



EXPLORING HOW LIVE STREAMING SHAPES MALE CONSUMERS' PERCEPTIONS OF RATINGS AND REVIEWS

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Article history:

Submitted: 19 August

Revised: 6 Oktober

Accepted: 4 November

Keywords:

Consumer Review;

Live streaming;

Male;

Purchase Decision;

Store Rating;

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Abstract

This study aims to understand how consumer reviews, store ratings, and live streaming affect online shopping decisions among male consumers. It also looks into how live streaming can mediate the connection between reviews, ratings, and purchasing choices. We chose a purposive sampling method, focusing on male consumers who are often overlooked in similar research. Data was gathered online through questionnaires filled out by 170 students from three universities in Sikka Regency. To analyze relationships, we used multiple linear regression, and the Sobel Test helped us examine the mediation effects. The results are encouraging, showing that consumer reviews, store ratings, and live streaming all positively influence male consumers' online buying decisions. Interestingly, live streaming serves as a mediator between store ratings and purchase choices, but it doesn't play the same role between reviews and decisions. Overall, this research offers valuable insights into male consumer behavior in the world of e-commerce.

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INTRODUCTION

After the COVID-19 pandemic, consumer shopping behavior shifted from conventional in-store shopping to online shopping as a more practical and efficient option. Data from Bank Indonesia shows that the number of online consumers rose to 51 percent in August 2020. On the other hand, data from Exabytes recorded an increase in the number of online businesses by 38.3 percent compared to 2019. This indicates that more people are starting to see online business as a promising business opportunity. In addition, Bank Indonesia also recorded a 26 percent increase in online business transactions during the pandemic. In fact, the combined turnover of the four largest e-commerce companies in Indonesia in 2020 is estimated at 429 trillion rupiah, more than double the previous year's turnover of 201 trillion rupiah. (Chandra et al., 2022). Research on Indonesian e-commerce consumer behavior in 2021, released by Kredivo, shows the dominance of men in online purchase transactions. As many as 62 percent of transactions were made by men, while women only accounted for 38 percent. (Ranggasari, 2022). The increase in online purchases is directly proportional to the number of internet users. According to the latest survey results from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), the internet penetration rate in Indonesia increased from 78.1 percent in 2023 to 79.5 percent in 2024. This increase reflects a steady and sustainable growth trend since 2018, when internet usage penetration only reached 64 percent (Kristianti & Adji, 2024). The number of e-commerce purchases is expected to continue to increase as the number in internet users grows.

Online buying decisions are made by consumers who gather information about products and stores. Accurate information is essential because consumers have limited knowledge of online products. (Cahayani et al., 2025). Information asymmetry occurs in online markets; sellers have more information than consumers. (Demaj & Manjani, 2020). Actual products are inaccessible, so consumers are hesitant. On the other hand, seller information is considered less trustworthy because it always presents the good side of the product. Previous consumer experiences are considered more reliable than seller claims because consumers have personally used the product and verified its advantages. (Molinillo et al., 2022). In online product purchases, consumers cannot assess product quality directly as they can in physical stores. Therefore, consumers tend to rely on customer reviews and previous purchase experiences to infer product quality. (Chen et al., 2022; He et al., 2020). Although customer reviews are seen as a significant factor in decision-making, not all reviews receive an equal attention. Customers tend to distinguish credibility and relevance among online reviews. (Changchit et al., 2021). Writing online reviews allows consumers to share their assessments of products they have purchased or used. These assessments typically include feedback on user satisfaction, product quality, and seller interaction. Reviews not only assist other customers in deciding but also provide sellers with insights for improving their products and services. (Sari & Sharif, 2021).

In addition to online comments, store ratings are also important information for customers before making a purchase decision. (Ibrahim et al., 2024). Ratings result from evaluating the level of satisfaction, as reflected in user feedback on products or services. (Sun et al., 2020). Customers convey their assessment of a product or service through symbolic representations, such as stars, rather than using text reviews. The use of this star symbol serves as a concise visual means of expressing their level of satisfaction or perception in a direct and easy-to-understand manner. (Oetarjo et al., 2023). The higher the star scale, the greater the indication that the product or store is considered to have good quality. Conversely, a low star rating can signal that the product or store is perceived as failing to meet consumer expectations. (Oetarjo et al., 2023).

