



Exploring Destinations in Seconds: The Impact of Short-Form Travel Influencer Videos on Travel Intention

Explorando Destinos em Segundos: O Impacto dos Vídeos Curtos de Travel Influencers na Intenção de Viagem

Explorando Destinos en Segundos: El Impacto de los Videos Cortos de Travel Influencers en la Intención de Viajar

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Abstract

This study investigates the effects of short-form video length and influencer presence on travel intention, examining how these factors affect consumers' perceptions and willingness to travel. An online experiment involving 205 participants employed a 2 × 2 factorial design to assess the effects of video length (30 seconds vs 1 minute) and influencer presence (absent vs present). Participants were exposed to authentic videos obtained from TikTok. This study addresses a gap in the literature by exploring how different video lengths and influencer presence affect travel intention, thereby contributing to the understanding of consumer behaviour in digital marketing and tourism. The results revealed that 1-minute videos, particularly those without influencers, generated higher travel intention, whereas 30-second videos did not produce the expected effect, even when featuring influencers. Openness to experience was also identified as an influential factor. The study provides important insights into how the length and content of short-form videos influence travel intention, contributing to a better understanding of consumer behaviour in digital environments and to the improvement of tourism marketing strategies. The findings have significant practical implications for travel agencies, digital influencers, and tourism marketing practitioners seeking to optimise their social media content and engagement strategies.

Keywords: travel influencers, travel intention, tourism marketing, TikTok, short-form videos.

Resumo

A pesquisa investiga o impacto da duração de vídeos curtos e da presença de influenciadores na intenção de viagem, analisando como esses fatores afetam a percepção dos consumidores e sua disposição para viajar. Foi conduzido um experimento online com 205 participantes, utilizando um design fatorial 2x2 para avaliar a influência da duração dos vídeos (30 segundos vs. 1 minuto) e da presença de influenciadores (ausência vs. presença), e os participantes foram expostos a vídeos reais da plataforma TikTok. Este estudo preenche uma lacuna na literatura ao explorar como diferentes durações de vídeos e a presença de influenciadores

afetam a intenção de viagem, contribuindo para a compreensão do comportamento do consumidor no contexto do marketing digital e do turismo. Os resultados revelaram que vídeos de 1 minuto, especialmente sem a presença de influenciadores, geraram maior intenção de viagem, enquanto vídeos de 30 segundos, mesmo com influenciadores, não alcançaram o efeito esperado. A abertura a novas experiências também foi identificada como um fator influente. O estudo fornece insights importantes sobre a influência da duração e do conteúdo de vídeos curtos na intenção de viagem, contribuindo para um melhor entendimento do comportamento do consumidor no ambiente digital e para o aprimoramento das estratégias de marketing voltadas ao setor de turismo. As descobertas possuem implicações práticas significativas para agências de viagens, influenciadores digitais e profissionais de marketing turístico, que podem otimizar suas estratégias de conteúdo e engajamento nas mídias sociais.

Palavras-chave: influenciadores de viagens, intenção de viagem, marketing turístico, TikTok, vídeos curtos.

Resumen

La investigación examina el impacto de la duración de los videos cortos y de la presencia de influenciadores en la intención de viajar, analizando cómo estos factores afectan la percepción de los consumidores y su disposición a realizar un viaje. Se llevó a cabo un experimento online con 205 participantes, utilizando un diseño factorial 2×2 para evaluar la influencia de la duración de los videos (30 segundos vs. 1 minuto) y de la presencia de influenciadores (ausencia vs. presencia). Los participantes fueron expuestos a videos reales de la plataforma TikTok. Este estudio aborda una laguna en la literatura al explorar cómo distintas duraciones de los videos y la presencia de influenciadores afectan la intención de viajar, contribuyendo a la comprensión del comportamiento del consumidor en el contexto del marketing digital y del turismo. Los resultados revelaron que los videos de 1 minuto, especialmente aquellos sin la presencia de influenciadores, generaron una mayor intención de viajar, mientras que los videos de 30 segundos, incluso con influenciadores, no alcanzaron el efecto esperado. La apertura a nuevas experiencias también fue identificada como un factor influyente. El estudio aporta importantes insights sobre la influencia de la duración y del contenido de los videos cortos en la intención de viajar, contribuyendo a una mejor comprensión del comportamiento del consumidor en el entorno digital y al perfeccionamiento de las estrategias de marketing dirigidas al sector turístico. Los hallazgos presentan importantes implicaciones prácticas para las agencias de viajes, los influenciadores digitales y los profesionales del marketing turístico, quienes pueden optimizar sus estrategias de contenido y de interacción en las redes sociales.

Palabras clave: influenciadores de viajes, intención de viajar, marketing turístico, TikTok, videos cortos.

Introduction

The rise of social media has transformed how consumers interact. Just as the internet has changed e-commerce, it has also altered how people search for and consume information about tourist destinations. From the planning stages to post-trip memories, social media have become essential throughout the tourist journey, serving both as sources of information (Souza & Machado, 2017) and as channels through which individuals share their experiences with friends and fellow enthusiasts (Brito & Freitas, 2019).

