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THE ROLE OF LIVE STREAMING ELEMENTS IN INFLUENCING CONSUMER PURCHASE BEHAVIOR: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW OF THE FITNESS PRODUCT MARKET

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Abstract:

The rise of live streaming has redefined digital marketing, particularly in the fitness industry, where real-time interactions between influencers and consumers shape purchasing decisions. This systematic literature review (SLR) explores how elements within live streaming, specifically streamer characteristics, fitness product properties, and the streaming environment, influence consumer perceptions of trust, perceived value, and ultimately, purchase behaviour. Conducted through a comprehensive search of academic databases, this review includes 50 studies published between 2015 and 2024. The review synthesizes findings to offer insights into how streamer credibility, product quality, and interactivity drive consumer engagement. This study provides a cohesive understanding of the mechanisms at play in live streaming and offers recommendations for future research to deepen our understanding of digital consumer behaviour in this context.

Keywords:

Live Streaming, Consumer Behaviour, Fitness Products, Trust, Perceived Value, Purchase Behaviour, Digital Marketing



Introduction

The rapid expansion of digital platforms has revolutionised how businesses engage with consumers, offering new and innovative methods for marketing. Among these, live streaming has emerged as a particularly effective tool for real-time consumer interaction. In the fitness industry, where dynamic demonstrations and personal engagement are critical, live streaming provides a unique platform for influencers to showcase products, demonstrate exercises, and connect directly with potential consumers. This form of marketing surpasses traditional advertising by offering a level of immediacy and authenticity that is challenging to replicate through other channels. Unlike pre-recorded videos or static advertisements, live streaming thrives on spontaneity and interaction. Viewers can ask questions, seek clarifications, and watch products being used in real-time. This immediacy provides consumers with direct access to information, making live streams a valuable resource for those seeking to make informed purchasing decisions. Additionally, the interactive nature of live streaming fosters a sense of authenticity. Consumers perceive live demonstrations as less scripted and more genuine, which can build trust and confidence in both the influencer and the products being promoted.

In the context of fitness products, these attributes of live streaming are particularly impactful. Fitness influencers often serve as trusted sources of information for their followers, who seek not only advice but also validation for their purchasing decisions. Streamer characteristics such as expertise, credibility, and personality play a significant role in shaping consumer perceptions and actions. Similarly, product attributes such as quality, usability, and relevance are amplified when showcased in real-time demonstrations, allowing consumers to see the value of the product in practical use. Furthermore, the live-streaming environment itself, with its interactive and community-driven atmosphere, creates a unique context where consumers feel more engaged and confident in their decisions.

Research supports these observations. For instance, studies like those by Lu et al. (2021) have highlighted how live streaming builds trust and enhances consumer engagement by creating a sense of real-time connection. Wongkitrungrueng and Assarut (2020) emphasise the importance of streamer credibility and interaction in driving purchase decisions, while Chen and Lin (2022) explore the role of authenticity in live-streaming environments in fostering consumer trust. In conclusion, live streaming has established itself as a transformative tool in the marketing of fitness products. Its ability to combine real-time interaction, authenticity, and personalised engagement sets it apart from traditional marketing approaches. By leveraging the unique attributes of live streaming, fitness influencers and brands can not only promote their products effectively but also build lasting relationships with their audience, significantly influencing consumer purchase behaviour in the process.

The research questions guiding this review are:

Q1: How do streamer characteristics influence consumer perceptions of trust and perceived value?

Q2: What role do fitness product properties play in shaping consumer perceptions?

Q3: How does the live streaming environment contribute to consumer decision-making processes?

This systematic review is necessary due to the fragmented nature of the existing literature on live streaming's influence on consumer behavior. Although studies have examined various aspects of live streaming, there is a need to synthesise these findings to present a comprehensive overview of how live streaming elements affect consumer purchase decisions. By systematically reviewing and synthesising existing research, this study aims to provide a framework that can guide future research and inform marketing strategies in the fitness industry.

