



Mediating Role of Perceived Social Value between E-commerce Live Streamer Characteristics and Customer Purchase Intention in Shandong, China

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Abstract

The vigorous development of e-commerce live streaming has made e-commerce live streamers a key factor influencing consumer decisions. However, the intrinsic mechanisms through which their characteristics affect customer purchase intention remain unclear. Especially within the live streaming context noted for its highly interactive nature, the mediating role of Perceived Social Value urgently requires exploration. This study takes consumers of e-commerce live streaming in Shandong Province, China, as its research subjects. It constructs a theoretical model with three e-commerce live streamer characteristics, Professionalism, Interactivity, and Popularity, as independent variables, Perceived Social Value as the mediator variable, and Customer Purchase Intention as the dependent variable. The research aims to investigate the direct impact of live streamer characteristics on purchase intention and to examine the mediating role played by Perceived Social Value therein. To this end, corresponding research hypotheses are proposed. A quantitative research approach is designed, planning to collect data through questionnaire surveys, and intending to employ Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the hypotheses. The expected findings are anticipated to provide a new theoretical perspective for understanding consumer behavior in live streaming e-commerce and offer managerial insights for industry practice.

Keywords: E-commerce Live Streamer Characteristics; Perceived Social Value; Customer Purchase Intention; Shandong Province; E-commerce Live Streaming

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Introduction

Against the backdrop of the continuous integration of digital technology and business innovation, the rise and proliferation of e-commerce live streaming have seamlessly connected real-time interaction, social experience, and instant transactions, creating a shopping environment characterized by strong immersion and direct feedback (Li Jie et al., 2025; Liu Jing, 2025). As a pioneer and the largest market of this model, China's developmental journey has garnered significant attention. Data indicates that in 2025, the national online retail sales reached 2.32 trillion US dollars, marking an 8.6% year-on-year growth (China Internet Network Information Center, 2026). The transaction volume of e-commerce live streaming exceeded 762.4 billion US dollars, accounting for approximately one-third of total online retail sales, with year-on-year growth of 16.48% (Development Research Center of the State Administration for Market Regulation, 2026). Shopping via live streams has become a mainstream way to consume.

Delving into the three core elements of e-commerce live streaming, "people, goods, and field" the live streamer undoubtedly serves as the hub connecting the scene with products and influencing consumer decision-making. Research papers retrieved from the Science Direct full-text database using "e-commerce live streamer" as a keyword constitute 35.97% of studies related to e-commerce live streaming. E-commerce live streamers build a solid bridge connecting products and customers through their unique personal characteristics. Data shows that the number of professional online live streamers in China reached 15.08 million in 2023. However, the surge in the number of live streamers has not led to a corresponding improvement in overall sales effectiveness, with the market exhibiting a pronounced "Pareto Principle" (80/20 rule). This phenomenon reveals a key issue: within seemingly similar live streaming formats, the influence of different live streamers on consumers varies greatly. Therefore, systematically investigating the core characteristics of live streamers and their intrinsic mechanisms driving customer purchase intention holds not only practical guiding significance for platforms to optimize their ecosystems, for brands to select partners, and for live streamers' own development, but also provides decision-making references for governmental industrial policy formulation.

Focusing on the regional market in China, the e-commerce live-streaming ecosystem in Shandong Province exhibits strong vitality and distinctiveness, serving as an excellent case for observing this emerging business format. It is reported that in 2024, 10 of 16 cities in Shandong Province appeared on the national list of the top 100 cities by transaction volume on Douyin's e-commerce platform. However, beneath the prosperous scene, intense competition has brought a series of practical challenges. Research shows that after experiencing explosive growth, the e-commerce live-streaming market's growth rate has been gradually decelerating. Simultaneously, many live streamers lack an adequate understanding of product technical parameters, usage scenarios, and cultural connotations, making it difficult to convey deeper product value (Jiang et al., 2024). The issue of content homogenization highlighted in industry reports stems from a structural deficiency in live streamers' content-creation capabilities, which constrains the effective transmission of brand value (Z. Han & Du, 2023). Furthermore, standardized scripts lacking regional industrial knowledge fail to evoke consumers' sense of regional identity (Agag et al., 2024). This makes it challenging for many live streamers to establish deep emotional and cultural connections with consumers when promoting local specialty products in Shandong Province. These practical dilemmas collectively point to a core question: in an intensely competitive

market environment, which systematic characteristics do e-commerce live streamers need to possess to enhance customer purchase intention effectively? Answering this question has become key to breaking through the current industry development bottleneck.

