



## THE INFLUENCE OF TIKTOK ON BOOK CONSUMPTION

### A INFLUÊNCIA DO TIKTOK NO CONSUMO DE LIVROS

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#### **Abstract**

Considering the importance of reading habits and the expansion of the literary market following TikTok's success, this research examines how TikTok influences young adults' reading habits, applying a consumption experience perspective to explore how digital interactions shape their reading practices and preferences. To ensure the analysis's relevance, participants were selected for their high engagement with both reading and TikTok, and two focus groups were conducted with users aged 18 to 25. The findings highlight TikTok's role in transforming reading into a socially mediated, emotionally driven experience, thereby advancing theoretical understanding in experiential consumption studies.

**Keywords:** Book consumption. Consumption experience. TikTok.

#### **Resumo**

Considerando a importância da leitura e o crescimento do mercado literário após o sucesso do TikTok, esta pesquisa examinou como o TikTok influencia os hábitos de leitura de jovens adultos, aplicando uma perspectiva da experiência de consumo para explorar como interações digitais moldam suas práticas e preferências de leitura. Para a análise, foram selecionados leitores frequentes e usuários ativos do TikTok, e conduzidos dois grupos focais com usuários de 18 a 25 anos. Os resultados destacaram o papel do TikTok na transformação da leitura em uma experiência socialmente mediada e emocionalmente impulsionada, avançando na compreensão teórica sobre Experiência de Consumo.

**Palavras-chave:** Consumo de livros. Experiência de consumo. TikTok.

### Introduction

Social media was created with the aim of connecting people around the world and encouraging communication, allowing users to express their opinions in a practical way and with the freedom to raise guidelines and their thoughts on various subjects. Social media creates connectivity with unbridled speed, making immediate information increasingly competitive. “Connectivity is possibly the most important game changer in the history of marketing. Although it can no longer be considered new, it has been changing many facets of the market and shows no signs of slowing down” (Kotler et al., 2017, p.31).

With the Coronavirus and the new built-in blocking routine, TikTok quickly became an easy entertainment option, and with its addictive design of an “infinite” feed, it soon saw a significant increase in users' screen time. Through the algorithm, the various interests of the consumer are explored through screen time on a specific topic, searches for keywords related to a lifestyle or even a characteristic product, likes, shares, video saving, all actions carried out within of the TikTok application induced it to identify and recognize from the collected data, the habits, mood and even the consumption interests of those who watch. Today, the application is seen as a portal for accessing billions of people who can comment, share, and even express their opinions about brands and their products through the available tools.

Among the niches of interest that survived on the platform, there is "BookTok", a term used to demonstrate content creators focused on the literary world, making short and fun videos about their readings. These creators use different formats to capture the user's attention, such as telling the stories as true facts, making the viewer believe that it is a case of gossip and, at the end of the video, disclosing the title of the work where it is possible to know the improvement of the story.

According to Carlos Drummond de Andrade, “Reading is an inexhaustible source of pleasure, but incredible as it has reached, almost all of it, it does not feel this thirst”. This sentence was written by the poet in the last century and can still be considered current in several scenarios. The habit of reading has suffered from the low market demand over the last years due to the interference of the digital world and the intense presence of cell phones in people's daily lives, taking space from other leisure activities.

As Drummond said, it is not common for most people to feel the need or interest in entering the world of reading. However, many influencers, the so-called “Booktokers”, have used the TikTok platform as an ally to spread their opinions about the titles they read. Consequently, they are helping to reverse this scenario by generating third-party interest in these stories, which has positively moved in the publishing market.

These influencers make up a community of readers who have kept their literary experiences in the app and use it to expose their opinions, analyses and points of view, in addition to finding other people who have had experiences. Many publications gained recognition through this practice and significantly increased their sales after popularizing it on the platform.

The literary market was one of the markets that had the greatest impact on this social media, which has a community called Booktok with around 150 billion views (TikTok, 2023). Booktok consists of the TikTok reader community, responsible for giving visibility to various titles and sharing their reading experiences from the moment the book arrives, the so-called “Unboxings”, which are videos made up of people opening packages of books or receiving them by mail, to the final opinions, the sensations generated, even indicating and encouraging the consumption of these works.

TikTok's participation in the sale and consumption of books was so significant that even physical bookstores had to adapt their facilities to give prominence to the platform's “favorite” works. Online stores also adapted to the success of the category and surrendered to the new fashion by listing the

most sought-after works within the platform, as is the case with Amazon, an online store that serves the entire world and is one of the most popular online destinations for readers.

Colleen Hoover is the author of more than 20 books, and released in 2018 the title "It Ends with Us," which portrays an abusive relationship between Lily and Ryle. In 2021, the book became a highlight among Booktokers, who popularized the title and influenced thousands of people around the world to read it. In 2022, "It Ends with Us" completed 1 year on the list of most popular books sold, and made Colleen the author who sold the most books around the world that same year, with 1.2 million copies in Brazil alone, according to *Veja* magazine (2023).

