Navigating the stream: unveiling the factors shaping consumer purchase intention in live streaming shopping on social media platforms

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Abstract

The advancement in internet technology has firmly entrenched social media as an indispensable aspect of daily life. Social networking communities have evolved into a profoundly relevant space for marketers. Nowadays, social media offers a diverse array of features that actively engage users in buying and selling products and services. Live streaming, particularly, has gained remarkable popularity among social media influencers and businesses alike. Companies are increasingly investing time and resources into captivating consumers through social media live streaming rather than traditional offline methods. In recent years, many researchers have delved into this domain, identifying various theories/models and factors that influence consumers' adoption of this technology. This study synthesizes these models and factors, conducts weight analysis and sheds light on various limitations to guide future investigations. The study's findings reported that SOR model is the most adopted model in this domain therefore trust, enjoyment, and uncertainty are some key predictors of purchase intention. Moreover, it is important to acknowledge limitations such as geographical constraints, methodological challenges, and the use of purchase intention as a proxy for actual behaviour that shapes this research.

Keyword: Live-streaming, SOR model, Weight analysis, Literature review, purchase intention

1.Introduction

A real-time recording and broadcasting medium is referred to as live streaming [1]. Utilizing diverse forms of communication technology, live streaming offers an immediate and authentic experience to the audience, simulating their physical presence at the event. In 2023, social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and YouTube successfully provide live streaming services. Live streaming now encompasses a wider array of services than in the past. Consumers enjoy fun and entertaining streaming on social media and are involved in the discussion and deal-grabbing process [2]. There are many advantages that come with using live streaming for social shopping, including direct and instantaneous interaction between sellers and potential buyers, and showcasing product transparency and authenticity.

The prior discussion highlights the effectiveness of live streaming for both businesses and customers. In recent years, many scholars have undertaken diverse research efforts to illuminate this technology's impact. Consequently, this study aims to review previous literature, synthesize models and theories employed in live streaming studies, and further narrow down the factors influencing consumer purchase intentions through a weighted analysis. This study, furthermore, synthesises the limitations of this domain to mitigate them in future research. This study would be beneficial for future comprehensive studies to create a holistic model considering important factors and mitigating the limitations.

2. Literature Search

The Scopus database was utilized for a comprehensive literature search, employing keywords such as "live streaming" OR "streaming" OR "social media live streaming," AND "behavioural intention," OR "adoption," OR "acceptance," OR "usage behaviour," OR "use intention," OR "purchase intention". The search, applied to titles, abstracts, and keywords, yielded an initial pool of 175 articles. This study subsequently excluded conference papers, reviews, and newspaper blogs, resulting in the removal of 43 studies due to duplication. This left 132 articles for further investigation. Upon reviewing these papers, this study identified that 47 studies had adopted and validated conceptual models and theories. Therefore, this study proceeds to synthesize these models, theories, and constructs from these 47 studies to conduct a weight analysis.

2.1 Theories and Model of Live streaming shopping studies

Table 1 presents various models and theories adopted in live-streaming shopping studies. It is noted that the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model has been employed in ten studies, examining a range of factors [3,4]. The SOR model simplifies the process of consumer decision-making into three stages. However, critics have argued that these simplifications may not fully capture the complexity of live-streaming shopping behaviour [74,75]. Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) is the second most used model that has been utilized in three studies. Individuals tend to enhance their executive cognitive processing during decision-making [13,14,15]. Nonetheless, within the fast-paced and dynamic context of live-streaming shopping, not all users may engage in deep cognitive processing [15]. Furthermore, multiple studies have delved into the exploration using Affordance Theory, Signalling Theory, and the Theory of Planned Behaviour. Review of this study has unveiled that a limited number of studies used holistic models considering live-streaming technology adoption. Moreover, the majority of studies have not focused on the measurement of consumers' real shopping experiences but rather on intention.

Therefore, further investigations are imperative, considering more holistic models to enhance the experience and adoption of this technology.