Despite the flourishing practice of e-commerce live streaming and the abundance of academic research, exploration of the aforementioned core question still shows significant deficiencies. Existing literature predominantly concentrates on two aspects: consumer repurchase intention and impulse buying behavior, while paying relatively insufficient attention to the formation mechanism of the more fundamental customer purchase intention (Q. Li et al., 2024; Y. Li et al., 2024; G. Yao et al., 2024). Regarding research on e-commerce live streamer characteristics, academia has not yet reached consensus on their importance rankings, specific pathways, and boundary conditions, with some theoretical disagreements and empirical variations. For instance, conclusions about how key variables such as live streamer professionalism and interactivity affect purchase decisions are inconsistent across studies (Wei Jianfeng et al., 2022; Shi et al., 2024; S. Zhang et al., 2022). More importantly, the analysis of the intrinsic psychological mechanisms through which live streamer characteristics influence purchase intention is not deep enough.

Most studies follow the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework, with perceived value considered a key mediating variable. Existing research largely employs perceived utilitarian value and perceived entertainment value to explore the impact of e-commerce live streaming on purchase intention (Agag et al., 2024; Qi & Masrom, 2024; K. Wang et al., 2025; Xu et al., 2024; Yu et al., 2025; Yum & Kim, 2024; H. Zhang et al., 2024). According to a 2024 consumer behavior survey in the region (Figure 1) retrieved from Statista, perceived social value is equally important, satisfying users' deep-seated needs for social belonging and trend-following. Perceived social value refers to the customer's perception of the social significance derived from purchasing and using a product or service (Kantamneni et al., 1996).

Data shows that 36% of customers regard community interaction as one of their primary motivations for participating in live streaming, indicating their desire to integrate into the community, gain a sense of identity and belonging through bullet comments, likes, and sharing. Another 38% of respondents value the trend information provided by live streaming, indicating that live-streaming shopping has, to some extent, become a symbol of social status and a pathway for group participation. This type of value is particularly applicable to younger consumer groups, who complete self-expression and value affirmation through social interaction and trend synchronization, further strengthening purchase intention. Although some studies have begun to focus on social factors, research exploring the impact of perceived social value on customer purchase intention in the e-commerce live streaming market remains scarce. The uniqueness of the live streaming format necessitates a theoretical reconstruction of the connotation of perceived value. M.-S. Han et al. (2024) empirically found that the traditional utilitarian-hedonic dichotomy partially affects purchase intention; however, the definition and measurement of new dimensions remain far from reaching consensus in academia. Yang et al. (2023) found that perceived social value significantly moderates purchase intention. Fayola et al. (2024) emphasized that content design lacking narrative innovation and situational co-creation cannot trigger customers' immersive experience. Therefore, the specific role that perceived social value plays between live

streamer characteristics and purchase intention, and the precise mediating pathways involved, remain theoretical blind spots urgently requiring in-depth exploration.

