

Factors Influencing the Adoption of Social Commerce Live-Streaming Shopping among Malaysian Consumers

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ABSTRACT

Social commerce live-streaming shopping has fundamentally transformed Malaysia's digital retail ecosystem, offering real-time interaction and immediate consumer engagement. However, traditional technology adoption models such as the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT 2) often overlook the human-centric nuances and interpersonal trust inherent to live sales environments. To address this theoretical gap, this conceptual paper extends the UTAUT 2 framework by integrating streamer credibility, which encompasses perceived expertise, trustworthiness and authentic engagement as a vital core construct alongside performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, hedonic motivation and price value. Adopting a qualitative, deductive theoretical synthesis, this study maps the complex interdependencies between platform affordances and consumer psychological drivers tailored to the unique socio-cultural dynamics of Malaysia. The conceptual analysis reveals that while conventional UTAUT 2 dimensions effectively acts as the primary catalyst to reduce information asymmetry and mitigate consumer uncertainty during virtual demonstrations. By establishing a structured, multidimensional model, this research bridges the gap between digital platform usability and sustained consumer loyalty. For industry stakeholders and marketers, the framework offers actionable insights, highlighting the need to transition from high-pressure, transactional sales tactics toward trust-centric, community-oriented live-streaming strategies that foster long-term customer engagement. Additionally, this study provides a foundation for future empirical validation and longitudinal research examining how emerging technologies, such as AI-driven virtual avatars, reshape trust-building mechanism within social commerce environments.

Keywords: Social Commerce, Live-Streaming shopping, UTAUT 2, Streamer Credibility, Behavioural Intention

INTRODUCTION

The rapid emergence of social commerce live-streaming shopping has fundamentally transformed the digital retail landscape in Malaysia, providing a dynamic platform for real-time interaction and immediate consumer engagement (Bawack et al., 2023; Duan & Begum, 2024). Despite its exponential growth, existing literature often relies on conventional frameworks like UTAUT and UTAUT 2 to assess technology adoption, which frequently overlook the unique, human-centric nuance of real-time sales environment (Ong et al., 2019). While these models typically account for performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, hedonic motivation and price value, they lack sufficient explanatory power regarding interpersonal trust established between host and viewer. To address this theoretical gap, this conceptual paper extends the UTAUT 2 framework by incorporating streamer credibility as a core construct, acknowledging that the personal attributes of the host, specifically their expertise and trustworthiness, are considered as pivotal in driving consumer purchase intention (Shih et al., 2023; Wel et al., 2023).

Despite this integration, empirical evidence suggests a disconnect between platform usability and sustained consumer loyalty, as many Malaysian shoppers report hesitation due to inconsistent service quality and concerns regarding information transparency (Chong et al., 2022). Consequently, identifying the critical determinants that bridge this engagement gap remains a primary challenge for marketers seeking to foster a long-term adoption in the Malaysian market. To resolve this, this concept paper empirically investigates how streamer credibility, when synthesized with existing UTAUT 2 constructs, shapes the purchase intentions of Malaysian consumers. By elucidating these relationships, the research aims to provide actionable insights for industry stakeholders, enabling them to mitigate consumer uncertainty, build deeper trust and ultimately enhance the efficacy of live-streaming shopping initiatives.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT 2) and Live-Streaming Adoption

In this study, Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT 2) is applied to assess how performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, hedonic motivation and price value collectively drive behavioural intention toward live-streaming (Zeng & Mohamad, 2026). Performance expectancy highlights how the perceived utility and effectiveness of real-time demonstrations facilitate purchase decisions, while hedonic motivation captures the intrinsic pleasure and excitement derived from the interactive, often gamified nature of these sessions (Gunadi et al., 2023). Furthermore, effort expectancy and social influence operate by minimizing technical barriers and leveraging peer validation to normalize shopping behaviours, while price value ensures that perceived cost-efficiency remains a central motivator for adoption (Xu & Su, 2025).

