Flow Experience as a Primary Driver of Gen-Z Purchase Intention on TikTok Live Shopping: A Mediator with Limited Effect

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Abstract. The rising popularity of TikTok Live Shopping has driven significant changes in the shopping behavior of Gen-Z in Indonesia. This study aims to examine the influence of streamer attractiveness and streamer expertise on purchase intention, with flow experience as a mediating variable. A quantitative research method with a survey approach was employed. The study population consisted of individuals aged 13–28 years residing in Indonesia who actively engage with TikTok Live Shopping. A purposive sampling technique was used, resulting in 122 respondents who met the inclusion criteria. Data were collected through an online questionnaire comprising construct items adapted from previous studies. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale. Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares - Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the assistance of SmartPLS 4 software. The results indicate that both streamer attractiveness and streamer expertise significantly influence flow experience, and all variables have a significant effect on purchase intention. The main finding highlights that flow experience has the strongest direct effect on purchase intention and partially mediates the relationship between streamer characteristics and purchase intention.

Keywords: *Streamer Attractiveness, Streamer Expertise, Flow Experience, Purchase Intention, TikTok Live Shopping.*

Introduction

The development of digital technology in recent years has significantly transformed how consumers interact with brands, particularly through social media platforms. One of the innovations that has experienced rapid growth is live shopping, a promotional and selling process that integrates e-commerce, live video broadcasting, and the interactive elements of social media (Wu & Xu, 2024), such as TikTok Live. This phenomenon not only enables real-time interaction between sellers and buyers but also positions streamers as influential actors in attracting consumers and shaping their purchase decisions (Zheng et al., 2023). Since its launch in 2016, TikTok has experienced remarkable user growth. By 2025, the global number of TikTok users is projected to exceed 2.1 billion (Duarte, 2025). Alongside TikTok's rising popularity, the trend of live shopping or live commerce has also demonstrated significant growth. According to a report by (Grand View Research, 2024), the global live commerce market is valued at approximately USD 14.72 billion in 2024 and is projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 32.8%, reaching USD 77.89 billion by 2030.

At the end of 2024, Indonesia emerged as the largest TikTok market in the world, with approximately 165.1 million users (Oberlo, 2024), as illustrated in *Figure 1*. The majority of TikTok users fall within the age ranges of 18–24 and 24–35 (Duarte, 2025), most of whom are members of Gen-Z. This generation is known for being digitally active and showing a preference for content that is authentic and interactive (Heriyanto et al., 2024). This indicates that TikTok holds considerable potential as a marketing channel for reaching Gen-Z consumers.
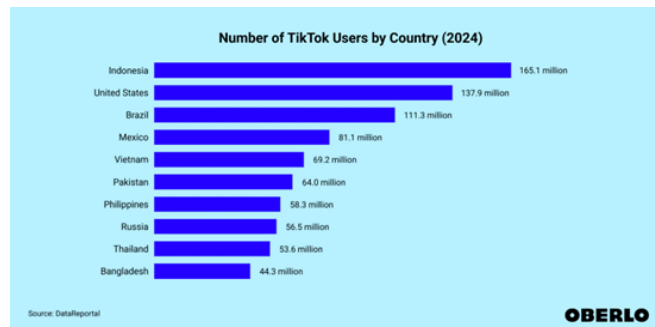
Figure 1. TikTok Users by Country (Source: oberlo.com)

Based on a survey conducted by (Jakpat, 2024), TikTok Live Shopping was recorded as the second most used live commerce platform among sellers in Indonesia, with 49% of respondents indicating they used the platform. TikTok also ranked first in terms of the highest number of new visitors (40%), the most viewers (37%), and second in terms of contribution to sales (33%). Interestingly, an observational study conducted by (Supriyanto et al., 2023) revealed that some sellers generated higher revenue through TikTok Live Shopping, up to three times more, compared to Shopee Live. This is believed to be due to TikTok's more interactive live feature in comparison to Shopee Live.

