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Impulse Buying in Live Streaming Commerce: A Literature Review and Research Agenda

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the phenomenon of impulse buying within the domain of live streaming commerce as an emerging paradigm of digital marketing. It aims to conceptualize and identify the underlying determinants that precipitate impulsive purchase behaviors during interactive live streaming sessions. Employing a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach, the research synthesizes empirical evidence from 30 peer-reviewed studies published between 2021 and 2025 to delineate conceptual progressions, methodological tendencies, and relational frameworks. The analytical results categorize influencing factors into three core dimensions: external stimuli, encompassing interactivity, streamer attractiveness, and time-limited promotions; psychological mechanisms, including emotional arousal, involvement, and trust formation; and social dynamics, reflected in group norms and community influence. The results show that impulsive buying behavior in live streaming situations happens when emotional response, technological affordance, and social interaction all work together. This synthesis provides a theoretical foundation for understanding the multi-dimensional mechanisms driving impulsive consumption decisions in interactive digital retail environments.

Keywords: *Digital Consumer Behaviour, Impulse Buying, Interactivity, Live Stream Commerce.*

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1. | INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade, the rise of live streaming commerce has transformed the landscape of digital marketing and reshaped how consumers interact with online buying environments. As online ecosystems continue to evolve, impulse buying within platforms such as Shopee Live, TikTok Shop, and Taobao has become an increasingly important focus for scholars and practitioners. This fact occurs because live streaming integrates elements of entertainment, social participation, and transactional activity into a single real-time experience, creating both opportunities and challenges related to spontaneous purchasing behavior (Ward, 2012; Alias et al., 2016). For marketers, this phenomenon is pivotal, as it highlights the interplay between psychological triggers, technological affordances, and social influences that collectively shape unplanned purchases in e-commerce settings (Tirdasari & Dhewanto, 2012; Rai & Pandey, 2025).

Recent research further underscores the relevance of impulse buying in live streaming contexts by demonstrating its association with emotional responses, technological engagement, and shifts in consumer behavior accelerated by pandemic-driven digital adoption (Ellyawati & Miranda, 2025). Various studies point to multifaceted drivers such as interactive communication, streamer credibility, promotional pressure, and real-time social presence that strengthen consumers' tendency to make impulse purchases (Alias et al., 2016; Xu et al., 2020).

Despite the growing volume of research, an integrated understanding of the combined contributions of technological, psychological, and social dynamics remains underdeveloped. Many prior studies have examined isolated antecedents or specific contexts, resulting in fragmented theoretical insights and limited managerial implications (Xia et al., 2024). To address this gap, the present article employs a systematic literature review (SLR) to consolidate and critically evaluate empirical and conceptual developments on impulse buying in live streaming commerce published from 2021 to 2025.

This review seeks to address three principal concerns: the growing significance of impulse buying in live streaming commerce within both academic and practical contexts, the trajectories pursued by contemporary scholars in prestigious publications, and the role of this study in developing a comprehensive conceptual framework for elucidating impulse buying mechanisms. Ultimately, this study offers a refined theoretical foundation and research agenda that integrates external stimuli, psychological processes, and social interactions. offer fresh perspectives on academic advancement and strategic marketing innovation within both Indonesian and global live streaming commerce settings (Xia et al., 2024; Ellyawati & Miranda, 2025).

2. | LITERATURE REVIEW

Impulsive Buying

Consumer behavior studies have widely discussed impulsive buying, which refers to a person's tendency to purchase something suddenly without planning. Rook and

Fisher (1995) explain that impulsive buying happens because people often respond quickly to emotional triggers and environmental cues, such as attractive product displays or promotions. With the growth of online shopping and social media, this behavior has become even more common. According to Amos et al. (2014), features like flash sales, limited-time offers, simple checkout processes, and appealing app designs strongly encourage consumers to buy impulsively.

Psychological factors also play an important role. Verplanken and Sato (2011) found that a favourable mood, stress, low self-control, and hedonic motivation can increase impulsive buying. Certain personality traits, such as materialism and sensation seeking, also make people more likely to purchase without thinking. Situational factors matter as well. Turley and Milliman (2000) showed that store elements like lighting, music, and layout can create a pleasant atmosphere that leads to spontaneous buying. In digital settings, clean and easy-to-use interfaces make people more comfortable and more likely to buy quickly.

