4.6 Discussion of research findings

This study examines the role of storytelling in videos and the effect of homophily on purchase intention through the mediating mechanisms of affective involvement and perceived story credibility, while also investigating the moderating role of product type in these relationships. This section discusses the findings in relation to previous studies addressing the relationships examined in the research model. Specifically:

4.6.1 Effect of storytelling on affective involvement

The finding that storytelling in video marketing has a significant effect on affective involvement extends the findings of Hu et al. (2025), who demonstrated that exposure to peripheral cues can generate emotional responses through the peripheral route of the ELM. This result also provides another perspective on the role of video as an important stimulus within the S-O-R framework in generating viewers' emotional responses, complementing previous research that has focused on visual aesthetics, content quality, or the overall characteristics of advertising videos as stimuli (Lu et al., 2024; Wen et al., 2024).

Compared with other forms of communication, this finding is consistent with Zhang and Ramayah (2024), who argued that storytelling in communication generally functions as an effective mechanism for triggering emotional responses. It is also consistent with Li et al. (2019), who suggested that storytelling can strongly influence consumers' emotions and personal values through narrative structures. A well-developed story can evoke changes in consumers' emotional or cognitive states, thereby increasing empathy and positive audience responses. Similarly, Escalas (2004) argued that highly narrative stories tend to evoke emotions naturally. The present finding further reinforces the central role of stories in engaging consumers emotionally, as emphasized by Garczarek-Bak et al. (2024).

The finding of this study, particularly in the context of product storytelling, also provides a complementary perspective to Crespo et al. (2022), who highlighted another dimension of storytelling, namely narrative structure, as contributing to affective involvement in brand storytelling. It is also consistent with Kühn and Boshoff (2021) in their study of brand stories, which argued that when a story is presented in an engaging manner, it not only attracts and

inspires consumers but also harmoniously combines rational and emotional elements, enabling consumers to perceive a personal connection with the product or brand.

4.6.2 Effect of homophily on affective involvement

The results show that homophily with characters appearing in videos has a positive effect on affective involvement. This finding further supports the argument of Zhang et al. (2021) that homophily functions as a stimulus that fosters consumers' emotional connections with content creators. It also confirms that homophily is an important stimulus within the S-O-R framework for developing emotional connections with endorsers and products.

However, while Zhang et al. (2024) emphasized the effect of homophily with information creators, suggesting that when consumers perceive similarities with content creators in terms of values, attitudes, or experiences, they tend to develop stronger feelings of attachment and empathy toward them, the present study focuses on viewers on a platform that combines entertainment and commerce through short-form videos. In this context, such exposure may be less likely to result in a long-term and stable attachment. Therefore, the emotional response may remain at the level of affective involvement, namely immersion in or connection with the emotions conveyed by the video. This represents an immediate, situational emotional response that occurs during exposure to storytelling content. Importantly, this connection originates not from Homophily with the content creator, but from perceived Homophily with the character appearing in the video.

Although the emotional state examined differs from that investigated in previous studies, from the perspective of the ELM, this finding further supports the arguments of Ding et al. (2025) and Hu et al. (2025) that peripheral cues, including homophily, can draw recipients into deeper emotional states, such as a state of flow.

Furthermore, this finding reinforces the argument of Park et al. (2008), who regarded Homophily between individuals as an important characteristic of online social network structures. Such Homophily can contribute substantially to individuals' emotional connections with online communities and subsequently influence their purchase intentions. In the context of video information, although viewers may not participate in a specific community, they can still develop an emotional connection with the story presented in the video, including both the narrator and the story content, when they perceive similarities with the character or storyteller appearing in the video.

4.6.3 Effect of storytelling on perceived story credibility

The results demonstrate that storytelling is an important factor in enhancing perceived story credibility.

First, this finding provides a more specific perspective on the way information is conveyed through video. Previous studies have identified communication-related factors as contributing to credibility in general or to the credibility associated with different entities, including content creators such as influencers, bloggers, and streamers (Shen & Wang, 2024; Penttinen et al., 2022; Elhajjar & Itani, 2025; Saima & Khan, 2021; Javed et al., 2024; Minh et al., 2024). In this regard, storytelling represents an important aspect of how content is communicated and constitutes a component of video content.

