

Title- Effectiveness of Short-Form Video Content (Reels/TikTok/Shorts) in Brand Engagement

Abstract

This paper focuses on the efficiency of short video content, such as Tik Tok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts, in promoting brand engagement in the digital marketing environment. Due to their conciseness, visual quality, and potential to be highly engaging, short-form videos have become a leading communication tool with the active development of social media platforms and the changing consumer behaviour.

The study will be qualitative in nature and will be based on a systematic literature review of the current academic research, industry reports and other pertinent publications. The study lists the major factors affecting the engagement, such as the platform algorithms, consumer behaviour, emotional connection, and content strategies.

The results indicate that short video content is very effective in increasing brand engagement using interactive features of likes, comments, shares and user generated content. Algorithms are significant in content visibility, and thus brands need to change their strategies to align with the algorithm. Also, relatability, authenticity, and storytelling are discovered as enhancing emotional links between brands and audiences.

Another issue this study shows is the platform differences and the necessity of platform-specific marketing approaches. Although short-form videos are presented with significant opportunities in terms of reach and engagement, their success depends on the correspondence of the content to the preferences and tendencies of the algorithms.

All in all, the research finds that the short-form video content is a potent and changing tool in the digital marketing, which can be utilized to improve brand visibility, engagement and consumer relationships when done strategically.

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Declaration

I hereby affirm that, this dissertation titled Effectiveness of Short-Form Video Content (Reels/Tik Tok/Shorts) in Brand Engagement is my original work and it has been completed as part of my academic requirements.

I attest that this work has never before been submitted to any degree or other qualification, in this or any other institution. Any information sources utilized in this paper have been cited and recognized appropriately according to the principles of scholarly methods.

I also assert that this study has been carried out in an ethical manner and it does not involve any type of plagiarism or academic misconduct.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

The high rate of digital technologies has greatly changed the marketing communication arena. The older advertising platforms, which include the print media and lengthy promotional materials are gradually giving way to vibrant and interactive web-based platforms. Of these, social media sites have been a potent means of communicating the brands to the consumers in real time. One of the significant changes that have taken place in recent years is a transition towards short-form video content, especially on such platforms as Tik Tok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts.

The short-form videos are meant to convey brief and interesting video content in fewer seconds or one minute and are meant to be lightweight and engaging. The changes in consumer behaviour, such as the shortening of attention span, the growth of mobile usage, and a tendency to consume content rapidly, easily and in an entertaining form are the major drivers of their popularity. These networks have powerful algorithms that tailor content to user interaction and hence it is easier to circulate interesting videos to many people not dependent on the number of followers of the person creating the content.

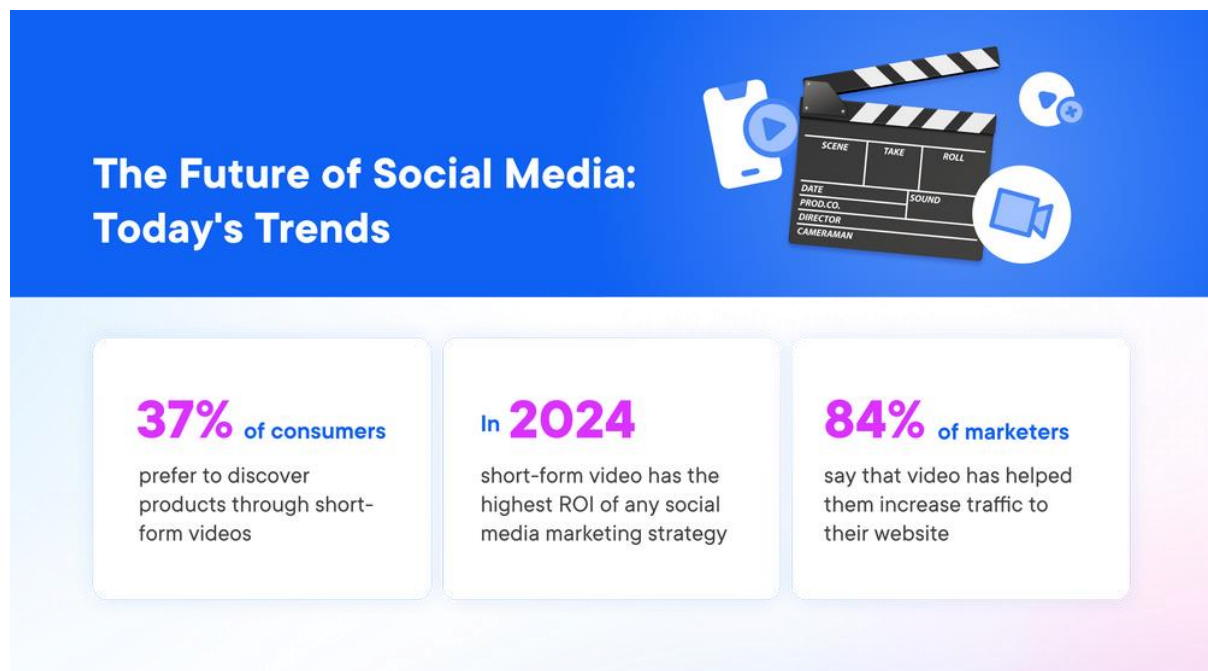


Figure: Short-Form Content trends and statistics

Source: (InAppStory, 2024)

Short-form video content has rapidly emerged as a dominant trend in digital marketing. Recent industry insights highlight its growing importance, with 37% of consumers preferring to discover products through short-form videos. In 2024, short-form video is reported to

deliver the highest return on investment (ROI) among social media marketing strategies. Additionally, 84% of marketers state that video content has significantly increased traffic to their websites. These statistics demonstrate the increasing reliance of both consumers and marketers on short-form video platforms, reinforcing their effectiveness as a powerful tool for brand engagement and visibility in the modern digital landscape.

Consequently, short-form video content is emerging as a significant marketing tool of brands to become more visible, reach more customers, and become more engaging. Short-form videos are usually casual, relatable, and interactive unlike traditional advertising and enable brands to relate with their audiences at a more personal level. Like, comment, share, and user-created content are also other important features that reinforce this interaction and make short-form video one of the potent tools in digital marketing.

Although its role is increasing in importance, the scholarly overview of the impact that short-form video content has on brand engagement is relatively small. Although industry reports have a strong indication of its success, academic study has not come up with a detailed analysis of this phenomenon focused and in depth. This paper, thus, will seek to discuss the efficacy of short form video content in increasing brand engagement in the environment of the current social media platforms.

1.2 Research Problem

Despite the fact that these platforms are becoming the most dominant in the digital marketing world, as changed by Tik Tok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts, the scholarly research on their effects on brand engagement is lacking. The literature in the field tends to be quite general in terms of social media marketing or influencer marketing, but does not examine the case of short-form video content as a communicative medium.

In addition, a lot of the existing studies focuses on quantitative aspects like views, likes, and shares and does not consider the qualitative elements of emotional connection, perception, and relatability. Comparative analysis on various platforms and lack of awareness on the effects of algorithms on content visibility and engagement is also limited.

This lapse presents the necessity of a more thorough study that would cover the quantitative and qualitative aspects of brand engagement with the short-form video content.

1.3 Research Aim

The main aim of this study is:

The aim of the research is to critically analyze the effectiveness of short-form video content (TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts) in improving brand interactions on social

networks.

1.4 Research Objectives

In order to fulfill the research purpose, the research is informed by the following objectives:

1. To investigate the use of short-form video content in marketing communication by the brands.
2. To determine the main elements that enable the short-form videos to attract viewers.
3. To analyze how marketing content in the form of a short video can have various effects on brand interaction, such as likes, shares, comments, and emotional bond.
4. To test the effectiveness of short-form video content against the traditional forms of the social media content.
5. To examine how platform algorithms can affect content visibility and engagement.

1.5 Research Questions

According to the objectives, the research questions in the study include:

1. What are ways of how the brands are utilizing short-form video material to engage audiences on social media?
2. What leads to the involvement of audiences with short-form video content?
3. What is the effect of the short-form video content on brand engagement, in terms of interaction and emotional connection?
4. What is the comparison between the effectiveness of short-form video content and the traditional content formats in terms of engagement?
5. How does the social media algorithms contribute to the quality and exposure of the short-form video content?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This research is academically and practically important.

Academically, the study adds to the existing literature on the topic of digital marketing by particularly dealing with the specific and emerging type of communication content, which is the short-form video materials. It fills the existing gaps in the literature through offering a deeper outline of how such content affects brand engagement both quantitative and qualitative.

Practically speaking, the results of the given research can be of value to marketers, businesses, and content creators. Since short-form video is still on top of the digital landscape, learning how to be effective can guide organisations to create more effective and economical marketing tactics. The provided insights can help a brand to produce the content

that matches the preferences of the audience and the algorithm of the platform, which will eventually enhance the engagement and the brand performance.

The study is also especially topical in the conditions of the contemporary digital landscape where the rivalry in gaining attention among the audience is intense, and the brands have to adapt to the ever-altering trends of consuming the content.

1.7 Scope of the Study

In this study, the researcher concentrates on short-form video content in three popular social media platforms, including Tik Tok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts. It also analyzes the impact of this type of content on the brand engagement including the user interaction in terms of likes, comments, shares and emotional reactions.

The research is confined to secondary research which involves usage of available academic literature, industry reports, and case studies. It does not require the gathering of primary data, e.g. surveys or interviews. Although this enables one to broadly analyse existing knowledge, it could experience a potential limitation to the capability to capture the real time consumer behaviour.

1.8 Organisation of the Dissertation.

This dissertation has the following structure:

- Chapter 1: Introduction- Provides the background, research problem, aim, objectives, research questions, and significance of the study.
- Chapter 2: Literature Review: Is a critical review of the existing literature on the topic of short-form video content, platform differences, algorithms, and brand engagement.
- Chapter 3: Methodology, the research design, sources of data, and data analysis methods are explained.
- Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis Chapter 4 describes and discusses the findings of the literature review.
- Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations - Concludes the findings, implications and future research and practice recommendations.

1.9 Summary

In a nutshell, this chapter has presented the topic of the research by outlining various reasons as to why short-form video content has become such an important aspect of digital marketing and how it can be utilized to improve brand interaction. It has stated the problem of the research, the aim and objectives, and the most important questions that should be addressed in the study. The relevance and extent of the study has also been talked about which gives a

clear ground on the next chapters.