The impact generated by the platform has even altered the communication of publishers, who increasingly seek to produce content that encourages the consumption of books and encourages the public not only to read the book, but also to comment and expose their thoughts with the intention of engaging each once more people in society present on TikTok. This movement is turning the platform into a tool that participates in the reading experience, which is no longer just about reading the book, but taking it to the debate within the platform.

According to Nielsen BookScan, in 2021 the publishing sector sold around 409 million copies, 55 million more than the previous year, featuring an increase of 15.4%, reflecting a revenue of 12.9% greater than in 2020, reaching the figure of 5.8 billion reais in sales in Brazil alone, in addition to impacting the production of these titles, which needed to increase by 24.5%. Such data were released by the National Union of Book Publishers (SNEL), making the impact of the movement explicit.

"Goods are tangible, services are intangible, and experiences are memorable" (Pine, Gilmore; 1998, p.98). Social media are increasingly seeking to link platforms to lived moments, focusing their purposes on the experience they provide or how they add to them to make them more striking, something unique (Almeida et al., 2022).

Experience marketing focuses on making the consumer emotionally involved with the product, not only with its usefulness or referring to the memories that it may have with the object, but bringing a pleasant experience that aims to build customer loyalty through the emotional and sensory (Palmeira et al., 2009).

Titled the brand that grew the most in 2022 by Forbes, TikTok is considered the second most used social media in the world after registering an increase of 215% from 2021 to 2022. The platform accumulates around 1 billion users, with only 82 million in Brazil, the third country that most uses the application, behind only the US, with 33 million more users, and Indonesia, which collected 109 million users, according to the magazine. So, TikTok has played a very important role within the publishing market, making books more and more sought after precisely because it linked the reading experience to a moment to be shared, something that allows you to participate in a community on and off the platform.

This concept is aligned with what is proposed by Schmitt (2000), when the author conceptualizes consumer experience as the concentration of marketing in the customer experience, where they provide emotional, emotional, cognitive, behavioral and relational values to consumers, creating memories with the platform.

Currently, there are few studies focused on the behavior of the app and its influence on consumption, translating into an invitation for a better understanding of the factors that may interfere in these decisions and in the behavior of the publishing market as a whole after the inherent use of the tool. The influence of social media on consumption habits and experiences has become increasingly common and debated, given the power that these tools have to provide a product or service on the market.

Thus, the aim of this study is to understand how TikTok influences book consumption, identifying the main decision factors for book consumption, and discussing the influence of TikTok on the book consumption experience.

According to Rodrigues (2016), the practice of reading enables social well-being, in addition to increasing thinking and communication skills, essential characteristics for defining and expressing positions, arguing and questioning rights as part of a community.

The habit of reading is directly linked to the behavior of society, since the social and economic progress of a country depends on the access that its people have to the knowledge transmitted by the written word (Bamberger, 1991), therefore, we can affirm the importance access to books, as well as the ability to interpret them for building and developing a community.

TikTok, through the legion of literary influencers present on the platform, has become a powerful tool with regard to strongly encouraging the consumption of various works, whether they are recent releases that have not yet solidified in the market, received the first impressions of readers and building their consideration, or old; as well as works that were already known by the public and were at the top of the best sellers due to the influence of Booktokers, such as the case of “Women Who Run with the Wolves” by Clarissa Pinkola, written in 1992 and which had an increase in sales based on reviews made within the app, where they accumulate more than 10 million mentions of the hashtag in Portuguese #Mulheresquecorremcomoslobos (TikTok, 2023).

Faced with this phenomenon, the present study contributes to the investigation of the role played by TikTok in the consumption of books, as suggested by the article by Nguyen et al. (2019) when mapping the role of social media in the purchase of books in the Vietnamese market. Using a perspective of the dimensions of the consumption experience proposed by Scussel et al. (2021), the influence of the TikTok on book consumption in Brazil and its impact on the publishing market will be examined from real market experiences.

In the aforementioned article, the authors also recommend studies on actual purchasing behavior, which is closely related to consumption experiences. As a method for collecting data, the focus group was chosen to capture not only the experiences of consumers but also the journey they took. The methodological choice complies with Palmer's (2010) recommendation, which suggests qualitative techniques as the best means of understanding consumer experiences due to the complexity of the variables involved.

The nascent body of scientific literature on the subject shows not only how new it is in scientific research, but also a small amount of data about the application's behavior and how it is moving a market related to more than 2 billion people.

### Literature Review

Experience marketing or experiential marketing has as its central objective to provide, through the use of products and services, sensory or emotional memories for its consumers (Larocca et al., 2020). By focusing on making the consumer emotionally involved with the product/service, it goes beyond its usefulness, striving to provide satisfactory memories, “no longer limited to some pre-purchase activity, nor to some post-purchase activity, for example, the satisfaction assessment, but includes a series of other activities that influence consumers' decisions and future actions” (Vézina, 1999, p.62), in order to promote customer loyalty through emotional and sensory stimuli. (Palmeira et al., 2009).