Consumer purchase decisions occur when consumers have authentic experiences with products sold online. The live streaming feature helps consumers gain a genuine experience through live product demonstrations, real-time product information, and more interactive features (Hossain et al., 2023). Through interactive features in live-streaming shopping, consumers can ask questions directly

to the seller. Seller-buyer interaction not only increases consumers' understanding of the product but also builds trust that can drive more convincing purchasing decisions (Hossain et al., 2023; Wongsunopparat & Deng, 2021). Live streaming enables integrated multisensory communication between sellers and consumers. Consumers can simultaneously watch the seller's activities and listen to their explanations, while sellers can respond to consumers' text messages in real time (Wang et al., 2022).

This research combines consumer reviews, store ratings, live streaming, and purchase decisions in a framework that is rarely found in previous studies. This research is enriched by treating live-streaming shopping as a mediating variable, given that previous studies have examined only the direct relationship between consumer reviews. (Chen et al., 2022; Fernandes et al., 2022; Guo et al., 2020) and store ratings (He et al., 2020; LaCour & Serra, 2022; Sun et al., 2020) To make purchase decisions. Researchers assume that consumers with positive review and rating information are still encouraged to watch product live streams. This is done as an effort to validate the information obtained and strengthen confidence before purchasing a real-time virtual experience. Different from previous studies that discuss gender in general (Changchit et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2022; He et al., 2020; Hossain et al., 2023; Sun et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2022) Or focus on women who are considered the most active in online transactions. (Allan et al., 2022; Fan-Osuala, 2023; Mahmood et al., 2022) This study focuses on men's online purchasing decisions. Kredivo and Katadata Insight Center research found that men are more wasteful than women when shopping online. This research makes a theoretical contribution by extending the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to live-streaming commerce, with male consumers as the primary focus. This emphasis is significant, as much of the existing e-commerce literature has focused on female consumer behavior, leaving the decision-making dynamics of male consumers relatively underexplored. On a practical level, the study provides valuable insights for sellers by highlighting that male consumers exhibit perception patterns distinct from those of female consumers. A more nuanced understanding of these differences can support the development of more precisely targeted strategies to engage the male market segment.

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) suggests that an individual's actions are driven by their intention to act. This intention is determined by three core elements: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Attitude represents a person's positive or negative evaluation of a given action. Subjective norms concern the influence of others, while perceived control refers to one's confidence in one's own ability to act. Collectively, these components shape behavioral intentions, which then serve as the strongest predictor of actual behavior. In the context of live streaming, TPB explains that consumers' attitudes form as they process information presented during the broadcast and weigh ratings and reviews. When the information is consistent and predominantly positive, it fosters a favorable attitude toward the product, thereby increasing purchase intention. (Misbakhudin & Komaryatin, 2023). Subjective norms emerge through social influence, either from interactions with fellow viewers or through social proof in the form of ratings and reviews. A high volume of positive feedback reinforces the tendency to follow this trend. Meanwhile, perceived behavioral control reflects the consumer's sense of confidence in making a purchase. Features embedded in live streaming that simplify transactions, coupled with reliable ratings and reviews that minimize uncertainty, further strengthen this confidence. (Long et al., 2024; Wibowo et al., 2024). Together, these three dimensions contribute to the formation of purchase intention, which ultimately translates into actual buying behavior.

Consumer reviews are responses from customers after using a product or service. Reviews reflect consumer satisfaction or dissatisfaction after using the product (Chen et al., 2022; Qin et al., 2023). Consumer reviews are submitted in the form of written comments, both positive and negative. Positive comments are made when consumers perceive benefits from using the product. Conversely, negative comments occur when the product does not meet consumer expectations (Changchit et al., 2021; J. Zhang et al., 2020). Consumer reviews are generally perceived as more trustworthy than

seller-provided information since they reflect firsthand experiences of past buyers. This sense of credibility builds confidence in the product's quality and motivates potential customers to develop a purchase decision (I. A. G. P. P. Sari & Hasbi, 2020). Purchasing decisions occur when a product receives a positive consumer assessment. Favorable reviews serve as social proof, enhancing consumer trust in a product or brand. When most feedback is positive, consumers are more likely to perceive the product as high-quality, aligned with their expectations, and worth purchasing (Guo et al., 2020).

