

# Conceptualizing Online Impulse Buying of Celebrity-Owned Brands on Live Streaming Commerce

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**Abstract:** *Celebrity-owned brands have quickly become popular, but whether consumers are triggered to purchase their brands online is questionable. Meanwhile, traditional marketing methods are no longer able to meet the consumer's shopping needs and styles of these consumers. Subsequently, live streaming commerce has become one of the new business models adopted by celebrities to promote their products online in this new era due to its effectiveness. This paper explores the concept of online impulse buying. A comprehensive review and analysis of the literature suggest some unresolved issues regarding the state of knowledge on online impulse buying. In addition, the current conceptualizations of online impulse buying behaviour are still lacking in capturing this behaviour on the internet. Hence, this paper intends to review past literature and develop a conceptual framework based on Stimulus Response Theory (SR theory) that will identify and understand the factors leading to online impulse buying in live streaming commerce on celebrity-owned brands context. Therefore, we propose a broadened conceptualization to resolve those issues and accurately capture impulse buying that occurs physically in retail stores and on the Internet. The results of our exploratory study are consistent with our conceptualization and present a robust platform for future research.*

**Keywords:** SR theory, impulse buying, live streaming commerce, celebrity-owned brands

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## 1. Introduction

Businesses need to be as innovative as possible in building business model around digital technologies and platforms to keep up with consumer's buying trend. Marketers are now focusing on marketing 5.0 as the marketing industry has changed toward technology for humanity (Hermina, Rahma & Gusnia; 2022). According to Kotler, Kartajaya and Setiawan (2021), Marketing 5.0 is an evolved fundamental of marketing which includes combination of the application of human-mimicking technologies that helps in creating, communicating, delivering, and enhancing value of customer experience. In relation to the marketing 5.0, businesses were positively digitalizing to make up for the shortfall in the traditional styles and venture into digital technology (Digital News Asia, March 2021).

Due to the advancement of technology and marketing 5.0 factors the e-commerce industry consequently has been upgraded and there is an emergence of a new model of social commerce called live streaming commerce. In accordance with Lee and Chen (2021), live streaming commerce can be seen as the advancement of e-commerce which include real time social interaction in which the live streamer promotes or sell products on a certain live streaming

commerce platform and then provides shopping links in a short time. Furthermore, live streaming commerce is an innovative and latest business model that were adopted by businesses, celebrities, and influencers to sell and promote their products and services online (Leong, Meng, & Alex, 2022). According to Enberg (2021) via Cui, Liu, and Gu (2022) the traditional marketing methods can no longer meet consumer's current shopping needs and styles but e-commerce live streaming has, therefore, become the focus of merchant's marketing strategies now. According to Lee and Chen (2021), there are three types of live streaming commerce which firstly, took place in a live streaming commerce platform incorporating commercial activities like TikTok while secondly, on marketplaces such as Shopee and Lazada and thirdly, social networking sites like Facebook and Instagram. This study will focus specifically on live streaming commerce platforms only.

On the other hand, different from how the traditional television shopping works, live streaming commerce shares the same concept but it happens in real time to enhance customer experiences and have much greater engagement that is unique between the streamers and its viewers (Leong et al., 2022). This situation further influence and trigger the audience's impulse buying behavior online. In accordance with Cui et al. (2022), live streaming has become popular among various e-commerce models as an efficient way of marketing and sales since live streaming can stimulate consumer's impulse purchase by creating compelling experience.

Referring to Elango and Suryakumar (2022), celebrities take advantage of their popularity by engaging themselves not only as the owner but also as the endorser for their own business or brands with the financial and decision-making power. Most importantly, according to Jasmine A. L. Yeap (2022) celebrities are using their power and popularity by launching their own brands which further serve as a strategy to safeguard their brand names, identities and stand out in the congested entertainment industry. It is important for them to stay relevant in the industry and making people to always remember them as a celebrity. Not just that, the local celebrity-owned brands are also introduced with the intention of maximizing the celebrities fan bases and the positive attitude that consumers have towards everything connected to the celebrities.

