

The Influence of Streamer Communication Style on Impulse Buying Behaviour in Live Streaming Commerce: A Conceptual Review

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Abstract: *Live-Streaming Commerce, as a transformative digital retail form, has emerged. It integrates real-time interaction, entertainment elements, and immediate purchase opportunities. Based on the Stimulus-Subject-Response (S-O-R) model, this paper constructs a conceptual framework to explore how the communication style of the hosts affects impulsive purchasing behavior through consumers' attitudes. This study is based on an extensive review of recent literature and focuses on two key dimensions of communication style - interactivity and entertainment - and their psychological impacts on consumers. The research results show that communication style significantly shapes consumers' attitudes, and these attitudes drive impulsive purchasing behavior. This study integrates scattered findings and proposes a simplified but robust conceptual model, providing a reference for future empirical research and contributing to the relevant literature.*

Keywords: Impulse Buying Behaviour; Attitude towards Live-Streaming Commerce; Communication Style; Interaction; Entertainment.

1. Introduction

Over the past decade, the rapid advancement of digital technologies has fundamentally reshaped the landscape of retail. Among the various innovations, live streaming commerce has emerged as a particularly influential format, integrating real-time video interaction with online shopping functions. Unlike traditional e-commerce, where consumer interaction is largely asynchronous, live streaming commerce enables real-time communication and integrates entertainment, social interaction, and instant purchasing, thereby creating a more immersive and engaging consumption environment (Sun et al., 2023; Li et al., 2025).

One of the most notable behavioural outcomes observed in this environment is impulse buying. Impulse buying refers to a spontaneous and unplanned decision to purchase, often driven by situational cues and emotional responses rather than deliberate evaluation (Rook, 1987; Beatty & Ferrell, 1998). In live streaming contexts, such behaviour appears to be amplified due to the convergence of time pressure,

social interaction, and persuasive communication (Zhang et al., 2023; Liu et al., 2025).

Within this environment, streamers play a central role as both information providers and social influencers. Their communication style—how they present products, interact with audiences, and create an engaging atmosphere—has a significant impact on consumer perceptions and behaviour. Specifically, interactivity and entertainment are considered key elements influencing consumer engagement and emotional responses (Li et al., 2024). However, despite increasing scholarly attention, existing studies tend to focus on isolated perspectives rather than providing an integrated understanding of how communication style influences impulse buying (Zou & Fu, 2024).

To address this gap, the present study adopts the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) framework (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974) to develop a conceptual model linking communication style, consumer attitude, and impulse buying behaviour. By focusing specifically on interactivity and entertainment, this paper aims to provide a more focused and theoretically grounded explanation of consumer behaviour in live streaming commerce.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 The S-O-R Framework in Digital Commerce

The Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) model has long been used to explain how environmental factors influence human behaviour. According to this framework, external stimuli affect individuals' internal psychological states, which subsequently shape behavioural responses (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974).

In online retail settings, stimuli may include website design, product presentation, and social interaction. These elements influence consumers' cognitive and emotional responses, which in turn determine purchasing decisions (Eroglu et al., 2001; Floh & Madlberger, 2013). The S-O-R framework has also been applied to social commerce and live streaming contexts, where interactive and immersive features are particularly prominent (Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020).

In the present study, communication style is conceptualised as the stimulus, consumer attitude as the organism, and impulse buying behaviour as the response.

2.2 Interactivity and Consumer Attitude

Interactivity is commonly understood as the extent to which users can engage in real-time communication and influence the flow of information (Liu, 2003). In the context of live streaming commerce, this is typically reflected through functions such as instant messaging, immediate feedback, and streamers' on-the-spot responses.

Existing studies have linked interactivity to several important psychological outcomes. For example, higher levels of interaction are often associated with stronger social presence and deeper user engagement (Jiang et al., 2010; Labrecque, 2014). When consumers perceive that their input receives timely responses, they tend to feel more involved rather than passively exposed to marketing content.

In more recent live streaming settings, this interactive process also appears to reduce uncertainty and foster trust (Wang et al., 2024). At the same time, continuous back-and-forth communication can make the streamer appear more authentic, which further shapes consumers' evaluations during the decision-

making process.

Based on these considerations, interactivity is expected to play a positive role in shaping consumer attitudes.

2.3 Entertainment and Consumer Attitude

Entertainment generally refers to the hedonic aspect of consumption, capturing the extent to which an experience is perceived as enjoyable or engaging. Within live streaming commerce, this dimension is often conveyed through humorous interactions, storytelling, and dynamic presentation styles.

