

THE IMPACTS OF LIVE BROADCASTING ON PURCHASE INTENTION THROUGH PERCEIVED VALUE AND CUSTOMER TRUST: CASE OF BEAUTY PRODUCTS IN TAOBAO LIVE PLATFORM IN NANJING, CHINA

Yu Niu^{1*}, Akaraphun Ratasuk², and Phichitphol Sitthipo³

^{1,2} Faculty of International College, Panyapiwat Institute of Management

³ Faculty of Business and Technology, Stamford International University

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Abstract

Based on the comprehensive SOR model, this study leaves no stone unturned, exploring the effects of content quality, promotion, visibility, interactivity, authenticity, and entertainment on consumer purchase intentions through perceived value and trust of beauty product customers in Taobao live broadcast in Nanjing, China. Our self-administrative questionnaires were designed to gather survey data from 529 customers, representing a response ratio of 96.20%. The PLS-SEM findings revealed a comprehensive understanding of the factors at play. For instance, promotion, interactivity, authenticity, and entertainment were found to positively and directly affect perceived value. On the other hand, the analysis revealed that authenticity and entertainment significantly positively affected customer trust, with authenticity showing a more substantial influence. Also, purchase intention was positively impacted by perceived value and trust. Moreover, the mediating effects of the Sobel test indicated positive mediations of trust between both authenticity and entertainment and purchase intention. Perceived value mediates the relationship between promotion, interactivity, authenticity, and entertainment and purchase intention. The study contributes novel insights into the factors influencing purchase intention and highlights the significance of perceived value and trust in driving such intentions. Moreover, it expands the existing literature by proposing an extended SOR model that can be applied in future studies exploring e-commerce live broadcasting. Lastly, we provide comprehensive guidelines for business owners, managers, and marketers to improve and refine marketing strategies for sustainable business success.

Keywords: SOR Model, Purchase Intention, E-Commerce Live Broadcasting, Customer Trust, Perceived Value

*Corresponding Author

E-mail: 6562100046@stu.pim.ac.th

Introduction

In the current era of widespread high-speed internet access, many products and services have become readily available to consumers via online shopping platforms, reducing the need for physical store visits (Wei et al., 2021). As a leader in global e-commerce, China's e-commerce evolution offers enhanced convenience, significantly improving living standards and life quality (Ma et al., 2022). CNNIC (2023) reported that China's Internet users reached 1,051 million in 2022, with a 74.4% penetration rate. The online shopping user base grew to 884 million, reflecting a significant increase in internet traffic, which has led to the rise of live-streaming e-commerce in China.

Due to the progressive advancement of digital technologies, innovative e-commerce business strategies like live streaming have emerged (Feng & Lu, 2020). Since 2015, online retailers have been using live streaming as a creative approach to engage with customers and maintain their competitiveness (Zhang et al., 2020). According to a report by CNNIC (2023), from 2015 to 2022, China was ranked first in the world market for seven consecutive years for live-streaming market value and is anticipated to be crucial in fostering new advancements (Qing & Jin, 2022). E-commerce live-streaming provides customers with a novel and interactive shopping experience while creating an innovative way for sellers and buyers to communicate (Huang & Suo, 2021). This has changed consumer purchasing behavior from acquiring information on

products and services, from reading reviews to watching and interacting with live-streamers (Dong et al., 2022; Ratasuk, 2019).

Positioned as a consumer-oriented live-streaming platform, Taobao Live has accumulated over ten million users since its launch in 2016 (Kit-fong et al., 2022). During the pandemic, the popularity of Taobao Live significantly increased, and it has become one of the most popular e-commerce platforms in China (Liu & Zhang, 2024). According to a financial report by Alibaba (2022), Taobao Live has conducted around 1.2 billion live broadcasts, garnering a total viewership of nearly 1.1 trillion, with the Gross Merchandise Volume (GMV) generated from live streaming surpassing 3.5 trillion yuan.

Among various products and services on Taobao Live, beauty is a top-selling category since women are their majority customers, accounting for about 80% of all users, according to Yin and Areeprayolkij (2024). Consequently, many emerging beauty product enterprises and merchants have been drawn to the live-streaming market, leading to intense rivalry (Peng et al., 2023). Therefore, knowing and understanding factors concerning live-streaming that can promote consumer purchase intentions is crucial for beauty product businesses and sellers in a live-broadcasting platform, particularly in Taobao Live (Rungruangjit, 2022).

Of all China's cities, Nanjing is one of the first cities in the country to offer e-commerce demonstrations, playing a leading role in the live streaming of

beauty products (Cai et al., 2022; Si, 2021; Zhang Wen Yao, 2023). Thus, it has been selected for this study.