## **2. Problem Statement**

Live streaming commerce has now been one of e-commerce strategies used as many businesses started to digitalize. This live streaming commerce such as on platforms like TikTok Live, Instagram Live, Facebook Live, Shopee Live and LazLive has been common sources and effective method for online shopping (Leong et al., 2022). The global pandemic has changed consumer buying behavior and trend as well as the way businesses conduct in the market (Leong et al., 2022). With that being said, due to the proliferation of live streaming commerce, there are evidence that online impulse buying is becoming an emerging phenomenon (Leong et al., 2022; Li, Wang, & Cao, 2022) and the latest trend of e-commerce and impulse buying is regarded as key factor (Lin, Tseng, Shirazi, Hajli, & Tsai, 2022). This is significant as several e-commerce digital technology and platforms in the world such as TikTok, Lazada and Shopee utilizes this feature very extensively these past few years and expected to further accelerate in growth (The Star, 2020).

Most crucially, along with the rise and success of digital technology celebrities have moved away from brand partnerships, endorsement and collaborations with large commercial brands and turned their hard-earned own popularity into businesses. However, despite the mainstream media has noticed this growing trend of celebrity-owned brands, academic studies have lagged

focusing on celebrity who do endorsements or partnership only rather than exploring the whole viability of this idea which is a celebrity-owned brands.

However, different consumers have different concerns doing transactions in live streaming commerce. In this research, the variables are chosen as key variables in influencing impulse buying on live streaming commerce since it is not yet fully tested and validated (Leong et al., 2022). This is also because consumer finds typical celebrities is not trustworthy (Lee & Chen, 2021; Schouten, Janssen, & Verspaget, 2020), not expert enough (Leong et al., 2022; Djafarova & Bowes, 2021) and not attractive (Leong et al., 2022 and Omnifluence Report, 2020). According to Lee and Chen (2021), trustworthiness affects consumer's value in the context of e-commerce, but some live streamers release false information such as transaction volumes, followers, online viewers, and number of likes to attract more consumer during the live streaming session took place in the platforms. In addition to that, consumer experienced disputes such as quality issues, fake goods, and problems after purchasing which further reduce consumer trust in purchasing on live streaming commerce. Moreover, in accordance with Lee and Chen (2021), attractiveness is a cognizable factor where celebrity can exert either positive or negative impacts on consumer's impression of the promoted brand very heavily based on their own attractiveness and personality alone. They must use their charm and skills to attract and present the product in the live streaming session as well as interact with consumers in real time but not all celebrity is able to do it. Moreover, since live streaming session lack information asymmetry, consumer is also more likely to positively interact, stimulate, engage, and continue watching celebrity streamers who are an expert in the session to trigger impulse buying (Leong et al., 2022).

To tackle the issue surrounding online impulse buying and celebrity-owned brands, previous studies by researchers have shown that impulse buying on live streaming commerce can increase sales of products and services. However, it is uncertain as to which factors may lead to escalate impulse buying in live streaming commerce. Stimulus Response (SR) theory is chosen and will be used throughout this study as it has been widely used for impulse buying studies and consumer behavior research by previous researchers. Via this study, the variable of the live streamer's attractiveness, expertise and trustworthiness will be adopted and tested whether they will affect online impulse buying in live streaming commerce platforms. Furthermore, the online impulse buying is adopted as a response to investigate the final impulse buying behavior (Leong et al., 2022; Lee & Chen, 2021; Chan et al., 2021).

### **3. Literature Review**

#### **Overview of Impulse Buying Behavior in Live Streaming Commerce**

A sudden, unplanned, and compelling consumer behavior that have limited deliberation of consideration of all available information and alternatives can be seen as impulse buying behavior (Lee & Chen, 2021). In addition to that, it is a sudden online purchase that happened on the spot without any prior plan that occur because of exposure to a stimulus to satisfy an individual self needs (Jayapal, Omar & Haron, 2017; Chein, Hui, & Lee, 2020). Impulse buying behavior of a consumer is driven by their emotions, spontaneous behavior, or low cognitive control in which this behavior is further triggered by appealing objects in the live stream sessions without considering financial, information or other aspects (Lee & Chen, 2021; Chan, Cheung, & Lee, 2017). Meanwhile, according to Akram, Khan, Hui, Tanveer and Akram (2018) on the other hand reported that online buyers are more impulsive when shopping compared to offline buyers.