Earlier studies have highlighted the importance of enjoyment in technology-mediated environments. For instance, perceived enjoyment has been identified as a key factor influencing user acceptance in hedonic systems (Van der Heijden, 2004), while hedonic motivations have also been shown to shape attitudes toward online shopping (Childers et al., 2001). Rather than serving only as a supplementary feature, entertainment can directly influence how consumers experience the interaction process.

In live streaming contexts, entertaining content tends to strengthen emotional engagement, making the shopping experience feel less transactional and more immersive. As a result, consumers may rely more on affective responses than purely rational evaluation when forming their attitudes (Hu et al., 2023). This shift is particularly relevant in environments where impulse-driven decisions are common.

From this perspective, entertainment is likely to play a meaningful role in shaping consumer attitudes in live streaming commerce.

2.4 Consumer Attitude and Impulse Buying Behaviour

Consumer attitude is generally understood as an individual's overall evaluation of a consumption experience, and it has long been considered an important antecedent of behavioural responses in marketing research (Ajzen, 1991). Rather than reflecting a single momentary reaction, attitude often captures a cumulative impression formed during the interaction process.

In live streaming commerce, this evaluative process tends to be closely tied to the nature of the shopping environment. This relationship may be particularly salient in digitally mediated environments where real-time interaction shapes consumer perceptions. When the experience is perceived as engaging or enjoyable, consumers are more likely to respond affectively, relying less on deliberate evaluation and more on immediate feelings.

Earlier research on impulse buying highlights the role of emotional states in shaping such behaviour. For example, impulse purchases are often associated with heightened emotional arousal and positive affect (Rook, 1987). At the same time, situational elements—such as time pressure or social influence—can further amplify these tendencies (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998), making spontaneous decisions more likely.

Within live streaming settings, recent studies suggest that consumer attitude functions as an important link between environmental stimuli and behavioural outcomes (Li & Peng, 2024; Zhang et al., 2023). In other words, how consumers evaluate the experience may directly influence whether they proceed to make impulsive purchases.

2.5 Mediating Role of Consumer Attitude

Within the context of this study, the influence of communication style on consumer behaviour is unlikely to occur in a direct manner. Instead, consumers typically form evaluative responses during the interaction process, which subsequently shape their behavioural tendencies. In this sense, consumer attitude can be viewed as an important psychological link between external stimuli and behavioural outcomes.

Evidence from online retail research suggests that consumers' evaluations often serve as a key mechanism through which environmental cues affect behaviour (Ha & Lennon, 2010; Floh & Madlberger, 2013). Rather than responding immediately to external features, individuals tend to interpret and internalise these stimuli before forming actionable intentions.

In live streaming commerce, different communication styles—particularly those that are more interactive or entertaining—can influence how consumers perceive and experience the shopping environment. These perceptions, in turn, contribute to the formation of attitudes, which may ultimately determine whether impulse buying occurs (Li et al., 2024).

Based on this line of reasoning, consumer attitude is expected to function as a mediating mechanism in the relationship between communication style and impulse buying behaviour.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Conceptual Framework

Building on the literature reviewed above, this study develops a conceptual framework to examine how different dimensions of communication style shape consumer behaviour in live streaming commerce. Rather than treating these effects as purely direct, the framework considers how consumers form evaluative responses during the interaction process, which may subsequently influence their behavioural tendencies (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974).

In particular, communication features such as interactivity and entertainment are expected to influence how consumers perceive and experience the live streaming environment. When consumers are able to engage in real-time interaction or are exposed to more engaging and enjoyable content, they are more likely to develop favourable evaluations of the overall experience (Jiang et al., 2010; Van der Heijden, 2004). These evaluations are reflected in consumer attitude, which represents an accumulated assessment formed throughout the interaction process. Based on this reasoning, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Interactivity positively influences consumer attitude.

H2: Entertainment positively influences consumer attitude.

Furthermore, consumer attitude is expected to play an important role in shaping behavioural outcomes. A more positive evaluation of the live streaming experience may increase the likelihood of impulse buying, particularly in contexts characterised by immediacy and emotional engagement (Rook, 1987; Beatty & Ferrell, 1998). Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Consumer attitude positively influences impulse buying behaviour.

At the same time, it is unlikely that communication style affects impulse buying behaviour only in a

direct manner. Instead, part of its influence may operate through the attitudinal pathway described above. In other words, communication features may first shape consumers' evaluations, which then translate into behavioural responses. This suggests a potential mediating role of consumer attitude in the relationship between communication style and impulse buying (Floh & Madlberger, 2013). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4a: Consumer attitude mediates the relationship between interactivity and impulse buying behaviour.
 H4b: Consumer attitude mediates the relationship between entertainment and impulse buying behaviour.