Second, storytelling functions as a central cue that contributes to perceptions of story credibility. This finding extends the understanding of central cues examined by Hu et al. (2025), particularly regarding the informational basis underlying perceptions of source trustworthiness within the ELM. From the perspective of the S-O-R framework, similar to clarity, information richness, and visual aesthetics, which have been identified as important stimuli in video communication (Shen & Wang, 2024; Lu et al., 2024), the present finding demonstrates that storytelling also constitutes an important stimulus shaping viewers' perceptions of credibility.

Furthermore, by specifically examining storytelling in product storytelling videos and conceptualizing credibility as perceived story credibility, which encompasses both the credibility of the information and the credibility of the storyteller or character within the story, this study extends the argument of Li et al. (2019) that storytelling is an effective communication approach for enhancing consumer trust, particularly in digital media environments.

Storytelling can contribute to credibility perceptions more broadly. The finding also provides a more diverse perspective on the application of storytelling in communication, complementing the work of Hong et al. (2018), who suggested that storytelling can serve as an effective communication tool for businesses and that perceived story credibility in advertising can be influenced by the communicator delivering the message, in this case, the character appearing in the video.

4.6.4 Effect of homophily on perceived story credibility

The results show that homophily with characters enhances perceived story credibility, consistent with previous studies suggesting that perceived homophily leads consumers to evaluate sources and information as more credible (Muda & Hamzah, 2021; Zhang et al., 2024; Daowd et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2018). This finding indicates that when viewers perceive similarities with characters in terms of attitudes, preferences, and experiences, they tend to empathize with them, trust them, and be more receptive to the story being conveyed.

The finding further extends previous research by demonstrating that homophily not only influences the credibility of the source but can also contribute to the credibility of the story as a whole. From the ELM perspective, this finding suggests that a peripheral cue such as homophily can simultaneously contribute to both central and peripheral responses. In particular, the effects of homophily on story credibility and purchase intention indicate that cognitive evaluation plays a more prominent role in this study than its effect through emotional responses. This finding differs from Zhang et al. (2024), but is consistent with Muda and Hamzah (2021) in emphasizing the role of Homophily in reinforcing credibility. The difference may stem from the content context: Zhang et al. (2024) focused on sponsored advertising, whereas user-generated content, characterized by greater independence and perceived closeness, may strengthen the relationship between homophily and credibility (Muda & Hamzah, 2021).

4.6.5 Effect of affective involvement on purchase intention

Affective involvement is found to have a significant positive effect on viewers' purchase intention. This result is consistent with previous findings concerning different emotional dimensions, including emotional attachment (Zhang et al., 2024), emotional engagement (Lee et al., 2021), and emotional responses (Wen et al., 2022; Adelaar, 2003). The distinction lies primarily in the conceptualization of the emotional experience. Rather than representing an internal emotional state of the information recipient at different levels or a long-term emotional connection, affective involvement in this study refers to the viewer's immersion in the emotions conveyed by the video and is characterized by an immediate response. This finding therefore adds another emotional dimension to the S-O-R model by highlighting the role of affective responses in shaping purchase intention in video communication.

This finding is also partly consistent with Kowalczyk and Pounders (2016) and Ladhari et al. (2020), who found that emotional attachment between consumers and message transmitters on social media positively influences purchase intention. Although emotional attachment reflects a deeper emotional relationship developed through prolonged interaction, whereas short-form video communication on entertainment-commerce platforms tends to generate more immediate and situational emotional responses, the present finding remains consistent with the view that emotions play an important role in shaping consumer evaluations and decisions.

Finally, compared with other forms of storytelling communication, this finding is consistent with Sung et al. (2022), who found that storytelling techniques can emotionally immerse consumers in a story, particularly when the story has a clear connection with the product. In such cases, consumers tend to develop more positive and deeper emotional responses, thereby increasing their likelihood of engaging in behaviors such as seeking additional information or making a purchase. Thus, whether through video storytelling or other forms of storytelling, the important role of emotional connection in shaping purchase intention is consistently demonstrated.