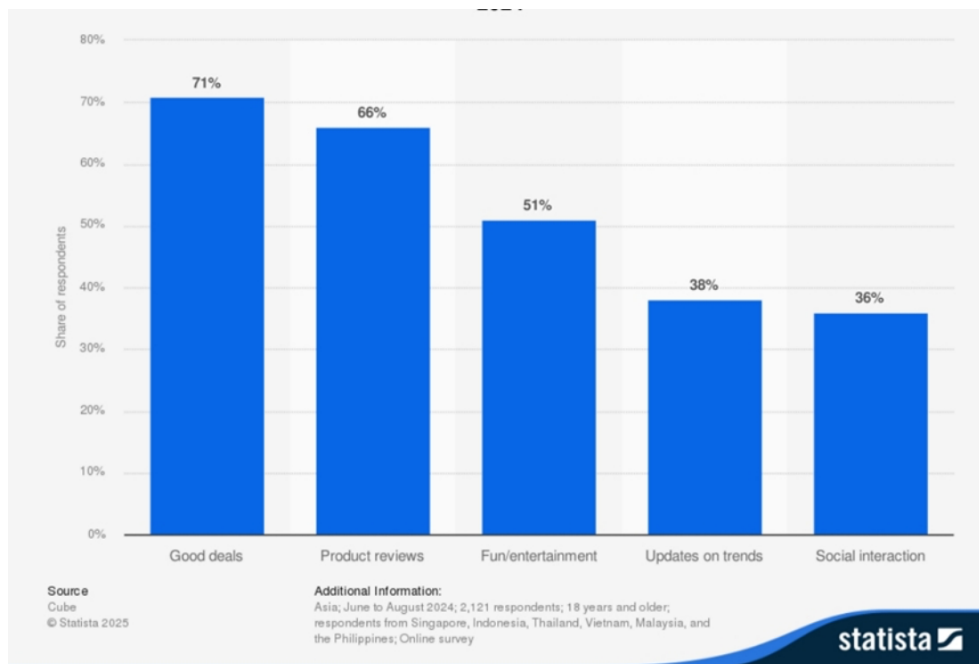


Figure 1: Primary Motivations for Live Streaming Consumption in Southeast Asia as of August 2024

To bridge the aforementioned gaps in both practice and theory, this study focuses on the typical regional market of Shandong Province, China, aiming to deeply explore how e-commerce live streamer characteristics drive customer purchase intention by influencing customers perceived social value. This study defines live streamer characteristics along three core dimensions: professionalism, referring to the mastery of product knowledge and credibility; interactivity, referring to real-time communication and responsiveness; and popularity, referring to public influence and reputation. Perceived social value is the customer's perception of value derived from aspects such as community belonging, identity recognition, and social interaction experiences through watching live streams and engaging in related behaviors. Based on this, this study proposes the following specific objectives and questions:

Research Questions:

The present conceptual study aims to answer the following questions:

RQ1. To what extent do e-commerce live streamer characteristics influence customer purchase intention?

RQ2. Does perceived social value influence customer purchase intention?

RQ3. Does perceived social value mediate the relationship between e-commerce live streamer characteristics and customer purchase intention?

The conduct of this study carries both theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, the findings will enrich and deepen consumer behavior theory in the context of e-commerce live streaming. By integrating relevant theoretical frameworks, this study constructs and validates a "live streamer characteristics (Stimulus) - perceived social value (Organism) - purchase intention (Response)" theoretical model, clarifying the key mediating role of

perceived social value, thereby addressing the deficiency of insufficient attention to socio-psychological mechanisms in existing research. In practice, this study provides direct insights for various stakeholders in the e-commerce live-streaming ecosystem. For live streamers and MCN agencies, the findings suggest that beyond enhancing professional competence and interactive skills, consciously fostering a community atmosphere in the live streaming room and transmitting social identity signals that resonate with specific consumer groups, such as local users in Shandong, are effective strategies for establishing differentiated advantages and enhancing fan loyalty and conversion efficiency (Q. Li et al., 2024; Mohammadi et al., 2021). For brands and enterprises, when selecting partner live streamers or cultivating in-house teams, the ability to construct "social value" should be evaluated. For platforms and relevant government departments, understanding the mechanism of social value's role helps design healthier community rules and incentive policies, guiding the industry from mere price and traffic competition to value competition and ecological construction. Therefore, this study helps address issues such as content homogenization and weak consumer emotional connections, providing valuable insights for promoting the high-quality, sustainable development of China's e-commerce live-streaming industry.

Literature Review

Customer Purchase Intention

Veronika Lee (2022) defines customer purchase intention as "the willingness of a customer to purchase a particular product or service." Intention is the subjective probability of an individual performing a specific behavior. Fishbein & Ajzen (1975) were the first to extend the concept of "intention" from the field of psychology to the domain of shopping and consumption. Dodds (1991) defined purchase intention as "the likelihood that a customer will buy a particular product, determined jointly by the customer's subjective attitude and external factors." Customer purchase intention is influenced by two independent yet interrelated factors: "subjective attitude" and "external factors." The relationship between purchase intention and purchase behavior is also affirmed by most scholars. Mullet & Karson (1985) and Ajzen & Driver (1991), among others, generally agree that purchase intention is a necessary prerequisite for customer purchase behavior and plays a decisive role in shaping it.