Table 1 Theories and Model of Live streaming shopping studies

Models/theories	Frequency	Citations
S-O-R model	10	Dong et al. [3]; Gao et al.[4]; He et al. [5]; Li et al.[6]; Shang et al. [7]; Shiu et al. [8]; Tong et al. [9]; Wu and Huang [10]; Zhao and Bacao [11]; Zheng et al. [12]
Elaboration likelihood model	3	Gao et al. [13]; Sang et al. [14]; Zeng et al. [15];
affordance theory	2	Lu et al. [16]; Wang et al. [17]
Signalling theory	2	Chen et al. [18]; Lu and Chen [19]
Theory of Planned Behaviour	2	Apasrawirote and Yawised [20]; Wang et al. [21]
uses and gratification theory	2	Wongkitrungrueng et al. [22]; Wang and Oh [23]
Models/theories occur in single study		
Arousal and consumer memory theory, Zhang et al. [24]; Cognitive Transactional theory, Zhou et al. [25]; Complementarity theory Qin et al. [26]; Flow theory Zheng et al.[27]; Game theory Ji et al.[28]; Live Streaming Transaction model, Paraman et al. [29]; Influencer marketing theory, Chen and Yang [30]; Information foraging theory, Liu et al. [31]; IT affordance, Sun et al. [32]; Observational learning theory Zhang et al.[33]; Parasocial interaction theory Shen et al. [34]; Perceived value theory, Singh et al. [35]; Push-Pull mooring, Ye et al.[36]; Social identity theory, Qian and Seifried [37]; Social presence theory, Hou et al. [38]; Socio-technical system theory, Zhang et al. [39]; Speech act theory, Chen et al.[40]; Theory of reasoned action, Yu and Zhang [41]; Theory of telepresence, Ma et al. [42]; Uncertainty reduction theory, Hwang and Youn [43]; Utilization theory, Chen et al.[44]; Yale model and benefit-risk framework, Chen and Zhang [45]; Cognitive emotion theory, Alam et al. [46]; Media richness and media ritual theory, Zelenkauskaite and Loring-Albright, [47].		

2.2 Synthesis and Weight analysis of live streaming in social media

After reviewing various models and theories, this study determined to synthesize the factors that influence consumer purchase intention using live-streaming technology. This section narrows down the factors and performed weight analysis to determine relative importance of different factors. Weight analysis determine the inductive and predictive power of independent variables over the dependent variable [48]. This technique is useful for ranking variables to understand their relative importance and the strength of their relationships within the model [48]. According to Jeyaraj et al. [77], this analysis helps to evaluate the effectiveness of individual independent variables in predicting technology adoption by considering three crucial components:

"(a) the number of times an independent variable was examined in individual IT adoption; (b) the number of times an independent variable was found to be significant in individual IT adoption; (c) the weight, calculated by (b)/(c) for individual IT adoption (predictive power)" [77, p. 6].

This study summarized the most influential predictors of purchase intention, segregating them based on their significant and non-significant relationships. The weight analysis reported that perceived enjoyment, social presence, flow, social interaction, customer engagement, perceived value, usefulness, Swift Guanxi, personal innovativeness and Dynamic brand experience are the strongest predictor of purchase intention with analysis score "1". While trust found to be second strongest predictor with an analysis score of 0.80, supported by findings in ten studies. Conversely, uncertainty acted as a negative predictor, inhibiting consumer purchases through live streaming. Table 2 presents a comprehensive overview of the most used relationships in live streaming studies. And those factors are placed into the following three categories: Psychological factors, emotional and social factors, and product and experience factors. These factors can assist researchers in selecting appropriate variables to develop more suitable research models for future investigations.