Tourism marketing and management have increasingly focused on the popularity of TikTok (Martins et al., 2024), which has already surpassed 1 billion active users worldwide (We Are Social & Meltwater, 2023). Driven by social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic, use of the platform increased among young people (Martins et al., 2023; Zhou et al., 2023), establishing it as a relevant tool for post-pandemic tourism promotion (Chen et al., 2023; Jiang et al., 2022).

Hashtags such as #TravelTikTok bring together videos posted daily by tourists visiting a wide range of destinations, offering distinctive perspectives on landscapes, cultures, and itineraries. In Brazil, content associated with this practice received more than 1 billion views over a three-year period (TikTok Creative Center, 2024). In a country where 70% of the population use social media and spend an average of four hours per day on these platforms, more than 82 million adults are reached by advertisements on TikTok (We Are Social & Meltwater, 2023).

Through short videos of up to 1 minute (Cao et al., 2021), TikTok demonstrates the potential to influence travel planning by converting views into actual visits (Fang et al., 2023; Zhou et al., 2023). Studies suggest that viewer attention (Cao et al., 2021; Fang et al., 2023) and emotional connection (Gan et al., 2023; Yang et al., 2022) are decisive factors in tourism promotion, shaping perceptions and travel intentions (Liu et al., 2023; Zhou et al., 2023).

Because of the limited number of studies on short-form videos, this subject represents an opportunity for research in communication, marketing, and psychology. However, most studies have been conducted in Asia, revealing gaps in the literature on Latin American markets (Martins et al., 2023). Moreover, although the influence of public figures (Yang et al., 2022) and the inspirational role of videos (Fang et al., 2023; Wu & Ding, 2023) have been recognised, little is known about the effects of video length and influencer presence on travel intention (Dong et al., 2024; Gu & Zhao, 2024; Trivedi et al., 2022).

This study is justified by the growing relevance of short-form videos, particularly on TikTok, which have been reshaping communication and tourism marketing strategies. Despite advances in the literature, studies examining how video length and influencers affect individuals' travel intentions remain scarce. From a theoretical perspective, it is important to emphasise that travel intention, also referred to as visit intention, differs substantially from tourism purchase intention. Whereas travel intention involves aspirational and affective components and destination choice, tourism purchase intention implies an immediate willingness to incur financial expenditure on travel packages, accommodation, and tickets (Saini et al., 2023; Ukpabi & Karjaluoto, 2018). Recent studies have highlighted elements such as storytelling (Cao et al., 2021), pre-trip inspiration (Fang et al., 2023), and perceived authenticity (Zhou et al., 2023), but few have explored the combined effects of short-form video length and travel influencers on the formation of travel intention.

Accordingly, this study seeks to answer the following question: How do the length of short-form videos and the presence of travel influencers affect consumers' travel intentions? Its objective is to analyse the effects of these elements on travel intention, understood as the intention to visit a destination, by investigating how they influence the consideration and selection of future destinations. In doing so, this study seeks to broaden the discussion of digital tourism marketing by providing a more detailed analysis of the interplay between short-form video length and the presence of travel influencers in shaping travel intention.

Theoretical framework

The influence of short-form video length on travel intention

As social media continue to evolve, there is a growing need to understand their effects on consumption, individuals, and society. By connecting people and enabling social interaction and the formation of communities of interest (Chung & Koo, 2015), these platforms establish new relationships between businesses and users. They also streamline value-chain and sales processes (Freund et al., 2012) and enhance tourism distribution channels (Xiao et al., 2018).

In the post-pandemic context, questions have emerged regarding which marketing strategies add the greatest value to tourist destinations and increase their competitiveness. Within this context, the internet and social media play an essential role in every stage of travel planning (Souza & Machado, 2017), supported by technological advances that have transformed the tourism industry. These changes are reflected in the increasing online sharing of travel experiences (Cruz & Freitas, 2021). The widespread availability of mobile technologies, particularly smartphones, has also led tourists to rely increasingly on these resources when searching for information and making travel decisions (Ukpabi & Karjaluoto, 2018).

The rise of short-form videos has also been transforming contemporary tourism. Through relevant content, engaging storytelling, and emotional appeal, these videos increase consumer engagement, generating likes, comments, and shares (Dong et al., 2024). Short-form video platforms influence travel intention by providing convenient access to appealing content. Their ease of use enhances immersion and engagement, while they also serve as relevant channels through which people can discover tourist attractions in the post-pandemic context (Liu et al., 2023). For example, TikTok was the most downloaded application worldwide in 2020 and 2021, accumulating 1.506 billion downloads (Koetsier, 2021).

The application focuses on creative entertainment for young people (Zhang, 2021) and uses a dynamic format that enables users to create and edit short-form videos (Haenlein et al., 2020). As this format has become increasingly popular, other platforms have introduced similar features, including Reels on Instagram and Shorts on YouTube. More than simply a platform for memes and viral dances, TikTok has become a strategic tool for global tourism marketing because of its promotional capacity (Martins et al., 2023; Martins et al., 2024; Wengel et al., 2022; Zhu et al., 2023).

Academic interest in short-form videos within tourism research has highlighted new objects of study, including storytelling (Cao et al., 2021), pre-trip inspiration (Fang et al., 2023), visual and auditory features (Gan et al., 2023), and content authenticity (Zhou et al., 2023). Cao et al. (2021) emphasised that short-form video platforms provide practical and concise information, satisfying young audiences' preference for immediacy, capturing their interest, and influencing their travel decisions.