4.6.6 Effect of perceived story credibility on purchase intention

The findings confirm that perceived story credibility positively contributes to purchase intention. This result provides another perspective on credibility in video communication. Previous studies have established that credibility in general, as well as credibility associated with different entities, can influence the purchase intention of recipients exposed to video content, including the credibility of electronic word-of-mouth, content creators, and platforms (Penttinen et al., 2022; Silaban et al., 2022; Yin et al., 2023; Le & Ryu, 2023). In contrast, credibility of the story represents an overall evaluation of the story, encompassing both the credibility of the content creator or storyteller (i.e., the character or narrator) and the credibility of the information conveyed through the story.

This finding is also consistent with Yin et al. (2023), who argued that credibility is one of the important factors guiding consumers' purchase intentions in social media communication. Specifically, in the context of storytelling communication, the finding is consistent with Chang (2025), whose study of brand storytelling identified credibility as one of the core factors contributing to the effectiveness of storytelling. When consumers perceive a story as authentic and trustworthy, they are more likely to place trust in the product and brand, which contributes to the formation of a stronger brand image in their minds and subsequently increases purchase intention.

The confirmation of this relationship also adds another cognitive component to the Organism dimension of the S-O-R model, complementing perceived information credibility in UGC video content examined by Minh et al. (2024).

4.6.7 The moderating role of product type

The results show that product type selectively moderates the relationships in the research model. Specifically, product type does not moderate the relationship between storytelling and affective involvement or between perceived homophily and affective involvement. In contrast, product type moderates the relationship between storytelling and perceived story credibility, with a stronger effect for low-involvement products, and moderates the relationship between perceived homophily and perceived story credibility, with a stronger effect for high-involvement products.

First, storytelling generates relatively stable affective involvement across product groups. This finding suggests that the storytelling experience, through the combination of characters, content, visuals, sounds, and communication style, can create an emotional connection regardless of the product's level of involvement. Although this finding is not entirely consistent with ELM, it suggests that in short-video contexts, the storytelling experience may override differences in product involvement when generating emotional responses.

Second, storytelling has a stronger effect on perceived story credibility for low-involvement products. This finding contradicts the expectations of ELM, which suggests that high-involvement products encourage consumers to pay greater attention to central cues. One possible explanation is that for low-involvement products, which involve relatively low risk and are purchased more frequently, consumers may find it easier to assess the credibility of a story. At the same time, storytelling components may exert strong persuasive effects through a combination of central and peripheral cues.

Third, perceived homophily does not produce significant differences in affective involvement between the two product groups. This finding suggests that homophily with the character can directly generate feelings of empathy and connection before consumers engage in deeper evaluations of the product. From an S-O-R perspective, perceived Homophily represents a social stimulus capable of generating relatively stable emotional responses; therefore, product involvement may not be sufficiently influential to alter this relationship.

Fourth, perceived homophily has a stronger effect on perceived story credibility for high-involvement products. This finding is consistent with the ELM argument that as personal involvement increases, consumers invest greater cognitive resources and place greater emphasis on diagnostically valuable cues. For high-involvement products, which involve greater perceived risk, consumers may rely more heavily on characters whom they perceive

as similar to themselves when evaluating the credibility of the story. Conversely, for low-involvement products, the role of homophily in building trust becomes less pronounced.

Overall, product involvement does not substantially alter emotional responses but plays an important role in shaping perceived story credibility. In particular, storytelling is more effective for low-involvement products, whereas perceived Homophily has a stronger effect for high-involvement products. This finding suggests that the same communication cue may demonstrate different levels of effectiveness depending on the involvement of the product.

4.6.8 The mediating role of affective involvement

The results show that affective involvement plays a complementary mediating role in the relationship between perceived homophily and purchase intention, as well as in the relationship between storytelling and purchase intention. The results also indicate that the mediating effect of affective involvement is stronger in the relationship between storytelling and purchase intention than in the relationship between perceived homophily and purchase intention.

