

# Exploring the popularity of immersive short videos based on use and satisfaction theory

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**Abstract:** *In the context of the information society, new media of all kinds are trying to go beyond words and pictures and images to compete for people's limited attention in a more vivid, intuitive and easy-to-understand way. Short videos have emerged. As a media with rich content and diversified forms of expression, short video combines text, pictures, images, sound and other audio-visual effects, which fully meets the user's needs for distraction and time fragmentation. At the same time, it also provides a platform for audiences to create and display themselves. A platform for the audience to create and display themselves. It is this feature that this paper captures, transporting base use and satisfaction reasoning to conduct a thesis exploring the popularity of immersive short videos.*

**Keywords:** *New media; immersion; needs*

## 1. Introduction

In recent years, short videos have been prosperous development, and among many types of short videos, immersive short videos stand out, combining the concept of immersion with short videos to make short videos spread more widely and rapidly. In the process of dissemination, immersive short videos affect the psychology, attitude and behavior of the audience, making them change positively, thus influencing the whole society. From the perspective of the use and satisfaction of immersive short videos, this paper discusses the satisfaction of users' needs in the four aspects of immersive short videos, namely, sensory, curiosity, socialization and consumption, and provides some references to the development of immersive short videos.

## 2. The history, arigin and background of the theary

The Usage and Satisfaction Theory originated in the 1940s. American sociologist Berelson firstly made a relevant study on two print media, namely books and newspapers, and summarized four universal motives for reading in his article What Reading Brings to Us: Utility Motive, Rest Motive, Exaggeration Motive, and Escape Motive. Subsequently, Hertzog of the University of Colombia's Broadcasting Research Unit examined and summarized the motivational factors behind the use of radio and television media. However, the use and satisfaction theories at this stage were relatively simple and superficial in terms of both methodology and content. [1]

After a period of stagnation, the theory made a new breakthrough in the 1960s through the study of television programs by McGuire and others. McGuire's research had a strict procedure in terms of conceptualization, audience samples and data analysis. By investigating six types of programs, including news, knowledge contests and family dramas, McGuire concluded that the television medium provides four common "satisfactions": mood change, interpersonal relationships, self-confirmation and environmental monitoring. [2] In the 1970s, in his 1974 article "Individual Use of Mass Communication," communication scholar Katz summarized media contact as a basic model of "social factors + psychological factors → media expectations → media contact → need satisfaction," which supplemented the social conditioning factors in media contact activities. In 1977, Ikuro Takeuchi, a Japanese scholar, further supplemented this model.[3]

### 3. The important nations, concepts and assumption or argument of the theory:

#### 3.1 Nations

Usage and satisfaction theory refers to examining the psychological and behavioral utility of mass communication for human beings by analyzing the audience's motivation to use the media and obtaining need satisfaction from the standpoint of the audience. In 1974, the American-Israeli sociologist Elihu Katz firstly put forward the theory of use and satisfaction in his paper "Individual's Use of Communication", and he summarized the media contact behavior as a causal chain process consisting of five links: "social factor + psychological factor - media expectation - media contact - need satisfaction". [5]

#### 3.2 Concepts

New media; immersion; needs

Uses and gratification theory is built on the following concepts:

##### 3.2.1 New Media

In 1967, P. Goldmark, head of the Technical Research Institute of the Columbia Radio and Television Network of the United States, called EVR "New Media" in a project proposal for the development of EVR (electronic video recording) products, and the term "New Media" was born. In recent years, with the rapid development of science and technology and the wide application of new media products, the study of "New Media" has also been deepened and refined, resulting in studies such as "Cyber Ethics", "Art and New Media", "Gender and New Media", "Race and New Media", "Cyberfeminism" and many other research directions. As an emerging discipline, how should it be defined? In this regard, there are different views in the academic community. [6]The American magazine Wired, which focuses on reflecting computer technology and modern and future human social life, defines "new media" as "communication from everyone to everyone. According to Crosbie, an American scholar, "New media are media that are able to provide personalised content to the public at the same time. Through new media, the communicator and the audience become reciprocal communicators, and the countless communicators can have personalised communication at the same time." Professor Xiong Chengyu of the School of Journalism and Communication at Tsinghua University, on the other hand, believes that "new media is the sum of media that "play the function of communication on the basis of computer information processing technology and the Internet.

