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The Examination on Students'Parasocial Interaction and Brand Preference to Use Video Application in New Developing Area of Chengdu, China

Siyi Yan*

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Abstract

Purpose: This research investigates the influences on university students' parasocial interaction and brand preference regarding video applications in Chengdu, China. Seven variables were identified for examination, encompassing parasocial interaction, entertainment motive, perceived interactivity, self-disclosure, task attraction, physical attraction, and brand preference, with six hypotheses proposed to explore their interrelationships. **Research Design, Data, and Methodology:** A quantitative approach was employed in this study through the distribution of a questionnaire. The survey encompassed 500 students from two universities in Chengdu's New Developing Area, known for their active usage of the Bilibili application. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) were utilized as the analytical methods to assess goodness of fit and confirm the hypotheses proposed in the study. **Results:** Perceived interactivity, self-disclosure, and task attraction significantly contribute to parasocial interaction, which subsequently influences brand preference. However, the impact of entertainment motive on parasocial interaction was not supported. Furthermore, there is no support on the impact of physical attraction and parasocial interaction. **Conclusions:** These results underscore the importance of considering contextual factors such as geographical location. Furthermore, they provide valuable insights for content creators, video platform developers, and marketers seeking to effectively engage with and target this demographic in Chengdu, China.

Keywords : Perceived Interactivity, Self-Disclosure, Task Attraction, Physical Attraction, Brand Preference

JEL Classification Code: E44, F31, F37, G15

1. Introduction

Throughout the world, there are different kinds of popular video platforms. Such as Netflix as a stream-based video platform, YouTube as an online video platform based on user-generated content (UGC) and personal channels, TikTok as a short video platform, and so on. In China, the situation is relatively similar worldwide: three main categories of video platforms are favored by viewers (CNNIC, 2023).

The short video platform has stronger social attributes. People are willing to exchange their short video accounts to share their lives, just like people made with Instagram, Twitter, and other micro-blogs with the content of pictures and textures before the popularity of video social networking. The main short video platforms in China are Douyin th, the Chinese version of TikTok, Kwai, the WeChat video channel (based on the most popular instant messaging application in China) (Jiang, 2024), and Weibo. Other media platforms, such as Suike under iQiyi and Wesee under Tencent Video, may have related products. In recent years, short video platforms have grown dramatically, especially Douyin, which caused unprecedented success and became one of the world's most popular video platforms for online social media

1*Siyi Yan, Ph.D. Candidate in Technology, Education and Management, Graduate School of Business and Advanced Technology Management Assumption University of Thailand.

(Geyser, 2021).

Bilibili has significant achievements. In scale, Bilibili has become the third largest video platform (non-short video oriented) in China (Zhang, 2022). It also shows itself to be one of the fastest-increasing vlog communities in China (Sohu, 2019). Wang et al. (2021) reported that the user engagement of Bilibili is much higher than that of other medium-and-long-length video platforms. One of the main features of Bilibili is the use of video barrage, also known as Danmaku from the pronunciation in Japanese originally, and Danmu from the Pronunciation in Chinese (Yang et al., 2022). Johnson (2013) described the video barrage as dancing figures and columns of letters rushing over the images. The content of the video barrage is edited by viewers watching the video, but the on-screen action is computer-generated, which is vivid and layered.

From the perspective of platform developers, they need to understand its advantages and brand differences fully and why users prefer Bilibili to formulate long-term sustainable development strategies. Many video platforms have been losing money. The competition for video platforms is quite fierce. Major companies usually have more than one positioning video platform in an attempt to seize a variety of vertical market shares. For example, Bilibili's competitor, AcFun, started earlier with a similar positioning and target population, but the scale is far less than the former. Building a harmonious coexistence and healthy development ecology is crucial and urgent. Brand development guidance is required. Bilibili's successful experience may be worth learning from, and its limitations can inspire the whole industry.

