Asian Business Research Journal
Vol. 11, No. 5, 15-21, 2026
ISSN: 2576-6759
DOI: 10.55220/2576-6759.944

How Live Streaming Characteristics Drive Rational and Impulsive Purchase Intentions: A Dual-Path S-O-R Perspective

Xiu Juan Ou[1]
Yu Yun Liang[2]
An-Shin Shia[3] ✉

[1,2,3]*Business School, Lingnan Normal University, Zhanjiang, Guangdong, China.*
(✉ Corresponding Author)

Abstract

Live streaming e-commerce has become a dominant consumption scenario. However, existing research often neglects the dual mediation mechanism of cognitive and affective pathways. Grounded in Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) theory, this study constructs a model depicting the relationships among live streaming commerce characteristics, cognitive trust, affective pleasure, purchase intention, and impulsive purchase intention. Empirical results indicate that low-price promotions and intuitive product demonstration have replaced interactivity as core attractions, whereas interaction quality and perceived trust remain relatively weak. Live streaming characteristics directly and positively affect consumption intentions and significantly enhance cognitive trust and affective pleasure. Both cognitive and affective pathways exert positive driving effects on purchase decisions, and the affective pathway presents a stronger influence on impulsive consumption. Cognitive trust and affective pleasure jointly play a significant parallel dual mediating role between live streaming characteristics and behavioral intentions. This study verifies the explanatory power of the S-O-R framework and reveals a superficial development pattern characterized by overemphasis on promotion and display and insufficient attention to interaction and trust. The findings provide empirical implications for businesses to achieve integrated development of brand value and operational efficiency.

Keywords: Affective pleasure, Dual mediation effect, Impulsive purchase intention, Live streaming commerce characteristics, Purchase intention, S-O-R theory.

1. Introduction

With the deep integration of the digital economy and social e-commerce, live streaming commerce has emerged as a mainstream consumption scenario and a normalized shopping channel. Distinguished by real-time interaction, situational display, and time-limited promotions, this medium has catalyzed a profound shift in consumer decision-making—from rational, price-oriented behaviors to experience-driven, socially present, and impulse-driven actions. As the industry expands, it has become evident that business models relying excessively on low-price strategies are difficult to sustain (Liu et al., 2020; Li, 2024). Despite the growing body of literature on live streaming, existing studies predominantly focus on the direct impacts of isolated variables, such as streamer attributes or promotional mechanisms, on purchase intention (Liu et al., 2020; Meng et al., 2020). Few studies have constructed an integrated framework that comprehensively covers the technical, social, and economic stimuli inherent in real live streaming environments. Furthermore, the psychological "black box" translating these external stimuli into behavioral responses remains insufficiently explored. Most prior research adopts single-mediator models—typically focusing solely on affective states—ignoring the differentiated functions of cognitive and affective dual pathways (Xu, 2021; Xu & Liu, 2024).

To bridge these theoretical and practical gaps, this study constructs a holistic stimulus framework and examines consumers' behavioral decision-making mechanisms through the integrated lenses of Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) theory and social presence theory. Specifically, we define and validate a five-dimensional stimulus system that encapsulates technical characteristics (interactivity, media richness, and synchronicity), social characteristics (streamer attractiveness), and economic characteristics (promotional incentives). This study investigates how these multi-dimensional stimuli activate consumers' cognitive trust and affective pleasure. Subsequently, we examine whether these cognitive and affective responses exert distinct effects on rational purchase intention versus impulsive purchase intention, and we verify their parallel dual mediating roles within the current live streaming ecology.

This study makes several key contributions to the literature. First, it enriches the psychological mechanism of consumer decision-making in live streaming e-commerce by integrating S-O-R and social presence theories (Xu, 2021). By explicitly distinguishing between cognitive trust and affective pleasure, this research remedies the conceptual ambiguity caused by previous studies relying on a generalized, single affective attitude (Cui et al., 2024; Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020), thereby establishing a more rigorous paradigm for variable definition. Second, by introducing impulsive purchase intention alongside rational purchase intention, the study enhances the

interpretation of unplanned, trigger-driven consumption behaviors that are inherently characteristic of live streaming scenarios (Chen & Yao, 2022; Park & Lin, 2020; Cao, 2025). Practically, the findings provide actionable operational references for key stakeholders. For streamers, the results guide the optimization of interaction, product demonstration, and professional image-building to simultaneously foster cognitive trust and affective pleasure. For platforms, the insights inform the improvement of live streaming tools and situational experiences to boost user retention, while merchants can leverage these cognitive-affective conversion paths to improve transaction efficiency and reduce customer acquisition costs (Han & Xu, 2020).

