



# The Characteristics of Influencer Livestream Shopping that Encourage Consumer Impulsive Buying

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<p><b>Title of thesis:</b> The Characteristics of Influencer Livestream Shopping that Encourage Consumer Impulsive Buying</p>	
<p><b>Abstract:</b></p> <p>After the breakout of the Covid-19 pandemic, Influencer livestream shopping has gained popularity in China. The success of livestream shopping, particularly for products with a low return rate like cosmetics, is attributed to consumers' impulsive buying behaviour. Despite the growing significance of influencer livestream shopping, there is a scarcity of research on this emerging phenomenon. Impulsive buying refers to the act of purchasing items that consumers had not originally intended to buy and is often indicative of a lack of cognitive control. This thesis investigates the characteristics of influencer livestream shopping that affect consumers' impulsive buying behaviour, with a specific focus on cosmetic products on Chinese e-commerce platform Taobao. The characteristics of influencer livestream shopping are divided into two dimensions: the characteristics of the influencer and the characteristics of livestream shopping.</p> <p>The author adapted the S-O-R model for this research and explores the paths separately for the characteristics of the influencer and the characteristics of livestream shopping as stimuli (S). Parasocial relationship serves as the Organism (O), represented by a sense of intimacy that consumers develop with the influencer in their minds. Consumer's impulsive buying behaviour is the response (R). The study adopts a qualitative research approach, conducting in-depth interviews with 10 respondents who have made impulsive purchases of cosmetic products at least once during influencer livestream shopping. The findings indicate that influencers' attractiveness, hosting style, and expertise play a pivotal role in the development of parasocial relationship and may lead to impulsive buying behaviour. Moreover, promotion, an influencer-driven characteristic, emerges as a significant factor directly leading to impulsive buying behaviour without passing through parasocial relationship. The characteristics of livestream shopping, such as atmosphere and the involvement of other consumers, also contribute to encouraging impulsive buying.</p> <p>This research enriches existing literature on impulsive buying and livestream shopping. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights to cosmetics companies, both those who are considering adopting influencer livestream shopping in their marketing strategies and those who have already begun using this approach.</p>	
<p><b>Keywords:</b> livestream shopping; influencer marketing; influencer endorsement; impulsive buying; parasocial relationship; S-O-R model</p>	

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

With the rapid development of technology and logistics, online shopping has become the predominant way of shopping due to its convenience and limitless accessibility in terms of location and time. As a result, online shopping has experienced significant year-over-year growth (Chevalier, 2022). In 2021, the revenue of e-commerce surpassed EUR 4,59 trillion throughout the world, and over 2,1 billion consumers are recorded to have conducted online shopping (Barber, 2022). According to Lebow (2022), China has emerged as the global leader in online shopping, with 46,3% of its retail sales happening through digital channels. Especially after the breakout of the Covid-19 pandemic, the strict restrictions imposed on in-store shopping compelled an increasing number of companies to redirect their focus from offline business to online business, and gradually, influencer livestream shopping has developed and become a popular way of shopping in China. Livestream shopping witnessed a gross merchandise value of over CNY 2,36 trillion in all digital channels in China in 2021, equivalent to EUR 322 billion, and the number is estimated to grow by 47.9% in 2022 (Ma, 2022). It is worth noting that livestream shopping is not only gaining popularity in China, but also getting increasingly popular around the world. Some European companies such as Kicks and Apteekkiplus in Finland (Kicks, n.d.; Apteekkiplus, n.d.) have also adopted this approach.

Influencer livestream shopping is a newly emerged e-commerce method where influencers showcase products or services during their livestreams, allowing audiences to make purchases in real-time while watching the livestreams (Cai et al., 2018). Livestreams, defined as interactive and real-time broadcasts involving direct communication between influencers and their audiences, offer a unique platform for engagement and interaction (Wongkitrungrueng et al., 2020; Cai & Wohn, 2019). During livestreams, audiences can leave comments and pose questions about featured products through a chatbox, meanwhile influencers give immediate responses. This dynamic exchange fosters a sense of community and builds trust between influencers and consumers. Consequently, both domestic and international companies are now utilizing influencer livestream on e-commerce platforms to effectively market and sell a diverse range of products. This includes items such as clothing, food, cosmetics, home appliances, automobiles, and luxury accessories (Influencer Marketing Hub, n.d.).

Livestreams can be conducted by companies' employees directly in their online shops or by influencers through their own digital channels. Influencers, in general, have a large follower base and their opinion on products has an impact on their followers' purchase

decision (Ma, 2021). Influencers, commonly referred to as Internet Celebrities, have gained recognition on social media platforms due to their prominent online presence (Chen et al., 2021). For instance, the well-known Chinese livestream “Queen” Viya, who has 80 million followers on the Chinese e-commerce platform Taobao, sold a rocket launch service worth approximately 5,3 million euros in 2020. Throughout the same year, Viya sold a total of over 27 billion euros worth of products on her own livestream channel on Taobao. (Chin, 2021)

The focus of this study is on the phenomenon of livestream shopping on Taobao, a Chinese e-commerce platform developed by Alibaba Group. Taobao was the first platform to integrate livestream into its online shopping services in 2016 (Arora et al., 2021). Nowadays, Taobao remains to be recognized as the most popular business-to-consumer e-commerce platform in China (Thomala, 2022).