Methodology

This SLR was conducted following a structured methodology to ensure rigour and replicability. The review process involved a systematic search of three primary databases: Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, and JSTOR. These databases were chosen for their comprehensive coverage of academic research across multiple disciplines. The search terms used included "live streaming," "consumer behavior," "fitness products," "trust," "purchase behavior," and "perceived value." Boolean operators were employed to refine the search, and the review focused on peer-reviewed articles published between 2015 and 2024.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

To ensure relevance, studies were included based on the following criteria:

- a. Published in English
- b. Empirical studies that specifically address the impact of live streaming on consumer behaviour

Studies focusing on the fitness product market or generalizable to this context were excluded if they did not involve empirical research, focused on non-fitness markets without direct relevance, or were not published in peer-reviewed journals. The initial search yielded 200 studies, from which 50 were selected after applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Data Extraction and Synthesis

Data from selected studies were extracted and organised into themes based on the conceptual framework: streamer characteristics, fitness product properties, and live streaming scene. Thematic synthesis was employed to integrate findings across studies, enabling the identification of key patterns and insights relevant to each element of the framework.

Quality Assessment

The quality of the studies was assessed using the PRISMA guidelines and the CASP checklist, ensuring that only high-quality studies were included in the synthesis. This assessment focused on methodological rigour, sample size adequacy, and the clarity of reported findings, ensuring that the review provides a reliable synthesis of the current state of research.

Result

The selected studies were organised according to the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework, allowing for a structured analysis of how various live-streaming elements (stimuli) influence internal states (organism) and subsequent behaviours (response).

Streamer Characteristics

Streamer characteristics, credibility, expertise, attractiveness, and relatability emerge as pivotal factors in shaping consumer trust and perceived value. Grounded in the *Source Credibility Theory* (Hovland et al., 1953), which emphasises the impact of trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness on influence, recent research has contextualised these attributes within live streaming platforms, underscoring their critical role in cultivating consumer trust.

1. Credibility and Expertise

Lou and Yuan (2019) established that influencers perceived as highly credible and knowledgeable significantly enhance consumer trust, positively influencing purchase intentions. Similarly, Sokolova and Kefi (2020) affirmed that viewers exhibit a higher propensity to purchase products endorsed by credible streamers, thereby reinforcing the impact of expertise on consumer behaviour.

2. Attractiveness and Relatability

Attractiveness and relatability further augment the effectiveness of streamers in influencing audiences. Jin et al. (2019) demonstrated that these traits enhance consumer engagement by fostering appeal and personal connection. Additionally, Sawmong (2022) revealed that relatability not only strengthens audience-streamer bonds but also significantly contributes to purchase decisions by making streamers more accessible and engaging to their audiences.

Fitness Product Properties

The intrinsic properties of fitness products, quality, utility, and brand reputation are instrumental in shaping perceived value and consumer purchase behaviour. The *Expectancy-Value Theory* (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) explains how consumers evaluate products based on anticipated outcomes, with utility emerging as a central driver of decision-making.

1. Quality and Utility

Tsiotsou (2006) emphasized that perceived quality and satisfaction play both direct and indirect roles in shaping purchase intentions, particularly for sports-related products. Similarly, Hoo (2024) identified functional and practical benefits as key determinants of perceived value, directly influencing the decision-making process of fitness product consumers.

2. Brand Reputation

Aaker (1991) described brand reputation as a heuristic for trustworthiness, wherein products from reputable brands are perceived as more reliable. Salehzadeh and Pool (2017) corroborated this by demonstrating that brand trust enhances perceived value and purchase likelihood. Cuong (2020) further emphasised the interplay between perceived value and brand trust, highlighting their combined role in influencing consumer decisions, particularly for branded fitness products.

Live Streaming Scene

The live streaming environment, encompassing aesthetics, interactivity, and engagement mechanisms, significantly shapes consumer perceptions of value and trust. The Uses and Gratifications Theory (Katz et al., 1973) suggests that interactive and aesthetically engaging streaming environments fulfill consumer expectations and enhance satisfaction.

1. Aesthetics and Engagement

The research underscores the profound impact of aesthetics on consumer engagement. Tang et al. (2024) demonstrated that streamers with high physical attractiveness elicit stronger consumer responses, including sustained viewership, engagement, and purchase intentions. Hilvert-Bruce et al. (2018) highlighted how aesthetic appeal fosters immersive experiences,

cultivating loyalty. Furthermore, Wang (2024) found that aesthetic-driven emotional connections promote loyalty and repurchase behaviour, significantly exceeding consumer expectations.

