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THE EFFECT OF LIVE STREAMING ON PURCHASE INTENTION OF E-COMMERCE CUSTOMERS

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ABSTRACT

Live streaming is one of many features that e-commerce offers to help sellers showcase products in real-time through live video. During the pandemic Covid-19, live streaming became popular and grew as an important selling tool for sellers in e-commerce. Drawing from previous literature adoption behavior and social commerce, this paper proposes a framework that examines purchase intention on live streaming and its relationship with customer trust and engagement. A conceptual model including thirteen hypotheses was developed and tested on 207 valid questionnaires. The result indicates that hedonic and symbolic value in live streaming positively affects trust in products, while utilitarian and hedonic significantly affect trust in sellers. In the e-commerce context of live streaming, only hedonic and symbolic values positively impact customer engagement and trust in products. Finally, customer engagement in live streaming significantly affected purchase intention. Implications for theoretical and managerial are further discussed at the conclusion of this paper.

Keywords: live streaming, shopping value, customer trust, customer engagement, purchase intention

1. Introduction

Nowadays, electronic commerce such as Amazon, e-Bay, AliExpress, etc., is spreading worldwide, connecting sellers with buyers and allowing them to communicate through various features (e.g., private chat, product review). With the development of information and technology, live streaming emerges as an economic format that unites seller activities with video, allowing the seller to give distinctive interactive presentations (Wang, 2019). As a newly added feature in the e-commerce platform, live streaming appears to become a new marketing tool that is increasingly popular worldwide (Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020). Taobao Live Streaming Ecological Development Report (2019) has reported that the live streaming feature on Taobao.com helped online sellers to reach over 100 billion Yuan sales in 2018. This applied in Indonesia, as live streaming has gained popularity during pandemic covid-19 the last two years in Indonesia (CNN Indonesia, 2021). Live to stream in e-commerce answers online customer problems that highlight the uncertainty of product information (Dimoka et al., 2012). As the sellers presented how products are used and showed their different perspectives in real-time, sellers were also enabled to answer various questions from the customer and to conduct live activities that amused and also encouraged customers to buy the product presented (Lu, Xia, Heo, & Wigdor, 2018). In the social commerce context, live streaming has changed traditional commerce in several ways; live streaming gives customers detailed product information, unlike the usual online commerce, enabling customers to ask questions about product-related issues in real-time in the comment box, which sellers can answer immediately, and lastly decrease customers doubt about sellers' authenticity because the lack face to face interaction (Sun et al., 2019). Conducted study before also underlines that thanks to social presence and interaction enabled in live streaming, customers' shopping experience and trust can be increased (Hajli,, 2015).

In view of the increase of live streaming, especially in Indonesia, there are only a few resources about studies examining the phenomenon of live streaming in e-commerce. Most existing studies examined the stimulus and experience of live streaming concerning entertainment and skill-sharing purposes (Hilvert-Bruce et al., 2018; Hu et al., 2017; Lu et al., 2018; Todd & Melancon, 2017). To date, Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut

(2020) have described the effect of the perceived value of live streaming in building consumer trust and engagement, and Sun et al. (2019) examined how live streaming influences purchase intention in social commerce through an IT affordance perspective. A prior study that examined online purchase intention (Akram et al., 2021) described that perceived value, utilitarian and hedonic have significant effects on online purchase intention, with customer engagement mediating its relationship. Rather than widening the concept of live streaming perceived value builds consumer trust and engagement, we consider how live streaming will affect purchase intention with the concept of live streaming perceived value, consumer trust and engagement that has been described by Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut (2020). But, unlike previous research, this study will examine live streaming on e-commerce platforms such as Shopee, and we consider small sellers that use Shopee live to sell their products.

The empirical of this study is specific to the purchase intention of live streaming on an e-commerce platform in Indonesia. There are few studies about live streaming and purchase intention, but few examined live streaming in e-commerce as the characteristic of the platform is different from social commerce. Besides, this study aims to give insight to small enterprises that sell their product in e-commerce about consumers' behavior towards live streaming.

