

Short Video Usage and Influencer Effects: A Cross Cultural Study of TikTok and Douyin Users

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Article Info

Journal of Digital Business and International Marketing
<https://www.ansispublishations.com/journals/jdbim/jdbim.html>

Received 12 October 2025.

Revised form 15 November 2025.

Accepted 02 December 2025

Available online 05 January 2026.

© The Author(s), 2026.

<https://doi.org/10.64026/JDBIM/2026005>

Published by Ansis Publications.

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Abstract – Short-video platforms are now a powerful and fast-evolving type of social media all over the world, but the behavior of the users is different in the different cultural backgrounds. This paper will compare the similarities and differences between TikTok users in the United States and Douyin users in China based on the use of the platforms, the interest in influencers, the purchase intention, and the cultural value of the individual. Online survey was carried out (N = 439) in the form of a cross-sectional survey; the respondents were separate in terms of age young (1829) and older (3049). Findings suggest that Chinese users have increased platform experience, socialization levels of US users, and purchase intentions with influencers are stronger with Chinese. The individual cultural dimensions partly do not meet the expectations at the national level, and the assessment of the culture at the individual level will be useful in the digital media research and global marketing strategies.

Keywords – TikTok, Douyin, Influencer Marketing, Purchase Intention, Cultural Dimensions, Cross-Cultural Comparison.

I. INTRODUCTION

The theory of cross-cultural marketing is based on the assumption that consumers perceive and react to marketing messages using their deeply embedded cultural constructs. The works of Hofstede and Hall form a primary background contribution that is still reviewed in the field. It also offers theoretical models, which can outline communication preferences in national cultures. Cultural aspects highlighted by Hofstede (collectivism vs. power distance, collectivism, uncertainty avoidance and femininity vs. masculinity) have become the mainstream models towards the analysis of international marketing behavior. As an example, people who are located in very individualistic cultures, including the United States, are likely to appreciate individual accomplishment, assertiveness, and self-expression and are therefore more open to advertisements that are aggressive, humorously or provocatively oriented. In contrast, collectivist cultures, including China, value the group integration, power, and emotional control, which require less aggressive and more integrative speaking styles [1].

Despite structural similarities between TikTok and Douyin, both of which are owned by the same company, ByteDance, and both of which use the similar AI-based recommendation systems, their content ecosystems and strategic capabilities are very different. TikTok is also designed to be accessible to people all over the world, mainly focusing on trends, challenges, and user-created content, which is why Douyin is firmly rooted into the Chinese e-commerce and social system. The differences in data policies, monetization tools and interface features across the platforms affect brand utilization. TikTok rules and policies on content control and moderation mostly follow Western principles of free speech and inclusiveness, although there is mounting criticism of false information and harmful content. At the same time, the strict censorship of

Douyin in line with the Chinese system of control, is a significant factor affecting content and ideological coloring. TikTok enjoys the advantages of viral experimentation, and Douyin enjoys the advantages of value-congruent branding, which is in line with the state-approved stories.

As technology develops especially the internet, consumers are becoming more enlightened and it is more difficult to reach them using the conventional media. One important tool of dealing with these changes is segmentation. The present day can be described in terms of a wide and vast range of products that consumers can use in meeting the needs of the market. This fact contributes to the development of the usage as a significant element of social life. Social media has spread like wildfire and the manner in which individuals communicate, relate, and interact has radically changed. Social media have become some of the most important platforms to share personal information, news, photographs and videos as the vital communication channels that enable interaction of users online, which can be affected by or has an influence on the opinion of others. Based on a study in [2], digital opinion leaders are influential product and service promoters in different fields of marketing and business tactics.

Presently, influencer marketing is a major influencing tool in the development of the purchase behavior, and can be described as an influencing process of finding, locating, endorsing, and incorporating those people involved in the meaningful conversations. It is a significant approach to online marketing that requires marketers to concentrate on a smaller group of influential individuals instead of the group of potential consumers. The Social Influence Theory (SIT) is a theory developed by Kurt Lewin in the middle of the 20th century, which focuses on the impact of social environment on people, including peers, opinion leaders, and influencers [3]. It discusses the role of interpersonal relations and the effect of social interaction on the attitudes, opinion and behavior. Being one of the modern-day opinion leaders, social media influencers have a significant impact on the way people think and act as consumers. They create content, which fits their followers, thus, influencing their perceptions and decisions. An understanding of the principles of SIT can explain how influencers on social media can leverage their relationships with followers to influence them to make consumer decisions.