Therefore, referring to the literature, content quality, promotion, visibility, interactivity, authenticity, and entertainment are proposed as predictors of customer purchase intentions in this study (Qin et al., 2023; Yan, 2022; Zhou & Huang, 2023) and perceived value and customer trust as the mechanism based on the Stimulus Organism Response (SOR) model (Guo et al., 2021; Li et al., 2023; Yu & Zheng, 2022; Zhang et al., 2023).

Although e-commerce studies have demonstrated the impact of content quality, promotion, visibility, interactivity, authenticity, and entertainment on customer purchase intentions, their indirect influence through perceived value and trust, based on the SOR model has not been explored, especially in the context of Taobao Live's beauty product live streaming in Nanjing (Guo et al., 2021; Jingga & Santoso, 2024; Li et al., 2023; Yu & Zheng, 2022; Zhang, 2023).

Therefore, this study aimed to predict the impacts of content quality, promotion, visibility, interactivity, authenticity, and entertainment on consumer purchase intentions through perceived value and trust in Taobao's live-streaming of beauty products. This study's results were expected to enrich the existing literature on purchase intention, customer trust, perceived value, and related factors by expanding the SOR model. Furthermore, this research should offer practical guidelines for beauty product

business owners and marketers to enhance and innovate their online and e-commerce marketing strategies.

Literature Review

This study investigates the marketing factors influencing purchase intention through perceived value and trust, including content quality, promotion, visibility, interactivity, authenticity, and entertainment.

Content Quality

In live e-commerce, the content quality of a product encompasses an all-inclusive evaluation of its attributes, brand image, and additional information associated with the item being offered for sale (Apasrawirote & Yawised, 2022; Xu et al., 2020). In collaboration with influencers, content streamed online significantly enhances brand recognition and corporate information dissemination, thereby increasing online consumers' satisfaction and purchase intention (Dabbous & Barakat, 2020; Kim et al., 2020).

Promotion

Promotion in this research refers to promotional activities during live streaming, such as price reductions, giveaways, flash sales, raffles, money-back offers, and vouchers, among others, aimed solely at the live-stream audience (Tran, 2022; Wang et al., 2024). For most E-commerce broadcasts, promotional activities are a critical lure for viewers to engage in live streams and learn about new products (Wongsunopparat & Deng, 2021). Numerous studies have investigated promotion as a determinant of multiple

business results, including repurchase intention, brand identity, and other factors (Ratasuk, 2022a; Ratasuk & Buranasompob, 2021). For example, Lim and Guzmán (2022) explored how promotion impacts brand equity.

The Visibility of Live-streaming

The ability to “Vision” is a prevalent method for humans to gather data, with the processing of visual data benefiting from its rapidity, extensive capacity, and concurrent operations (Huang et al., 2024; Su et al., 2020). Liu et al. (2013) suggested that visual marketing stimulates consumer demand by providing a visual impact that, in turn, encourages them to develop a willingness to purchase. Harianto and Berlianto (2022) analyzed how visibility influences repurchase intentions in the context of online food delivery services.

The Interactivity of Live-streaming

The interactivity of live streaming is defined by the richness and scope of the two-way conversation between streamers and viewers (Kang et al., 2021; Peng et al., 2024). The lively exchange between hosts and audience members can influence the audience’s mental and emotional conditions, enhancing their confidence in the host and, as a result, impacting their purchasing choices (Wang & Liu, 2022). Kang et al. (2021) explored how interactivity dynamically influences consumer engagement behaviors.

The Authenticity of Live-streaming

Consumers’ assessment of the accuracy of presented product information defines the authenticity of live streams (Liu et al., 2022; Yao et al., 2024). During live sales events in

e-commerce, the presenter offers an in-depth showcase of the items, ensuring that consumers receive a complete presentation (Li et al., 2021). Such a presentation style, distinguished by its precise details and vivid imagery, allows viewers to engage more deeply in the live stream (Zhang et al., 2021). Sun et al. (2022) explored how authenticity affects Chinese consumers’ purchasing behaviors during live streams.

The Entertainment of Live-streaming

Viewers’ enjoyment during a live stream is the main indicator of its entertainment value (Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020; Yao et al., 2024). During the viewing process, consumer participation in purchasing is more about relaxation breaks and fun (Wang et al., 2020). When streamers attract consumers, their focus is intensely sharpened, which can easily lead to buying behavior (Cao et al., 2022). Lv et al. (2022) demonstrated that entertainment positively influences spontaneous purchasing and sustains the interest in continued viewing.

Perceived Value

In a live e-commerce setting, perceived value is defined as the product’s value and the positive emotional reactions it elicits from consumers, as described by Lakhan et al. (2021). Through live broadcasting, the product is presented directly to the consumer, saving time and allowing the consumer to perceive the value of the product (Zhang, 2023). The significance of consumer-perceived value for enterprises has generated widespread interest, and the impact of perceived value in-home

delivery service on customer satisfaction was examined by Uzir et al. (2021).