2. Literature Review

2.1 E-commerce and live streaming
E-commerce is a developed concept where technological developments with the widespread of personal computers and integrated internet have made paperless commerce possible (Wigand, 1997). Nowadays, e-commerce has dramatically impacted the economy, mainly how sellers from small to big companies and small-medium enterprises conduct their business activities around e-commerce. It benefits both sellers and buyers; sellers can enter the market which was limited before, and buyers gain access to broad product availability from worldwide sellers at minimizing expense (Napier et al., 2001). Aside from a wider variety of products, e-commerce has changed how enterprises made their marketing strategies and made customers more demanding than before (Valarezo et al., 2018). This is also related to how sellers only describe their products through text and how buyers find it difficult to interact with sellers and products when they usually touch, test, and try the product before making their purchase decision (Steinhoff et al., 2019).

Recent innovations in technology permit online sellers to show and demonstrate their products in real-time. This new phenomenon is called live streaming; it allows sellers to communicate, show a different side of products, and answer customer questions right away while organizing live activities that encourage customers to buy products presented on the spot (Lu, Xia, Heo, & Wigdor, 2018). Thus, authenticity, visualization, and interactivity through live streaming can lower customers' uncertainty, build their trust in the seller, and increase the customer experience of what they should get when they shop in traditional ways (Hajli, 2015).

2.2 Perceived Value
"Shopping perceived value" is the evaluation made by customers that complements their shopping experience (Zeithaml, 1988). The prior study highlighted how perceived value affects consumers' purchasing behavior (Chiu et al., 2014). In their previous research, Childers et al. (2002) suggested that consumers purchase based on convenience and enjoyment, typical of utilitarian and hedonic values. Since e-commerce now provides features that enable both seller and buyer to interact through the chatbox and product review, just like social media, social aspects could be considered in e-commerce as it plays a vital role (De Vries & Carlson, 2014).

2.3 Utilitarian Value
"Utilitarian value" is the motivation of customers to complete a mission or task, and the value obtained depends on finishing the job effectively during the process (To et al., 2007). This value relates to logical, critical, decision-centred, goal-oriented thinking (Arnold and Reynolds, 2003). Customers that tend to shop economically while saving their precious time, efforts, and money can be seen as utilitarian (Kesari & Atulkar, 2016). Also, convenience in terms of access, search, possession, and transaction is considered utilitarian motivation (Seiders, Berry, & Gresham, 2000).

In online shopping, consumers often doubt sellers and products posted because there is no authenticity guarantee provided by e-commerce platforms (Chen & Dhillon, 2003). This was related to the 'practical' in utilitarian value that prioritises consumer tasks with effortless processes that complete consumers' shopping effectively. With live streaming shopping, no need for consumers to search for more information about the product because live streaming allows sellers to give more details about products and answer customers' questions while seeing seller's faces and expressions and products in real-time in a way that cannot be fabricated or going through editing like an advertisement (Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020).

2.4 Hedonic Value

In contrast with the utilitarian value, which emphasises rational and practical aspects such as motivation, hedonic value is related to sensory, fantasy, and emotional elements for shopping motivation (Hirschmann & Holbrok, 1982). Ozen and Kodaz (2012) add that hedonic value is usually associated with perceived desire, entertainment, and pleasure consumers want from their shopping experience. Online consumers think that shopping in online environment offers an opportunity for consumers to switch from their daily routines (Parsons, 2002), distract them from problems and produce pleasure and happiness (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003). Thus, various exciting features that e-commerce offers help consumers to do online shopping easier and divert them from daily life. This statement is in line with the study conducted by Fiore et al. (2005), which explained that the effects of features and activities related to images (virtual models, mix and match virtually) from online clothing stores in e-commerce resulted in pleasure and emotion and then made consumers willing to pay attention to activities.