The following chapter will critically analyze the available literature to continue understanding the importance of short-form video content in the development of the brand engagement.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The fast introduction of digital technologies has dramatically changed the marketing communication, especially in the emergence of social media sites. The change in content format that is less traditional like text and static images to video-based content has been observed in recent years. The short-form video content is one of them, particularly on the Tik Tok, Instagram reels, and YouTube shorts. The fast development of the social media platforms has changed the means of communication between the brands and the audiences (Rabyn et al., 2025). Over the past few years, short-form video content, including Tik Tok videos, Instagram Reel and YouTube Shorts, has become one of the strongest marketing tools on the internet.

Such change can be explained by altering consumer behaviour in which consumers are now moving towards faster, entertaining and easily consumable content. The emergence of mobile usage and shorter attention span only worsened the situation, as mobile usage and short-form video instances become more popular. Consequently, brands are looking towards leveraging such platforms in order to become more visible, reach audiences, and advance the level of engagement.

Social Media Platforms Market Report 2026

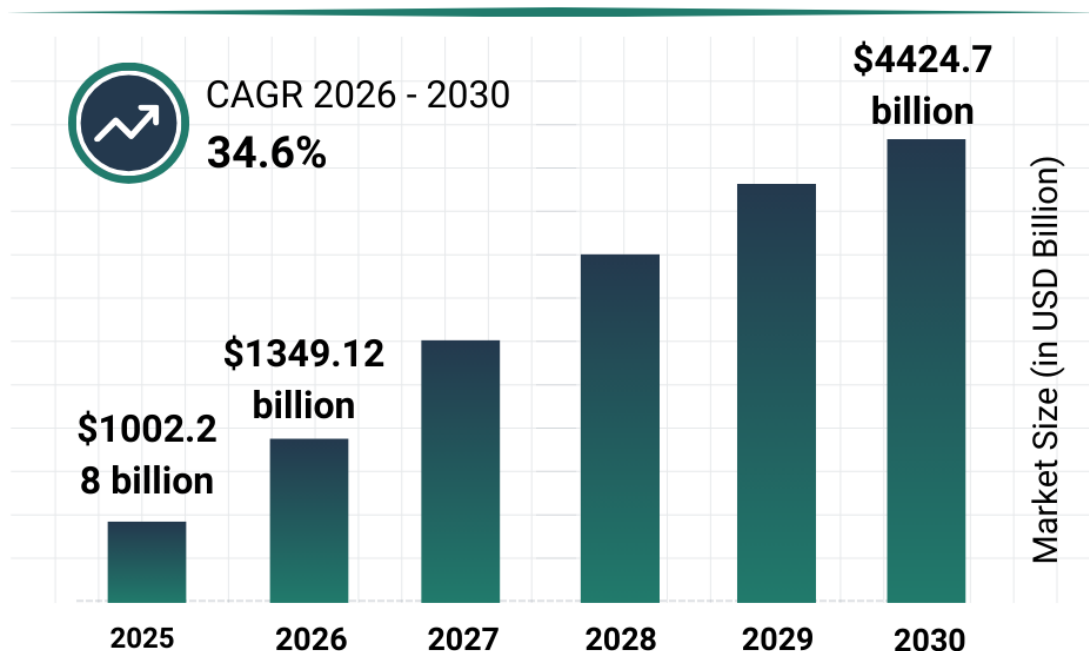


Figure: Social media platforms market report, 2026

Source: (The Business Research Company, 2026)

The high rate at which social media sites have been growing has really changed the way digital marketing is done globally. According to the recent market reports, the social media market worldwide is projected to increase in size with a current value of about 1002.28 billion in 2025 and 4424.7 billion in 2030, representing a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 34.6. This massive increase points out the growing reliance of businesses and consumers to social media platforms to communicate and market and consume content. Consequently, new formats of content have become popular, including short-form videos, which allows the brands to attract audiences to the highly competitive and rapidly changing digital environment.

This chapter presents a critical review on the available literature on the topic of short-form video content and its contribution to brand engagement. It also focuses on the distinction among big platforms, the place of algorithms in content exposure, and how brands work to increase engagement. Moreover, it also reveals main gaps in the literature that underlie the necessity of this study.

2.2 Short-Form Video Content: Definition and Importance

Video content that is short form is a type of video content that is usually between a few seconds and about one minute in length, which is consumed quickly and has high engagement. In comparison with long-form videos, which are quite informative, short-form videos are aimed at conveying brief, attractive, and effective messages.

The growing popularity of short-form video content is directly associated with the shift in the preferences of the digital consumers. The research indicates that content that is entertaining, visually dynamic and easy to consume is more likely to be read by the users. Youtube videos can fulfil these needs by including the following elements: music, storytelling, humour and trends (Rabyn et al., 2025).

The shareability of the short form video content is another major characteristic of the content. Videos are easily shared between the platforms giving them a wider audience. This is what has rendered short-form videos to be a useful tool to use by brands that intend to increase their audience and enhance brand awareness. While most studies agree that short-form videos increase engagement, there is limited discussion on how different content styles influence long-term brand relationships. Moreover, existing research largely focuses on quantitative metrics rather than emotional engagement, highlighting a gap that this study aims to address.

2.3 Shift Towards Short-Form Video Platforms

The shift to the practices of short-form video platforms has been instigated by technological shifts as well as a changing trend in consumer behaviour. Tik Tok, Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts among other platforms have changed how content is produced, distributed and consumed (Wigayha and Winata, 2025).

Tik Tok has contributed a lot towards the popularisation of short forms video content. Its easy to use interface and powerful algorithmic system enable the content to access a large audience, regardless of the lack of many followers. This has been very appealing to both content creators and brands.

Instagram Reels, which is a part of the Instagram platform, enables companies to reach their current customers and at the same time attract new users via its explore section. On the same note, YouTube Shorts channels on the popularity of YouTube and its search features, helping the brands to reach a wide audience.

The similarities notwithstanding, each platform is differentiated by user behaviour, content format, as well as algorithm arrangement. These differences are also significant to comprehend to come up with effective marketing strategies.

2.4 Distinction Between TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts

Despite the fact that all three platforms: TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts are dedicated to the short-form video content, they differ in a variety of critical aspects.

TikTok is a discovery-oriented platform, as the content is suggested to users by the page of For You. It also focuses on content relevance and interaction with the user which makes new content easier to go viral.

The Instagram Reels exists in a social networking context. It will enable the brands to capitalize on their existing followers as well as expanding their reach to new users. Its range is however usually affected by the network linkages at hand (Wigayha and Winata, 2025).

YouTube Shorts is different as it is an aggregation of content in short format with long-form video ecosystem of YouTube. It offers the brands a chance to incorporate both short and long content strategies with the benefits of being discovered and searchable.

Such variations indicate that platform-specific approaches are significant in marketing short-form video.

Although Tik Tok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts are all platforms that support the short-form video content, their dynamics of operation are very different. Tik Tok is mainly an algorithmic application, as it is preoccupied with content discovery, which is accomplished

by using personalised recommendations. Conversely, Instagram Reels can be considered more reliant on the established social networks, which means that engagement will be based on the relationships between the follower and the other parties. YouTube Shorts is an integration of both discovery-based and search-based systems, which provide higher views of long content. These distinctions imply that the engagement strategies cannot be standardized across platforms and has to be customized to platform peculiarities.

2.5 Role of Algorithms in Short-Form Video Marketing

The algorithms become very important in defining the success and visibility of the short-form video content. These algorithms examine the behaviour of the user, such as watch time, likes, shares, and comments, in order to suggest the content that matches the preferences of the user.

When using social networks like Tik Tok, the algorithm is very developed and aims at personalisation. It makes it so that the users are constantly fed with relevant and engaging content. This enhances the chances of interaction and long usage by the user on the platform. This is an opportunity and a challenge to brands (Iseal, 2025). Good and entertaining material can get to a substantial number of people within a short time, and without even substantial marketing expenses. Nevertheless, the brands should be ready to constantly change their content strategies so that they correspond to the preferences of algorithms.

ALGORITHM COMPARISON

TikTok	Reels	Shorts
It stands out through its highly personalized “For You” page, which uses a sophisticated algorithm to serve content based on user behavior and preferences.	Content is shown in the main Instagram feed, Stories, and the Explore tab, leveraging Instagram’s existing algorithm.	Are primarily featured on the Shorts shelf on the YouTube homepage, where they benefit from YouTube’s recommendation system.

Figure: Algorithm Comparison

Source: (Socialinsider, 2024)

Algorithms are relevant in deciding the success and visibility of short-form video content on platforms. Tik Tok has a very personalised For You page which suggests content based on user behaviour and preferences. Conversely, Instagram Reels delivers the content in the feeds, Stories, and the Explore page, which is based on the current social network algorithm. YouTube Shorts, however, have the advantage of the more sophisticated recommendation system of YouTube, showing content in the Shorts shelf of the homepage. Such algorithm variations shape the content discovery and interaction, and brands must ensure that they have platform-specific approaches to reach as many people as possible and engage with the audience (Socialinsider, 2024).

Moreover, algorithms are also more likely to emphasize the content that brings immediate results. This promotes the brands to produce content that is quick to catch the eye, keeps viewers engaged and involved.

2.6 Short-Form Video and Brand Engagement

The brand engagement is the interaction between the consumer with the brand that includes likes, commenting, sharing, and engaging in brand-related content. It has been found that one

of the effective tools of improving such engagement is the short-form video content.

The engagements of short-form videos are interactive, which motivates the user to interact with the content. This will enable consumers to engage in brand communication instead of being passive observers through features like comments, shares and user-created content.

Also, short video format helps brands to be more real and relatable. Short-form videos are more casual and interactive as opposed to conventional advertising, which can be formal and promotional. This appeals to the contemporary audience and enhances emotional appeal (Dong et al., 2024).

The use of trends and storytelling is another key factor. Brands can become more relevant and visible by following the trends and becoming more popular. Story telling, even in a brief time span, assists in establishing memorable experiences that contribute to increasing brand perception. Brand engagement on social media is the interactions between the users and branded content, such as likes, comments, shares and general participation of the audience. Short video platforms have been identified to create more engagement rates since the platforms promote active interaction among the users. As Towpek and Suriani (2025) report, social media with algorithms are more inclined to deliver content that makes users spend more time engaging with the content. The videos that attract attention fast and can be interacted with thus have higher chances of being pushed up the platform algorithms and can reach a greater number of people.

Besides, short-form videos may establish deeper emotional bonds between consumers and brands. According to Rabyn et al. (2025), on these platforms, it is possible to have parasocial interactions, where the audience forms a feeling of familiarity and personal connection with the brand through repeated exposure to relatable content. Such an interaction is also capable of affecting brand perception and consumer behaviour positively, which translates to an increased engagement and purchasing intentions.