Trust

Trust is defined as an individual's perception that others will perform according to their expectations (Ratasuk, 2024). In this study, trust is defined by consumer confidence either in the streamer or in the products featured during the live broadcast, attributed to prolonged exposure to the broadcast, the streamer's competence, or the brand image of the merchant (Liu et al., 2022). Within e-commerce live streaming, trust alleviates consumers' perceived risks and doubts regarding the streamer and their products, thus fostering greater engagement in online purchases (Liu et al., 2020). Chen et al. (2022) discovered the impact of customer trust on customer engagement and loyalty.

Purchase Intention

Purchase intention refers to the degree of consumers' willingness to buy the beauty products in the live broadcast because of the quality of the product content, promotion, or the live broadcast features (Tiwari et al., 2024). Sheth et al. (1991) described purchase intention as an intangible conviction that acts as an objective during the consumer's decision to select products. Businesses can ascertain consumer purchase intentions, predict market trends, and stimulate buying decisions by delivering diverse experiences and insights on products and services that meet consumer demands (Qing & Jin, 2022).

SOR Model

The Stimulus Organism Response (SOR) model, proposed by (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974), explains how the environment influences a person's mental activity and behavior (Chen & Yue, 2023). Later, scholars have widely used the SOR model to explain how individuals, through the mediation of their cognition and emotion, regulate or tend to behave according to certain features of the environment in which they live (Karim et al., 2021). Employing the SOR theoretical foundation, Liu et al. (2022) examined the influence of tourism e-commerce live-streaming characteristics on consumer purchase intentions, emphasizing users' engagement experiences and trust within the SOR model.

Hypothesis Development

Within the framework of live-streaming, the SOR theory illuminates how factors like content quality, promotion, visibility, interactivity, authenticity, and entertainment act as stimuli that influence consumer behavior through the mediating roles of perceived value and trust.

High-quality content is engaging, informative, and visually appealing, establishing credibility and values (Zhang et al., 2022). For example, Oktaviani et al. (2024) found that content quality has an indirect impact on purchase intention through perceived value and trust of customers at a leading women's fashion brand in Indonesia on TikTok.

Effective promotion enhances brand awareness and communicates value propositions (Apasrawirote & Yawised, 2022). When consumers encounter promotional content, it can create a sense of urgency and relevance (Pongratte et al., 2023). This exposure fosters trust and raises perceived value, as consumers feel informed and engaged, leading to a higher likelihood of purchase (Tran, 2022). A study by Apasrawirote and Yawised (2022) revealed that promotion, as part of the marketing mix can directly impact purchase intention through perceived value.

Increased visibility, whether through social media presence, search engine rankings, or offline presence, boosts brand recognition (Sun et al., 2022). When consumers frequently see a brand, it reinforces its legitimacy and builds trust (Zhang et al., 2022). This enhanced trust, coupled with higher perceived value from consistent exposure, can drive purchase intentions (Lakhan et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2022; Wu & Huang, 2023). Koban et al. (2023) found visibility, as a feature of live streaming, can promote purchase intention through perceived value and trust in the fashion business during COVID-19.

Interactive content, such as polls, quizzes, and live Q&A sessions, engages consumers directly (Tran, 2022). This two-way communication fosters a sense of connection and involvement, enhancing trust and making them feel more engaged (Liu et al., 2021, 2022).

Their perceived brand value increases, making them more likely to purchase (Yu & Zheng, 2022). Chen et al. (2022) revealed that the interactiveness of live streamers can foster the purchase intention of Taobao Live users by building good relationships.

Authentic content resonates with consumers personally (Ahmad et al., 2023). Brands that communicate transparently and share genuine stories build trust among their audience (Yu & Zheng, 2022). This authenticity elevates perceived value, as consumers view the brand as relatable and trustworthy, increasing their likelihood of purchasing (Chen et al., 2020). Liu et al. (2022) found that the authenticity of live streamers can significantly impact purchase intention directly and indirectly through trust.

Entertaining content captures attention and creates positive emotional associations with the brand. When consumers enjoy content, they are more likely to perceive it as valuable (Li et al., 2024). This enjoyment fosters trust, as consumers associate the brand with positive experiences, which can significantly influence their purchase decisions (Lakhan et al., 2021). Lakhan et al. (2021) found positive mediating effects of perceived value and trust between entertaining and purchase intention, based on the SOR model, in e-commerce platforms in Pakistan. Therefore, the following hypotheses were proposed and listed in Table 1 and shown in Figure 1.