The live streaming feature in e-commerce helps consumers get hedonic value through activities held by sellers through their live streams. These activities are not just showing, offering, or instructing the use of the product, but sellers can also carry out fun activities such as asking questions about audience preferences and distributing rewards such as gifts, discount vouchers, etc., which can increase consumer hedonic value.

2.5 Symbolic Value

Shopping is a social activity that has symbolic value, social code, and relationships and forms the identity of consumers themselves through shopping activities carried out (Firat & Venkatesh, 1993). It is undeniable that consumers make purchases to reflect and even enhance their identity (Sirgy et al, 2000; Erdern et al., 1999) and even help to achieve the social integration they desire (Hewer & Campbell., 1997). Koo et al. (2008), through their research, demonstrated that self-actualization (self-fulfilment) and affiliation or social relationships (friendly and good relationships) have a positive influence on consumers' evaluations of stores or sellers which can then have a positive effect on the intention to reconnect with shop or seller.

2.6 Consumer Trust

Trust plays a vital role in creating bonds between consumers and providers of products and services. Cheng et al. (2017) explain that consumers tend to interact with companies or individual providers of products and services that they trust. So, customer trust is the belief that other parties in social interactions that are carried out together will behave ethically and by the social order and do not act opportunistically (Gefen, Karahanna, & Straub, 2003).

In the digital context, the existence of a place and time separation in transactions causes the lack of interaction between consumers and sellers, as well as consumers with products which triggers consumers to trust only a few essential factors from seller and product (Komiak & Benbasat, 2004). These obstacles then create a sense of distrust towards transactions that will be carried out, especially regarding the seller and whether the products offered are of high quality.

Live streaming as a feature that can show sellers and products in one place and time through an application or website helps consumers increase their trust in the seller and the products offered. Based on the live streaming function and the customer trust factor that can be improved through these features, there are two types of customer trust important in this research; trust in the seller and trust in the product. Lu et al. (2010) explained that trust in the seller is a form of customer trust in the seller, hoping that the seller can be trusted, provides good service, and does not take advantage of consumers. Meanwhile, trust in the product relates to whether the product offered will meet their expectations and look and function as the seller says (Lee & Lee, 2005; Pappas, 2016). Therefore, we postulate:

H1. Utilitarian value of live streaming has a positive relationship with customers' trust.
H2. Hedonic value of live streaming has positive relationship with customers' trust.
H3. Symbolic value of live streaming has a positive relationship with customers' trust.
H4. Trust in a product has a positive relationship with customers' trust in the seller.

2.7 Consumer Engagement

Consumer engagement is a multidimensional element of consumers, including cognitive, psychological, behavioral, and emotional states when consumers actively participate in communication platforms (Brodie et al., 2011). Vivek et al. (2014) also explain that customer engagement is the interaction between consumers or potential consumers with activities carried out by companies or sellers. Such engagement can be seen very well in social commerce that provides two-way communication between consumers and sellers, providing opportunities for consumers to respond, comment, like, share, and reply to comments or chats (Khan & Vong,

2014).

E-commerce with various supporting features also facilitates customer engagement or consumer engagement with sellers. The comment field, private chat features with sellers, favorite buttons, etc., make it easier for consumers to communicate interactively with sellers. These various features can also be further used in the live streaming feature to help consumers communicate and engage with streamers or sellers during live streaming. Consumers can leave a 'heart' as a sign they like the activity or conversation that the seller is carrying out; consumers can also leave feedback, questions, or others through the comment column, etc. Vivek et al. (2012) added that customer engagement is not always related to search, evaluation, or purchase interactions between consumers and companies or sellers and consumers (Gummerus, Liljander, Weman, & Pihlstrom, 2012).