The category of cosmetics has experienced the most rapid growth on Taobao in recent years, with a 470% increase in active users for cosmetics on Taobao in 2020 compared to the previous year (Price, 2020). Influencer livestream shopping generated around 56 billion euros in revenue on Taobao, of which the cosmetics category accounted for 62.5%, that is approximately 35 billion euros, and the proportion continues to increase every year (Ma, 2021; Ma, 2022). Therefore, the cosmetics category is chosen as the context for this study given its remarkable growth and significance on Taobao.

### **1.1 Research Problem**

Impulsive buying has been a popular research area over the past few decades, hence there is a large quantity of research on consumers impulsive buying behaviour. Impulse buying refers to the act of making unplanned purchases, often driven by emotions, without much thought or consideration of practicality. This behaviour can be influenced by various factors including the surrounding environment, promotions, and peer pressure (Luo, 2005; Xiang et al., 2016; Xu et al., 2020; Lee & Chen, 2021). However, livestream shopping is a relatively new and rapidly growing phenomenon, which means that there is still limited research on consumers’ impulsive buying behaviour during influencer livestream shopping.

During influencer livestream shopping, a commonly employed strategy is to offer limited time and/or quantity deals. This approach is used to create an enthusiastic environment characterized by a sense of excitement and urgency. This enthusiastic environment can have a significant impact on consumers impulsive buying behaviour as the sense of

excitement and urgency instilled by limited time and quantity deals can lead consumers to make quick purchase decisions without having much thought about their practicality or necessity (Xu et al., 2020; Wongkitrungrueng et al., 2020).

Hamilton et al. (2014) conducted a study on influencer livestreams and identified two key factors that drive people to watch livestreams: unique content and interaction. Unique content refers to the original and entertaining material created by the influencer specifically for each livestream, often tailored to suit the audience's preferences and product features. This kind of exclusive content does not only attract a larger audience but also helps influencers boost their popularity (Hamilton et al., 2014). The interaction between influencers and audiences plays a significant role in fostering parasocial relationship with the audiences, as highlighted by Xu et al. (2020). This mutual engagement and connection contribute to the development of a bond between the audiences and the influencer, and this bond can have a positive impact on consumer's impulsive buying behaviour, as consumers feel more connected and compelled to support the products presented by the influencer (Xu et al., 2020). Parasocial relationship refers to the perceived one-sided relationship that consumers develop with influencers through their online presence and activities, as originally defined by Horton and Wohl in 1956. The level of interaction during a livestream can vary, including activities such as posing questions, receiving personalized product recommendations, and engaging in chats with the influencer or fellow viewers (Wongkitrungrueng et al., 2020). These interactions can foster a sense of intimacy and closeness between consumers and the influencer, leading to greater trust and loyalty towards the influencer (Cheng et al., 2020; Kang et al., 2021; Jin, 2021; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020), and potentially increasing the possibility of the act of impulsive buying behaviour (Xiang et al., 2016; Ku et al., 2019; Vazquez et al., 2020; Lee & Chen, 2021).

The act of impulsive buying is triggered by the interplay of both internal and external characteristics (Kalla and Arora, 2011). Internal characteristics refer to consumers' internal thoughts, feelings, and desires to make a purchase (Hoch and Loewenstein, 1991). External characteristics encompass various elements surrounding the purchasing situation. This includes the product itself, the environment in which the consumer finds themselves, and the stimuli from the merchant (Kalla & Arora, 2011). While encouraging impulsive buying has become a common strategy in e-commerce these days, it is nevertheless important to consider the potential downsides that can arise from consumers' impulsive buying behaviour. Lim et al., (2017) pointed out that consumers

often experience post-purchase regret and may subsequently intend to return impulsively purchased items. In addition, many e-commerce merchants offer free return policies to promote sales, while a large number of returns may increase the loss of logistics costs and thus harm their business (Lim et al., 2017). Zhang & Tang (2023) claimed that high commission rate and fixed fee for the influencer could lead to losses for the merchants. However, it is worth noting that the cosmetics category has consistently demonstrated one of the lowest return rates compared to other product categories, accounting for only 5% of all returns (Nosto, 2021). Therefore, it can be concluded that promoting impulsive buying during livestream shopping for cosmetic products can be a profitable approach, due to the fact that consumers' impulsive buying contributes to increased sales, meanwhile the cosmetics category has a negligible return rate which minimizes adverse impact on business.

Influencer livestream shopping is an emerging phenomenon, and there is limited prior research providing a comprehensive definition of its characteristics. However, live shopping (Kang et al., 2021; Cai et al., 2018; Xu et al., 2020; Xiang et al., 2016) and influencer livestream (Chen & Lin, 2018; Ku et al., 2019; Osei-Frimpong et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2021) have been popular research topics in recent years, Therefore, it would be more efficient to separate the characteristics of influencer livestream shopping into influencer-related characteristics and livestream shopping method-related characteristics.

## **1.2 Aim of the research**

This research aims to identify the internal and external characteristics of influencer livestream shopping that affect impulsive buying during livestream shopping according to consumers, with a specific focus on cosmetic products. The characteristics of influencer livestream shopping consist of influencer-related characteristics (internal) and livestream shopping method-related characteristics (external). The following research questions are formulated for this study.

RQ1: What characteristics of influencer livestream shopping do consumers perceive affect their purchase intention?