The increasing use of live streaming in online sales has attracted significant attention, especially among researchers. These studies emphasize various factors influencing live streaming, which can be broadly categorized into two main groups: internal and external factors (Cui et al., 2024). Internal factors include consumer characteristics and their psychological and behavioral dimensions (Gong et al., 2020; Tang et al., 2024; Zheng et al., 2023). Consumer characteristics encompass demographic information such as age and gender, personality traits that indicate openness to new experiences and active control, as well as frequency of watching live streaming. From the psychological and behavioral perspectives, consumer motivations such as exploration, achievement, and emotional engagement are key. Moreover, psychological aspects such as social presence, social bond, and psychological distance also play critical roles in shaping consumer experiences in live streaming contexts. Meanwhile, external factors involve platform features, product and content elements, and streamer attributes (Jiang et al., 2024; D. Wang et al., 2022; Zheng et al., 2023). The platform affects user experience through interface features, system quality such as synchronization, and overall user engagement. Regarding product and content aspects, information quality, content personalization, and transparency are essential to the success of live streaming. Streamer-related factors such as credibility, emotional, and physical appeal also influence user interaction and purchase intention.

Recently, several researchers have identified the mediating role of flow experience in the relationship between streamer attractiveness and streamer expertise and purchase intention (Herman & Amelinda, 2025; Jiang et al., 2024; Tang et al., 2024; Zheng et al., 2023). Based on Flow Theory, flow is a psychological state in which individuals are fully immersed in an activity, experiencing intense focus and enjoyment (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). When audiences experience flow during live streaming, they become more emotionally and cognitively engaged, which ultimately enhances their purchase intention. However, findings are inconsistent, some suggest that physical attractiveness and expertise of streamers do not always significantly influence flow. Instead, factors such as social presence and interactivity appear to be more significant in shaping flow experiences (Zheng et al., 2023).

This study aims to analyze the relationships between streamer attractiveness (SA), streamer expertise (SE), flow experience (FE), and purchase intention (PI) in the context of live commerce or live shopping. The research is guided by four main questions. First, how do streamer attractiveness (SA) and streamer expertise (SE) influence flow experience? Second, how do SA and SE influence purchase intention (PI)? Third, how does flow experience affect purchase intention (PI)? Fourth, to what extent does flow experience mediate the relationship between SA and SE and purchase intention (PI)? These research questions are intended to explore in greater depth the psychological mechanisms experienced by consumers, particularly Generation Z, during live shopping sessions, while also addressing inconsistencies in previous findings. Furthermore, due to the limited number of studies that specifically examine the influence of streamer characteristics on flow experience and purchase intention, this research aims to fill that gap in the literature.

Therefore, this study examines the influence of source characteristics (in this case, the streamer) using the Source Credibility Model (Ohanian, 1990). Specifically, the research explores streamer

characteristics through two main dimensions: (1) streamer attractiveness and (2) streamer expertise, which are proposed to influence both flow experience and purchase intention. Based on these theoretical underpinnings and research objectives, the following hypotheses are proposed:
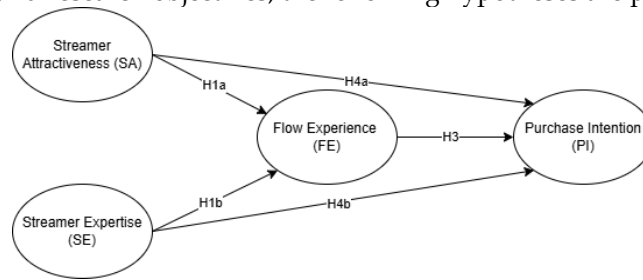

Figure 2. Research Model

H1a: Streamer attractiveness has a positive effect on consumers' flow experience in TikTok Live Shopping activities.

H1b: Streamer expertise has a positive effect on consumers' flow experience in TikTok Live Shopping activities.

H2a: Streamer attractiveness has a significantly positive effect on purchase intention.

H2b: Streamer expertise has a significantly positive effect on purchase intention.

H3: Flow experience positively affects consumers' purchase intention in TikTok Live Shopping activities.

H4a: Flow experience mediates the effect of streamer attractiveness on purchase intention in TikTok Live Shopping activities.

H4b: Flow experience mediates the effect of streamer expertise on purchase intention in TikTok Live Shopping activities.

Methods

This study employed a quantitative method with a questionnaire survey approach. Data were collected by distributing an online questionnaire through the Google Forms platform. The main content of the questionnaire was divided into two sections: the first section contained demographic and basic respondent information. Screening questions were also included in this section to filter respondents, such as whether they had watched live streaming and purchased products in the last two months. Only respondents who answered "Yes" were invited to continue. The second section consisted of measurement items to evaluate the research variables. These variables included independent variables (streamer attractiveness and streamer expertise), the mediating variable (flow experience), and the dependent variable (purchase intention). Additionally, attention-check questions were incorporated, requiring specific responses to filter out inattentive respondents.