Dorn et al. (2010) underlined that customer engagement contributes indirectly to companies or business actors where this contribution consists of non-transactional behavior that adds value to the company. Research conducted previously by Fiore & Kim (2005) underlined that consumers' perceived value or value has a strong relationship with choice, assessment, purchase, and satisfaction with shopping experience, affecting consumer re-engagement intentions. Thus, we posit:

H5. Utilitarian value of live streaming has a positive relationship with customer engagement.
H6. Hedonic value of live streaming has a positive relationship with customer engagement.
H7. Symbolic value of live streaming has a positive relationship with customer engagement.

The advanced features in live streaming help consumers increase their trust, especially about product and seller information lacking in the digital space. We argue that the features provided in live streaming help consumers to be actively involved during live streaming and increase consumer trust in sellers and products by seeing first-hand how sellers convey information about products, instructing how to use products, etc. So, we expect to see the relationship between customer trust and customer engagement with the seller:

H8. Customers' trust of live streaming has a positive relationship with customer engagement.

2.8 Purchase Intention

In shopping activities, consumers' purchase intention is the behavior they possess before they finally decide to buy the product or service they want. Purchase intention refers to the possibility of consumers making purchase decisions which is the subjective results through evaluation carried out by consumers on related products (Sharma et al., 2021). Purchase intention can measure the possibility of consumers buying a product and can be used to measure consumer behavior (Lin & Ching, 2010).

Many factors can influence online and offline consumers' purchase intentions (Akram et al., 2021). In their study, Ashraf et al. (2016) stated that customer engagement is closely related to online purchase intention. This is supported by the statement of Jain and Yadav (2018), which underlines the influence of website engagement on purchase intention. Meeting that occurs within the scope of e-commerce, such as learning, sharing, advocacy, socialization, and co-development, occurs because of the consumer's need for information (Brodie et al., 2013). Thus:

H9. Customer engagement has a positive relationship with purchase intention.

3. Research Method

This study is a quantitative study with a partial least square structural equation model (PLS-SEM) used as method for analysis. Data were collected in Indonesia, one of the largest numbers of active internet users globally. Using a five-point Likert scale anchored with (1) "strongly disagree" to (5) "strongly agree," a questionnaire survey was conducted online with respondents who often use Shopee as the choice of e-commerce and ever watched live streaming shopping through Shopee..

Questionnaire surveys were distributed through social media groups and social media platforms using provided google forms link. The suggested minimum requirement of samples should be five times the amount of the research indicators Hair et al., (2017). Therefore, 207 samples of data were collected for this study.

SPSS software was used to analyse the validity and reliability of each variable during the pre-test, and SmartPLS software was used to run the PLS-SEM (Ringle, Wende, & Becker, 2015). Two steps are required to measure the research model, first one is to measure the measurement model and then the second one to measure the structural model. The former was used to assess the reliability and validity of the measures, and the latter to test the hypotheses.

Fig 3.1 is a suggested framework of the effect of live streaming on purchase intention of e-commerce that draws from previous literature. The perceived value (utilitarian, hedonic, symbolic) of live streaming is expected to have positive influence on customers' trust (H1–H3) and customer engagement (H5–H7). Customer trust in

