

Host Quality and Interactivity: Consumer Engagement's Mediation in Shopee Live Purchase Intention among Jabodetabek Consumers

Ronaldo Winarto¹
Bernard T. Widjaja²

¹Faculty of Economics and Business, Krida Wacana Christian University, Jalan Tanjung Duren Raya No. 4, West Jakarta, 11470, Indonesia. E-mail: ronaldo.winarto@gmail.com

²Faculty of Economics and Business, Krida Wacana Christian University, Jalan Tanjung Duren Raya No. 4, West Jakarta, 11470, Indonesia. E-mail: bernard.widjaja@ukrida.ac.id

Abstract

As consumer purchasing behaviour rapidly shifts toward online channels, live commerce has emerged as a critical marketing strategy, necessitating the investigation of its core purchase drivers. This explanatory study analyzed how host quality and platform interactivity influence consumer purchase intention, utilizing consumer engagement as a mediating psychological mechanism. The research focused on urban Millennial (1981–1996) and Gen Z (1997–2012) users residing in Jabodetabek who utilize the dominant Shopee Live platform. Data were gathered via an online quantitative survey from 166 qualified consumers and analyzed using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS–SEM) method. Findings confirmed that both host quality and interactivity positively and significantly predicted engagement. Notably, interactivity demonstrated a significant direct influence on purchase intent, whereas host quality did not show a direct effect. Consequently, engagement served as a full mediator for the host quality–purchase intention link, and a partial mediator for the interactivity–purchase intention relationship. This validates the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S–O–R) framework, confirming that host attributes and platform features (S) enhance engagement (O), which is the essential bridge driving purchasing behaviour (R). Practically, these results guide e-commerce platforms and merchants to prioritize host training and interactive feature development to maximize engagement-driven conversion.

Keywords

host quality, interactivity, consumer engagement, purchase intention, live commerce

Corresponding Author:
Ronaldo Winarto

Email:
ronaldo.winarto@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION

The global economy has been fundamentally redefined by the rapid progression of digital technology, requiring organizations across various sectors to undertake swift adaptation. Indonesia, characterized by high internet penetration and a large social media user base, has experienced accelerated digital transformation, particularly in the commerce sector. E-commerce has become integral to the urban lifestyle, offering convenience, accessibility, and product variety (Kotler et al., 2021; Verhoef et al., 2015). Evidence of this significant market opportunity is demonstrated by the substantial surge in Indonesia's e-commerce transaction value, which escalated to IDR 512 trillion in 2024, marking a twelve-fold increase compared to seven years prior (see Figure 1).

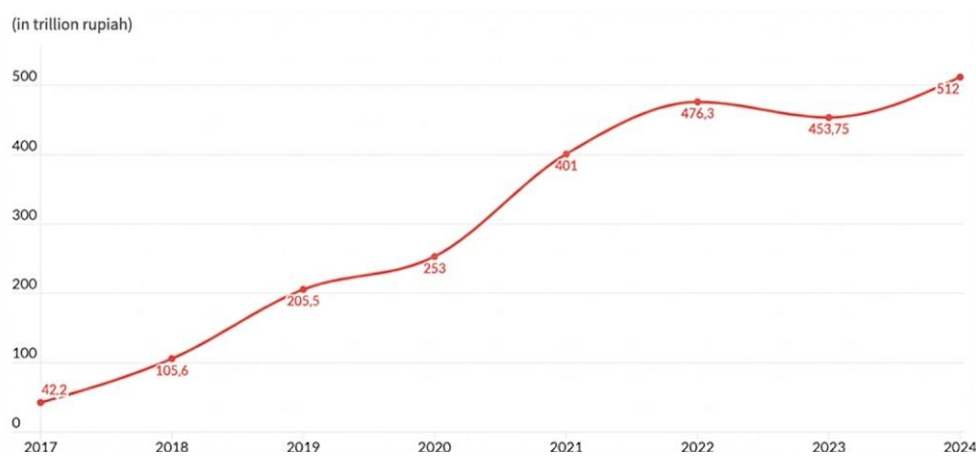


Figure 1. Indonesia's E-Commerce Transaction Value (2017-2024).