The empirical analysis in this study is based on data collected via a structured questionnaire using mature scales and quota sampling to ensure representativeness. Statistical analyses, including descriptive statistics, reliability and validity tests, correlation analysis, and regression analysis, were conducted using SPSS 26.0. Notably, the PROCESS macro was utilized to rigorously test the parallel dual mediation effects. By strictly adhering to the Stimulus-Organism-Response logical sequence, this study forms a complete and consistent explanatory framework. The remainder of this paper is organized as follows: Section 2 reviews the relevant literature; Section 3 develops the theoretical model and hypotheses; Section 4 details the research methodology; Section 5 presents the empirical results and hypothesis testing; and Section 6 discusses the findings, implications, limitations, and future research directions, theoretical and practical implications, limitations, and future research directions.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Live Streaming Commerce as Multidimensional Stimuli

Live streaming commerce characteristics constitute the external environmental stimuli that consumers perceive and process during live shopping events. Based on social presence theory and the unique affordances of this medium, prior studies have identified various dimensional features such as interactivity, media richness, and streamer attributes (Liu et al., 2020; Xu, 2021; Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020). Interactivity enables real-time dialogue and co-creation, fostering a sense of social presence. Media richness delivers high-sensory stimulation through high-definition displays and multi-angle demonstrations. Synchronicity creates a sense of time pressure through real-time information feedback and limited-time constraints. Furthermore, streamer attractiveness—encompassing professionalism, credibility, and affinity—acts as a vital social stimulus (Han & Xu, 2020), while promotional incentives, comprising exclusive discounts and coupons, serve as a primary economic driver (Chen & Yao, 2022).

Despite these valuable insights, existing literature predominantly examines these characteristics in isolation, focusing heavily on singular dimensions such as streamer attributes or promotional mechanisms (Meng et al., 2020). Few studies have constructed a holistic stimulus framework that systematically integrates technical, social, and economic dimensions simultaneously. In reality, consumers are exposed to a complex, synergistic environment rather than isolated cues. To accurately reflect the current live streaming ecology, this study conceptualizes live streaming characteristics as a comprehensive five-dimensional stimulus system: interactivity, media richness, synchronicity, streamer attractiveness, and promotional incentives.

2.2. Cognitive and Affective Responses: A Dual-Path Perspective

Within the S-O-R paradigm, external stimuli are processed through internal organism states before eliciting behavioral responses. In live streaming contexts, these internal states encompass both cognitive evaluations and situation-induced emotional reactions. However, existing literature frequently conflates these two distinct psychological processes. Many studies rely on a generalized, single mediator—such as "attitude," "perceived value," or a broad "affective experience"—to explain consumer reactions (Cui et al., 2024; Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020). This conceptual ambiguity obscures the specific psychological mechanisms at play, making it difficult to determine how different stimuli trigger distinct internal pathways.

To remedy this theoretical limitation, this study strictly divides the organism component into a dual-path structure: cognitive trust and affective pleasure. Cognitive trust represents a rational, evaluative path, reflecting the cognitive judgment and belief formed by information authenticity, product assurance, and streamer professionalism. Conversely, affective pleasure represents an experiential, emotional path, capturing the enjoyment, relaxation, and excitement derived from viewing and interacting. By explicitly distinguishing between cognitive and affective responses, this study establishes a more rigorous paradigm for understanding how consumers psychologically navigate the live streaming environment.

2.3. From Rational to Impulsive: Divergent Behavioral Outcomes

The ultimate outcomes of the S-O-R framework in e-commerce are typically behavioral responses. While traditional online shopping models heavily emphasize rational purchase intention—defined as a planned, goal-oriented buying likelihood—live streaming commerce inherently fosters a different behavioral pattern: impulsive purchase intention. Impulsive purchase intention refers to a sudden, spontaneous, and powerful urge to buy immediately, triggered by environmental cues without deliberate deliberation (Chen & Yao, 2022). Compared to rational purchase intention, impulsive buying better captures the instant, emotion-driven, and atmosphere-dependent nature of live streaming consumption (Park & Lin, 2020).