The scope of the research was students, including undergraduate and postgraduate students, from two selected universities in Chengdu, China, who are also avid users of the Bilibili application. The research aims to explain causal relationships between parasocial interaction, entertainment motive, perceived interactivity, self-disclosure, task attraction, physical attraction, and brand preference for university students to use the Bilibili application in Chengdu, China. The researcher developed the model by integrating previous studies, literature, and theories from different aspects to test the relationship.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Entertainment Motive

Entertainment motive is defined as a need for amusements and recreational activities as a leisure pursuit using the Bilibili application (Rubin & Step, 2000). Utz's (2015) study reported that messages to entertain could make viewers feel linked with people who posted the information on social media, and it also caused the high-level entertainment value of video or messages to attract viewers with strong motives for entertainment. The stronger the entertainment motivation is, the stronger the connection with vloggers is. Entertainment motive to use media closely participants users' psychological experiences and identify if they would empathize with media personalities (Yuan et al., 2016). According to Alhabash et al. (2012) and Zhang and Pentina (2012), motivations for using SNS (like Facebook and Weibo) consist of social links, investigation of information, entertainment-seeking, and relationship-establishing. Thus, this study has drawn the first hypothesis:
H1: Entertainment motive has significant impact on parasocial interaction.

2.2 Perceived Interactivity

Perceived interactivity is the ability and the speed to provide feedback for Bilibili video creators (Labrecque, 2014). In Internet research, some researchers define interactivity in terms of the technical functionality of a website, such as the ability to browse the website, provide feedback, and how fast the website reacts (Labrecque, 2014), while others consider it as a perceptual variable dependent on the users' two-way communication with a personality of media (McMillan & Hwang, 2002) focusing on the cues and content within the message itself instead of technological features. In Labrecque's (2014) case of websites, the term interactivity focused on the content and cues of the message itself while creating an impression of communication between viewers and media persona: they are listening and interacting promptly, which is what parasocial interaction is. Therefore, the second hypothesis is placed as:
H2: Perceived interactivity has significant impact on parasocial interaction.

2.3 Self-Disclosure

Self-disclosure is the behavior to reveal hidden, personal ideas and feelings to others for Bilibili video creators (Wheeless & Grotz, 1977). Many studies about social relationships considered self-disclosure because it was an important prerequisite in all of it. People, especially social media users, always disclose information about themselves to be involved in interpersonal communication (Sicilia et al., 2016). The content of self-disclosure will develop further as the relationship progresses (Chung & Cho, 2017), commonplace to intimate matters, easily observable to hidden. Hidden things, like personal beliefs, self-identity, self-worth, dependence on others, etc., can be perceived by people in an intimate connection in depth. Kim and Song (2016) pointed out that there was a mediating variable between parasocial interaction and self-disclosure to

celebrities, which is the feeling of social presence. Vloggers self-disclose to lead their viewers, enhancing parasocial relationships to a higher level (Fazli-Salehi et al., 2022). Therefore, this study posits the hypothesis that the perception of self-disclosure from vloggers can be the driver of parasocial interaction:
H3: Self-disclosure has significant impact on parasocial interaction.

2.4 Task Attraction

Task attraction is defined as the ability to complete a given task for viewers with the help of the Bilibili application (McCroskey & McCain, 1974). In consumer services, task attractiveness is like a grace linked to service personnel's attitude and capacity to manage matters (Brady & Cronin, 2001). Service employees can also feel this with faith in themselves and their ability to perform their jobs efficiently (McCroskey et al., 2006). In the field of management, the task attraction of an employee's service is a norm to evaluate enforcement of service (Brady & Cronin, 2001), competent staff to manage the business effectively, even in cases where service failure may influence the consumer negatively, can also satisfy consumer's prospects (Azab & Clark, 2017). Han and Yang's (2018) research on parasocial interactions mentioned above shows that task attraction is a necessary factor that positively affects users' trust and reliance. It was expected to facilitate the relationship between users and the research target by enhancing task attraction. Therefore, this research posts the fourth hypothesis:
H4: Task attraction has significant impact on parasocial interaction.

