



Characteristics of eWOM Information on BookTok toward Book Purchase Intention: SOR-IACM Approach

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Abstract

Background: BookTok has become an influential short-form video community for book discovery and recommendation, yet the cognitive pathways through which eWOM information is evaluated, adopted, and translated into purchase intention remain insufficiently explained, particularly regarding whether product involvement conditions this process.

Objective: This study examines the effects of information quality, information quantity, information credibility, and needs of information on information usefulness; the effects of information usefulness on information adoption and information adoption on purchase intention; the mediating role of information adoption between information usefulness and purchase intention; and the moderating role of book involvement in the information adoption-purchase intention relationship.

Methods: A quantitative survey was conducted with 368 valid Indonesian TikTok users who had been exposed to BookTok content. Data were analyzed using PLS-SEM in SmartPLS with 10,000 bootstrap subsamples to evaluate the measurement model, structural relationships, mediation, and moderation.

Results: Information quantity, information credibility, and needs of information positively predicted information usefulness, whereas information quality did not. Information usefulness positively predicted information adoption, and information adoption strongly predicted purchase intention. Information adoption significantly mediated the relationship between information usefulness and purchase intention ($\beta=0.497$, $p=0.018$), while book involvement did not significantly moderate the information adoption-purchase intention relationship ($\beta=-0.014$, $p=0.417$).

Conclusion: BookTok eWOM influences purchase intention through a staged cognitive process in which perceived usefulness must be translated into information adoption before shaping purchase intention. The findings also suggest that high involvement with books does not necessarily strengthen the conversion of adopted BookTok information into purchase intention.

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INTRODUCTION

The shift in the digital landscape has made social media no longer just a communication space, but a space for shaping consumer opinions, evaluations, and decisions, because users now simultaneously play the role of recipients and producers of electronic word-of-mouth or eWOM-based information (Leong et al., 2022). In this context, TikTok occupies an important position because it works through algorithm-based content distribution of For You Page, so that information can reach audiences far beyond the creators' initial social networks, and Indonesia

itself is one of the largest TikTok markets globally ([DataReportal, 2025](#)). This algorithmic character makes TikTok relevant as a space for product discovery and the formation of purchase intentions, not just as an entertainment medium.

One of the most prominent phenomena in the TikTok ecosystem is BookTok, which is a community of users who produce and distribute short videos about recommendations, reviews, emotional reactions, and book reading experiences ([Jerasa & Boffone, 2021](#)). A number of studies show that BookTok not only expands the visibility of certain titles, but can also revive sales of old books, drive the revival of certain genres, and change the dynamics of promotion in the publishing industry ([Dera, 2024](#)). This means that BookTok can no longer be understood solely as a cultural practice of digital reading, but also as a marketing infrastructure that influences the market in a real way.

From a digital marketing perspective, BookTok content can be read as a form of eWOM because it contains consumer evaluations, experiences, and recommendations disseminated over the internet to a wide audience. Within the framework of eWOM, the communication process is formed by the source, message, and receiver, and this study deliberately places attention on message characteristics, especially information quality, information quantity, and information credibility, because these dimensions are still relatively less systematically explored in the context of BookTok than the characteristics of creators or influencers ([Cheng et al., 2021](#); [Cheung & Thadani, 2012](#); [da Silva et al., 2025](#)). Emphasizing message characteristics is thus essential for understanding how BookTok eWOM is cognitively processed by consumers.

BookTok is also increasingly relevant to study because it operates amid a social commerce logic that shortens the distance between information exposure and purchase actions ([Indrawati et al., 2023](#)). When the content of a book recommendation is connected to a purchase link or directs users to an e-commerce platform, it functions as a spark of attention, an evaluation channel, and a starting point for transactions ([Azmi et al., 2025](#)). The focal research question is thus: how do BookTok's eWOM characteristics shape users' cognitive pathways toward purchase intention?

To answer this question, this study combines the Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) framework and the Information Acceptance Model (IACM) ([Erkan & Evans, 2016](#)). Within the SOR framework, information quality, information quantity, and information credibility are positioned as stimuli from the digital environment, while information usefulness and information adoption represent internal cognitive processes, while purchase intention represent the behavioral responses ([Kim et al., 2020](#)). At the same time, IACM helps to explain the stages of information reception more specifically, namely how information characteristics and needs of information shape the usefulness of information, thereby driving information adoption and purchase intention.