Although prior research recognizes that trust and pleasure generally promote purchase intention, and that affective states exert a stronger impact on impulsive behaviors (Park & Lin, 2020; Li, 2025), significant gaps remain. Most existing studies adopt single-mediator models to link stimuli to outcomes, failing to capture the differentiated effects of cognitive versus affective paths on distinct behavioral intentions. For instance, it remains unclear how cognitive trust and affective pleasure uniquely drive rational purchasing compared to impulsive purchasing within the same integrated model. Furthermore, the explanatory power of these relationships may vary depending on contextual moderators like product type or streamer type (Xu & Liu, 2024), yet integrated models that account for these complex pathways are scarce. Consequently, by constructing a parallel dual-mediation model

that distinguishes between rational and impulsive purchase intentions, this study bridges these gaps, offering a more precise and comprehensive explanation of consumer decision-making in live streaming scenarios.

3. Theoretical Model and Hypotheses

3.1. Theoretical Foundation and Conceptual Model

Drawing upon the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) paradigm, this study posits that the multidimensional characteristics of live streaming commerce act as external stimuli (S) that trigger distinct internal psychological states (O)—namely, cognitive trust and affective pleasure—which subsequently drive divergent behavioral responses, specifically rational purchase intention and impulsive purchase intention. Social presence theory further complements this framework by elucidating how technological affordances (e.g., interactivity, media richness) and social cues (e.g., streamer attributes) generate a sense of "being there," thereby facilitating emotional immersion and psychological closeness (Xu, 2021; Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020; Qin, 2025). Based on this theoretical synthesis, a conceptual model with parallel dual mediation paths is proposed (see Figure 1).

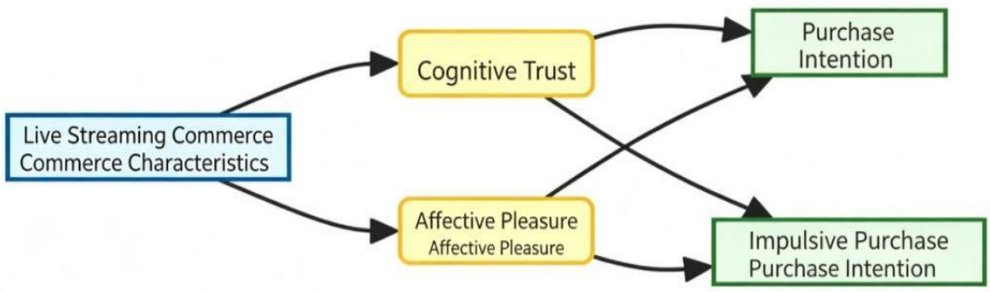

Figure 1. Flowchart of the Research Conceptual Model.

3.2. Hypothesis Development

3.2.1. Impact of Live Streaming Characteristics on Cognitive Trust

Cognitive trust is rooted in rational assessment and the perception of reliability. The multidimensional features of live streaming provide consumers with rich informational cues to form such evaluations. From a technical perspective, interactivity allows consumers to ask real-time questions and receive instant feedback, significantly reducing information asymmetry and uncertainty (Xu, 2021). Media richness enables high-definition, multi-angle product demonstrations, allowing consumers to inspect product details virtually, which strengthens product assurance. From a social perspective, a streamer's attractiveness—manifested through professionalism and expertise—acts as a heuristic cue for competence, directly fostering rational credibility (Han & Xu, 2020). Even economic and temporal cues, such as synchronicity (real-time inventory updates) and promotional incentives (transparent pricing mechanisms), provide rational signals of value and transaction security. Consequently, the integrated technical, social, and economic stimuli in live streaming environments systematically cultivate consumers' cognitive trust. Thus, we hypothesize:

H_1: Live streaming commerce characteristics (interactivity, media richness, synchronicity, streamer attractiveness, and promotional incentives) have a significant positive impact on cognitive trust.