Source: Putri (2025)

As the e-commerce market matures, new innovations like social commerce and, subsequently, live streaming commerce (live commerce) have emerged to enhance the online shopping experience. Live commerce integrates real-time video streaming with instantaneous interaction capabilities and immediate purchasing options, thereby creating a dynamic, engaging, and highly participatory shopping environment (Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020). In Indonesia, Shopee has aggressively adopted this trend through Shopee Live, which holds a dominant position (see Figure 2), contributing over 45% of total live-stream transactions in Southeast Asia, with Indonesia as the primary market (Muhamad, 2025; Setyowati, 2025). Shopee Live's popularity is also confirmed by studies showing it as the most frequently used and recalled brand in the live commerce segment (Irham, 2023).



Figure 2. Live streaming platform vs Product Type Buying (2023)

Source: Irham (2023)

The primary demographic for this platform is the digitally savvy Millennial (1981–1996) and Generation Z (1997–2012) consumers residing in the urban Jabodetabek region (Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi). These consumer segments typically seek personalized, genuine shopping experiences and are highly responsive to social media influence (Bolton et al., 2013; Francis & Hoefel, 2018).

Variables and Theoretical Framework (Stimulus–Organism–Response)

This research utilizes the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S–O–R) Theory to model how external stimuli influence the internal psychological state before resulting in the behavioural outcome (Mehrabian & Russell, 1976). Within this framework, the Stimuli (S) consist of two key exogenous variables. The first is Host Quality (X1), which refers to consumer perception of the host’s expertise, trustworthiness, attractiveness, and entertainment value exhibited during the live stream (Hu et al., 2017; Qu et al., 2023). Effective hosts build parasocial interaction, strengthening the bond with the audience (Sun et al., 2019), which aligns with the experiential marketing approach where the quality of human interaction shapes customer value (Widjaja, 2016). The second stimulus is Interactivity (X2), defined as the platform’s capacity to facilitate real-time, two-way communication, encompassing responsiveness, personalization, social presence, and interactive mechanisms (C. Jiang et al., 2019; Y. Liu & Shrum, 2002). Research suggests that these digital interaction dimensions and perceived brand value collectively enhance the overall service experience delivered through the platform (Widjaja, 2020).

These environmental stimuli influence the Organism (O), represented in this study by Consumer Engagement (Z). Engagement is the internal psychological and behavioural manifestation of the consumer that extends beyond mere purchase (Brodie et al., 2011; Doorn et al., 2010). It encompasses cognitive (attention to content), affective (positive emotions), and

conative (active participation via comments, likes, or sharing) dimensions. This variable is essential as it bridges external stimuli and the behavioural response. In contemporary digital marketing, strong brand experience is crucial as it actively forms customer perceived value, which impacts engagement levels and subsequent sharing behaviours, such as electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) and digital loyalty (Winoto Tj & Widjaja, 2024).

Finally, the process culminates in the Response (R), specifically Purchase Intention (Y). This variable represents the consumer's inclination or psychological preparedness to acquire a specific product or service after interacting with a marketing trigger (Chidambaram et al., 2024; Spears & Singh, 2004). The tendency to buy is empirically influenced by external factors, such as the credibility of the host or influencer and the use of endorsements, which can affect consumer decision-making either directly or through enhanced advertising recall (Wibowo et al., 2024).

Problem Formulation: Phenomena and Research Gaps

Despite the immense market potential, not all live commerce efforts, even on dominant platforms like Shopee Live, achieve optimal conversion. A noticeable phenomena gap exists between the high adoption rate and the varied real-world success of live commerce sessions. While consumers from the Millennial and Gen Z cohorts in the Jabodetabek region strongly prefer engaging and informative content, anecdotal evidence suggests that many live sessions struggle with low viewership or zero spectators, despite consistent broadcasting efforts (Dwi, 2023). This fluctuation highlights the urgent need to empirically understand how key success factors, specifically host quality and interactivity, drive consumer involvement in this dynamic Indonesian market.

Regarding the research gap, although international research has established the influence of host attributes (Hu et al., 2017; Qu et al., 2023; Sun et al., 2019) and interactivity (Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020) on purchasing outcomes, several crucial limitations remain in the current literature. First, there is limited contextualization in Indonesia, as most live commerce studies originate from China or the United States. Consequently, few studies have adequately applied the S-O-R model to investigate Host Quality and Interactivity specifically within the localized context of Shopee Live. Second, while consumer engagement is acknowledged as an important outcome, there is a need for explicit testing of its full mediating effect on the relationship connecting host attributes and platform interactivity to purchase intention. Understanding this psychological mechanism ($S > O > R$) is critical for generating richer insights. Finally, the distinct profile of high-tech exposure and instant gratification sought by urban Millennial and Gen Z consumers requires specialized investigation into how they respond to specific live commerce stimuli, a specific demographic focus often overlooked in broader studies.