Accordingly, the digitalisation of tourism marketing has driven the growth of video advertising, which plays a key role in communication and the formation of travel intention. Trivedi et al. (2022) found that longer videos were more effective than six-second videos in influencing attitudes towards brands, strengthening brand attachment, and encouraging behavioural intentions. These effects may increase destination and hotel bookings because prolonged exposure intensifies consumer identification and emotional responses. Conversely, Varan et al. (2019) analysed advertisements of different lengths (7, 15, 30, and 60 seconds) and found that seven-second advertisements achieved approximately 60% of the effectiveness of 30-second advertisements in terms of unaided recall. This result indicates that shorter formats can capture attention rapidly, particularly in advertising-saturated environments.

Gu and Zhao (2024) examined user behaviour on consumer-to-consumer (C2C) platforms such as TikTok and found that videos lasting up to 15 seconds increased click-through rates, whereas videos lasting up to three minutes improved viewing time and consumer surplus. These findings suggest that an appropriate balance must be achieved among length,

engagement, and effectiveness. Zhao and Wagner (2023) further demonstrated that video length influences perceived usability and flow state: short-form videos require up to 12 times more cognitive processing than longer videos, which may hinder immersion and compromise the user experience. The choice of video length therefore affects both communication and user experience, making it an important factor in travel intention. Dong et al. (2024) also emphasised that video structure, including relevant information, storytelling, and emotional appeal, increases engagement by generating more likes and shares, thereby demonstrating the role of visual narratives in tourism communication.

Personalised recommendations and autoplay features intensify continuous content consumption and expand the influence of digital creators. Meanwhile, the unpredictability of short-form videos helps sustain attention and immersion, making them effective tools for promoting destinations and tourism products (Zhang, 2024). Video length and format, combined with persuasive elements and influencer participation, therefore play a central role in developing favourable attitudes and subsequent travel intention.

Furthermore, longer advertisements featuring celebrity influencers increase emotional responses and booking intention (Trivedi et al., 2022), whereas videos lasting between 6 and 60 seconds produce diminishing returns, indicating that shorter formats are also effective in capturing attention (Varan et al., 2019). Based on this evidence, the following main hypothesis is proposed:

H1: The length of short-form tourism videos influences consumers' travel intentions.

The following secondary hypotheses are derived from H1:

H1a: Tourism videos adapted for social media, lasting either 1 minute or 30 seconds, positively influence consumers' travel intentions.

H1b: Short-form tourism videos lasting 1 minute positively influence consumers' travel intentions.

H1c: Very short-form tourism videos lasting up to 30 seconds positively influence consumers' travel intentions.

Travel influencers

Travel influencers play an important role in shaping the purchasing decisions and behaviours of tourists seeking high-quality tourism products and services (Ukpabi & Karjaluoto, 2018). They serve as opinion leaders who influence destination choices through social media (Saini et al., 2023). Understanding the interaction between tourism and social media requires consideration of the behavioural connections among tourist attractions, their images, and travel influencers (Smith, 2021).

Silva and Mendes (2023) emphasised the need for studies investigating the effects of influencers on tourism to address existing theoretical gaps. Research has shown that influencers' attractiveness and trustworthiness enhance their persuasive power, affecting purchase intention, particularly in the hospitality industry (Silva & Costa, 2021). When watching videos, consumers are influenced by the perceived credibility of and emotional connection with influencers (Silva & Mendes, 2023), which are decisive factors in communication effectiveness (Xiao et al., 2018).

Thus, when influencers communicate relevant and persuasive information, they increase consumer trust and interest. Their presence may also provide more authentic experiences, particularly when they express their personalities in videos (Gan et al., 2023), making destinations more attractive and stimulating interest in future travel (Zhou et al., 2023). Videos featuring influencers increase engagement and encourage travel decisions by combining authenticity, storytelling, and emotional appeal – essential elements in influencing consumer behaviour (Dong et al., 2024). This effect is strengthened by strategies such as storytelling and personalised recommendations, which increase message credibility and confidence in destination choice (Zhang, 2024).

Influencers therefore increase destination visibility and shape travel decisions, establishing themselves as central agents in tourism marketing, whose effectiveness depends on how travellers interpret online information. This process relies on the transparency and trustworthiness of the information shared on social media (Silva & Mendes, 2023). Because of their high levels of engagement, travel influencers are expected to positively influence consumers' travel intentions. The following hypothesis is therefore proposed:

H2: The presence of travel influencers in tourism videos positively influences consumers' travel intentions.

Recent studies indicate that very short tourism videos lasting less than 30 seconds and featuring travel influencers may increase travel intention by combining persuasion, visual impact, and credibility. The literature on digital engagement suggests that shorter, more dynamic videos maximise viewer attention retention, optimise information processing, and facilitate decision-making (Dong et al., 2024). The use of influencers strengthens this effect by generating social identification and making the tourism experience more tangible and accessible to the target audience (Zhang, 2024). Combining short-form videos with travel influencers therefore makes the content more persuasive and appealing, increasing interest in the destinations presented. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Very short tourism videos featuring travel influencers have a stronger positive effect on consumers' travel intentions.