3.2.2. Impact of Live Streaming Characteristics on Affective Pleasure

In contrast to cognitive trust, affective pleasure represents an experiential and emotional response. Social presence theory suggests that live streaming transforms solitary shopping into a socially engaging event. Interactivity and media richness create a highly immersive sensory environment that triggers enjoyment and emotional arousal (Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020). The synchronicity of live broadcasts generates a thrilling sense of time pressure and exclusivity, elevating emotional excitement. Furthermore, streamer attractiveness—particularly affinity, humor, and expressiveness—facilitates parasocial interactions, generating emotional contagion and a sense of companionship. Finally, promotional incentives (e.g., securing a limited-time discount) elicit immediate gratification and hedonic value. By stimulating multiple sensory and social receptors, these characteristics collectively enhance consumers' affective pleasure. Thus, we hypothesize:

H_2: Live streaming commerce characteristics (interactivity, media richness, synchronicity, streamer attractiveness, and promotional incentives) have a significant positive impact on affective pleasure.

3.2.3. Impact on Purchase Intention and Impulsive Purchase Intention

Once internal states are activated, they guide behavioral responses through differentiated pathways. Cognitive trust, built on rational evaluation and risk reduction, lowers the perceived transaction risk and aligns with goal-oriented shopping behaviors, thereby strongly driving planned purchase intention (Li, 2024). Conversely, affective pleasure represents a hedonic, experiential state. In the highly stimulating atmosphere of live streaming, elevated pleasure lowers self-control and triggers spontaneous reactions, making it a primary antecedent of impulsive purchase intention (Chen & Yao, 2022; Park & Lin, 2020).

However, the boundaries between rational and impulsive behaviors in live streaming are permeable. Affective pleasure can also positively influence general purchase intention by enhancing overall shopping satisfaction, while cognitive trust—by lowering the threshold for decision-making in a fast-paced environment—can also inadvertently facilitate impulsive buying (Xu & Liu, 2024). Nevertheless, following the core tenets of the cognition-affect dichotomy, cognitive trust is theoretically expected to exert a relatively stronger effect on rational purchase intention, whereas affective pleasure will more robustly predict impulsive purchase intention. Thus, we hypothesize:

H_3: Cognitive trust has a significant positive impact on purchase intention.

H_4: Affective pleasure has a significant positive impact on purchase intention.

H_5 Cognitive trust has a significant positive impact on impulsive purchase intention.
H_6 Affective pleasure has a significant positive impact on impulsive purchase intention.

4. Research Methodology

4.1. Measurement Scales

All constructs were measured using validated multi-item scales adapted from prior literature. Responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The independent variable, live streaming commerce characteristics, was conceptualized as a five-dimensional second-order construct: interactivity, media richness, synchronicity, streamer attractiveness, and promotional incentives. Scales for these dimensions were adapted from Liu et al. (2020), Wongkitrungrueng and Assarut (2020), and Han and Xu (2020). Mediating variables (cognitive trust and affective pleasure) were measured using scales adapted from Cui et al. (2024) and Xu (2021). Dependent variables (rational purchase intention and impulsive purchase intention) were assessed using items adapted from Park and Lin (2020) and Chen and Yao (2022). Control variables included gender, age, education, viewing frequency, and annual consumption. All items were translated using a standard back-translation procedure.

4.2. Data Collection and Sample

Data were collected via an online survey platform (Wenjuanxing) in April 2026. Attention-check questions were embedded, and respondents who had never watched live streaming were excluded. From 225 initial responses, 46 invalid responses were removed, yielding 179 valid samples. As shown in Table 1, the sample was predominantly female (78.77%), aged 19–25 (92.74%), and undergraduate students (87.15%). While indicating a concentrated profile, this accurately reflects the core demographic of live streaming impulse-driven consumption behaviors, making the sample theoretically appropriate for this study (Cao, 2025). Table 2 shows that most respondents were occasional viewers (72.07%) with low annual consumption (58.10% under 100 RMB).

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Sample.

Variable	Category	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	38	21.23
	Female	141	78.77
Age	18 or below	8	4.47
	19–25	166	92.74
	26–35	2	1.12
	36–45	2	1.12
	46 or above	1	0.56
Education	High school or below	2	1.12
	Junior college	16	8.94
	Bachelor's degree	156	87.15
	Master's or above	5	2.79

Table 2. Live Streaming Viewing and Consumption Behavior.