Research Objectives and Hypotheses

This investigation is designed to empirically address the gaps identified in the literature by systematically assessing the causal relationships among the specified variables within the unique scope of the Shopee Live platform, focusing specifically on urban Millennial and Gen Z consumers residing in the Jabodetabek region. The study's specific objectives are to quantitatively determine the influence exerted by Host Quality (X1) and Interactivity (X2) on the psychological state of Consumer Engagement (Z), and to quantify their resultant impact on Purchase Intention (Y). Additionally, the research aims to rigorously analyze the specific mediating function of Consumer Engagement (Z) in channelling the effects of these two external stimuli toward Purchase Intention (Y).

Drawing upon the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S–O–R) theoretical framework and established literature, the conceptual model posits several causal relationships. Regarding the influence of stimuli on the organism, it is hypothesized that both Host Quality (H1) and Interactivity (H2) exert a positive and significant influence on Consumer Engagement. Concerning the direct influence on the behavioural response, the study proposes that Host Quality (H3) and Interactivity (H4) demonstrate a positive and significant influence on Purchase Intention. Furthermore, Consumer Engagement acts as a critical driver, expected to exert a positive and significant influence on Purchase Intention (H5). Finally, regarding the indirect mechanisms, Consumer Engagement is hypothesized to function as a mediator in the influence relationship between Host Quality and Purchase Intention (H6), as well as between Interactivity and Purchase Intention (H7).

Research Significance

The empirical findings derived from this study contribute substantially to both academic theory and industry practice. Theoretically, this research expands the current body of knowledge related to digital marketing and consumer behaviour through several avenues. First, it illuminates contextual drivers by providing a rich, in-depth understanding of the core antecedents—specifically host quality and interactivity—that drive consumer engagement and subsequent purchase intention within the novel and dynamic context of live commerce in a developing market economy, such as Indonesia. Second, the study rigorously validates the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S–O–R) framework specifically within the highly competitive and localized environment of Shopee Live, focusing on the unique target demographic of urban Millennials and Gen Z. Finally, it clarifies mediating mechanisms by delineating the precise functions of Consumer Engagement as both a full mediator for Host Quality and a partial mediator for Interactivity. This refines the theoretical understanding of how social and functional stimuli translate into behavioural responses in live commerce.

Practically, the results provide valuable insights for industry players. For e-commerce platforms such as Shopee, the study offers data-driven feedback on platform elements that maximize engagement and conversion, aiding in the development of new interactive features and host training programs. Simultaneously, for businesses and marketers—ranging from MSMEs (UMKM) to large brands—the research offers practical guidance on the key factors necessary to optimize live commerce strategies, content development, and host selection specifically tailored for the urban Millennial and Gen Z audience.

METHODS

The methodology section outlines the field approach, sampling techniques, data acquisition instruments, and analysis procedures utilized to test the formulated hypotheses concerning consumer behaviour in live commerce. This research aligns with the focus areas of *Jurnal Komunikasi dan Bisnis*, specifically marketing communications, by applying quantitative methods.

Research Design and Approach

This investigation utilized a quantitative methodological approach paired with an explanatory research design. This dual approach was chosen primarily because it permits the objective measurement and statistical analysis of numerical data, ensuring the rigorous testing of the pre-established causal hypotheses via valid and reliable instruments.

The core objective of this explanatory framework was to establish the causal links between the exogenous variables (Host Quality and Interactivity) and the ultimate endogenous outcome (Purchase Intention). A central requirement was the careful evaluation of the specific function of Consumer Engagement as the mediating variable within this pathway.

In terms of data acquisition, the study employed a cross-sectional design. This meant that all data were systematically collected from the sampled respondents during a single, defined timeframe, serving to capture the relationships between the variables at one moment in time. It is important to acknowledge that the reliance on a cross-sectional design and self-reported data may limit the ability to draw strict causal inferences and introduces the potential for response bias, though these methods remain appropriate for the study's explanatory objectives.