RQ2: How do the characteristics of influencer livestream shopping impact consumers' impulsive buying according to consumers?

This research will contribute to enriching the existing research on impulsive buying and livestream shopping. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights to cosmetics companies, both those who are considering adopting influencer livestream shopping in their marketing strategies and those who have already begun using this approach. These insights can assist them in selecting the most suitable influencers and refining their influencer livestream strategies to stimulate consumer impulsive buying and enhance sales.

### **1.3 Delimitations**

This research focuses on Chinese consumers who do the most online shopping in the world (Lebow, 2022), moreover, influencer livestream shopping has already become a mature shopping method in China, ahead of other markets (Channel News Asia, 2021). Regarding the massive population in China, there is great potential for international companies to enter the market and start influencer livestream shopping.

There are two types of platforms for livestream shopping: e-commerce platforms that include livestream function, such as Taobao and Jingdong (JD), and livestream platforms with sales function, referring to selling on livestream platforms like Douyin, also known as Chinese TikTok (Cai et al., 2018, p. 82). Since this study primarily examines livestream shopping on the Chinese e-commerce platform Taobao, its scope is limited to e-commerce platforms that offer livestream functionality.

On Taobao, the category of cosmetics includes both makeup and skincare products. Therefore, in this research, skincare products are also included. Although long-term effects of skincare products may take time to appear, their immediate effects are visible and describable.

The influencers for cosmetic products that are studied in this research are Internet Celebrities on Taobao who became famous by sharing makeup products and tutorials. Conventional celebrities such as singers and actors are excluded from this study, as their expertise in cosmetics is not guaranteed, whereas the expertise of the influencer is a vital characteristic to explore in this study.

This research conducted interviews with a relatively small sample size of 10 respondents, which may be considered a limitation. Additionally, the respondents are located in the same city and share a similar age range, potentially impacting the transferability of the findings.

#### **1.4 Structure of the thesis**

The thesis starts with the introduction chapter in which the author explains the current situation of influencer livestream shopping, introduces the research problem, and formulates research questions.

In the literature review chapter, the author extensively examines relevant literature concerning livestream shopping, influencer marketing, influencer endorsement, and impulsive buying. Based on the characteristics summarized from previous studies, the author adopts the S-O-R model for this research to gain deeper insights into the dynamic relationship among stimuli, the organism (consumer), and their responses in the context of influencer livestream shopping. This adapted S-O-R model will serve as the framework for the empirical research. The choice of the S-O-R model is motivated by its widespread use among researchers in the study of consumers' impulsive buying behaviour.

In the chapter of empirical research, the author introduces the research method, and gives justifications for choosing qualitative research. Then the author discusses sampling, data collection, data analysis and evaluation of the quality of data.

In the fourth chapter of this research, the author presents findings and conducts a thorough analysis. This chapter provides a comprehensive presentation of the research results with relevant supporting quotes from the conducted interviews.

This thesis concludes with the chapter of discussion and implications. The author summarizes the key findings and provides answers to the previously formulated research questions. Then managerial implications are discussed as well as limitations of this research and recommendations for future research.

#### **1.5 Definitions of main terms**

In this section, the definitions of main terms in this research will be explained. The main terms include livestream shopping, influencer, influencer marketing, influencer endorsement, parasocial relationship and impulsive buying.

*Livestream shopping*, an online shopping method, was first introduced in China on the e-commerce platform Taobao in 2016, which is owned by Alibaba Group (Baird, 2023). Over the years, it has evolved into a mature shopping method on Chinese e-commerce platforms. Livestream shopping involves real-time interaction and allows the audience to make direct purchases while watching livestreams (Cai et al., 2018).

*Influencers* refer to Internet Celebrities with charisma who are recognized and followed by a large group of people, and these influencers' opinion on products have significant influence on their followers (Osei-Frimpong et al., 2019). Influencers in the context of cosmetics have expertise in cosmetic products and makeup tutorials as the expertise of the influencer is an important characteristic in this research.

*Influencer marketing* is a widely adopted marketing strategy that involves collaborating with influencers to promote a brand, product, or service on the influencers' own social media channels (Belanche et al., 2021). This strategy leverages the influencers' established credibility and extensive reach among their followers, making it an effective means of increasing brand awareness and engagement.

*Influencer endorsement* is a popular form of influencer marketing, where merchants pay influencers to endorse their products on social media platforms, aiming to stimulate consumers' purchase intentions and increase sales (Osei-Frimpong et al., 2019; Belanche et al., 2021). Influencer endorsement in the context of livestream shopping is making use of the influencers' popularity and reputation to promote a product or a service during livestream shopping on Taobao (Ku et al., 2019).

*Parasocial relationship* is an imagined interpersonal relationship with a persona (Horton & Wohl, 1956; Vazquez et al., 2020). In the context of livestream shopping, parasocial relationship refers to a sense of intimacy that consumers develop with the influencer, and this special one-sided relationship with the influencer is solely formed in consumers' mind. Consumers tend to develop parasocial relationships with the influencers when they watch the influencers' livestreams over time (Xu et al., 2020).

*Impulsive buying* refers to the act of purchasing items that consumers had not initially intended to buy. This unplanned and spontaneous buying behaviour can be triggered by both external surrounding stimuli and internal psychological factors (Parsad et al., 2019). In the context of influencer livestream shopping, external surrounding stimuli can be the enthusiastic environment and limited time offers on the platform, while internal psychological factors include consumer's emotional attachment to the influencer (Jin et al., 2021).

