



Influence of Vertical Video Features on Consumer Engagement: A Multidimensional Structural Equation Modeling Approach

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Abstract

Customers' interactions with businesses, goods, and online content have changed as a result of the quick rise of short-form vertical video content on digital platforms. This study uses a multidimensional Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) approach to examine the impact of important vertical video elements on customer engagement. Visual appeal, interaction, information richness, entertainment value, personalization, and perceived authenticity are just a few of the factors that the study conceptualizes vertical video features along with their impact on customer engagement. The concept of consumer involvement is operationalized as a multifaceted construct that includes behavioral, emotional, and cognitive aspects. The suggested framework aims to clarify how certain aspects of vertical video content elicit consumer attention, emotional engagement, interaction, and behavioral reactions. Customers who frequently interact with short-form vertical video content on websites like Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts, and TikTok may be the source of primary data. The measuring model is evaluated and the proposed structural links between the constructs are investigated using SEM. It is anticipated that the study will reveal the dimensions that have the greatest impact on consumer responses and offer empirical insights into the relative contributions of various vertical video features to consumer engagement. In addition to offering useful insights for marketers and content producers looking to develop more captivating vertical video strategies, the findings can add to the expanding body of research on digital consumer behavior.

Keywords: Short-form Video Content; Vertical Video; Customer Engagement; Consumer Behavior; Social Media Marketing; Visual Appeal; Personalization; Perceived Authenticity; Digital Marketing; Structural Equation Modelling (SEM).

Introduction

The rapid proliferation of smartphones and social media platforms has profoundly changed how consumers consume digital content. Vertical video is a big hit in new types of digital communication, because it works well on mobile devices and creates immersive and engaging viewing experiences. Vertical videos are created to fit the natural orientation of smartphones rather than the conventional horizontal video formats that require the screen to be rotated, facilitating smooth content consumption. The rise of vertical video can be attributed to the rise of platforms such as Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts and Snapchat, which have made the format one of the most powerful tools in contemporary digital marketing strategies. Video marketing in vertical format is the strategic use of vertically oriented video content by brands and organizations to communicate messages, advertise products and services, and engage consumers through mobile platforms. This format works because it taps into consumer preference for convenience, short content and visually rich experiences. That's why marketers are increasingly investing in vertical video campaigns to capture

attention and create meaningful relationships with consumers, especially as mobile devices continue to dominate Internet usage.

Consumer engagement has emerged as a key construct in marketing research due to its association with a range of positive outcomes including customer loyalty, advocacy, and purchase intentions. According to Brodie, Hollebeek, Jurić and Ilić (2011), consumer engagement is a psychological state that occurs from the interactive experience between consumers and brands. Likewise, Vivek, Beatty, & Morgan (2012) define consumer engagement as the degree of an individual's participation and involvement with the offerings and activities of an organization. In the contemporary literature, consumer engagement is conceptualised as a multidimensional construct that includes cognitive, emotional and behavioural dimensions (Dessart, Veloutsou, & Morgan-Thomas, 2015).

The growing prominence of vertical video has prompted marketers to rethink their communication approaches and content creation practices. Vertical video marketing enables brands

to deliver concise, visually appealing, and interactive messages that align with the changing preferences and shorter attention spans of consumers. Previous studies have suggested that video content is more effective in attracting consumer attention, enhancing information retention, and stimulating emotional responses compared to static forms of communication. However, despite the increasing use of vertical videos by organizations, academic understanding of the specific features of vertical videos that influence consumer engagement remains limited.

Consumer engagement has emerged as a critical concept in marketing literature because of its strong association with favorable outcomes such as brand loyalty, purchase intention, word-of-mouth communication, and customer advocacy. Contemporary perspectives conceptualize consumer engagement as a multidimensional construct comprising cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions. Cognitive engagement reflects the extent of consumers' mental involvement and attention toward marketing content, emotional engagement captures affective reactions and feelings generated by the content, whereas behavioral engagement refers to consumers' observable actions such as liking, commenting, sharing, and interacting with the content. Understanding how different characteristics of vertical videos influence these dimensions of engagement is essential for developing effective digital marketing strategies.