Social media further strengthens impulsive buying through influencer content, customer reviews, unboxing videos, and product recommendations, which create trust and make products seem more appealing. Overall, past research shows that impulsive buying is influenced by a mix of emotions, environment, social factors, and technology, making it an important topic for understanding modern consumer behaviour.

Live Streaming Commerce

Over the last decade, the rise of live streaming commerce has transformed the landscape of digital marketing and reshaped how consumers interact with online buying environments. As online ecosystems continue to evolve, impulse buying within platforms such as Shopee Live, TikTok Shop, and Taobao has become an increasingly important focus for scholars and practitioners. This occurs because live streaming integrates elements of entertainment, social participation, and transactional activity into a single real-time experience, creating both opportunities and challenges related to spontaneous purchasing behavior (Ward, 2012; Alias et al., 2016). For marketers, this phenomenon is pivotal, as it highlights the interplay between psychological triggers, technological affordances, and social influences that collectively shape unplanned purchases in e-commerce settings (Tirdasari & Dhewanto, 2012).

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contexts, resulting in fragmented theoretical insights and limited managerial implications (Xia et al., 2024; Li, 2025). To address this gap, the present article employs a systematic literature review (SLR) to consolidate and critically evaluate empirical and conceptual developments on impulse buying in live streaming commerce published from 2023 to 2025.

This review aims to respond to three major issues: the increasing importance of impulse buying in live streaming commerce for both academic and practical domains, the directions current scholars have taken in top-tier publications, and the contribution of this work in constructing a comprehensive conceptual roadmap for understanding impulse buying mechanisms. This study provides an enhanced theoretical framework and research agenda that synthesizes external stimuli, psychological processes, and social interactions, thereby fostering academic progress and strategic marketing innovation in both Indonesian and global live streaming commerce contexts (Xia et al., 2024; Ellyawati & Miranda, 2025).

3. | RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method to collect and analyze evidence from previous research that examines the relationship between impulsive buying and live streaming commerce in the digital economy era. The SLR method is chosen because it provides a structured, transparent, and replicable process for identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing relevant research findings (Tranfield et al., 2003). The primary focus of this study is on quantitative research published between 2021 and 2025, as this period reflects the most recent developments in consumer behavior analysis. The purpose of this study is to identify the influence of live streaming commerce on impulsive buying behavior.

Data were collected through a systematic search using the Google Scholar database. A combination of keywords with Boolean operators was applied to ensure broad topical coverage. The main keywords used were “Digital Consumer Behavior” OR “Impulse Buying” OR “Interactivity” OR “Live Stream Commerce.” The inclusion criteria were as follows: studies published between January 2021 and December 2025, published in peer-reviewed academic journals, written in English, employing quantitative methods such as regression, SEM, or correlation, and examining at least two of the three main variables: leadership style, organizational culture, and employee performance.

The exclusion criteria encompassed conference papers, conceptual articles, theses, or studies that concentrated solely on a single variable without establishing a connection to employee performance. After the screening process, 15 articles met the inclusion criteria and were selected for further analysis. The data were analyzed using descriptive and thematic approaches by reviewing findings from various studies related to impulsive buying and live streaming commerce. Each study was classified based on the type of live streaming commerce, its connection to impulsive buying, and the key findings that illustrate the relationships among the variables. The analysis is then

presented in the following table to highlight the researchers, journals, key variables, main findings, and results of each study.

4. | RESULTS

This section presents a comprehensive summary of findings from the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) conducted on 30 empirical studies published between 2021 and 2025 that specifically examine impulse buying behavior in live streaming commerce (LSC). The purpose of this review is to identify patterns, relationships, and recurring analytical results across the selected studies by categorizing research variables, methodological approaches, inferential techniques, and the significance of the relationships tested. Each study was systematically classified based on the author, publication year, journal, research variables examined, key findings, and the overall direction of results, indicated by a positive (+) or negative (–) effect.