In the quest to determine how much social media influences the necessity of the product and consequently the consumer purchasing behavior in different cultures, it would be imperative to examine how culture influences consumer intentions to use the social media. Culture has got its essence; it is the complex set of beliefs, roles, behaviors, values and traditions of the human societies. Culture is an important concept to study consumer behavior. As presented by Gong [4], culture affects almost all businesses and consumers in each and every country. The cultural constructs, feelings and reactions to certain conditions influence thinking and behavior of people and their using social media and internet as the means of communication and decision-making processes.

Table 1. Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions

Dimension	Details
Long-term orientation vs. short-term orientation	The degree to which a community is pragmatic, future-based in contrast to a short-term perspective or traditional historical perspective.
Uncertainty avoidance	The extent to which people consider unstructured situations and ambiguity to be threatening.
Femininity vs. masculinity	The overwhelming values of the masculine society include Victory, career and success. The common values of the female society are family and caring.
Individualism vs. collectivism	Individualism refers to a social system of personal autonomy; the individuals seek personal ventures or want their efforts to obtain recognition. Collectivism refers to a social order, where men are incorporated into strong, cohesive units.
Power distance	Subordinate organizational members will recognize disparate power distribution to varying degrees.

A popular definition of culture suggested by Birukou et al. [5] is as collective configuration of the mind, which renders members of a single group distinct from members of the other group. The mobility and ever-changing culture are the attribute in which every generation brings its unique aspects before it is passed on to the next generation. The cultural dimension theory by Hofstede has offered a theory that clarifies the effects of the culture on the values of the members in the society, and how they relate to the behavior. It is possible to explain the features of countries and their components using five dimensions (see **Table 1**).

The aim of the study is to review the variations of users of TikTok and Douyin in terms of platform usage, the preference of the influencers, and purchasing intention, and to determine the individual-level cultural values, which depend on the cultural dimension of individualism and power distance, and the impact of the latter on online behavior as proposed by Hofstede.

The rest of this study will be organized in the following way: Section II will focus on the literature related to cross-cultural difference in the context of utilizing short videos as an application within the community of TikTok/Douyin users. Section III describes our methodology, including the research design and sampling properties, measurement tools, and data collection/characteristics. Section IV is a report of our findings in detail based on our sampling method. Lastly, the study is concluded by Section V which emphasizes the idea that both age and cultural situations define significant differences in platform utilization, influencer exposure, and consumer behavior of users of TikTok/Douyin.

II. RELATED WORK

Yu et al. [6] claim that Douyin motivation is not the same as motivation of using other social media platforms. As the current paper shows, despite the fact that socialization is one of the key elements of social media use, it is the most uncommon reason among Douyin users; most of them claim to have entertainment as their main motivation to use this platform. Earlier studies on the topic of social media and its study through the aspects of the uses and gratifications framework underline the significance of the relational motives, as social media is viewed more as social. However, new applications like Instagram and TikTok (Douyin) do not follow on Facebook, which is broadly seen as an effective channel of maintaining interpersonal relationships and ensuring easy communication. As compared to this, emergent platforms offer a platform through which online personalities, influencers, and content creators can engage with audiences and share content. Some of the users of Instagram and TikTok (Douyin) note that they use these platforms as a means to build communities and communicate with others, but most users are only consumers.

Alharbe [7] argue that social media has been used as a vehicle of communicating with one another, creation of awareness and consciousness to the world in general. In addition, TikTok/ Doyin and similar short-videos have become widespread among the younger generations, and it is agreeable that they have a significant implication on youth socialization. Social media, when used properly, can be an effective tool of enhancing social awareness and interest among the young population. However, the presence of concomitancy risks is apparent. As the popularity of small videos grows, virtual and physical space becomes more and more intermingled, creating the need to question the socio-psychological implication of it. As much as responsible use of social media has the potential of enhancing social awareness and empathy, empirical studies have shown that there is an inverse correlation between internet addiction and social awareness.

In addition, according to Zhang, Bu, and Li [8], there is a positive correlation between frequent consumption of short videos among adolescents and social isolation. Short videos, including those available on TikTok, therefore, might increase social awareness, but excessive use or dependency undermines this advantage. The increased popularity of influencer marketing has prompted a similar academic interest but the factors that make it successful have not been conclusive. Some researchers, such as De Veirman and Hudders [9], report the instrumental role of the informational value of posts made by the influencer and the negative influence of overt disclosures of sponsorship on the attitudes and purchase intentions, but some studies contradict these results.