Nevertheless, even though the popularity of the short-form video marketing is increasing, there is little scholarly evidence on its direct influence on brand engagement. Most of the available literature is devoted to social media marketing in general and does not look at the short-form video content as a unique form of communication (Wigayha and Winata, 2025). Also, it is typically a part of several studies which center on quantitative measures, like views or likes, but few discuss the qualitative side of the engagement, like the perceptions of the audience and their emotional reactions (Haron et al., n.d.). Thus, additional studies are needed to comprehend more about the impact of the short-form video content on the brand engagement in the digital marketing potential.

2.7 Brand Awareness and Engagement Strategies

There are numerous approaches to the maximization of the effect of short-form video content that are developed by the brands. The involvement in trending challenges and content formats is one of the typical strategies and makes it more visible and relevant.

Another strategy is influencer marketing. Influencers have built the rapport with their audiences, so their content becomes more credible and interesting. Coupling with influencers will help brands to connect with their target audiences better.

Produced content by users is also important in increasing the brand engagement. Promoting content creation and sharing in connection with a brand makes it more authentic and improves the bonds between consumers.

In addition, performance metrics like views, likes, shares, and watch time are used to measure the effectiveness of brands with regards to their content. These measures can give information about the behaviour of the audience and can be used to narrow down marketing strategies.

2.8 Growth of Short-Form Video in Digital Marketing

The heavy development of the social media has brought about great change in the digital marketing. The creation of the short-form video content is one of the most impactful changes, especially on TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts. Through these platforms, brands are able to communicate with audiences through short, visually appealing videos, which are meant to win the attention of people in a brief period of time. Short-form videos are one minute long videos and are meant to provide brief, entertaining, and easy-to-share videos (Towpek and Suriani, 2025). The younger audience, in particular, Generation Z and millennials, is spiking interest in this format due to the preference of fast and visually dynamic content over standard advertising formats.

It has been stated that the video-based marketing is more efficient in capturing the attention of the audience than the text-based post or a static image. Wigayha and Winata (2025) believe that visual storytelling is a major aspect of online marketing since it assists companies to build memorable and emotionally impactful experiences on the consumer. Short-form videos enable the brand to introduce imaginative and relatable information that would resonate with the audience and would create brand awareness and enhance customer relationships. Also, informal and authentic style of the videos frequently makes the brands seen as more accessible and more trustworthy to viewers.

2.9 Critical review of existing studies

The current literature on the short-form video content underscores its increased significance in digital marketing; nevertheless, a number of drawbacks and inconsistencies exist. Although lots of studies recognize the potential of platforms like Tik Tok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts to improve brand engagement, its level and intensity of analysis can differ considerably across research (Mondal et al., 2023).

The greatest weakness noted is that it over-values quantitative metrics like views, likes, and shares to gauge engagement. Research by Apasrawirote et al. (2022) and Basnet (2025) is mainly centered on the performance indicators, which tend to look past the qualitative factors, including emotional connection, audience perception, and authenticity. Conversely, Dong et al. (2024) and Rabyn et al. (2025) highlight the significance of storytelling, relatability, and parasocial interaction in the consumer engagement. This shows a gap in the literature between metric and experience-based approaches to engagement understanding.

Moreover, a platform-based view is taken by many studies as opposed to a comparative view. As an example, studies that concentrate on TikTok alone accentuate the algorithmic power of the platform in terms of content discoverability, but the research on Instagram Reels accentuates the social connection and brand consistency (Wigayha and Winata, 2025). Nonetheless, a small body of research offers a comparative view of engagement strategies across diverse platforms, which leaves a knowledge gap regarding the differences in engagement strategies in diverse digital settings.

The next major problem is the lack of exploration of the influence of algorithms. Although it is accepted that the role of algorithms is significant in research by Towpek and Suriani (2025), the specific research has not explored the effect of changes in algorithms on the long-term brand appearance and involvement. This is a great gap in the existing research given that the social media sites are dynamic.

Also, a significant part of the literature is grounded on secondary information, and theoretical examination instead of empirical research. Haron et al. (n.d.) point out that little primary research has been conducted on real-time user behaviour, especially regarding changing trends and consumer preferences. This casts doubt on the generalisability and practical applicability of findings.

The other weakness is that it does not put emphasis on long-term results like brand loyalty and purchase intent. Although a number of studies have validated that the content of short-form videos enhances consumption, fewer studies have evaluated whether this consumption leads to long-term consumer relationships or actual consumer purchasing behaviour

(Bikowski, 2025).

Study	Focus Area	Key Findings	Limitations
Apasrawirote et al. (2022)	Engagement metrics	Focuses on likes, shares, and views	Ignores emotional engagement
Dong et al. (2024)	Short video marketing	Highlights storytelling & relatability	Limited platform comparison
Rabyn et al. (2025)	Brand perception	Emphasises emotional connection	Lacks empirical data
Wigayha & Winata (2025)	Platform differences	Explains TikTok vs Reels strategies	No integrated analysis
Basnet (2025)	Small brand marketing	Shows growth via short videos	Focuses only on quantitative results
Towpek & Suriani (2025)	Algorithm role	Highlights importance of engagement signals	Limited discussion on long-term impact

In general, the literature is a good source to understand the use of short-form video in digital marketing, but it is still disjointed. It is evident that more integrated, comparative and empirically based research is required that incorporates both quantitative and qualitative aspects of engagement. This paper will fill these gaps by providing an in-depth discussion of short-form video content in various platforms and how it influences brand engagement.

2.10 Theoretical framework

This investigation is underpinned by pertinent theoretical viewpoints that define user behaviour, interaction and content accessibility in online settings.

Uses and Gratifications Theory.

The Uses and Gratifications Theory is about why people take active choices of which media to consume in order to fulfill their needs; e.g., their need to be entertained, informed, or to interact with others. Within the framework of the short-form video platforms, the users are interested in quick, visually engaging, and entertaining content that satisfies their need to get a quick fix of content. This theory can be used to explain why short-form videos become increasingly popular and why they are able to draw a large audience.

Engagement Theory

The Engagement Theory is centered on active user engagement via interaction, collaboration and involvement. In the social media, the participation is measured in terms of likes, shares, comments, and user-generated content. Video content in the short form improves engagement

as it promotes instant interaction, making the users active participants and not passive observers. This theory lends credence to the premise that increased involvement gives rise to improved brand-consumer relationships.

Platform Theory (Algorithmic Visibility Theory Theory)

The Theory of Algorithmic Visibility describes the manipulation of content distribution and visibility by algorithms on digital platforms. Users are based on the data of user behaviour (watch time, likes, shares) to recommend content. The theory emphasizes that the level of content success does not necessarily rely on quality but also its correlation to platform algorithms. It also describes disparities in content access among platforms.

Link to Study

Collectively, these theories offer a holistic perspective to comprehend the impact of short-form video content on the user behaviour, engagement patterns, and brand visibility across the digital platforms.

2.11 Psychological Drivers and Influencer Role in Short-Form Video Engagement

The swift development of short-form video platforms like Tik Tok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts is not only technologically enhanced but is also deeply embedded in the psychology of the consumers. It is imperative to understand the psychological process that goes on in user engagement to elucidate why short-form video content has become a highly effective tool in digital marketing.

The vision of less attention span is one of the most important psychological motivators. Modern consumers, in particular, younger viewers are more likely to be drawn to fast, engaging, and easily digestible content. Short-form videos are meant to convey information and entertainment in a matter of a few seconds, and this fits perfectly in this behavioural change. According to Burke (2025), digital audiences tend to interact with the content that involves minimum cognitive effort and provides immediate value. This consumer friendliness enhances the chances of viewing the content again and spending a lot of time on the platform. Another important factor is instant gratification. Video platforms that offer video content in short forms offer the benefit of having continuous streams of video content, which users can easily move between one video and another. This gives the impression of instant gratification, since users do not have to wait to view engaging or informative content. Bikowski (2025) says this extreme consumption behaviour helps to strengthen the habitual consumption behaviours. This means that users will spend more time on these platforms and this exposes branded content.

Emotional stimulation is also important in spurring engagement. Without any specific format, humour, narration, music, and relatable situations are often used to bring emotional reactions to short-form videos. These emotional instigators have the potential to considerably impact user behaviour by ensuring that content is more memorable and shareable. As Dong et al. (2024) emphasize, storytelling in short videos contributes to the establishment of an emotional resonance, enhancing the relationship between brands and consumers. It is this emotional involvement that is necessary in developing long-term brand relationships.

Also, the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) concept is also important to the consumption of short-form video. Social media platforms often create a trending content, challenges, and viral video, urging users to keep up. This leaves a feeling of urgency to the users to keep on getting new content. This behaviour is further reinforced by the fact that algorithm-driven platforms prioritise trending content and high-performing content, as noted by Towpek and Surani (2025). This means that the users tend to engage more with what is currently trending and this increases the rate at which the brands that are in line with the trend will engage.

Social validation is another psychological criterion. The likes, comments and shares that are features serve as a pointer to the popularity of the content and influence how the content is perceived by users. When users notice that a video is highly engaging, they will positively respond by watching and engaging with the video. This forms a feedback loop in which popular content is further brought into the limelight. According to Apasrawirote et al. (2022), engagement metrics not only help to measure the user interaction but also can affect the algorithmic promotion of the content. This indicates the need to create content that is interactive.

Furthermore, parasocial interaction is a key concept in understanding user engagement on short-form video platforms. Parasocial relationships are the one-way emotional relationships, which users form with content creators or brands. With the repetition of content that is relatable and authentic, users will start to experience a feeling of familiarity and trust. As Rabyn et al. (2025) indicate, the interactions may have a beneficial effect on the brand perception and consumer behaviour. It is especially applicable to short-form video marketing, where the content might seem conversational and intimate.

The impact of influencer marketing has also been gaining importance in the short-form video interaction alongside psychological drivers. Influencers can serve as mediators between brands and consumers, and they can help to establish trust and credibility. In contrast to conventional advertising, the content created by influencers seems more authentic and relatable. Basnet (2025) states that influencer marketing is especially effective when small

and emerging brands are involved since they do not have to spend a lot of money on marketing.

Influencers may be generally divided into macro-influencers and micro-influencers. Macro-influencers have a higher following and reach and micro-influencers are smaller and more engaged. It has been shown that micro-influencers can be more successful at creating higher engagement rates because they have a more direct connection with the followers (Bahatan et al., 2025). This renders them to be very useful to brands that strive to establish meaningful interactions as opposed to mere visibility.