##### 3.2.2 Immersion

"The source of happiness is the flow of the mind. When we reach a state of mind flow and have an optimal experience, we have found happiness." In 1975, psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi first proposed the theory of "mind flow". This theory refers to the feeling of being absorbed in something that causes high levels of excitement and fulfilment. This theory corresponds to the optimal experience created by an "immersive" experience. Since then, the theory has been applied more widely as one of the new types of consumer products that result from the superimposition of "immersive experience + entertainment consumption". Immersion firstly refers to the fact that in order to learn and master a foreign language, people need to get out of the current living environment and go to an environment surrounded by a foreign language, which not only allows students to give up their previous language thinking habits, but also allows them to relax their mind and rapidly improve their foreign language ability through communication and exchange.

##### 3.2.3 Needs

"The fulfilment of audience needs by short videos from the perspective of 'use and fulfilment':

(1)Satisfying cognitive and expressive needs Cognitive needs refer to people's desire to solve problems encountered in real life and to understand things, which can mostly be satisfied through the acquisition of information. In the process of survival and development, human beings cannot live without knowing the dynamics of the external world. Only when we have timely information about the changes in the surrounding environment can we better adapt to the changes in the environment, and thus better survive and develop. The process of acquiring information is a process of understanding the environment and eliminating uncertainty about the outside world. Nowadays, the importance of information has reached an unprecedented level. Through short videos, people can learn about the latest current affairs, learn various knowledge and skills, and find the necessary information for their work

and life, so as to satisfy their cognitive needs of the outside world.[7]

(2)Satisfy emotional needs: the most significant feature of short videos is that they are short, the unit of video has changed from minutes to seconds, and the strict time constraints make them not strictly follow the narrative logic and formal framework of traditional videos, and much of the content is the user's self-record and expression, and a large amount of UGC content has led to a high percentage of short videos in the casual and funny category. In addition, vivid and creative short video content is more likely to be loved by users, and the platform encourages uploaders to create this kind of video, so that short videos can achieve lightweight content, which all bring a relaxed and pleasant feeling for users to watch.[8]

(3)Satisfy the demand for individual integration Currently, all major short video platforms support users to forward, comment and like videos, etc. Users can share their favourite short videos to social media platforms with open relationship chains, such as microblogging, WeChat Friend Circle and QZone, etc. at anytime and anywhere. In addition, by posting short videos, users can receive likes, comments and concerns from others, especially the periodic content update, which is more conducive to establishing a connection between the uploader and the general audience and gaining more attention. In this process, the uploaders win the recognition and love of others by showing their knowledge and charisma, which satisfies the need for personal integration; some of the uploaders even become Internet celebrities because of the large amount of attention they get from the videos they post, thus gaining a certain status on the virtual platform.

(4)Satisfying the Demand for Social Integration The advancement of media technology allows people to communicate and entertain themselves across time and space, which, to a certain extent, leads to a reduction in the frequency of face-to-face communication, and at the same time inevitably creates a sense of loneliness and uneasiness stimulated by social pressure.[9] Short videos provide a platform for people to participate in social and public affairs, where they can comment on and forward hot social topics or events, express their own views, and communicate with others. In terms of social public discourse, the emergence of short videos promotes the realisation of the rights enjoyed by individuals as social citizens, and thus enhances their sense of belonging and identity.