The questionnaire employed measurement indicators for each construct adapted from previous studies, as shown in *Table 1*. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to facilitate quantitative mapping of respondents' attitudes and perceptions, as well as to support statistical analysis in the structural model.

Table 1: Item-items for variables

Construct	Item Code	Item Statement	References
Streamer Attractiveness	SA1	I find this streamer's physical appearance attractive.	(Chang et al., 2023; Hinterhuber & Hu, 2025; Ohanian, 1990)
	SA2	I consider this streamer to have a strong charisma.	
	SA3	During the live stream, I admired the streamer's handsomeness or beauty.	
	SA4	I perceive this streamer as a pleasant person.	
Streamer Expertise	SE1	The streamer demonstrates professional skills in their field.	(Jiang et al., 2024; Ohanian, 1990)
	SE2	The streamer possesses specific expertise that supports their activities.	

	SE3	The streamer has in-depth knowledge about the promoted products.	
	SE4	The streamer has extensive experience in live streaming and sales.	
Flow Experience	FE1	I felt happy and enjoyed the experience while watching the live stream.	(Tang et al., 2024)
	FE2	Time seemed to pass quickly when watching the streamer's live session.	
	FE3	I felt completely immersed (focused) while watching the live stream.	
	FE4	I was less aware of my surroundings while focusing on the streamer's live stream.	
Purchase Intention	PI1	If given the opportunity, I would consider purchasing the product recommended by this streamer in the near future.	(Chang et al., 2023)
	PI2	I am interested in seeking more information about the product suggested by this streamer.	
	PI3	I feel it is likely that I will purchase the product recommended by this streamer in the near future.	

The target population of this study consists of individuals classified as Gen-Z those aged between 13 and 28 years, residing in Indonesia, who actively use TikTok and have experience in participating or viewing TikTok Live Shopping sessions. Generation Z (born between 1997 and 2012) was selected as the focus of this study because they represent the most active group of social media users and tend to exhibit impulsive consumption behaviors (Heriyanto et al., 2024), particularly in the context of visual and real-time interactions such as live shopping.

The sampling technique employed was purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling method that involves selecting respondents based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. The inclusion criteria for this study were as follows:

1. residing in Indonesia,
2. aged between 13 and 28 years,
3. having watched or participated in a TikTok Live Shopping session within the past two months,
4. having purchased a product via TikTok Live Shopping within the past two months, and
5. willing to complete the questionnaire honestly and thoroughly.

The sample size was determined based on the guideline by Hair et al. (2010), which suggests a minimum of 5 to 10 respondents per measurement item used in the research instrument. Given a total of 15 items in the questionnaire, the required minimum sample size was between 75 and 150 respondents. This study involved 122 Gen-Z respondents, consisting of 66% female and 34% male participants. A detailed profile of the respondents is presented in the corresponding *Table 2*.

Table 2: Description of Respondent Characteristics

Measure	Item	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	42	34%
	Female	80	66%
Age	13–18 years	20	16%
	19–23 years	91	75%
	24–28 years	11	9%
Frequency of TikTok Live Shopping Participation	1–3 times	54	44%
	4–6 times	33	27%
	Daily	35	29%

The majority of respondents were in the age range of 19–23 years (75%). In terms of frequency, most participants reported watching live streams 1–3 times over the past two months (44%). Subsequently, the collected data were analyzed using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach based on Partial Least Squares (PLS). Data analysis was conducted using SmartPLS 4

software, chosen for its capability to handle complex structural models and its flexibility in testing relationships among latent variables.

Result and Discussion

This study employed Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to analyze the relationships between variables and assess the mediating role of flow experience. The analysis was conducted in two main stages: the evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) and the evaluation of the structural model (inner model). The measurement model evaluation (outer model) involved testing for convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability. The structural model evaluation (inner model) was conducted to assess the relationships among indicators, including coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), hypothesis testing, and model fit (GoF). The model evaluation results indicate the extent to which the independent variables influence the dependent variable in this study.