H₁: Consumer reviews have a positive effect on purchasing decisions

Consumers can also make purchasing decisions by considering store ratings. Store ratings are evaluations given by consumers of the quality of service and shopping experience on online store platforms. (LaCour & Serra, 2022; Sun et al., 2020). This evaluation is generally presented in a numerical or symbolic format, such as stars, on a scale of 1 to 5. Higher scores indicate a positive perception of the store, while low scores reflect dissatisfaction (Oetarjo et al., 2023). A strong rating signals that numerous consumers have already tried the product and provided favorable feedback. This fosters greater trust and reduces uncertainty in the purchasing decision, particularly among buyers who are less familiar with the product. (He et al., 2020; Ibrahim et al., 2024). Stores need to ensure consistency in product and service quality to improve and maintain ratings. High ratings tend to increase consumer confidence in making purchasing decisions.

H₂: Store ratings have a positive effect on purchasing decisions

In today's digital era, consumer trust is further strengthened through direct interaction offered by live streaming features. Live streaming features allow consumers to see products in real time and receive information in real time. (Hossain et al., 2023; Hu & Ming, 2020). This interaction creates a higher immediacy than conventional promotional methods. Live streaming increases customer engagement and accelerates the purchase decision-making process by providing a more personalized, interactive experience. (Wongsunopparat & Deng, 2021). Live streaming offers a dynamic, engaging experience that is often perceived as more persuasive than conventional advertising. During these sessions, consumers can observe the product in real time, receive immediate explanations from the seller, and ask questions. Such interaction fosters a sense of connection, enhances trust, and promotes transparency about both the product and the seller. Consequently, live streaming serves as a valuable medium for reinforcing consumer confidence and stimulating purchasing decisions. (Chandraa et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2022).

H₃: Live streaming has a positive effect on purchasing decisions

Positive reviews and ratings create a favorable initial perception of a product or store. When positive information is combined with the visual experience and live interaction during live streaming, consumer trust is further enhanced (Chandraa et al., 2024; Q. Zhang et al., 2024). Live streaming serves as an interactive medium that enables sellers to respond directly to reviews, verify product quality, and address negative perceptions from prior reviews (Abadi & Ivoniasari, 2024). This interaction contributes to reducing consumer doubts and increasing confidence in making purchasing decisions. In addition, the appearance of store ratings as a result of consumer assessments also illustrates the perception of professionalism and credibility of sellers in the eyes of consumers (Li et al., 2023). Consumers will be encouraged to seek additional information about stores with high ratings in live streaming sessions. Ratings and reviews function as an initial reference for assessing product quality and seller credibility, yet they are often static and lack interactive elements. Online ratings and reviews act as an immediate indicator of a product or service's quality. They strengthen consumer trust and reduce uncertainty because they are viewed as more impartial than seller-provided information. Consequently, strong ratings or reviews boost buying intentions, whereas weak ratings or reviews may discourage purchase decisions (Respati et al., 2024; Sari & Hasbi, 2020). Through live streaming, this information can be transformed into a more engaging experience, as sellers present social proof via ratings and reviews while showcasing products, addressing questions, and engaging with viewers in

real time (Changchit et al., 2021; Hossain et al., 2023; LaCour & Serra, 2022). As a result, ratings and reviews are interpreted not merely as figures or written comments but as validated social proof observed directly during the session. This process assists hesitant consumers in gaining greater certainty, reduces perceived risk, and builds trust (Long et al., 2024; Misbakhudin & Komaryatin, 2023). Thus, live streaming serves as a connector that converts static information into an engaging, persuasive interaction, ultimately motivating consumers to proceed with purchase decisions.