Regarding its mediating role in the relationship between perceived homophily and purchase intention, this finding is consistent to some extent with Zhang et al. (2024), who argued that emotional attachment serves as an important mediator between homophily and purchase intention. Although emotional attachment represents a stronger emotional response than the connection, immersion, and emotional engagement reflected by affective involvement, emotional connection constitutes a fundamental condition for the development of emotional attachment (Zhang et al., 2024). This finding is also consistent with the context of short-video communication that combines entertainment and shopping. The results further support the argument of Adelaar et al. (2003), who confirmed that emotional responses within the S-O-R framework play an important mediating role in explaining the effects of communication formats, including video, on purchase intention. Accordingly, this study contributes an additional emotional component to the S-O-R framework, alongside immersion, emotional attachment, general emotional responses, and flow experience, in explaining the effects of video on purchase intention. This finding is also consistent with Park et al. (2021), who suggested that perceived homophily serves as a precursor to the development of affective involvement with content creators, thereby generating behavioral responses among consumers.

Regarding the mediating role between storytelling and purchase intention, this finding is consistent with the argument of Lund et al. (2018) in product communication that authentically and attractively portrayed characters can serve as emotional bridges to products, thereby encouraging positive consumer responses. It also supports Crespo et al. (2022), who argued that narrative structure can connect products with consumers' personal identities, thereby increasing affective involvement, as well as Kühn and Boshoff (2021), who demonstrated that engaging stories can integrate rational and emotional elements, strengthening consumers' personal connection with products. Similarly, in storytelling communication, Sung et al. (2022) found that emotional engagement with a story related to a product can encourage consumers to seek information, purchase, or share the product. The present findings therefore provide further evidence for the argument that authentically and attractively portrayed characters can serve as emotional bridges, generating consumers' empathy and emotional connection with products and consequently encouraging positive responses such as attention, memory, and purchase intention, as demonstrated by Lund et al. (2018). Likewise, the findings reinforce the role of narrative structure as a component of storytelling in connecting emotions with behavioral responses, as established by Crespo et al. (2022).

4.6.9 The mediating role of perceived story credibility

The results show that perceived story credibility mediates the relationships of both homophily and storytelling methods with purchase intention, with a stronger mediating effect for homophily. This finding is consistent with Zhang et al. (2024) and Muda and Hamzah (2021), who found that homophily enhances perceived

source credibility and, consequently, purchase intention. The present study extends these findings by examining the credibility of the entire story, rather than only the content creator. This is also consistent with Katz et al. (2004) and Daowd et al. (2020), who emphasized that perceived homophily can strengthen trust and the credibility of information, thereby influencing behavioral intentions.

Furthermore, storytelling methods influence purchase intention through perceived story credibility, supporting previous studies on the mediating role of credibility in video communication (Shen & Wang, 2024; Penttinen et al., 2022; Elhajjar & Itani, 2025; Javed et al., 2024; Minh et al., 2024). The finding also supports Li et al. (2019) and Hong et al. (2018), who argued that storytelling can enhance trust and reduce information asymmetry by naturally conveying product values, benefits, and characteristics, thereby strengthening consumers' confidence in the product.

4.6.10 Discussion in relation to findings from related studies

Three published studies are particularly relevant to this research: (1) The Impact of video on purchase Intention: A systematic review and future research directions; (2) The Impact of perceived homophily and storytelling in video on purchase intention: The mediating roles of flow experience and storyteller credibility; and (3) The Impact of story characteristics in video on affective involvement and purchase intention.

First, the systematic review provides a basis for identifying the major groups of factors and mechanisms underlying the effects of video on purchase intention, thereby informing the development of the research gaps, hypotheses, and research model. The findings of this dissertation further reinforce the argument that the effect of video on purchase intention operates through psychological mechanisms, specifically affective involvement and perceived story credibility.

Second, the dissertation is consistent with research on perceived homophily and storytelling in demonstrating that these two factors enhance purchase intention through consumers' psychological states. However, the present study extends the existing model by replacing flow experience and storyteller credibility with affective involvement and perceived story credibility, thereby shifting the focus from evaluations of the storyteller to evaluations of the story as a whole.