According to Kim and Kim [10], consumer knowledge in the form of follower characteristics can be a barrier to behavioral involvement in the content of influencers since informed consumers can find the advertising campaigns of major brands to be too commercial. On the contrary, other researches show a positive effect of consumer knowledge on consumer behavior. Furthermore, Venciute et al. [11] indicate divergent evidence on the role of influencer indegree, the number of followers an influencer has, and its impact on marketing performance. All these conflicting results highlight the necessity of the overall knowledge of the factors influencing the effectiveness of influencer marketing (see **Fig. 1**).



Fig 1. Theoretical Framework of Influencer Marketing Performance.

Consumers also rely more on influencers to discover a product and also deliver credible opinions and authentic recommendations that are genuine. However, even with the increasing influence of influencer-created content, there are many questions about the qualities that make an influencer truly effective when influencing the purchase intention, which is

one of the primary goals of marketers and brands. As pointed out by Joseph [12], the credibility of the sources, especially their physical attractiveness and trustworthiness attributes, has a strong effect on the consumer responses. Influencers who are very attractive are usually received and engaged and credible influencers are ones who develop emotional credibility and brand congruence. Such features, however, will hardly work on their own. The quality of shared content, e.g. clarity, relevance, the appeal and informativeness can mediate the impact of such attributes.

According to the description of Wan and Zhao [13], content that is of high-quality increases consumer trust and interest, which then leads to higher chances of purchase decision making, when the content is of low quality or mismatched, even reputable influencers lose credibility. Despite this knowledge, very little research has also studied how quality of content acts as a mediator between the influencer attributes and consumer behavior. The relationship between the two influential attributes physical attractiveness and trustworthiness and purchase intention especially concerning the quality of the content is under-researched. In the digital competitive world where influencer marketing is a highly contested area with brands consistently spending a lot of money on it, the decrease in strategic achievement can be caused by the failure to apply a content-based approach.

The fact is that culture can play a very vital role in marketing including advertising, marketing approach and consumer buying habits; however, there is a dearth of theoretical and empirical studies concerning the cross-cultural adaptation of the latest technology of social networking [14]. The culture as a predictor of online purchasing has produced conflicting findings as regards to the impact of culture on online buying behavior. According to some research, online stores would need to modify their atmospherics so that it would reflect certain peculiarities of the culture. According to Kim, Yang, and Kim [15], cultural differences made no difference in terms of the ability of online retailers to attract and retain their clients because well-established online retailers like Amazon are successful in their international markets by providing a universal customer interface. Culture and lifestyle severely affect the behavior and the growing popularity of social networking among people is quickly making it a choice of style of life among the people of various generations and cultures and thus it should be given more attention.

Whether retailers apply the culturally specific or global marketing approach as developed by Johri et al. [16], there is no denying the fact that they have to realize the more urgent need of incorporating social networks into their structure. Use of social media has essentially changed the face of consumers, and thus, it is critical that brands quickly adjust to the new technologies and consumer trends to ensure they are relevant. As a result, retailers must mainly concentrate their online activities on enticing shoppers in their respective constituencies through discussion facilitation and promotion through third-party sites like social networks.

The framework by Hofstede has been utilized in other adoption research works both at national and individual levels and the results have shown that there are great correlations existing between cultural dimensions and adoption of high-tech products such as the Internet, mobile phones and personal computers. Na, Kosinski, and Stillwell [17], who is among the first to investigate the issue of culture in the context of social media, assumed that individualism versus collectivism is a rather relevant dimension in the study of the use of Web 2.0 services, including social media platforms. Although he explained the differences between individualism and collectivism in social media, he did not give much details on how to operationalize his ideas on the social media. Conversely, Shim et al. [18] carried empirical research in order to find out differences in user goals and behaviors across four countries (United States, France, China and South Korea). The authors determined the influence of cultural differences on the goals and actions of social media users.

Heinonen [19] have noted that social media sites provide effective mechanisms through which consumers can share their views on diverse matters. In individualistic societies, people can be more interested in the creating and management of attractive personal profile pages and pictures to demonstrate their unique identity and character. Besides, people of individualistic cultures can be characterized by a stronger desire to share personal information, instead of communicating with people, because they focus on personal achievement and recognition. This can lead to repeated changes of relationships status, career and homes, as people are trying to show their own achievements and individuality.