Inferential analysis was performed using the Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) technique, specifically adopting the Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM) approach. PLS-SEM was selected for its proven robustness and predictive orientation when dealing with complex conceptual models, which is particularly advantageous for sophisticated mediation analyses like those conducted in this study.

Subjects, Population, and Sample

The conceptual scope of the research objects encompasses the four latent constructs mapped using the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) framework: the exogenous factors of Host Quality (X1) and Interactivity (X2), the mediating variable of Consumer Engagement (Z), and the endogenous outcome of Purchase Intention (Y). The research subjects were identified as digital-savvy consumers belonging to the Millennial (born 1981–1996) and Generation Z (born 1997–2012) cohorts. This specific demographic was selected due to their high level of engagement with the e-commerce landscape and residence within the urban Jabodetabek region (Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi).

Regarding the sampling technique, the study implemented non-probability purposive sampling to select respondents based strictly on predefined inclusion criteria. To qualify for participation, individuals were required to meet three specific conditions: they must be aged between 17 and 42 years, currently domiciled in the urban Jabodetabek region, and have watched or interacted with the Shopee Live platform at least once in the preceding six months. In terms of sample size, the study adhered to standard Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) guidelines, which recommend a minimum sample size of ten times the number of operational model indicators (Green, 1991; Hair et al., 2019; Kline, 2023). Given the 15 operational indicators, the minimum requirement was calculated at 150 respondents. The study successfully collected and utilized data from 166 valid consumers who fully met all stipulated criteria for the final analysis.

Measurement and Data Collection

Research Instrument

Data acquisition was executed through a structured questionnaire, which served as the primary research instrument. This tool was deployed digitally using the Google Form platform to ensure efficiency and broad access to the target population. The contents of the questionnaire were systematically designed by transforming the study's latent variables (Host Quality, Interactivity, Consumer Engagement, and Purchase Intention) into specific, measurable items through the operationalization of constructs based on established academic literature.

To quantify respondents' perceptions and attitudes, all variables employed a standardized 5-point Likert scale. This scale spanned from 1, representing Strongly Disagree, up to 5, representing Strongly Agree. Furthermore, the questionnaire incorporated initial screening filters (screener questions) to ensure that only participants who satisfied the necessary demographic and behavioural criteria (Millennial/Gen Z, Jabodetabek domicile, and recent Shopee Live viewing history) could proceed with the survey.

Operationalization of Variables

The operationalization of the constructs—Host Quality (X1), Interactivity (X2), Consumer Engagement (Z), and Purchase Intention (Y)—is summarized in the table below, following the theory.

Table 1. The Operationalization of Research Variables

Variable	Dimension	Indicators	Scale
Host Quality (X1)	Expertise	X1.1 - Host ability to understand the product	Likert 1-5
	Trustworthiness	X1.2 - Host provides honest and reliable information	
	Attractiveness	X1.3 - Host's appearance and communication are engaging	
	Entertainment Value	X1.4 - Host is entertaining and not boring	
Interactivity (X2)	Responsiveness	X2.1 - Responses are addressed quickly	Likert 1-5
	Personalization	X2.2 - Live discussion is relevant	
	Social Presence	X2.3 - Feeling of connection with the host	
	Interactivity mechanisms	X2.4 - Uses interactive features	
Consumer Engagement (Z)	Cognitive	Z1.1 - Focus and attention while watching live	Likert 1-5
	Affective	Z1.2 - Feeling entertained during the live session	
	Conative	Z1.3 - Giving comments, likes, or sharing the stream	
Purchase Intention (Y)	Buying Readiness	Y1.1 - Intention to buy	Likert 1-5
	Referential Readiness	Y1.2 - Desire to try the product	
	Exploratory Interest	Y1.3 - Desire to know more about the product	
	Preferential Readiness	Y1.4 - Willingness to recommend the product	

Source: Synthesized from Ferdinand (2014); Hu et al. (2017); Qu et al. (2023); Y. Liu & Shrum (2002); Jiang et al. (2019); Brodie et al. (2011); Doorn et al. (2010); Chidambaram et al. (2024); Spears & Singh (2004)

Data Collection Chronology

The acquisition of primary data was systematically managed online, leveraging the established technique of purposive sampling. This collection phase spanned a duration of two months, commencing in July 2025 and concluding in August 2025. This digital distribution method was strategically selected to ensure broad and efficient access to the geographically focused target population of digital-savvy urban consumers. Furthermore, to ensure data reliability and integrity, the platform was configured to utilize non-duplicate submission features and implement systematic filtering to exclude all incomplete or unusable responses.