Openness to experience

Openness to experience is defined as an individual's receptiveness to new experiences, curiosity, and imagination (Fang et al., 2023). This personality trait may shape tourists' perceptions of a destination and influence their behaviour (He et al., 2023). Recent research has recognised the relevance of this psychological construct to how people respond to and engage with tourism experiences (Fang et al., 2023; Hu & Wan, 2024).

Since ancient times, accounts, paintings, and photographs have stimulated the human imagination and inspired a desire to explore distant places. Visual representations of tourist destinations therefore shape travellers' expectations and guide their choices, demonstrating the interconnectedness of tourism, images, and the imagination (Silva et al., 2019). Individuals with high levels of openness to experience are more receptive to new ideas and more likely to engage with local cultures and explore the most authentic aspects of a destination (He et al., 2023). It is reasonable to infer that the effect of travel influencers on travel intention may vary according to each individual's openness to experience. Individuals who are more open to experience are likely to be more strongly influenced by travel influencers than those with lower levels of openness. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Openness to experience moderates the effects of tourism video length and the presence of travel influencers on consumers' travel intentions.

Methodology

A descriptive quantitative approach with an experimental focus was adopted to test the hypotheses. The study followed a 2 (video length: 30 seconds vs 1 minute) × 2 (presence of travel influencers: present vs absent) between-subjects factorial design. The sample primarily comprised individuals aged between 18 and 50 years.

The online questionnaire was administered between March and April 2024. Each participant was exposed to only one experimental or control condition. The control condition consisted of an expository video about a tourist destination ($n = 41$), and all videos were obtained from TikTok. This approach was selected to simulate a realistic digital consumption environment in which consumers interact with videos on social media. Figure 1 presents the experimental design and participant distribution.

Figure 1

Experimental group conditions

Duração do Vídeo			<i>Travel Influencers</i>
	Ausência	Presença	
1 minuto	Vídeos de curta duração sem a presença de travel influencer ($n = 42$)	Vídeos de curta duração com a presença de travel influencer ($n = 42$)	
30 segundos	Vídeos de curtíssima duração sem a presença de travel influencer ($n = 40$)	Vídeos de curtíssima duração com a presença de travel influencer ($n = 40$)	

Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

The final sample comprised 205 participants who were randomly allocated to the different experimental groups. Random allocation helped ensure sample homogeneity, as indicated by Hernandez et al. (2014). Each group was exposed to one of the experimental conditions, which varied according to video length and the presence or absence of travel influencers.

In order to ensure that video length was the primary variable being tested, all videos used in the experiment were standardised in terms of visual and auditory content. This control ensured that differences in the results could

be attributed solely to the manipulated variable, in accordance with studies addressing internal validity in experiments (Aguinis et al., 2021).

The experiment included a control group to isolate the effects of the manipulated variables (video length and influencer presence) on travel intention. The control group was exposed to neutral informational videos without emotional or persuasive appeals, thereby controlling for potential confounding factors.

The second stage of the selection process applied criteria intended to ensure similarity to actual social media campaigns. Videos focusing on tourist destinations were included, whereas those focusing on influencers' personal lives or containing sponsored or paid advertising content were excluded. Priority was given to destinations in Brazil that were accessible to the study population. A pre-experimental phase involving 25 participants, with five allocated to each group, was conducted to validate the conditions and videos.

Manipulation effectiveness was assessed using two questions: i) "I consider this campaign to be authentic; that is, I could plausibly encounter it on social media" (mean = 4.46); and ii) "I do not believe this campaign is authentic; that is, I would be unlikely to encounter it on social media" (mean = 3.56). A paired-samples *t* test indicated a significant difference between the means ($t = 2.94$; $p < 0.001$). The manipulation-check results showed that participants perceived the conditions as resembling actual campaigns.

However, the reverse-worded item addressing campaign's lack of authenticity produced an intermediate mean score ($M = 3.56$ on a seven-point scale), indicating that some participants remained somewhat sceptical about the stimulus. In experimental research conducted in digital environments, such a response is both statistically acceptable and expected. Social media environments, particularly TikTok, are saturated with organically heterogeneous and edited content, increasing consumers' perceptual threshold (Aguinis et al., 2021). The statistically significant difference identified by the paired-samples *t* test ($t = 2.94$; $p < 0.001$) confirms that, despite the inherent noise involved in the perception of online advertising, the manipulation reliably distinguished perceived realism from artificiality, supporting the ecological validity of stimuli.

Participants then completed the questionnaire via Google Forms, which facilitated data collection and processing. After providing informed consent, they proceeded to the section addressing sociodemographic characteristics and social media use. They subsequently completed the manipulation check and measures of the following constructs, using adapted scales: Travel Intention (Böttger et al., 2017; Khoi et al., 2020), Openness to Experience (Beck, 2021; Yoo & Gretzel, 2011), and Advertising Campaign Acceptance (Fang et al., 2023). The constructs are presented in Table 1 and were measured using seven-point semantic differential scales ranging from 1 (low) to 7 (high).