## **2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter consists of four main areas of literature: livestream shopping, influencer marketing, impulsive buying, and the S-O-R model. First, livestream shopping on Taobao is introduced and explained in detail. Second, the studies of influencer marketing and the characteristics of influencer are presented. Then the author discusses existing research on impulsive buying. Finally, the S-O-R model is introduced, and the author presents the modified S-O-R model for this research.

### **2.1 Livestream shopping**

Livestream is a real-time recording and broadcasting medium that has become increasingly prevalent, particularly in the gaming industry and on Chinese e-commerce platforms (Hamilton et al., 2014; Cai et al., 2018). Livestream shopping is a form of online shopping that involves real-time interaction and can be characterized by two modes of livestream shopping: “the livestream embedded in e-commerce” and “e-commerce integrated into livestream” (Cai et al., 2018, p.82). Livestream embedded in e-commerce refers to e-commerce platforms that have livestream function, such as Taobao and Jingdong (JD). E-commerce integrated into livestream involves the practice of selling products directly on livestream platforms such as Douyin, also known as Chinese TikTok.

Influencer livestream shopping is the combination of livestream shopping and influencer marketing, where influencers promote and sell products from various brands through their personal livestream channels (Basiouny, 2022).

The distinctions between conventional online shopping and livestream shopping on Taobao are outlined in Table 1, based on findings from prior studies on online shopping and livestream shopping. Conventional online shopping on Taobao requires consumers to browse through products and read product information, one item at a time, to make informed purchase decisions (Xu et al., 2020). In stark contrast, livestream shopping offers a remarkable departure from this routine, granting consumers the privilege of accessing comprehensive product details through live demonstrations by influencers.

**Table 1 Conventional online shopping VS livestream shopping**

<b>Conventional online shopping</b>	<b>Livestream shopping</b>	<b>Consequences</b>	<b>Sources</b>
Product demonstration in image in text	Real-time product demonstration	Live product demonstration is more accurate and clearer than images and texts.	Xu et al., 2020
Focus on product facts	Focus on product facts and usage	Livestream shopping offers more thorough information about the product.	Cai et al., 2018
Product images can be photoshopped	Demonstration in real-time cannot be edited	Product information is more realistic and reliable in livestream shopping.	Cai & Wohn, 2019; Ho & Rajadurai, 2020
Live chat with customer service	Real-time interaction with the influencer	Livestream shopping offers consumers more interactive and entertaining shopping experience.	Cai et al., 2018; Chen & Lin, 2018; Xu et al., 2020
Other consumers are not reachable	Possibility to interact with other consumers	Livestream shopping allows consumers to refer to other consumers' comments on the products.	Cai & Wohn, 2019
Unlikely to get extra discount	Likely to get extra discount	Lower price during livestream shopping increases consumers' purchase intention.	Cai et al., 2018

The product information given during conventional online shopping focuses on product facts, while influencers can offer more product facts and showcase the usage of the product during livestreams (Cai et al., 2018). Moreover, livestream shopping allows influencers to show the product from all angles so that consumers can have a close and detailed look at the product, which offers more reliable information than over-Photoshopped product images on the website (Cai & Wohn, 2019; Ho & Rajadurai, 2020).

During livestream shopping, consumers can have real-time interaction including real-time video and chat box with influencers (Wongkitrungrueng et al., 2020) and ask for product details, advice, try-on and any product-related questions. Consumers not only can interact with influencers, but they are also likely to interact with other consumers during livestream shopping (Cai & Wohn, 2019). Cai et al. (2018) also pointed out that during livestream shopping, influencers might give extra discount to the consumers in order to increase their purchase intention. To sum up, livestream shopping attracts more consumers than conventional online shopping because livestream shopping offers a clearer and more reliable demonstration of the product, instant and personalized product information, interaction with the influencer and other audience, and discounts (Cai et al., 2018; Chen & Lin, 2018; Xu et al., 2020).

Cai & Wohn (2019) conducted a survey involving 220 participants and found that consumers demonstrate a strong motivation to watch livestreams before making a purchase. This motivation is significantly increased when they have had enjoyable interactions with the streamer or other viewers during livestreams. Moreover, Ma (2021) reached similar conclusions through a study of 339 Chinese consumers. The research highlighted a strong correlation between consumers' intentions to engage in livestream shopping and their perceived levels of enjoyment and social interaction during livestreams. In another study, Wongkitrungrueng et al. (2020) investigated the effects of livestream commerce, focusing on sellers' perspectives, and adopted a comprehensive mixed quantitative and qualitative approach. They analysed livestream sellers' data on Facebook and discovered compelling evidence of the positive impact of livestream shopping. It was found that livestreams not only efficiently boosted sales figures but also significantly enhanced the overall customer experience. Furthermore, livestreams played a crucial role in fortifying customer-seller relationships, thereby reinforcing the value of livestream shopping in the realm of e-commerce.

### 2.1.1 Livestream on Taobao

Taobao is an e-commerce platform with livestream function embedded in it. Livestream on Taobao enables consumers to make the purchase without leaving the livestreams (Basiouny, 2022). There are currently two types of livestream shopping on Taobao: influencer's own livestream channel and merchant's livestream channel (Yi, 2021). When influencers conduct livestream shopping in their own channel, they select products from various brands and merchants. It is a common practice for brands and merchants to approach influencers who are well-suited for their products and offer the influencers commissions based on the number of products they sell during their own livestreams (GMA, 2020).