This study aims to systematically review the influencing factors and intrinsic mechanisms of customer purchase intention in the context of e-commerce live streaming. As a key antecedent variable of consumer behavior, the formation mechanism of customer purchase intention is particularly complex in this new domain of e-commerce live streaming. Existing research generally agrees that customer purchase intention in e-commerce live streaming is comprehensively influenced by a multidimensional, multi-layered system of factors, which can be summarized into four core dimensions: source characteristics, platform and context, consumer individual factors, and product and marketing strategies (Jiang et al., 2024; Y. Wang et al., 2024).

Among these, the characteristics of the e-commerce live streamer are the primary external stimulus driving consumer purchase intention. The live streamer's professionalism, interactivity, and popularity constitute the core triangle of their influence. However, live streamer characteristics do not directly affect purchase intention; rather, they exert an indirect influence by triggering consumers' internal psychological states, namely perceived value. Perceived social value plays a central mediating role herein. Specifically, the

community interaction and para-social relationships constructed by live streaming satisfy consumers' needs for social identity and belonging, i.e., perceived social value (Y. Wu & Huang, 2023; Yu et al., 2025). Research indicates that these multidimensional value perceptions are the core psychological hub connecting external live-streamer stimuli to final purchase decisions (Zhou & Huang, 2023).

The aforementioned relationships are strongly supported by classic theoretical frameworks. The Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) theory provides a meta-framework for understanding this process, where live streamer characteristics serve as the external stimulus (S), influencing the consumer's internal state of perceived value (O), ultimately driving their purchase intention response (R) (Zhu et al., 2023). Meanwhile, Stimulus-Response (S-R) theory explains the direct response pathways that certain characteristics may trigger, while perceived value theory specifies the connotation of the "organism" state. Together, they construct an integrated theoretical model explaining the formation mechanism of customer purchase intention in e-commerce live streaming.

E-commerce Live Streamer Characteristics

Professionalism of e-commerce live streamers refers to the proficiency and trustworthiness they demonstrate during live streaming regarding product knowledge, industry information, and communication skills. It is a multidimensional construct encompassing depth of knowledge, communication effectiveness, and credibility (Yu et al., 2025). Research indicates that a live streamer's professionalism has a crucial impact on consumers' purchase decisions. Sokolova & Kefi (2020) found that trustworthy bloggers who demonstrate expertise on relevant topics are more influential on purchase intention. Simultaneously, professionalism is seen as a cornerstone for building cognitive trust. Cao et al. (2025) explicitly state that sales personnel's expertise is a significant source of their credibility, effectively establishing and strengthening audience trust in live-streaming shopping. Research by Liu & Sun (2024) also verified that professionalism indirectly and significantly affects consumers' purchase intention through perceived trust. This implies that consumers tend to transfer their recognition of the live streamer's professional competence to trust in the recommended products, thereby reducing perceived risk and facilitating purchase decisions. Therefore, this paper posits that a live streamer's professionalism can positively influence consumer purchase intention by establishing trust and enhancing perceived value. Based on the above discussion, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between e-commerce live streamer professionalism and customer purchase intention.

Interactivity in live streaming refers to a live streamer's ability to engage in real-time, two-way information exchange and emotional connection with the audience. Its core lies in creating a sense of social presence through bidirectional communication (Chen et al., 2024; Cao et al., 2025). Research shows that a high degree of interactivity is a key driver of consumer purchase intention in live-streaming e-commerce. Firstly, real-time, effective interaction directly fulfills consumers' social and emotional needs. By instantly responding to comments, using personalized addresses, and employing emotional expression, live streamers can establish a virtual intimate relationship or "para-social relationship" with the audience (Tao et al., 2024). Research by Cao et al. (2025) further confirms that positive interaction, by fostering authenticity and a sense of community, can effectively cultivate audience trust in the live streaming shopping context. Research by Li & Zheng (2024) also

found that the match between a live streamer's and a user's communication style enhances attractiveness and, by eliciting positive emotional states in users, ultimately stimulates customer purchase intention. Thus, interactivity not only creates an immersive shopping experience but also systematically and positively influences consumer purchase decisions through three pathways: emotional arousal, information supplementation, and trust building. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H2: There is a significant positive relationship between e-commerce live streamer interactivity and customer purchase intention.