Impulse buying is one of the most important topics to be studied now in consumer behavior studies now especially with the increased advancement of technologies on these platforms now. This study is important as a comprehensive information of attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness as key factors or variables in influencing consumer's impulse buying via live streaming commerce.

### **Attractiveness**

Attractiveness can be defined as the appearance of the celebrity's beauty or elegance physically as well as their manners and etiquette that the celebrity has developed as a credible source that attracts and maintain the attention of their followers and fans (Lee & Chen, 2021; Ramirez & Merunka, 2021). Earlier study by Ohanian (1990) refers attractiveness consisting of a component of attractive or unattractive, classy, or not classy, beautiful, or ugly and elegant or plain that are possessed by an individual. Although attractiveness often associated with physical attraction, it is more than that where it includes characteristics such as lifestyle or competencies of the celebrity (Erdogan, 1999; Oyeniya, 2014; Silvera & Austad, 2004).

Leong et al. (2022) refer attractiveness as to how audience perceive the appearance, personality, and talent of a celebrity during a live stream session. Zhu, Amelina, and Yen (2020) mentioned that attractiveness helps to enhance persuasion process based on likeability, similarity to target audience as followers are likely to make judgement based on the attractiveness of the celebrity. The more attractive the celebrity, the more they will find the brand to be worthy to be impulsively purchased. Leong et al. (2022) also showed that the attractiveness is formed by the streamer's familiarity with the products sold, physical appearances, likability, and similarity with the audience. Leong et al. (2022) added that live stream operators and vendors should consider the attractiveness of celebrity in their main promotional strategy as this would lead to higher chance in impulse buying of the product sold.

Attractiveness has been studied before using SR model previous researchers. Leong et al. (2022) confirmed that attractiveness of a live streamer has a significant association with consumer's enjoyment which in turn influence and improve the audience's impressions of the promoted brands thus leads to live streaming commerce impulse buying. This is also supported by Lee and Chen (2021) that studied on Chinese consumer context also confirmed that attractiveness of live streamer has a significant influence on the audience's enjoyment in live streaming commerce which left good impression among the audience which consequently turned into impulse purchases. These studies found that, attractiveness significantly affect consumer's behavior in online settings.

### **Expertise**

Expertise can be defined as the level of capacity the sources must make legitimate affirmations (McCracken, 1989). Meanwhile, Ohanian (1990) defined expertise as a capability to be an expert or non-expert, knowledgeable or not knowledgeable, qualified, or not qualified, and skilled or not skilled as viewed by audience or consumer. On the other hand, Shimp (2000) in earlier study defined expertise as the knowledge, experiences they possessed or skills to the topic which in this case to their brand endorsed. In a more recent studies, expertise is the extent to which the celebrity is perceived and seen by audience as someone who have a high level of knowledge, understanding, experience, status, accomplishment, and skill that can be a stimulus for consumers and the ability to make correct assertions (Leong et al., 2022; Lee & Chen, 2021; Zhu et al., 2020). Ramirez and Merunka (2021) also have defined expertise as the extent to which the celebrity is perceived as a skillful and have considerable amount of knowledge

which affects the truthfulness of the message they convey while doing live streaming sessions in the platforms.

Meanwhile, Zhu et al. (2020) linked expertise to a perceived knowledge that were possessed by people to make a truthful and correct assertions where in this case refers to the expertise of the celebrity themselves to promote their own brands. This is also consistent with Erdogan (1990) claim in which the celebrity expertise is the source of validator certification for consumers during shopping activities and decision making. Leong et al. (2022) reported that a streamer who is an expert in the field and have excellent robust knowledge on it can stimulate more engagement with the audience especially their followers and fans. In addition, the expertise of celebrity is vital to be considered when devising promotional strategies as it can lead to higher number of impulses buying of products by consumers (Leong et al., 2022).

The audience will be delighted, engaged, and have a fun moment when the streamer has brand knowledge and were able to convey information effectively and true. Previous studies also found that expertise help to increase the audience's awareness, experience as well as reducing the information gap on the brand but on the other hand also able to develop interpersonal relationship (Leong et al., 2022).