Taken together, the proposed framework, as illustrated in Figure 1, captures these relationships in an integrated manner, highlighting the mediating role of consumer attitude in linking communication style to impulse buying behaviour.

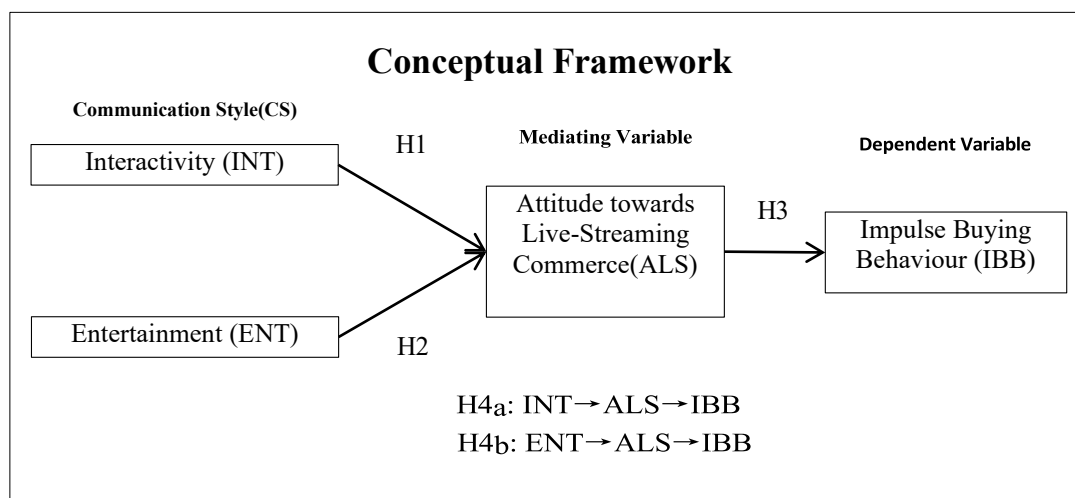


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

3.2 Instrument Development

To empirically examine the proposed conceptual framework and the associated hypotheses, this study focuses on consumers who have experience with live streaming commerce. A quantitative research design is adopted, with data collected through a structured questionnaire (Creswell, 2014). The collected responses will be systematically coded and analysed using appropriate statistical techniques to explore the relationships among the variables and to test the proposed model. This approach allows for a more systematic examination of both direct and indirect relationships proposed in the model (Hair et al., 2019).

In this study, communication style is treated as the key independent construct, operationalised through dimensions such as interactivity and entertainment. Consumer attitude is positioned as a mediating variable, reflecting individuals' overall evaluation of the live streaming shopping experience. Impulse buying behaviour is considered the dependent variable, capturing consumers' tendency to make spontaneous purchase decisions during live streaming sessions (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998).

To measure these constructs, a five-point Likert scale is employed, which is commonly used in social science research to capture subjective perceptions and attitudes (Likert, 1932). Respondents are asked to indicate their level of agreement with each statement, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). During the questionnaire design process, the wording of items is kept as clear and straightforward as possible to reduce potential misunderstanding. In addition, positively worded statements are primarily adopted to facilitate respondents' comprehension and to maintain consistency

in interpretation.

A summary of the measurement items used in this study is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: some of the measurement items

No.	Items	Source
INT	The streamer interacts frequently with viewers during the live session..	Kang, K. et al.(2021)
	I can easily communicate with the streamer in real time.	Ma, L.(2022)
	The streamer responds promptly to viewers' questions.	Zhao, Y.et al. (2021)
	The live-streaming session makes me feel involved.	Li, Y.et al. (2021)
ENT	Watching the live stream is entertaining.	Chandrruangphen, .et al.(2022)
	The live-streaming session is enjoyable.	Sun, Y.,et al.(2020)
	The streamer makes the session fun and interesting.	Xu, X. et al.(2020)
	I watch live streams partly for entertainment purposes.	Hu, M. et al.(2020)
ALS	I have a positive attitude toward live-streaming shopping.	Zhao, Y.et al. (2021)
	I think purchasing through live streams is a good idea.	Ma, L.. (2022)
	I like the experience of shopping via live streams.	Kang, K. et al.(2021)
	Live-streaming commerce is appealing to me.	Park & Lin (2020)
	Overall, I consider live-streaming shopping to be valuable.	Hu & Chaudhry (2020)
IBB	I often make impulse purchases during live streams.	Sun et al. (2020)
	I make unplanned purchases during live streams.	Zhao et al. (2021)
	When I see products in live streams, I tend to buy them immediately.	Kang et al. (2021)
	I find it difficult to control my purchasing impulses during live streams.	Hu & Chaudhry (2020)
	I sometimes regret my purchases made during live streams.	Zhang, M., & Zhang, L. (2022)