Existing research has predominantly focused on the effectiveness of social media videos in general, emphasizing factors such as entertainment, informativeness, credibility, and interactivity. Nevertheless, limited attention has been devoted to examining the distinctive attributes of vertical videos. Features such as convenience, appeal, aesthetics, personalization, informativeness, and interactivity may shape consumers' perceptions and engagement behaviors in unique ways. Given the rapid evolution of mobile-first content consumption, there is a pressing need to investigate the relative influence of these features on different dimensions of consumer engagement.

To address this research gap, the current study develops and empirically tests a multidimensional model to examine the effect of vertical video features on consumer engagement. Specifically, the study explores the impact of convenience, appeal, aesthetics, personalization, informativeness and interactivity on the cognitive, emotional and behavioral engagement of consumers. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is employed to validate the proposed relationships, testing the direct effects of vertical video features on engagement outcomes and offering a comprehensive view.

Literature Review

The proliferation of mobile devices and social networking platforms has accelerated the adoption of short-form vertical video as a dominant communication format. Platforms such as TikTok, Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts, and Snapchat have transformed consumers' media consumption habits by promoting brief, immersive, and mobile-optimized content. Short-form videos align with contemporary users' preference for quick, entertaining, and easily consumable information, thereby enabling marketers to engage audiences more effectively.

Tytarenko (2025) demonstrated that vertical videos evoke rapid emotional responses through limbic system activation, whereas horizontal videos encourage analytical processing and trust formation, influencing both short- and long-term consumer behavior. Similarly, Cao and Aral (2026) found that specific video features, such as the presence of people and the timing of textual elements, significantly affect audience engagement across platforms and industries. Kim (2026) further showed that speech characteristics, including shorter sentences, faster delivery, and referential language, enhance audience interaction with video content. Likewise, Zhang, Qiu, and Ye (2025) reported that audiovisual elements such as colloquial language, cadence, colorfulness, and visual prominence positively influence consumer engagement in short-video advertising. Collectively, these studies suggest that neuropsychological, linguistic, and audiovisual features play a crucial role in determining the effectiveness of video content in engaging consumers.

Apasrawirote et al. (2022) reported that short-form video content significantly enhances brand engagement by facilitating stronger influencer-consumer interactions. Similarly, Manic (2024) observed that the brevity, emotional resonance, and shareability of short-form videos contribute to higher levels of audience engagement and brand connection. The study emphasized that storytelling, relevance, and content quality are critical determinants of engagement in digital environments. Despite the increasing practical significance of vertical videos, empirical investigations examining their unique characteristics and their influence on different forms of consumer engagement remain limited.

Recent literature increasingly conceptualizes consumer engagement as a multidimensional phenomenon involving cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components. Dessart, Veloutsou, and Morgan-Thomas (2015) proposed that engagement extends beyond observable behaviors and incorporates consumers' mental and emotional investments in brand interactions. Hollebeek and Macky (2019) further argued that social media engagement reflects varying degrees of consumers' cognitive processing, affective attachment, and

participatory behaviors. Their findings suggest that understanding engagement through multiple dimensions provides richer insights into consumer responses than relying solely on behavioral indicators such as likes or shares. Moreover, recent reviews indicate that engagement manifestations differ across digital platforms and content formats, necessitating context-specific investigations (Herle, 2024).

Research Method

The Study: The present study adopts a quantitative, cross-sectional research design to examine the influence of Vertical Video Marketing content features on Consumer Engagement. The study investigates the relationship between the dimensions of Vertical Video Marketing and the cognitive, emotional, and behavioural dimensions of Consumer Engagement.

