

Exploring the Factors Influencing Consumers' Shopping Intentions in the Context of Clothing Live Streaming by Internet Celebrities

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Abstract. Since the rise of live streaming by internet celebrities in 2016, a wave of influencers has emerged. As an important social phenomenon in the mobile internet era, the "internet celebrity economy" has come into being. Against this backdrop, this study first examines the development of internet celebrity marketing, analyzes the pros and cons of the "internet celebrity" marketing model and the "internet celebrity economy," and explores how these strategies influence consumers. The study focuses on "consumers' shopping intentions" as the research object, following the structure of "analyzing phenomena - identifying problems - solving problems." It revolves around the conflicts between internet celebrity marketing, the influencers themselves, and consumers, concluding that consumers' shopping intentions change with the variations in marketing strategies. The findings indicate that internet celebrity marketing significantly impacts consumers' shopping intentions. Although internet celebrity marketing has certain advantages and appeal, it also has some shortcomings. Future research directions could also be based on the study of consumers' happiness.

Keywords: Internet celebrity economy; consumers; live streaming.

1. Introduction

This study focuses on the rapid development of the internet in the 21st century, accompanied by the continuous advancement of modern information technology. This research is highly significant for the rapid promotion of live streaming sales [1]. Online sales marketing methods have low operational costs, fast results, and can bring substantial economic benefits to products. This marketing model has gradually replaced traditional marketing methods, becoming a primary marketing channel for many industries in China [2]. Clothing is a necessity in human life, and with the rapid development of the economy, people's standards of living have continuously improved. Due to China's large population base and high demand for clothing, the Chinese clothing industry has been growing rapidly, and the competition in the clothing market has become increasingly fierce. To enhance corporate profits and expand business survival space, most clothing companies have started seeking new marketing channels. Internet celebrity marketing has gradually emerged in the public eye and has been well-received by consumers.

With the rapid development of the internet, internet celebrity marketing, as an emerging marketing method, has gradually played an important role in the consumer market. Internet celebrities, with their unique personal charm and extensive social influence, have attracted a large number of fans and followers [3]. Internet celebrity marketing, also known as Influencer Marketing, mainly relies on influential internet celebrities (KOLs & KOCs) to convey product and brand information, attracting potential audiences and achieving brand conversion. The emergence of internet celebrity marketing has not only changed the development model of the clothing market but also brought greater convenience to consumers. Online shopping channels save consumers time and offer significant discounts, quickly gaining popularity among consumers and clothing companies. However, with the continuous improvement of online marketing levels and the expansion of channels, some clothing companies have resorted to shortcuts, leading to a series of problems in the online marketing of the clothing industry. These include low product quality and after-sales services that fail to meet consumer expectations. These issues have led to consumer distrust in online shopping, limiting the development of online marketing. To eliminate the negative factors in online marketing, relevant

industries have begun to strengthen the management of online marketing and gradually increase the supervision of products marketed by internet celebrities, providing a guarantee for the development of China's online marketing model. The ultimate goal of this study is to explore the impact of internet celebrity marketing on consumers' purchasing decisions and analyze the advantages and disadvantages of internet celebrity marketing.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Opportunities in Internet Celebrity Marketing

Since the rise of live streaming by internet celebrities in 2016, a wave of influencers has emerged [4]. Internet celebrity marketing, with its unique charm and enormous potential, has become a new marketing trend in the clothing industry. This opportunity not only brings profit value to the clothing industry but also mutually benefits the emerging social media, providing consumers with a larger consumption stage and adding new vitality to the internet.

The goal of internet celebrity marketing is to promote a company's products and services, attracting potential audiences and converting them into actual consumers through the dissemination and recommendations of internet celebrities.

On this large stage, for those internet celebrities who have their own clothing brands, internet celebrity marketing has become an indispensable tool. It not only enhances the visibility of their brands but also expands their sales channels. Through the internet sales channel, more people can become aware of their products. By collaborating with popular internet celebrities, clothing brands can improve their image and credibility, enhancing consumers' trust in the brand. It also provides more sales channels for large clothing companies and more exposure opportunities for small and medium-sized clothing enterprises.

2.2. Challenges in Internet Celebrity Marketing

The effectiveness of internet celebrity marketing is influenced by various factors, such as the influencer's influence, the quality of their followers, and the marketing content, making it difficult to accurately measure its impact [5]. Internet celebrity marketing requires significant time and resources to find, collaborate with, and monitor influencers, demanding high management capabilities from the team.