The IACM's advantage in this study lies in its ability to explain the processing of persuasive information on social media through a more detailed pathway than system-centric technology acceptance models ([Erkan & Evans, 2016](#)). In the logic of elaboration likelihood model, information quality tends to be processed through substantial evaluation, while information quantity and information credibility can work as heuristic cues. On the other hand, information needs represent the internal orientation of users that determine how seriously they process the content encountered ([Rahaman et al., 2022](#)). Thus, the combination of SOR and IACM allows this study to position BookTok not only as a cultural trend, but as an information system that drives gradual cognitive mechanisms towards purchase intention ([Ngo, Bui, et al., 2024](#)).

Although eWOM studies continue to evolve, there are three main gaps that remain open. First, many IACM studies focus on the context of e-commerce or text-based reviews, whereas short videos like TikTok carry visual, narrative, and emotional elements that can change the way users evaluate information ([Leong et al., 2022](#)). Second, the available BookTok studies focus more on community practices, digital literacy, or creator influence, so the cognitive mechanisms that explain the shift from information exposure to purchase intention are still not adequately understood ([Jerasa & Boffone, 2021](#)). Third, research on the role of product involvement as a moderator in eWOM generally still relies on utilitarian products, while books as community-based hedonistic products have different evaluation dynamics and are worthy of empirical testing ([Zhai et al., 2022](#)). Critically, the specific cognitive mechanisms through which BookTok's visually-driven, algorithmically curated short-form video content translates eWOM exposure into

purchase intention remain insufficiently explored, a foundational theoretical gap that directly motivates the present inquiry.

Departing from this gap, this research offers two main contributions. First, this study shifts the focus from source characteristics to message characteristics in the context of BookTok by placing information quality, information quantity, and information credibility as the main stimuli tested on information usefulness and information adoption (Cheng et al., 2021; Cheung & Thadani, 2012; da Silva et al., 2025). Second, this study adds book involvement as a boundary condition that is tested on the path from information adoption to purchase intention, thereby expanding the reading of IACM to the category of hedonistic products that are strongly influenced by personal preferences and the identity of the reader's community (Balling & Martens, 2024).

Beyond contextual novelty, BookTok presents theoretically distinct characteristics from prior eWOM environments that may alter underlying cognitive mechanisms. Unlike text-based reviews or static social media posts, BookTok delivers persuasive content through a combination of visual imagery, auditory cues, creator authenticity, and algorithmic personalization, elements that may activate different information processing routes than those documented in earlier eWOM literature (Bui et al., 2025). Theoretically, this suggests that the SOR framework's stimulus components may function differently when embedded in a short-form video format, where heuristic processing may dominate over systematic evaluation, and where the For You Page algorithm acts as an invisible curator shaping exposure patterns. Articulating these distinctions is essential for determining whether prior IACM findings generalize to the BookTok environment or whether the framework requires contextual calibration in short-form video contexts (Erkan & Evans, 2016).

Thus, the purpose of this study is to analyze the influence of information quality, information quantity, information credibility, and information needs on information usefulness in BookTok content, examine the influence of information usefulness on information adoption and purchase intention, and evaluate whether book involvement strengthens the relationship between information adoption and purchase intention in Indonesian TikTok users. Academically, this research expands the application of SOR-IACM to the scope of BookTok and book products; practically, this research provides a basis for publishers, booksellers, and content creators to design more effective messaging in driving purchase decisions.

Based on these goals, this research model was developed by adapting the IACM structure in the context of Indonesian TikTok from Indrawati et al. (2023) and the social media eWOM model from Ngo, Bui, et al. (2024), then adding book involvement as a moderation variable based on the concept of product involvement in the context of UGC from (Geng & Chen, 2021). In this model, information quality, information quantity, information credibility, and needs of information are positioned as antecedents of information usefulness; Information usefulness is then predicted to affect information adoption, while information adoption is predicted to affect purchase intention. Book involvement was tested as a moderator in the relationship between information adoption and purchase intention, while information adoption was also tested as a mediator in the relationship between information usefulness and purchase intention.

Based on this theoretical synthesis, this study proposes a research model that describes the relationship between eWOM information characteristics on BookTok content, information usefulness, information adoption, and purchase intention, with book involvement as a moderation variable. The full research model is presented in Figure 1.