### ***3.3 Assumptions or arguments***

The above characteristics of immersive short videos give users a stronger "viewing" experience. According to Heidegger, the so-called image of the world does not mean an image of the world, but that the world is grasped as an image. "Viewing" becomes an important way to connect the two key elements of the "world" - people and images. In the digital age, "viewing" has become the new content and experience that technology platforms bring to users. For example, one respondent said that in travel videos, travel destinations, harmony, filters and composition are the most important elements.[10]

For example, one respondent said that in travel videos, travel destinations, picture harmony, beautiful filters and regular composition have become his potential requirements for such videos. In the new media era, the digitalisation and interactivity of short video platforms have given users a new way of existence and a sense of being, forming a relationship between the media and real life that mirrors and generates each other, i.e. a kind of mediated existence. At the same time, users participate in it, and also integrate their own needs into the continuous creation of bloggers' videos through comments, private messages and other means. As a result, the relationship between users and bloggers is blurred, the production model of "PGC + UGC" is further expanded, and the concept of co-creation is deeply rooted in people's hearts.[11]

## **4. Application of the theory in contemporary media or communication research**

### ***4.1 Reality Interaction for VR Applications***

The emphasis on interaction is in fact the purpose of the use and gratification theory of audience-centred communication. The emphasis on interaction means studying the interests of visitors and motivating them to approach the exhibits. Before the emergence of VR technology, the interaction between visitors and exhibits was mainly centred on the interactivity of the exhibits themselves and the planning activities in the science and technology museums as the "intermediary bridge" to complete the interactive activities, and such activities only stayed at a simple level. However, in VR exhibits, the audience can be completely immersed in the VR technology environment, and interact directly and

intuitively with the spatial environment and information. The media as a mirror is a reflection of social reality, and one of the most important reasons for audiences to engage with the media is the desire to control the environment through the media and to understand the changes in the external environment.[12]

#### ***4.2 The impact of media exposure***

In *Seven Days of Play*, Spring J showed that older Americans spend 40 per cent of their leisure time on media-related activities. Excessive exposure to and use of media can affect older adults' other recreational activities and daily interpersonal interactions, as well as their perceptions of individual aging and social development. Robinson et al. found that older adults perceive the importance of media in that they feel that exposure to and use of communication media is an important part of what constitutes an older adult's leisure and recreational life.[13]

Ding Qiyao (2018), "Characteristics of Older Adults' "Touching the Internet" and Its Impact," both focus on older adults' exposure to and use of new media. While the scope of research continues to expand, the research problem is also more refined, and more and more scholars are concerned about the relationship between new media and the elderly, and explore the impact of media use on the elderly. Among them, the most researched is the study of the elderly and WeChat, including contact behaviour, use behaviour, self-presentation, identity and so on. [14]

Ren Zhenhua (2018 ) conducted a related study on the relationship between the use of WeChat and social adaptation and life satisfaction among urban elderly in China.

Uses and gratification theory suggests that audience psychological needs are satisfied in multiple factors, such as exposure to a medium that allows access to more unknown information, emotional resonance triggered by interactive participation experiences, emotional relief, recreation and entertainment, and self-awareness. The use and satisfaction theory suggests that the psychological needs of the audience can be satisfied by a variety of factors, such as exposure to the media to obtain more unknown information, emotional resonance through interactive participation, a mood-relieving entertainment atmosphere, and self-awareness.

#### ***4.3 Public service announcement (PSA)***

According to advertising guru Ogilvy(2003) , in the long run, brand image is more important in determining a brand's position in the marketplace than small differences between products. the small differences between products, the brand's image is more important in determining the brand's position in the marketplace. [4]

Position in the market. With the continuous development of society and economy, the problem of homogeneity among products is becoming more and more serious, and the market environment is full of commercial advertisements. The problem of product homogeneity is becoming more and more serious, and the market environment is full of commercial advertisements, so the audience's attention is constantly shifted. The attention of the audience is constantly shifted, and the cognition and trust of the audience to the advertisements are reduced. The effect of advertisement is greatly reduced. Therefore, shaping a good brand image is particularly important for the development of enterprises.