In the face of a massive wave of traffic, internet celebrities may feel anxious about not being able to sell the products [6]. Traffic can make clothing products easier to sell, but once the traffic subsides, the products may face the problem of unsold inventory. The influencer's personal influence largely motivates their fans to become potential customers and consumers. Finally, creating their own marketing strategies to retain consumers' loyalty is essential. However, these issues also come with significant challenges.

2.3. Gaps in the Clothing Industry

Clothing, food, shelter, and transportation are the most indispensable parts of people's lives, with clothing being the top priority. With the rise of the internet, clothing sales through live streaming have entered the public's view. Coupled with the emergence of the internet celebrity industry, the concept of internet celebrity marketing has gradually gained traction. Consumers have started pursuing clothing styles and brands, paying attention to the overall image that clothing brings to them. Internet celebrities have noticed the marketing gap in this industry, and clothing sales through live streaming have begun to appear in the public eye. In earlier years, people generally accepted offline fitting and purchasing, with street shopping being the mainstream shopping method. However, with the continuous advancement of the internet, the demand for clothing purchases is no longer limited to offline channels. Instead, through the dissemination of the internet, more people have become aware of the diversity of clothing. The issue of unsold inventory in the clothing industry, as well as

the problem of unsellable products caused by information gaps, has significantly improved. Through the influence of internet celebrities, more consumers can have access to a variety of clothing options.

In summary, internet celebrity marketing has a significant impact on consumers' shopping intentions. Although internet celebrity marketing has certain advantages and appeal, it also has some shortcomings, such as doubts about authenticity, overexposure, and hidden consumption. Therefore, when conducting internet celebrity marketing activities, brands and companies need to fully consider consumers' purchasing needs and psychological characteristics, reasonably control the intensity and frequency of internet celebrity marketing, to enhance the effectiveness of advertising and the accuracy and stability of consumers' purchasing decisions.

3. Theoretical Basis and Research Hypotheses

3.1. Classification of Internet Celebrities

Internet celebrities (Internet Celebrities) are individuals who gain popularity online due to certain events or behaviors, either in real life or on the internet. Their rise to fame is often due to certain traits being amplified by the internet, aligning with the aesthetic, entertainment, voyeuristic, and imaginative psychology of netizens, thus gaining popularity online.

Internet celebrities can be categorized into various types, including popular internet celebrities loved by the masses, and knowledge-based internet celebrities with outstanding abilities. Besides real-life individuals, there are also virtual avatars that can replace traditional live streaming methods. For example, late at night on Taobao, some store homepages feature intelligent live streaming rooms. Upon entering, consumers will find a virtual character introducing the store's products, which is a virtual avatar.

A virtual avatar (avatar) refers to a person's virtual image on the internet. The emergence of this technology has been largely applied in virtual fitting mirrors for clothing. It uses the consumer's height and weight to simulate a realistic human image, recommending the most suitable clothing size for the consumer. Real-life individuals, based on their own height and weight, try on clothes that fit them and sell the products through marketing methods. Each person's height and weight are different, distinguishing them from others. For example, someone who is 169cm tall and weighs 100 pounds can wear a size M top. Compared to someone who is 160cm tall and weighs 100 pounds, they can also wear a size M. Although both can wear size M, the fitting effect between the two is quite different.

3.2. The Concept of Sales Strategies

Sales refer to the promotion of goods by celebrities, internet celebrities, and internet marketing professionals through video live streaming and other means. Professionals from various industries have joined the live streaming sales ranks, contributing to local economic development.

3.3. Consumer Happiness

Consumer happiness (CONSUMER WELL-BEING) is a cross-disciplinary field between consumer behavior (Eugene Paulus (T. O. Paulus)) and happiness economics, attracting significant interest from many scholars both domestically and internationally [7].

Happiness (Sense of happiness) refers to a series of joyful and pleasant emotions subjectively generated based on human satisfaction and security [8]. In the context of consumption, this emotion greatly reflects consumers' positive emotional output, providing sellers with good feedback, which is necessary.

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can wear a size M top. Compared to someone who is 160cm tall and weighs 100 pounds, they can also wear a size M. Although both can wear size M, the fitting effect between the two is quite different. Based on this, the following hypothesis is proposed. H1: Real live streaming internet celebrities (vs. virtual AI sales) can better enhance consumers' happiness.