To extend this framework, the present research integrates streamer credibility as a critical direct construct, positing that perceived attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness of the broadcaster may serve as essential catalysts for trust transfer (Lin & Nuangjamnong, 2022; Wan, 2026). By grounding the study in this extended framework, it becomes possible to capture how viewers transition from passive observers to active participants through psychological mechanism of trust transfer. Ultimately, this synthesized model provides a comprehensive lens through which to examine the Malaysian market, accounting for the human-centric nuances that define successful engagement in social commerce.

Performance Expectancy

In the context of live-streaming commerce, performance expectancy refers to the degree to which a consumer perceives that utilizing these platforms will facilitate superior shopping efficiency and functional benefits (Albugami & Zaheer, 2023). This construct is particularly critical in Malaysia, where real-time product demonstrations and interactive Q&A sessions significantly reduce the perceived risks associated with online purchasing (Chung, 2025; Cahyono et al., 2025). By offering tangible demonstrations of product quality, streamers function as essential conduits for information that mitigate consumer uncertainty and cognitive dissonance during the pre-purchase phase (Suhud et al., 2025). Furthermore, the immediacy of these visual evaluations allows users to assess product quality in real time (Suhud et al., 2025).

As documented in the literature, the relationship between performance expectancy and behavioural intention is well-established, as consumers who perceive higher efficiency in their shopping tasks through these platforms are significantly more likely to adopt social commerce as a primary retail channel (Chung, 2025). Beyond this functional utility, however, the perceived performance of the live-streamer shopping journey is increasingly augmented by algorithmic personalization and psychological triggers such as scarcity, which collectively refine the consumer experience.

By tailoring real-time product recommendations to individual user preference and leveraging limited-time offers to induce immediate engagement, these platforms facilitate the transformation of the shopping process from a search-oriented activity to a dynamic, performance-optimized encounter (Kao & Huang, 2024; Qiao, 2025; Sari et al., 2026). Considering these functional and psychological enhancements, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Performance expectancy has a positive and significant influence on the behavioural intention to adopt live-streaming shopping among Malaysian consumers (Ng et al., 2024).

Effort Expectancy

Within the live-streaming commerce landscape, effort expectancy is conceptualized as the degree to which consumers perceive the navigation, interaction and transactional functionalities of the platform as intuitive and accessible, thereby encompassing technical operability and cognitive accessibility (Albugami & Zaheer, 2023; Ng et al., 2024). As users acquire feelings of ease from understanding and interacting with these interfaces, their perceived flow and engagement are substantially enhanced, which facilitates a smoother transition toward actual technology adoption (Zhao & Bação, 2021).

In this context of the Malaysian digital ecosystem, where platform complexity can deter older demographic segments, high effort expectancy serves as a vital enabler that mitigates the perceived cognitive burden of navigating real-time shopping interfaces (Qing & Jin, 2022). Moreover, existing literature suggests that ease of use significantly influences attitudes toward digital shopping by minimizing the friction encountered during the purchasing journey (George et al., 2025; Hao, 2025).

When consumers perceive live-streaming platforms as effortless to navigate, they are more likely to overcome the technical barriers inherent in real-time interactive commerce, thereby strengthening their behavioural intention to adopt these services (Ng et al., 2024; Zhao & Bação, 2021). This ease of navigation fosters a positive cognitive appraisal of the technology, which further reinforces the consumer's readiness to engage in social commerce activities (Albugami & Zaheer, 2023). By minimizing the cognitive load associated with complex transactional processes, higher levels of effort expectancy directly facilitate a more seamless and committed adoption path (Qing & Jin, 2022). In light of this, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H2: Effort expectancy has a positive and significant influence on the behavioural intention to adopt live-streaming shopping among Malaysian consumers (Rizkalla et al., 2024).