products influences trust in sellers in live streaming (H4), and is then expected to increase customer trust (H5-H7). Lastly, customer engagement in live streaming will significantly affect purchase intention.
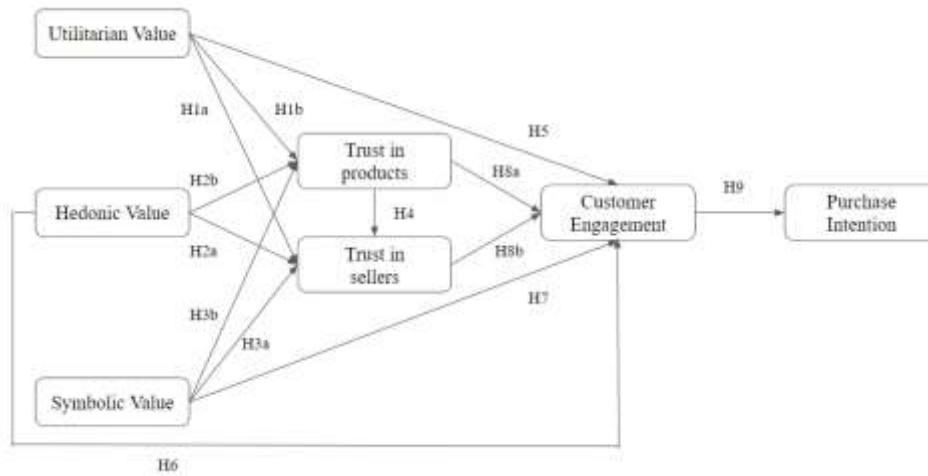

Figure 3.1 shows the theoretical framework suggested

4. Results and Discussion

As seen from table 4.1, we can conclude that females are more interested in live streaming shopping than males, with female respondents dominated by 74,4% and male respondents 25,6%. When we viewed in terms of age, most of the respondents were in the age range 18-24 years old with 58%, and 25-50 years old came in second with 41%. Respondents also need to fill in options for their job occupation, with more than half of the total respondents being students with 54,1%, private employees come in second with 29,4%, the entrepreneur is 7,7%, civil servants with 1,4%, the housewife is 3,3%, and others job such as freelancer come last with 3,8%. Lastly, the researchers want to know how much cost respondents spend on e-commerce shopping with IDR 50.000 – IDR 100.000 with 31,4%, IDR 100.000 – IDR 250.000 come in first with 44,4%, IDR 250.000 – IDR 500.000 is 17,8% and more than IDR 500.000 is 6,2%.

Table 4.1 Respondent Socio-Demographic

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	53	25,6%
	Female	154	74,4%
Age	18 - 24	120	58%
	25 – 50	87	41%
	> 50	0	
Job Occupation	Students	112	54,1%
	Housewife	7	3,3%
	Private employees	61	29,4%
	Civil Servant	3	1,4%
	Entrepreneur	16	7,7%
	Others	8	3,8%
E-commerce shopping spent	IDR 50.000 – 100.000	65	31,4%
	IDR 100.000 – 250.000	92	44,4%
	IDR 250.000 – 500.000	37	17,8%
	> IDR 500.000	13	6,2%

Source: Statistical Software used by the researcher

Individual loadings, composite reliability, Cronbach's alpha, and average variance extracted (AVE) scores were used to measure the validity and reliability of the model. Each instrument went through a validity check to see whether the questionnaire from each variable was valid. Hair et al. (2013) suggested that an instrument is valid when the loadings are greater than 0,5. Next, AVE was calculated to assess the convergent validity, and it was recommended that the indicators could be declared valid when the value is higher than 0,5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The internal consistency, measured by composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values, needs to be higher than 0,6 for Cronbach's alpha and >0,7 for the composite reliability (Hair et al., 2013). The following table 4.2 shows the value of construct validity and reliability:

Table 4.2 Assessment of measurement model

Items	Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Utilitarian Value		0.762	0.848	0.583
UV1	0.774			
UV2	0.656			
UV3	0.814			
UV4	0.801			
Hedonic Value		0.886	0.917	0.689
HV1	0.810			
HV2	0.892			
HV3	0.858			
HV4	0.844			
HV5	0.739			
Symbolic Value		0.878	0.916	0.732
SV1	0.847			
SV2	0.874			
SV3	0.867			
SV4	0.832			
Trust in Seller		0.862	0.907	0.710
TIS1	0.765			
TIS2	0.903			
TIS3	0.875			
TIS4	0.820			
Trust in Product		0.833	0.900	0.750
TIP1	0.886			
TIP2	0.829			
TIP3	0.883			
Customer Engagement		0.910	0.933	0.735
CE1	0.865			
CE2	0.882			
CE3	0.837			
CE4	0.847			
CE5	0.854			
Purchase Intention		0.936	0.959	0.886
PI1	0.935			
PI2	0.940			
PI3	0.950			

