

# *Effect of Live Streaming on Consumer Impulsive Purchase Behavior*

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**Abstract:** According to previous research, it can be illustrated that the environment, physical equipment and cultural concept influence factors in the live broadcast process have a certain impact on consumers' impulsive buying behavior. The atmosphere clues of the environment and heart flow experience created by physical equipment do have positive impact on consumer impulse purchases, and Zhong-Yong thinking due to cultural concept can have negative effects to a certain degree. On this basis, this paper narrows the scope of research on influencing factors, mainly explores how the host in the e-commerce live streaming to affect consumer impulse purchase behavior from the above three levels. By exploring the influencing factors at the main broadcast level, this paper will help the host to improve the quality of live show and improve the traffic conversion rate by implementing flexible e-commerce strategy.

## **1. Introduction**

With the rapid development of Internet in modern society, online shopping has become a brand-new business model. According to the 47th China Interlink Network Development Statistics Report, since December 2020, the number of live e-commerce subscribers in China has reached 388 million [1]. Taobao is currently one of the most popular "e-commerce and live" marketing platform. Taobao Live-led turnover has grown by more than 150% for three consecutive years, making it the fastest growing new economy [2]. E-commerce live streaming consists of three important elements: people, exactly the host and consumers, goods and platform. The live streaming provides a comprehensive commodity information service in real time and fascinates consumers' interest. Impulsive buying is a rapid, unconscious and unplanned purchase behavior of consumer influenced by both internal and external factors. This behavior often occurs to consumers during the live, which eventually leads to impulsive purchase behavior. The factors that affect this behavior in a live scene can be broadly divided into three levels: environment, physical equipment and cultural concept influence.

Given that online live shopping is so popular that it has become a hot topic in the Internet economy, this essay will take the consumers who have impulsive buying behavior during the live broadcast as the research object, to figure out the factors that influence the impulsive purchase behavior of consumers and put forward some feasible marketing strategies from the perspective of the host. This essay will first review related literatures about live streaming and the general impacts of the host, and

then will analyze specific factors of consumers' impulsive purchase behavior from the three aspects of the situational atmosphere influence created by the host. Finally, the relationship between the relevant influencing factors and consumer buying behavior is concluded, showing the host of live streaming how to improve the quality and efficiency of live to achieve sales purposes.

## 2. Literature Review

According to Li (2016) [3], live broadcast can improve the conversion rate of transactions, its contribution lies in the provision of live multi-directional information and live shopping atmosphere. According to Liu, Li and Yin (2020) [4], whose research based on SOR(Stimulus-Organism-Response) theory, as a new e-commerce model, live shopping attracts consumers through visual interface, real product display, interactivity and entertainment. By reading literature of a large number of scholars about e-commerce live research, we can conclude that e-commerce live broadcast mainly contains three elements, people, goods and platform. People include consumers, the audience of the live show, and the host, which is an indispensable part of the live broadcast shopping. Goods are what the host or the seller wants to sell to potential consumers in order to make profits. The platform is usually a medium where e-commerce live streaming goes on and creates an immersive interactive shopping experience for consumers, so that consumers will make the most intuitive response to the live situation in real time, that is, the willingness of impulsive purchase behavior.

E-commerce Live is a new application of Webcast in the Internet economy, which can significantly improve consumer purchases. Impulsive purchase behavior is always a focus of consumer behavior researches. According to the research on impulsive buying behavior by a series of scholars such as Rock, Piron, Baumeiste, Li Yalin and Jing Fengjie, etc., impulsive buying is a rapid, unplanned purchase influenced by both internal and external factors. The influencing factors mainly include the impulsive characteristics of consumers, discretionary time and money, commodity attributes, sales service process and so on. According to the study of the influence factors of Xiong and Jing (2010) [5], who use the improving influencer model based on Dholakia (2006) [6], the factors affecting consumers' impulsive buying can be divided into three parts: situational factors, marketing stimulus factors and individual factors. Situational factors include consumer's disposable time and money, sales atmosphere, commodity touching, service interaction. Marketing stimulus include commodity prices and promotional prices. Individual characteristic factors include consumer impulsive traits, self-control, shopping hedonism psychology, commodity popularity. Sales atmosphere is the sales scene to bring consumers a direct visual feeling, such as live scene music, the background, etc. will affect the consumer's perception of the merchandise. Therefore, from the aspect of environmental influence, the situation created by the host will affect the impulsive purchase behavior of consumers to some extent.

In the study of Gong, Ye, Wu and Liu (2019) [7], they explore the influence of the atmosphere clues of the live scene on consumers' impulse to consume. The study is based on the "S-O-R" model, a regulated mediation model. "S-O-R" model refers to stimulation is the impact of the external environment on the individual, the body is the inner state of each stimulated individual, and the reaction is the individual's behavior. The external environment stimulates the individual's inner state, and further affects the individual's behavior [8]. The researchers also study the mechanism of the role of heart flow experience and Zhong-Yong thinking in it. The flow experience created by physical equipment means concentration, full commitment, and intrinsic pleasure, which may allow consumers to make unplanned purchases or increase the number of unplanned purchases. Zhong-Yong thinking is a cultural concept of traditional Chinese cultural way of thinking, which emphasizes self-restraint, does not go to extremes, and does not act because of short-term mood swings. Through a survey of 681 live-streaming consumers, they find that the atmosphere clues had a positive effect

on impulse consumption intentions, and that the flow experience acted as a partial intermediary between the two. The Zhong-Yong thinking, on the other hand, plays a negative role in regulating the atmosphere clues and impulse consumption intentions. However, the study uses cross-sectional research design, only reveals the concurrent relationship between atmospheric clues, heart flow experience, Zhong-Yong thinking and impulsive consumption intention, and did not specifically consider how the role of the host influence consumer impulsive consumption intention. Therefore, based on the live streaming situation of online shopping, this essay will further study the factors of the live streaming atmosphere created by the host on the consumer's impulsive purchase behavior.