Third, the dissertation is consistent with research on story characteristics in confirming the positive effect of storytelling on affective involvement and purchase intention. At the same time, the study extends previous research by conceptualizing storytelling as a second-order construct, incorporating perceived story credibility, and examining the moderating role of product type based on product involvement.

Overall, the dissertation builds upon and extends previous research by simultaneously examining emotional and cognitive mechanisms, adopting a more comprehensive conceptualization of storytelling, and identifying product-related conditions under which storytelling videos are more effective. These contributions provide a clearer understanding of the mechanisms through which video influences consumers' purchase intentions.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS

5.1 Conclusion

Based on the S-O-R and ELM theoretical frameworks and relevant empirical research findings, this study examines the effects of storytelling methods and Homophily in video marketing on consumers' purchase intention through two mediating mechanisms, namely affective involvement and perceived story credibility, while also examining the moderating role of product type based on product involvement. On this basis, the study contributes to extending the underlying theoretical frameworks and proposes managerial implications for enhancing consumers' purchase intention through video marketing communication.

The results show that both storytelling methods and homophily have positive effects on affective involvement and perceived story credibility; simultaneously, both mediating variables positively influence purchase intention. All indirect effects are statistically significant, confirming that affective involvement and perceived story credibility serve as complementary mediators. Among these mechanisms, affective involvement plays a more prominent role in the effect of storytelling methods, whereas perceived story credibility is more important in the effect of homophily.

The results further indicate that product type moderates only certain relationships. Specifically, the effect of storytelling methods on perceived story credibility is stronger for low-involvement products, whereas the effect of homophily on perceived story credibility is stronger for high-involvement products. In contrast, product type does not moderate the relationships between the two antecedent variables and emotional involvement. This finding suggests that product involvement primarily influences the formation of story credibility rather than emotional responses, thereby clarifying the conditions under which storytelling videos can be more effective.

5.2 Theoretical contributions

The findings of this study make several contributions to the S-O-R and ELM theories in explaining the mechanisms through which video marketing influences consumers' purchase intention, as follows:

5.2.1 Contributions to the S-O-R Theory

With regard to the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) model, this study extends and further clarifies both the Stimulus (S) and Organism (O) components in the context of video marketing communication, as follows:

Regarding Stimulus (S), the study incorporates storytelling methods as a stimulus associated with content strategy, conceptualized as a second-order construct comprising eight components related to content, presentation format, and characters. The results show that storytelling methods positively influence both affective involvement and perceived story credibility, thereby demonstrating their ability to simultaneously generate emotional and cognitive responses. The study also extends the conceptualization of homophily from homophily with the content creator to homophily with the character in the story, which is consistent with the distinctive characteristics of storytelling communication.

Regarding Organism (O), the study incorporates two psychological states, namely affective involvement and perceived story credibility. In particular, credibility is shifted from an evaluation of the information source to an evaluation of the story as a whole, while affective involvement reflects the extent to which viewers connect with and immerse themselves in the story.

In addition, the study provides evidence of two mediating pathways within the S-O-R framework. Storytelling methods exert a stronger effect on purchase intention through emotional involvement, whereas Homophily exerts a stronger effect through perceived story credibility. These findings indicate that purchase intention arising from video marketing communication is formed simultaneously through emotional and cognitive mechanisms, and that different stimuli may activate different psychological states before leading to the same behavioral response.

5.2.2 Contributions to the Elaboration Likelihood Model

Regarding the ELM model this study contributes to the theory in two main aspects, namely the persuasive cue system and the role of involvement in the persuasion process in video communication, as follows:

First, the study extends the persuasive cue system of ELM by incorporating storytelling methods as a composite persuasive cue. Unlike previous studies that have primarily distinguished between central and peripheral cues, this study conceptualizes storytelling methods as a structure that integrates both types of cues. The results show that storytelling methods positively influence perceived story credibility and emotional involvement, indicating that a single stimulus can simultaneously activate both processing pathways. At the same time, although homophily

represents a peripheral cue, it exerts a stronger effect on perceived story credibility, suggesting that the effectiveness of a cue is not entirely fixed but depends on the nature of the stimulus and the communication context.