Social Influence

Social influence refers to the extent to which an individual perceives that important peers, family members, or social groups believe they should engage with a particular technology (Ng et al., 2024). In the context of the Malaysian digital landscape, which is often characterized by collectivist values, this construct manifest as a significant motivator for consumers to align their shopping behaviours with the perceived expectations of their social circles (Khine & Dreamson, 2023). As users frequently observe co-viewers endorsing product through real-time comments and witnessing collective enthusiasm during live sessions, this peer validation effectively mitigates individual purchasing uncertainty, thereby reinforcing the normative pressure to participate in live-streaming (Khine & Dreamson, 2023; Ng et al., 2024).

Consequently, when consumers perceive a favourable social appraisal of these platforms within their networks, their readiness to adopt them as primary retail channel is significantly strengthened (Rizkalla et al., 2024). In light of these social dynamics, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Social influence has a positive and significant influence on the behavioural intention to adopt live-streaming shopping among Malaysian consumers (Ng et al., 2024).

Hedonic Motivation

Hedonic motivation captures the inherent pleasure and emotional gratification consumers derive from the interactive, entertainment-oriented nature of live-streaming sessions, which often transcends mere functional utility (Arisman & Imam, 2022). Within the collectivist cultural context of Malaysia, which is consistent with Hofstede's cultural dimensions, this motivation is inextricably linked to communal decision-making, as consumers frequently seek group consensus in real-time chatroom where shared enthusiasm and co-viewer participation provide powerful social proof that validates their purchase choices (Khine & Dreamson, 2023).

Because this immersive, joy-driven experience fulfils both personal desire and the need for social alignment, it functions as a critical driver of platform (Mutambik et al., 2024). Research indicates that when consumers perceive high level of enjoyment and stimulation, their propensity to engage with social commerce is significantly enhance (Chung, 2025; Luo et al., 2023). In light of these motivational factors, it is hypothesised that:

H4: Hedonic motivation has a positive and significant influence on the behavioural intention to adopt live-streaming shopping among Malaysian consumers (Nguyen-Thanh et al., 2025).

Price Value

In the Malaysian live-streaming market, price value functions as a critical determinant of adoption, reflecting the cognitive trade-off where consumers meticulously evaluate whether the monetary cost of products is justified by the tangible benefits received (Luo et al., 2023). In terms of value-seeking behaviour, Malaysian shoppers are particularly responsive to the exclusive, time-sensitive promotions and discount coupons that streamers frequently deploy to highlight exceptional value (Zhang et al., 2024).

This assessment is further solidified by the interactive nature of live broadcasts, which provide consumers with real-time comparisons and social validation from co-viewers, thereby reducing perceived financial risk and anchoring their judgment of value (Ko, 2024). By facilitating a rational calculation of savings against perceived product quality, price value directly influences the likelihood of consumer adoption, confirming its role as foundational driver in this retail environment (Cahyono et al., 2025). Accordingly, it is hypothesised that:

H5: Price Value has a positive and significant influence on the behavioural intention to adopt live-streaming shopping among Malaysian consumers, as the rational calculation of monetary benefits shapes their decision-making process (Syamsuar & Witarsyah, 2025).

Streamer Credibility

By combining professional expertise and trustworthiness with authentic parasocial connections, streamers effectively reduce consumer uncertainty when physical product inspection is impossible, fostering the confidence needed for viewers to commit to live-streaming shopping (Ko, 2023; Lee & Wan, 2023; Wel et al., 2023). This perceived competence allows the streamer to act as a reliable proxy for product quality, directly addressing the information asymmetry that often characterizes the virtual marketplace (Phuong et al., 2023). Yet, this trust-building process is complicated by the “authenticity paradox”, wherein hyper-rehearsed or overly polished product demonstrations may paradoxically trigger consumer scepticism, as viewers increasingly rely on spontaneous, unscripted responses as more valid indicators of streamer’s integrity than formal professional expertise alone (Jiang et al., 2024; Luo et al., 2024).