Variable	Category	Frequency	%
Viewing Frequency	Occasional (1–2/month)	129	72.07
	Regular (1–2/week)	35	19.55
	Frequent (≥3/week)	15	8.38
Annual Consumption	≤100 RMB	104	58.10
	101–500 RMB	43	24.02
	501–1000 RMB	20	11.17
	1001–5000 RMB	10	5.59
	≥5001 RMB	2	1.12

5. Empirical Analysis and Results

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 26.0 and the PROCESS macro. Prior to hypothesis testing, common method bias was assessed via Harman's single-factor test, which revealed that the largest factor explained 32.7% of the variance (< 50%), indicating no severe bias.

5.1. Measurement Model

Reliability and validity were evaluated to ensure the robustness of the measurement model. As shown in Table 3, the Cronbach's α coefficients for all variables (Live streaming characteristics (LSC), cognitive trust (CT), affective pleasure (AP), purchase intention (PI), and impulsive purchase intention (IPI). ranged from 0.814 to 0.872, exceeding the 0.80 threshold, which demonstrated excellent internal consistency.

Construct validity was further confirmed through factor analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer- Olkin (KMO) value was 0.826, and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant (*p* < 0.001), indicating suitability for factor analysis. Convergent validity was established as all factor loadings were ≥ 0.6 and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for all constructs met the ≥ 0.5 criterion. Discriminant validity was supported, as the square root of the AVE for each construct exceeded its correlation coefficients with other constructs. Overall, the measurement model exhibited robust psychometric properties.

Table 3. Reliability and Validity Analysis.

Variable	Code	Items	Cronbach's α	AVE
Live streaming characteristics	LSC	16	0.872	0.62
Cognitive trust	CT	3	0.835	0.63
Affective pleasure	AP	3	0.826	0.62
Purchase intention	PI	4	0.851	0.65
Impulsive purchase intention	IPI	3	0.814	0.61

***Notes:** KMO = 0.826; Bartlett's test of sphericity $p < 0.001$. Discriminant validity is supported as the square root of AVE for each construct exceeds its correlation coefficients with other constructs. Common method bias is not severe (single factor explains 32.7% of variance < 50%).

5.2. Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis (Table 4) indicated that all core variables were significantly and positively correlated (*p* < 0.01). Live streaming characteristics howed strong positive correlations with cognitive trust (*r* = 0.682) and affective pleasure (*r* = 0.715). Furthermore, cognitive trust and affective pleasure were positively correlated with both purchase intention and impulsive purchase intention. These results provided initial support for the hypothesized relationships and met the prerequisites for regression analysis.

Table 4. Correlation Matrix.

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
LSC	1				
CT	0.682	1			
AP	0.715	0.693	1		
PI	0.658	0.671	0.704	1	
IPI	0.696	0.648	0.732	0.765	1

Note: $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed).

5.3. Hypothesis Testing

To test the proposed hypotheses, hierarchical regression analysis and the PROCESS macro (Model 4 with 5,000 bootstrap samples) were employed.

Main Effects: The regression results (Table 5) demonstrated that live streaming commerce characteristics significantly and positively predicted cognitive trust ($\beta = 0.682$, *p* < 0.001) and affective pleasure ($\beta = 0.715$, *p* < 0.001), supporting H1 and H2. Regarding behavioral outcomes, cognitive trust ($\beta = 0.326$, *p* < 0.001) and affective pleasure ($\beta = 0.385$, *p* < 0.001) both significantly predicted rational purchase intention, supporting H3 and H4. For impulsive purchase intention, both cognitive trust ($\beta = 0.293$, *p* < 0.001) and affective pleasure ($\beta = 0.447$, *p* < 0.001) were significant predictors, supporting H5 and H6. Notably, comparing the beta coefficients, affective pleasure exerted a stronger impact on impulsive purchase intention (0.447) than cognitive trust (0.293), aligning with the theoretical differentiation of the dual paths.

Mediation Effects:The bootstrap results (Table 6) confirmed the parallel dual-mediation mechanism. For rational purchase intention, both the indirect path through cognitive trust (effect = 0.217, 95% CI [0.152, 0.289]) and affective pleasure (effect = 0.258, 95% CI [0.187, 0.336]) were significant, with a significant direct effect (0.183). For impulsive purchase intention, the indirect paths via cognitive trust (effect = 0.190, 95% CI [0.131, 0.255]) and affective pleasure (effect = 0.308, 95% CI [0.230, 0.392]) were also significant, alongside a significant direct effect (0.198). These results fully validate the proposed S-O-R dual-path model, confirming that live streaming characteristics drive both rational and impulsive purchasing through cognitive and affective mechanisms.