Trust and authenticity are closely connected with the effectiveness of the influencers. The consumers tend to be more involved with the content that seems authentic as opposed to being overly promotional. Video platforms of short format promote a relaxed and spontaneous approach to content which will further this perception. As emphasized by Dong et al. (2024), authenticity is one of the factors that contribute to the engagement, as it makes the content more relatable and believable.

Furthermore, influencers have a considerable role in the creation and diffusion of trends. Most viral challenges and content formats are created by influencers and are subsequently implemented by brands. This enables the brands to become a part of the existing trends making themselves visible and relevant. According to Wigayha and Winata (2025), the involvement in trends can provide a significant boost to the engagement, particularly when the activity is accompanied by influencer collaboration.

User-generated content (UGC) is another essential element of influencer marketing. Influencers usually prompt their followers to generate and post content in regards to a brand, resulting in greater engagement and organic exposure. Dang et al. (2025) suggest that UGC positively influences authenticity and consumer trust because it is an actual user experience and not controlled by the brand. This participatory method will turn consumers into active contributors as opposed to being passive viewers.

Along with its benefits, influencer marketing also has some challenges. The potential loss of brand control is one of the most important issues. Given that influencers develop their content in their style, it is not always that everything will fit perfectly into the identity of the brand. Additionally, over-reliance on influencers can reduce the originality of brand content. According to Bahatan et al. (2025), a balance between influencer collaboration and brand consistency is essential to long-term success.

Moreover, platform algorithms determine the effectiveness of influencer marketing. Influencer-created content has more chances of being promoted when it has a high level of

engagement during the early phases. According to Towpek and Surani (2025), the content with high levels of interaction is prioritised in the work of the algorithmic systems, which means that the influencer partnerships become one of the strategic advantages of the brand. To sum up, the effectiveness of short-form video content in encouraging brand engagement can be greatly explained by the psychological factors and the increased significance of influencer marketing. Instant gratification, emotional attachment, social approval and FOMO are some of the elements that influence user behaviour and interaction patterns. At the same time, influencers enhance engagement by providing authenticity, trust, and relatability. Combined, these forces present a dynamic setting where brands are able to effectively connect with audiences and maximise engagement on digital platforms.

2.12 Research Gap

Despite the fact that the presence of literature speaks of the significance of short-form video content in digital marketing, one can notice several limitations. Numerous researches have covered social media marketing in general, but not the short-form video platforms in particular.

Another area of limited comparison research is the study of the distinctions between the TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts. The majority of the literature is inclined to concentrate on one platform that limits the general knowledge about marketing short-form video.

Moreover, the studies tend to focus on quantitative strategies like views and likes without focusing on qualitative indicators, including the emotional connection, sympathy, and perception of users (Basnet, 2025).

The current literature evidences both congruency and incongruency on the efficacy of the short form video content. Various studies put more emphasis on quantitative engagement metrics like views, likes and shares as a measure of success. Other researchers, however, suggest that such qualitative factors as emotional connection, relatability, and authenticity have a more significant influence on the consumer behaviour. This contrast shows a difference between the metric-based and experience-based approaches to understanding brand engagement.

Although numerous studies are based on examining the specifics of a particular platform, such as the algorithmic benefits offered by TikTok or the social connectivity provided by Instagram, there is not much comparative analysis among different platforms. Also, there is a gap in the comprehension of the sustainability of short-form video marketing communication

strategies due to the nature of existing research in this area.

Generally, the literature is disjointed, and there is no coherent and comparative and theory-based analysis. This paper fills these gaps by integrating platform comparison, algorithmic influence, and quantitative and qualitative aspects of brand engagement.

The other major gap is the fact that the role of algorithms has not been explored much. Although the significance of algorithms is accepted, the impact of algorithms on the visibility of content and the interaction with a brand is not analyzed adequately (Mondal et al., 2023).

According to these limitations, a more detailed analysis that would combine the differences in platforms, influence of algorithms, and qualitative elements of engagement is necessary. This paper seeks to fill these gaps by referring to how the short-form video material contributes to brand engagement using a systematic review methodology.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the research approach that was used in this research is described. It elaborates on the research design, methodology, data sources, and data analysis techniques in studying the effect of short-form video content on brand engagement. Also in the chapter, the author defends the use of secondary research and outlines how the systematic review was carried out in this study.

This methodology aims at making sure that the research is done in a systematic, open and dependable way. Through systematic review practice, the research will synthesise the available literature and give a broad scope of the subject.

3.2 Research Design and Approach

This research paper will use the qualitative research design that is premised on a systematic literature review. The qualitative approach is suitable in this study because the researcher is interested in the concepts, patterns and relationships and not in measuring them quantitatively (Sinh & Nguyet, 2025).

The systematic review approach will enable the gathering and evaluation of the available academic research, industry reports and other publications (Kayode et al., 2025). By so doing, the research will be founded on credible and peer reviewed sources, which increase the research reliability and validity.

The study is conducted in a deductive manner, as the available theories and concepts concerning the social media marketing and brand engagement are explored and implemented to the environment of short-form video material. This assists in determining patterns and making significant conclusions to the literature (Chen, 2023).

3.3 Justification for Secondary Research

This paper is based on secondary research and not primary research. There are a number of reasons explaining why secondary research was decided to be used.

To begin with, there has been extensive coverage of the issue of short-form video marketing in existing academic literature, industry reports, as well as, case studies. Thus, it has enough data to analyze it thoroughly without having to gather primary data.

Secondly, this study will focus on synthesising and critically reviewing the literature as opposed to creating new empirical information. A systematic review would be especially appropriate when it comes to determining patterns, trends, and gaps in the literature (Apasrawirote et al., 2022).

Thirdly, the primary data collection is not feasible due to practical restrictions in terms of time and resources. The use of secondary research enables the possibility to include a larger number of sources in the given time period.

Lastly, secondary data offers an opportunity to receive a variety of opinions and extensive research, which will make the analysis deeper and broader.

3.4 Sources of Data

In this study, the data is gathered using different secondary sources such as academic journals, research articles, books, and industry reports. These are the sources offering some information about short-form video marketing, platform algorithms, and brand engagement (Jiang et al., 2024).

The main databases to be used in data collection are:

- a. Google Scholar
- b. ResearchGate
- c. ScienceDirect
- d. Emerald Insight

These databases were chosen as they are credible and peer-reviewed academic materials can be accessed.

3.5 Search Strategy

The systematic search strategy has been used to find the literature that is pertinent to this study. Relevant studies were included by the means of specific keywords and search strings.

The keywords in the search were:

- a. “short-form video marketing”
- b. “TikTok marketing”
- c. “Instagram Reels engagement”
- d. “YouTube Shorts marketing”
- e. “brand involvement on social networks”.
- f. “social media algorithms and interaction.

The search strings with the use of Boolean operators were:

- a. “short-form video AND brand engagement”.
- b. “Tik Tok OR instagram reels or You Tube shorts.” AND “social media marketing as well as short video content”.

The search was confined to the studies that are published in English and within a relevant time to maintain the inclusion of recent and relevant literature.

3.6 PRISMA Framework

In order to make the process of choosing relevant literature systematic, transparent, and replicable, the framework of the Preferred Reporting Items to Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) will be adopted in the study. PRISMA is generally recognised as a standard guideline to undertake systematic literature reviews, which allow researchers to clearly describe the process of identifying, screening, and selecting studies.

The PRISMA application to this study contributes to the increase in reliability and validity of the study, as it makes sure that only relevant and high-quality sources are used. It also offers a systematic method of reducing bias in the choice of studies and also enables the readers to comprehend how the final dataset was obtained. This study follows the PRISMA process that has four major steps:

1. Identification:

A wide search was provided in various academic databases such as Google Scholar, ResearchGate, ScienceDirect, and Emerald Insight. The keywords were: short-form video marketing, Tik Tok engagement, Instagram Reels marketing, You Tube Shorts, and brand engagement on social media. And and or were used as the Boolean operators to narrow down the search results. In this process, a total of 60 records were detected.

2. Screening:

At this point, any duplicated records were eliminated and the rest of the studies were filtered in accordance to their titles and abstracts. Those studies that were not directly related to short-form video content or engagement with the brand were eliminated. This measure was to make sure that only pertinent studies could pass to the next phase.

3. Eligibility:

The rest of the studies were assessed at the full-text level to identify the relevance and quality of the studies. In this stage, 40 full-text articles have been evaluated on the basis of the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Articles that did not have enough relevance, credibility or quality of the academic work were excluded.

4. Included Studies:

Upon the use of all screening and eligibility criteria 40 studies have been identified to be included finally in the analysis. Based on these studies, thematic analysis was created and utilized to discuss the research objectives.

The PRISMA framework provides the research with the necessary methodological rigour and transparency in the process. It further assists in enhancing the reliability of the results in that it shows that there was an organized manner in which the literature was selected.

3.7 Selection of Studies

The process of selecting the studies followed a systematic and structured process according to PRISMA framework. This process was focused on finding high-quality and relevant literature that can directly contribute to the understanding of the effectiveness of the short-form video content in brand engagement.

Firstly, a general search strategy was employed to get a wide scope of research studies on the research topic. This led to the discovery of 60 records of different academic databases. In these studies, journal articles, conference papers and industry reports were used.

During the screening phase, the duplication of studies was eliminated to make sure that no source was duplicated. The rest of the studies were then reviewed based on their titles and their abstract. In this step, the research that was not directly connected to the short-form video content, social media marketing, or brand engagement were eliminated.

The second step entailed a thorough full-text analysis of the rest of the studies. Forty studies were reviewed to determine eligibility. All the studies were thoroughly reviewed to make sure that they were related to the research objectives and presented significant information on the subject matter.

The last selection involved 40 studies that satisfied all the inclusion criteria. These researches were deemed as reliable and relevant studies and formed the basis of the data analysis in the current research.

This systematic selection procedure made sure that the study was grounded on credible and high-quality sources, thus improving the validity and reliability of the research outcomes.

3.8 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria.

To ensure that the quality and relevance of the research were maintained, clear inclusions as well as exclusion criteria were developed. These criteria served to sift out irrelevant research and to make sure that only relevant literature was incorporated into the analysis.

Inclusion Criteria:

- Research on short-form video apps like Tik Tok, Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts.
- Studies pertinent to brand interaction, social media marketing, or digital marketing.
- Research journal articles and industry credible reports.
- Articles published in English.
- Recent research that indicates contemporary trends in digital marketing.

Exclusion Criteria:

Research that is not related to the content of short-form videos.

Studies concentrating solely on long-form video portals.