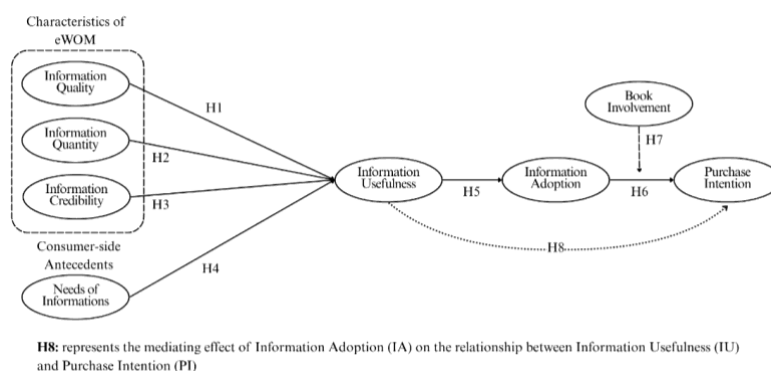


Figure 1 Research Model

(Source: Adapted from [\(Erkan & Evans, 2016; Geng & Chen, 2021; Indrawati et al., 2023; Ngo, Vuong, et al., 2024\)](#))

The model tested eight hypotheses. H1–H4 examines the influence of information quality, information quantity, information credibility, and needs of information-on-information usefulness; H5 tests the effect of information usefulness on information adoption; H6 tests the effect of information adoption on purchase intention; H7 tests the role of book involvement moderation; and H8 examines the mediating role of information adoption. Thus, the research model follows the SOR–IACM logic because information characteristics and information needs are positioned as initial inputs that are processed through information usefulness and information adoption before generating purchase intention [\(Bui et al., 2025\)](#).

METHOD

This study used a quantitative approach with a survey method and a descriptive-causal research design to examine the relationships between variables in the extended SOR–IACM model. The quantitative approach was chosen because the purpose of the research was confirmatory, namely, to test theoretically formulated hypotheses regarding the relationships among the characteristics of eWOM information, information needs, information usefulness, information adoption, book involvement, and purchase intention [\(J. F. Hair et al., 2019; Hair Jr et al., 2021\)](#). The study population consisted of TikTok users in Indonesia who were active users, read books, had been exposed to BookTok content, and were at least 18 years old. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling to ensure that the selected respondents were relevant to the research context [\(Sekaran & Bougie, 2016\)](#). This study was conducted from January to April 2026, and data collection was carried out via Google Forms. To minimize sampling bias, eligibility screening questions were placed at the beginning of the survey to confirm that respondents were active TikTok users who had engaged with BookTok content within the preceding month.

Data collection was carried out in two stages: a pretest and the main study. The pretest involved 30 respondents to assess the initial validity and reliability of the research instrument. During the main data collection stage, 448 responses were obtained. After the inclusion criteria and response quality were examined, 80 responses were removed because they either did not meet the screening questions or exhibited response patterns that were unsuitable for analysis, such as straight-lining. Consequently, 368 valid responses were retained for the main analysis. The data-cleaning process was conducted before the evaluation of the measurement and structural models to ensure that the PLS-SEM analysis included only responses that met the research criteria and demonstrated adequate response quality. Specifically, the exclusion criteria encompassed: (1) failure to pass the screening questions confirming exposure to BookTok content; (2) straight-lining, defined as providing identical responses across five or more consecutive items; (3) excessively short completion times (under two minutes), indicating insufficient attention; and (4) logically inconsistent response patterns identified through manual review.

The research instrument consisted of 35 items measuring eight latent constructs, namely information quality, information quantity, information credibility, information needs, information usefulness, information adoption, purchase intention, and book involvement. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The items were adapted from relevant previous studies, particularly Erkan & Evans [\(2016\)](#), and were subsequently contextualized for BookTok to maintain conceptual equivalence while ensuring contextual relevance.

Given that all variables were collected through a single self-reported questionnaire, the potential for common method bias (CMB) was explicitly addressed through both procedural and statistical measures. Procedurally, the instrument was designed to reduce CMB by mixing item types, separating predictor and criterion variable blocks, and including reverse-scored items. Statistically, Harman's single-factor test was conducted, and the first factor accounted for only 31.4% of the total variance, which was below the 50% threshold and suggested that CMB was unlikely to substantially distort the results. Furthermore, the full collinearity VIF values for all constructs ranged from 1.000 to 2.149, further indicating the absence of significant common method variance in the dataset [\(Kock, 2015\)](#).