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Sample Characteristics

The present research used a quantitative and cross-sectional survey design to explore the variation between TikTok users in the United States and Douyin users in China with regard to platform usage, influencer interaction, purchase intentions, and personal cultural values. The survey-based design is very appropriate structure to cross-cultural comparative study of digital media behaviors and statistical analysis of group differences could be done. The participants had to be active users of TikTok (US) or Douyin (China) at the age between 18 and 49 years of age and have prior experience on the platform.

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of Sample

Variable	Category	US	China
Age Group	18–29	n (%)	n (%)
	30–49	n (%)	n (%)
Platform	TikTok/Douyin	TikTok	Douyin
Total Sample	—	n	n

The data screening processes involving eliminating unfinished and contradictory responses yielded 439 usable questionnaires that were to be analyzed. The respondents were further separated into young users (1829 years) and old users (3049 years) to investigate age-related flow differences in influencer engagements and purchasing behavior, which is also aligned with previous social media studies. **Table 2** shows the demographic structure of the final sample, both in terms of country and age-group distribution. **Fig. 2** represents the general structure of the research process including study design and the final dataset construction which gives us the visual picture of the sampling and data construction.

Measurement Instruments and Variables

A number of constructs were developed to measure the engagement of TikTok/Douyin users on the application, their interaction with influencers, their buying habit, and their cultural orientation. The variables used in the platform usage were the duration of time spent on TikTok/Douyin or similar platforms, the number of people that follow the platform every day, the number of users, and those followed. Such indicators show the degree of socialization and engagement of users on the short-video social networks and have been extensively used in previous researches.

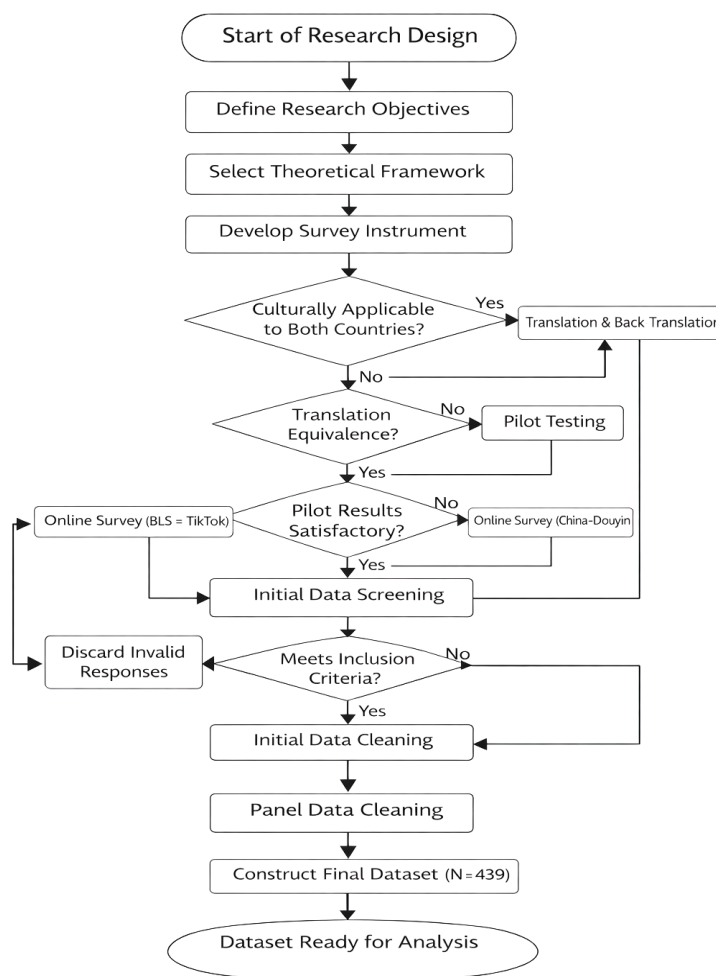


Fig. 2. The Workflow of Research Design and Data Collection.

The variables of influencers were measured through the question of asking the respondents to identify one of their preferred influencers and specify the sphere, in which the influencer is most skilled. The expertise of influencers was divided into eight categories: music, travel, beauty, fashion, food, pet, fitness, etc. This classification is based on the recognized influencer marketing literature that focuses on niches specialization and content mastery as factors of persuasive effect. Purchase intention was measured by the use of three hypothetical product endorsement scenarios each rated on a 5-point Likert scale. The overall score of purchase intent was between 3 and 15 and the greater the score the more perceived influence was seen to be put forth by the influencer. This is a multi-item measurement which enhances reliability and construct validity.