The popularity of a live streamer is typically characterized by their follower base, social influence, and opinion leadership, serving as an important external cue influencing consumer decisions (Yang, 2023; Ma, 2021). In the information-overloaded environment of live-streaming e-commerce, high popularity serves as an efficient heuristic cue, significantly reducing consumer decision costs. According to Ma (2021), consumers tend to make decisions with "economizing awareness," directly associating a live streamer's high popularity with high product quality and reliability, thereby quickly forming purchase intention. This is a typical process of trust transfer. Research by Sethi & Kapoor (2021) also supports this view, indicating that live streamers with reputable reputations provide more credible recommendations. Secondly, popularity can evoke strong emotional resonance and social conformity effects. The live streaming rooms of highly popular live streamers often form powerful emotional fields where audience emotions (such as excitement, admiration) are contagious, thereby stimulating impulse buying (Meng et al., 2021). Simultaneously, the large fan base itself constitutes social proof, leading consumers to exhibit herd mentality, believing that "the choice of the majority is correct," and to follow implicit consumption norms (Ma, 2021). Furthermore, purchasing products recommended by popular live streamers, especially those with symbolic meaning, can provide consumers with "social currency," satisfying their needs for identity and social belonging (Wang et al., 2025).

Ultimately, the combined effect of popularity is reflected in perceived value. Research by Wu et al. (2023) confirmed that internet celebrities primarily promote purchasing behavior by enhancing consumers' perceived functional value, perceived emotional value, and reducing perceived risk (Wanqi et al., 2024; A. Yao et al., 2024). The endorsement of highly popular live streamers can boost consumer expectations of product quality and trendy value while significantly reducing financial, quality, and social risks associated with the purchase. Therefore, this paper posits that a live streamer's popularity positively influences consumer purchase intention through multiple mechanisms: trust heuristics, emotional contagion, value enhancement, and risk reduction. Based on this, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H3: There is a significant positive relationship between the popularity of e-commerce live streamers and customer purchase intention.

Perceived Social Value

Perceived social value refers to the social benefits consumers gain from consumption behavior, such as group belonging, interpersonal interaction, and social identity (Akram et al., 2021; Wu & Huang, 2023). In the highly socialized context of live-streaming e-commerce, consumption behavior itself is an act of social interaction and identity construction, making the role of perceived social value particularly prominent. The live streaming medium, by creating a "sense of social presence" and building virtual

communities, provides the technological and social foundation for consumers to connect with "like-minded people" and gain a sense of membership (Zhu et al., 2023; Wu & Huang, 2023).

Existing research generally agrees that perceived social value is a key variable driving purchase intention. Its mechanisms primarily include establishing trust in the live streamer and community by strengthening social identity (Wu & Huang, 2023; Zhang et al., 2024), reducing consumers' perceived risk through social information exchange within the live streaming room (Akram et al., 2021), stimulating herd buying behavior through group atmosphere (Wu & Huang, 2023), and satisfying self-expression needs by consuming products with symbolic meaning (Akram et al., 2021). These mechanisms collectively explain how perceived social value transforms external social contexts into internal purchasing motivation.

Based on the classic Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) theoretical framework, this study posits that perceived social value may play a key mediating role in linking external stimuli (live streamer characteristics) to consumer response (purchase intention). Prior research across contexts has verified the mediating role of perceived value (Zhu et al., 2023), providing a theoretical basis for this study's inference regarding the specific mediating pathways of perceived social value in the context of e-commerce live-streaming. Given the strongly social nature of live-streaming e-commerce, an in-depth exploration of the mediating role of perceived social value therein is both theoretically and practically necessary. It helps clarify the deep psychological processes through which live streamer characteristics influence purchase decisions, providing precise guidance for platforms and live streamers to optimize social interaction strategies and build high-engagement communities. Based on the above theoretical reasoning and literature review, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H4: There is a significant positive relationship between perceived social value and customer purchase intention.

H5: Perceived social value mediates the relationship between professionalism and customer purchase intention.

H6: Perceived social value mediates the relationship between interactivity and customer purchase intention.

H7: Perceived social value mediates the relationship between popularity and customer purchase intention.