2.5 Physical Attraction

Physical attraction is defined as the appearance of the Bilibili application, Bilibili video creators, and videos on the Bilibili application are aesthetically pleasing (Liu et al., 2019). Matey (2016) states that the halo effect of attractive looks could influence some positive perceptions about traits, so people with physical attractiveness will find it easier to get positive evaluations than others (Buunk & Dijkstra, 2011). These favorable personality traits may include intellectual acumen, social adeptness, and unwavering integrity (Till & Busler, 2000), which play an important role in social life. Some studies also proved that physical attraction is positively associated with various items, such as health (Butler et al., 2017), position (Korobov & Bamberg, 2004), social behavior (Pepping et al., 2017), and status prediction (Brumbaugh et al., 2014). Soderlund and Julander (2009) have reported the positive effect of physical attraction on customer assessment of service processes and outcomes. Much evidence proves the positive influence of task attraction, including various visual elements, on users' emotional reactions and preferences (Nanda et al., 2008) and then increases intimate relationships (Han & Yang, 2018). To sum up, this study presents the fifth hypothesis:
H5: Physical attraction has significant impact on parasocial interaction.

2.6 Parasocial Interaction

Parasocial interaction is a one-sided relationship between the viewers and Bilibili video creators (Horton & Wohl, 1956). The main difference between the two is if it was limited to situational interaction. Parasocial relationships might lead to a cross-situational relationship and continue after media consumption. Parasocial interaction lacks mutuality, marked by two-way communication (Schramm & Hartmann, 2008). Parasocial interaction is also a part of parasocial phenomena, which summarizes various parasocial responses between media senders and receivers, and other parts are named as parasocial relationships, parasocial break-ups, and so on (Liebers & Schramm, 2019). Lim and Kim (2011) and Hartmann and Goldhoorn (2011) used parasocial interaction regarding marketing outcomes to show the positive influence on satisfaction and enjoyment with shopping experiences. Not much literature studies parasocial interaction and brand preference, but it connects with other objects that can reflect brand preference (Zha et al., 2023). Siew et al. (2018) argued three characteristics of brand preference in luxury brands: Consumers' distinct relationship with brands, alternative options' attraction reduction, and the ability to perceive positive emotions associated with brands. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:
H6: Parasocial interaction has significant impact on brand preference.

2.7 Brand Preference

Brand preference is defined as viewers' favor for the Bilibili application compared to other brands (Hellier et al., 2003). Brand preference and purchase intention can elicit consistent cognitive processing of brand-related information, cues, and experiences among consumers (Alford & Biswas, 2002; Chu & Lu, 2007). Brand preference usually refers to some desirability to a particular selection of alternatives (Oliver & Swan, 1989), and brand preference refers to a kind extent in specific consideration sets, which are about customers' favor to the designated brand in comparison with other brands (Hellier et al., 2003). The literature on brand preference focuses on marketing and advertising media. The research from (Vickey et al., 2012) described that the launch of running apps can improve the sports brand's connection with consumers, consequently enhancing consumers' brand preference and purchase intention (Cheng et al., 2022).

3. Research Methods and Materials

3.1 Research Framework

Five independent variables were identified: entertainment motive (EM), perceived interactivity (PI), self-disclosure (SD), task attraction (TA), and physical attraction (PA). Parasocial interaction (PSI) was considered as a mediating variable, while brand preference (BP) served as the dependent variable. The theoretical frameworks guiding this study draw from existing literature. The first framework, as proposed by Liu et al. (2019), focuses on the relationship between entertainment motive and brand preference. The second framework, derived from Fazli-Salehi et al. (2022), includes perceived interactivity and self-disclosure as independent variables. The third framework, influenced by Han and Yang (2018), incorporates task attraction and physical attraction. Notably, all three frameworks share parasocial interaction as the mediating variable, a concept adopted in this study. Building upon these foundations, the conceptual framework illustrated in Figure 1 was developed to guide the research.