Evaluation of the Measurement Model (Outer Model)
Convergent Validity and Reliability Testing

Figure 2 illustrates that the variable streamer attractiveness (SA) was measured using four indicators: SA1, SA2, SA3, and SA4. The variable streamer expertise (SE) was measured using four indicators: SE1, SE2, SE3, and SE4. The variable flow experience (FE) was measured using four indicators: FE1, FE2, FE3, and FE4. Finally, purchase intentionwas measured using three indicators: PI1, PI2, and PI3.
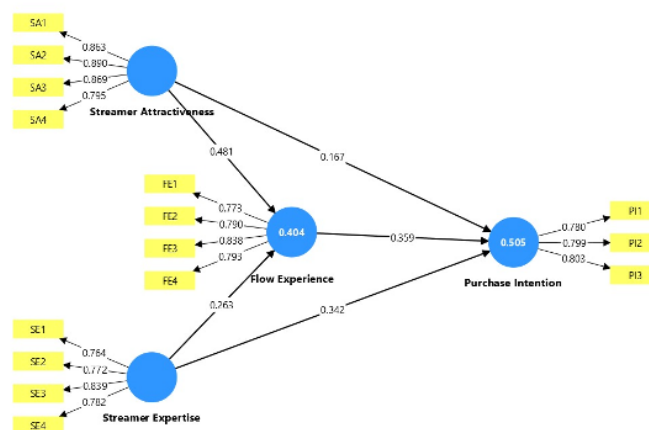
Figure 3. Research Model

Source: Processed Data using SmartPLS (2025)

Convergent validity was assessed by examining the loading factor and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). As shown in *Table 3*, all indicators for the four variables had loading values greater than 0.70, indicating that each indicator effectively measured its respective construct. Additionally, the AVE values for all variables exceeded the 0.50 threshold, thus meeting the criteria for convergent validity (Hair et al., 2010).

Furthermore, reliability testing was conducted using two approaches: Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR). All four variables exhibited Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.70 (SA = 0.876; SE = 0.799; FE = 0.811; PI = 0.709), indicating strong internal consistency for each construct. Similarly, the Composite Reliability values ranged from 0.837 to 0.915, suggesting excellent reliability across all variables.

Table 3: Results of Convergent Validity and Reliability Testing

Variable/Indicator	Loading	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Composite Reliability
	> 0.70	> 0.50	0.60 – 0.90	0.60 – 0.90
Streamer Attractiveness (SA)		0.731	0.876	0.915
SA 1	0.863			

SA 2	0.890			
SA 3	0.869			
SA 4	0.795			
Streamer Expertise (SE)		0.624	0.799	0.876
SE1	0.764			
SE 2	0.772			
SE 3	0.839			
SE 4	0.782			
Flow Experience (FE)		0.638	0.811	0.869
FE 1	0.773			
FE 2	0.790			
FE 3	0.838			
FE 4	0.793			
Purchase Intention (PI)		0.631	0.709	0.837
PI 1	0.780			
PI 2	0.799			
PI 3	0.803			

Discriminant Validity Testing

Discriminant validity testing aims to ensure that each measurement item accurately captures only the construct it is intended to measure and does not overlap with other constructs. One method used to assess discriminant validity is the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 4: Results of Discriminant Validity Testing

	Flow Experience	Purchase Intention	Streamer Attractiveness	Streamer Expertise
Flow Experience	0.799			
Purchase Intention	0.615	0.794		
Streamer Attractiveness	0.589	0.518	0.855	
Streamer Expertise	0.459	0.576	0.408	0.790

The Fornell-Larcker criterion requires that the square root of the AVE (the diagonal values in the table) for each construct must be greater than the correlations between that construct and any other construct (the off-diagonal values (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). This ensures that each construct shares more variance with its own indicators than with other constructs. The interpretation of the Fornell-Larcker matrix can be observed in *Table 4*. All square root values of the AVE exceed the inter-construct correlations, indicating that each construct demonstrates good discriminant validity. In other words, each construct is better explained by its own indicators than by indicators of other constructs within the model.