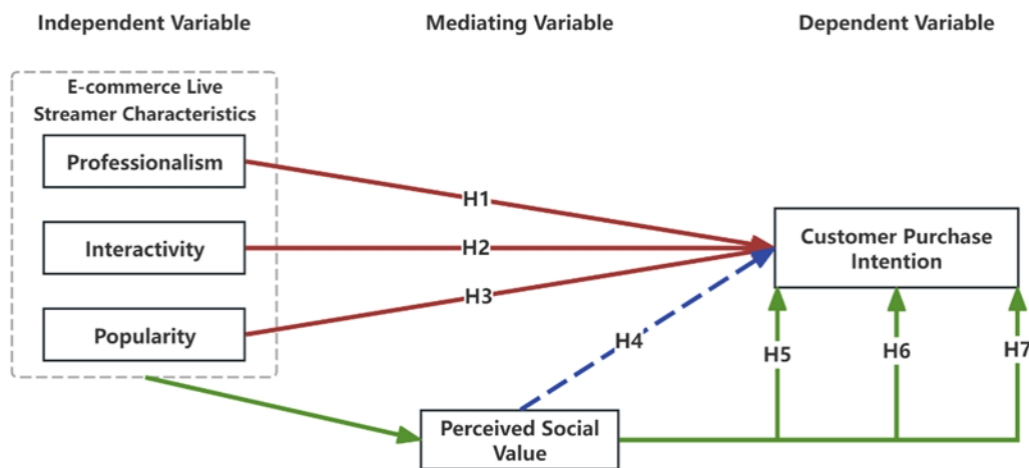


Figure 2: Research Framework

Methodology

Research Paradigm

This study clearly falls within the positivist paradigm. From the ontological stance of this research, the characteristics of e-commerce live streamers, customer-perceived value, and purchase intention are objective facts that exist within the specific social context of the e-commerce live streaming market in Shandong Province, China. The relationships between them are observable and measurable. Epistemologically, this study is deductive, aiming to test and reveal the relationships between e-commerce live streamer professionalism, interactivity, popularity, perceived social value, and customer purchase intention by collecting quantitative data from the target population. The knowledge obtained is objective and verifiable. Methodologically, this is specifically reflected in adopting a clear quantitative research path, including a cross-sectional survey design, structured questionnaire measurement, etc.

Research Method

Based on the core research objective of systematically testing the mediating role of perceived social value between e-commerce live streamer characteristics and customer purchase intention, and to achieve quantitative measurement and causal inference of relationships between variables, this study determines to employ a quantitative research method.

The choice of methodology must strictly serve the research purpose. The purpose of this study is confirmatory rather than exploratory, with the core aim of testing a theoretical model containing multiple variables and their predefined pathways. The quantitative research method aligns well with this. Its advantages include objectivity, precision, efficiency, generalizability, and strong capabilities for hypothesis testing and causal inference. This study constructs a theoretical model including mediating effects. Quantitative research can employ advanced statistical techniques such as correlation and regression analyses, and particularly Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to precisely quantify the strength of associations between variables and to effectively test and validate the preset causal pathways.

Therefore, this study is inherently confirmatory and explanatory, aiming to test theory, quantify relationships, and generalize conclusions. The quantitative research method provides the most appropriate and powerful philosophical guidance and technical path.

Research Design

To achieve the research objectives, this study methodologically adopts an explanatory quantitative research design orientation and employs a cross-sectional survey as the overall research framework. Data is collected via a structured questionnaire, and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is ultimately used for data analysis and hypothesis testing. The analysis results reporting follows Joseph Hair's footsteps to enhance clarity and organization (Joseph F. et al., 2021; Mohammadi, 2019).

The explanatory research design focuses on explaining phenomena and verifying causal relationships between theories, which is entirely consistent with this study's core purpose of elucidating "the extent to which live streamer characteristics influence purchase intention through perceived value." In terms of the time dimension, the cross-sectional survey design collects data from a large target population at a single point in time. It is efficient and economical, well-suited for obtaining large-sample data with limited resources to examine covarying relationships between variables and the theoretical model. Certainly, this study also recognizes the inherent limitations of cross-sectional design in causal inference. Therefore, robust theoretical deduction, rigorous measurement, and statistical control techniques will be used to strengthen inference robustness.

The data collection tool for this study is a structured questionnaire. All core constructs are measured using a 5-point Likert scale. The Likert scale operationalizes abstract theoretical concepts into quantifiable measurement items, facilitating respondents' understanding and answering, and enabling efficient collection of standardized data. Its reliability and validity can be strictly tested through statistical methods (Mohammadi et al., 2017; Song et al., 2023).