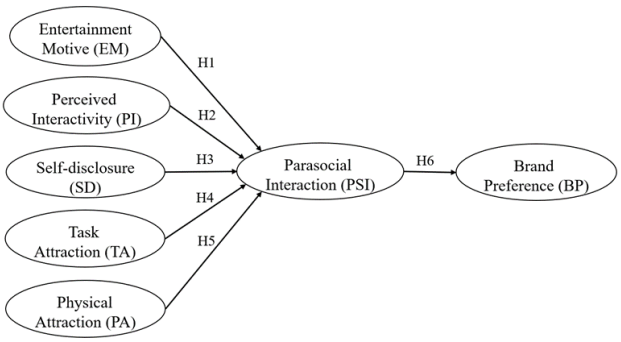

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

H1: Entertainment motive has significant impact on parasocial interaction.
H2: Perceived interactivity has significant impact on parasocial interaction.
H3: Self-disclosure has significant impact on parasocial interaction.
H4: Task attraction has significant impact on parasocial interaction.
H5: Physical attraction has significant impact on parasocial interaction.
H6: Parasocial interaction has significant impact on brand preference.

3.2 Research Methodology

This study employs quantitative methods and empirical analysis, utilizing a questionnaire survey to investigate the factors influencing parasocial interaction and brand preference among university students. The target population comprises students from two universities located in the new developing area of Chengdu, China, specifically Sichuan University of Media and Communications, and Chengdu University. The questionnaire is structured into three sections: a screening question, demographic information, and items rated on a five-point Likert scale for the examined variables. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) are adopted for structuring and testing the research model.

To assess the questionnaire items, a scale of +1, 0, and -1 is utilized, following guidelines by Hambleton (1978) and Turner and Carlson (2003). Items with acceptable values between 0.5 and 1.00 are retained, while those falling below this range are modified or removed. Following evaluation by three experts, all scale items achieved a score of 0.67, indicating satisfactory performance.

The internal consistency reliability of the pilot test is assessed, with Cronbach's alpha scores. The scores for parasocial interaction (PSI), entertainment motive (EM), perceived interactivity (PI), self-disclosure (SD), task attraction (TA), physical attraction (PA), and brand preference (BP) are 0.915, 0.937, 0.897, 0.939, 0.848, 0.833, and 0.926, respectively. All scores exceed the threshold of 0.8, indicating excellent reliability and affirming the suitability of the investigation instrument for this study (Hair et al., 2003).

3.3 Population and Sample Size

The target population consists of university students from two selected institutions in Chengdu, China, recognized as enthusiastic users of the Bilibili application, namely Sichuan University of Media and Communications, and Chengdu University. Considering the minimum sample size required, calculated to be 425 according to Soper (n.d.), and to ensure robust statistical results, a sample size of 500 participants is deemed appropriate for this study. Hence, the survey comprises 500 students from the new developing area of Chengdu who are active users of the Bilibili application.

3.4 Sampling Technique

The researcher employed a multi-stage sampling approach, combining elements of both probability and non-probability sampling techniques to conduct the survey sampling. The selected sampling techniques included judgmental or purposive sampling for the initial stage, stratified random sampling for the second stage, and

convenience sampling for the third stage.

In the first step, judgmental sampling was utilized to select students from two universities located in Chengdu's New Developing Area, specifically targeting those who are enthusiastic users of the Bilibili application. Stratified random sampling was then employed to gather data from subgroups within the target population, ensuring that the sample reflects the proportional representation of each stratum, as outlined in Table 1.

Convenience sampling was adopted in the final stage, whereby target respondents were reached based on various criteria, including ease of accessibility, availability of time, and willingness to participate. This approach facilitated the inclusion of participants who met the study's criteria and were readily accessible for data collection.

Table 1: Sample Units and Sample Size

University	Population Size	Proportional Sample Size
Sichuan University of Media and Communications	23350	228
Chengdu University	27937	272
Total	**51287**	**500**

Source: Constructed by author

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Demographic Information

Analyzing demographic and general data from a sample size of 500 individuals revealed insights into gender distribution, age demographics, academic pursuits, familiarity with the Bilibili application, and the duration of its usage. The majority of the sample consisted of males, accounting for 57%, while females constituted 43%. Upon closer examination of age demographics, individuals aged 20 years or younger represented the largest segment at 37.6%. Among academic pursuits, Bachelor's programs were the most prevalent, making up 47.8%, followed by Master's programs at 39.8%, with doctoral programs being the least represented.