Table 2: Weight analysis Summary for Behavioural/Purchase intention

IV	Sig	Citations	Non-Sig	Citations	Total	Weight
Trust	8	Chong et al. [49]; Chen et al. [50]; Chen and Yang [30]; Dong et al. [3]; Hou et al. [38]; Lu and Chen [19]; Park and Lin [51]; Zhang et al. [33]	2	Ma [52]; Rungruangjit [53]	10	0.80
Perceived Enjoyment	6	Gu et al. [54]; Liu et al. [31]; Ma [65]; Singh et al. [35]; Yin et al. [55]; Zhu et al. [56].	0		6	1
Uncertainty	6	Chen and Zhang [45]; Chou et al. [57]; Gao et al. [4]; Hwang and Youn [43]; Lu and Chen [19]; Ma [65]	0		6	1
Social presence	5	Chen et al. [2]; Gao et al. [4]; Hwang and Youn [43]; Hou et al. [38]; Wang and Oh [23]	0		5	1
Flow	4	Li and Peng [58]; Paraman et al. [29]; Zhao and Bacao [11]; Zheng et al. [12]	0		4	1
Social interaction	4	Gao et al. [13]; Hou et al. [38]; Shiu et al. [8]; Wang and Oh [23]	0		4	1
Customer engagement	4	Addo et al. [59]; Qin et al. [26]; Yu and Zheng [41]; Zheng et al. [60]	0		4	1
Perceived value	4	Chao et al. [61]; Li et al. [6]; Singh et al. [35]; Wang et al. [23]	0		4	1
Attitude	4	Chen and Lin [1]; Evans et al. [62]; Yu and Zheng [41]	1	Park and Lin [51]	5	0.8

Usefulness	3	Doanh et al. [63]; Qin et al. [26]; Zhu et al. [64]	0		3	1
Swift Guanxi	2	Lu et al. [16]; Zhang et al. [33]	0		2	1
Personal innovativeness	2	Singh et al. [35] Ye et al. [36]	0		2	1
Dynamic brand experience	2	Shiu et al. [8]; Wang et al. [21]	0		2	1
Perceived risk	1	He et al. [5]	1	Singh et al. [35]	2	0.5

2.2.1 Psychological Factors

Factors that influence individual behaviour including their adoption and engagement with technology such as social media or live streaming uses are consider as psychological factors [76]. Many studies have examined psychological determinants such as Enjoyment and innovativeness in live streaming platforms. As demonstrated by previous research [31, 35, 54, 65], Enjoyment significantly impacts consumers' likelihood to shop, when providing positive experiences during live streaming. Similarly, when consumers find innovativeness in live streaming, they are more likely to purchase products [35, 36]. Positive attitudes and perceptions towards products boost purchasing tendencies [1, 41, 62]. On the contrary, Park and Lin [51] explained that attitude has no significant influence on purchase decisions. Chao et al. [61] found that perceived value positively determined consumers buying decisions during live streaming. Trust is another psychological key construct that strongly influences consumers to adopt this technology. Trust in streamers, platforms, and products/brands, as validated by Chong et al. [49], Chen et al. [50], Chen and Yang [30], and Dong et al. [3], has been demonstrated to have a significant influence on consumer purchase decisions while using this technology. On the other hand, Ma [52] and Rungruangjit [53] found no significant influence on purchase intention. Usefulness, strongly linked to perceived practical benefits, is important in consumer decision-making, as highlighted by [26,63,64]

2.2.2 Emotional and Social Factors
The emotional spectrum intertwines with social dynamics. Emotional engagement, emotional trust, and perceived emotional value, evidenced by Gao et al. [4]; and Addo et al. [59]; Chao et al. [61]; significantly affects usage intentions. Emotional contentment and trust, arising from perceived emotional value, strongly influence purchase intentions. Social presence, as observed by Ma [65]; and Gao et al. [4] exerts a positive impact on purchase decisions. The sense of social connection during live-streaming sessions effectively steers consumers' purchasing choices.

2.2.3 Product and Experience Factors
Uncertainty within the product domain also plays a pivotal role [4,19, 43,45,65]. Hwang and Youn [43] illuminate that product uncertainty, encompassing aspects like product quality and fit, negatively affects the likelihood of consumer purchase through live streaming. Additional dimensions, such as background music and consumer memory, as elucidated by Zhang et al. [45], significantly influence purchase intention in the live-streaming

context. This intricate web of factors underscores the complex interplay between psychological, emotional, social, and product-related dimensions, shaping consumer decisions during live streaming sessions.

3. Limitations and future research of Live Streaming Studies

The literature review of live streaming studies also unfolded various limitations that required to be identified within the domain. These highly mentioned limitations are geographical constraints, factors analysis, overemphasis on purchase intention and methodological drawbacks. Shedding light on these limitations and providing future direction are necessary within the context of live streaming in social media studies so that, the future scholar can mitigate them.