When livestreams are operated by the merchants, typically one or two of the merchant's employees are responsible for hosting the livestream. In rare cases, merchants may invite celebrities to participate in their livestreams, although such instances are infrequent.

Figure 1 showcases a screenshot from an influencer's own channel during a livestream shopping event.



**Figure 1** An example of an ongoing influencer livestream shopping on Taobao

Figure 1 is an example of an ongoing livestream hosted by an influencer on Taobao. Taobao, a versatile multifunctional e-commerce platform, offers the dual experience of conventional online shopping and livestream shopping. Product links within the livestream often direct audience to the respective merchant's or brand's Taobao shops. Before the livestream, influencers announce the schedule and featured products, allowing their followers to receive notifications about the upcoming event on Taobao. In this example of influencer's livestream shopping, over 33 million audience are watching this livestream. The audience can interact with the influencer or other fellow audience by posting comments or questions in the chat box below, which are then displayed in the comments area. Furthermore, in this particular livestream, a special offer is available at CNY 319, a significant reduction from the original price of CNY 649, as indicated in the lower left corner. Additionally, during livestream shopping, you can express your appreciation by clicking the heart icon in the lower right corner. This action not only boosts the popularity of the livestream event but also enhances its visibility to potential online consumers on Taobao, as it may be recommended to viewers watching other livestreams on Taobao (Booth, 2022).

## **2.2 Influencer marketing**

Influencer marketing is a marketing strategy that involves collaborating with influencers, often referred to as Internet celebrities, to promote a brand, product, or service on the influencers' own social media channels (Belanche et al., 2021; Schaffer, 2022). Companies widely use influencer marketing today because it is an effective method for increasing brand awareness by leveraging the popularity and reputation of these Internet celebrities (Schaffer, 2022). Different from celebrity marketing which uses the fame of traditional celebrities such as singers and actors, influencers are Internet celebrities who gained a substantial number of followers by for example sharing lifestyle tips and providing product recommendations especially in sectors such as fashion, cosmetics, and lifestyle (Belanche et al., 2021). Influencers' endorsements tend to be perceived as more credible by their followers when compared to those of traditional celebrities, primarily because influencers typically promote the products they have personally tested to their followers (Jin et al., 2021; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020).

Although influencer marketing is a common practice for many companies, it is essential to recognize that influencer marketing is not always beneficial. Haenlein et al. (2020) have emphasized that influencer marketing can potentially harm a brand's image if the influencer is not a suitable fit for the brand. For instance, if an influencer known for

expertise in cosmetics endorses a car brand, their followers may question the credibility of the endorsement, and the failure in endorsement would cause the influencer to lose followers (Belanche et al., 2021). Basiouny (2022) has also confirmed the importance of selecting the right influencer who specializes in the specific product category.

### ***2.2.1 Influencer endorsement and characteristics of influencer***

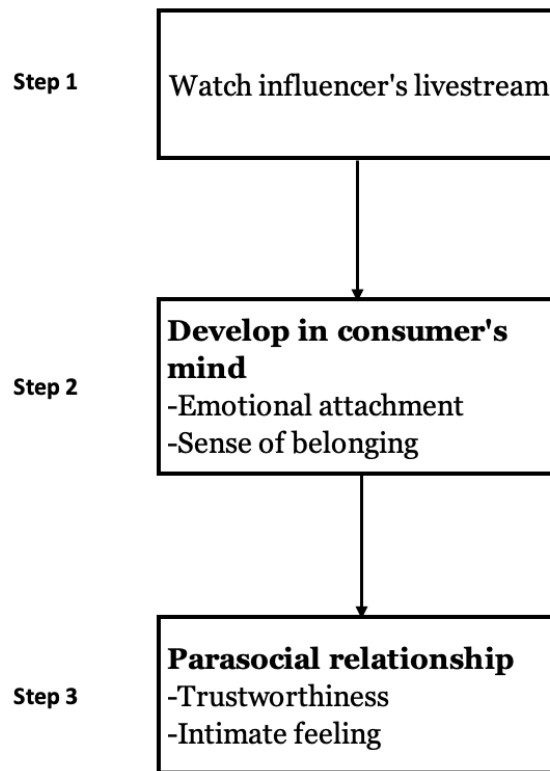
Influencer endorsement is a popular form of influencer marketing; merchants pay influencers to promote their products (of any categories from food, makeup, clothing, cars, etc. to even intangible services) on social media. This strategy is employed to stimulate consumers' purchase intention and boost sales (Osei-Frimpong et al., 2019; Belanche et al., 2021).