Regarding the adoption of the Bilibili application, users reported various durations of usage. Approximately 44.2% and 37.2% of respondents reported utilizing the application for 1 and 2 years, respectively. The awareness of the Bilibili application's existence varied among respondents' sources of knowledge, with friend's recommendations emerging as the primary source, accounting for 38.2% of responses.

Table 2: Demographic Profile

Demographic and General Data (N=500)		New Developing Ara	
		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	285	57.0%
	Female	215	43.0%
Age	20 Years Old or below	188	37.6%
	21-30 Years Old	132	26.4%
	31-40 Years Old	129	25.8%
	41 Years Old or Over	51	10.2%
Academic Program	Bachelor's Program	239	47.8%
	Master's Program	199	39.8%
	Doctoral Program	62	12.4%
Bilibili Application Use	1 year	221	44.2%
	2 years	186	37.2%
	More than 3 years	93	18.6%
Know About Bilibili Application	Social Media	128	25.6%
	Friend's Recommendation	191	38.2%
	Media Advertisement	124	24.8%
	Others	57	11.4%

4.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Stevens (1992) established criteria to assess the quality of items in Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), indicating that factor loadings exceeding 0.40 with a significance level below 0.05 demonstrate acceptable performance. Additionally, to evaluate the measurement model's robustness, recommendations from Fornell and Larcker (1981) were considered. They proposed that for satisfactory convergent validity, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) should ideally surpass 0.5. However, if the AVE falls below this threshold, a Composite Reliability (CR) exceeding 0.6 can compensate. Furthermore, the evaluation of convergent validity aligned with the criteria outlined by Fornell and Larcker (1981), suggesting that even if the AVE is below 0.5, the construct's reliability remains adequate due to a high Composite Reliability (CR).

Table 3: Confirmatory Factor Analysis Result, Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Variables	Source of Questionnaire (Measurement Indicator)	No. of Item	Cronbach's Alpha	Factors Loading	CR	AVE
Entertainment Motive (EM)	Liu et al. (2019)	7	0.898	0.660-0.818	0.899	0.562
Perceived Interactivity (PI)	Fazli-Salehi et al. (2022)	4	0.846	0.708-0.810	0.846	0.580
Self-disclosure (SD)	Fazli-Salehi et al. (2022)	3	0.886	0.830-0.878	0.886	0.721
Task Attraction (TA)	Han and Yang (2018)	3	0.878	0.809-0.871	0.878	0.706
Physical Attraction (PA)	Han and Yang (2018)	3	0.777	0.712-0.756	0.777	0.537
Parasocial Interaction (PSI)	Liu et al. (2019)	7	0.861	0.639-0.723	0.861	0.470
Brand Preference (BP)	Liu et al. (2019)	4	0.786	0.679-0.705	0.787	0.480

The main objective of evaluating goodness of fit in the measurement model is to ascertain if the proposed model effectively captures the relationships between observed variables and latent constructs. A favorable fit signifies that the model accurately represents the observed data, whereas a suboptimal fit indicates the need for model adjustments to better reflect the underlying structure of the constructs (Kline, 2015). The findings presented in Table 4 validate the appropriateness of the confirmatory factor analysis model proposed in this study.

Table 4: Goodness of Fit for Measurement Model

Fit Index	Acceptable Criteria	Statistical Values
CMIN/DF	≤ 5.00 (Marsh et al., 2004)	679.781/413 = 1.646
GFI	≥ 0.80 (Nayir, 2013)	0.920
AGFI	≥ 0.80 (Nayir, 2013)	0.904
NFI	≥ 0.80 (Wu & Wang, 2006)	0.917
CFI	≥ 0.80 (Nayir, 2013)	0.965
TLI	≥ 0.80 (Sharma et al., 2005)	0.961
RMSEA	≤ 0.08 (Pedroso et al., 2016)	0.036
Model Summary		**Acceptable Model Fit**

Remark: CMIN/DF = The ratio of the chi-square value to degree of freedom, GFI = Goodness-of-fit index, AGFI = Adjusted goodness-of-fit index, NFI = Normed fit index, CFI = Comparative fit index, TLI = Tucker-Lewis index and RMSEA = Root mean square error of approximation

The results displayed in Table 5, adhering to the criteria established by Fornell and Larcker (1981) for discriminant validity testing and complemented by the validation of convergent validity, provide substantial evidence supporting the construct validity of the measurement model. These findings notably enhance confidence in the accuracy and reliability of the measurement instrument employed within the framework of the study.