The beginning of the study of this concept began in 1980, with the objective of accompanying the understanding of consumers' buying behavior by realizing the prevalence of the emotional element in the process (Moral Moral, & Fernández Alles, 2012). Pioneers in the study of experience as part of

consumer behavior, Holbrook and Hirschman, in 1982, contested the rational model by highlighting the emotional variables – pleasure, dreams, fantasies, feelings and fun – present in consumption, calling the phenomenon the experience view (Larocca et al., 2020).

Although the beginning of the study on the consumption experience and its importance took place in the 1980s, it was only in the late 1990s that the subject really took on greater proportions, after the book “Experimental Marketing” was launched by Schmitt in 2000, where the author conceptualizes the topic for the first time and states that “experiences occur as a result of an encounter, going through something or experiencing things” (Schmitt, 2000, p. 57). Therefore, the concept is not related to the quality of the product or its price, but to the emotions that it arouses in the consumer (Tarta, 2013).

To understand and analyze the experiences that consumers have when interacting with products and services, Schmitt (2000) proposed an experiential marketing framework known as the Strategic Experience Modules. This framework can be employed to design and shape distinct types of experiences depending on the context. Within this approach, the author identifies five key experiential dimensions: sense, feel, think, act, and relate. Sense refers to the stimulation of the five senses, which can influence consumer behavior or judgment through attributes such as color, texture, flavor, and smell, characteristics that impact the customer’s perception of a product. Feel concerns about the emotions and feelings experienced by consumers when interacting with a product or service, including both positive emotions, such as joy, pleasure, and enthusiasm, and negative emotions, such as sadness or anger. Think involves the cognitive processes that occur during the consumption experience, involving the perception, understanding, interpretation, and processing of information about the product or service. Act highlights the role of social interaction and connection with others during the consumption experience, including engagement with employees, other consumers, friends, or family, and influencing how consumers perceive and engage with the experience. Finally, Relate emphasizes the establishment of connections with consumers by encouraging their integration into social groups or broader contexts that reinforce the positioning of a company or product.

Schmitt (2000) considers rational and emotional sustainable consumers, and these aspects are the basis of their decisions. In this way, experiential marketing considers that individuals want to receive experiences in a creative and emotional way. In addition, the consumer keeps these memories arising from the experiences of the product or service and, based on this, evaluates his consumption and relationship with that specific product (Moral Moral, & Fernández Alles, 2012).

However, based on the interpretation of experience within marketing, the authors Carù and Cova (2003) identify in their research the different ways of offering products and services, as well as the different levels of experience intensity that they can provide. In this way, the researchers propose two axes, where the first has the extremes called common and extraordinary, from left to right, and the second with extremes that represent the consumer and consumption, from top to bottom (Carù, & Cova, 2003).

The authors emphasize the importance of those involved with marketing, whether they are managers, researchers or professionals in the area, to understand the breadth of something as grand as experience and criticize a marketing tendency to use experience as something commonplace, which will lead to the saturation of this experience (Carù, & Cova, 2003).

Lanier Junior and Rader (2015), in turn, show that the literature available so far has broadened the perspective of the structures of the consumption experience; however, it has limited its understanding by attributing functions to them. Thus, starting from a two-dimensional optical proposal by Carù and Cova (2003), the authors propose a structure that analyzes consumption experiences and details the relationships between psychological and functional aspects. These, in turn, are divided into subdimensions, namely: structure, anti-structure, function and anti-function, which served as the basis for identifying four main types of consumer experience: performance, liberation, stochastic and

adventure. The concept of structure was defined as stable and consistent relationships, while the anti-structure received the opposite concept, that is, unstable and inconsistent relationships (Lanier Junior, & Rader, 2015).

Performance experiences can be interpreted as common experiences, as they are linked to factors independent of society, in addition to being related to commercial, mundane, and profane. Liberating experiences, on the other hand, bring consumption experiences that address unstable relationships, which are embedded in a cultural framework and produce lasting impacts (Larocca et al., 2020).

Stochastic experiences are related to consumption experiences to related relationships, that is, stable, which in turn underlie a cultural form, but bring with them anti-functional consequences that reinforce consistent relationships. Adventure experiences are a special case, as they are characteristic for resisting any attempt at structural or functional domination, and has four distinct characteristics: (i) it is separate from everyday life, (ii) it activates the undefined, uncertain, and indeterminate aspects of existence, (iii) it transforms the person into a historical and (iv) it is a process and not a content” (Larocca et al., 2020).

After analyzing the concepts presented in the literature and seeking to unify the content then presented, Scussel et al. (2021) sought points of convergence in these configurations and arranged them in six constructive dimensions of the consumption experience, namely: emotional, cognitive, utilitarian, pragmatic, material and contextual.