Table 5. Regression Results.

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	β	t	p	R^2	Hypothesis
CT	LSC	0.682	12.35	<0.001	0.465	H1 Supported
AP	LSC	0.715	13.72	<0.001	0.511	H2 Supported
PI	CT	0.326	7.18	<0.001	0.450	H3 Supported
	AP	0.385	8.42	<0.001		H4 Supported
IPI	CT	0.293	6.53	<0.001	0.536	H5 Supported
	AP	0.447	9.96	<0.001		H6 Supported
PI	LSC	0.658	11.47	<0.001	0.433	Direct Effect
IPI	LSC	0.696	12.91	<0.001	0.484	Direct Effect

Table 6. Parallel Dual Mediation Results.

Path	Effect	SE	95%CI Lower	95%CI Upper	Mediation
Characteristics → CT → Purchase	0.217	0.035	0.152	0.289	Significant
Characteristics → AP → Purchase	0.258	0.039	0.187	0.336	Significant
Characteristics → CT → Impulsive	0.190	0.032	0.131	0.255	Significant
Characteristics → AP → Impulsive	0.308	0.042	0.230	0.392	Significant
Characteristics → Purchase (direct)	0.183	0.041	0.103	0.263	Significant
Characteristics → Impulsive (direct)	0.198	0.044	0.112	0.284	Significant

6. Conclusion and Implications

6.1. Conclusions

Drawing upon empirical data and the S-O-R paradigm, this study yields three core conclusions regarding consumer decision-making in live streaming commerce. First, live streaming characteristics function as a holistic, multidimensional stimulus encompassing technical, social, and economic cues. Second, the cognitive-affective dual-path mechanism is robustly validated: external stimuli drive both rational and impulsive purchase intentions

through the parallel mediation of cognitive trust and affective pleasure. Third, and most distinctively, a clear divergence in path effects is observed; while cognitive trust predominantly sustains rational purchasing, affective pleasure serves as the significantly stronger catalyst for impulsive buying, confirming the experiential and atmosphere-dependent nature of live streaming consumption.

6.2. Discussion

The findings of this study offer several intriguing theoretical insights and nuances compared to prior literature. First, the empirical results reveal a "superficial" attraction mechanism in current live streaming ecosystems. Contrary to prior studies that position interactivity as the fundamental driver of live streaming (Xu, 2021), the descriptive statistics in this study indicate that young consumers rate promotional incentives and media richness (product display) significantly higher than interaction experience. This suggests a structural shift: in highly competitive markets, efficient information transmission and shallow emotional connections (e.g., visual appeal, streamer affinity, and low-price anchors) may have surpassed deep, two-way interactivity in terms of marginal utility for generating initial consumer engagement.

Second, this study successfully addresses the conceptual ambiguity in prior S-O-R literature by validating the cognition-affect dichotomy. Existing research frequently relies on a generalized affective mediator, failing to explain why consumers exhibit both planned and unplanned purchasing behaviors in the same environment (Cui et al., 2024). By demonstrating that affective pleasure exerts a substantially stronger impact on impulsive purchase intention ($\beta = 0.447$) compared to cognitive trust ($\beta = 0.293$), this study provides empirical boundaries for how different psychological states govern different behavioral outcomes.

Third, the data exposes a critical paradox: the disconnection between short-term transactional conversion and long-term relational retention. While promotional incentives effectively stimulate immediate affective pleasure and impulsive actions, cognitive trust and recommendation willingness scored the lowest among all dimensions. This aligns with the concern that an over-reliance on economic stimuli creates a "trust deficit," where consumers transact based on immediate gratification but refrain from deeper cognitive commitment or word-of-mouth dissemination, ultimately threatening the sustainable growth of live streaming platforms.

6.3. Managerial Implications

The findings provide actionable strategic guidelines for live streaming stakeholders. For streamers, the results highlight a strategic paradox: while promotional incentives and product display are highly effective, the bottleneck lies in interaction depth and trust building. Streamers should transition from one-way, high-volume "shouting" sales pitches to interactive, expertise-driven dialogues. To foster *cognitive trust*, streamers must demonstrate professionalism and provide authentic product information; to trigger *affective pleasure*, they should leverage their *attractiveness* to create emotional resonance and parasocial relationships, rather than relying solely on price wars.