The synthesis in this chapter focuses on understanding (1) how stimulus-related factors in live streaming commerce influence consumer psychological states, (2) how cognitive and affective organism variables mediate these effects, and (3) how these processes manifest in consumers' impulsive purchasing decisions. The summary of the reviewed studies is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. A Systematic Literature Review Study

No	Author (Year)	Key Variables	Main Findings	Result
1	Nguyen et al. (2023)	Vividness, Personalization	Increase urge to buy via consumption vision & telepresence	(+)
2	Chen et al. (2022)	Streamer attributes → Value	Value mediates → impulsive buying	(+)
3	Silalahi et al. (2025)	Shopping motivation	Hedonic ↑ IB; utilitarian not significant	(+)/(–)
4	Tong et al. (2022)	Visual complexity	Emotions mediate ↑ purchase intention	(+)
5	Yi Qu et al. (2023)	Viewing frequency, emotions	Viewing frequency & emotions → IB	(+)
6				
7	Chen et al. (2024)	Channel strategy	Livestreaming ↑ IB; returns influence effect	(+)
8	Hao & Huang (2024)	Scarcity appeals	Supply-based scarcity ↑ arousal → IB	(+)
9	Shao (2024)	Influencer credibility/empathy	Attachment ↑ impulsive buying	(+)
10	Fu and Hsu (2023)	Interactions → Presence/TCE	Presence & TCE ↑ urge to buy impulsively	(+)
11	Chen et al. (2023)	Social presence	Broadcaster presence ↑ IB; viewer presence NS	(+)/(–)
12	Luo et al. (2021)	Persuasive cues	Vocal cues strongest persuasion → IB-related	(+)

No	Author (Year)	Key Variables	Main Findings	Result
13	Asante (2024)	Hedonic, utilitarian, social motives	Motivations ↑ livestream shopping intention	(+)
14	Shahpasandi et al. (2020)	Flow → IB	Flow ↑ impulsive consumption	(+)
15	Dong et al. (2023)	LS features → Flow	Flow mediates engagement → IB	(+)
16	Wu et al. (2021)	Norm violation	Not directly focused on IB but related behavior	(±)
17	Zhang et al. (2024)	ELM cues → Persuasiveness	Persuasiveness ↑ purchase intention/IB	(+)
18	Xu et al. (2020)	Affordances	Diagnosticity & psych distance → intention	(+)
19	Moqbel et al. (2023)	Hedonic/utilitarian → addiction	LS tactics induce compulsive/impulsive buying	(+)
20	Zhang et al. (2023)	Background music	Music ↑ arousal & purchase intention	(+)
21	Karim et al. (2023)	Delight, emotions	Positive affect ↑ impulsive buying	(+)
22	Xia et al. (2024)	Parasocial relationship	Parasocial relationship → trust → purchase	(+)
23	Yi and Jai (2020)	Consumer motives	Motivation ↑ urge for impulse buying	(+)
24	Rai & Pandey (2025)	Virtual vs human streamer	Virtual ↓ IB; present-focus moderates	(–)
25	Yang et al. (2021)	Signals → Value/Distance	Interactive signals ↑ IB; product value ↑ IB	(+)
26	Huang et al. (2024)	Time pressure, social influence	Arousal mediates → impulsive buying	(+)
27	Xu et al. (2020)	Service convenience	Value & e-trust → impulsive buying	(+)
28	Zhang et al. (2024)	Consumer vulnerability	Vulnerability → stronger impulsive buying	(+)
29	Huang et al. (2024)	Hedonic value & gender	PHV ↑ IB; females more impulsive	(+)
30	Gao et al. (2022)	Engagement & inspiration	Inspiration → impulsive buying	(+)

Based on the synthesis of 30 studies, several notable empirical patterns were identified. A dominant pattern shows significant positive effects across most variables examined. Many studies consistently report that streamer characteristics such as credibility, expertise, attractiveness, and interactivity strongly influence impulsive buying behavior. Similarly, live streaming features, including vividness, personalization, visual complexity, and background music, also play an important role. Additional influential factors include scarcity signals (both quantity- and time-based), interactive cues between viewers and streamers or among viewers themselves,

parasocial relationships, social presence, flow, immersion, engagement, hedonic value, arousal, emotional pleasure, as well as shopping motivation and economic incentives.