The emotional dimension refers to the feelings and emotions that consumers experience during interactions with products or services, which can result in positive or negative outcomes depending on the emotions elicited. The cognitive dimension involves the consumer’s reasoning processes, including memories of previous experiences, the influence of others’ opinions, and the learning derived from consumption. The utilitarian dimension focuses on the perceived usefulness of a product, service, or brand in relation to the consumer’s own goals, with company-generated stimuli playing a key role in differentiating brands and meeting specific needs (Scussel et al., 2021).

The material dimension emphasizes the interaction between the consumer and the tangible aspects of the value proposition, linking practices to physical objects, and supporting activities. The pragmatic dimension centers on the consumer’s actions, requiring engagement with products, services, or experiences, and reflecting how individual factors, such as age, shape the perception of brands, organizations, or other consumers. Finally, the contextual dimension highlights the external factors that influence the consumption experience, including social, cultural, and environmental elements, which affect how consumers perceive and respond to stimuli from products, services, marketing efforts, and interactions with others (Scussel et al., 2021).

When analyzing the dimensions and pillars discussed in the literature, it becomes clear that experience plays a central role in consumption: the more memories consumers have of a product or service, the more likely they are to recommend or continue using it. This study followed the recommendations of Scussel et al. (2021) to relate the theoretical propositions described in the six dimensions of consumption experience with real experiences described by consumers, analyzing market situations from the perspective of the proposed dimensions, also to advance by testing the applicability of the dimensional model in empirical research.

The different aspects of consumption and their dimensions make it possible to visualize how emotions are part of everyday life and are taken into account during the consumption of an item, as well as the role of a company/product/service in providing continuity in the post -sale to complete the experience, even if its composition goes far beyond consumption and after-sales. Brambilla et al. (2010) explains the importance of maintaining constant contact with consumers to monitor consumption experiences.

Therefore, to understand the experience in this study, the proposed dimensions will help to identify the reader's consumption journey and, given the gap proposed by the author Nguyen et al. (2019), when investigating the influence and role that TikTok played within the market editorial.

## Method

In order to understand the role of TikTok in the consumption of books in Brazil, focus groups were made with the purpose of deepening the understanding of the perception of the chosen group of consumers with the objective of producing “in-depth information and illustrative in the intention of it producing other information” (Gerhardt, & Silveira, 2009, p. 58).

The focus group was the technique chosen to gather data on the different experiences and influences brought about by TikTok, with the aim of establishing a greater connection with participants who are not only involved with both markets mentioned, TikTok and books, but also actively participate in the social media and use it as a search tool, fitting the profile sought for the research (Belzile, & Oberg, 2012).

During collection, the researcher simply observes the development of contributions without intervening or helping to form participants' opinions. In this context, the research adopts an inductive approach, exploring and describing a specific phenomenon with the aim of generating theoretical perspectives. The analysis is the result of observing individual cases, seeking to understand the whole and enabling the construction of a broader understanding (Ryan et al., 2014).

According to Belzile and Oberg (2012), the practice encourages participants to contribute their experiences and reactions, enriching the study by making it increasingly introspective and real. This way, participants will bring different worldviews that contribute to the discussion, as they see the topics differently and, in this case, may have had different impressions of each book or the platform itself.

Faced with a select market within the Brazilian reader scenario (Santos, 2022), the objective of the research focused on understanding the influence of a social media related to a common habit and, based on that, it was decided to prioritize groups with more the frequency of reading and use of the social media, directing the present work to analyzes concentrated on a certain reader profile. In this way, two focus groups were controlled with participants selected to openly address the subject not only with the researcher, but in social media or discussion groups. In this sense, an invitation was sent to participants via text messages, intentionally requesting their participation, containing the description of requirements for participation: being a reader, that is, “having read, in whole or in parts, at least 1 book in the last 3 months” (Instituto Pró-Livro, 2020) and use TikTok frequently, that is, more than 3 times a week.

The first focus group was formed by 5 adolescents between 16 and 18 years old, only one male and four females. All are in high school and are public school students. Four people claim to reside in the city of Brasília-DF and one in the city of Campo Grande-MS.

The second focus group was formed by three adult individuals aged between 23 and 25 years, where the three are female. All have completed higher education, where two declared to reside in Brasília-DF and one in the city of Monkey Mia-Occidental Australia/AU.

The focus groups took place through video conferences recorded on June 13 and 17, 2023, according to the availability of the participants, with approximately 45 minutes each. Both meetings had open questions that were directly related to the general and specific objectives of the study in question. In all, 8 questions were pre-selected and sent with the theoretical framework, which helped to guide the conversation. However, it is important to highlight that the model chosen for the collection of additional questions asked spontaneously with the intention of extracting deeper information motivated

by the statements made by the participants.