Sample and Area of Study: The study was conducted among social media users who actively consume vertical video content. A total of 850 valid responses were collected using a structured questionnaire through convenience sampling from respondents in India.

Tool for Data Collection: Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising 35 statements of Content Features of Vertical Video Marketing and 29 statements measuring Consumer Engagement, adapted from the scale developed by Vinerean and Opreana (2021) in Consumer Engagement in Online Settings: Conceptualization and Validation of Measurement Scales. All items measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree.

The questionnaire included 35 statements related to the Content Features of Vertical Video Marketing, developed through an extensive review of the literature, and to establish face validity, the instrument was reviewed by a panel of 100 subject matter experts, comprising 50 academicians with more than 15 years of teaching and research experience and 50 professionals from the digital marketing industry with over 5 years of professional experience. Their suggestions and feedback were incorporated to improve the clarity, relevance, and comprehensiveness of the questionnaire items. Fourth quartile acceptance was considered i.e.; 75 percent and the final list of 29 attributes was used to develop the scale for Content Features of Vertical Video Marketing. The finalized instrument was used for data collection with the sample size of 850 respondents which were social media users. The data collected was subsequently analyzed using reliability analysis, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM).

Data Analysis

Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted to identify the underlying dimensions of the Content Features of Vertical Video Marketing and Consumer Engagement. Reliability analysis demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency, with Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.855 for Content Features of Vertical Video Marketing and 0.964 for Consumer Engagement. For Content Features of Vertical Video Marketing, the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was 0.880, and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ($\chi^2 = 7369.932$, $df = 406$, $p < 0.001$), confirming the suitability of the data for factor analysis. Principal Component Analysis with Varimax rotation extracted six factors explaining 55.82% of the total variance, namely Convenience (10.61%), Appeal (9.96%), Aesthetics (9.88%), Personalization (9.64%), Social Connection (9.40%), and Social Credibility (6.33%). Factor loadings ranged from 0.65 to 0.78.

Similarly, for Consumer Engagement, the KMO value was 0.974 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ($\chi^2 = 18521.31$, $df = 435$, $p < 0.001$). Principal Component Analysis with Varimax rotation extracted three factors explaining 63.89% of the total variance: Cognitive Engagement (25.75%), Emotional Engagement (19.29%), and Behavioural Engagement (18.85%). Factor loadings ranged from 0.62 to 0.79. These findings confirm the multidimensional nature of both constructs and support their use in subsequent analyses.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) using AMOS 21 was conducted to validate the measurement models of Content Features of Vertical Video Marketing and Consumer Engagement. For Content Features of Vertical Video Marketing, the six-factor model comprising Convenience, Appeal, Aesthetics, Personalization, Social Connection, and Social Credibility demonstrated an excellent fit with the data (CMIN/DF = 1.132, GFI = 0.970, AGFI = 0.963, NFI = 0.949, CFI = 0.994, and RMSEA = 0.012). Convergent validity was supported with Composite Reliability (CR) values ranging from 0.69 to 0.84 and AVE values ranging from 0.42 to 0.51. Discriminant validity was established as the square root of AVE for each construct exceeded its inter-construct correlations, with the highest correlation being 0.415.

Similarly, the three-factor Consumer Engagement model comprising Cognitive, Emotional, and Behavioural dimensions demonstrated an acceptable fit (CMIN/DF = 3.376, GFI = 0.898, AGFI = 0.882, NFI = 0.928, CFI = 0.948, and RMSEA = 0.053). Convergent validity was confirmed through satisfactory CR (0.915–0.949) and AVE (0.546–

0.623) values, while discriminant validity was supported as the square root of AVE values exceeded the corresponding inter-construct correlations. Overall, the CFA findings confirmed the reliability and validity of both measurement models for subsequent structural analyses.

Hypotheses Development

The following hypotheses were formulated to examine the influence of the content features of Vertical Video Marketing on Consumer Engagement.