Second, the study extends the role of involvement in ELM by classifying products into high- and low-involvement groups. The results show that homophily has a stronger effect on perceived story credibility for high-involvement products, consistent with the argument that higher involvement encourages consumers to pay greater attention to cues with diagnostic value. Conversely, storytelling methods have a stronger effect on perceived story credibility for low-involvement products, while their effects on affective involvement are not moderated by product type. These findings suggest that the persuasive effectiveness of storytelling videos depends not only on the level of product involvement but also on the communication strategy and the nature of the cue, thereby providing additional evidence for the applicability of ELM to video marketing communication.

5.3 Managerial implications

The findings show that storytelling methods, homophily, affective involvement, and perceived story credibility all play important roles in explaining consumers' purchase intention. Based on the mean values, all variables were rated at relatively high levels (ranging from 3.98 to 4.19 on a five-point scale), indicating that consumers generally have positive evaluations of storytelling videos. However, the structural model results show that these components are important factors and operate through different mechanisms in the formation of credibility. Therefore, firms should not only maintain the quality of the factors that consumers already rate highly but also prioritize investment in those factors that have greater effects and, at the same time, may need to be adapted to different product types.

5.3.1 Managerial implications for storytelling methods

The results show that storytelling methods positively influence purchase intention through affective involvement and perceived story credibility, with the effect through affective involvement being stronger. With a mean value of 4.14, storytelling methods were rated relatively highly; however, story interestingness (Mean = 3.98) and character sincerity (Mean = 4.10) still require improvement. Firms should view storytelling methods as a communication strategy by developing stories that are connected to customers' experiences, needs, and real-life situations, while also directing and controlling content quality based on the eight components of storytelling methods.

Content creators should pay particular attention to attractive and sincere characters, interesting and coherent stories, rich information, clear visuals, fluent communication, and appropriate sound effects. Content should prioritize real-life experiences and avoid overly promotional presentations, while ensuring high-quality visual and audio elements to enhance the naturalness and authenticity of the video. Overall, firms should provide strategic direction and control content quality, while content creators should directly implement and bring the story to life. Coordinated implementation of all eight components can help videos strengthen emotional connections and credibility, thereby enhancing consumers' purchase intention.

5.3.2 Managerial implications for homophily

The results show that Homophily positively influences purchase intention through affective involvement and perceived story credibility, with the mediating role of perceived story credibility being stronger. With a mean value of 4.02, Homophily was evaluated at a relatively high level, but there remains room to enhance its persuasive effectiveness in videos. Firms and content creators should strengthen the Homophily between characters and target customers in terms of interests, values, perspectives, and product-use experiences.

Content should incorporate situations that are familiar to consumers' everyday lives and portray values and product-selection behaviors that are similar to those of target customers. At the same time, characters should be encouraged to share their experiences, selection criteria, and practical concerns rather than merely providing

promotional evaluations. In addition, firms should select content creators whose consumption styles and interests are compatible with those of the target customer group to enhance the naturalness and authenticity of the story.

In particular, for high-involvement products, homophily has a stronger effect on perceived story credibility. Therefore, greater attention should be paid to homophily in terms of values, perspectives, and product-use experiences, helping viewers perceive the story as a relevant and trustworthy source of reference.

5.3.3 Managerial implications for perceived story credibility

The findings indicate that perceived story credibility is an important cognitive mechanism through which storytelling methods and homophily influence purchase intention. These factors are more effective when consumers trust the story, believe the information conveyed, and perceive the emotions as authentic. However, perceived story credibility had the lowest mean value among the model variables (Mean = 3.99), indicating that consumers still have some doubts about the authenticity of storytelling videos. Therefore, firms and content creators should prioritize enhancing story credibility throughout the content development process.

First, firms should develop realistic and logically structured stories that reflect plausible consumer experiences rather than overly perfect or promotional scenarios. Content creators should present product-use experiences naturally, from the initial need and usage process to the outcomes.

Second, firms should ensure that product information accurately reflects the product's characteristics, functions, and limitations. Content creators should base their evaluations on actual experiences, explain the reasons behind their opinions, and integrate product information naturally into the story rather than relying on explicit promotional claims.