Table 1 Proposed Hypotheses

Hypotheses

- H1 Perceived value mediates the relationship between content quality and purchase intention.
- H2 Perceived value mediates the link between promotion and purchase intention.
- H3 Perceived value mediates between visibility and purchase intention.
- H4 Perceived value mediates between interactivity and purchase intention.
- H5 Perceived value mediates the relationship between authenticity and purchase intention.
- H6 Perceived value mediates the link between entertainment and purchase intention.
- H7 Trust acts as a mediator in the relationship between content quality and purchase intention.
- H8 Trust serves as a mediator in the relationship between promotion and purchase intention.
- H9 Trust mediates between visibility and purchase intention.
- H10 Trust mediates the link between interactivity and purchase intention.
- H11 Trust acts as a mediator in the relationship between authenticity and purchase intention.
- H12 Trust serves as a mediator in the relationship between entertainment and purchase intention.

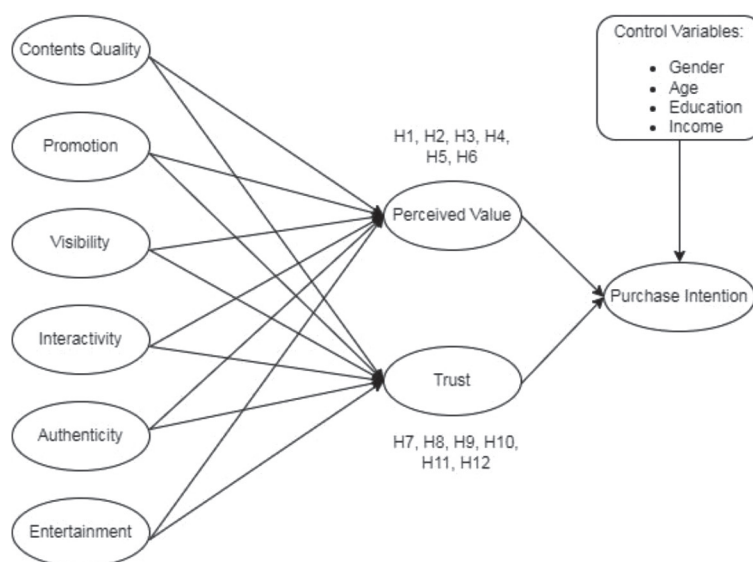


Figure 1 Conceptual Model

Methodology

This study focused on Taobao Live beauty product customers living in Nanjing, China.

Sample and Data Collection Procedure

The population of interest of this study is beauty product consumers in Taobao Live living in Nanjing, China whose number is considered unknown. Thus, the samples were 18-year-old and older Taobao Live beauty product consumers living in Nanjing, China, selected using stratified purposive sampling to ensure a good representation of the samples to the population (Iliyasu & Etikan, 2021). Fifty respondents from each of the 11 districts were selected, a total of 550 participants, to ensure the sufficiency of the final data (Cochran, 1977). They were invited to participate voluntarily through online community groups in Taobao Live using self-administered questionnaires, including demographics, behaviors, and scales measuring the variables, for data collection

Measurements

Content quality was measured using a four-item scale adapted from Mathwick et al. (2001). Promotion was measured using a four-item scale adapted from Dittmar et al. (1995). Visibility was measured using a four-item scale adapted from Liu et al. (2013). Interactivity was measured using a four-item scale adapted from Flanagin and Bator (2010). Authenticity was measured using a four-item scale adapted from Beverland et al. (2008). Entertainment was measured using a four-item scale adapted from (Chen & Lin, 2018).

Perceived value was measured using a four-item scale adapted from Davis (1989). Trust was measured using a four-item scale adapted from 2 related studies (Chang & Chen, 2008; Ratasuk & Gajesanand, 2023). Lastly, purchase intention was measured using a four-item scale adapted from 2 related studies (Ratasuk, 2023a; Wang et al., 2021). All scales have been validated and proven reliable (Ratasuk, 2022b, 2023b). The questionnaire utilized a Five-point Likert scale, from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Data Analysis

Partial Least Squares Structural Equation modeling (PLS-SEM) and the Sobel test were employed to predict and analyze the proposed hypotheses, focusing on the indirect effects of this complex research model (Lin et al., 2020). PLS-SEM can demonstrate greater flexibility in handling non-normally distributed data, which is often experienced (Ratasuk & Gajesanand, 2020). WarpPLS 8.0 was chosen as it is the latest version, capable of delivering more accurate results (Ratasuk, 2023b).

The university research ethics committee has approved this study and granted it the following reference number: PIM-REC 006/2567

Results

529 Taobao beauty product customers responded to the survey, representing a response ratio of 96.20%. Most respondents were female (365), accounting for 69%, and the rest 164 were males, representing 31%. Most respondents (286), or 54.1%, were between 18-25 years old, followed by 111

respondents, or 21%, were between 26-30 years old. One hundred thirty-seven respondents earned between 4,001 to 6,000 RMB per month. Respondents with a bachelor's degree constituted 77.86%, whereas those holding a master's degree represented 17.25%. Two hundred nineteen respondents are students, representing 41.49%, and 101 respondents work in private organizations, accounting for 19.11%.