Data analysis was conducted in several stages. First, the pretest data were analyzed using SPSS to assess the initial validity and reliability of the instrument. The main data were subsequently analyzed using SmartPLS through the PLS-SEM approach. PLS-SEM was selected based on several considerations consistent with the characteristics of this study. First, the research model was relatively complex, comprising eight latent constructs, one interaction-based moderation relationship, and one mediation pathway. PLS-SEM was therefore considered appropriate for estimating the proposed relationships within the model. Second, the research objectives had a predictive-explanatory orientation in the relatively recent quantitative research context of BookTok, for which PLS-SEM was considered appropriate. Third, the data distribution did not fully meet the multivariate normality assumptions generally associated with covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM).

The evaluation of the measurement model was conducted using outer loadings, average variance extracted (AVE), the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT), the Fornell-Larcker criterion, cross-loadings, Cronbach's alpha, and composite reliability. The structural model was evaluated using VIF, R-square, Q-square, and effect size (f-square). Hypothesis testing was then performed using bootstrapping with 10,000 subsamples to assess direct effects, mediation effects, and moderation effects (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Franke & Sarstedt, 2019; J. Hair & Alamer, 2022; Henseler et al., 2015). Furthermore, the selection of PLS-SEM was supported by its predictive-explanatory orientation. When research objectives extend beyond model fit to include the prediction and explanation of variance in endogenous constructs, as was the case in this study, PLS-SEM is considered a suitable methodological approach (Shmueli et al., 2019).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

After the data cleansing process, the final sample used in the analysis amounted to 368 valid respondents. Respondent profiles are presented to show the demographic characteristics and context of respondents' exposure to TikTok and BookTok before interpretation of the research model. Respondents were dominated by women at 72.3%, with the largest age group in the 18–21 age range at 46.2%, followed by 22–25 years old at 17.4% and 26–30 years old at 17.1% (see Table 1). In terms of education, most respondents were educated in high school/vocational school and bachelor's degree, while in terms of work, the largest group were students and private employees. The composition showed that respondents mainly came from young age groups who are close to social media use and had a high probability of being exposed to BookTok content regularly as shown in Table 1.

Table 1.

Respondent profile and study context

Aspects	Main categories	n	%
Gender	Women	266	72,3
	Male	102	27,7
Age	18–21 years old	170	46,2
	22–25 years old	64	17,4
	26–30 years	63	17,1
Final education	High School/Vocational School	202	54,9
	Bachelor/D4/S1	138	37,5
Jobs	Student	172	46,7
	Private employees	74	20,1
Domicile	Java Island outside Jabodetabek	158	42,9
	Jabodetabek	121	32,9
Income	< IDR 3,000,000	238	64,7
Duration of TikTok use per day	> 3 hours	155	42,1
	2–3 hours	138	37,5
BookTok viewing frequency	3–5 times/month	158	42,9
Follow a BookToker account	Yes	255	69,3

(Source: Results of research data processing)

TikTok usage among respondents was also relatively high. Most respondents use TikTok for more than two hours per day, and 42.1% even use TikTok for more than three hours per day. In terms of exposure to BookTok, most respondents watched BookTok content 3–5 times in the past month, while the most watched types of content are book recommendations and book reviews. In addition, around 69.3% of respondents stated that they follow a particular BookToker account, although there is a slight missing response to this item (Table 1). The data shows that the respondents in this study not only meet the inclusion criteria, but also have close experience with the BookTok ecosystem.

Table 2.*Descriptive statistics of constructs*

Constructs	Mean	SD	Kurtosis	Skewness
Book involvement (BI)	4,517	0,532	0,125	-0,972
Information adoption (IA)	4,221	0,550	2,359	-0,860
Information credibility (IC)	3,901	0,674	0,375	-0,449
Information quality (IQL)	4,002	0,593	0,274	-0,518
Information quantity (IQN)	4,293	0,594	2,079	-1,158
Information usefulness (IU)	4,300	0,578	1,529	-1,008
Needs of information (NI)	4,255	0,648	1,594	-1,103
Purchase intention (PI)	4,028	0,634	0,077	-0,474

(Source: Results of research data processing)

Descriptive statistics across constructs show a positive assessment tendency. The mean value ranged from 3,901 to 4,517, with the highest mean being in book involvement followed by information usefulness, information quantity, and needs of information (Table 2). The standard deviation of the whole construct was in the range of 0.532 to 0.674, which indicates a relatively moderate variation in answers. Descriptively, this pattern indicates that respondents rate BookTok content as a useful source of information, available in sufficient quantities, and generally relevant to their needs when considering book purchases. In addition, the mean book involvement was the highest among all constructs (mean=4.517; SD=0.532), indicating that the sample of this study is dominated by individuals with strong involvement with books as a product category. This condition is relevant to consider in the reading of moderation results, as the distribution of book involvement that tends to be high and homogeneous in the sample can limit the variance needed to statistically detect the effect of moderation.