Third, firms should encourage content creators to express authentic emotions based on genuine experiences rather than rigid scripts. Natural language, tone, and expressions can help viewers perceive the emotions as genuine and, consequently, enhance the credibility of the overall story.

Overall, perceived story credibility should be viewed as the result of the integration of content, information, and emotional authenticity, rather than merely the accuracy of product information. A logical story, credible information, and authentic emotions can strengthen consumers' trust in video content and enhance the effects of storytelling methods and homophily on purchase intention.

5.3.4 Managerial implications for emotional involvement

The findings show that affective involvement is the strongest mediating mechanism influencing purchase intention, serving as an important pathway through which storytelling methods and homophily affect consumers' purchase intention. This indicates that the effectiveness of storytelling videos depends not only on information and trust but also on their ability to engage and excite viewers throughout the viewing process. Although affective involvement was rated relatively highly (Mean = 4.12), firms and content creators should continue enhancing the emotional experience of videos.

In product storytelling, affective involvement arises when viewers are drawn into the story and perceive it as engaging and personally meaningful. Engaging, novel, and emotionally resonant stories can increase attention, positive attitudes, and purchase intention, whereas neutral and emotionally unengaging content may lead to passive viewing and weaker persuasive effects.

Moreover, affective involvement is shaped by both storytelling methods and homophily. Therefore, firms and content creators should combine engaging stories with characters who are similar to target customers in relevant characteristics. When viewers feel close to the character and are captivated by the story, they are more likely to become immersed in the content, thereby strengthening affective involvement and ultimately stimulating purchase intention.

5.3.5 Managerial implications from the moderating role of product type

The findings show that video communication effectiveness varies between high- and low-involvement products. While Affective involvement remains relatively stable across product types, perceived story credibility is influenced by product involvement. Therefore, firms should tailor communication strategies to each product group.

For low-involvement products, firms should prioritize storytelling methods to enhance story credibility by using familiar situations, natural story progression, relevant information, and authentic visual and audio elements. Content creators should emphasize genuine product-use experiences rather than merely presenting technical features or functional benefits.

For high-involvement products, firms should prioritize communicators with high homophily with target customers. Homophily in interests, values, product perspectives, and consumption experiences can strengthen story credibility, particularly for higher-risk purchases. Thus, firms should select content creators based not only on popularity but also on their compatibility with target customers.

Finally, different emotional strategies are not necessary across product groups because storytelling methods and homophily generate relatively stable affective involvement regardless of product involvement. Firms can maintain engaging and relatable storytelling while adapting credibility-building elements to each product type, thereby optimizing resources and enhancing video communication effectiveness.

5.4 Limitations and directions for future research

Although the study has achieved its intended objectives and provided meaningful findings, several limitations remain, as follows:

First, self-reported data collected at a single point in time may be subject to subjective perceptions and recall bias. Asking participants to select the most impressive video may introduce selection and recall biases, meaning that the findings may not fully reflect the broader range of product storytelling videos. In addition, the cross-sectional design does not allow changes over time to be assessed. Future research could use randomly selected videos or provide specific videos for participants to evaluate, combined with experimental and longitudinal designs to address these limitations.

Second, the literature review primarily relies on the Scopus database and may therefore overlook studies indexed in other databases. Future studies should combine multiple databases, such as Web of Science, to enhance the comprehensiveness of the literature review.

Third, the study does not distinguish between influencers/KOLs and ordinary consumers appearing in videos, although the characteristics of the communicator may influence how viewers process and respond to information. Future research should compare different types of characters or communicators to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the effects of storytelling and Homophily.

Fourth, the study examines information-processing motivation through product involvement but does not assess consumers' ability to process information, although ELM suggests that both factors are necessary to activate the central route (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Future research should incorporate variables that reflect consumers' information-processing ability.

Fifth, the study focuses exclusively on TikTok, whereas content characteristics, algorithms, and user behaviors may differ across platforms. Future research should conduct comparative studies across TikTok, YouTube, Facebook Reels, and Instagram to enhance the generalizability of the findings.

LIST OF AUTHOR'S PUBLICATIONS

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