The reliability and convergent validity analysis results are detailed in Table 2. The Cronbach's alpha for all variables should exceed 0.7, indicating that both the data acquisition tool and the collected data are reliable (McNeish, 2018). Full collinearity

tests were performed to test multicollinearity among the variables and Common Method Bias (CMB). Kock (2015) suggested that the full Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) should be below 3.3. Therefore, the model has no serious multicollinearity issue and is free from CMB.

All factor loadings should not be lower than 0.5 (Cheung et al., 2023)

The Composite Reliability (CR) of all constructs is recommended to be higher than 0.7 to be recognized as satisfaction, and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of all constructs be more significant than 0.5, indicating less error remains (Hair Jr et al., 2020). Therefore, the convergent validity of the data is satisfactory.

Table 2 Convergent Validity and Reliability Analysis

Construct	Items	Factor Loadings	CR	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE	VIF
Contents Quality (CQ)	CQ1 The introduction of beauty products in the Taobao live room is very detailed.	0.832	0.892	0.839	0.675	2.961
	CQ2 With a detailed presentation, I will feel good about the beauty products in the live room.	0.837				
	CQ3 The more detailed the introduction of the beauty products, the more quality, and superiority of the feeling.	0.796				
	CQ4 I will want to buy it when I see the detailed beauty product introduction in the Taobao live broadcasting room.	0.819				

Table 2 Convergent Validity and Reliability Analysis (Cont.)

Construct	Items	Factor Loadings	CR	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE	VIF
Promotion (PM)	PM1 There are more promotional options for beauty products in Taobao Live, including but not limited to full discounts, discounts, and seconds.	0.810	0.892	0.838	0.673	3.057
	PM2 I find better prices on beauty products in the Taobao live streaming room.	0.781				
	PM3 I will want to buy them when I see beauty products discounted in the Taobao live streaming room.	0.849				
	PM4 The more extensive the discount, the more likely it is that I will have a desire to buy.	0.840				
Visibility (VB)	VB1 The visual presentation of the Taobao live room is more appealing to me.	0.815	0.909	0.867	0.715	2.986
	VB2 The video presentation mode of the Taobao live room is more conducive to my understanding of beauty product information.	0.849				
	VB3 Taobao Live will clearly show the appearance of beauty products.	0.855				
	VB4 Taobao Live will demonstrate the use of beauty products.	0.863				
Interactivity (IA)	IA1 The visual presentation of the Taobao live room is more appealing to me.	0.856	0.892	0.839	0.675	2.860
	IA2 The video presentation mode of the Taobao live room is more conducive to my understanding of beauty product information.	0.828				
	IA3 Taobao Live will clearly show the appearance of beauty products.	0.819				
	IA4 Taobao Live will demonstrate the use of beauty products.	0.781				

Table 2 Convergent Validity and Reliability Analysis (Cont.)

Construct	Items	Factor Loadings	CR	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE	VIF
Authenticity (AT)	AT1 During the live broadcast, the anchor showed the beauty products from many aspects.	0.805	0.884	0.824	0.658	2.658
	AT2 During the live broadcast, the anchor did not make false propaganda about beauty products.	0.701				
	AT3 I learned more about the quality and efficacy of beauty products through the anchor's explanation.	0.866				
	AT4 The anchor's trial of the beauty products deepened my understanding of the products.	0.861				
Entertainment (ET)	ET1 Watching Taobao live streaming can make me feel engaged, happy, and satisfied.	0.898	0.925	0.878	0.803	2.922
	ET2 The interactive content of the Taobao live broadcast will make me feel relaxed and happy.	0.892				
	ET3 Watching Taobao live streaming allows me to feel companionship that breaks through space.	0.900				
Perceived Value (PV)	PV1 I think the quality of the beauty products I would buy on Taobao Live is worth the money.	0.864	0.930	0.906	0.726	3.064
	PV2 The beauty products I would buy on Taobao Live would meet my usage needs.	0.840				
	PV3 I can buy the beauty products I want to buy after watching Taobao Live.	0.850				
	PV4 Buying beauty products in Taobao Live is attractive to me.	0.862				
	PV5 Buying beauty products in Taobao Live makes me feel relaxed and happy.	0.845				

Table 2 Convergent Validity and Reliability Analysis (Cont.)

Construct	Items	Factor Loadings	CR	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE	VIF
Trust (TU)	TU1 I will trust the beauty products through the display and presentation of Taobao Live Stream.	0.873	0.916	0.877	0.731	3.161
	TU2 I think beauty products are more reliable, as shown by this presentation in Taobao live.	0.823				
	TU3 I believe that the anchors in Taobao Live will pay attention to users' needs and be very sincere.	0.847				
	TU4 I think the information about the presentation of beauty products in Taobao Live is authentic and reliable.	0.877				
Purchase Intention (PI)	PI1 Watching Taobao live stream, I would consider buying their beauty products.	0.835	0.916	0.877	0.731	3.094
	PI2 After watching Taobao Live, I want to recommend beauty products to my friends and family.	0.825				
	PI3 I would likely buy the same beauty product from Taobao live.	0.869				
	PI4 I will buy more beauty products by watching live streams of Taobao e-commerce in the future.	0.890				

Discriminant validity was evaluated utilizing the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT). As indicated in Table 3, the HTMT criterion was met, with all values

falling below the recommended threshold of 0.85, as suggested by Henseler et al. (2015), while Hair Jr et al. (2021) suggested that the values can be accepted below 0.90.