In the context of the internet's big data, technological development is rapid, but some things still cannot compare to human labor [9]. Taking the popular internet celebrity live streaming sales rooms as an example, traditional internet celebrity live streaming will showcase the aesthetics, uses, practicality, and cost-effectiveness of the clothing, providing a face-to-face (face-to-face) experience. Based on these operations, the internet celebrity will then implement marketing strategies for the clothing, such as repeatedly emphasizing that the product will be discounted, offering consumers a lower price, discounts, gifts, and other incentives to attract more consumers to purchase, stimulating impulsive shopping in a short time and increasing sales. Compared to virtual AI in live streaming rooms, its role is not as intuitive. Virtual AI lacks the empathy of real hosts and the initiative needed in the sales process. For example, in the following scenario, when a consumer asks in the comments what size clothing is needed for a height of 165cm, and when the AI is not yet mature, it will ignore the consumer's question, failing to connect with the consumer's intentions. This is a significant factor that cannot replace traditional methods. When consumers' purchasing needs are not met, they may lose confidence in the product, leading to customer loss and impacting the product.

However, from another perspective, questioning this hypothesis from the beginning. Even without the internet celebrity themselves, the product would still be sold in other forms because the product itself is singular, but people are dynamic. Based on this viewpoint, it is proposed that despite the perfection of the internet celebrity's various strategies, consumers are more inclined to choose such products [10]. In summary, the following hypothesis is proposed. H2: Product quality plays a mediating role in the relationship between internet celebrity marketing strategies and consumers' shopping intentions.

3.4. The Moderating Role of Product Orientation

Product concept (product concept), also known as "product orientation," refers to a marketing concept centered on the product. It is an ancient marketing concept that appeared, became popular, and disappeared simultaneously with the production concept. It is also a "production-oriented" concept, emphasizing product production over sales and product quality over customer needs. However, in this concept that emphasizes products over customer needs, a link is needed to regulate it. On one side is internet celebrity sales, and on the other side is the consumer, with the product playing a mediating role in between. There is the internet celebrity's marketing of the product on one hand, and the consumer's pursuit and supervision of the product on the other. The product focuses on its own quality, and the internet celebrity leverages their marketing strategies, influencing consumers' shopping intentions and forming a closed loop. For example, consumers hope to support their favorite internet celebrity hosts while also purchasing high-quality, aesthetically pleasing products.

4. Research Methods and Experimental Results

4.1. Research Methods and Problem Statement

Based on the above background, this study proposes three research questions: Do internet celebrity marketing strategies have pros and cons that confuse consumers in their consumption? Do these sales strategies of internet celebrities affect consumers' shopping intentions? What are the methods to enhance internet celebrity marketing strategies to satisfy consumers' happiness? To address these questions, this study employs questionnaire surveys and statistical analysis methods [11]. First, through the study and analysis of literature, based on social cognitive theory and the technology acceptance model, this study identifies the influencing factors of internet celebrity sales strategies as consumer behavior and intentions at the individual level, and trends and self-demand purchases at the environmental level, forming an influencing factor model [12]. Subsequently, after data collection

and statistical analysis, this study uses a consumer purchase intention model to evaluate the fit of the influencing factor model, conduct hypothesis testing, and clarify the relationship between each influencing factor and consumers' shopping intentions [13]. Finally, combined with model analysis, this study deepens the understanding of the impact of internet celebrity sales marketing methods on consumers.

Based on the above hypothesis derivation, the overall research framework of this chapter is shown in Figure 1. This chapter mainly discusses whether consumers experience happiness [14]. To this end, a series of studies are conducted. First, Study 1 will use statistical analysis methods to test the impact of internet celebrities' sales strategies on consumers, then test the mediating role of product orientation, and finally conclude that internet celebrities' sales strategies do influence consumers and play a significant role.

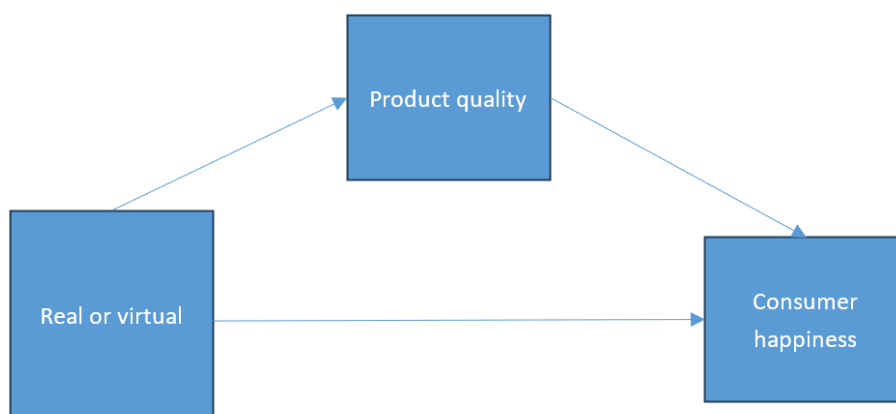


Fig. 1 Happiness research framework

4.2. Experimental Purpose and Design

Experimental Purpose: Will consumers' shopping intentions change with the variations in internet celebrities' sales strategies?