At the individual level, cultural dimensions were assessed on the basis of adapting the scales on the Hofstede framework with individualism and power distance. The individualism scale had six items, whereas the power distance scale had five items. **Table 3** presents the summarization of all the key variables and the way they are operationalized. Reliability analysis showed that both constructs had satisfactory internal consistency that went beyond the recommended Cronbach alpha of 0.70.

Table 3. Operationalization of Key Variables

Construct	Measurement	Scale / Categories
Platform Usage	Length of use, daily use	Categorical ranges
Socialization	No. of followers, following	Categorical ranges
Influencer Preference	Expertise domain	8 categories
Purchase Intention	3 scenarios	5-point Likert
Individualism	6 items	Likert scale
Power Distance	5 items	Likert scale

Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

The questionnaire was passed online in the US and China. To achieve cross-cultural equivalence, the questionnaire was translated and back-translated to English and Chinese in accordance to the set methodological rules. Their participation was voluntary and anonymity and confidentiality was assured. The process of data collection and preparation is outlined in Fig. 2, whereas the data analysis workflow is outlined in Fig. 3. These numbers provide a graphic description of the sequential process involved in this project, the distribution of the surveys to statistical testing.

The analysis of data was conducted in three steps. To demonstrate demographic factors, the trend of using the platform, preferences of influencers, the score of purchase intentions, and score of cultural dimensions, descriptive statistics were computed. Second, a reliability analysis of the individualism and power distance scales was done to determine the internal consistency of the two scales by means of Cronbach alpha. Third, independent samples t-tests were used to test the difference in means between countries (US vs. China) and between age groups (young vs. older users) in each country. This analysis plan is suitable in contrasting autonomous groups and is usually employed in cross-cultural and social media study [20]. Table 4 provides a breakdown of the statistical tests that were performed under each of the research objectives.

Table 4. Summarization of Data Analysis Methods

Research Objective	Variables	Analysis Method
Usage comparison	Platform experience, followers	Descriptive statistics
Influencer effects	Purchase intention	t-tests
Cultural differences	Individualism, power distance	t-tests
Scale reliability	Cultural scales	Cronbach’s alpha

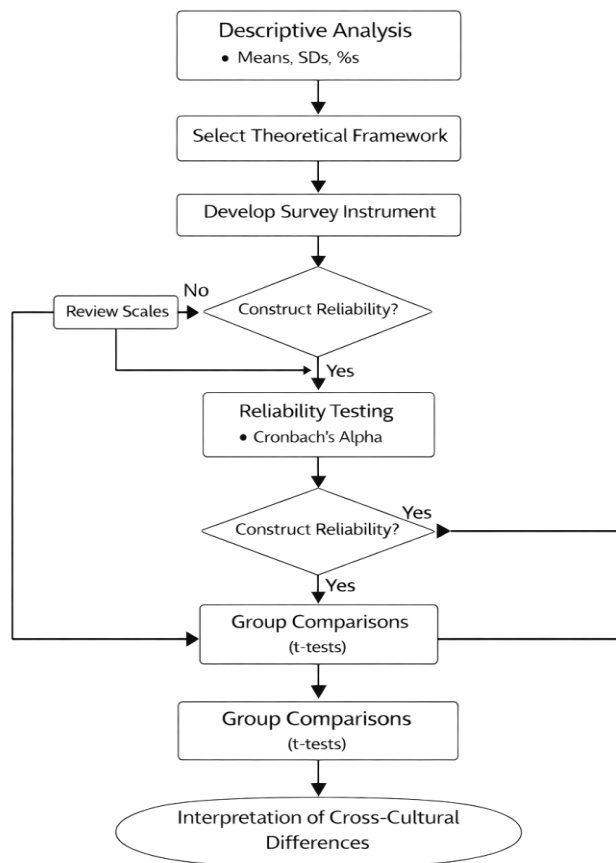


Fig 3. Workflow Data Analysis and Statistical Testing.

IV. RESULTS

Our study detected contrasting trends of using the applications on TikTok and Douyin among two sample groups. Out of the 100 participants of United States, 46.1% of mentioned having used TikTok within one to two years, 24% with less than a year, 18% between 2 to 3 years and 11% over 3 years. On the other hand, the sample of Chinese participants showed a more spread distribution: 39.4% took two-three years on Douyin, 35.7% took more than three years, 22.6% took one-two years and 2.3% took less than one year. Comparative analysis indicates that the duration of usage of Douyin users was the longest compared to those of TikTok users as shown in **Table 5**.