Table 3 HTMT Ratio

	PI	TU	PV	CQ	PM	VB	IA	AT	ET
PI									
TU	0.844***								
PV	0.838***	0.854***							
CQ	0.727***	0.788***	0.795***						
PM	0.736***	0.780***	0.816***	0.845**					
VB	0.695***	0.741***	0.788***	0.828***	0.838***				
IA	0.763***	0.826***	0.850***	0.766***	0.786***	0.807***			
AT	0.765***	0.800**	0.883**	0.839***	0.826***	0.863**	0.869**		
ET	0.782***	0.846***	0.870**	0.738***	0.732***	0.690***	0.797**	0.827***	

Notes: *** = p-values ≤ 0.001 and ** = p-values ≤ 0.01, PI = Purchase Intention, TU = Trust, PV = Perceived Value, CQ = Contents Quality, PM = Promotion, VB = Visibility, IA = Interactivity, AT = Authenticity, ET = Entertainment

Model-Fit Indices

This research model is robust, with strong explanatory power and acceptable multicollinearity levels as indicated by the ten model fit indices: The Average Path Coefficient (APC) of 0.163 indicates a significant average effect size of predictors on outcomes. The Average R-squared (ARS) value of 0.783 shows that about 78.3% of the variance in the dependent variables is explained by the model, reflecting its strength. The Average Adjusted R-squared (AARS) of 0.780 further confirms this while accounting for model complexity. Both the Average Block VIF (AVIF) of 2.709 and the Average Full Collinearity VIF (AFVIF) of 2.956 suggest low multicollinearity,

which is ideal. The Tenenhaus GoF (GoF) value of 0.791 indicates a well-fitted model, while the Simpson's Paradox Ratio (SPR) of 0.895 signals consistent relationships across groups. The R-squared Contribution Ratio (RSCR) at 0.997 highlights significant contributions from the predictors. The perfect Statistical Suppression Ratio (SSR) of 1.000 indicates no negative suppression effects, and the Nonlinear Bivariate Causality Direction Ratio (NLBCDR) of 0.974 supports strong causal interpretations.

PLS-SEM and Sobel Test Results

Figure 2 presents the results of PLS-SEM, showing the direct relationships among all the variables.