Osei-Frimpong et al. (2019) found that influencer endorsers with characteristics such as attractiveness and trustworthiness have positive effects on consumer's purchase intention and can contribute to enhanced brand recognition and loyalty. Xu et al. (2020) claimed that an influencer's physical attractiveness is likely to make the audience like him/her, thereby increasing their motivations for shopping. Ku et al. (2019) summarized the key characteristics of influencer, including a large follower base, professional knowledge, unique personality and skills to keep the audience active. Lin et al. (2021) discovered that influencers' emotion and the audience's emotion have effects on each other. A happy influencer can spread joy to the audience, and in turn, the joyful audience can contribute to the influencer's happiness. Chen and Lin (2018) observed that the more familiar the audience are with the influencer, the more positive attitudes they will hold towards the influencer, and the more likely they will interact with the influencer. Ku et al. (2019) argued that when consumers are attracted to an influencer, they may immerse themselves in the virtual environment created by the influencer and make the purchase without paying much attention to the content of the endorsed product or service. Over time, consumers are likely form an intimate connection with the influencer, leading to the development of a parasocial relationship (Xu et al., 2020; Xiang et al., 2016; Ku et al., 2019). I will next discuss parasocial relationships, since they play a crucial role in influencing consumer behaviour and brand loyalty in the context of influencer marketing, as highlighted by the research of Xu et al. (2020), Xiang et al. (2016), and Ku et al. (2019).

### **2.2.2 Parasocial relationship**

Parasocial relationship is a special one-sided relationship that forms in the minds of consumers, and it is described as an imagined interpersonal relationship with a persona (Horton & Wohl, 1956; Vazquez et al., 2020). Giles (2022) suggested that people can develop parasocial relationship not only with real personas such as celebrities and actors, but also with fictional characters. The development of parasocial relationship is critical as it fosters an emotional attachment between the audience and the influencer, thereby increasing their engagement in marketing activities (Jin et al., 2021).

Some studies have demonstrated that parasocial relationship can be established through consumers' sense of belonging, which represents a need for social interactions and supportive relationships to uphold positive self-esteem. When a consumer experiences a pervasive desire for social inclusion and a sense of belonging, parasocial relationships become more appealing as they address the consumer's need for affiliation. This sense of belonging fosters an emotional attachment between consumers and the influencer, and consumers tend to trust the influencer's recommendations as if the influencer were a close and trustworthy friend (Escalas & Bettman, 2017; Jin et al., 2021). Sokolova and Kefi (2020) found that parasocial relationship has significant effects on enhancing consumer purchase intention. The development of parasocial relationship is summarized by the author in Figure 2 below. When the audience are immersed in parasocial relationship with the influencer, their loyalty is likely to be affirmed. Such loyalty can subsequently lead to various changes in consumer behaviour (Horton & Wohl, 1956). For example, it may result in increased instances of impulsive buying, a topic we will discuss later.



**Figure 2** Development of parasocial relationship during livestream

Figure 2 sums up the development of parasocial relationship during livestream on e-commerce platforms. Step 1 is the act of watching influencer's livestream. After consumers engage with the influencer's livestream for a certain duration, they tend to progress to Step 2, where they experience the sense of belonging as part of social inclusion and they begin to form an emotional attachment to the influencer as if the influencer were their trustworthy friend. Gradually the consumers would enter Step 3: they would have a feeling of intimacy and trust the products that the influencer endorses. (Escalas & Bettman, 2017; Jin et al., 2021) Next, the author will discuss impulsive buying, which has been suggested to be a relevant concept in the context of livestream shopping, as consumers often make unplanned purchases while watching livestreams.

### **2.3 Impulsive buying**

Impulsive buying, referring to the act of purchasing items that consumers had not originally intended to buy, is often indicative of a lack of cognitive control. In these moments, when consumers feel the urge to make a purchase, they tend to neglect consideration of potential consequences (Lee & Chen, 2021). Jiang and Cai (2021) asserted that consumers frequently engage in impulsive buying behaviour when watching influencer livestreams. Online merchants nowadays encourage customers to

conduct impulsive buying in order to increase sales, with up to 40% of the revenue generated from online shopping attributed to impulsive buying (Xiang et al., 2016; Chen et al., 2021). One of the main reasons for such a significant proportion is the convenience of online shopping, which allows consumers to react according to their changing mind and purchase items they did not initially intend to buy (Chen et al., 2021).

Impulsive buying is characterized by unplanned and spontaneous purchasing behaviour, which can be triggered by both external surrounding stimuli and internal psychological factors (Parsad et al., 2019; Iyer et al., 2019). External surrounding stimuli include factors such as the enthusiastic environment and limited-time offers on the platform, while internal psychological factors relate to consumer's emotional attachment to the influencer (Jin et al., 2021). Wongkitrungrueng et al. (2020) studied consumers' impulsive buying from the seller's perspective and discovered that limiting the quantity and duration of offers during livestream shopping can significantly boost consumers' impulsive buying tendencies. Jiang and Cai (2021) noted that the enthusiastic hosting style of influencers has a positive impact on encouraging consumers' impulsive buying behaviour. Consumers may find themselves drawn to influencers because of the enthusiastic atmosphere and high interaction during livestream shopping, leading to impulse buying (Ku et al., 2019; Xu et al., 2020). Some researchers have found that consumers' emotions have positive effects on their impulsive buying behaviour (Luo, 2005; Iyer et al., 2019), when consumers are emotionally attached to the influencer, they are more likely to purchase the products endorsed by the influencer impulsively.

Influencer's alignment with the product or brand image is another factor that can influence consumers' impulsive buying behaviour (Parmar et al., 2020; Chen et al., 2021). Whether the influencer is a good fit for the brand depends on whether the category of the product the influencer endorses is within his/her expertise. In other words, when the influencer possesses expertise in the category of the product, consumers are more likely to trust the influencer and make impulsive purchases (Jin et al., 2021). In the following section, I will discuss the stimulus-organism-response model, a framework commonly utilized by researchers to investigate impulsive buying behaviour.