H_{4a}: Live streaming mediates the relationship between consumer reviews and purchasing decisions

H_{4b}: Live streaming mediates the relationship between store ratings and purchasing decisions

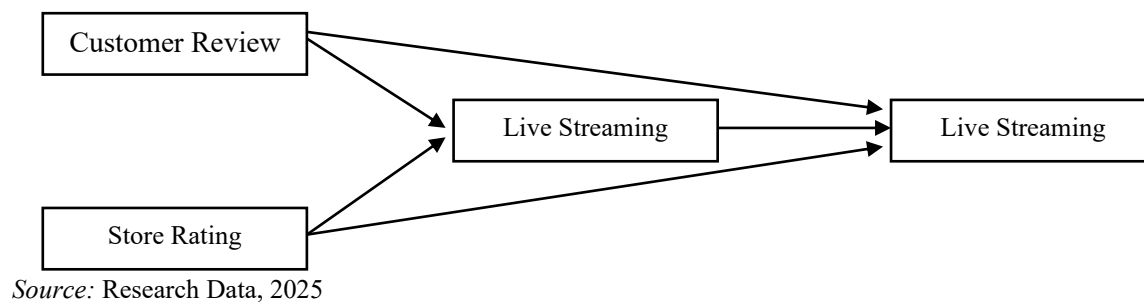


Figure 1. Research Framework

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is a quantitative associative study that aims to determine the effect of ratings and reviews on male consumer purchasing decisions, with live streaming as a mediating variable. Samples were purposively selected, with men who actively shop online as the focus of the research. Data collection used a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire distributed to university students in Maumere City. Linear regression was used to assess the direct effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable, and the mediating factor was tested using the Sobel Test. The research model and the Sobel Test formula are as follows:

$$PD = \alpha + \beta_1 CR + \beta_2 SR + \beta_3 LS \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

$$LS = \alpha + \beta_1 CR + \beta_2 SR \dots \dots \dots (2)$$

With:

- α : Constant
- β : Regression Coefficient
- PD : Purchase Decision
- CR : Consumer Review
- SR : Store Rating
- LS : Live Streaming

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This test aims to explore men's purchasing decisions in terms of consumer reviews, store ratings, and live streaming. The research is enriched by making live streaming a mediating variable. The research respondents were 170 male students from three universities in Sikka Regency. Descriptive statistics for the study are shown in Table 1.

Table 1.
Descriptive Statistics

	Consumer Review	Store Rating	Live Streaming	Purchase Decision
Minimum	1	1	2	1
Maximum	5	5	5	5
Mean	3.91	4.10	3.55	4.06
Standard Deviation	0.73	0.77	0.86	0.64

Source: Research Data Testing, 2025

Table 1 shows that apart from statements related to live streaming, research respondents minimally answered strongly disagree (1) for each questionnaire statement. Meanwhile, the 'strongly agree' (5) response is the maximum response for respondents to the questionnaire statement. The mean value, which is greater than the standard deviation, indicates that the respondents' answers are relatively concentrated and not widely spread. A standard deviation less than the mean indicates a high level of consistency or agreement among respondents to the questionnaire statements. The smaller the standard deviation relative to the mean, the less variation there is in respondents' opinions. Therefore, the results in Table 1 indicate that perceptions tend to be uniform when responding in the research instrument.

Table 2.
Partial Regression Testing

Variable	Regression Coefficient	Std. Error	Sig.
Consumer Review	0.15	0.05	0.00
Store Rating	0.25	0.08	0.00
Live Streaming	0.23	0.04	0.00