#### ***4.4 IP Film***

IP films are sweeping through the Chinese film market, and the audience's attitude directly determines the audience's viewing behaviour. According to the theory of use and satisfaction, the purpose of using media is to satisfy people's needs, and the audience holds the initiative in the choice of media. IP films have already determined the target audience at the early stage of operation, so the purpose of creating such films is to satisfy the psychological expectations of the target audience to the greatest extent possible, and to get the corresponding box office returns, which is crucial for commercial films.[15]

## 5. Criticism of the theory, future direction of the theory

### 5.1 Critiques

#### a) Inadequate content selection

The content is different and the needs satisfied are different. "In McGuire's use and satisfaction theory, it is pointed out that audiences have choices in processing media information, which reflects the subjective initiative of the audience, who actively seek and choose programmes to satisfy their psychological and social needs." This active choice leads directly to competition between media outlets, which produce a large number of "entertaining" television programmes in order to compete for viewership. Some studies have suggested that the level of psychological fulfilment of viewers varies according to the type of content (e.g., the amount of content that a viewer is able to enjoy).[16]

#### b) Measurement data with low reliability

To be able to accurately study the social interaction behaviours of the elderly and youth groups, a large number of samples and data sources are needed to support a more scientific and rigorous analysis of the laws behind them. As the data of individual users are commercial privacy, the sample size obtained from interviews and participant observation used in this study is insignificant in the face of the huge amount of data, and the number of texts is slightly less effective for generalisation (Wang Lu, 2022).[17]

#### c) Immersion in the virtual to the exclusion of the real

The Declaration of the Independence of Cyberspace (1996) by the American scholar Barlow is an excellent embodiment of this rejectionist attitude. Barlow writes: "Governments of the industrial world, you giants of flesh and steel, are tiresome. I come from cyberspace, the new home of the mind. In the name of the future, I ask you, who belong to the past, not to interfere with our freedom. You are not welcome, you are not sovereign where we gather."[18]

According to the above research, it is only for people to get the satisfaction of their needs in immersive short videos, and it does not tell about the harms of indulging in the virtual world, ignoring the negative correlation events in media communication, which does not have a good measure of standards between the virtual and the real, and it will lead to people's rejection of only focusing on the satisfaction of their needs and ignoring the real thing, which will cause people to have a rejection of the real world, which is not conducive to the research.

### 5.2 Future direction

Immersive short videos should continue to rely on high-quality content to strengthen the sensory satisfaction brought about by "watching" and the "immersive" experience of the senses themselves; video creators should organically cooperate with commercial organisations to give priority to conveying positive energy and retaining their own creativity, and to reduce the abruptness brought about by the combination of content and commercial presentation, so as to avoid falling into the rut of value alienation. [19]Video creators should organically cooperate with commercial organisations, giving priority to conveying positive energy and retaining their own creativity, to reduce the abruptness of the combination of creative content and commercial presentation, and to avoid falling into the stereotype of value alienation. At the same time, platforms should increase the supervision of the phenomenon of rubbing the edges and pandering in immersive short videos, so as to create a good cyberspace. The future development of short videos still needs to strengthen the gatekeeping efforts, to improve the content production system, optimise the content ecology, strengthen copyright protection, and grasp the needs of users more accurately while harnessing the algorithms with mainstream values, in order to achieve the sustainable development of short videos.

## 6. Conclusion

The use and satisfaction theory describes how to influence people's needs, and applied to short videos, it can be said that the emergence of immersive short videos also allows users to change from passive viewers to active participants, which greatly satisfies people's needs for self-expression and exploration of the inner world, and provokes the users' desire to share, so as to achieve multifaceted dissemination. Immersive short video meets the needs of users in the four aspects of sensation,

curiosity, socialisation and consumption, which is an important reason for its increasing popularity. It can not only provide audiences with high-quality content, but also bring a good experience, which may generate more viewing groups and ideas creativity in the future.

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