3.1 Geographical constraints

An evident constraint in the landscape of live-streaming studies emerges from their pronounced concentration within the boundaries of China [78]. This geographical bias limits the transferability of findings across regions due to the divergent social and technological milieu [78]. The inherent global nature of live streaming contrasts with this singular focus, thus inadequately capturing a balance of consumer behaviour. Cultural disparities among countries further compound this limitation, necessitating future cross-cultural analyses to provide a more balanced understanding [50, 54]. To advance the field, expanding research efforts to emerging nations becomes paramount for refining the generalizability of research models and hypotheses [4]. This expansion holds promise for unravelling the intricate interaction between cultural nuances and impulse buying behaviour within the live-streaming context [38].

3.2 Variant in Factors

The limitation of factor analysis manifests in the sparse exploration of a comprehensive model that integrates multiple variables in live-streaming studies. Scholars recommend the inclusion of mediating variables such as flow and consumer experience to construct a more encompassing analytical framework [4]. Notably absent from some studies is the exploration of pivotal factors like social influence, which has the potential to significantly influence consumer behaviour [66]. Moreover, the role of "Experience" in live streaming contexts merits further investigation, as its impact on consumer behaviour remains understudied [4]. By delving into unique live streaming shopping factors, such as streamer influence and expertise, feature enhancement and innovativeness, researchers can glean richer insights into consumer motivations [4]. Addressing the socio-cultural dimensions in live streaming becomes imperative, as these differences play a substantial role in shaping consumer buying behaviour [38].

3.3 Overemphasis on Purchase Intention

A prevailing trend in live streaming studies revolves around an inordinate focus on examining consumer purchase intentions and behavioural intentions, thereby side-lining the exploration of actual behaviour. This imbalance overlooks the potential incongruity between intentions and actions [71], highlighting the need for research to shift its spotlight towards actual purchase behaviour [2]. The suggestion to investigate a broader spectrum of dimensions and perspectives that influence consumer behaviour is paramount, ensuring a more comprehensive

understanding of engagement and behaviour within the live streaming landscape [12]. Scrutinizing the real-world behaviour of consumers, rather than their intentions, adds depth to the comprehension of their engagement [4].

3.4 Methodological Drawbacks

Methodological choices also constitute a limitation within the live-streaming studies domain. Predominantly quantitative methods and validated questionnaires have been employed, potentially introducing biases rooted in memory recall [2]. In pursuit of richer insights, embracing qualitative and mixed method approaches and incorporating laboratory or field experiments emerges as an avenue to unravel the complexities of live-streaming technology [12]. Strengthening the study's external validity calls for the adoption of research models that can traverse diverse cultural landscapes [4].

4. Recommendation and Conclusion

Many technology adoption studies have previously explored consumer adoption, taking into account various dimensions of social media. Their objective is to develop a comprehensive model that enhances the consumer experience and establishes a sustainable system that can be easily implemented [67-73]. Similarly, this study conducted an extensive literature review to uncover various models and theories, as well as the factors that significantly influence live streaming on social media platforms. The SOR model emerged as the most widely adopted model in this research, while trust was the most frequently used construct in conjunction with purchase intention. However, a more holistic consumer adoption model needs to be investigated in this domain. Additionally, diffusion of innovation, perceived compatibility, perceived complexity, trialability, and risk perception are some factors might be adopted within live streaming future studies. The evaluation of past user experiences, including satisfaction, usability, and aesthetics, should also be considered in future research. The research also synthesized several limitations and outlined potential future directions in this domain. Notably, addressing geographical and methodological drawbacks, as well as highlighting the overemphasis on purchase intention, emerges as vital steps for future research to undertake. A critical limitation to note is that the majority of studies did not employ specific models to investigate consumer actual purchasing behaviour, rather they focused solely on purchase intention. Thus, forthcoming research should direct its efforts towards constructing more comprehensive models encompassing pertinent and influential factors that impact actual purchase behaviour within the live streaming context.

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