



Factors Affecting Consumers' Purchasing Behaviours in Live Streaming E-Commerce: A Review

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ABSTRACT

Live streaming e-commerce is a new shopping mode in recent years. It has taken off in a big way and become an indispensable part of online shopping among many consumers. Based on the current development status of live broadcast, this paper sorts out and summarizes the literature from four factors that affect consumers' purchase intention and behaviour in live broadcast e-commerce, namely price promotion, streaming media credibility, platform design and interactivity. aspect. The research results show that the attractiveness, credibility and professionalism of streamers have a positive impact on consumers' purchase intention and behaviour, and the design of e-commerce platforms can significantly affect consumers' shopping experience. Real-time interactions can enhance product trust. Finally, the paper provides possible inspiration for the improvement of live e-commerce.

Keywords: *Live streaming e-commerce; Price promotion; Streamers' credibility; Design of platforms; consumer behaviour.*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Research Background

The emergence of e-commerce makes people enthusiastic about online shopping. E-commerce is the process by which goods and services are purchased and sold online. It is developed through today's burgeoning online networking. E-commerce makes people's life more convenient, and best of all, it provides consumers with more choices. It reduces time and energy costs for consumers. Therefore, it has gained in popularity worldwide [1]. Live streaming "is a broadcasting practice that brings audio and video of real-time happenings to viewers over the internet". Its popular due to its authenticity. During a live streaming, there is no editing process, and streamers can have real-time interactions with viewers. It realizes a remote socialization. People share any of their comments, and receive responses in real time, which gives people a lot of enjoyment [2]. Nowadays, many social platforms have been developed for the public to provide live streaming service, such as TikTok, Facebook, etc. There is a wide variety of content to be broadcast, include online education, concert streaming, etc. Live streaming is becoming more and more popular in in various industries [3]. Social commerce, the process of selling and buying goods and

services directly on social media, is an important part in e-commerce. A new shopping method called live streaming e-commerce emerges, and quickly comes into fashion. In general, there are three kinds of platforms for live streaming e-commerce. The first one is e-commerce platform such as Taobao. These platforms are used for commercial activities. Combining with live streaming can help to facilitate selling. The second one is live streaming platforms, such as TikTok. The third one is social networking site, such as WeChat. These two platforms are based on social events. By integrating with commercial activities, sellers and consumers can conduct transactions on goods and services [4]. According to the 48th China Statistical Report on Internet Development, by the end of June 2021, the user size of live streaming in China had reached 638 million, accounting for 63.1% of the total Internet users. The Chinese user size of e-commerce live streaming had reached 384 million, an increase of 75.24 million year-on-year, accounting for 38.0% of the total Internet users [5]. Due to its convenience, interactivity and enjoyment, live streaming e-commerce has attracted more and more consumers.

1.2. Research Significance

The booming live streaming e-commerce promotes consumption. It has become an indispensable part of

online shopping among many consumers and influenced consumers' purchasing behaviours unconsciously. There is a considerable amount of literature focusing on the factors in live streaming e-commerce that impact consumers' purchasing intention and behaviour. So, this paper summarizes four representative factors from the existing literature. They are price promotion, streamers' credibility, design of platforms, and interactivity. These factors can stimulate consumption through different mechanisms. So, this paper can provide enlightenment to help flourish live streaming e-commerce in the future.

1.3. Paper organization

This paper is structured as follows. The first part is the introduction. It shows the motivation of this paper and introduces the emergence of live streaming e-commerce. Thereafter is the literature review. In this part, the four factors are discussed. Figure 1 below shows the overall structure of the literature summary. Finally, the paper summarizes key findings, possible inspirations for the improvements in live streaming e-commerce, recommendations for future studies and limitations of this study.