Sources which are not academic or reliable like blogs that lack credibility.

Duplicate studies

Articles that do not have enough data or are not relevant to the research objectives.

The relevance and reliability of the studies were ensured by the use of these criteria. It was also useful in ensuring uniformity in the selection process thus minimizing the possibility of bias.

3.9 Thematic Analysis Framework

A thematic analysis framework has been used to analyse the chosen literature. Thematic analysis is a common qualitative research technique that assists in identifying, analysing and interpreting patterns or themes in data.

Thematic analysis is suitable in this study because it will enable the researcher to understand complex relationships between short-form video contents and brand engagement. It also allows the organisation of vast quantities of data into purposeful themes.

The thematic analysis process in this study entailed the following steps:

1. Familiarisation with Data:

Each of the chosen studies was read more than once in order to get a profound comprehension of the material.

2. Initial Coding:

The main ideas, concepts and patterns were defined and labeled as codes.

3. Theme Development:

The similar codes were put together to create larger themes.

4. Review of Themes:

Themes were narrowed down so that it is relevant and in line with the objectives of the research.

5. Final Themes:

The last themes were identified and applied in organizing the findings in Chapter 4.

The major themes that were identified in this study are:

- The place of algorithms in content visibility.
- Drivers of consumer attraction and engagement.
- Connection and relatability of emotions.

- Impact on brand awareness and engagement
- Differences in platforms, and strategic implications.

The thematic analysis has given a methodical approach to make out the data and give significant conclusions out of the chosen literature.

3.10 Data Analysis Method

Qualitative thematic analysis was used to analyse the data collected out of the selected studies. The technique is applicable in discovering patterns and relationships in a textual data. The process of analysis was initiated by thoroughly examining all the chosen studies. The important details that pertain to the video content that appears in short forms, the engagement strategies, and consumer behaviour were isolated. **The following steps were followed in the data analysis process:**

a. Data Familiarisation:

To get the content of all the selected articles, the researcher has gone through all the selected articles.

b. Coding:

Significant ideas and common patterns were recognized and coded.

c. Categorisation:

Similarities were used to group codes into larger categories.

d. Theme Development:

The categories were furthered into themes that describe the important findings.

Interpretation:

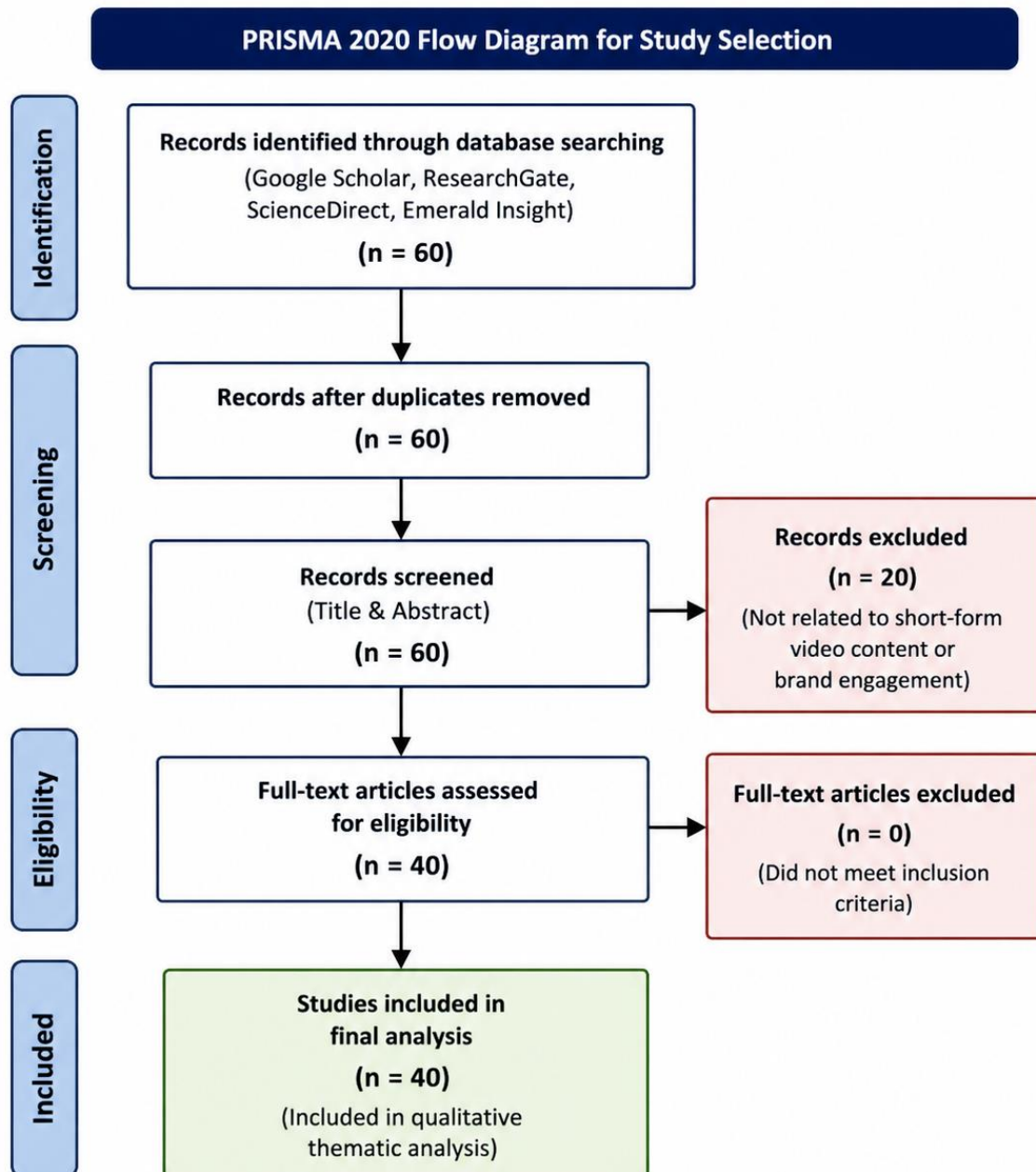


Figure X: PRISMA flow diagram showing the study selection process.

Note: n = Number of records/studies

The themes were analysed in relation to the research objectives and questions.

The approach made it possible to conduct a systematic and organized data analysis. It also aided in establishing both quantitative (including engagement metrics) and qualitative (including emotional connection and relatability) aspects.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Even though the research is founded on secondary data, ethical considerations were also a

closely followed aspect. Academic integrity and ethical research practices were followed in the entire process of the research.

To prevent plagiarism, firstly, all sources applied in the study were correctly referenced and cited to prevent plagiarism. The credible academic databases were used to make sure that the information used was reliable and authentic.

Secondly, the study did not involve any primary data collection such as surveys or interviews. Thus, no problems regarding the consent of participants and their confidentiality were noted.

Thirdly, the data considered was publicly available and no confidential or sensitive data was accessed.

Finally, the researcher was objective and did not bias in terms of research relevance and methodological quality. PRISMA framework also guaranteed the transparency of the research process.

Such ethical concerns help to make the study credible and reliable.

3.12 Summary

This chapter has described the methodology employed in this research including research design, data sources and analysis techniques used. The PRISMA framework was adopted so that a systematic and transparent process of the selection of the relevant studies can be performed.

This numbered 60 records out of which 40 studies were evaluated in full text and eventually included in the analysis. Clear inclusion and exclusion criteria were employed to make sure that only high-quality and relevant studies were included.

Thematic analysis was adopted as the main approach of the analysis of the data and its engagement with the brand as well as the identification of the key themes in the short-form video content and brand involvement.

On the whole, the methodology gives a solid ground to the research so that the findings that are presented in the following chapter can be founded on credible and systematically analysed data.

Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the results of the systematic literature review are presented and analyzed in terms of a thematic approach. The thematic analysis was chosen as recommended in Chapter 3 to discover common patterns, concepts, and relationships in the chosen literature on short-form video content and brand engagement. The results are grouped into major themes that rose during the analysis of data, which makes it possible to have a systematic and in-depth view of how the content of short-form videos can affect brand engagement on platforms like Tik Tok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts (Toktassynova, 2025). ***The identified themes are:***

1. Role of algorithms in content visibility
2. The drivers of consumer attraction and engagement.
3. Connection and relatability on an emotional level.
4. Impact on brand awareness and engagement
5. Differences and strategic implications based on platforms (Wigayha and Winata, 2025).

All themes are addressed in terms of pre-existing literature and with the research objectives and questions.

4.2 Mapping of Findings with Literature

Theme	Key Concepts	Supporting Literature	Relevance to Research Objectives
Algorithms and visibility	Personalisation, recommendation systems, reach	Iseal (2025); Towpek and Suriani (2025)	Objective 5
Consumer engagement drivers	Attention span, entertainment, trends	Rabyn et al. (2025); Wigayha and Winata (2025)	Objective 2
Emotional connection	Relatability, authenticity, parasocial interaction	Dong et al. (2024); Kayode et al. (2025)	Objective 3
Brand awareness and interaction	Likes, shares, comments, participation	Apasrawirote et al., 2022	Objective 3 and 4
Platform differences	TikTok vs Reels vs Shorts strategies (Wigayha and	Wigayha and Winata (2025)	Objective 1 and 4

	Winata, 2025)		
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This mapping will show that the results are both supported by the already existing academic discussions as well as the research gaps that have been identified in Chapter 2 are also addressed.

4.3 Theme 1: Role of Algorithms in Content Visibility

Among the most prevailing themes developed during the analysis, it is important to mention the crucial role of algorithms as the determinant of the video content popularity and fame of short videos. Tik Tok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts are all social media platforms that are highly dependent on recommendation algorithms that focus on user engagement metrics: watch time, likes, shares, and comments.

According to the literature, these algorithms have serious impacts on the way content is distributed to the audiences (Moreno et al., 2024). Contrasting with the traditional social media marketing, where the range was determined by the number of followers, short-form video platforms allow them to go viral without depending on the popularity of the creator. This can be especially seen on the For You page of TikTok, which personalises streams of content according to user behaviour (Haron et al., n.d.).

Based on the analysis, one can conclude that algorithms are both an opportunity and a challenge to the brands. On the one hand, they enable the brands to gain high visibility without having to spend a lot of money on advertising. Conversely, they demand brands to keep changing their content strategies in accordance with the algorithmic preferences. Information that is not interesting in the first few seconds is not going to be promoted, which is why it is important to resort to immediate engagement (Apasrawirote et al., 2022).