H1: Convenience has a significant positive influence on consumers' Cognitive Response toward Vertical Video Marketing.

H2: Appeal has a significant positive influence on consumers' Cognitive Response toward Vertical Video Marketing.

H3: Aesthetics has a significant influence on consumers' Cognitive Response toward Vertical Video Marketing.

H4: Personalization has a significant influence on consumers' Cognitive Response toward Vertical Video Marketing.

H5: Social Connection has a significant influence on consumers' Cognitive Response toward Vertical Video Marketing.

H6: Social Credibility has a significant positive influence on consumers' Cognitive Response toward Vertical Video Marketing.

H7: Convenience has a significant positive influence on consumers' Emotional Response toward Vertical Video Marketing.

H8: Appeal has a significant positive influence on consumers' Emotional Response toward Vertical Video Marketing.

H9: Aesthetics has a significant influence on consumers' Emotional Response toward Vertical Video Marketing.

H10: Personalization has a significant influence on consumers' Emotional Response toward Vertical Video Marketing.

H11: Social Connection has a significant influence on consumers' Emotional Response toward Vertical Video Marketing.

H12: Social Credibility has a significant positive influence on consumers' Emotional Response toward Vertical Video Marketing.

H13: Convenience has a significant positive influence on consumers' Behavioural Response toward Vertical Video Marketing.

H14: Appeal has a significant positive influence on consumers' Behavioural Response toward Vertical Video Marketing.

H15: Aesthetics has a significant influence on consumers' Behavioural Response toward Vertical Video Marketing.

H16: Personalization has a significant influence on consumers' Behavioural Response toward Vertical Video Marketing.

H17: Social Connection has a significant influence on consumers' Behavioural Response toward Vertical Video Marketing.

H18: Social Credibility has a significant positive influence on consumers' Behavioural Response toward Vertical Video Marketing.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

The structural model was evaluated using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) in AMOS to examine the hypothesized relationships between the Content Features of Vertical Video Marketing and Consumer Engagement. The adequacy of the model was assessed using various goodness-of-fit indices.

The Chi-square to Degrees of Freedom Ratio (CMIN/DF) was found to be 2.126, which is below the recommended threshold value of 3.0, indicating a good model fit. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI = 0.931), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI = 0.927), and Incremental Fit Index (IFI = 0.931) exceeded the recommended threshold value of 0.90, thereby confirming a satisfactory fit of the structural model. The Goodness of Fit Index (GFI = 0.873), Adjusted Goodness of

Fit Index (AGFI = 0.861), and Normed Fit Index (NFI = 0.877) were slightly below the recommended value of 0.90. However, these values are sufficiently close to the threshold and may be considered acceptable in conjunction with the satisfactory performance of the other fit indices. Furthermore, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA = 0.036) was substantially below the recommended maximum value of 0.05, indicating an excellent fit between the proposed model and the observed data. Overall, the model fit statistics suggest that the structural model adequately represents the data and is suitable for examining the hypothesized relationships between the content features of Vertical Video Marketing and Consumer Engagement through Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