3.3 Data collection

To enhance the reliability and credibility of the data, careful attention is given to both the source of information and the data collection procedure (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). In this study, primary data are collected through a structured, self-administered questionnaire, which allows respondents to complete the survey independently and reduces potential interviewer bias (Dillman et al., 2014; Fan & Yan, 2010).

Given that this research is conducted across nine higher education institutions in Nantong, a stratified sampling approach is employed. The sample is proportionally allocated based on the student population of each institution to ensure adequate representation (Etikan & Bala, 2017). Following this approach, a total of 399 valid responses are targeted for analysis.

The questionnaire is designed to capture key constructs in the proposed model, including communication style (e.g., interactivity and entertainment), consumer attitude, and impulse buying behaviour in live streaming commerce contexts. To facilitate data collection, the survey is distributed online through a commonly used questionnaire platform, allowing respondents to complete it conveniently. This approach helps improve response efficiency while maintaining consistency in data collection across different institutions (Wright, 2005; Zhang et al., 2020).

3.4 Data Analysis and Evaluation Hypothesis Testing

The data collected from the questionnaires will be processed and analysed using statistical software such as SPSS and AMOS. After data collection, all responses are first organised and entered into the dataset, followed by a careful screening process to identify incomplete or inconsistent entries. This step helps ensure that the data used for subsequent analysis meet the required quality standards and enhances the reliability and validity of the measurement instruments (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994; Sarker et al., 2024).

The analytical procedure is carried out in several stages. First, data coding and preliminary checks are conducted to prepare the dataset for analysis. This includes verifying the structure of the items and ensuring that the measurement scales are applied consistently. Next, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and reliability testing are performed to examine the underlying factor structure and internal consistency of the constructs (Finch, 2019).

Following this, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is employed to assess the measurement model, focusing on the validity and reliability of the constructs included in the study (Brown & Moore, 2012). Once the measurement model is established, structural equation modelling (SEM) is used to evaluate the proposed relationships among variables and to test the research hypotheses (Mburu, 2014).

Specifically, H1 and H2 examine the effects of communication style dimensions (interactivity and entertainment) on consumer attitude, while H3 focuses on the relationship between consumer attitude and impulse buying behaviour. In addition, H4 tests the mediating role of consumer attitude in the relationship between communication style and impulse buying behaviour. A significance level of 0.05 is adopted to determine whether the hypothesised relationships are statistically supported. This threshold is widely used in social science research as a conventional criterion for statistical significance, indicating a 5% probability of committing a Type I error (Di Leo & Sardanelli, 2020; Bevans, 2023).

4. Expected Contributions

This study seeks to provide an empirical examination of how communication style influences consumer behaviour in live streaming commerce by developing and testing a structured conceptual framework. By focusing on the roles of interactivity and entertainment, as well as the mediating effect of consumer attitude, the research aims to offer a more nuanced understanding of the mechanisms underlying impulse buying in digitally mediated environments.

The contributions of this study can be considered from several perspectives. First, at the theoretical level, it extends existing research on live streaming commerce by integrating communication-related factors into a unified framework that links external stimuli, internal evaluation, and behavioural outcomes. While prior studies have often examined these elements in isolation, this study brings them together and highlights the mediating role of consumer attitude, thereby providing a more comprehensive explanation of how impulse buying behaviour is formed.

Second, from a contextual perspective, the study draws on data collected from higher education institutions in Nantong City, Jiangsu Province, China. By situating the analysis within this specific setting, the research contributes empirical evidence from a context that has received relatively limited attention in the existing literature. This may help to enrich current understanding of consumer behaviour in live streaming commerce, particularly among younger and digitally active populations.

Third, in terms of practical implications, the findings are expected to offer useful insights for practitioners involved in live streaming commerce. A clearer understanding of how communication styles shape consumer attitudes and behavioural responses may assist platform operators and streamers in designing more effective interaction strategies. At the same time, the results may also help consumers become more aware of the factors influencing their purchasing decisions, thereby encouraging more rational consumption behaviour.

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