The questions participating in the script were: a) What motivates you to buy a book?; b) What criteria are decisive to buy a book?; c) Do you use social media as a search platform for these titles? which?; d) What do you think of TikTok as a search platform? How often do they use it?; e) Has any TikTok content/content creator sparked your interest in a book?; f) Did this content induce you to actually purchase the book?; g) Have you ever seen this stand in a bookstore? What was your perception about?; h) Have you ever bought/consumed books because you saw indications on TikTok?

After achieving the objectives proposed at the beginning of the call and closing it where all the participants met according to what was exposed, the transcripts of the research members' speeches were carried out to better analyze all the guidelines maintained.

Content analysis of responses was used, such an approach involving the identification and categorization of themes, concepts or patterns present in the transcript (Krippendorff, 2018). After categorization of themes, identifications were made of the dimensions of consumption experience by Scussel et al. (2021) (cognitive, contextual, emotional, material, pragmatic and utilitarian) in the participants' responses, in which the theoretical framework was used as support.

Flick (2008) connects the concept of data triangulation with the quality of qualitative research, claiming that it acquires maximum quality by correlating 2 or more points of view on the researched subject, which may be between two different approaches or research with different opinions. With regard to the focus groups, the participants experienced different ones about the same object. The discrepancies occurred within the same group and between groups 1 and 2, enriching the qualitative research process by making Flick's (2008) approach explicit and the desire for a more abundant discussion on the subject, which contributed to the promotion of those chosen.

## Findings

From the information transmitted through the focus groups and analysis of content categories, it was possible to visualize more clearly the participants' relationship with TikTok and how this social media interferes with the consumption of books. The results that will be exposed below will emphasize the perception of the participants regarding the phenomenon and their experiences will be presented from the evaluations proposed by Scussel et al. (2021).

The groups were identified as Groups 1 and 2, the first being formed by adolescents aged 16 to 19 years old and Group 2 formed by adults aged 23 to 25 years.

### *Consumption decision factors*

Regarding the motivation for consuming the book, 100% of Group 1 cited TikTok as a gateway to new spontaneous readings. The application was mentioned for allowing access to the opinions of several people in a practical and quick way, allowing the user, after going through several reports, to reach a conclusion whether or not the book is worth consuming.

Considering Schmitt's (2000) framework, this journey highlights some experiential dimensions, such as "think," in which the sensations (sense) and emotions (feel) aroused by the watched video allow the reader to decide whether or not to consume the book, and if so, the purchase of the book is completed (act), as well as this validation being given through the "like" on the post (relate).

Due to the format of the application, it is common that, by consuming this type of content frequently, it presents these videos in a more commonplace way, therefore, the new indications literally "appear" on the user's screen without him having to go after it. *"I saw it on TikTok and got the beautiful cover and I*

*was interested. Especially if someone made a review, I'm interested" (Eduarda).*

The Cognitive dimension, from the model by Scussel et al. (2021), where the consumer makes his consumption decisions based on the exposed, is explicitly in the speech in question, in addition to being something that the TikTok user is totally susceptible due to the size of the social media's reader community and the influence that it presents under the users, given the data already discussed. *"Usually it's like this, if I'm seeing a lot of people talking about the book, I'm like, impossible to be bad, I want to read it" (Raphael).*

Group 2 mentioned a second application used for referrals (Skoob) and said they were not so influenced by TikTok after being asked how to use the social media as a search tool for new readings, corroborating what Vézina (1999) indicated about the consumption decision not being linked to just one activity. According to the participants, TikTok is made up of younger people, and they end up not having the same taste in book styles, as shown by Paula's speech, which received support from the rest of the group present. *"For me, the biggest problem with TikTok is because you see that there are a lot of children, you know? Like, a lot of very young people there."* Karen completed the thought: *"Wow, I was going to comment on this because there are a lot of teenagers indicating the book. And there are some people who generally don't have much of a reading base, younger people."*

In this way, it is possible to perceive the different app consumption experiences according to the age and literary maturity of the users, while Group 1 is extremely influenced by the app, Group 2 makes considerations for not identifying with the influencers. This corroborates the contextual dimension of Scussel et al. (2021), in which the experience is directly connected to the social and cultural structures in which the individual is inserted, also relating to the dimension "relate" of Schmitt (2000), where social interaction and connection with people in general, interfere with how the consumer perceives the product.

On the other hand, there are situations where the book is very successful on account of the platform and ends up stoking the curiosity of the older group as well, who end up surrendering to the app's indications if it is something that has taken over the social media, as exposed by Paula during a meeting. *"It also depends, sometimes there are some books that everyone is talking about, so you end up not paying much attention to the cover because you want to read it."* This type of reaction can be explained by Almeida et al. (2022), who express that the dynamics of social media focus on the experiences that will be generated. Also, on this occasion, we can see the Cognitive dimension overlapping the Material dimension (Scussel et al., 2021), where the opinion of third parties arouses more curiosity and converts the admirer into a consumer, even if the external (cover) of the product, in this case, the book, is not so attractive.