Table 5: Discriminant Validity

	PSI	EM	PI	SD	TA	PA	BP
PSI	**0.686**						
EM	0.207	**0.749**					
PI	0.597	0.189	**0.762**				
SD	0.622	0.304	0.434	**0.849**			
TA	0.575	0.255	0.414	0.743	**0.840**		
PA	0.258	0.077	0.317	0.271	0.351	**0.733**	
BP	0.614	0.238	0.518	0.644	0.628	0.428	**0.693**

Note: The diagonally listed value is the AVE square roots of the variables
Source: Created by the author.

4.3 Structural Equation Model (SEM)

Based on Table 6, the goodness of fit of the structural model for university students in the new developing area was evaluated using various statistical indices and compared against established thresholds cited in the literature. All goodness of fit indices for the structural model of university students in the new developing area indicate a satisfactory or good fit to the empirical data. The model is considered to be in harmony with the observed data, suggesting that it provides a meaningful representation of the relationships among the variables under investigation.

Table 6: Goodness of Fit for Structural Model

Fit Index	Acceptable Criteria	Statistical Values
CMIN/DF	≤ 5.00 (Marsh et al., 2004)	1352.671/428 = 3.160
GFI	≥ 0.80 (Nayir, 2013)	0.848
AGFI	≥ 0.80 (Nayir, 2013)	0.824
NFI	≥ 0.80 (Wu & Wang, 2006)	0.835
CFI	≥ 0.80 (Nayir, 2013)	0.880
TLI	≥ 0.80 (Sharma et al., 2005)	0.870
RMSEA	≤ 0.08 (Pedroso et al., 2016)	0.066
Model Summary		**Acceptable Model Fit**

Remark: CMIN/DF = The ratio of the chi-square value to degree of freedom, GFI = Goodness-of-fit index, AGFI = Adjusted goodness-of-fit index, NFI = Normed fit index, CFI = Comparative fit index, TLI = Tucker-Lewis index and RMSEA = Root mean square error of approximation

4.4 Research Hypothesis Testing Result

In this study, we examined the relationships outlined in the research hypotheses between the independent and dependent variables. This examination involved assessing standardized path coefficients and their associated t-values. The detailed findings of this analysis are outlined in Table 7, where statistical significance is determined by p-values below the conventional threshold of 0.05. As a result, all hypotheses proposed in this study were confirmed, with the research outcomes offering robust and statistically significant evidence in favor of each hypothesis.

Table 7: Hypothesis Results of the Structural Equation Modeling

Hypothesis	(β)	t-value	Result
H1: EM→PSI	0.018	0.411	Not Supported
H2: PI→PSI	0.459	8.523*	Supported
H3: SD→PSI	0.423	8.436*	Supported
H4: TA→PSI	0.208	4.611*	Supported
H5: PA→PSI	0.043	0.933	Not Supported
H6: PSI→BP	0.615	9.205*	Supported

Note: * $p<0.05$
Source: Created by the author

The results were observed regarding the impact of perceived interactivity, self-disclosure, task attraction, and parasocial interaction on brand preference, with all hypotheses being supported. The standardized path coefficients for perceived interactivity (β = 0.459), self-disclosure (β = 0.423), task attraction (β = 0.208), and parasocial interaction (β = 0.615) were all statistically significant, with t-values ranging from 4.611* to 9.205*. These results suggest that factors such as perceived interactivity, self-disclosure, and task attraction significantly contribute to parasocial interaction, which subsequently influences brand preference. However, the impact of entertainment motive on parasocial interaction was not supported, as its standardized path coefficient (β = 0.018) did not yield a statistically significant t-value. Conversely, the impact of physical attraction on parasocial interaction was that standardized path coefficient (β = 0.043) did not yield a statistically significant t-value.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion and Discussion

This research investigated the influences on university students' parasocial interaction and brand preference regarding video applications in Chengdu, China. Seven variables were examined, including parasocial interaction, entertainment motive, perceived interactivity, self-disclosure, task attraction, physical attraction, and brand preference, with six hypotheses proposed to explore their interrelationships.