Table 1

Constructs and variables used in the experiment

Code	Variable	Construct	Cronbach's alpha
TI1	What is your current level of excitement about visiting this place?	Travel Intention ¹	0.938
TI2	What is your current level of interest in visiting this place?		
TI3	What is your current level of curiosity about visiting this place?		
OE1	How much do you enjoy trying new things?	Openness to Experience ²	0.839
OE2	How much do you enjoy thinking about new things?		
OE3	How much do you enjoy hearing new ideas?		
ACA1	To what extent do you consider the information presented in the video to be truthful?	Advertising Campaign Acceptance ³	0.766
ACA2	Would you consider recommending this place to a friend or acquaintance?		
ACA3	How would you describe your current level of acceptance of the idea of visiting this place?		

Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

1TI4 ("What is your current level of disinterest in visiting this place?") was excluded because it reduced the scale's reliability.

2OE4 ("Do you consider yourself to have a vivid imagination?") was excluded because it reduced the scale's reliability.

3ACA4 ("What is your current level of indifference towards visiting this place?") was excluded because it reduced the scale's reliability.

In addition to the descriptive analysis of the sample, one-way and two-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were performed to test the literature-based hypotheses. Post hoc tests were also conducted to examine differences among the experimental groups (Hair et al., 2009). Additional hypotheses concerning the possible influence of sociodemographic variables were also tested. These supplementary analyses enabled a comparison of the explanatory power of the study's main variables (ie, video length and the presence of travel influencers) with that of sociodemographic variables considered as competing explanations for travel intention. Checks were also performed to detect missing values and

outliers, but no such cases were identified. Data were analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows, version 26 (IBM Corp., Armonk, N.Y., USA).

Results

Data collection yielded 205 valid questionnaires, of which 130 (63.4%) were completed by female participants. Participants ranged in age from 17 to 68 years, with a mean age of 33 years. This age range adequately represents the target audience for the tourist destination market. Regarding educational attainment, most participants had completed higher education (111 participants, 54.1%). A total of 22 participants (10.7%) had completed secondary education, whereas 72 (35.1%) had attended but not completed higher education. Table 2 summarises the sample's sociodemographic characteristics.

Table 2

Sociodemographic profile of the study groups

Variable	Group 1	Groups ¹					Overall
		Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Control		
n		42	42	40	40	41	205
Sex	Female	26 (61.9%)	28 (66.7%)	26 (65.0%)	22 (55.0%)	28 (68.3%)	130 (63.4%)
	Male	16 (38.1%)	14 (33.3%)	14 (35.0%)	18 (45.0%)	13 (31.7%)	75 (36.6%)
Age	Mean (SD)	37 (12.8%)	34 (8.38%)	33 (10.3%)	31 (11.7%)	28 (10.9%)	33 (11.2%)
	Secondary education	4 (9.5%)	9 (21.4%)	2 (5.0%)	5 (12.5%)	2 (4.9%)	22 (10.7%)
Educational attainment	Completed higher education	30 (71.4%)	18 (42.9%)	27 (67.5%)	23 (57.5%)	13 (31.7%)	111 (54.1%)
	Incomplete higher education	8 (19.0%)	15 (35.7%)	11 (27.5%)	12 (30.0%)	26 (63.4%)	72 (35.1%)
Watches tourism videos on TikTok	Yes	22 (52.4%)	18 (42.9%)	15 (37.5%)	23 (57.5%)	27 (65.9%)	105 (51.2%)
	No	20 (47.6%)	24 (57.1%)	25 (62.5%)	17 (42.5%)	14 (34.1%)	100 (48.8%)

Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

1Group 1: 1-minute video with a travel influencer; Group 2: 1-minute video without a travel influencer; Group 3: 30-second video with a travel influencer; Group 4: 30-second video without a travel influencer.

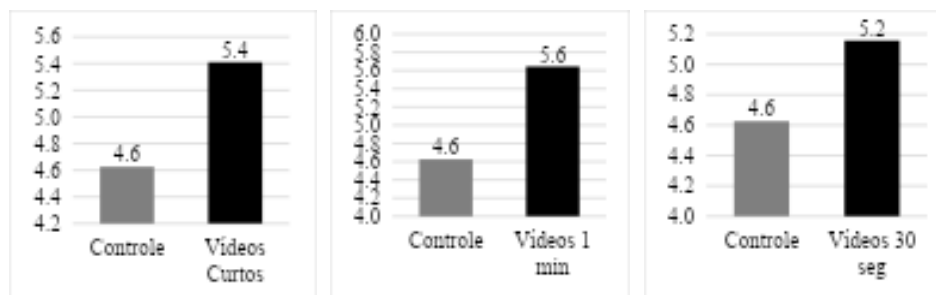
Following the descriptive analysis of the sample, hypothesis testing was conducted. To test H1 and its sub-hypotheses, the experimental groups were organised according to each proposed relationship. For H1a, which assessed the effect of tourism videos adapted for social media, all experimental groups were combined and compared with the control group. A significant difference was observed between the experimental and control groups, $F(1, 200) = 7.643$, $p = 0.006$; Welch's test, $p = 0.020$. Travel intention was higher in the experimental groups ($M = 5.4$) than in the control group ($M = 4.62$), indicating that the videos had a positive effect on travel intention.