### **Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness is the situation where consumer saw a celebrity to be believable and honest which affected how audience view the brand they promote. Trust refers to celebrity's honesty, integrity (Erdogan, 1999), dependable, reliable as well as their sincerity (Ohanian, 1990; Rajeshkanna & Inbalaskshmi, 2016). Customer desire that this element of credibility to be heavily possessed by celebrities (Ahmed et al., 2014; Saleem, 2017) compared to expertise and attractiveness when promoting their brands. Meanwhile, Shimp (2000) in earlier study defined trustworthiness as the level of honesty and believability possessed by celebrities. In a more recent context, trustworthiness can be defined as a situational factor in which it is reflecting as the level of confidence in the celebrity's claims regarding their own brand without any bias which related to level of honesty as well as integrity as believed by consumers after eliminating complexity and uncertainty (Lee & Chen, 2021; Zhu et al., 2020; Ramirez & Merunka, 2021).

In relation to this, there are five sub point to measure the level of trust as guided by Ohanian Model which includes dependability, reliability, honesty, sincerity and finally trustworthy. Previous study of Zhu and Chen (2012) via Zhu et al., (2020) suggested that trust gives consumer the confidence when purchasing online which removes the process of information searching or validation prior making a purchase thus making it easier for consumer to purchase brands impulsively without prior plan. This help to reduce the complexity or uncertainty in impulse buying as they have the level of trust on the celebrity.

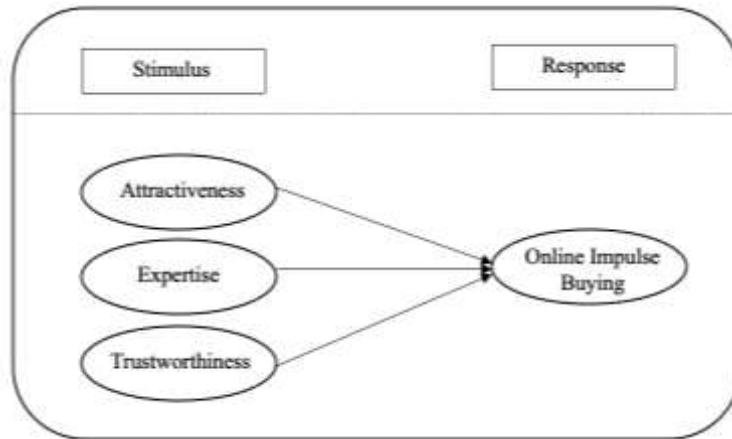
Several studies previously have found that customer trust have influenced the consumer themselves to highly value the products that are being promoted by celebrities (Nyamakanga, Ford & Viljoen, 2019). However, there was also arguments from previous researchers such as in Ohanian (1990) that shared no significant effect of trustworthiness on consumer's evaluation towards the brand (Nyamakanga et al., 2019).

### **Stimulus-Response (SR) Theory**

The underlying theory for this study is SR theory. SR theory studied by Woodworth (1929) are made up of two components, which are stimulus (S) and response (R). Stimulus can be seen as a factor in external environment that switch or influences an individual feelings such as their



emotions and desires. In live streaming, stimulus act as an influence that awaken the audience’s reaction. In this study, the stimulus will be represented by attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness. The response part of this theory can be defined as the final decision taken by an individual that are based on cognitive and affective states because of the stimulus. In this study, the online impulse buying will be the response outcome by the consumers.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

#### **4. Methodology**

This study target population will be consumers who have experience in purchasing products online via any live streaming commerce platforms. A quantitative approach will be employed, and convenience sampling will be used to conduct this research since the target respondents are large. A self-administered questionnaire which is Google Form will be used to distribute the questionnaire. The questionnaire will consist of sections which are screening questions, demographic questions, and the measurement items. The actual data to be collected will then be analyzed using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) to obtain results due to the nature of the study (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2013).

#### **5. Conclusion**

The purpose of this study is to identify the effect of attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness towards the impulsive buying of celebrity-owned brands in live streaming commerce context. More specifically, this conceptual framework is designed to identify which of the dimensions are the key variables to influence consumer’s online impulse buying on live streaming commerce in purchasing celebrity-owned brands. This conceptual paper will help to contribute to understanding SR theory via live streaming commerce context, the existing literature, knowledge and for the purpose of future research. This research could also help live streamers and celebrities to understand consumer’s impulse buying behavior on live streaming commerce.

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