Table 3*Summary of measurement model evaluation*

Constructs	Outer loading	AVE	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	Status
Book involvement	0,811–0,836	0,675	0,841	0,893	Adequate
Information adoption	0,722–0,823	0,609	0,785	0,861	Adequate
Information credibility	0,829–0,889	0,722	0,871	0,912	Adequate
Information quality	0,717–0,775	0,566	0,808	0,867	Adequate
Information quantity	0,728–0,835	0,615	0,794	0,864	Adequate
Information usefulness	0,724–0,801	0,607	0,838	0,885	Adequate
Needs of information	0,741–0,833	0,649	0,819	0,881	Adequate
Purchase intention	0,756–0,857	0,645	0,862	0,901	Adequate

(Source: Results of research data processing)

Table 4
Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Test Results

Item	Variabel							
	BI	IA	IC	IQL	IQN	IU	NI	PI
BI								
IA	0.500							
IC	0.262	0.711						
IQL	0.380	0.761	0.837					
IQN	0.448	0.809	0.584	0.650				
IU	0.454	0.908	0.722	0.679	0.808			
NI	0.373	0.766	0.576	0.554	0.730	0.888		
PI	0.431	0.750	0.715	0.727	0.603	0.686	0.649	

(Source: Results of research data processing)

Evaluation of the measurement model showed adequate results. All indicators have an outer loading above 0.708, while all constructs have an AVE value above 0.50, Cronbach's alpha above 0.785, and composite reliability above 0.861 (Table 3). These results show that the indicators used can reflect the construct consistently and reliably. Discriminant validity is also acceptable because the Fornell-Larcker diagonal value exceeds the correlation between constructs, and even if there is a high HTMT value between information usefulness and information adoption, the inferential confidence interval still does not cross the number 1, indicating that the constructs remain statistically distinguishable (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Franke & Sarstedt, 2019; J. Hair & Alamer, 2022; Henseler et al., 2015).

Table 5
Summary of structural model evaluation

Constructs	R ²	R ² adjusted	Q ²
Information usefulness	0,683	0,679	0,994
Information adoption	0,547	0,546	0,992
Purchase intention	0,399	0,394	0,985

(Source: Results of research data processing)

Evaluation of the structural model also shows that the model is worth further testing. All VIF values are in the range of 1,000 to 2,149, so there is no significant multicollinearity problem. The R-square value shows that the model explains 68.3% information usefulness variance, 54.7% information adoption variance, and 39.9% purchase intention variance, while the Q-square value for the entire endogenous construct is well above zero, which is between 0.985 and 0.994 (Table 5). Thus, the model not only has moderate to strong explanatory capabilities, but also shows high predictive relevance in the context of BookTok. It should be noted, however, that Q² values of 0.985–0.994 are unusually high relative to typical benchmarks in behavioral research and should be interpreted alongside R² and f² as complementary predictive relevance indicators rather than standalone measures. Regarding practical significance, the effect sizes (f²) revealed that H4 (NI→IU; f²=0.361), H5 (IU→IA; f²=1.207), and H6 (IA→PI; f²=0.410) represent large practical effects, while H2 (IQN→IU; f²=0.115) and H3 (IC→IU; f²=0.076) represent small effects. These distinctions clarify that not all statistically significant paths carry equal practical weight in the BookTok eWOM context.

The results of the structural model test are presented in Figure 2. The red line indicates an unsupported hypothesis (H1 and H7), while the black line indicates an accepted hypothesis.