Source: Research Data Testing, 2025

Table 2 presents the results of testing the direct effects of the independent and mediating variables on the dependent variable to test partial hypotheses. The directional hypothesis is analyzed by examining the regression coefficient and significance level to assess the direction and strength of the relationship between the variables. The test results of consumer reviews on purchasing decisions show a significance value of 0.00 and a regression coefficient of 0.15. The positive regression coefficient and a significance value of less than 5 percent indicate that better consumer reviews tend to accelerate purchasing decisions among male consumers. This result is in line with the first hypothesis. Chen et al (2022) and Fitriyani et al (2024) Explain that consumer reviews that have experienced the benefits of the product act as a credible source of information and can improve product quality perceptions. Positive consumer reviews have a significant influence on purchasing decisions by increasing potential buyers' trust. (Sembiring & Nisa, 2024). Good reviews from previous users serve as social evidence that strengthens perceptions of product quality and reliability, reducing doubts and perceived risks before purchase. Information conveyed through reviews helps consumers compare products, understand their advantages and disadvantages, and accelerate their decision-making. (Fernandes et al., 2022; J. Zhang et al., 2020). Chen et al (2022) Found that before making a purchase, men typically filter and compare only certain information based on what they already know. Reviews from other consumers assist them in making logical assessments and minimizing the sense of risk, resulting in decisions that are clearer and more assured. Purchasing decisions become more focused and convincing with careful consideration.

Partial testing of store ratings on purchasing decisions in Table 2 shows a regression coefficient of 0,25 and a significance value of $0.00 < 0.05$. This result indicates that the higher the store rating, the more likely consumers are to buy a product or service. These results provide strong support for the second hypothesis. Fitriyani et al (2024) and Oetarjo et al (2023) Explain that a high store rating instills trust in potential buyers. High ratings can reduce doubts and increase confidence in

transactions. Stores with good ratings are considered superior to other stores. This is because high ratings are deemed to reflect guaranteed product and service quality. In addition, a good rating indicates that many previous customers are satisfied with the store's services. High store ratings encourage purchasing decisions. High store ratings result in brain activity associated with more positive decision-making and reduced cognitive conflict, especially in the context of high prices. Store ratings can act as a risk mitigator when product prices are high. Consumers tend to see high ratings as a guarantee of service or product quality. (Sun et al., 2020). Siraj et al (2024) Explained that men tend to reason and rely on clear information, such as ratings. High store ratings provide a strong signal of trust and significantly impact men's purchasing decisions. Men generally focus on efficiency, and performance-oriented people tend to see ratings as a direct representation of product quality and seller reputation. This speeds up the decision-making process. In the context of a conflict between price and rating, men are more likely to choose products from stores with high ratings, even if those products are slightly more expensive.

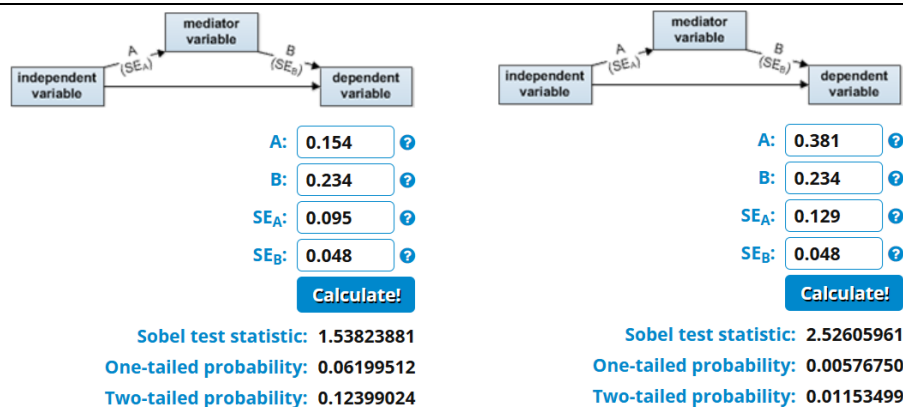
The third hypothesis tests the relationship between live streaming and purchasing decisions. Table 2 shows that the significance value is $0.00 < 0.05$ with a regression coefficient of 0.23. The more intensely consumers watch live streaming, the more likely they are to make a purchase. The regression results show that live streaming positively affects purchasing decisions, thereby supporting the hypothesis. Live streaming influences purchasing decisions by providing direct interaction between sellers and buyers. Real-time video allows for real product demonstrations and gives an authentic, transparent impression of the product. This two-way interaction helps address consumers' doubts directly, increasing their confidence in making purchases. In addition, active communication also builds trust and closeness between consumers and (Md Altab et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2022). The quality of systems, information, and services in live streaming encourages consumers to feel more confident and gain a better understanding before buying. Through real-time interactions, consumers form values and trust that strengthen their intention to purchase. (Qing & Jin, 2022). Male consumers also seek information through live streaming to ensure they make a product purchase. The focus is on technical explanations, product authenticity, and live reviews from hosts or other users. Real-time interactions with sellers foster trust and accelerate decision-making. (Qin et al., 2023; Wongsunopparat & Deng, 2021).