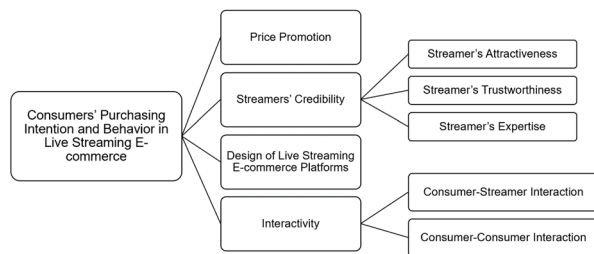


Figure 1 Structure of the Literature Summary

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Price Promotion

Price promotion is a marketing strategy commonly used in live streaming e-commerce. Consumers can buy the product at a lower price. In live streaming e-commerce, price promotion methods adopted by the sellers generally include discount, coupon, full reduction, cash return, time-limited low-price secs kill, additional gifts, etc. [6]. Price promotion plays an important role in consumers' purchase intention and behaviour. Consumers are price-sensitive. About 51% of users attribute their engagement in live streaming shopping to the lower prices, that is, price promotion. According to demand curve, there will be a consumer surplus when the price is lower than consumers' willingness to pay. Therefore, price production will inspire consumers to produce purchase intention and make purchases [6,7]. In hunger marketing mode under the e-commerce platform, promotional incentive could improve consumers' perceived value, which meant the price promotion make

the products more economical. Consumers trust the products and the live commerce e-commerce platforms more due to price promotion. Hence, they are likely to make impulse purchases [8]. Zhong et al. (2022) studied the purchase intention in live streaming shopping among college students. The results show that price discounts can not only increase collage students' trust to live streaming shopping, but can significantly improve their purchase intention. This was due to limited purchasing power among college students [9]. However, there are still researches show that price promotion will not promote consumers' purchase intention and buying behaviour. Hu and Chaudhry (2020) found that price promotion did not affect consumers' engagement because consumers cannot give evaluations to the products until they experience them. Moreover, there were many sellers provided price promotion. When promotion becomes so common, low prices will not be very attractive for consumers [10].

Price promotion in live streaming e-commerce is usually time limited, which has an influence on consumers' purchasing behavior. Time limitation can inspire consumers to make impulse purchases because they were afraid of losing the opportunity to make purchases at a lower price. The limited promotional period push consumers to take actions immediately [6]. Zhang et al. (2022) studied whether promotional time limit could positively influence consumers' perceived value to a product in the hunger marketing mode, which then urged consumers make purchases impulsively. The results showed that time limitation did not impact perceived value because of the increased frequency of live streaming e-commerce. Consumers could have more chances to buy the desired products, which weakened the effect of time limitation to consumers' perceived value to the products [8].

2.2 Streamers' Credibility

The celebrity endorsement is a marketing strategy to develop the brand recognition. It can also help the business to capture the target audience. Successful celebrity endorsement can not only effectively attract more consumers to make purchases, but also get potential consumers' attention [11]. Endorser credibility means whether the endorsers of the products are believable to the consumers. It can be measured by endorser's expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness [12]. In live streaming e-commerce, the streamers introduce and display the products to the viewers. They are the endorsers for the products. Therefore, streamers' credibility can impact consumer behavior. Song and Liu (2021) found that streamers' credibility could weaken consumers' perceived risk and increase consumers' purchase intention [13]. Researches also showed that each of the three dimensions – streamer's attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise – can affect consumers'

purchase intention and buying behaviour in live streaming shopping.

2.2.1. Streamer's Attractiveness

The streamer's attractiveness refers to the extent that viewers are drawn to the streamer. The streamer's attractiveness can be measured through not only the streamer's physical attractiveness like appearance and voice, but also other traits of the streamer such as personality, streaming style, specialties, and skills. An attractive streamer plays an important role in consumers' engagement in live streaming shopping and their purchasing decisions [13]. Xu et al. (2019) built an S-O-R model and found that streamer's attractiveness as a stimulus can strongly affect cognitive assimilation and emotional energy, which represent viewer's cognitive state and emotional states. Cognitive assimilation could promote hedonic consumption, and consumers are more willing to share their live streaming shopping experiences. Emotional energy had a significant impact on impulsive consumption, hedonic consumption, and social sharing behaviour [14]. Xu et al. (2020) improved their study by replacing emotional energy by arousal as the emotional state. Arousal referred to the extent to which the viewers feel engaged by the streamer. The results showed that streamer's attractiveness can positively influence viewer's cognitive and emotional states. People liked to engage in live streaming e-commerce because the streamer made consumers enjoy the entertainment process. Making purchase and sharing their experiences could make consumers excited, which was how streamer's attractiveness influence consumers' purchasing behavior [14,15]. Lee and Chen (2021) got the similar results [4]. Gao et al. (2021) observed that streamer attractiveness is positively related to consumers' perceived persuasiveness, which meant consumers developed a positive attitude toward the product endorsed by an attractive streamer, which increased purchase intention [16]. Hu (2021) observed that streamer's attractiveness met consumers' emotional needs, and increase their engagement [17].