Population and Sampling Technique

Given the research topic's focus, this study defines its scope as follows: the research objects are consumers aged 18 and above in Shandong Province with full civil capacity who have had e-commerce live-streaming shopping experiences in the past year and are currently permanent residents of Shandong. A simple random sampling technique is used to select users of different ages, genders, occupations, and income levels randomly to ensure sample representativeness (Depeng et al., 2024; Yong et al., 2024). This study focuses on factors influencing purchase intention rather than actual purchase behavior itself. Because purchase intention is the most direct and powerful predictor of actual purchase behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), a precise analysis of its formation mechanism holds higher theoretical value and practical foresight.

Based on 2024 demographic data and the proportion of e-commerce live-streaming users, the estimated number of active e-commerce live-streaming users in Shandong Province is approximately 42.739 million. This constitutes the potential study population. The determination of sample size follows the authoritative framework proposed by Krejcie and Morgan in 1970. This framework indicates that when the population size (N) reaches or exceeds 1 million, the minimum required sample size (n) is 384 at a 95% confidence level with a $\pm 5\%$ sampling error. Given that the population of this study exceeds 1 million,

according to the Krejcie & Morgan (1970) formula, with a 95% confidence interval, the required sample size is 384. Krejcie and Morgan's formula is $n = [X^2 * N * p * (1-p)] / [e^2 * (N-1) + X^2 * p * (1-p)]$, where n = sample size; N = population size; e = acceptable sampling error; X^2 = chi-square value for 1 degree of freedom at 95% confidence = 3.841; p = population proportion (if unknown, use 0.5). 384 is the scientific baseline ensuring sample representativeness. Furthermore, given the additional sample size requirements for Structural Equation Modeling (e.g., the "10-times rule") and the possibility of invalid responses during questionnaire collection, this study will strive to obtain more valid questionnaires, exceeding this baseline, in actual data collection to provide more stable parameter estimates and higher statistical power.

Variable Scale Measurement

All core constructs in this study are measured using a questionnaire survey method and a five-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree). All measurement items are adapted from mature, repeatedly validated scales published in internationally authoritative journals. Necessary contextual fine-tuning of the wording has been made to align with the specific context of e-commerce live streaming in Shandong Province, China, to ensure the content validity and situational applicability of the scales.

Table 3.1: Variables, Measurement Items, and Sources for this Study

Variable	Title Number	Measurement Item	Source
Customer Purchase Intention (CPI)	CP11	I will choose e-commerce livestreaming as my preferred shopping method.	Yin et al., 2020; Gao et al., 2020;
	CP12	I find shopping through e-commerce livestreaming more reliable.	
	CP13	If given the opportunity, I would consider purchasing products in e-commerce livestreams.	
	CP14	I believe high-quality products can be found through e-commerce livestreaming.	
	CP15	I would recommend this livestream to others.	
Professionalism (PR)	PR1	The e-commerce live streamer is a product expert.	Yin et al., 2020; Gao et al., 2020;
	PR2	The e-commerce live streamer has extensive experience with the products.	
	PR3	The e-commerce live streamer is very knowledgeable about the products.	
	PR4	The e-commerce live streamer is objective when recommending products.	
	PR5	The e-commerce live streamer emphasizes product details during introductions.	
Interactivity (IN)	IN1	The e-commerce live streamer enjoys communicating with customers.	Yin et al., 2020; Gao et al., 2020;
	IN2	The e-commerce live streamer actively responds to customer inquiries.	
	IN3	The e-commerce live streamer promptly replies to customer questions.	
	IN4	The e-commerce live streamer provides relevant information to meet customer needs.	
	IN5	The e-commerce live streamer can manage emojis.	
Popularity (PO)	P01	I enjoy watching popular e-commerce live streamers.	Yin et al., 2020; Han et al., 2020;
	P02	People around me know this e-commerce live streamer.	
	P03	This e-commerce live streamer has a large following.	
	P04	This e-commerce live streamer's livestream attracts significant traffic.	
	P05	Popular e-commerce live streamers give me more confidence when purchasing products.	
Perceived Social Value (PSV)	PSV1	Using products recommended by the e-commerce live streamer will leave a good impression on others	Yin et al., 2020; Han et al., 2020; Zheng et al., 2019;
	PSV2	Using products recommended by the e-commerce live streamer will earn you more praise from those around you	
	PSV3	e-commerce livestreaming can help you gain social recognition	
	PSV4	e-commerce livestreaming makes you more confident in social settings	
	PSV5	Using products recommended by the e-commerce live streamer helps you project a positive personal image	