1. Flow Experience (FE): The value is 0.799, which is greater than its correlations with Purchase Intention (PI) = 0.615; Streamer Attractiveness (SA) = 0.589; and Streamer Expertise (SE) = 0.459.
2. Purchase Intention (PI): The value is 0.794, greater than its correlations with Flow Experience (FE) = 0.615; Streamer Attractiveness (SA) = 0.518; and Streamer Expertise (SE) = 0.576.
3. Streamer Attractiveness (SA): The value is 0.855, greater than its correlations with Flow Experience (FE) = 0.589; Purchase Intention (PI) = 0.518; and Streamer Expertise (SE) = 0.408.
4. Streamer Expertise (SE): The value is 0.790, greater than its correlations with Flow Experience (FE) = 0.459; Purchase Intention (PI) = 0.576; and Streamer Attractiveness (SA) = 0.408.

Evaluation of the Structural Model (Inner Model)

The independent variables in this research model explain 39.4% of the variance in Flow Experience (adjusted R-square = 0.394), while the remaining 60.6% is influenced by other factors

outside the model. This suggests that there is still room for additional variables that could explain the variance in Flow Experience.

Meanwhile, the independent variables explain 49.2% of the variance in Purchase Intention (adjusted R-square = 0.505), with the remaining 50.8% influenced by other external factors. The higher R-square and adjusted R-square values for Purchase Intention, as shown in *Table 5*, indicate that the model is more effective in explaining the variance in Purchase Intention than in Flow Experience.

Thus, this research model demonstrates a greater ability to explain the relationship between the independent variables and Purchase Intention. However, these results also imply that other variables beyond those currently included in the model may be worth considering in future research.

Table 5: Results of R-square Testing

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Flow Experience	0.404	0.394
Purchase Intention	0.505	0.492

Table 6 presents the effect size (f²) values, which are used to measure the magnitude of contribution from each independent variable to the dependent variable. Based on the analysis results, Streamer Attractiveness has an effect size of 0.324 on Flow Experience, indicating a moderate to large effect, in accordance with Cohen (1988) guidelines, which state that an effect size (f²) of 0.02 is considered small, 0.15 moderate, and 0.35 large (Cohen, 1988; Hair et al., 2017). This indicates that streamer attractiveness contributes significantly to shaping viewers' flow experience.

On the other hand, Streamer Expertise has an effect size of 0.097 on Flow Experience, which falls into the smallcategory. Nevertheless, the effect of Streamer Expertise on Purchase Intention reaches 0.180, indicating a moderateeffect, suggesting that streamer expertise plays an important role in influencing purchase intention. Meanwhile, the effect size of Streamer Attractiveness on Purchase Intention is only 0.036, classified as small, indicating that streamer attractiveness does not have a strong direct influence on purchase intention. Lastly, Flow Experience has an effect size of 0.155 on Purchase Intention, which is at the threshold of the moderate category, implying that the flow experience perceived by viewers during live streaming sessions also plays a meaningful role in influencing their purchasing decisions for recommended products.

Table 6: Effect Size Test Results (f²)

	Flow Experience	Purchase Intention
Flow Experience		0.155
Purchase Intention		
Streamer Attractiveness	0.324	0.036
Streamer Expertise	0.097	0.180

To evaluate the relationships between variables and test the proposed hypotheses, hypothesis testing was conducted using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach. The results, including the original sample values, t-statistics, and p-values, are summarized in *Table 7* below.

Table 7: Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	*Path*	*Original Sample (O)*	*t-statistic*	*p-values*	*Significance*
H1a	Streamer Attractiveness -> Flow Experience	0.481	6.768	0.000	Siginifikan
H1b	Streamer Expertise -> Flow Experience	0.263	3.449	0.001	Siginifikan
H2a	Streamer Attractiveness -> Purchase Intention	0.167	1.97	0.049	Siginifikan
H2b	Streamer Expertise -> Purchase Intention	0.342	3.82	0.000	Siginifikan
H3	Flow Experience -> Purchase Intention	0.359	3.161	0.002	Siginifikan
H4a	Streamer Attractiveness -> Flow Experience -> Purchase Intention	0.173	2.667	0.008	Siginifikan
H4b	Streamer Expertise -> Flow Experience -> Purchase Intention	0.094	2.171	0.030	Siginifikan