Besides contributing to the increased visibility, algorithms also add some degree of unpredictability to the content that affects the content performance in a big way. Although algorithmic systems are intended to make the user experience personal, they tend to be black-boxed, and brands cannot fully comprehend or predict how content will reach them (Shi & Kim, 2025). This makes the environment dynamic in that even high-quality content can not succeed unless it is in line with the current algorithmic preferences.

Besides, the focus on instant engagement metrics, including watch time and engagement, makes brands focus on short-term performance, rather than long-term strategy. This can result in the production of cliched content as opposed to content that is meaningful to communicate. Towpek and Suriani (2025) state that content that attracts the reader in the initial few seconds is more likely to be promoted, which is why it is required to have

powerful hooks and a rapid flow of the narrative.

But this also brings about a competitive pressure whereby brands are constantly changing in line with the trends instead of considering consistent brand messaging. In the long run, these dependency may decrease the originality of content and strategic coherence. Also, the constant change of algorithms can disrupt set content strategies and make brands experiment all the time and change their approach (Guan, 2024).

As such, as much as algorithms are offering major prospects of reach and growth, they will require an adaptable and data-driven strategy. Brands are forced to strike a balance between algorithm optimisation and creative consistency in order to have visibility and long-term engagement.

Moreover, the results indicate that algorithms promote the content that promotes interaction. Amplification is more likely to occur in videos that elicit comments, shares, or repeat views. This reinforces the idea that engagement is not just an outcome but also a driver of visibility. On the whole, this theme emphasises that to make short-form video marketing as effective as possible, it is crucial to learn and apply the algorithms of the platform.

4.4 Theme 2: Consumer Attraction and Engagement Drivers

The other prominent theme explored is the use of consumer behaviour to create engagement with short-form video content. Throughout the literature it is constantly reiterated that contemporary audiences are more attracted to fast, entertaining and visual content.

The move towards the short-form video can be significantly explained by the shrinking attention span and the growing popularity of using a mobile device. Value is the content that consumers will consume more frequently in the short run. Consequently, brands are concentrating on producing brief but effective videos that draw the interest immediately.

Several engagement drivers emerged from the analysis:

- a. Entertainment value: Humour, creativity and storytelling enhance viewer interest.
- b. Trends and virality: Trending challenge participation increases visibility.
- c. Visual appeal: The attractiveness is of dynamic visuals and editing techniques.
- d. Lightness to consume: Minimal length of time stimulates repetition (Burke, 2025).

The results also show that the trend-based content is a major factor in engagement. With the trends in the social media, there is a greater chance that brands with content that matches the existing trends will be able to appeal to the audience and gain greater visibility.

Also, short-form video platforms are interactive and this makes them active. Functionalities like comments, duets and shares enable the user to directly interact with the content, making

them active participants and not just passive viewers (Rabyn et al., 2025).

In addition to the engagement drivers provided, like entertainment and trends, one more significant aspect of consumer attraction is the pace and ease of content consumption. Short-form videos are meant to be immediate value adding, and this is in line with the hectic digital behaviour of the contemporary users (Burke, 2025). Such a model of quick consumption promotes viewing repeatedly and constant scrolling, raising the level of interaction.

Also, cognitive ease has a considerable role in the interaction with the audience. The easily comprehended, visually appealing and emotionally appealing content requires less mental effort and will therefore be appealing to the viewers. The audience will be more willing to listen to the content that offers them immediate satisfaction and does not demand thorough analysis and interpretation.

The other important factor is the participatory characteristics of short platforms. The elements of duets, challenges, and comment interactions turn the viewers into active participants. This interactive space will help the user become more engaged and more willing to share the content, and will grow the reach organically.

Nevertheless, the application of trends as a key engagement factor also has shortcomings. Although the trend-based content can increase the level of visibility, it does not tend to last long and might not aid in brand differentiation in the long term. Over reliance on trends poses the risk that brands may lose their individuality.

In this way, accessibility, interactivity and relevance are other factors that attract consumers in short-form video content besides entertainment. A middle ground between creativity and strategic purpose is indispensable to long-term engagement.

This theme reinforces the notion that the success of short-form video marketing is pegged on the consumer preferences. To ensure that consumers engage most, brands need to comprehend how audiences will act and structure their content to suit them (Bikowski, 2025).

4.5 Theme 3: Emotional Connection and Relatability

The third theme revolves around the value of emotional appeal and relatability in brand engagement. As opposed to traditional advertising, which can be formal and promotional, short-form video content can be more informal and authentic (Towpek and Suriani, 2025).

The discussion shows that relatability is one of the main factors affecting the engagement of the audience. Viewing content that resembles real-life experiences, feelings, or jokes is more apt to appeal to the audience. This brings a familiarity and trust between the audience and the brand.

One important concept found in the literature is the concept of parasocial interaction wherein viewers form a perceived relationship with brand or content creators by virtue of being exposed to them repeatedly. This emotional bond may have a beneficial impact on the brand perception and loyalty.

Another important aspect of creating emotional engagement is storytelling. Effective storytelling in such short periods can also generate memorable experiences that can increase the brand recall. Brands that effectively use narratives in their content are more apt to connect with the audiences on a more intimate level.

In addition, genuineness is also emphasized as an essential factor. Consumers will also be more interested in content that is authentic as opposed to content that is too polished or advertorial. This change is indicative of a wider trend towards digital marketing in which transparency and humanisation are becoming more important (Kayode et al., 2025).

Besides improving engagement, emotional connection is essential in influencing consumer attitudes towards a brand in the long term. The content of the short-form videos enables the brand to communicate more in a humanised and less formal way, which makes the perceived distance between the brand and the audience less. This feeling of intimacy helps in enhanced emotional attachment and trust.

Additionally, audience identification is strongly connected with relatability. The viewers will be more likely to respond positively when they see content that represents their own experiences, values, or challenges. As Rabyn et al. (2025) emphasize, the given identification reinforced parasocial relationships in which the audience experiences a personal connection toward the creators of the content or a brand even though there is no direct interaction.

However, the increasing focus on relatability also presents a strategic challenge (Bahatan et al., 2025). Excess use of informal or light-hearted material can blur brand positioning, especially when dealing with a brand that is supposed to be up-market or professional. As such, brands should strike the right balance between authenticity and consistency in brand identity.

Another important aspect is emotional storytelling. Even in a relatively short period, good storytelling can make a lasting impression and make the brand memorable. According to Dong et al. (2024), stories that trigger such emotions as humour, inspiration, or empathy tend to be shared and recalled more.

In general, emotional connection is not only limited to immediate engagement measures. It helps in enhancing consumer relationship and affecting long term brand perception, thus a very important component of short form video marketing strategies (Kulkarni, 2026).

This theme shows that emotional contact is not limited to such quantifiable parameters as likes or shares. It helps to build consumer relationships with the brands in the long term and has an effect on consumer behaviour.

4.6 Theme 4: Impact on Brand Awareness and Engagement

The fourth theme is the consideration of the effect of the short-form video content on brand awareness and engagement. The results show that short videos are very useful in raising brand awareness and motivating user engagement.

Measures of brand engagement here are:

- a. Likes
- b. Comments
- c. Shares
- d. User-generated content

According to the literature, short-form video platforms are said to drive an increase in levels of engagement than traditional content formats like text or still images. This is mainly because of their interactive and immersion characteristic (Basnet, 2025).

Among the most important conclusions, active participation is promoted by short-form videos. It is more likely that the user will consume the content via comments, sharing or creating their own content about the brand. This not only makes it more visible, but also builds brand credibility.

Although the benefits of short-form video content are apparent in the brands awareness aspect, it has more than just the visibility aspect since it also affects the perception of the brands by viewers. The visuals, music, and narrations make it a multi-sensory experience that will enhance memorability and brand recall (Wahyudi et al., 2025).

Amplification effect produced by the interaction of user is one of important aspects of this impact. Likes, comments or shares of content make it more likely that the content will be further distributed by platform algorithms. This leads to a vicious circle of interaction resulting in visibility, and visibility creating more interaction. According to Basnet (2025), this is one of the main reasons why the presence of brands on the short-form platforms grows so fast.

It should be noted, though, that not every engagement will lead to brand value. Passive interaction, like views or likes can suggest popularity but does not always imply high consumer interest or loyalty (Li & Tu, 2024). The level of active interaction, including comments and user-generated content will offer more insight into the involvement of

audiences and brand association.

Also, short video content helps in brand awareness as it allows repeated exposure. Considerable exposure on user feeds leads to familiarity and this may have a positive impact on consumer perception in the long run (Wahyudi et al., 2025).

Although these are the benefits, short-form content might not be as rich in information as it is fast-paced. Thus, short-form strategies should be supported with other types of content in order to provide a complete communication strategy in brands.

The user generated content (UGC) is of great importance in this regard. As consumers make and share content pertaining to a brand, it reinforces authenticity and trust (Dang et al., 2025). This kind of interaction is more powerful than standard advertisement, which is viewed more authentic.

Also, short videos can help in brand recall. Visual storytelling, music and trends are all combined, making the content more memorable, increasing brand recognition.

Another insight of the findings is that short-form video content is superior to the traditional forms of content in terms of attentiveness and engagement (Iseal, 2025). This substantiates the point that brands should change to more dynamic and interactive content strategies.

4.7 Theme 5: Platform Differences and Strategic Implications

The last theme is the dissimilarity between the key short-form video platforms and their marketing strategy consequences.

- a. Despite the similarity between TikTok, Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts, they are not the same in the way they are used, their algorithm and the way they distribute content.
- b. TikTok: It is content-discovery based and viral. It is more algorithm-oriented and provides more possibilities to new content to reach huge masses.
- c. Instagram Reels: It will be integrated with other social networks, and a brand can use its audience to increase its reach and leverage its existing audiences.
- d. YouTube Shorts: It is an intersection of short-form content and the larger YouTube ecosystem, with long-term discoverability via search (Ruangkanjanases et al., 2023).

The results indicate that one fits all strategy is not effective. Rather, brands should strategise to be platform-specific to optimise engagement.

For example:

- On TikTok, brands ought to concentrate on trends and storytelling.
- On Instagram, it is significant to be consistent with the brand identity.

- On YouTube Shorts, short and long-form content strategies can be used to increase visibility (Dong et al., 2024).

In addition to structural variations, the user expectations and content consumption behaviour of each platform also differ and have crucial strategic impacts on brands. Such behavioural differences are important to understand in order to develop effective content strategies.

To illustrate, the users of Tik Tok tend to be discovery-oriented, so they tend to watch to be entertained and find something new. This drives brands towards creativity, participation in the trends, and storytelling. Conversely, Instagram Reels viewers are frequently guided by social relations and brand image and need to have content that matches a specific visual impression.