For H1b, which examined the effect of short-form videos, only the groups exposed to 1-minute videos were considered. A significant difference was also identified, $F(1, 122) = 10.775$, $p = 0.001$; Welch's test, $p = 0.004$. Travel intention was higher among participants exposed to 1-minute videos ($M = 5.6$) than among those in the control group ($M = 4.62$).

Conversely, very short videos lasting 30 seconds did not have a statistically significant effect on travel intention, $F(1, 117) = 2.591$, $p = 0.110$; Welch's test, $p = 0.136$. No significant difference was identified between the mean for the 30-second video groups ($M = 5.2$) and that for the control group ($M = 4.62$). Figure 2 presents the results of the tests of H1 and its sub-hypotheses.

Figure 2

Comparison between short-form video groups and the control group



Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

To test H2, only the groups exposed to videos featuring travel influencers were selected and compared with the control group. The analysis showed a marginally significant difference, $F(1, 118) = 3.113$, $p = 0.080$; Welch's test, $p = 0.103$. Thus, the presence of travel influencers had a modest effect on travel intention, with a higher mean among participants exposed to influencers ($M = 5.2$) than among those in the control group ($M = 4.63$).

Testing H3 required a comparative analysis of all five groups. The ANOVA yielded a significant result, $F(4, 197) = 3.624$, $p = 0.007$. A least significant difference (LSD) post hoc analysis was subsequently conducted to identify differences among the individual conditions (Table 3).

Table 3

Multiple-comparison test

	1-minute videos		30-second videos		Control
	With travel influencer	Without travel influencer	With travel influencer	Without travel influencer	
Mean	5.35	5.93	5.05	5.26	4.63
σ	1.69	1.10	1.45	1.71	1.94
1 minute with travel influencer	—				
1 minute without travel influencer	0.101	—			
30 seconds with travel influencer	0.411	0.015**	—		
30 seconds without travel influencer	0.798	0.060*	0.571	—	
Control	0.042**	0.000***	0.238	0.077*	—

Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

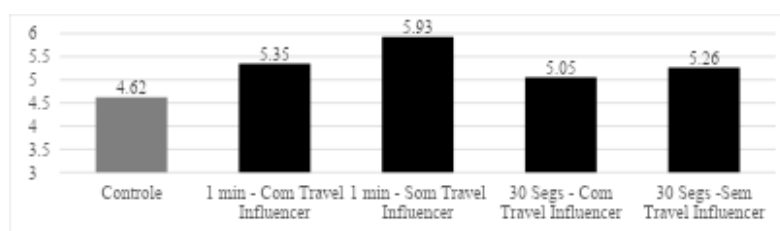
*Significant at the 10% level; **significant at the 5% level; ***significant at the 1% level.

Post hoc analysis: LSD.

Data presented in Table 3 revealed a result that differed from that predicted by H3. The condition associated with the highest travel intention was the 1-minute video without a travel influencer ($M = 5.9$), which differed significantly from the control group ($M = 4.6$; $p < 0.05$). The 1-minute video featuring a travel influencer condition ($M = 5.3$) also differed significantly from the control group ($p < 0.05$). Figure 3 presents the results of the test of H3.