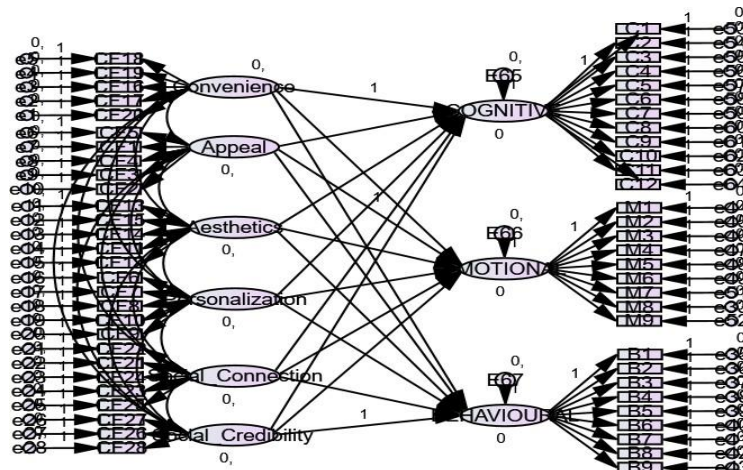


Figure 4.7: Input Model for SEM

Structural Path Analysis

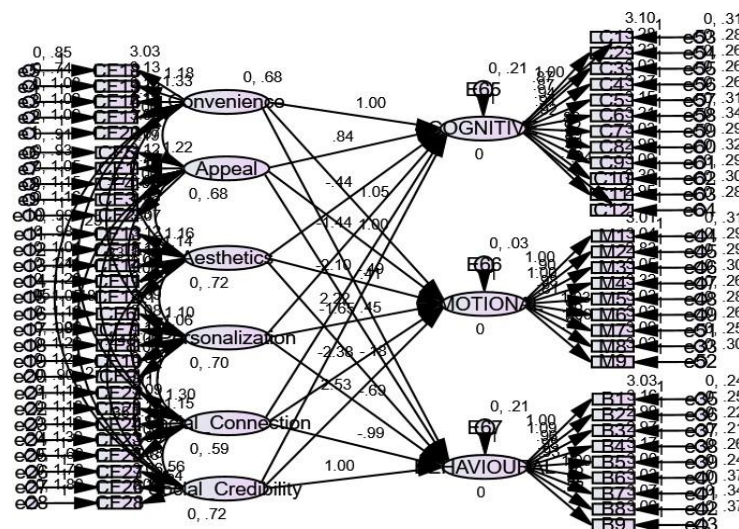


Figure 4.8: Output Model for SEM

Hypothesis Testing Results Cognitive Response

H4	Personalization → Cognitive	-1.57	***	Supported (Negative)
H5	Social Connection → Cognitive	-2.09	***	Supported (Negative)
H6	Social Credibility → Cognitive	2.46	***	Supported (Positive)

Hypothesis	Relationship	Estimate	P-value	Result
H1	Convenience → Cognitive	1.07	***	Supported (Positive)
H2	Appeal → Cognitive	0.90	***	Supported (Positive)
H3	Aesthetics → Cognitive	-0.48	0.002	Supported (Negative)

Emotional Response

Hypothesis	Relationship	Estimate	P-value	Result
H7	Convenience → Emotional	1.189	***	Supported (Positive)
H8	Appeal → Emotional	1.134	***	Supported (Positive)
H9	Aesthetics → Emotional	-0.573	0.002	Supported (Negative)
H10	Personalization → Emotional	-1.897	***	Supported (Negative)
H11	Social Connection → Emotional	-2.505	***	Supported (Negative)
H12	Social Credibility → Emotional	2.96	***	Supported (Positive)

Behavioural Response

Hypothesis	Relationship	Estimate	P-value	Result
H13	Convenience → Behavioural	0.624	***	Supported (Positive)

H14	Appeal → Behavioural	0.685	***	Supported (Positive)
H15	Aesthetics → Behavioural	-0.275	0.011	Supported (Negative)
H16	Personalization → Behavioural	-1.063	***	Supported (Negative)
H17	Social Connection → Behavioural	-1.393	***	Supported (Negative)
H18	Social Credibility → Behavioural	1.565	***	Supported (Positive)

The SEM results revealed that all eighteen hypotheses were supported. Convenience, Appeal, and Social Credibility exhibited significant positive effects on Cognitive, Emotional, and Behavioural responses, indicating their importance in enhancing consumer engagement with vertical video content. Conversely, Aesthetics, Personalization, and Social Connection demonstrated significant negative effects across all three engagement dimensions. Among the positive predictors, Social Credibility emerged as the strongest driver of Consumer Engagement ($\beta = 2.46, 2.96, \text{ and } 1.57$), while Social Connection showed the strongest negative influence ($\beta = -2.09, -2.51, \text{ and } -1.39$) on Cognitive, Emotional, and Behavioural responses, respectively. Overall, the findings suggest that consumers respond more favourably to vertical video content perceived as convenient, appealing, and credible, whereas excessive emphasis on aesthetics, personalization, and social connection may reduce engagement outcomes.