Table 5. Data on the Frequency and Time Spent on Both Platforms

Category	Level (reversed)	CH (N=221)	US (N=219 / 217)
Duration spend on Douyin/TikTok daily	≥ 3 h	13 (5.9%)	13 (5.9%)
	2–3 h	27 (12.2%)	21 (9.6%)
	1–2 h	90 (40.7%)	58 (26.5%)
	31–59 min	68 (30.8%)	61 (27.9%)
	11–30 min	23 (10.4%)	57 (26.9%)
	≤ 10 min	0 (0%)	9 (4.1%)
Duration as Douyin/TikTok user	1–2 h	79 (35.7%)	25 (11.5%)
	31–59 min	87 (39.4%)	40 (18.4%)
	11–30 min	50 (22.6%)	100 (46.1%)
	≤ 10 min	5 (2.3%)	52 (24%)

One of the most conspicuous features of TikTok and Douyin as social media platforms is that they provide the possibility to engage in social interactions. As a result, the number of followers and followings is a critical variable in the given investigation that could be used to examine the differences between TikTok and Douyin users thoroughly. **Table 5** highlights the overall number of followers in every nation of respondents on TikTok and Douyin. During the survey, the participants were only allowed to choose a single answer that most closely represented the common distribution of the followers on their platform.

The most frequent sample respondents in the United States were having between 51 and 100 followers (21.1%), then more than 300 followers (20.6%), and 11 to 50 followers (17.0%). The majority of the surveyed participants (Chinese) had 33.9 to fifty followers on Douyin. About 22.6% of participants said that they had 51-100 followers, and 12.7% said they had 101-150 followers. Only 16 participants (7.2% of total) of Chinese people indicated that they had 300 or more followers on Douyin with 1.8% of the 251 to 300 as the least common number of followers. Another difference was that, about 30% of Chinese respondents said they had more than 100 Douyin followers, and 51.8% of U.S. respondents said they had more than 100 TikTok followers. These results hint at the fact that U.S. TikTok users are more prone to interaction and socialization than Chinese Douyin users.

The new influencers are an important element of TikTok and Douyin. This study has analyzed how often users interact with TikTok and Douyin, the content of the videos that users like the most of all the influencers and the degree of persuasiveness of the influencers on how customers should buy their products. Participants that were followed by the number of influencers are defined in **Table 6**. Most of the Chinese (40.7) and U.S (27.9) samples reported to be following 11-50 TikTok/Douyin users. Also, the second most frequent response of Americans was 51-100 influencers (17.8%). Chinese respondents had the same response (24). The response of 101-150 influencers (15.5%/13.1%), was in the third position in the United States. The count of influencers followed by the participants was also largely the same in China and the United States: 6.7% of China followed 300+ influencers on TikTok, and 18.2% on Douyin which were the number of influencers followed by the users.

The U.S. TikTok followers and followees were notable as they were seen unlike the Chinese Douyin followers who had their size of followers and followees limited to the U.S. TikTok followers.

Table 6. Percentage and Frequency of Followers of Tiktok/Douyin Influencers

Level (reversed)	US – No. of followers (N=218)	US – No. of following/influencers (N=219)	CH – No. of followers (N=221)	CH – No. of following/influencers (N=221)
> 300	45 (20.6%)	18 (8.2%)	16 (7.2%)	6 (2.7%)
251–300	15 (6.9%)	7 (3.2%)	4 (1.8%)	4 (1.8%)
201–250	16 (7.3%)	11 (5%)	12 (5.4%)	9 (4.1%)
151–200	14 (6.4%)	22 (10%)	13 (5.9%)	22 (10%)
101–150	23 (10.6%)	34 (15.5%)	28 (12.7%)	29 (13.1%)
51–100	46 (21.1%)	39 (17.8%)	50 (22.6%)	53 (24%)
11–50	37 (17%)	61 (27.9%)	75 (33.9%)	90 (40.7%)
≤ 10	22 (10.1%)	27 (12.3%)	23 (10.4%)	8 (3.6%)

The participants were asked to name a favorite TikTok/Douyin influencer and then indicate the expertise of the influencer. Influencers refer to the users of TikTok/Douyin who create content in specific niches. In this study, the influencer expertise was divided into eight categories, which included ‘fitness’, ‘pets’, ‘food’, ‘fashion’, ‘beauty’, ‘travel’, ‘music’, and ‘others.’ Most of the respondents in the United States were subscribers to music, fashion, and beauty influencers with 25.1, 18.3 and 5.5% of the total respondents in the U.S. participating respectively. The least popular category of the U.S. participants included pet influencers (0.9 only). ‘Fashion’, ‘food’, and ‘beauty’ influences are the most recorded preferred respondents among Douyin influencers in China with 31.21% of overall participants in China, 27.1%, and 17.2% of the total participants, respectively. The least preferred influencers were pet influencers with none of the participants choosing them as their preferred influencer, and the next most preferred influencer was the fitness influencer with 0.5.