YouTube Shorts is a more complex dynamic due to being embedded in a larger content ecosystem. Users can switch between short and long-form content, which enables brands to develop more engagement with a variety of formats (Azhar et al., 2025). This provides the prospects of continuity in content and the retention of audience in the long term.

Another important consideration is content lifespan. The content of TikTok has a shorter life cycle and a greater chance of going viral whereas YouTube content can be visible longer as it has a search option. This influences brand planning and distribution of content on platforms. These disparities underscore the fact that a uniform content approach is not a successful approach in the marketing of short-form video. Rather, brands need to be platform-specific, but overall brand consistent.

Finally, effective short-form video marketing must be flexible and strategic in its approach, making sure that the content is appealing to platform dynamics in addition to larger marketing goals (Riaz, 2025).

In this theme, the value of strategic flexibility is emphasized in digital marketing. Brands that comprehend platform dynamics will be in a better position to gain effective engagement.

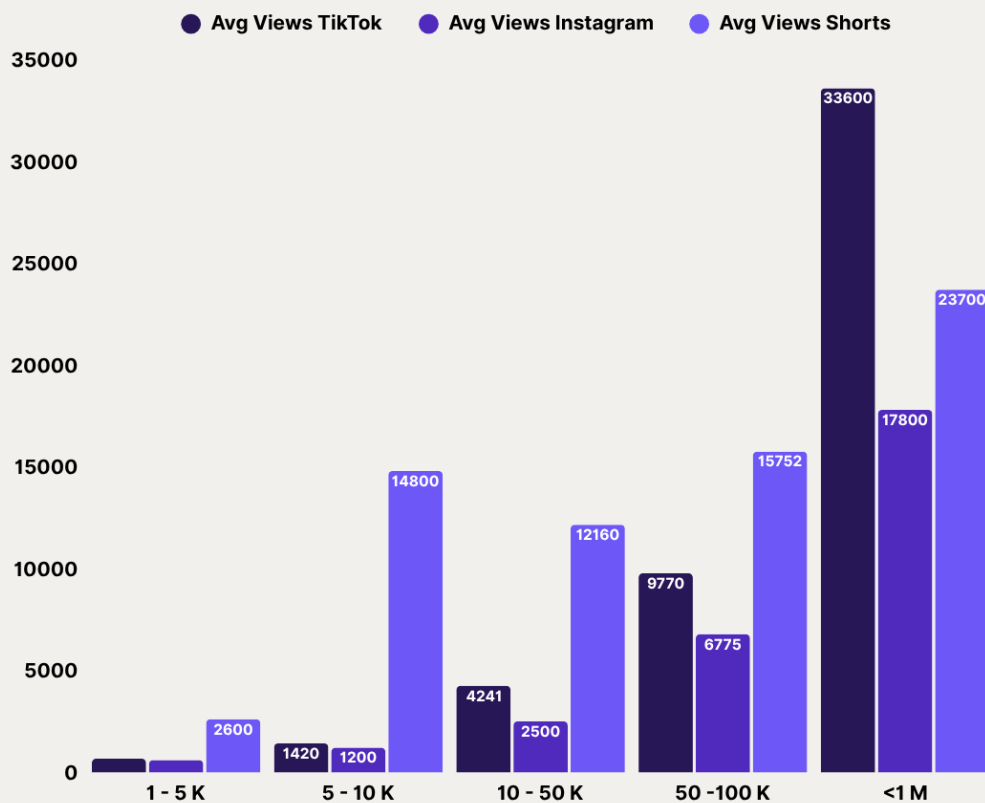
4.8 Discussion of Findings

The results all indicate that video content in short format is an effective tool in improving brand interaction. The algorithms, consumer behaviour, emotional connection, and platform characteristics play off to produce a dynamic marketing environment (Ahmed, 2024).

Among essential lessons, it is important to note that engagement does not depend only on the quality of the content but also on its compatibility with platform algorithm and liked by the audience. This supports the significance of the data-driven marketing approach.

Views on Short Videos

Instagram Reels get the least views



Source: Socialinsider data
Data range: Jan 2024 - Aug 2025

socialinsider

Figure: Views on various platforms

Source: (Socialinsider, 2024)

The platform differences have a powerful impact on the performance of short-form video content and its reach. As of recently, the average views of Instagram Reels are relatively lower than Tik Tok and YouTube Shorts in terms of various audience sizes. Tik Tok regularly records the most engagement and views because of its powerful algorithmic

discovery feature, and YouTube Shorts also is successful because of its reliance on the YouTube recommendation system (Bikowski, 2023). Instagram Reels, in turn, will be more dependent on already existing networks of followers and thus may be restricted in its reach. These differences point to the significance of platform-specific strategies, since brands need to adjust their content strategy depending on the specifics of the algorithm and audience behaviour of the platform (Socialinsider, 2024).

Although the results indicate the high effectiveness of short-form video contents in the promotion of brand engagement, a critical analysis shows that there are a number of complexities and limitations that should be taken into consideration. The high engagement metrics like likes, shares, and comments can be considered successful, but they do not necessarily result in meaningful consumer relationships and long-term brand value.

The excessive trust in algorithmic systems is one of the key issues. As can be seen in the findings, platforms like Tik Tok, Instagram reels and YouTube shorts are highly reliant on algorithms that rank content based on engagement indicators. Although this provides a chance to be seen in a short time frame, it also brings about the uncertainty in the way content will be viewed. Towpek and Surani (2025) suggest that content that creates instant interaction should be favoured by algorithms-driven platforms, which often prefer instant interaction in the first few seconds. This compels brands to concentrate on developing eye catching content as opposed to strategically congruent messages. Consequently, the quality of content can be put behind engagement optimisation.

Also, short-term focus of performance may lead to compromising the brand building over the long term. Viral content does not necessarily represent the main identity or values of the brand. Bahatan et al. (2025) suggest that though short-form videos may help to influence purchasing decisions, they may not necessarily work effectively when it comes to consistent brand communication. What this implies is that when brands focus more on trends than on strategy, there is a risk of brands losing coherence in their communication.

A second key concern is the prevalence of trend-based content. Trends in consumer engagement, as identified in Theme 2, have a significant impact on consumer engagement. Nevertheless, when trends are used, there is a challenge of content homogeneity that arises when more than one brand creates similar types of content. According to Wigayha and Winata (2025), engaging in trends enhances visibility yet can decrease differentiation. This gives a very competitive environment where it becomes more and more challenging to stand out.

Further, the results also indicate a disconnect between quantitative and qualitative

involvement. Although the number of views and likes is a common metric to assess the success of the communication, it is not always significant enough to establish meaningful interaction. Li and Tu (2024) highlight that passive engagement cannot necessarily result in brand loyalty or purchase intention. Active engagement (e.g., comments and user-generated content) offers more insight into consumer behaviour but is less commonly analysed in existing literature.

The opportunity and challenge of emotional connection, as found in Theme 3, is not without its own opportunities and challenges. The level of engagement is increased by emotional storytelling and relatability to create a sense of familiarity between the consumers and the brands. But too much informality can water down brand positioning. Dong et al. (2024) emphasize that authenticity is a fundamental element of engagement, but the necessary balance between relatability and professionalism is important to brand credibility.

Moreover, the issue of platform dependency presents a great strategic threat. Each platform has different algorithms and behaviour of the user and brands have to implement platform specific approach. Nonetheless, such disintegration may cause disparity in marketing campaigns. According to Ruangkanjanases et al. (2023), to provide coherence, brands should implement short-form strategies as part of the overall digital marketing strategy.

Overall, although the short-form video content has a considerable amount of benefits in regards to engagement and visibility, it has a range of limitations that affect its effectiveness, including dependency on the algorithm, the saturation of the trends, and the unbalanced nature of short-term engagement and long-term brand value. It needs a more strategic and balanced approach so as to maximise its potential.

Moreover, the results fill the gaps in the research found in Chapter 2. Whereas earlier research has been mostly quantitative in nature, this analysis emphasizes the significance of the qualitative aspects, including emotional attachment and relatability.

The relative analysis of platforms also helps in more under-the-belt knowledge of short-form video marketing that has been wanting in the available literature.

4.9 Case-Based Knowledge of Industry Practices

To further substantiate the finding, it is worthwhile to look at the application of the short-form video strategies in real-life marketing situations. Practical insights on how the brands effectively use short-form video content to increase engagement and the difficulties that they are facing are provided by industry practices.

A single observation is that the use of storytelling and relatability has been widely used in

successful campaigns. Brands that produce content based on the daily experience have a higher engagement rate. Rabyn et al. (2025) hold that relatable content can be strongly engaged with, as it creates emotional resonance and provides a sense of relatability. Indicatively, to make its content more attractive, brands tend to employ humour or real-life situations, which correlates with the psychological motivators identified in Chapter 2.

The other strategic approach that has been noted in the industry practices is the utilization of influencers. Through influencer collaborations, brands have the opportunity to reach target audiences through voices of trust. According to Basnet (2025), smaller brands will find it easier to use influencer marketing as a means to access established audiences without the need of spending large sums of money on advertising. Specifically, micro-influencers have been found to achieve more engagement rates because they are perceived as authentic (Bahatan et al., 2025).

Another important factor that can increase the engagement is the user-generated content (UGC). Brands can also invite users to take part in challenges or to produce content associated with their brands. Not only does it increase visibility, but it also helps to build trust, because content created by the user will be seen as more authentic. Dang et al. (2025) underline that UGC enhances relationships between consumers and brands by encouraging the active involvement.

Moreover, campaigns that are successful usually take advantage of platform-specific capabilities. As an example, the TikTok campaigns often revolve around trends and challenges, whereas Instagram Reels campaigns are typically based on visual appeal and brand consistency. Instead, YouTube Shorts enjoys the advantage of being integrated with long-form content and therefore brands are able to keep the audience engaged over a long period (Azhar et al., 2025). This underscores the need to consider platform-specific strategies. Nevertheless, there are also a number of challenges that can be identified by industry practices. A key problem is the lack of longevity of content. In contrast to the traditional marketing content, short-form video tend to have a short time frame of relevance. Due to the rapid change of trends, content might become obsolete in a very short period. This necessitates brands to keep on producing new content, which exerts more demand on creativity and resources (Burke, 2025).

The other problem is in quantifying effectiveness. Engagement metrics are not always an indicator of long-term results like brand loyalty or conversion rates. Although engagement metrics present immediate feedback, they do not necessarily indicate the results in the long term (such as brand loyalty or conversion rates). According to Bikowski (2025), the new

marketing strategy needs to be oriented at the combination of the short-term engagement data with the long-term performance indicators.