Consequently, the most effective streamers are those who adaptably balance their professional command of product information with a sincere, conversational demeanour, ensuring that their demonstrations appear as natural, peer-to-peer exchanges rather than choreographed sales pitches (Liao et al., 2022; Zhou & Luo, 2023). The perceived genuineness, cultivated through transparency and unscripted interaction, is crucial for establishing the deep-seated trust required to translate viewer engagement into deliberate purchase decisions (Ko, 2023; Luo et al., 2024).

Furthermore, the ability to maintain its balance is supported by the strategic utilization of interactive platform features, which allow streamers to demonstrate their expertise in real-time, thereby reinforcing the sense of authenticity that is foundational to consumer confidence in the virtual marketplace (Luo et al., 2024; Zhou & Lou, 2023). Thus, by synthesizing technical proficiency with consistent, transparent communication, streamers can cultivate a reliable persona that transcend mere salesmanship, effectively deepening the parasocial bond with their audience (Zantis, 2026). Given this pivotal role of credibility in bridging viewer engagement and consumption, this conceptual paper proposes the following hypothesis:

H6: Streamer credibility positive and significantly influences on the behavioural intention to adopt live-streaming shopping among Malaysian consumers (Ko, 2023; Liao et al., 2022).

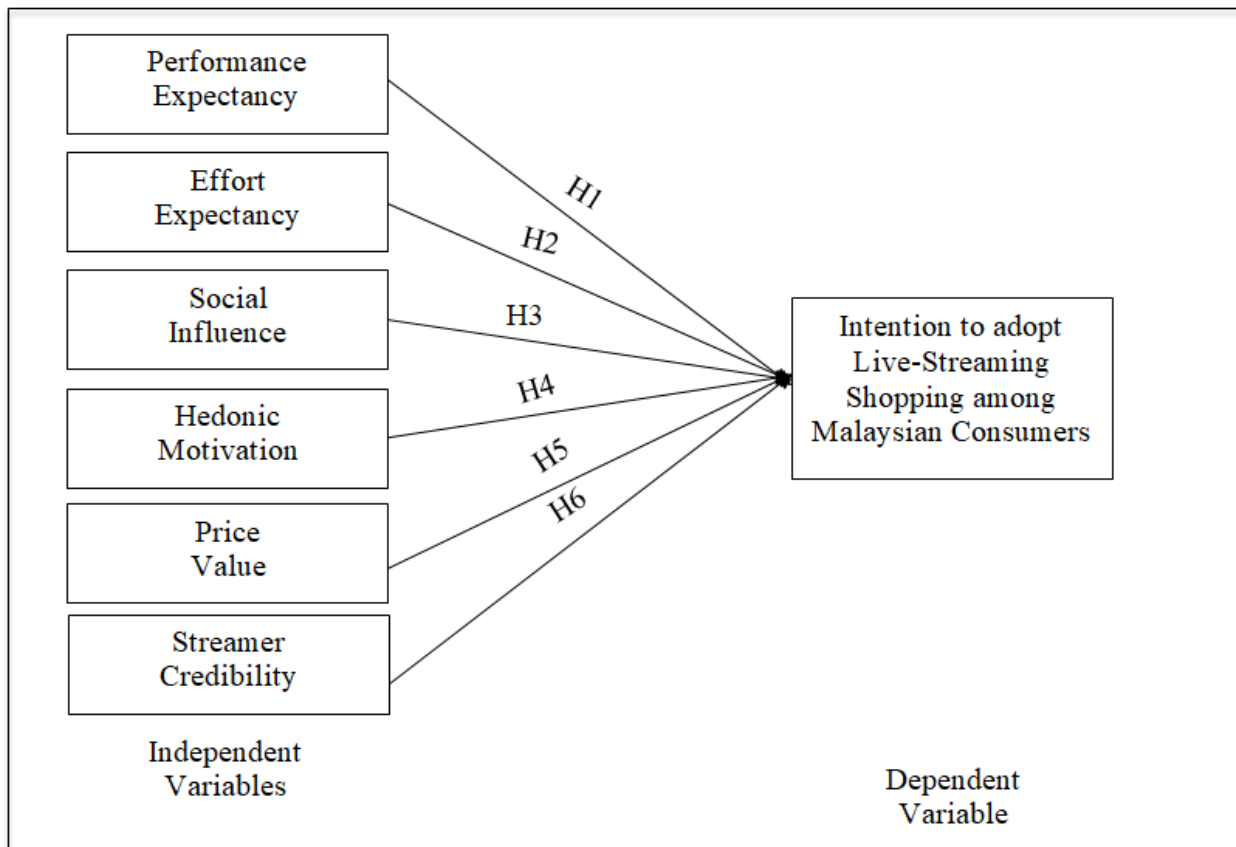


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Intention to adopt Live-Streaming Shopping among Malaysian consumers

METHODOLOGY

This conceptual framework adopts a qualitative, analytical approach, synthesizing existing literature to map the complex interdependencies between social commerce affordances and the psychological drivers of Malaysian consumers. This methodological approach involves integrating these constructs into a cohesive theoretical framework that reflect the unique dynamics of the Malaysian live-streaming environment. By extending the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), streamer credibility is included as a construct essential for reducing information asymmetry, alongside established determinants such as performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, hedonic motivation, and price value, this concept paper constructs a robust, multidimensional model.

This deductive, theoretical synthesis critically examines existing literature to elucidate the synergetic relationships between these psychological drivers and platforms affordances, thereby providing a comprehensive, logic-based foundation for understanding the behavioural intentions underlying social commerce adoption among Malaysian consumers.