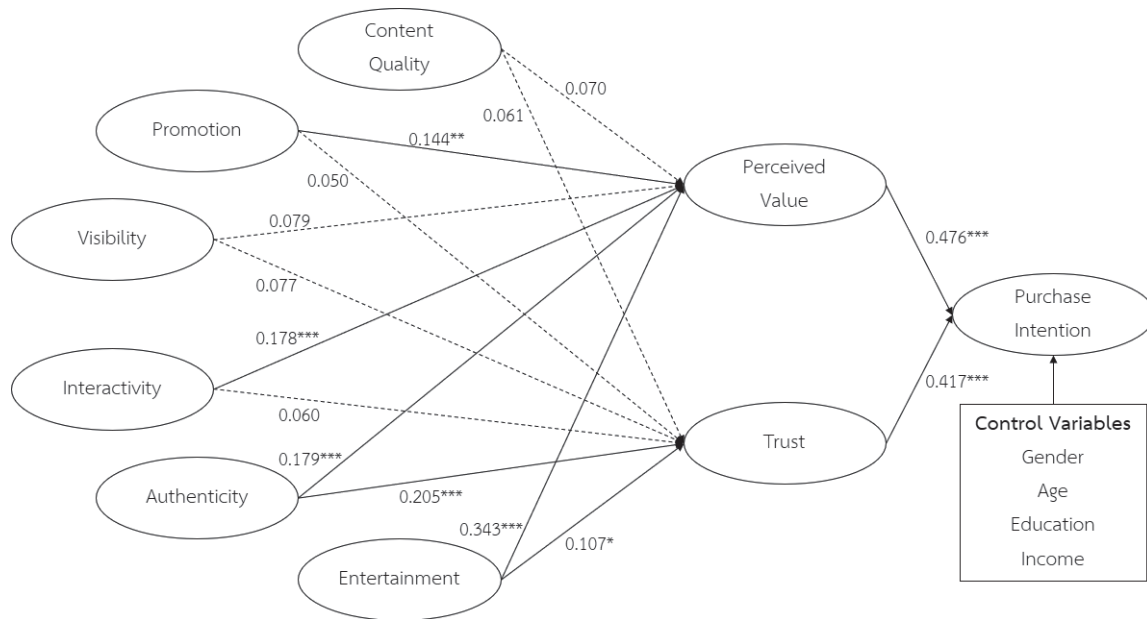


Figure 2 The PLS-SEM Results

Notes: *** = p-values ≤ 0.001 , ** = p-values ≤ 0.01

The PLS-SEM findings revealed that out of the six independent variables, 4 of them, including promotion ($\beta = 0.144$; $p < 0.010$) and interactivity ($\beta = 0.178$; $p < 0.001$), authenticity ($\beta = 0.179$; $p < 0.001$), and entertainment ($\beta = 0.343$; $p < 0.001$) have significant positive impacts on perceived value. On the other hand, only ($\beta = 0.205$; $p < 0.001$) and entertainment ($\beta = 0.107$; $p < 0.010$) have significant positive impacts on trust. Lastly, perceived value ($\beta = 0.476$; $p < 0.001$) and trust ($\beta = 0.417$; $p < 0.001$) have significant and positive impacts on purchase intention. Therefore, the indirect effect test was applied to only six of the ten hypotheses, which are hypothesis 2, 4, 5, 6, 11, and 12.

The Sobel test results indicated that Hypothesis 2, which proposed that perceived value mediates the link between promotion and purchase intention ($t = 2.942$, $p = 0.003$), was supported. Hypothesis 4, which proposed

that perceived value mediates between interactivity and purchase intention ($t = 3.566$, $p = 0.000$), was supported. Hypothesis 5, which proposed that perceived value mediates the relationship between authenticity and purchase intention ($t = 3.583$, $p = 0.000$), was supported. Hypothesis 6, which proposed that perceived value mediates the link between entertainment and purchase intention ($t = 2.982$, $p = 0.003$), was supported. Hypothesis 11, which proposed that trust acts as a mediator in the relationship between authenticity and purchase intention ($t = 3.930$, $p = 0.000$), was supported. Hypothesis 12 was supported, which proposed that trust is a mediator in the relationship between entertainment and purchase intention ($t = 2.265$, $p = 0.010$).

Control Variables

The results showed that there is no significant association between all control variables and purchase intention: Education

($\beta = -0.013$; $p = 0.786$), Age ($\beta = -0.053$; $p = 0.279$), Gender ($\beta = 0.042$; $p = 0.383$) and Income ($\beta = 0.062$; $p = 0.204$).

Discussion

This study uses the SOR model to examine the effects of live broadcasting on purchase intention for beauty products on the Taobao Live platform in Nanjing, China. This model effectively illustrates how external stimuli, such as live broadcasts, influence internal consumer states and ultimately drive purchasing behavior.

Four of the six independent variables demonstrated significant positive impacts on perceived value. Entertainment has the strongest effect, suggesting that engaging and enjoyable experiences greatly enhance consumers' perceived value of products or services, aligning with Lakhan et al. (2021), who found that entertainment of live streaming promotes trust and perceived value for e-commerce platforms in Pakistan. This shows that entertainment can elevate user engagement and satisfaction, leading to a higher perceived worth of offerings. Similarly, authenticity and interactivity also emerged as crucial factors, consistent with a study by Chen et al. (2020), which found that authenticity reinforces the notion that consumers value genuine and trustworthy brands in the Chinese restaurant business. While interactivity highlights the importance of consumer engagement in shaping perceptions, it supports the study by Liu et al. (2021) that interactivity promotes perceived value in social commerce. These

results underscore the need for businesses to create authentic and interactive experiences to foster positive perceptions of value, as Kang et al. (2021) suggested.

On the other hand, even though only authenticity and entertainment significantly impact trust out of the six variables, which aligns with a study by Lakhan et al. (2021), trust's R^2 is still relatively high at 0.87.

However, all six tested hypotheses regarding the mediating role of perceived value and trust were supported. For instance, perceived value significantly mediated the relationships between promotion, interactivity, authenticity, entertainment, and purchase intention. These findings suggest that even if promotion and interactivity drive initial interest, the perceived value ultimately translates this interest into purchase behavior. In particular, the significant mediating effects found for Hypotheses 2, 4, 5, and 6 (with t-values ranging from 2.942 to 3.583) illustrate how perceived value acts as a crucial link between engagement strategies and consumer behavior. This reinforces the importance of enhancing perceived value through effective marketing strategies that attract attention and resonate with consumer expectations. These findings are aligned with the SOR model and prior studies, such as the study by Apasrawirote and Yawised (2022), which states that perceived value mediates between promotion, as part of the marketing mix, and online purchase intention. Liu et al. (2021) found that interactivity can promote purchase intention through perceived value

in social commerce based on the SOR model. A study by Chen et al. (2020) revealed the positive impacts of consumers' perceived authenticity on their perceived value, predicting consumers' purchase intentions in the restaurant business in China.