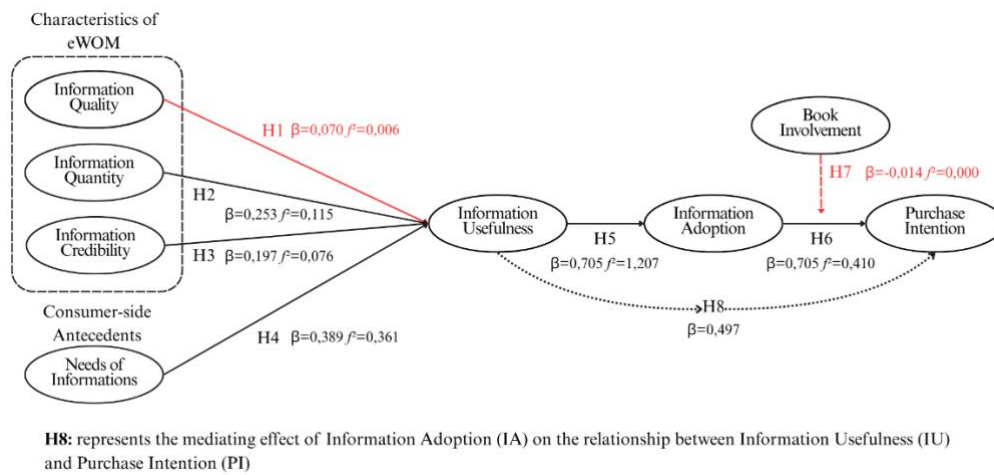


Figure 2. Structural Model Test Results
(Source: Results of research data processing)

Table 6.
Hypothesis test results

Hypothesis	Relationship	b	t	p	f ²	Decisions
H1	IQL → IU	0,070	1,407	0,080	0,006	Rejected
H2	IQN → IU	0,253	4,791	0,000	0,115	Accepted
H3	IC → IU	0,197	5,072	0,000	0,076	Accepted
H4	NI → IU	0,389	9,313	0,000	0,361	Accepted
H5	IU → IA	0,705	16,172	0,000	1,207	Accepted
H6	IA → PI	0,705	2,356	0,009	0,410	Accepted
H7	BI × IA → PI	-0,014	0,209	0,417	0,000	Rejected
H8	IU → IA → PI	0,497	2,369	0,018	—	Accepted

(Source: Results of research data processing)

The results of hypothesis testing showed that only six of the eight relationships were empirically supported. Information quantity had a positive effect on information usefulness ($\beta=0.253$; $p<0.001$), information credibility had a positive effect on information usefulness ($\beta=0.197$; $p<0.001$), and needs of information had a positive effect on information usefulness ($\beta=0.389$; $p<0.001$), while information quality had no significant effect on information usefulness ($\beta=0.070$; $p=0.080$). Furthermore, information usefulness had a positive effect on information adoption ($\beta=0.705$; $p<0.001$), information adoption had a positive effect on purchase intention ($\beta=0.705$; $p=0.009$), and information adoption was also shown to significantly mediate the relationship between information usefulness and purchase intention ($\beta=0.497$; $p=0.018$). However, book involvement was not shown to significantly moderate the relationship between information adoption and purchase intention ($\beta=-0.014$; $p=0.417$) (Table 6).

As a methodological limitation, this study reports path coefficients, t-values, and p-values but not bias-corrected bootstrap confidence intervals; future replications of this model should include 95% bootstrap confidence intervals alongside significance testing to provide a fuller assessment of each path's precision and stability (Hair et al., 2022).

Discussion

H1: Information Quality has a positive effect on Information Usefulness

H1 was rejected because information quality did not have a significant effect on information usefulness. These findings suggest that in the context of BookTok, information quality, which encompasses clarity, completeness, and relevance, is not necessarily automatically perceived as useful by users. This pattern can be explained through the short-form character of videos that encourage fast and heuristic information processing, so users do not always evaluate the quality of arguments in depth when watching book recommendations on TikTok (Fu et al., 2020). In addition, books are an experiential product, so the suitability of products can often only be ascertained after reading, not only through initial information that is considered quality (Liu

[et al., 2021](#)). Thus, H1's rejection does not mean that the quality of information is not important, but suggests that BookTok's information usefulness is more influenced by other mechanisms that are more in line with TikTok's algorithmic and social environment. From a theoretical standpoint, this finding challenges the universal applicability of the SOR framework's quality-stimulus pathway in short-form video environments. When persuasive content is delivered through BookTok's dynamic, visually-rich medium, information quality may be processed through the platform's inherent heuristic tendencies rather than evaluated through systematic argument scrutiny ([Petty & Cacioppo, 1986](#)). This constitutes a theoretically meaningful refinement to SOR-IACM: the stimulus-organism pathway may require contextual calibration when the stimulus channel operates primarily through affective and algorithmic mechanisms.