Following the logic used by Group 1, Group 2 was also very susceptible to the consumption of books due to their physical characteristics, aspects related to the Material dimension (Scussel et al., 2021), which concerns the physical properties of the product such as capacity, size, etc. with people or production labels from Netflix or Amazon Prime repel readers for not being so attractive. *"People on the cover, I don't even consider people"* (Paula), about brands of cinematographic productions, Beatriz suffered: *"and I hate that brand on the cover of the book that is like this, a symbol of Netflix. Oh, just seeing that makes me angry, I say no"*.

*"If the cover really catches my attention, if it's a book I've never heard of in my life that I didn't know, the cover will be the first factor to call attention. And if the cover is ugly, it influences my judgment, but then I see the synopsis, you know?" (Karen)*

It can be noticed that the visual factor contributes a lot to the reader's perception of the book, which can alienate the consumer if the aesthetics are not something attractive, proving that the popular saying makes sense in some cases, yes, books are judged by their cover. Based on the ideas of Carù and Cova (2003), one could consider that the issue of the cover could be understood from a functional

perspective, such that the visual communication of the cover can be used to express the book's main theme. Group 2 also felt that the experience runs the other way around, where the cover makes you consume a given book purely for its look: *"the cover is very beautiful, I buy it just because the cover is beautiful, like a collector, there was a beautiful butterfly"* (Beatriz).

Group 2 held that the cover is indeed a strong factor for consumption, and the aesthetic issue can serve as an incentive for the consumption of this title. The members brought experiences where the works were read purely by their covers, as in the case of Beatriz, who was concurrent with the agreement of the entire group. We can associate such elements with the Sensory dimension of Schmitt (2000), which is used to analyze characteristics such as color and texture of the product, just like the Material dimension of Scussel et al. (2021), where the external part influences the consumer to purchase or use such a product.

The former research participants also showed that the fact that the people who make up their cycle of friendships are reading a certain book leads them to read it too, to feel included in the conversation. Both groups suffered situations in which they read a certain book due to the influence of the group of friends, which generated curiosity or to feel included in the conversation, fitting the characteristics of the Contextual dimension (Scussel et al., 2021), as they were encouraged to read a certain book to be included no context. *"I read Evelyn Hugo, because 3 friends of mine had read it. Everyone had actually read it, it was a pyramid scheme"* (Raphael).

80% of participants said they preferred to buy or consume books online because of the prices. Amazon was the most cited store as the main portal for online shopping due to price, security, and speed, also counting on the Kindle device, a device developed by Amazon that makes it possible to read anywhere and carry more than one book in a compact way. Again, it is possible to situate this stage of the journey within the functional dimension of the experience described by Carù and Cova (2003). TikTok consumers say they look for the book online or via Kindle before buying it physically due to the investment value.

Participants in Group 1 reported consuming books precisely at the price that Amazon offers, often without knowing what the story is about, motivated by the great promotions offered by the store. This behavior is within the Contextual dimension (Scussel et al., 2021), where the consumer ends up consuming a particular product due to the situational variables that directly affect it, in addition to being related to the utilitarian dimension, since the consumer, responding to the stimuli of the company in question, in this case low prices, preferable this one to the others on the market. *"I only buy on Amazon but that's because there is no shipping here. I know it will arrive well, it's purely because it's cheap"* (Eduarda); *"I bought so many books, but like, there are a lot that were just because I was like R\$12"* (Beatriz). *"Sometimes I don't even feel like it, but I buy it because it's cheap"* (Ana Elisa).

From those exposed by the focus groups, we can say that social media bring users closer to brands, allowing this monitoring, having free access not only to their consumers but also to potential buyers, encouraging the consumption of their product or service. On the other hand, we also have the Utilitarian dimension (Scussel et al., 2021) very well represented when a user of the social media searches for a profile through the service/product that he/she delivers, consuming niche content, and entering a community that consumes this type of content. Thus, the next topic will be devoted to analyzing the role of TikTok in the consumption experience of the participants in this study.

### *Consumer experience and TikTok*

Both groups reported using TikTok as a search tool for new readings, but with different purposes. Group 1, the youngest, said they trust the app's indications a lot; some participants even said they trust so much that they even consume the books without knowing much about the synopsis, being completely influenced by Booktokers. *"I already bought a book, just because, like, there was a snippet that*

*appeared on TikTok*” (Beatriz), who was accompanied by Sofia *“I do this all the time”*.

This factor is closely related to the Cognitive dimension (Scussel et al., 2021) since the consumer blindly trusts third-party experiences, explaining the level of influence of the social media within the publishing market and for readers in this age group. One of the participants said he uses TikTok a lot as a search tool for new readings because of the language and because he has many opinions that can be used to compare the views of the platform's influencers.