In general, the insights given by the case confirm that short-form video content is a potent engagement tool, but its effectiveness has to be based on strategic implementation, constant development, and alignment with the overall marketing goals.

4.10 Implications to Brand Strategy and Marketing Practice

The results of this research have significant implications to the brand strategy and digital marketing practices. With the short-form video content on the social media platforms still prevailing, brands have to adjust their strategies to be able to fully utilize the potential.

Audience-centric approach should be considered one of the most important implications. Consumer behaviour is a very important aspect of engagement as was identified in Theme 2. To produce content that is relevant and appealing, brands should be aware of their preferences in content format, tone, and style. As Tran (2025) points out, audience-oriented approaches can be used to increase the level of engagement by matching the content with what users expect to see.

The other significant implication is the combination of creativity and information-based decision-making. Although creativity is a key to imparting attention, data analytics offers information about the performance of content and the behaviour of the audience. As Basnet (2025) points out, content strategies can be optimised with help of performance metrics that include watch time, shares, and comments. This kind of creativity and analytics allows brands to optimise interactions.

The results also imply that the brands are advised to use multi-platform strategy. Since various platforms have a variety of benefits, the use of a single platform can narrow the scope and performance. Wigayha and Winata (2025) claim that the diversification of the platform will enable the brands to reach diverse audience segments and decrease the reliance on particular algorithms.

In addition, brand consistency is essential in a very dynamic world. Though keeping up with trends is essential, brands have to make sure that their content is in line with their general identity. According to Dong et al. (2024), consistency improves brand recognition and trust, which are key to long-term success.

The other implication is the significance of emotional involvement. Emotional connection is one of the elements of consumer behaviour according to Theme 3. To establish meaningful relationships with audiences, brands need to focus on storytelling, authenticity, and

relatability. Rabyn et al. (2025) stress that emotional involvement can lead to a more significant brand perception and loyalty.

Also, user participation should not be underestimated in terms of its role. The promotion of user-generated content and features of interaction may greatly increase engagement. According to Dang et al. (2025), participatory strategies promote a sense of community within the brand-consumer relationships.

Lastly, the brands should be flexible to the shifts in platform algorithms and trends. The volatile character of social media necessitates a continuous experimentation and innovation. According to Towpek and Surani (2025), the brands that are able to respond to the changes in the algorithms more quickly are more likely to be able to remain visible and engaged.

Finally, the conclusions about the implications of the study reveal the necessity to have a balanced and a strategic approach to the short-form video marketing. Creativity, data analysis, emotional involvement, and platform-specific strategies can be combined to help brands effectively use short-form video content to increase engagement and ultimately succeed in the long term.

4.11 Summary

The systematic literature review presented in this chapter has been analysed through thematic analysis of the results. Five themes were identified, including algorithms, drivers of consumer engagement, emotional connection, brand awareness and platform differences.

The analysis shows that short-form video content can be very useful in improving brand engagement because of its interactive, relatable, and algorithm-driven content. It also emphasizes the importance of platform-based approach by brands and emphasizes both quantitative and qualitative elements of engagement (Agbetoba, 2025).

The following chapter will expand on these findings to give conclusions and recommendations to be made to marketers and future researchers.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

The chapter outlines a conclusion of the study depending on the findings that are discussed in Chapter 4. It is a synopsis of the main findings associated with the efficiency of short-form video content to boost brand engagement on such platforms as Tik Tok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts (Stepanova, 2024). Moreover, the chapter gives practical suggestions to marketers and organisations, summarises the constraints of the research, and gives future research recommendations.

5.2 Overview of the most important results.

The purpose of the study was to critically examine how well short-form video content can enhance brand engagement. Thematic analysis of secondary data resulted in some significant findings (Panda & Bernard, 2025).

First, the research discovered that algorithms are at the heart of content visibility and engagement. Social media platforms like TikTok have extremely individualised recommendation engines that enable even new creators and brands to achieve high viewership. Instagram Reels, in contrast, is more dependent on other social networks, whereas the discovery of YouTube Shorts has a hybrid of both recommendations and search. This underscores the fact that algorithmic systems have a huge impact on content distribution and consumption.

Secondly, consumer behaviour emerged as a key driver of engagement. Contemporary viewers like quick, enjoyable and attractive content. The growing popularity of mobile phones and the decreasing attention span have added to the necessity to create short-form video content. Such aspects like trends, humour, storytelling, and visual appeal were singled out as significant factors to capture and hold the attention of the audience (Fatimah & Nasir, 2025).

Thirdly, the study highlighted the importance of emotional connection and relatability. Short-form videos help brands to deliver content in a more natural and informal way, which is highly appealing to the audience. There was also the concept of parasocial interaction that saw consumers build a feeling of connection with brands by having recurrent exposure to content that they can relate with (Apasrawirote et al., 2022).

Moreover, the results indicated that video content in the short format contributes greatly to brand awareness and engagement. Short videos produce more interactivity, such as likes, comments, shares, and user-created content than more traditional forms of content, such as

text and images. This engagement helps in better brand memory and customer engagements. Lastly, the paper highlighted the role of platform variations and strategic change. Each platform has unique characteristics, user behaviour patterns, and algorithmic structures. One-size-fits-all is, therefore, not effective (Manic, 2024). The best way to ensure maximum engagement and visibility is to use platform-specific strategies by brands.

5.3 Conclusion

On the basis of the results, one can draw a conclusion that the content of short-form videos is a very useful means of increasing brand engagement within the digital marketing landscape. The emergence of platforms like Tik Tok, Instagram reels, and YouTube short has changed the way brands engage with consumers, as they no longer use the traditional promotional channels but rather an interactive and engaging format.

Among the main conclusions is the fact that engagement is no longer determined by the quality of content, but rather the ability of the content to match the platform algorithms and the preferences of the audience. The capability of the short-form video platforms to distribute the content on a personalised basis has opened new avenues to assist brands to reach more people without incurring huge advertising expenses.

Further, the research establishes that the content of short-form videos can be especially effective in establishing emotional relations with consumers. The unpolished, real-life, relatable quality of such content enables brands to reach the audience at a more personal level, which is crucial to long-term brand commitment.

The other significant conclusion is that the short-form video content is more effective in terms of engagement compared to the traditional content formats. Its interactive capabilities and visual attractiveness make it more interactive and memorable which increases brand awareness and customer engagement (Mesbah & Ayad, n.d.).

However, the study also highlights that the effectiveness of short-form video content depends on the ability of brands to adapt to platform-specific dynamics. It is important to be aware of the peculiarities of each platform to create an effective marketing strategy.

In conclusion, short-form video content is an influential and dynamic marketing tool, which is bound to keep on influencing the future of digital marketing.

5.4 Recommendations

Judging by the results of this research, it is possible to make a number of practical suggestions to the marketers, businesses, and content creators (Rabyn et al., 2025).

5.4.1 Adopt Platform-Specific Strategies

The same content strategy should not be used by the brands in all platforms. Instead:

- a. The content of Tik Tok is supposed to be trendy, creative and narrative.
- b. Instagram Reels are supposed to be brand-wise and image-wise consistent.
- c. YouTube Shorts ought to be part of long-form content strategies.
- d. Platform specific algorithms will enhance visibility and interaction.

5.4.2 Be Audience-Centric.

It is best that the brands focus more on the target audience and develop content that meets their preference (Tran, 2025). Content should be:

- a. Entertaining
- b. Relatable
- c. Easy to consume

This will enhance audience attention and retention.

5.4.3 Trends and Virality of Leverage

Being involved in trending challenges, hashtags, formats can greatly increase visibility. In order to stay relevant and competitive, brands must be keen on monitoring the trends and using them in their content strategies (Haron et al., n.d.).

5.4.4 Enhance Emotional Engagement

The brands must emphasize on the storytelling and genuineness as a way of establishing emotional bonds with the audience. Real-life experiences, humour and human aspects of content are likely to connect with the viewers.

5.4.5 Promote User-Generated Content (UGC).

By encouraging users to create and post content about the brand, it is possible to:

- a. Increase authenticity
- b. Improve trust
- c. Expand reach organically
- d. UGC can be an effective engagement tool.

5.4.6 Make use of Data and Analytics

Platform analytics should be used by brands to:

- Track performance metrics
- Understand audience behaviour
- Optimise content strategies (Basnet, 2025)
- The effectiveness of marketing will be enhanced through data-driven decision-making.

5.4.7 Be Consistent and Frequent.

Posting regularly and delivering content regularly are key to keeping the audiences entertained and in the algorithm. To maintain constant engagement, brands need to create a content schedule (Iseal, 2025).

5.5 Study Limitations

Although the study has made contributions, it has a number of limitations.

To begin with, the research uses secondary data, and this restricts the capacity to get real time consumer behaviour and first-hand insights (Wigayha & Winata, 2025). Surveys or interviews are the primary research techniques that may present more specific and detailed findings.

Secondly, the analysis is limited to three large platforms: Tik Tok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts. Other new platforms and regional differences were not taken into account.

Thirdly, the research is based on the literature that can be of different quality, scope, and approach. This can influence the externalisability of the results (Towpek & Suriani, 2025).

Also, due to the rapidly changing characteristics of social media, the algorithms and trends of platforms can vary with time, which can affect the applicability of the results in the future.

5.6 Future Research Directions

This study may be developed in a number of ways in future studies.

To begin with, researchers are able to carry out primary research to get first hand information about the consumer and the marketer. This would offer a better insight into the behaviour and preferences of the users.

Secondly, future research can be conducted in the form of comparative analysis with more platforms, such as emerging social media platforms and regional variations.

Thirdly, it may be necessary to examine the long-term effects of short-form video content on brand loyalty and purchasing behaviour, a topic that was not greatly discussed in this study.

Also, more research can be conducted on how artificial intelligence and sophisticated algorithms can be used to influence content visibility and interaction (Kayode et al., 2025).

Lastly, the potential uses of short-form video marketing in the industry could be studied in the future to comprehend the differences in its efficacy in various industries.

5.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has given a detailed conclusion of the study by summarising the important findings, giving practical recommendations, discussing the limitations and the future research directions. The paper affirms that the short-form video content is a very powerful marketing

instrument that boosts brand engagement due to its interactive, relatable, and algorithmic characteristics (Dong et al., 2024). But the success will be based on its ability to strategically adjust to platform dynamics and preferences of the audience. The implications of the present study can assist marketers in creating better digital strategies and build on the evidence in digital marketing.

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