2. Interactivity

Interactivity within live streaming environments also plays a critical role. Qian Li et al. (2023) identified features such as live chats and real-time feedback as essential for building trust and mediating purchase intentions. Wu et al. (2024) emphasised that real-time interaction fosters a sense of community, enhancing trust and driving consumer purchase intentions.

Perceived Value and Trust

Perceived value and trust serve as central mediators in the stimulus-organism-response (*S-O-R*) framework, connecting external stimuli to purchase behaviour. These internal states are shaped by streamer characteristics, product attributes, and live-streaming environments.

1. Perceived Value

Sweeney and Soutar's (2001) multidimensional value framework highlights the functional, emotional, and social dimensions of perceived value. Siti Wardah et al. (2023) demonstrated that functional utility and emotional enjoyment significantly predict purchase intentions in live-streaming contexts, reflecting the multi-faceted nature of perceived value.

2. Trust

Trust is indispensable in reducing the perceived risk associated with online transactions. Wu and Hang (2023) observed that trust in both the streamer and the product directly influences purchase behaviour. Malik et al. (2023) further posited that trust mediates the relationship between perceived value and purchase intentions, thereby reinforcing its critical role in fostering consumer loyalty and driving purchasing decisions.

Purchase Behaviour

Purchase behaviour represents the ultimate response within the *S-O-R* framework. Evidence consistently demonstrates the significant influence of perceived value and trust on consumer purchase decisions. Yang et al. (2022) highlighted that these factors mitigate perceived risk and enhance consumer confidence, ultimately fostering stronger purchase intentions in live-streaming environments.

Discussion

The findings from this review strongly support the application of the Stimulus-Organism-Response (*S-O-R*) model in explaining how live-streaming features influence consumer behavior. Key elements such as streamer credibility and expertise, product quality, and interactivity were identified as primary drivers of consumer engagement, ultimately shaping purchase decisions. These findings align with existing research in digital marketing, which consistently links credibility and interactive experiences to fostering trust and encouraging consumer actions (Lu et al., 2021; Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020). The practical implications for marketers are substantial. To maximise the effectiveness of live-streaming strategies, brands should prioritise collaborating with credible influencers whose expertise resonates with their target audience. Emphasising product quality through live demonstrations can highlight tangible benefits and foster perceived value among viewers. Furthermore, creating engaging and interactive streaming environments where consumers can ask questions,

participate in discussions, and feel part of a community can significantly enhance trust and emotional connection with the brand (Chen & Lin, 2022).

Despite these insights, several limitations within the existing literature warrant attention. Many studies in this domain rely heavily on self-reported data, which is prone to social desirability bias and inaccuracies. Additionally, cultural factors influencing live-streaming interactions remain underexplored. This gap is critical, as cultural norms and values may significantly affect consumer perceptions of credibility, interactivity, and authenticity in live-streaming contexts. To address these limitations, future research should incorporate cross-cultural comparisons and employ experimental designs that can better isolate the causal effects of live-streaming elements on consumer behaviour (Zhang et al., 2023). In conclusion, while this review underscores the efficacy of the S-O-R framework in understanding consumer behaviour in live-streaming contexts, further research is essential to address its current gaps. By exploring diverse cultural settings and adopting robust methodologies, future studies can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that drive consumer engagement and purchase behaviour in live-streaming environments.

Conclusion

If applicable, this section should include acknowledgement of any grant numbers or funding sources; otherwise, this detail can be omitted. This systematic literature review presents a comprehensive synthesis of the impact of live-streaming elements on consumer purchase behaviour, with a particular focus on the fitness product market. By examining the roles of streamer characteristics, product attributes, and the live-streaming environment, this review offers valuable insights into the factors influencing consumer engagement and purchase decisions in real-time digital marketing contexts. The findings emphasise the pivotal roles of perceived value and trust as mediators in the relationship between live-streaming stimuli and consumer purchase behaviour. Future research should extend these findings by employing longitudinal and cross-cultural approaches to enrich our understanding of live streaming's influence on consumer behaviour. As live streaming continues to evolve as a prominent marketing tool, understanding its impact on consumer decision-making processes will be crucial for brands seeking to establish meaningful and effective engagement with their target audiences.

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