This factor was a positive point, also raised by Group 2, consisting of people older than the first. This group says they do not rely 100% on the social media's indications for reasons already explained in the previous section, but use it to see the reviews of books indicated on other platforms, such as Skoob. The Pragmatic dimension (Scussel et al., 2021) can be observed when this group says they like to oppose the opinions that are exposed on social media, but that they cannot trust because they have not had very good experiences with the indications. *“I don't trust TikTok nominations because every time I read a book that was successful on TikTok, I hated it”* (Karen). Such speech characterizes the Moral Moral and Fernández Alles' (2012) perspective on memories arising from experiences with a product or service, where the experiences that Karen had with the platform were ruined to the point where she lost confidence in it, changing the way she sees the platform, negative associations. Marcelle countered Karen's statement and says she uses the app but with restrictions *“I search TikTok to see if there's anyone criticizing, to see if a video will appear speaking very badly so I can have both sides to know if I want it, if I don't want to read.”*

Both groups said they had influencers whom they trusted because they identified with literary taste, consolidating once again the Cognitive dimension (Scussel et al., 2021). Groups stated that they are more likely to trust the opinions of these influencers than individual opinions on the app. *“She doesn't just talk about books, but every time she talks about a book I think it's really good. Then, whenever she recommends it, I buy it too”* (Beatriz). Karen followed the same reasoning in Group 2 *“There are some Booktokers that I trust in the indications, so if x person indicated a book, I already know it will be good because the person has a similar taste, read and already indicated good things here”* (Karen), referring to the trust that these consumers place in the opinion of third parties for having had good experiences when it comes to referrals.

With regard to the stands placed in physical locations to indicate the successes of the platform, both groups said they did not like the initiative, and it was even agreed that they repel buyers because it is not something attractive and does not arouse the curiosity of readers, since they already know the books exposed. *“It's just that normally, all the books that are there I already know through TikTok, I find it a bit tacky”* (Raphael). Paula expressed her indignation with regard to the stands and Marcelle said she was even removed from the titles when she saw them on the stand *“Man, I thought that was horrible.”* (Paula); *“I already have prejudice there when I see that stand”* (Marcelle).

The stands provoke negative reactions in the participating consumers, which clearly characterize the Sensory (Schmitt, 2000) and Emotional (Scussel et al., 2021) dimensions, related to the emotions and feelings provoked in the consumer from the interaction with these structures, showing yet another the importance of being attentive to customer occurrences.

In view of the results found, they will be accommodated as designed in the future, and their effects on consumer experience, as well as the space occupied during the present study.

## Discussion

During the discussions, participants offered insights that can inform strategic actions in the publishing market, helping to expand its potential and maintain its relevance in the current economic landscape.

The first recommendation would be about the aesthetics of the books, including those originating from

streaming productions such as Netflix and Amazon Prime, considering the functional perspective of Carù and Cova (2003), the prevalence of the Sensory (Schmitt, 2000) and Material (Scussel et al., 2021) dimensions. The participants unanimously stated that they were not attracted to book covers featuring people or production labels. They reported distancing themselves from these editions because they anticipated a negative bias associated with such covers and were concerned about how they would affect the overall aesthetics of their bookshelves, factors unrelated to the actual content of the work. Emphasizing that the company seeks to provide satisfying memories and loyalty precisely through the emotional engagement of the consumer (Palmeira et al., 2009; Vèzina, 1999). In this way, editions were indicated that referred to the productions, but without leaving them explicitly as the photos that are currently used. If the intention is to differentiate them from the other works of the author due to the productions, a version with elements that still resemble the original would be indicated, but that is related to the film/series, bringing graphic elements on the cover of objects referring to the scenes.

There was also great revulsion on the part of the participants in relation to the stands that highlight the most sought-after books on TikTok, one of the promotional actions that bookstores use to identify the books that are highlighted within the platform with the intention of niche these readers. As seen in this study, and taking as a premise the Pragmatic dimension of Scussel et al. (2021), the idea was not well received and may be repelling readers who are interested in these titles. Therefore, the recommendation would be to extinguish these stands and replace them only to indicate sympathy in general, without directly relating to the application, since this causes some embarrassment for readers who seek these books.

Publishers can take advantage of the Booktokers movement and show a little more about upcoming releases, how the company's day-to-day works, and how it behaves in relation to the volume of the niche within the platform, with the intention of humanizing the brand and starting a relationship with readers. Assuming that the consumer experience consists of the emotions that the product evokes in the consumer (Moral Moral, & Fernández Allez, 2012; Tarta, 2013), publishers benefit from these booktoker actions by allowing readers to discover other titles through the brand's upcoming releases and that the brand does not become hostage to criticism from influencers and which they indicate, as they would form their own community within TikTok.

Recognizing the social importance of promoting reading habits for both individual development and cultural progress, this study deepens the understanding of how TikTok influences readers and shapes their decisions to purchase or consume books. By examining these behaviors through the lens of consumption experience, the research strengthens existing discussions on the role of social media in guiding consumer choices and aligns with theoretical perspectives that highlight the emotional, cognitive, and contextual dimensions involved in consumption (Scussel et al., 2021). The findings show that TikTok does more than recommend titles; it actively becomes part of the reading experience itself, contributing to new forms of engagement that increasingly stimulate the publishing market.