Based on these results, the evaluation of each hypothesis is explained as follows: **The Effect of Streamer Attractiveness on Flow Experience.** The test results indicate that streamer attractiveness has

a positive and significant effect on flow experience (path coefficient = 0.481, p = 0.000, t = 6.768 > 1.96), thus H1a is accepted. This study further confirms that perceptions of streamer attractiveness, both in terms of physical appearance and engaging communication style, can create deep experiences and involvement when consumers watch TikTok Live Shopping sessions. The higher the attractiveness of a streamer, the greater the likelihood that the audience will experience a flow state while watching TikTok Live Shopping. This is consistent with findings by Tang et al. (2024), who found that the visual attractiveness of streamers enhances attention and creates flow conditions in the audience. Attractive streamers tend to capture attention more quickly and maintain it for longer durations. From the perspective of attention allocation, this allows consumers to remain in the live streaming space, which is a crucial element in the emergence of flow experience. Qi & Xiaoli (2024) also noted that streamer attractiveness positively influences viewing experiences, including enjoyment, excitement, concentration, and loss of self-awareness. In line with the study by Herman & Amelinda (2025), in the Gen Z context of this study, visual appeal and pleasant personal interaction are key to engagement. This reinforces that in live commerce marketing strategies, the visual and charismatic qualities of streamers are essential assets in shaping flow experience.

The Effect of Streamer Expertise on Flow Experience. The results also show that streamer expertise has a positive and significant effect on flow experience (path coefficient = 0.63, p = 0.001, t = 3.449 > 1.96), hence H1b is accepted. This indicates that expertise in delivering information, explaining product features, and professionally answering questions plays a major role in creating an enjoyable experience for the audience. These findings support Jiang et al. (2024), who demonstrated that streamer expertise promotes trust and enhances user experience during live streaming. Consistent with Herman & Amelinda (2025), audiences who receive valid and useful information from streamers tend to feel more engaged and focused, triggering flow conditions. In this research context, expertise proves to be an important element in generating flow experience, although its influence is not as strong as streamer attractiveness.

The Effect of Streamer Attractiveness on Purchase Intention. Our findings show that streamer attractiveness significantly affects purchase intention (path coefficient = 0.167, p = 0.049, t = 1.970 > 1.96), thus H2a is accepted. Although the effect is significant, the significance level is very close to the threshold, indicating that the direct influence strength of streamer attractiveness on purchase intention is not as dominant compared to other paths in the model. Nonetheless, this finding aligns with previous studies by Herman & Amelinda (2025), which state that streamer attractiveness plays an important role in shaping purchase intention. This also confirms Choi & Lee (2019), who found that visual attractiveness can foster positive attitudes toward the product, which eventually affects purchase intention.

However, personal attractiveness of the streamer tends to serve as an initial trigger or surface-level attraction rather than a primary determinant in consumer purchasing decisions. This is supported by Sun et al. (2022), who noted that streamer visual attractiveness can shape positive perceptions toward products and brand image, but such effects depend on context and how attractiveness is combined with other elements such as authenticity. Furthermore, Tang et al. (2024) emphasize that although streamer attractiveness can draw consumer attention and retain them in the broadcast space, prolonged attention allocation does not automatically lead to purchase behavior, especially if not accompanied by supporting factors such as a strong flow experience. In other words, visual attractiveness has potential but is not the sole trigger of purchase intention. This also reinforces the finding in this study that flow experience plays a more dominant role in bridging the relationship between streamer attractiveness and purchase intention, highlighting the crucial mediation role of flow. Attractiveness is important for building first impressions and initial engagement, but purchasing decisions ultimately depend more on the extent to which consumers feel connected and immersed in the live shopping experience.

The Effect of Streamer Expertise on Purchase Intention. The test results also confirm that streamer expertise significantly influences purchase intention (path coefficient = 0.342, p = 0.000, t = 3.820 > 1.96), thus H2b is accepted. This shows that expertise in conveying detailed and convincing product information substantially increases the audience's purchase intention. When audiences perceive that the streamer understands the offered product, they feel more confident to make a purchase. This finding supports Herman & Amelinda (2025), who found that perceptions of streamer expertise directly increase purchase intention. Additionally, (Alfianti et al., 2022; Cheng et al., 2024;

Jiang et al., 2024) note that expertise functions as a key component of credibility. Consumers tend to feel more trustful and comfortable watching streamers who thoroughly understand and convincingly present the product. Although (Cheng et al., 2024) focused on endorsers, the same concept applies to individual streamers. The higher the level of expertise, the greater the sense of security and confidence that the purchase decision is rational and appropriate. In the Gen Z context, expertise is an important indicator in filtering information amid the abundance of promotional content. Therefore, streamer selection should consider not only appearance but also the ability to explain products informatively.