For platform operators, the low scores in interaction experience signal a need to upgrade technological affordances. Platforms should develop more intuitive real-time interaction tools (e.g., co-viewing features, interactive voting) to lower the threshold for user participation, transforming passive viewers into active participants.

For merchants, the study underscores the necessity of shifting from pure performance marketing to brand equity building. Given the sample's profile of "low-frequency viewing, low-consumption," merchants should design segmented product strategies—using live streaming primarily for low-risk, visually demonstrable experience goods to trigger affective impulse buying, while subsequently utilizing post-purchase services and quality assurance to cultivate the cognitive trust necessary for long-term customer retention and positive eWOM (electronic word-of-mouth).

6.4. Limitations and Future Research

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that present avenues for future research. First, the sample is highly concentrated among young, well-educated female consumers (Generation Z). While theoretically relevant for impulse buying, this limits the generalizability of the findings to broader demographic cohorts, such as older consumers or male-dominated verticals (e.g., gaming or tech live streaming). Future studies should employ more diverse, stratified sampling.

Second, this study utilized a cross-sectional survey design, which inherently limits the ability to establish strict causal relationships or capture the dynamic evolution of consumer psychology over time. Future research could adopt longitudinal tracking or experimental designs to observe how cognitive trust and affective pleasure fluctuate across different stages of the consumer journey. Finally, the current model focuses on direct mediation pathways; future research could integrate moderating variables—such as product type (search vs. experience goods), streamer type (expert vs. celebrity), or consumer involvement—to construct a more comprehensive moderated mediation model, further elucidating the boundary conditions of the dual-path mechanism in emerging scenarios like cross-border live streaming or brand self-broadcasting.

References

Liu, F. J., Meng, L., Chen, S. Y., & Duan, K. (2020). Research on the influence of online celebrity live streaming on consumers' purchase intention and its mechanism. *Chinese Journal of Management, 17*(1), 94–104. https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.1672-884x.2020.01.011

Xu, J. Y. (2021). Influence of online celebrity live streaming on college students' purchase intention based on S-O-R theory. *China Business & Trade.*

Meng, L., Liu, F. J., Chen, S. Y., & Duan, S. (2020). Can I arouse you? Influencing mechanism of information source characteristics of different types of live streaming online celebrities on purchase intention. *Nankai Business Review, 23*(1), 131–143.

Xu, A. F., & Liu, Z. H. (2024). Influencing factors of consumers' purchase decision in live streaming commerce: From the perspective of attention economy. *Journal of Business Economics.*

Han, X. Y., & Xu, Z. L. (2020). Influence of e-commerce streamer attributes on consumers' online purchase intention: Based on grounded theory. *Foreign Economics & Management.*

Chen, Y., & Yao, Z. (2022). The effects of real-time interaction in live streaming commerce on consumers' impulsive buying behavior. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 67*, 102995. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2022.102995

Cui, T., Dai, P., Xu, J., & Lu, Y. (2024). Influencing mechanisms of live streaming influencer characteristics on purchase intention: The mediating role of emotional trust. *PLOS ONE, 19*(11), e0322294. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0322294

Park, J., & Lin, L. (2020). Live streaming commerce: How live streaming influencers affect consumers' impulsive buying intention. *Journal of Interactive Marketing, 51*, 3–18. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2020.07.003

Wongkitrungrueng, A., & Assarut, N. (2020). The role of live streaming in building consumer trust and purchase intention. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 55*, 102110. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2020.102110

Li, F. Y. (2024). Influence of e-commerce live streaming interactivity on consumers' online purchase intention: Chain mediation based on flow experience and perceived value. *Journal of Business Economics.*

Cao, W. P. (2025). Formation mechanism and governance path of live streaming e-commerce driving consumers' impulsive purchase from the perspective of SOR. *E-commerce Review.*

Li, L. (2025). Research on influencing factors of consumers' impulsive purchase intention in e-commerce live streaming: From the perspective of ELM dual-path model. *China Business & Trade.*

Qin, J. X. (2025). Research on the influence mechanism of real-time interaction on consumers' impulsive buying behavior in e-commerce live streaming. *E-commerce Review.*