2.2.2. Streamer's Trustworthiness

Streamer's trustworthiness refers to the degree of honesty, integrity, and believability of a streamer perceived by the viewers. If the consumers trust the streamers, then they will think that the products are worth buying. Therefore, high streamer's trustworthiness gives consumers a positive attitude toward the products and can increase consumers intention [13]. Park and Lin (2020) found that the trustworthiness of Wanghong, the streamer, could drive consumers' purchase intention [18]. Lu and Chen (2021) found that trust to streamers could not only reduce consumers' perceived product quality uncertainty and product fit uncertainty which negatively impact purchase intention, but also directly promote generating

purchase intention [19]. Gao et al. (2021) observed that streamer's trustworthiness is related to consumers' perceived persuasiveness, which increased consumers' willingness to buy [16].

2.2.3. Streamer's Expertise

Streamer's expertise means the extent to which the streamer understands the knowledge of the products. During live streaming, the streamers introduce and display the products to the viewers, which can let viewers learn more about the products. Then, viewers decide whether or not to make purchases. Thus, whether the streamers are knowledgeable to provide accurate information may have an impact on consumers' buying behaviour [20]. Hu and Chaudhry (2020) proposed structural bonds to represent streamer's professional knowledge about the products. The study indicated that structural bonds enhance consumers' affective commitment to streamers and the online marketplace. Also, it directly promotes consumers to engage in live streaming shopping [10]. Chen et al. (2020) suggested that the product knowledge of streamers perceived by consumers can significantly improve their trust to the streamers. This trust motivated consumers to pay more. However, there was not a significant relationship between trust in streamer and consumers' purchase intention. This may because consumers' purchase intention is increased by trust in streamers is through the improvement in consumers' trust in products [20]. Zhong et al. (2022) got the similar results with Chen et al. (2020) [9]. Lee and Chen (2021) found that streamer's expertise can positively affect consumers' perceived enjoyment which inspired impulse purchase [4].

2.3. Design of Live Streaming E-Commerce Platforms

Nowadays, consumers not only concern about whether they can buy stuff they need and want, but also pay attention to shopping experiences. In live streaming e-commerce, the easy-to-use design of live platforms can provide consumers a pleasurable shopping experience. That is, the design of live streaming shopping platforms can influence consumers' sensory experience, which influenced consumers' purchasing intention and behaviour in live streaming shopping [21]. A user-friendly exterior design of live streaming shopping platform was more attractive to consumers, which caused impulse buying behaviour directly. The exterior design could also inspire consumers buy impulsively through enhancing their self-efficacy, and psychological ownership. That is, the exterior design of platforms could give consumers a good impression on the streamers and products, which then increases consumers' willingness to make purchases [21]. Lee and Chen (2021) found that purchase convenience had positive impact on products' usefulness perceived by consumers which urge

consumers to buy impulsively. If consumers could make purchases easily on the platform interface, they are more likely to buy [4].

2.4 Interactivity

In traditional online shopping, consumers know the product details via browsing texts and images posted on e-commerce platforms. They communicate with the sellers via leaving text messages. It is possible for consumers not to receive a reply in time. Whereas, in live streaming e-commerce, consumers can have real-time interaction with the streamers and other viewers, which makes the shopping process more vivid. When watching the live streams, viewers ask questions and share feelings through sending screen bullets [22]. Thus, streamers can change their presentation immediately according to viewers' requests. The viewers' buying behaviour will be stimulated by the interactions with the streamer and other viewers. Sun et al. (2019) used the concept of metavoicing affordance to describe the interactivity in live streaming shopping. It provided consumers a sense of immersion and presence which then rise their purchase intention [23]. Hu and Chaudhry (2020) illustrated social bonds as the real-time interaction among members participated in live streaming. It can stimulate consumers' engagement directly or through positively influence consumers' affective commitment to the broadcaster. This meant interactivity improved consumer's emotions while watching live stream, thereby increased willingness to buy [10]. Song and Liu (2021) got the same result. But it cannot significantly influence the risks on the products perceived by consumers. This may be because consumers were doubtful about the integrity of product information provided by the streamers [13]. Zhang et al. (2022) observed that real-time comments sent by consumers can improve consumers' perceived value on the products because it reduced consumers' uncertainties toward products. But the comments did not make significant influence on consumers' perceived trust since it was difficult to capture meaningful information when the comments fast scrolling on the screen. It was difficult for consumers to identify the authenticity of comments due to the malicious comments from competitive businesses [8]. Zhang et al. (2022) studied whether the three determinants – active control, two-way communication, and synchronicity – of interactivity can inspire consumers make purchases again. They found that all the three can improve consumers' trust in streamers and products which promote customers' willingness to engage in live streaming shopping continuously [23]. Huang et al. (2021) indicated that interactivity shortened the temporal, social, and spatial psychological distance among viewers, which enhanced viewers' social presence, then enhanced their flow experiences and made purchases impulsively [24]. Ming et al. (2021) added that social presence of viewers can

also enhance consumers' trust to stimulate impulsive buying [25].