The main purpose of the experiment is to study the impact of internet celebrities' sales strategies on consumers' experience and whether the sales process induces impulsive shopping behavior in consumers [15,16]. The experiment uses a questionnaire survey form for analysis, ultimately deriving a model of consumers' shopping decisions, combined with causal relationship arguments, leading to the following experiment.

4.3. Experimental Design and Process

First, an online questionnaire survey was conducted, distributing 100 questionnaires over three days. The survey included 10 questions related to consumers' shopping intentions.

Next, 100 participants were recruited on the JianShu platform, and 8 samples that did not follow the instructions were excluded, resulting in 92 valid samples (89% female, average age over 18). All valid participants received a 5-yuan monetary reward.

The experiment first required participants to answer their age and gender, then randomly assigned them to one of two groups.

Participants were then asked to watch and read experimental materials, designed for the experiment.

After watching the experimental materials, participants' product evaluations were measured.

Subsequently, various variables were measured.

Three questions were used to measure participants' perceptions of product quality ("What is your overall evaluation of this product? 1=Very poor; 7=Very good," "How do you think the quality of this product is? 1=Very poor quality, 7=Very good quality," "Compared to other products, the quality of this product is: 1=Far below average; 7=Far above average").

4.4. Experimental Results

Manipulation Check. The measurement results showed that the perception of Group 2 was significantly higher than that of Group 1 (*M*=6.13, *SD*=0.89, *F*(1,92) =81.88, *p*=0.2), indicating a successful manipulation check.

Main Effect Test. First, an ANOVA was conducted with IV on DV. Using consumer happiness as a covariate (consumers' happiness under internet celebrity marketing is higher than that from self-consumption), the results supported H1 ($p > 0.1$).

Mediation Effect Test. Using the product as a mediating variable, the Hayes (2017) PROCESS program was used for mediation testing (Model 4, 5000 bootstrap samples, 95% CI). The results showed that the mediation effect value of product quality was 0.22 (*SE*=0.01), with a confidence interval of (0.01, 0.01), indicating a significant mediation effect of product quality. Among them, "sense of understanding" played a fully mediating role ($\beta = -0.071$, *SE*=0.038, $\{CI\}_{95\%} = [-.151, -.002]$). The results supported H1.

The study used questionnaire surveys and statistical analysis methods to verify the promoting effect of internet celebrity marketing strategies, supporting H1. Subsequent studies will follow the methods of Experiment 1; considering practicality, subsequent studies will use comparative methods to test the happiness effect.

5. Conclusion

The results of this study indicate that consumers are significantly influenced by internet celebrities' sales strategies, leading to excessive impulsive consumption. This further concludes that some consumers have an infinite pursuit of product quality, but during the consumption process, consumers generate positive emotional feedback, which is the conclusion drawn from the experiment—consumers experience happiness. It is concluded that during internet celebrity live streaming sales, the influencer's impact, discount attributes, real-time two-way interaction, and entertainment attributes all positively influence consumers' purchase intentions. Among them, the influencer's impact and entertainment attributes do not directly affect consumers' purchase intentions but have an indirect impact, while discount attributes and real-time two-way interaction have both direct and indirect impacts on consumers' purchase intentions. The rise of clothing sales in the internet celebrity circle.

Overall, the development prospects of internet celebrity sales are still broad, but continuous efforts are needed in technological innovation, content innovation, and standardized management to cope with the increasingly fierce market competition and ever-changing market demands.

This study has some limitations, but it is only based on the author's objective analysis of the phenomenon. Besides the study of happiness, future research could specifically analyze the bond between internet celebrities and consumers, the impact of market competition on consumers, and conduct experimental analyses from more nuanced perspectives.

Future research directions could also be based on the study of consumers' happiness. Consumers can derive happiness from these marketing strategies.

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