Figure 3

Comparison among the study groups

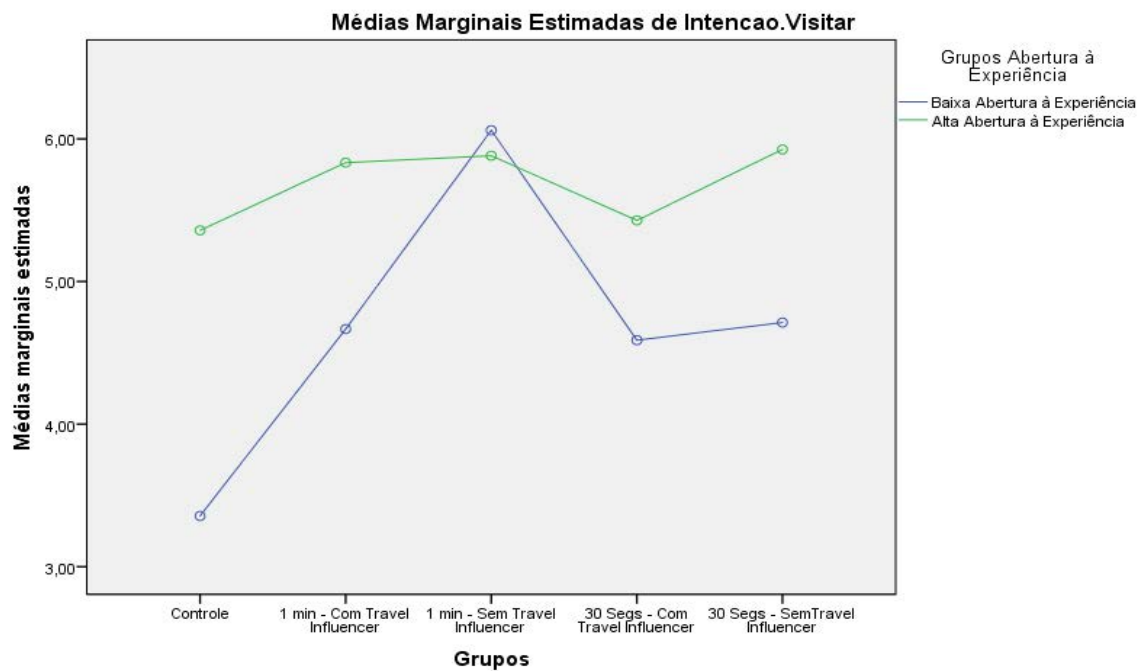


Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

H4 was subsequently tested to assess the combined effect of the variables using a two-way ANOVA. Responses to the openness-to-experience construct were divided into two groups representing low and high openness. A significant difference was found between the openness groups ($F = 21.084$, $p < 0.001$). The interaction between the experimental conditions and levels of openness was marginally significant ($F = 2.412$, $p = 0.051$) suggesting a possible moderating effect. Figure 4 displays the mean travel intention scores according to experimental condition and level of openness to experience.

Figure 4

Two-way ANOVA: study groups and openness to experience



Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

Competing hypotheses involving socioeconomic variables were also formulated to determine whether these variables influenced travel intention and to assess the robustness of the main hypotheses (H5). Tourism is closely associated with leisure, entertainment, and quality of life. According to Rabahy (2019), increases in leisure time and real household income – H5a, comparing income below and above BRL 6,500.00 – which are frequently associated with educational attainment – H5b, comparing secondary education, incomplete higher education, and completed higher education – expand opportunities for tourism. Changes in individual behaviour may also influence the intention to consume tourism experiences, with potential variations according to sex (H5c) and age – H5d, comparing individuals aged below and above 33 years.

Among the relationships analysed, only sex (H5c) showed a marginally significant difference [$F(1, 200) = 2.954$, $p = 0.087$]. The remaining competing hypotheses were not supported. The results demonstrate that socioeconomic variables alone do not adequately explain consumers' travel intentions. By contrast, short-form videos, travel influencers, and openness to experience were more relevant to understanding this behaviour. Table 4 summarises the results for the main and competing hypotheses.

Table 4*Results of hypothesis testing*

Hypothesis	Relationship	F	p	Status
H1	H1a Social media-adapted tourism videos → TI	7.643	0.006***	Supported
	H1b Short-form videos (1 minute) → TI	10.775	0.001***	Supported
	H1c Very short-form videos (30 seconds) → TI	2.591	0.110	Not supported
H2	Travel influencers → TI	3.113	0.080*	Partially supported
H3	Very short-form videos (30 seconds) with travel influencers → TI (stronger effect)	—	0.238	Not supported
H4	Short-form videos with travel influencers and high openness to experience → TI	2.412	0.051*	Partially supported
H5	H5a Income → TI	0.022	0.881	Not supported
	H5b Educational attainment → TI	1.087	0.339	Not supported
	H5c Sex → TI	2.954	0.087*	Partially supported
	H5d Age → TI	0.439	0.508	Not supported

Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

*Significant at the 10% level; ***significant at the 1% level.

The analysis of socioeconomic variables revealed that only sex had a marginal influence on travel intention, indicating that sociodemographic variables considered in isolation have limited ability to identify the target audience for tourist destinations.

Discussion

Prior research has highlighted the effects of social media on tourism, with TikTok standing out as a platform for destination promotion because of its extensive reach and high levels of engagement (Dong et al., 2024; Martins et al., 2023; Martins et al., 2024). Through its short and creative videos, TikTok provides an effective means of sharing tourism experiences, demonstrating the power of the information disseminated through these platforms (Recuero, 2009).

The production of tourism videos is intended to encourage consumption, as proposed in H1. Support for this hypothesis reinforces previous findings regarding the inspirational potential of short-form videos (Fang et al., 2023; Wu & Ding, 2023). Trivedi et al. (2022) found that longer videos featuring celebrity influencers exerted stronger effects on attitudes and intentions than shorter videos or videos featuring experts, suggesting that longer exposure enhances advertising effectiveness. Consistent with this evidence, the present study found that 1-minute videos increased travel intention, indicating that video length positively influences consumers and is associated with advertising costs. Varan et al. (2019) supported this argument by showing that short videos facilitate recall, whereas longer videos allow for more effective storytelling and emotional appeal, both of which are essential to conversion. H1b was therefore supported, whereas H1c was not supported.

Regarding the source of information, the presence of travel influencers was expected to increase travel intention, as proposed in H2, but the results provided only partial support for this hypothesis. Trivedi et al. (2022) showed that celebrities appearing in longer videos were more effective than experts, suggesting that influencer type interacts with video length to shape consumer attitudes. Previous studies have focused on tourism inspiration derived from authentic experiences (He et al., 2023; Khoi et al., 2020). By contrast, influencers with technical or expert profiles have been found to be less inspiring, revealing a tension between rational and affective decision-making and highlighting the challenges of communication on social media.

H3, which concerned the most appealing experimental condition, was not supported. The most effective condition consisted of 1-minute videos without influencers. This finding is consistent with Buhalis and Law (2008), who argued that technology should be adapted to consumer needs. Gu and Zhao (2024) similarly noted that although shorter videos increase click-through rates, an optimal video length is required to develop storytelling and engagement.