Scientifically, this study contributes through the discussion presented in it about the different views about the consumption experience over time, having as a guide the dimensions proposed by Scussel et al. (2021) for its timeliness and adaptability to the situations that occurred. Such a vision gave the analysis of the real evidence of book consumers, in addition to promoting the theme with data from scientific research on the subject, something scarce and extremely strong, given the growth of the market in recent years due to the impact of the social media in question.

The results allow for a greater understanding of the consumer profile of this market, how it acts on social media, and its interaction with the publishing market. In this way, it is possible to identify these consumers and direct your actions to reach them more efficiently. Such results also influenced the empirical understanding of the six dimensions proposed in the study by Scussel et al. (2021), helping in future research that uses it as a basis, enabling the theoretical development of the concept.

## Final Considerations

The present study contributes to the understanding and analysis of the results obtained, which strongly motivated the development and analysis of the impact of TikTok on book consumption, as indicated in previous studies. The findings suggest that TikTok has become a relevant tool in the publishing market, transforming reading from an individual habit into a shared, socially mediated experience. Despite the limited number of participants, the qualitative approach provided valuable insights into how digital interactions, algorithms, and influencer content shape readers' perceptions, motivations, and purchase behaviors.

To achieve the main objective of the work, which consists of understanding how TikTok influences the consumption of books, the study is based on the 6 dimensions proposed by Scussel et al. (2021) to categorize the different consumption experiences that readers had with the TikTok platform in order to identify the influence that this application has on the consumption of books and on the consumption decisions of these users.

This division made it possible to achieve the objective of the study, as it allowed identifying aspects that were most cited by the participants when dealing with which decision factors for consumption. When analyzing the results after separating them by dimensions, the strong presence of the Cognitive and Material dimensions can be heard, the first being related to the opinions of third parties about the books, their experiences and points of view about the experiences lived through reading. This behavior is related to the format of the TikTok application and how it has become a strong tool within the publishing market, as it is based on the recommendations and experiences shared by the videos that users are increasingly inclined to consume a particular book, in addition to generate identification of the consumer public with the influencers, further increasing the chance of consumption of a certain book that is highlighted among them, as seen in the results of this work.

The Material and Emotional dimension are present in the different characteristics of the book and, from the reports acquired in the focus groups, one can see the influence that the cover has on consumption and on the different sensations that it can cause within this market, and may even repel the consumer. If there are people on the cover or production stamps, as previously mentioned, expressing the importance of the book's construction process being aimed, from the beginning, at its final consumer.

In order to discuss the influence of TikTok on the book consumption experience, participants were asked questions that aimed to exemplify how their consumption behavior in relation to books was related to the platform, such as the question "Have you already bought/consumed books because you saw the indications on TikTok?", where all participants agreed. In addition, the participants brought different experiences about how the subject was present in everyday conversations, as surgeons, these interests and their instructions, until actually characterizing consumption.

From these contributions, the present dimensions (cognitive, contextual, emotional, material, pragmatic and utilitarian) were submitted, as well as their combinations, with the intention of visualizing how experiences can be correlated and occur simultaneously, opening space to explore various aspects within the publishing market marketing strategies, which can instigate more than one dimension in the same initiative, such as linking the material aspect to cognitive understanding.

Within the universe of readers, it is very common for them to recommend books or make videos showing the beauty of the versions they received/bought, whether common or collector's. Encouraging influencers to show more and more reviews that meet the public's expectations or that bring something extra tends to generate a positive impact.

The importance of studies focused on social media for the consumption experience is highlighted,

which have transformed and still transform so dynamically according to the participation of these social media in the daily lives of consumers. In the case of the study in question, we can see how TikTok influences the decisions of these readers, their behaviors, conversation groups and consumer experiences as a whole, being able to enhance it, connecting communities through their tastes and fostering a market for the whole.

It is worth emphasizing the topicality of the proposed topic, which, however, resulted in restricted access to information about TikTok in easy and accurate sources, which were not always available in scientific databases. One can also mention the difficult access to the TikTok platform itself. Since the results found here are more indicative than conclusive, it is recommended that future studies focus on seeking more and more information about the behavior of this platform and social media in general, and how they can influence the day-to-day life of the user and their consumer experiences, for example, if TikTok's influence effectively converts into book sales.

Group 2 mentioned the Skoob application as a source of indication of future readings, it is recommended studies that delve into this issue in order to confirm the elevation of this social media to the publishing market and to what extent its audience differs from the TikTok audience, bearing in mind that age may not be the only differentiating factor between them.

Instagram was also cited as the social media consulted for book recommendations by the second group, but the first brought the perception of not liking the titles displayed on this social media very much, which leads to the question of what is the differentiation factor? Would it be the language or is the audience really different even within the same niche? These questions are of great value for the editorial market and these studies are advised for understanding the consumer of this market.

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