#### **2.4 S-O-R model**

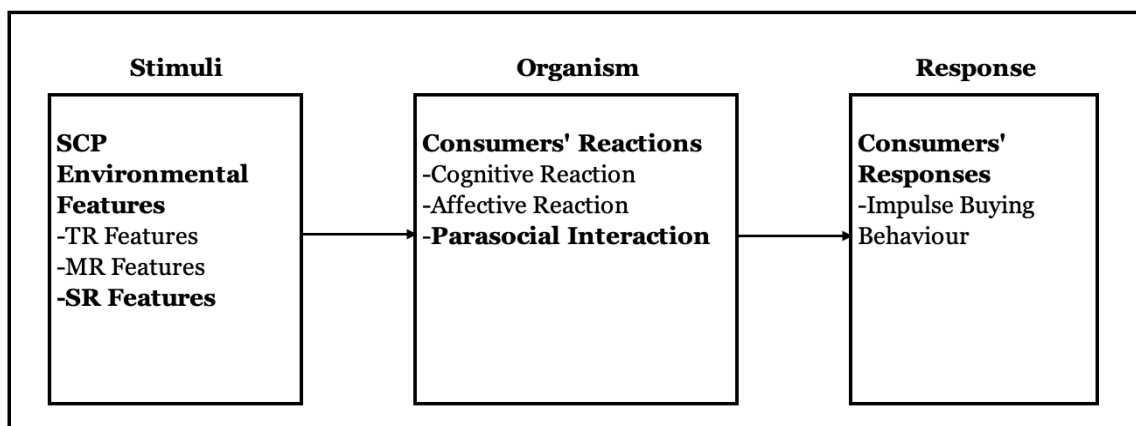
Mehrabian and Russell (1974) introduced the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model to study consumer behaviour. The S-O-R model was developed to understand the relationships between external stimuli, the internal processes of individuals (organism),

and their subsequent responses. The S-O-R model serves as a valuable framework for examining various aspects of consumer behaviour, including impulsive buying tendencies. According to Mehrabian and Russell (1974), stimulus refers to external environmental stimuli which include a variety of factors such as sensory input, environmental conditions, social cues, and any external influences perceived by the individual. These stimuli may be in various forms, including visual, auditory, tactile, or related to other sensory modalities. Organism represents an individual's internal processes including emotional reactions and cognitive evaluations. Response is the individual's behavioural response to the environmental stimuli with the function of this individual's internal processes. In recent studies, it has been observed that these environmental stimuli can affect an individual's emotional processes, subsequently shaping their purchasing behaviour (Zhai et al., 2020; Xu et al., 2020; Lee & Chen, 2021; Kang et al., 2021; Xiang et al., 2016; Lavuri, 2023).

S-O-R model has been frequently applied and modified to study consumer behaviour (Xu et al., 2020; Xiang et al., 2016; Kang et al., 2021; Lavuri, 2023). Xu et al. (2020) modified the S-O-R model to investigate consumers' shopping behaviour in the context of livestream commerce. They identified the streamer's attractiveness, parasocial relationship and information quality as stimuli, while cognitive assimilation and arousal as organism. Cognitive assimilation reflects how an individual mentally processes the information provided by the external stimuli, and arousal involves the emotional and physiological state experienced by an individual in response to external stimuli which drives the motivation of consumption activities (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). In terms of responses, defined as shopping behaviour in the study, impulsive consumption, hedonic consumption, and social sharing are considered. Impulsive consumption refers to unplanned and spontaneous purchases and is characterized by a lack of cognitive control. Hedonic consumption is the act of purchasing and consuming products or services for the primary purpose of pleasure, enjoyment, or sensory gratification. Social sharing includes the behaviour of consumers sharing their shopping experiences, product reviews or recommendations through social networks to influence the purchasing decisions of others. Their results showed that the streamer's attractiveness, parasocial relationship and information quality have direct effects on consumers' cognitive assimilation and arousal, and consumers' cognitive assimilation and arousal have direct effects on consumers' shopping behaviour.

Kang et al. (2021) modified the S-O-R model to explore the effects of interactivity on consumer engagement behaviour in livestream commerce. Consumer engagement behaviour is a spontaneous and non-transactional interaction with a brand or a company. They defined interactivity as social stimuli, social tie strength as organism and consumer engagement behaviour as response. They found that in the context of livestream commerce, interactivity has positive effects on consumer engagement behaviour until it exceeds a certain level, then consumer engagement behaviour starts to decrease.

Xiang et al. (2016) modified the S-O-R model for their study on consumers' impulsive buying behaviour on social commerce platforms (SCP). Figure 3 below represents the modified S-O-R model, which holds significant relevance to this research. Therefore, in the upcoming section, the author will further refine and adapt this model. Xiang et al. (2016) categorize stimuli within the S-O-R model into three distinct types, each contributing to the complex dynamics of impulsive buying on social commerce platforms. These stimuli encompass online environmental features, which comprise task-related (TR), mood-related (MR), and social-relevant (SR) features.