H2: Information Quantity has a positive effect on Information Usefulness

H2 was accepted because information quantity has a positive effect on information usefulness. These findings indicate that the more information or exposure to BookTok content that users perceive, the more likely it is that the information is considered useful in the book evaluation process. In the TikTok environment, the repeated appearance of the same book from different creators can serve as social proof, as users interpret the volume of discussion as a signal that the book is worth attention. These results are in line with eWOM research which shows that the quantity of information helps consumers cross-check, enrich the basis for evaluation, and enhances perceived information usefulness ([Leung, 2021](#); [Song et al., 2021](#)). Therefore, on BookTok, the amount of information not only represents the amount of content, but also becomes a marker of collective validation in the digital reader community.

H3: Information Credibility has a positive effect on Information Usefulness

H3 was accepted because information credibility has a positive effect on information usefulness. These results show that BookTok users tend to rate information as useful when the content is perceived to be trustworthy, convincing, and reliable as the basis for book purchase considerations. Information credibility is important because the BookTok ecosystem brings together organic reviews, personal recommendations, and potentially commercially motivated content, so users need a signal of trust to sort out information that is worth using ([Dera, 2024](#)). These findings are consistent with eWOM studies on social media that place information credibility as an important predictor of information usefulness, including in the context of SNS and visual eWOM ([Bui et al., 2025](#)). Thus, the credibility of information becomes a cognitive filter that helps users convert BookTok's exposure into information that is considered useful.

H4: Needs of Information has a positive effect on Information Usefulness

H4 was accepted because needs of information had a positive effect on information usefulness and was the strongest predictor in the model. These findings confirm that information usefulness is determined not only by the characteristics of the message, but also by the user's internal motivation to seek out and process information before making a purchase decision. In IACM, information needs act as a drive that makes individuals more actively assess whether information can help their decisions. In the context of BookTok, users who are looking for reading recommendations, comparing titles, or reducing uncertainty before buying a book will find it easier to view BookTok content as useful. These results also reinforce the SOR logic that digital stimuli will be more effective when they meet the user's internal conditions that encourage more serious information processing ([Bui et al., 2025](#); [Kim et al., 2020](#); [Rahaman et al., 2022](#)).

H5: Information Usefulness has a positive effect on Information Adoption

H5 was accepted because information usefulness has a positive effect on information adoption. This path became one of the strongest relationships in the model, which suggests that usefulness perception is the primary gateway before users receive and use BookTok information as a basis for consideration. In the logic of IAM and IACM, information that is considered to help decision-making will be more likely to be internalized by consumers, so that it does not stop as passive exposure. These findings are consistent with eWOM research which shows that information usefulness is an important predictor of information adoption in the context of social media and TikTok ([Indrawati et al., 2023](#); [Sardar et al., 2021](#); [Rahaman et al., 2022](#)). In other

words, BookTok acts as a source of influence when users judge that the information received helps them understand, evaluate, or choose a book.

H6: Information Adoption has a positive effect on Purchase intention

H6 was accepted because information adoption had a positive effect on purchase intention ($\beta=0.705$; $t=2.356$; $p=0.009$). Although the value of the H6 path coefficient is identical to H5 ($\beta=0.705$), the lower t-statistical value of H6 ($t=2.356$ compared to $t=16.172$ in H5) is normal in models containing moderation interaction variables. The presence of the BlxIA construct in the model divides the variance in the IA→PI pathway, so that the standard error of the direct path increases and results in a smaller t-value even though the path coefficient remains substantial. Thus, the significance of H6 at $p=0.009$ remains acceptable and shows that the relationship between information adoption and purchase intention is statistically strong.

These findings showed that the intention to buy a book did not arise only because the user is watching BookTok content, but because the information has been received, approved, and used as a basis for consideration. In IACM, information adoption is a stage of transition from cognitive evaluation to behavioral intention, because the information that has been adopted enters the consumer decision-making process (Sardar et al., 2021). These results are in line with a study of TikTok and social media eWOM that found that information adoption is a close predictor of purchase intention (Indrawati et al., 2023). Within the scope of BookTok, information adoption can be reflected in the use of recommendations, reviews, or community assessments as a reference to consider book purchases.

H7: Moderation of Book Involvement in the Relationship between Information Adoption and Purchase intention

H7 was rejected because book involvement was not proven to moderate the relationship between information adoption and purchase intention. Interestingly, the interaction coefficient showed a negative direction ($\beta=-0.014$), which indicated that book involvement not only failed to strengthen the relationship, but tentatively led to an effect that was opposite to the initial hypothesis, although not statistically significant ($p=0.417$). These findings suggest that a person's high involvement with books does not necessarily strengthen the conversion of adopted information into purchase intention. One possible explanation is that readers with high book involvement are more selective, more critical, and tend to look for additional sources before deciding to buy a book, so that information from BookTok becomes one of the inputs, not the only basis for decisions.