Table 3.
Mediation Regression Testing

Variable	Regression Coefficient	Std. Error	Sig.
Consumer Review	0.15	0.09	0.10
Store Rating	0.38	0.12	0.00

Source: Research Data Testing, 2025

The research mediation test uses the Sobel test to test the regression in models 1 and 2. The results of model 1 testing are shown in Table 2, and those of model 2 testing are shown in Table 3. The coefficient value in each model indicates the strength of the relationship in the variables. The difference in coefficient values between model 1 and model 2 suggests the potential for mediation. The Sobel Test is used to confirm whether the mediation effect is statistically significant.



Source: Research Data Testing, 2025

Figure 2. Sobel Test Results

Figure 2 shows the Sobel test results for live-streaming mediation in the relationship between consumer reviews and store ratings on male consumers' purchase decisions. The test results show two different realities for the same mediation variable. Based on the Sobel Test results with a significance value of 0.12 (> 0.05), it can be concluded that live streaming does not have a significant mediating role in the relationship between consumer reviews and purchase decisions, rejecting hypothesis 4a. Live streaming fails to mediate because the relationship between consumer reviews and live streaming is not significant, with a value of 0.10 (> 0.05) (see Table 3). In addition, consumer reviews already have a strong influence in purchasing decisions, with a strength of 0.15 and a significance of 0.00 (see Table 2). The presence or absence of live streaming does not significantly change the way consumers respond to reviews in the decision-making process. Changchit et al (2021) and J. Zhang et al (2020) Explain online reviews as credible information from consumers who have used the product. Information in the form of text reviews facilitates comparisons of judgments between consumers. The more favorable the comments, the more likely consumers are to decide to buy the product. Conversely, negative comments about the product make it less likely to be purchased. (Guo et al., 2020; Sari & Hasbi, 2020).

In testing the relationship between store ratings and male consumer purchasing decisions, live streaming serves in a mediating variable, with a significance value of $0.01 < 0.05$, supporting hypothesis 4b. Testing store ratings on live streaming reinforces this result in Table 3, which is significant at 0.00, and testing live streaming on purchasing decisions is also substantial at 0.00. Consumers feel that store ratings are not strong enough to drive purchasing decisions. Consumers look for additional detailed information about stores and products through real-time live-streaming shopping videos. Consumer assessment in numerical format (Oetarjo et al., 2023) is insufficient to decide whether to buy a product. Consumers use live streaming to validate high or low store ratings. Consumers are more interested in watching live streaming from stores with high ratings because they are considered more credible. A good rating instills trust, which increases interest in following the store's live stream (Qing & Jin, 2022; Wang et al., 2022). A live streaming strategy combined with a good store reputation can be a practical approach in increasing purchase conversions on e-commerce platforms.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study aims to evaluate the role of live streaming as a mediating variable in the relationships among consumer reviews, store ratings, and purchase decisions. In addition, this study also analyzes the factors that lead to purchase decisions. This research focuses on male consumers, a topic that has

not been widely discussed in previous literature. The test results show that consumer reviews, store ratings, and live streaming have a partial effect on purchasing decisions. The mediation test results using the Sobel Test show that live streaming acts as a mediator in the relationship between store ratings and buying decisions. However, live streaming did not successfully mediate the relationship between consumer reviews and purchasing decisions.

This study uses a quantitative approach, which limits understanding of the deeper psychological or emotional aspects of the consumer experience when watching live streaming. Therefore, further research should include qualitative analysis and expand the demographic coverage by conducting comparative studies based on gender, both within a single research period and over time, in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of differences between male and female respondents in purchasing behavior.

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