Data Analysis Techniques

The research employed Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) for all inferential data analysis, facilitated by SmartPLS 4 software. PLS-SEM was specifically adopted due to its strong predictive orientation and inherent capability to effectively manage complex conceptual models, particularly those involving mediation relationships. The analytical procedure followed a standardized, two-step evaluation process involving the assessment of the Measurement Model (Outer Model) followed by the Structural Model (Inner Model).

The first stage involved the evaluation of the Measurement Model (Outer Model) to assess the psychometric properties of validity and reliability. To establish convergent validity, the outer

loading for each indicator was required to meet a minimum value of 0.70, while the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) needed to exceed 0.50. Subsequently, internal consistency reliability was determined using Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha (CA), both of which were required to surpass the threshold of 0.70. Finally, discriminant validity was rigorously assessed using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT) approach, where adequate differentiation among constructs was established if values remained below 0.90 (Hair et al., 2019).

The second stage focused on the Structural Model (Inner Model) to evaluate the hypothesized causal linkages. This assessment included the Coefficient of Determination (R^2), which quantifies the variance explained in the endogenous variables, and the Effect Size (f^2), classified as small (0.02), moderate (0.15), or large (0.35). Additionally, the overall Goodness of Fit (GoF) was calculated to determine model suitability, interpreted against standard criteria of small (0.10), moderate (0.25), and large (0.36) (Tenenhaus et al., 2005).

To confirm the significance and direction of the proposed relationships, Hypothesis Testing was executed via a bootstrapping procedure employing 5,000 subsamples at a critical alpha level of $\alpha=0.05$. Direct effects were supported if the p-value was less than 0.05 and the 95% Confidence Interval did not contain zero. Furthermore, indirect effects were analyzed to assess mediation, with the specific mediation type (full or partial) classified according to the framework established by Zhao et al. (2010).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section is organized into three main subsections: the General Overview of Respondents, the Empirical Results from the PLS-SEM analysis (including Model Evaluation and Hypothesis Testing), and a comprehensive Discussion that integrates the findings with the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) theory and relevant literature.

General Overview of Respondents

The research successfully utilized data from 166 valid respondents who met the purposive sampling criteria (Millennial or Gen Z consumer, domiciled in urban Jabodetabek, and having watched Shopee Live at least once in the last six months).

Respondent Characteristics Summary

The data reveals specific demographic and behavioural patterns among the subjects (Table 2). The dominance of Generation Z (60.2%) and the high percentage of S1 graduates confirm that the sample is representative of the digital-savvy, urban consumer segment targeted by live commerce platforms. The high frequency of viewing (47.0% watch 1–2 times per week)

suggests that respondents have sufficient exposure to the Host Quality and Interactivity stimuli being measured.

Table 2. The Respondent Characteristics Summary

Characteristic	Dominant Group	Percentage
Generation	Gen Z (17–28 years)	60.2%
Gender	Male	58.4%
Education	Bachelor's Degree (S1)	62.0%
Occupation	Private Employees (41.6%) and Students (37.3%)	78.9%
Viewing Frequency	1–2 times per week	47.0%

Source: Processed Research Data (2025)

Empirical Results from PLS-SEM

The analysis of the collected data was executed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM), specifically utilizing the SmartPLS 4 software. The process strictly followed the established two-stage analytical procedure, beginning with the evaluation of the Measurement Model (Outer Model) and subsequently moving to the Structural Model (Inner Model).

Model Evaluation (Outer and Inner Model)

The assessment of the Measurement Model (Outer Model) confirmed that all constructs and their associated indicators met the stringent psychometric criteria for validity and reliability. Regarding convergent validity and item reliability, every indicator in the model successfully met the requirement, with the lowest observed outer loading being 0.775. Furthermore, convergent validity was strongly established as the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all constructs ranged from 0.674 to 0.770, comfortably surpassing the required 0.50 threshold. In terms of construct reliability, the constructs demonstrated strong internal consistency, confirmed by Composite Reliability (CR) values ranging from 0.892 to 0.924, which well exceeded the minimum acceptable criterion of 0.70. Finally, discriminant validity was rigorously assessed using the Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). All HTMT values for the construct pairings were found to be below the specified 0.90 threshold, with the highest calculated value being 0.893, confirming that the latent variables in the model are empirically distinct.