This negative direction can also reflect that consumers with high involvement have strong preferences and evaluation standards, so the adoption of information from BookTok does not necessarily encourage purchase intention but rather triggers longer considerations. These results are also consistent with the understanding that the effect of moderation in the IACM model is not always significant, especially when product categories involve personal preferences, perceptual risks, or complex evaluation processes (Singh et al., 2025; Zhai et al., 2022; Geng & Chen, 2021). Thus, book involvement is more accurately understood as an audience characteristic that influences the way users verify information, not always as a persuasion booster.

Theoretically, this finding offers an important refinement to the IACM model. In contexts where information is delivered through highly engaging short-form video that inherently maximizes informational engagement across all user types, the incremental moderating effect of individual product involvement differences may be attenuated (Bui et al., 2025; Zhai et al., 2022). This implies that in high-stimulation digital environments, platform design characteristics may exert more influence on the information adoption-purchase intention link than individual involvement differences—a nuance not captured in prior IACM applications that relied on text-based review contexts.

H8: Information Adoption Mediates the Relationship between Information Usefulness and Purchase intention

H8 was accepted because information adoption is proven to mediate the relationship between information usefulness and purchase intention. These findings show that BookTok's information that is considered useful is not enough to encourage purchase intention if the

information has not been adopted as a decision reference. Theoretically, these results support the IACM flow that places information adoption as an important cognitive mechanism between information usefulness and behavioral intention (Erkan & Evans, 2016). These findings are also consistent with eWOM research which shows that information adoption bridges the influence of information usefulness on purchase intention (Sardar et al., 2021). In the SOR framework, these results reinforce the logic that responses in the form of purchase intention are formed through internal cognitive processes, i.e., the assessment of the usefulness and internalization of information, rather than solely from exposure to information stimuli.

Overall, the results of this study show that BookTok works as an eWOM space that influences purchase intention through a gradual cognitive process. The theoretical contribution of the research lies in the expansion of SOR-IACM to the context of short videos and community-based hedonistic products, by emphasizing that needs of information, information quantity, and information credibility determine information usefulness more than information quality in the context of BookTok. Practically, publishers, booksellers, and BookTok creators need to prioritize content that answers the audience's information needs, maintains the credibility of the message, and builds consistent yet relevant exposure (Azmi et al., 2025).

More specifically, these findings extend SOR-IACM by demonstrating that in short-form video environments, (1) the stimulus-organism pathway is more strongly driven by motivational and credibility cues than by information quality; (2) the organism-response pathway (information adoption → purchase intention) is robust even without significant individual-level moderation; and (3) information adoption functions as a full mediator, positioning cognitive internalization rather than mere exposure as the decisive mechanism. Together, these contributions move the study beyond a contextual application toward a genuine theoretical advancement of the SOR-IACM framework.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that in the context of BookTok on TikTok, book purchase intentions are formed through gradual cognitive mechanisms. Information quantity, information credibility, and especially needs of information have been proven to increase the usefulness of information. Furthermore, information usefulness drives information adoption, and information adoption drives purchase intention. On the other hand, information quality had no significant effect on information usefulness, and book involvement was not shown to moderate the relationship between information adoption and purchase intention.

Conceptually, these results reinforce the relevance of IACM in explaining eWOM processing on social media while expanding the application of SOR in the context of digital community-based hedonistic products such as books. Theoretically, these findings extend both the SOR and IACM frameworks by revealing that in visual, algorithmically curated short-form video environments, the stimulus pathway is governed more strongly by motivational and credibility-based factors than by information quality, and the organism-response conversion requires the mediating step of information adoption to be activated. These theoretical refinements offer broader implications for digital persuasion research beyond the BookTok context: they suggest that as information environments become increasingly visual and algorithm-driven, existing eWOM frameworks may require domain-specific calibration of their stimulus components.

The main contribution of this study lies in the finding that BookTok works most effectively when users are not simply exposed to the content, but assess the content useful and then adopt it as the basis for decisions. In practice, content strategies should prioritize authentic credibility signals and consistent relevance, as elaborated in the discussion section.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Zhafira Azka Alifa: Conceptualization, methodology, data collection, formal analysis,

original draft writing, and manuscript revision. Nurdin Sobari: Supervision and manuscript review.

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