The Effect of Flow Experience on Purchase Intention. The analysis results reveal that flow experience positively and significantly affects purchase intention (path coefficient = 0.359, p = 0.002, t = 3.161 > 1.96), thus H3 is accepted. This means that when audiences experience flow during TikTok Live viewing, they are more motivated to purchase the offered products. The enjoyable, focused, and distraction-free experience creates an ideal condition for spontaneous purchase intention formation. This is consistent with previous research (Herman & Amelinda, 2025; Jiang et al., 2024; Zheng et al., 2023).

Interestingly, this coefficient is the highest among all direct paths toward purchase intention in this model, including the direct effects of streamer attractiveness and streamer expertise. This fact indicates that emotional and psychological involvement during live streaming sessions is the primary determinant in forming purchase intention, especially among Gen Z consumers. The dominance of this path also indicates a shift in Gen Z consumer behavior patterns, which not only consider rational attributes such as streamer expertise or appearance but prioritize authentic and immersive emotional experiences. Live shopping is not merely a transactional process but an interactive space that triggers feelings of enjoyment, comfort, and personal connection. Therefore, flow experience can be regarded as the most impactful psychological path in driving purchase intention.

Flow Experience as a Mediator of the Effect of Streamer Attractiveness on Purchase Intention. The indirect effect results show that flow experience significantly mediates the relationship between streamer attractiveness and purchase intention (path coefficient = 0.173, p = 0.008, t = 2.667 > 1.96), thus H4a is accepted. This is consistent with the findings of (Tang et al., 2024). However, since the direct effect (H2a) is also significant, this type of mediation is classified as partial mediation. This means that although streamer attractiveness directly influences purchase intention, most of its effect occurs through the flow experience.

Flow Experience as a Mediator of the Effect of Streamer Expertise on Purchase Intention. Mediation by flow on the streamer expertise path is also significant (path coefficient = 0.097, p = 0.030, t = 2.171 > 1.96), thus H4b is accepted, consistent with (Jiang et al., 2024). Although the mediation effect is smaller than H4a, because the direct effect is also significant, this represents partial mediation. This indicates that while expertise can directly encourage purchase, the flow experience strengthens this influence, especially by creating an enjoyable experience that accelerates the conversion of intention into action.

Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the influence of streamer attractiveness and streamer expertise on purchase intention, with flow experience as a mediating variable, in the context of TikTok Live Shopping among Gen Z consumers in Indonesia. Using a quantitative approach and Structural Equation Modeling analysis via SmartPLS 4, this research revealed several important findings.

First, both streamer attractiveness and streamer expertise positively and significantly affect flow experience. This indicates that personal characteristics of streamers, both visually and in terms of expertise, play vital roles in building emotional and psychological engagement during live shopping sessions. Second, the analysis results show that streamer expertise has a stronger direct influence on purchase intention compared to streamer attractiveness. Nevertheless, streamer attractiveness still contributes to purchase intention, albeit at a significance level close to the threshold. Third, flow experience was found to have a positive and significant effect on purchase intention, with the highest coefficient value compared to other direct paths. This confirms that the emotional and immersive experience consumers undergo while watching live streams is a dominant factor in driving purchase intention. Lastly, flow experience also significantly mediates the relationship between streamer characteristics and purchase intention, but this mediation is partial. In other words, the influence of

streamers on purchase intention is not entirely through flow, but flow plays a crucial role in strengthening that relationship.

Overall, the practical implication of this study emphasizes that in the TikTok Live Shopping context, building a strong flow experience is a crucial strategy in converting consumer interest into purchase intention. While attractive and competent streamers are important for initial attention, psychological factors such as deep emotional engagement prove to be more decisive in the purchase decision process, especially among Gen Z consumers.

Suggestions

This study has several limitations that should be considered for future research. The adjusted R-square values for flow experience (0.394) and purchase intention (0.492) indicate that there are other variables not included in the model that may have an influence. Therefore, future studies are recommended to expand the model by incorporating constructs such as trust, perceived enjoyment, or parasocial interaction to better explain purchase intention comprehensively. Additionally, since the respondent scope was limited to Gen Z in Indonesia with respondents from only a few regions, future research is encouraged to involve respondents from more diverse regions and age groups to enhance the generalizability of the findings.

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