Results & Discussion

The findings revealed that the content features of Vertical Video Marketing significantly influence Consumer Engagement. Convenience, Appeal, and Social Credibility positively affected Cognitive, Emotional, and Behavioural engagement, indicating that consumers respond more favourably to vertical video content that is easy to access, attractive, and perceived as trustworthy. Social Credibility emerged as the strongest positive predictor across all engagement dimensions. These findings are consistent with the studies of Lou and Yuan (2019) and Djafarova and Rushworth (2017), which reported that credibility and authenticity of digital content enhance consumers' attitudes, trust, and engagement intentions. Similarly, the positive role of

appeal supports the findings of De Vries et al. (2012), who observed that attractive and engaging social media content generates higher levels of consumer interaction.

Conversely, Aesthetics, Personalization, and Social Connection exhibited significant negative effects on Cognitive, Emotional, and Behavioural engagement. The negative influence of personalization may be explained by consumers' perceptions of intrusiveness and privacy concerns associated with highly targeted content, supporting the findings of Aguirre et al. (2015). Likewise, the adverse effect of social connection aligns with Bright et al. (2015), who suggested that excessive social interaction and information overload on social media platforms may diminish user engagement. The unexpected negative effect of aesthetics indicates that excessive focus on visual sophistication may divert attention from the informational value of the message. Overall, all eighteen hypotheses were supported, highlighting that while convenience, appeal, and credibility foster consumer engagement, marketers should carefully balance personalization, social cues, and aesthetic elements when designing vertical video marketing strategies.

Contrary to expectations, Aesthetics, Personalization, and Social Connection showed significant negative effects on cognitive, emotional, and behavioural engagement. The negative effect of aesthetics suggests that excessive visual enhancements may distract consumers from the core message of the video, reducing meaningful engagement. Similarly, highly personalized content may create feelings of intrusiveness and privacy concerns, leading consumers to respond less favourably. This finding supports the personalization paradox proposed by Aguirre et al. (2015). Furthermore, the negative influence of social connection indicates that

excessive social interactions and information overload on digital platforms may contribute to social media fatigue, thereby reducing engagement levels (Bright et al., 2015). These findings suggest that while visual appeal, personalization, and social interaction are important, their excessive use may diminish consumer engagement in vertical video marketing.

Implications and Limitations

The findings provide valuable insights for marketers and content creators seeking to enhance consumer engagement through vertical video marketing. The positive effects of Convenience, Appeal, and Social Credibility suggest that vertical video campaigns should prioritize ease of consumption, engaging presentation, and credible messaging to stimulate cognitive, emotional, and behavioural responses. The strong influence of social credibility highlights the importance of authentic communication, trustworthy influencers, and reliable information in building consumer engagement. Additionally, the negative effects of Aesthetics, Personalization, and Social Connection indicate that excessive visual complexity, over-personalized content, and intrusive social cues may reduce consumer engagement. Therefore, marketers should adopt a balanced approach when designing vertical video strategies.

The study employed a cross-sectional design, which restricts the ability to establish causal relationships over time. Data were collected using convenience sampling from Indian social media users, limiting the generalizability of the findings to other cultural and geographical contexts. Furthermore, the study relied on self-reported responses, which may be subject to common method bias and social desirability bias. Future research may adopt longitudinal designs, probability sampling techniques, and cross-cultural comparisons to validate and extend the present findings. Additional variables such as platform characteristics, consumer personality traits, and moderating factors may also be explored to gain a deeper understanding of engagement with vertical video content.

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