Following the measurement validation, the evaluation of the Structural Model (Inner Model) confirmed the overall robustness and predictive capability of the conceptual framework. The model demonstrated strong fitness, with a calculated Goodness of Fit (GoF) value of 0.65, which significantly surpasses the required large criterion of 0.36 (Hair et al., 2022; Tenenhaus et al., 2005). Additionally, the model's explanatory power, quantified by the Coefficient of Determination (R^2), proved substantial. The combined stimuli of Host Quality and Interactivity accounted for 51.2% of the variance observed in Consumer Engagement ($R^2=0.512$), categorized

as medium to strong. Collectively, Host Quality, Interactivity, and Consumer Engagement explained 65.4% of the variance in Purchase Intention ($R^2=0.654$), indicating a strong level of explanatory power.

Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis testing results, based on bootstrapping (5,000 subsamples, $p<0.05$ threshold), are summarized below:

Table 3. Bootstrapping Path Coefficients (Simplified)

Hypothesis	Path	β (Coefficient)	t-stat	p-value	Decision
H1	$X1 \rightarrow Z$	0.182	2.022	0.043	Accepted
H2	$X2 \rightarrow Z$	0.578	6.279	0.000	Accepted
H3	$X1 \rightarrow Y$	0.026	0.385	0.700	Rejected
H4	$X2 \rightarrow Y$	0.348	4.320	0.000	Accepted
H5	$Z \rightarrow Y$	0.507	6.885	0.000	Accepted
H6	$X1 \rightarrow Z \rightarrow Y$	(Indirect 0.092)	N/A	Significant	Full Mediation
H7	$X2 \rightarrow Z \rightarrow Y$	(Indirect 0.293)	N/A	Significant	Partial Mediation

Source: Processed Research Data (2025)

Discussion

The data derived from this study demonstrate clear alignment with the hypothesized relationships, establishing the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S–O–R) model as a valid framework for explaining consumer dynamics in the live commerce setting of Shopee Live among Millennials and Gen Z.

Discussion of Direct Effects ($S \rightarrow O$ and $S \rightarrow R$)

H1: Host Quality \rightarrow Consumer Engagement (Accepted). The finding that Host Quality positively and significantly influences Consumer Engagement aligns with established literature (Hu & Chaudhry, 2020). Host Quality acts as a primary Stimulus (S) that captures audience attention and fosters an emotional connection. This outcome transforms the stimulus into a psychological Organism (O) response (engagement), confirming that a host's performance is crucial for building the emotional and cognitive bond necessary for long-term viewership.

H2: Interactivity \rightarrow Consumer Engagement (Accepted). Interactivity showed the strongest path in the $S \rightarrow O$ relationship. This strongly supports the hypothesis that the platform's ability to facilitate real-time, two-way communication significantly drives consumer involvement. As a key Stimulus (S) characteristic of live commerce, high interactivity ensures consumers feel heard and valued, generating a heightened sense of presence and connection that translates into

active engagement (Organism). This is consistent with Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut (2020), who found that mutuality and responsiveness strengthen user engagement in live streaming.

H3: Host Quality \rightarrow Purchase Intention (Rejected). Crucially, Host Quality did not show a significant direct effect on Purchase Intention. This result, while contradicting H3, is vital for the S-O-R model. It suggests that while a charismatic or entertaining host is effective in drawing and retaining attention (Stimulus \rightarrow Organism), this aesthetic appeal alone is insufficient to trigger the final behavioural Response (R), unless that appeal is processed through an internal mechanism (Addo et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2019). This highlights that in the Indonesian live commerce context, the effect of the host is primarily atmospheric and relational, rather than purely transactional.

H4: Interactivity \rightarrow Purchase Intention (Accepted). In contrast to Host Quality, Interactivity exhibited a significant positive direct effect on Purchase Intention. This is likely because Interactivity provides immediate informational utility and reduces perceived risk (e.g., getting real-time answers to product questions, seeing live demonstrations, leveraging flash deals). Interactivity serves as a powerful Stimulus that can bypass some internal processing steps to directly influence the behavioural Response. This is supported by Sun et al. (2019) and Tian et al. (2023), who found that interactivity mechanisms can create urgency and trust that accelerates the buying decision.