Also, the choice of influencers among the participants was studied in terms of age. The age of the individuals used in the research was between 18 and 49, and it was set at 30 to identify the boundary between the youth and the elderly. The young segment integrated respondents aged between 18 and 29 years and the older segment integrates those between 30 and 49 years. The results in the U.S. sample showed that the most popular TikTok influencers were ‘beauty’ (18.41%), ‘fashion’ (22.11%), and ‘music’ (22.10%) influencers, and pet influencers were the least famous TikTok influencers in the younger group (0%). The older demographic had the music influencers first (27.3%), then the ‘beauty’ and ‘fashion’ influencers (14% and 16.8%, respectively). The two respondents who chose pet influencers as their most preferred category make them the least preferred category at 1.4.

Most respondents in the younger age group, 65.50% in Chinese sample, ‘food’ (20.9), ‘fashion’ (21.8), ‘beauty’ (35.5) as their favorable Douyin influencers. In addition, with reference to the aged population, most preferred ‘fashion’ (12.6%), ‘beauty’ (27%), and ‘food’ (33.3%) influencers. Also, one representative of the younger audience selected fitness influencers as their best option, and no one representing the younger audience chose fitness influencers to be their favorite. Moreover, pet and fitness influencers did not acquire an acceptable position among the Chinese elderly group.

The main difference in the preferences of the participants in the influencer knowledge between U.S. and China was the preference for music expertise in the United States and food expertise in China. Besides, more U.S. respondents preferred fitness and pet influencers over the Chinese respondents (see **Table 7**).

Table 7. The Results of the Influencer Expertise Among Tiktok/Douyin Users Based on Age

Interest (reversed)	US < 30 (N=76)	US ≥ 30 (N=143)	US All ages (N=219)	CH < 30 (N=110)	CH ≥ 30 (N=111)	CH All ages (N=221)
Other	10 (13.2%)	28 (19.6%)	38 (17.4%)	19 (17.3%)	18 (16.2%)	37 (16.7%)
Fitness	7 (9.2%)	10 (7.0%)	17 (7.8%)	1 (0.9%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.5%)
Pet	0 (0.0%)	2 (1.4%)	2 (0.9%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Food	7 (9.2%)	7 (4.9%)	14 (6.4%)	23 (20.9%)	37 (33.3%)	60 (27.1%)
Fashion	16 (21.1%)	24 (16.8%)	40 (18.3%)	24 (21.8%)	14 (12.6%)	38 (17.2%)
Beauty	14 (18.4%)	20 (14.0%)	34 (15.5%)	39 (35.5%)	30 (27.0%)	69 (31.2%)
Travel	6 (7.9%)	13 (9.1%)	19 (8.7%)	1 (0.9%)	2 (1.8%)	3 (1.4%)
Music	16 (21.1%)	39 (27.3%)	55 (25.1%)	3 (2.7%)	10 (9.0%)	13 (5.9%)

We used a 5-point Likert scale to assess the purchase intent of the participants in three different situations. As a result, the score in the purchase intention was between three (a highly improbable purchase) and fifteen (a highly probable purchase).

Table 8 shows the average, α (Cronbach’s alpha), and SD (standard deviation) of purchasing intent in the two scenarios per the two countries. The high scores in purchase reflected that the specified influencer had a higher impact on the purchasing intentions of participants since all of the three goods were assumed to be recommended by the influencer in the specified situation. The Chinese sample had a larger integrated purchase scores (SD = 1.61, M = 10.81) as compared to U.S. sample. The t-test that followed had the $t(437) = -2.57, p = 0.05$ which did indicate that the two nations differ significantly in mean. Consequently, the influencers were found to have stronger impact on the buying behavior of the Chinese respondents.

The older age group of individuals was found to be more prone to the impact of the influencers on purchasing intent compared to the younger group as indicated in the lower purchase score (M = 10.05, SD = 1.65) of the former group compared to the latter (M = 10.56, SD = 1.95). The influencers affected the purchase intention of older Chinese sample (M = 10.99, SD = 1.50) more than it did to the younger sample (M = 10.64, SD 1.71). Nevertheless, when it comes to mean difference in purchase scores of various countries, the t-test showed that age bracket (old/young) in the U.S. records ($p = 0.05, t(216) = -1.951$) but not within the Chinese records ($p = 0.050, t(219) = -1.62$) was found to be significant.