A quantitative approach was employed in this study through the distribution of a questionnaire. The survey included 500 students from two universities in Chengdu's New Developing Area, recognized for their active usage of the Bilibili application. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) were utilized as analytical methods to assess goodness of fit and confirm the hypotheses proposed in the study.

The findings revealed that perceived interactivity, self-disclosure, and task attraction significantly contribute to parasocial interaction, subsequently influencing brand preference among university students in Chengdu. However, the hypothesized impact of entertainment motive on parasocial interaction was not supported. Additionally, there was no significant support for the relationship between physical attraction and parasocial interaction.

These results emphasize the importance of considering contextual factors such as geographical location when examining the factors influencing parasocial interaction and brand preference among university students. The lack of support for the impact of entertainment motive and physical attraction suggests potential differences in preferences and behaviors among this demographic in Chengdu.

Furthermore, these findings provide valuable insights for content creators, video platform developers, and marketers seeking to effectively engage with and target university students in Chengdu, China. Understanding the factors that drive parasocial interaction and brand preference can inform the development of more engaging and appealing video content and platforms tailored to the preferences and behaviors of this demographic.

Overall, this research contributes to the growing body of literature on parasocial interaction and brand preference in the context of video applications, offering practical implications for industry practitioners and academic researchers alike.

5.2 Recommendation

Content creators and video platform developers should tailor their content to enhance perceived interactivity, self-disclosure, and task attraction, as these factors have been identified as significant contributors to parasocial interaction and brand preference among university students in Chengdu. This could involve incorporating interactive features, encouraging user engagement, and creating content that aligns with the interests and preferences of the target audience.

Further research could explore the specific preferences and behaviors of university students in Chengdu in greater detail. This could include conducting focus groups or surveys to gather insights into their preferences regarding video content, platform features, and brand interactions. Understanding these preferences can help content creators and developers better cater to the needs of their target audience.

Given the importance of contextual factors such as geographical location, it would be beneficial to explore cultural nuances that may influence parasocial interaction and brand preference among university students in Chengdu.

This could involve conducting comparative studies across different regions in China or exploring cultural influences on media consumption behaviors.

Content creators and platform developers should focus on strategies to increase user engagement and foster a sense of community among university students in Chengdu. This could include hosting interactive events, facilitating user-generated content, and providing opportunities for users to connect with each other and with content creators.

Brands seeking to target university students in Chengdu should consider partnering with popular content creators or sponsoring relevant events or content on video platforms. Collaborating with influencers and brands that resonate with the target audience can help increase brand visibility and engagement among university students in Chengdu.

It is essential for content creators, platform developers, and brands to continuously evaluate user feedback and monitor trends in media consumption behaviors among university students in Chengdu. This can help identify opportunities for improvement and innovation to stay relevant and competitive in the rapidly evolving digital media landscape.

By implementing these recommendations, content creators, platform developers, and brands can effectively engage with and target university students in Chengdu, China, ultimately enhancing user experiences and driving brand loyalty.

5.3 Limitation and Further Study

The study's sample was drawn from university students in Chengdu's New Developing Area, which may not fully represent the broader population of university students in Chengdu or other regions of China. Consequently, the findings may not be generalizable to all university students in Chengdu or beyond.

The study utilized a cross-sectional design, capturing data at a single point in time. While this design is suitable for assessing relationships between variables, it does not allow for causal inferences or the examination of changes over time. Future research employing longitudinal designs could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics between parasocial interaction, brand preference, and other factors.

The study relied on self-reported measures to assess variables such as perceived interactivity, self-disclosure, and brand preference. While common in survey-based research, self-report measures are susceptible to biases and may not fully capture participants' true behaviors and attitudes. Future research could incorporate objective measures or behavioral observations to enhance measurement validity.

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