H5: Consumer Engagement \rightarrow Purchase Intention (Accepted). Consumer Engagement showed a strong, positive, and significant influence on Purchase Intention. This finding confirms Engagement as a highly effective Organism (O) state in converting psychological involvement into a concrete behavioural Response (R) (Islam & Rahman, 2017). When urban Millennials and Gen Z feel cognitively, affectively, and conatively connected to the session, their sense of value and willingness to buy drastically increases, making engagement a robust predictor of Purchase Intention.

Discussion of Mediation Effects (S \rightarrow O \rightarrow R)

H6: Full Mediation of Host Quality (Accepted). The mediation analysis revealed Full Mediation (Indirect-Only). Since the direct path was insignificant, but the indirect path was significant, it confirms that Consumer Engagement is the essential mechanism through which Host Quality impacts purchasing decisions (Zhao et al., 2010). This outcome strongly validates the S-O-R model here: the social and entertainment stimulus provided by the host must first foster an internal psychological state (engagement) before it can translate into purchasing behaviour.

H7: Partial Mediation of Interactivity (Accepted). The analysis confirmed a Partial Mediation effect for the relationship between Interactivity and Purchase Intention (Zhao et al., 2010). Since both the direct path and the indirect path were found to be significant, the results

indicate that interactivity influences Purchase Intention via two parallel mechanisms. First, it operates through a direct path driven by informational utility, efficiency, and trust. Second, it functions through an indirect path by intensifying psychological involvement—specifically Consumer Engagement—which, in turn, significantly boosts Purchase Intention. This result highlights the multidimensional nature of interactivity as a stimulus in live commerce, capable of initiating both rational and emotional processing that leads to buying intent.

Comparison with Previous Literature

The empirical findings concerning the model’s high predictive power—in which Host Quality, Interactivity, and Consumer Engagement collectively account for 65.4% (R^2) of the variance in Purchase Intention—strongly affirms the conceptual model’s effectiveness within the specific operational context of Shopee Live.

Table 4. Previous Research

No	Research (year)	Variables				Result
		X1	X2	Z	Y	
1	Putro et al. (2024)	✓			✓	X1 → Y = S (+)
2	X. Liu & Zhang (2024)		✓		✓	X2 → Y = S (+)
3	Oktaviani & Albari (2023)		✓		✓	X2 → Y = S (+)
4	Zhang et al. (2023)		✓		✓	X2 → Y = S (+)
5	Hapsari et al. (2025)	✓			✓	X1 → Y = S (+)
6	Z. Jiang et al. (2022)	✓	✓	✓		X1 → Z = S (+) X2 → Z = S (+)
7	Yang et al. (2024)	✓			✓	X1 → Y = S (+)
8	Zou & Fu (2024)	✓			✓	X1 → Y = S (+)
9	Bolun et al. (2025)		✓	✓		X2 → Z = S (+)
10	He et al. (2022)	✓	✓	✓	✓	X1 → Z & Y = S (+) X2 → Z & Y = S (+)
11	Ao et al. (2023)	✓		✓	✓	X1 → Z & Y = S (+)
12	F. Liu et al. (2022)		✓		✓	X2 → Y = S (+)
13	Cheng (2024)		✓		✓	X2 → Y = S (+)

Source: Processed Research Data (2025); X1 - Host Quality; X2 - Interactivity; Z - Consumer Engagement; Y - Purchase Intention; S - Significant; (+) - Positive

This outcome advances prior research by synthesizing distinct effects into a unified S-O-R framework. While earlier study separately affirmed the influence of Host Quality (Putro et al., 2024; Yang et al., 2024) and Interactivity (X. Liu & Zhang, 2024; Zhang et al., 2023) on purchase outcomes, this study quantitatively confirms that their high predictive power relies on Consumer Engagement as the crucial bridge (Organism).

This study advances the literature by demonstrating the necessary full and partial mediation roles of Consumer Engagement. While previous research validated the positive

existence of these paths, this study quantitatively confirms that the strong predictive power (65.4%) observed in the Purchase Intention variable is a direct result of successfully modelling as the crucial psychological bridge (Organism) between the two distinct live commerce stimuli (Host Quality and Interactivity) and the behavioural outcome (Purchase Intention).