The model explicitly posits that these six constructs function as antecedent variables that collectively shape the adoption landscape, thereby providing a clear theoretical lens for future empirical validation. By mapping these dimensions, this study establishes a structured a basis for testing the proposed relationships, serving as a rigorous roadmap for researchers to investigate how specific platform features and consumer motivation intersect within the unique sociocultural context of Malaysia. This conceptual synthesis ultimately bridges the gap between established technology acceptance paradigms and the evolving realities of digital retail, providing a foundational pathway for evaluating the complex interplay between technical affordances and psychological drivers.

CONCLUSION

While this conceptual framework delineates the foundational psychological and platform drivers of social commerce, it is constrained by its static nature, which may inadequately address the rapid integration of artificial intelligence and virtual avatars within live-streaming interfaces. Future empirical validation should consequently prioritize longitudinal studies to assess how the emergence of AI-driven virtual streamers alters established paradigms of parasocial interaction and trust, as this technological transition potentially undermines conventional, human-centric trust-building mechanisms.

For practitioners, these findings suggest a critical shift in marketing strategy, rather than relying solely on traditional streamer credibility, brands must innovate toward ethically informed, algorithmically transparent engagement models that balance immediate conversion goals with the cultivation of sustainable, long-term consumer relationship. Furthermore, future empirical studies should examine how cultural nuance, such as collectivism and religious influences within the Malaysian market, moderate the relationships, thereby ensuring the broader generalizability of this theoretical framework. By addressing these cultural and technological variables, this study offers actionable insights for policymakers to cultivate a more competitive, innovative and consumer-friendly digital market environment in Malaysia.

In addition, marketers should leverage the broader UTAUT 2 framework which incorporates performance expectancy, social influence, hedonic motivation, price value, habit and facilitating conditions to design seamless, interactive shopping experiences. By aligning digital strategies with these validated drivers of technology acceptance, brands can effectively reduce consumer hesitation and reinforce purchase intentions, bridging the gap between passive viewership and active consumption. Finally, integrating these strategies requires e-commerce operators to transition from transactional, high-pressure tactics toward community-oriented engagement, which is essential for navigating the distinct socio-technical expectations of the Malaysian market.

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