Data Analysis

To verify the theoretical hypotheses proposed in this study, the following data analysis strategies and steps are planned. Data analysis will follow a systematic process from measurement instrument testing to theoretical model validation. First, descriptive statistics will be conducted on the collected valid questionnaire data to present the basic demographic (e.g., age, gender, education level, income, etc.) and behavioral characteristics of the sample. Second, before formally testing the structural model, the reliability and validity of the measurement instruments need to be ensured. For this purpose, the following tests are planned sequentially: Item Analysis will employ the Extreme Group Comparison method and the Item-Total Correlation method to discriminate and screen items; Reliability Analysis

plans to use SPSS software, calculating Cronbach's α coefficient and Corrected Item-Total Correlation (CITC) values to assess the internal consistency of the scales; Validity Analysis will first conduct the KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to judge the suitability of the data for factor analysis. Subsequently, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is intended to examine the construct validity of the scales, investigating the item loadings and the variance contributions of the common factors. Given that the measurement model passes the tests, this study plans to employ Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) as the primary method for hypothesis testing. This method is suitable for research aimed at theory development and prediction, and it has relatively lenient requirements for data distribution. The analysis is planned to be completed using SmartPLS software. By estimating and testing the significance of the path coefficients in the structural model, the aim is to systematically test all the research hypotheses proposed earlier regarding the relationships between e-commerce live streamer characteristics, perceived social value, and customer purchase intention.

Conclusions and Future Recommendations

The formation mechanism of customer purchase intention in e-commerce live streaming has become a research hotspot in the era of digital consumption. However, existing research predominantly focuses on repurchase intention and impulse buying, with insufficient attention to the complete psychological pathways of fundamental purchase intention. Simultaneously, within the mechanism by which live streamer characteristics exert influence, discussions of the mediating role of perceived value, particularly the dimension of perceived social value, remain scarce. Focusing on the typical regional market of Shandong Province, China, this study empirically tested the mediating role of perceived social value between e-commerce live streamer characteristics (professionalism, interactivity, popularity) and customer purchase intention, and constructed and validated an integrated "live streamer characteristics - perceived social value - customer purchase intention" theoretical model.

Concurrently, this study, for the first time in the context of regional (Shandong Province) e-commerce live streaming, systematically argues for the key mediating role of perceived social value. This implies that in live-streaming scenarios in the Shandong market, consumers are not only purchasing goods but also seeking value in experiences of community belonging, identity recognition, and social interaction. The authority and trust built by live streamers through professional explanations, the intimate sense of community fostered through high-frequency interaction, and the trend-leading and social identity symbols provided by popularity ultimately translate into the social benefits perceived by consumers, thereby significantly driving their purchase intention. This conclusion offers a new perspective on solving the practical problems currently faced by the e-commerce live streaming industry in Shandong and nationwide, such as differences in live streamer capabilities, content homogenization, and weak emotional connections with consumers. The perspective involves shifting from mere "product promotion" to "value co-creation and community operation," establishing differentiated advantages and deep user loyalty by consciously constructing and transmitting social value.

However, this study also has certain limitations. Firstly, although the research sample is representative, it is confined to Shandong Province. The generalizability of the conclusions to other regions nationwide requires further testing. Secondly, this study primarily focuses

on the mediating mechanism of perceived social value, resulting in a relatively concise model. Future research could deepen and expand in the following directions: First, expand the research scope to conduct cross-regional comparative studies and test the model's stability across different cultural and economic contexts. Second, constructing a more comprehensive integrated model. Future research should incorporate perceived utilitarian value (e.g., cost-performance, quality perception) and perceived entertainment value (e.g., fun, pleasure) alongside perceived social value to form a more comprehensive system of mediating variables, thereby more fully revealing the diverse psychological mechanisms through which e-commerce live streaming influences customer purchase intention. Third, employing longitudinal research designs. Through tracking surveys, capturing the dynamic changes in consumer perceptions and intentions to enhance the causal inferential power of the research. Through continued exploration in the above directions, academia can construct a more three-dimensional, dynamic, and contextually grounded theoretical framework, thereby providing a stronger academic foundation and practical guidance for the refined operation and high-quality development of the e-commerce live streaming industry.

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