The high R^2 achieved confirms the potency of these specific, immersive live commerce stimuli when channelled through engagement for urban Millennial and Gen Z consumers in Jabodetabek, providing a specific contextual validation missing in the existing literature.

Implications

Theoretical Implications

Theoretically, this research expands the current body of knowledge regarding digital marketing by providing robust empirical validation for the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) framework within the dynamic, high-context environment of Indonesian live commerce. First, by confirming full mediation, the research refines the theoretical role of Host Quality. It establishes that Host Quality should not be treated merely as a direct antecedent of purchasing behaviour, but rather as a precursor to psychological engagement, reinforcing the necessity of the "Organism" state in the S-O-R model when the stimulus is relational or atmospheric. Second, the study contributes to theory by delineating the dual function of Interactivity through partial mediation. This demonstrates that interactivity simultaneously provides transactional utility through direct effects and facilitates emotional attachment through indirect effects mediated by engagement.

Practical Implications

Practically, the results provide actionable insights for industry stakeholders. For e-commerce platforms such as Shopee, the high predictive power of the model confirms the efficacy of the live commerce format. Platforms should prioritize the further development of interactivity mechanisms—such as real-time rating, specialized reaction features, and enhanced Q&A functionality—as this stimulus has a direct, powerful effect on purchase intention. Simultaneously, for sellers and hosts, the discovery of full mediation for Host Quality necessitates a strategic shift. Businesses should invest heavily in host training programs focused on building authenticity and emotional connection rather than solely on product knowledge. Hosts must leverage their expertise to maximize the "Organism" state (engagement), recognizing this as the essential lever for conversion. Finally, given the high proportion of Generation Z consumers, strategies must move beyond passive broadcasting to create highly participatory sessions where the host actively acknowledges and responds to viewer input in real-time.

CONCLUSION

The core objectives outlined in the Introduction were successfully fulfilled, as this research analyzed the dynamic influences linking critical stimuli within the live commerce context to resulting consumer behaviour. The robust empirical data, generated through Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), demonstrated strong compatibility with the theoretical framework, thereby validating that external platform components successfully convert into purchasing intent via internal psychological mechanisms. The essence of the research findings strongly supports the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) framework in the context of Shopee Live among urban Millennial and Gen Z consumers. Both Host Quality and Interactivity were confirmed to positively and significantly influence Consumer Engagement (Organism). Furthermore, Consumer Engagement was found to be a crucial psychological mechanism that significantly drives Purchase Intention (Response).

The primary theoretical novelty and conceptualization derived from this research centres on the mediating function of engagement. Specifically, the study established that Host Quality does not exert a direct, significant influence on Purchase Intention; instead, its effect is fully channelled through Consumer Engagement. This finding refines theory by confirming that the atmospheric, charismatic, and trustworthy qualities of the host serve primarily to build emotional and cognitive bonds, which must precede the actual behavioural decision to buy. Conversely, the analysis identified a partial mediation for Interactivity, encompassing features like live chat and real-time responses. This variable significantly influenced Purchase Intention both directly and indirectly via engagement, indicating that platform interactivity holds a dual role by simultaneously fulfilling informational utility and fostering emotional closeness.

The strong predictive power of the model, explaining 65.4% of the variance in Purchase Intention, underscores the critical importance of optimizing these specific digital stimuli for marketing communication strategies within live commerce. Based on these findings, specific strategies are recommended for industry application. For e-commerce platforms and practitioners, such as Shopee, sellers, and hosts, the core strategy must be focused on maximizing engagement, particularly recognizing the fully mediated role of Host Quality. Businesses must invest heavily in host professionalism and training that emphasizes building authenticity, rapport, and expertise, thereby ensuring the host effectively converts attention into engagement. Furthermore, platforms should enhance and diversify interactivity features—such as real-time polling, dedicated Q&A functions, and customized reaction features—to leverage its direct and indirect influence on buying intent.

For further research, the study suggests several prospective developments. Future researchers are encouraged to employ longitudinal designs to validate causal relationships over time, addressing the limitations of cross-sectional analysis. Additionally, applying this S-O-R

model to comparative studies on different live commerce platforms (e.g., TikTok Live or YouTube Live) would help examine how platform-specific affordances affect consumer behaviour across various digital contexts. Finally, subsequent studies should explore the integration of additional psychological variables, such as perceived trust or social presence, to further enrich the literature on digital consumer behaviour.

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