To comprehend how users are different, we examined the similarity and differences in their demographic variables; the aforementioned descriptive analysis aimed at the general demographic features of TikTok/Douyin users. In addition, the cultural dimension by Hofstede serves as the main theoretical framework applied in this research. Specifically, in the present digitalized world, the situation has drastically changed, as the initial analysis of the Hofstede cultural dimensions in the workplace had been done many years ago. The TikTok and Douyin users are mostly young and creative in demographic. **Table 9**, therefore, focused on cultural scores of people instead of the national aggregate at the beginning.

Table 8. Ages and other Product Configurations Buy Scores of The Users

Group / Scenario (reversed)	US N	US Mean	US SD	US Cronbach's α	CH N	CH Mean	CH SD	CH Cronbach's α
Scenario beer	220	3.31	0.94	0.83	221	3.44	0.88	0.87
Scenario soda	220	3.55	0.73	0.73	221	3.72	0.74	0.82
Scenario cream	220	3.52	0.73	0.76	221	3.65	0.80	0.86
All age	220	10.39	1.86	-	221	10.81	1.61	-
Age \geq 30	144	10.56	1.95	-	111	10.99	1.50	-
Age < 30	76	10.05	1.65	-	110	10.64	1.71	-

Table 9. Scores Categorized by Age Bracket of Users

Group / Dimension (reversed)	US N	US Mean	US SD	US α	CH N	CH Mean	CH SD	CH α
All age – Power distance	220	3.12	1.16	0.92	221	2.42	0.88	0.82
All age – Individualism	220	2.43	0.90	0.89	221	2.50	0.75	0.82
Age \geq 30 – Power distance	144	3.15	1.19	-	111	2.49	0.89	-
Age \geq 30 – Individualism	144	2.40	0.95	-	111	2.43	0.75	-
Age < 30 – Power distance	76	3.07	1.13	-	110	2.34	0.88	-
Age < 30 – Individualism	76	2.49	0.79	-	110	2.57	0.76	-

The description analysis showed that the Chinese Douyin users had an average score of higher individualistic orientation (SD = 0.750, M China = 2.501) as compared to the US TikTok users (M US = 2.43, SD = 0.90). The power distance standard deviation of 3.12 with a score of 1.16 among the US TikTok users against 2.42 and a standard deviation of 0.88 among Douyin users in China was the standard deviation of power distance. The average difference in the individual power distance scores differed according to the nation (US/China) $t(439) = 7.161, p < .01$; however, the individualism score, and the difference between the two scores were not significantly distinct $t(439) = -0.84, p > .05$. The individualism scale had six items and power distance scale had five items. The alpha of the individualism scale is 0.82 and 0.89 in the case of China and United States respectively of the power distance scale.

V. CONCLUSION

This paper has shown that the cultural and age contextual variables contribute to substantial differences in platform use, interaction with content creators, and buying patterns among TikTok and Douyin users. The Chinese Douyin audience has longer tenure and greater intentions to purchase that are contingent on the creators, and the U.S. TikTok audience is more socialized and has a more varied range of behaviors between influencers and followers. Given that results of a cross-national difference in individualism are lower than those in Hofstede-based assumptions, individual culture measures depict more differences in power distance, however. These results highlight the importance of revisiting the cultural perspective through which the digital ecosystem is to be viewed. Taken together, the findings highlight the fact that the success of the influencer marketing process depends not only on the platform but also on the culture, meaning that the localization of the strategic approaches is required, and the cultural research carried at the individual level is necessary to make the global short-video marketing projects successful.

CRedit Author Statement

The authors confirm contribution to the paper as follows:

Conceptualization: Shi Gengqiang, **Methodology:** Shi Gengqiang, **Data Curation:** Wang Yuanjun, **Writing- Original Draft Preparation:** Wang Yuanjun and Shi Gengqiang, **Visualization:** Wang Yuanjun and Shi Gengqiang, **Investigation:** Shi Gengqiang, **Supervision:** Wang Yuanjun and Shi Gengqiang, **Writing- Reviewing and Editing:** Wang Yuanjun and Shi Gengqiang. All authors reviewed the results and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Data Availability

No data was used to support this study.

Conflicts of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Funding

No funding agency is associated with this research.

Competing Interests

There are no competing interests.

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ISSN: 3104-4115