Source: Statistical Software used by the researcher

The next step is to investigate the structural model and hypothesis testing after examining the measurement model and meeting the criteria for validity and reliability. R-squared (R^2) is a statistical measure representing the proportion of the variance for a dependent variable explained by an independent variable in the regression model. Results of the structural model are presented in Table 4.3, combined with path analysis. It defines a substantial portion of the variance, with a coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.711 for trust in sellers, 0.663 for trust in products, 0.674 for customer engagement, and 0.548 for purchase intention as dependent variables suggesting a satisfactory level of predictive power.

4.3 Path analysis results

	Coefficient	Standard deviation	T statistics	P values	R^2	Hypothesis
UV → TIP	0.158	0.103	1.541	0.062	0.663	Rejected
HV → TIP	0.258	0.109	2.377	0.009		Accepted
SV → TIP	0.364	0.104	3.501	0.000		Accepted
UV → TIS	0.165	0.067	2.460	0.007	0.771	Accepted
HV → TIS	0.242	0.071	3.407	0.000		Accepted
SV → TIS	-0.019	0.077	0.246	0.403		Rejected
TIP → TIS	0.566	0.079	7.183	0.000		Accepted
TIP → CE	0.209	0.069	3.029	0.001		Accepted
TIS → CE	0.076	0.091	0.839	0.201		Rejected
UV → CE	-0.140	0.097	1.451	0.073	0,674	Rejected
HV → CE	0.250	0.082	3.031	0.001		Accepted
SV → CE	0.519	0.079	6.571	0.000		Accepted
CE → PI	0.815	0.034	24.291	0.000	0.548	Accepted

Source: Statistical Software used by the researcher

Moreover, the direct path coefficient is used to explain all hypotheses suggested in this study. By using the bootstrapping process and one-tailed t-test, the t-statistical value must be greater than the t-table 1.96 as suggested by Hair et al., (2014). As reported in Table 4.3 hedonic value ($\beta = 0.258$; $p < .009$) and symbolic value ($\beta = 0.364$; $p < .000$) of live streaming has positive impact on consumer trust in products but not for utilitarian value. For trust in sellers, only utilitarian value ($\beta = 0.165$; $p < .007$) and hedonic value ($\beta = 0.242$; $p < .000$) can be seen to have a significant direct effect. As suggested, there is a relationship between trust in products and sellers ($\beta = 0.566$; $p < .000$) supporting hypothesis H4. We predicted that customer trust could affect customer engagement as trust in products ($\beta = 0.209$; $p < .001$) is seen to have positive influence on customer engagement but not trust in sellers ($\beta = 0.076$; $p < .201$). For the effect of live streaming perceived value on customer engagement, only two; hedonic value ($\beta = 0.250$; $p < .001$) and symbolic value ($\beta = 0.519$; $p < .200$) are seen to positively affect customer engagement. Lastly, there's direct effect of customer engagement on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.815$; $p < .000$) and support H9.

5. Conclusion and Implications

This study aims to determine the factors of purchase intention of live streaming shopping e-commerce from customer trust and customer engagement possessed during live streaming. Based on the descriptive analysis generated from 207 respondents collected who have watched live streaming on e-commerce platforms in Indonesia during the last three months, nine hypotheses from 13 hypotheses suggested almost have a significant effect but not for utilitarian towards trust in products, symbolic towards trust in sellers, trust in sellers towards customer engagement and utilitarian value towards customer engagement.

The implication of this study is mainly to give insight to small-medium enterprises that use live streaming on the e-commerce platform to sell and promotes their product. For theoretical implication, the findings of this study will be added to the literature about live streaming, especially in the context of e-commerce.

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