Another set of findings shows mixed or partially supported results. Approximately five studies reported inconsistencies or only partial support for certain hypotheses. For example, utilitarian value tends to have weaker explanatory power compared to hedonic value. In some studies, virtual influencer attractiveness and hedonic content do not significantly predict purchase behavior. Certain peripheral cues, such as resonant contagion, were found to be statistically insignificant, and information usefulness also produced non-significant results in several models. A smaller group of studies revealed negative or opposite findings. For instance, virtual streamers were found to reduce impulse buying due to heightened cognitive or rational processing among consumers. Quantity pressure does not always generate a sense of urgency, and utilitarian pathways frequently demonstrate weak or non-significant effects, contradicting some traditional expectations.

The collective findings indicate that impulse buying in live streaming commerce is largely shaped by immediate sensory stimuli, emotional arousal, and immersive social interactions, while rational considerations tend to play a secondary role. Psychological organism states such as hedonic value, arousal, presence, telepresence, parasocial bonding, and flow serve as robust mediators in nearly all significant relationships identified. Furthermore, theoretical models such as the Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) framework, Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), Flow Theory, and the Pleasure Arousal Dominance (PAD) model consistently appear across the literature and are empirically validated through PLS-SEM, CB-SEM, and experimental approaches.

5. | DISCUSSION

The results from the studies conducted by Zhang et al. (2024), and Shao (2024) clearly show that live streaming commerce has a major influence on encouraging impulsive buying, and it works through several psychological and interaction-based processes. Qu and his colleagues found that the high level of interactivity in live streaming, along with real-time communication and a strong sense of social presence between streamers and viewers, helps build emotional closeness. This emotional connection increases how involved consumers feel during the live session, making them more open to external persuasion and more likely to buy items without planning. Supporting these findings, the study by Yu et al. (2025) showed that trust in the streamer, especially trust in how accurate, honest, and authentic the information appears, plays a key role in strengthening the link between live streaming and impulsive buying. When consumers believe that the streamer is reliable, sincere, and transparent, their tendency to make spontaneous purchases becomes even stronger.

In addition, Zhang et al. (2024) highlighted that the way streamers demonstrate products live, provide clear and detailed visuals, and communicate persuasively can trigger positive emotions, curiosity, and immediate confidence in the product. These emotional reactions often lead consumers to make quick purchase decisions without

deeply evaluating the product. Adding to this perspective, Shao (2024) emphasized that FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) is another strong factor that drives impulsive buying in live streaming settings. Limited-time discounts, countdown timers, and the pressure created by other viewers' comments make consumers feel a strong sense of urgency, pushing them to buy right away before the chance disappears. Altogether, these studies suggest that live streaming commerce is not just a simple online sales platform but a highly engaging and emotionally driven environment. Within this environment, interactivity, trust, persuasive visuals, and social pressure all work together and reinforce one another, significantly increasing the likelihood that consumers will engage in impulsive buying.

6. | CONCLUSION

This study provides a comprehensive synthesis of the determinants of impulse buying in live streaming commerce based on evidence from 30 empirical studies published between 2021 and 2025. Using a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach, the study integrates technological, psychological, and social perspectives to explain spontaneous purchasing behavior in highly interactive digital environments. The findings show that technological affordances, including vividness, interactivity, personalization, and real-time features, stimulate cognitive and emotional states such as enjoyment, flow, trust, and emotional arousal, which increase consumers' likelihood of making unplanned purchases. Social factors, including streamer credibility, social presence, parasocial interaction, and community engagement, further strengthen immersion and perceived authenticity. Promotional cues such as scarcity and time pressure also accelerate impulsive decisions, while personality traits and self-streamer congruence moderate these effects.

Several limitations remain, particularly the dominance of cross-sectional designs, limited cross-cultural and experimental evidence, and insufficient examination of long-term outcomes such as satisfaction, regret, return rates, and customer engagement. Future research should therefore employ longitudinal, experimental, and multi-market comparative designs. Emerging factors such as AI-driven streamers, algorithmic recommendations, and platform governance also warrant further investigation. Overall, this study advances understanding of impulse buying in live streaming commerce through a unified framework integrating external stimuli, organismic states, and behavioral responses, while offering implications for both theoretical development and digital marketing practice.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Ethical Approval and Originality Statement

Ethical approval was obtained for this study. The manuscript represents original work and has not been previously published, nor is it under consideration by another journal.

Data Disclosure Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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