Moreover, the significant mediation effects for trust in the relationships between authenticity and purchase intention (Hypothesis 11) and entertainment and purchase intention (Hypothesis 12) emphasize the dual role of trust in bolstering both perceived value and purchase intentions. The strong t-value of 3.930 for authenticity suggests that brands must prioritize trust-building measures to maximize purchase likelihood, aligning with previous research by Liu et al. (2022) that perceived live streamers' authenticity positively impacts customer purchase intention through trust. Lakhan et al. (2021) also found that both perceived value and trust positively mediate between entertainment and purchase intention in e-commerce platforms in Pakistan, based on the SOR model.

In the light of insignificant results, content quality alone may not sufficiently promote trust or enhance perceived value. This could indicate that consumers prioritize other factors, such as user testimonials, over the quality of content. Businesses may need to focus more on emotional engagement and relatability rather than solely on high content production standards. Promotional efforts cannot build trust due to consumer skepticism, emphasizing the need for authenticity. Increased visibility does not automatically foster trust and

perceived value because modern consumers are skeptical of overly promoted brands and products. Interactivity alone cannot promote trust because the effectiveness of interaction tends to depend on its authenticity and relevance to consumers, who may need engaging experiences and direct interactions.

Conclusions

In the context of live e-commerce broadcasting within the beauty products industry, based on the results, consumers who positively perceive the promotion, interactivity, authenticity, and entertainment of live streaming tend to perceive higher product and brand value. Meanwhile, consumers who perceive high authenticity and entertainment tend to trust the products and brands more. This may be because perceived value and trust also make consumers feel more confident in purchasing and perceive the minimal risk they tend to experience from purchasing online. Moreover, perceived value and trust also mediate between factors and purchase intentions.

Academic Contributions

This study advances understanding of consumer behavior in live-streaming e-commerce by examining how factors like promotion, interactivity, authenticity, and entertainment on Taobao Live influence perceived value, trust, and purchase intention for beauty products in Nanjing, China. Using PLS-SEM, we identified how these factors interact and mediate consumer decisions. This research contributes to the Stimulus-

Organism-Response (SOR) model by showing how live-streaming features serve as stimuli, affecting consumer perceptions (organism) and ultimately influencing their purchase intentions (response). Our findings underscore the importance of authentic interactions and effective communication strategies in shaping consumer behaviors in digital retail environments.

Practical Contributions

The findings of this study can be applied as a guideline for streamers, business owners, and live-streaming platforms to improve the refining marketing strategies. Beauty product sellers are advised to: 1) Emphasize interactive features during live broadcasts to engage with viewers effectively. Incorporate promotional activities that highlight product benefits and features. 2) Focus on maintaining authenticity in presentations to build trust among viewers. Incorporate entertaining elements to make the broadcasts engaging and memorable. 3) Ensure that products are presented in a clear and compelling manner during broadcasts. Highlight unique selling points and benefits that enhance perceived value. 4) Use demonstrations and customer testimonials effectively to demonstrate product efficacy and reliability, thereby increasing perceived value. 5) Maintain transparency in product information and business practices during

broadcasts. Address customer concerns promptly and credibly. 6) Consistently deliver on promises made during broadcasts to build a reputation for reliability and trustworthiness. 7) Integrate live broadcasts with other marketing channels to reinforce messaging and reach a broader audience. Lastly, continue engaging with customers post-purchase through follow-up communications and customer support to sustain trust and encourage repeat purchases.

Limitations and Recommendations

A limitation of this research is its focus on a specific geographical area (Nanjing, China) and product category (beauty products on Taobao Live), which may limit the generalizability of findings to other regions or product types. Future research could broaden the scope to include diverse geographic locations and product categories to enhance applicability across different consumer segments and markets. Additionally, while PLS-SEM provided valuable insights into relationships among variables, employing complementary methods such as qualitative interviews or observational studies could offer deeper insights into consumer perceptions and behaviors during live-streaming e-commerce. These approaches could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the nuances in consumer decision-making processes on digital platforms.

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Name and Surname: Yu Niu

Highest Education: Bachelor of Hotel Management (International Program) in International Hospitality and Dietary Culture College, Nanjing Tech University Pujiang Institute (NJPII), China

Affiliation: International College, Panyapiwat Institute of Management

Field of Expertise: Management, Marketing, and Hospitality Business



Name and Surname: Akaraphun Ratasuk

Highest Education: Doctor of Philosophy in Management (International Program), National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA)

Affiliation: International College, Panyapiwat Institute of Management

Field of Expertise: Management, Marketing, and Hospitality Business



Name and Surname: Phichitphol Sitthipo

Highest Education: Master of International Business, University of Wollongong

Affiliation: Stamford International University

Field of Expertise: Marketing