### **3. Analysis**

#### **3.1 Environment influence**

Firstly, atmosphere clues can have major environment influence. The host should strive to create a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere of live streaming, and at the necessary moments to create appropriate time pressure, such an atmosphere clue is more conducive to the implicit promotion of consumer impulse purchases. The atmosphere of the live broadcast is what consumers can relate to and also part of the explanation of the impulsive intention. The host interact more with consumers in real time, answer their questions and play different music to create atmospheres for different products, thus providing consumers with a pleasant shopping experience. Beatty (1998) [9] proves that positive emotions have a positive effect on consumers' impulse buying intentions, and when an individual's emotional response becomes stronger, such as happiness, pleasure, enjoyment, etc., it is more likely to trigger impulse buying. According to Rook's research (1987) [10], consumers are not constrained by rational factors when having impulse purchases because they have a pleasant feeling when shopping. So the happier consumers are, the longer they watch live, and the more likely they are to spend on impulse. In many current live broadcasts, hosts often take entertainment interactions, such as online sweepstakes, jackpots, guessing and other mini-games, to increase consumers' interest and active participation, so that they can maintain perceived pleasure. In addition, under time pressure, decision makers are more likely to use heuristic thinking to make quick decisions. Lu and others (2013) [11] believe that time pressure affects consumers' perception, similar to the positive emotions that material incentives bring to consumers. In Taobao live broadcast, limited time, limited purchase caused by the time pressure, will make consumers pay more attention to the product appearance attributes and local characteristics, exaggerated the perceived benefits of consumers and ignore the negative consequences behind the behavior, thereby stimulating consumer stimulation, excitement and other positive emotional reactions [2].

#### **3.2 Physical equipment influence**

Secondly, physical equipment can better help influence the compulsive purchase. Physical equipment not only means the camera devices but also all the external conditions equipped for a live show, such as the host's make-up style, promotion style, etc. The host should enhance their charm and service quality, actively interact with consumers in real time feedback to stimulate the consumer's heart flow experience, and maintain professionalism because unique temperament and image can increase the consumer's sense of product identity. Han and Xu's research (2020) [12] shows that the charm, recommending ability, presenting ability, interactive attributes of e-commerce hosts have a direct impact on the consumer's internal state and their willingness to buy online. The biggest difference between online shopping and offline is that the consumer can't see the physical goods, so the premise of online shopping is trust, and it's easier to generate a willingness to buy. Many consumers socialize with affable hosts in a process that gradually generates emotional and cognitive

trust in their recommended products. In addition, the host's familiarity with the product, the timeliness of answering consumer questions, the objectivity of product recommendations and the external appearance appeal can also enhance consumers' perceived trust under the situational atmosphere of live streaming. Therefore, most of the live hosts have a relatively good-looking appearance, cheerful and affable personality, and can have a certain degree of professionalism, which means they must be very familiar with each product. During the live broadcast, the host will always impatiently answer the same questions from different consumers, and be able to meet their needs from the consumer's point of view. For example, the very famous host Li Jiaqi, he has his illustrious unique characteristics, his personal phrase "buy it" left the consumers a very deep impression. His identity positioning is the girl's "Bromeo". He always obtains cost-effective and recommend easy-to-use skin care products for girls, can touch the consumer's heart experience to improve trust. In addition, his live show is constantly made 365 days a year. He works really hard, and has a very high-level affinity. Many girls buy his recommended products, not because of the brand, but the trust.

### 3.3 Cultural concept influence

Thirdly, the host is also supposed to attach importance to the value orientation of local culture concept in the process of live broadcasting, and conform to the personality characteristics and group habits of Chinese live consumers. As Zhong-Yong thinking will play a negative role in the promotion of impulsive purchase intention and weaken the consumer's heart flow experience, the host should consider the factors of the oriental cultural situation. Consumers with high Zhong-Yong thinking themselves have a high sense of belonging and security, can control the impulse to purchase behavior brought about by emotion. In response to this phenomenon, the host needs to think deeply and adopt marketing strategies flexibly. If the host ignores Chinese culture and adopts extreme and radical marketing methods, it may lead to the opposite result and lose the trust of consumers. For consumers, the cultivation of Zhong-Yong thinking can reduce impulsive buying behavior to a certain extent. The higher the consumer's Zhong-Yong cultural thinking, the more attention will be focused on the goods themselves when buying, and will be reconsidered before buying, so as to achieve self-control and adjustment of purchasing behavior [13].

## 4. Conclusion

In conclusion, e-commerce live streaming has been widely concerned by the public, and is a new type of media and consumption channel. Based on previous studies [7], this essay focuses the factors affecting the consumer's impulsive purchase behavior on the host, and explores the influence of the live situation created by the host. From the aspect of environment influence, the host should try to create a pleasant atmosphere to enhance the enjoyment of consumers, from the aspect of flow experience invented by physical equipment, the host has its own characteristics, affinity and charm and professionalism, can enhance consumer trust, from the aspect of a traditional Chinese culture concept -- Zhong-Yong thinking, the host is supposed fully take into account the cultural background, provide more flexible response to the East culture under the live scene, so as to better stimulate consumer impulse consumption.

This essay mainly uses comparative qualitative research methods. And this essay studies the influence factors of situational atmosphere created by the host in three levels: environment, physical equipment and cultural concept, which respectively are atmosphere clues, heart flow experience and Zhong-Yong thinking based on the previous research. Therefore, future research can further expand the direction of more influencing factors about consumers' impulsive purchase behavior, and there is a need for more causal relationship experiment or research.

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