The empirical superiority of the 1-minute video condition without travel influencers ($M = 5.93$) represents the most notable contribution of this study, challenging the assumption that influencer presence is inseparable from successful tourism marketing (Saini et al., 2023). This phenomenon may be interpreted through the lens of perceived authenticity and commercial saturation theory (Morhart et al., 2015). On TikTok, consumers may exhibit psychological defence mechanisms, particularly consumer reactance, when they recognise familiar digital endorsers, interpreting the content as overtly commercial and less trustworthy (Zhou et al., 2023). Conversely, 1-minute videos focusing exclusively on the tourist destination function as organic, immersive, destination-centred narratives. They allow viewers to imagine themselves in the setting independently, without the mediation or distraction created by the presence of a digital celebrity (Cao et al., 2021; Fang et al., 2023). A duration of 1 minute therefore appears to provide sufficient time for

the destination's aesthetic and informational features to unfold, maximising the user's flow state without introducing the commercial biases associated with influencers (Zhao & Wagner, 2023).

Finally, H4 was examined considering evidence that young TikTok users value authenticity and may respond negatively to commercial content (Morhart et al., 2015). The hypothesis was partially supported, suggesting that the combined effects of video length and openness to experience are not universal. Fang et al. (2023) supported this reasoning by indicating that openness to experience strengthens the influence of narrative and visual elements in tourism videos. Campaigns should therefore be adapted to audience characteristics, as consumers with higher levels of openness are more likely to explore a wider range of destinations (Plog, 2001).

In summary, the appeal of short-form videos does not necessarily ensure credibility when influencers are present. Victor et al. (2024) emphasised that such discrepancies may broaden the understanding of consumer behaviour and travel decision-making. The findings indicate that video length, influencer type, and platform characteristics should be carefully combined to influence travel intention effectively.

Final considerations

This investigation of the effects of short-form TikTok videos featuring travel influencers on consumers' travel intentions produced several relevant findings. First, the study revealed that short-form videos on TikTok increase the intention to visit destinations, highlighting their ability to attract attention and reinforcing their relevance to tourism marketing campaigns. However, very short videos lasting up to 30 seconds did not produce the expected effect, regardless of whether an influencer was present. Although highly popular, very short videos were less effective, whereas videos lasting up to 1 minute had a greater effect because they presented destination attractions more comprehensively. These findings suggest that although brevity is valued, providing more complete information tends to be more effective in tourism marketing.

The study also indicated that the presence of travel influencers introduces a complex dynamic into content consumption, although its influence on travel intention was nuanced and highly context-dependent. Although travel influencers play a relevant role in shaping users' initial perceptions and aesthetic preferences, their presence alone is not a decisive factor in consolidating the intention to visit a destination. This intention remains dependent on the structure and depth of the audiovisual content presented (Cao et al., 2021; Fang et al., 2023). Content quality, destination relevance, and individual consumer characteristics are also determining factors. The effectiveness of influencers is therefore context-dependent and requires an in-depth analysis of both the market and the target audience.

From a theoretical and conceptual perspective, this study reinforces the need to distinguish between attitudinal constructs. Researchers and tourism marketing practitioners should recognise that the findings reported here relate strictly to travel intention – the volitional, aspirational, and imagery-based dimension of destination decision-making – and should not be directly extrapolated to predict purchase intention, which represents the transactional dimension of acquiring tourism services. An effective audiovisual stimulus on TikTok may therefore convert views into a desire to visit and cause a destination to enter a tourist's consideration set. However, actual purchasing behaviour depends on conventional exogenous factors such as income elasticity, infrastructure, and financial feasibility (Rabahy, 2019).

Among the conditions examined, 1-minute videos without influencers were the most appealing. Although unexpected, this preference has relevant implications for campaign management. Consumers appear to value more spontaneous content that aligns with TikTok's communication style. Within this context, influencer presence may introduce a degree of formality that resonates more effectively on platforms such as Facebook or Instagram, but not necessarily on TikTok.

Another relevant finding is that consumers' openness to new experiences moderates the effects of video length and influencer presence on travel intention. This indicates that although short-form videos and content creator authenticity attract broad attention, consumers who are more open to new experiences are those who become more strongly motivated. This predisposition enhances content effectiveness by encouraging these individuals to imagine themselves participating in the experiences presented. Psychographic profiles therefore emerge as a key factor in achieving more precise segmentation in tourism marketing.

Finally, the study advances the literature by considering individual factors such as openness to experience and demonstrating that psychological traits may influence the effectiveness of short-form videos. This theoretical contribution supports the personalisation of strategies within the tourism sector and provides avenues for future research on market segmentation and platform-specific digital behaviour.

A key limitation is that the predictive scope of this study is restricted to the formation of travel intention, understood as the intention to visit a destination. This construct is predominantly aspirational and imagery-based and does not necessarily develop into tourism purchase intention or an actual purchasing decision (Saini et al., 2023). As transactional conversion involves complex exogenous barriers, such as budgetary constraints and logistical convenience, future studies should incorporate behavioural and economic variables, as well as longitudinal data, to track the complete consumer conversion funnel – from immersion in short-form videos to the eventual purchase of tourism products and services. The study also focused specifically on sun-and-beach tourism. Future research should

compare these results with those obtained for other types of destinations, thereby extending the applicability of the findings to different tourism contexts.

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