2.4.1. Consumer-Streamer Interaction

In live streaming e-commerce, streamers actively present the products from a variety of angles. For example, streamers sample the food products, and try on new clothes and cosmetics. Thus, consumers can have an intuitive evaluation to the products through streamer's verbal cues, facial expressions, and body languages. Consumers can also ask questions about the products via sending screen bullets. Then, the streamer provides further answers. The active online interactions between consumers and streamer during live streaming give consumers a sense of immersion and engagement. This feature makes live shopping more attractive and stimulates consumers' purchase intention and behavior in live e-commerce.

Xu et al. found that consumers' para-social interactions with streamers had a remarkable influence on their cognitive assimilation, emotional energy, and arousal in live streaming shopping, which means interactions with the streamers can change consumers' attitude and feeling while watching live streams, which triggers different purchasing behaviours in the live streaming e-commerce [14,15]. Sun (2020) suggested that high-frequency consumer-streamer interactions make consumers willing to engage in discussion in the shared chat rooms. Streamers also threw entertaining activities to continuously interact with consumers, which made consumers retain in live streaming chat rooms and make purchases [7]. Huang and Suo (2021) pointed out that consumer-streamer interaction effectively decreased consumers' preserved risk on the products and inspired impulsive buying behaviour [6]. Zhong et al. (2022) observed that trust could mediated the influence between consumer-streamer interaction and purchase intention [9]. Researchers put forward a concept of social presence of streamers to study how the consumer-streamer interactions impact purchasing intention and behavior. Social presence of streamers gave consumers a sense that they were having face-to-face interactions with the streamers. This may reduce product risk and increase affective intensity perceived by consumers [27]. Ming et al. (2021) proved that consumers' trust and flow state were strengthened by social presence of streamers, which then positively promote impulsive buying behaviour. With real-time interactions with streamers, viewers' concentration and shopping enjoyment could be improved, which prompted viewers' willingness to buy [25].

2.4.2. Consumer-Consumer Interaction

In live streaming shopping, viewers chat with each other, share their real-time feelings and any positive or

negative comments on the products by bullet screen. These comments are shown on the screen, and can be seen by other viewers. This creates interactions between consumers. These reviews do have some reference significance to help consumers make purchase decisions.

Huang and Suo (2021) proved that consumer-consumer interactions can reduce consumers' preserved risk on the products and directly prompt impulsive buying behaviour [6]. Gao et al. (2021) proved that co-viewer involvement enhanced consumers' perceived persuasiveness, and then increased purchase intention. A large number of viewers engaging in a live streaming left viewers a kind of impression that the streamers and the products they endorsed are reliable. However, bullet-screen consistency did not make huge impact. This may be because viewers pay more attention to streamers' performances than bullet screen comments. Moreover, consumers view product information from streamers more authentic [16]. Guo et al. (2021) indicated that consumers increased trust in products due to their trust in community members. Consumers trust the comments on products shared by community members, so they will be willing to engage in live streaming shopping [27]. Herd behaviour means that individuals in a group follow others' behaviours. It can occur in live streaming shopping. In order to reduce the risks of uncertainty, consumers may follow others' buying behaviour straightforward. In live streaming shopping, herd behaviour has a significant influence on consumers' purchase intention [28]. Fei et al. (2020) found that herding message made viewers pay more attention to those products purchased by large number of consumers. Consumers' herd mentality will prompt them to follow the buying behavior of others, thereby increasing their willingness to buy [29]. However, Li et al. (2021) got the different results. They observed that when a hot-selling product which was recognized by most consumers cannot promote consumers' impulse buying behavior. A possible reason was that consumers may focus more on the uniqueness of the product. Therefore, they will be more cautious when making purchases [30].

3. CONCLUSIONS

3.1 Conclusion of the Key Findings

Nowadays, online shopping has become part of everyday life for many people. With the continuous advancement of IT, live streaming e-commerce has taken off in a big way. From the existing studies, this paper summarized four factors that can affect consumers' purchasing intention and behaviour in live streaming e-commerce. The factors include price promotion, streamers' credibility, the design of live streaming e-commerce platforms, and interactivity. Price promotion has been shown to be a key factor because consumers are sensitive to prices. Streamers' credibility consists of three

dimensions: streamer's attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise. Studies have found that all the three have positive impact on consumers' purchasing intention and behaviour because they can change consumers' emotional state. When the streamers' credibility meets consumers' emotional needs, purchasing intention and impulsive buying behaviour is more likely to be generated. The design of live streaming e-commerce platforms can impact consumers' shopping experiences. If the design of platforms could provide a satisfactory shopping experience, consumers will be more willing to buy. Interactivity in live streaming shopping has been demonstrated to be a significant factor. In live streaming shopping, the real-time interactions between the streamer and consumers can provide a sense of immersion. This enhances consumers' affective commitment. Moreover, the real-time interactions increase consumers' trust about making purchases in live streaming e-commerce.

In the context of the rapid prosperity of live streaming e-commerce in recent years, this paper selected and organized several representative factors that can impact consumer behaviour in live streaming shopping. To promote its sustained boom, it is important for live streaming businesses to find out how to attract more consumers to engage in live streaming shopping. All the analysed factors in this paper can positively impact consumers' purchasing intention and buying behavior, which can provide live streaming e-commerce businesses inspiration to make improvements. Price promotions provide consumers a chance to get the goods at lower prices, which can not only encourage consumers to make purchases, but also induce potential consumers to produce purchase intention. In addition, a time-limited price promotion can be more attractive. Consumers are fearful about losing the access to discounts, so they may be more likely to buy impulsively. The frequency of providing time-limited price promotion should not be too high, or the consumers will not make purchases urgently to their decreased preserved risks of missing the chance to buy cheap.

Streamers' credibility is important. In live streaming e-commerce, the streamer is the voice of the products. A streamer of some renown is more attractive. So, consumers are more willing to listen to him talk about the products and make purchases. Live streaming e-commerce managers can invite idols and celebrities who have a large following for helping promote products. Furthermore, the streamers should have a comprehensive understanding of the products to make their introductions and recommendations more credible. When consumers trust the streamers, they will believe that the products are worth buying.

Live streaming marketers should make the design of live streaming e-commerce platforms more user-friendly. A pleasant shopping experience positively affects the emotional state of consumers, thereby increasing the

desire to buy. It may also make customers be willing to continuously engage in live streaming shopping in the future. The prosperity of live streaming e-commerce depends in large part on the real-time interactions between streamers and consumers. Therefore, streamers play a vital role in arousing the consumers' initiative. The streamers need to actively interact with consumers and respond quickly, which can provide consumers a sense of reality and presence. Interactions can also make consumers excited and happy. The positive emotions can stimulate consumers to make purchases. Interactions between consumers can be used as an auxiliary element to help provoke consumers' purchase intention and buying behaviour.

3.2 Future studies

This paper has some limitations. The results in most literature was produced by questionnaires. The sample size ranged from 200 to 500, which was generally small. Then, most consumers came from China. The survey scope can be expanded because people from different countries have different consumption concepts. Moreover, there might be difference between consuming intention and consumer behavior, which can be investigated.

Live streaming e-commerce is still developing. In the future, researchers can further investigate on other factors that can make influence on consumers' purchase intention and buying behavior in live streaming shopping. For example, consumers can be divided into different groups according to gender, age, income level, etc. to identify the most active consumer groups in live shopping. At the same time, the researchers need to categorize the products sold in broadcast room. Different group of consumers may have different shopping preferences and sensitivity to different influencing factors. Live streaming e-commerce marketers can find the best-selling categories of products and decide the target consumers for different products. Furthermore, researchers can study the situations of live streaming e-commerce on different platforms. Many researchers have focused on Taobao to survey the factors that impact consumers' behavior. The conditions of live streaming e-commerce on live streaming platforms and social networking site should also be studied. This may be helpful to expand the markets for live streaming e-commerce. Finally, against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a dramatic decrease in face-to-face social contact. Offline shopping can be replaced by the live streaming e-commerce. How to attract more consumers and create potential consumers to engage in live streaming shopping based on people's different consuming attitudes can be further studied.

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