**Figure 3** An example of S-O-R model modified by Xiang et al. (2016)

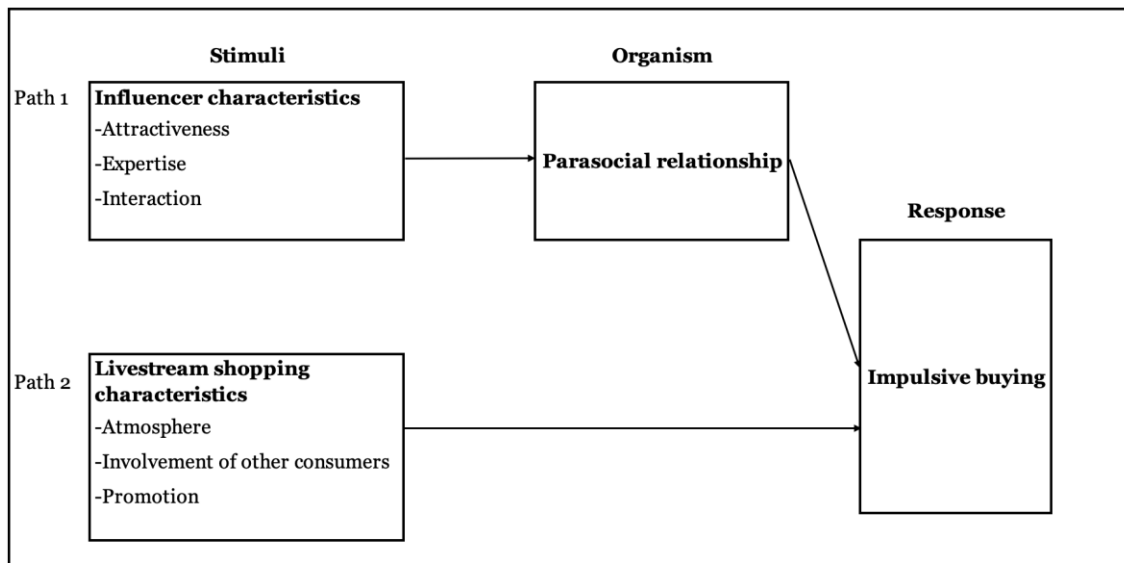
Task-related features refer to all product-related information that can help facilitate consumers' shopping process and are linked to influencer's professionalism. Mood-related features, on the other hand, are associated with the atmosphere and emotional tone set by the influencer, creating a sense of delight for consumers during the shopping experience. Social-relevant features come from influencers' interaction with consumers and the interaction among consumers. These stimuli collectively impact consumers' emotional reactions and parasocial interactions, ultimately influencing their responses in the form of impulsive buying (Xiang et al., 2016).

### 2.4.1 S-O-R model in the context of influencer livestream shopping

The theoretical framework for this study is a modification of the S-O-R model used by Xiang et al. (2016) to study consumers' impulsive buying behaviour on social commerce platforms. Figure 4 below illustrates the modified model for this research.

In the context of influencer livestream shopping, the stimuli consist of the characteristics of influencer and the characteristics of livestream shopping. These two dimensions of characteristics can both lead to impulsive buying, however, in different ways.

In Path 1, the external stimuli are represented by the influencer's characteristics, which encompass three key aspects: attractiveness, expertise, and interaction (Lee & Chen, 2021; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020; Xu et al., 2020). The organism is identified as consumers' development of a parasocial relationship with the influencer. The response is recognized as consumers' impulsive buying behaviour. The characteristics of influencers play a pivotal role in fostering parasocial relationship within consumers, subsequently influencing their impulsive buying tendencies (Xiang et al., 2016; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020).



**Figure 4** Modified S-O-R model for this research

In path 2, the stimuli are defined by the characteristics of livestream shopping, comprising the enthusiastic atmosphere, time-limited promotions, and involvement of other consumers (Jin et al., 2021; Xu et al., 2020; Wongkitrungrueng et al., 2020). Notably, these characteristics serve as direct triggers for consumers' impulsive buying responses, bypassing the intermediary step of parasocial relationship involvement.

#### 2.4.1.1 *Characteristics of influencer livestream shopping as stimuli*

Influencer livestream shopping encompasses two dimensions of characteristics: the characteristics of the influencer and the characteristics of livestream shopping. These two dimensions of characteristics function as stimuli, eliciting emotional responses within consumers. Within this adapted theoretical framework, the characteristics of the influencer are characterized by three key factors: 1) influencer's attractiveness, 2) influencer's expertise and 3) influencer's interaction with the consumers. On the other hand, the characteristics of livestream shopping involve the enthusiastic atmosphere, time-limited promotion during livestreams and involvement of other consumers.

**Influencer's attractiveness** is determined by both the physical appearance and personality of the influencer (Ha & Lam, 2017; Xu et al., 2020). The physical attractiveness of an influencer plays a significant role in attracting followers and gaining popularity (Xu et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2018). Furthermore, consumers are often drawn to influencers due to their appealing personality traits, such as humour and sincerity, as observed by Xu et al. (2020). This aligns with the audience's motivation to watch livestreams of influencers who possess the characteristics they admire (Cai & Wohn, 2019).

**Influencer's expertise** pertains to the influencer's knowledge and experience in the specific domain of the products they endorse (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). In the context of livestream shopping, influencer's expertise is determined by the quality of product facts and skilled demonstrations of product use provided by the influencer, which is considered as an important characteristic of influencer (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). Chen et al. (2017) emphasized that the quality of product facts as external stimulus has the most significant effects in their S-O-R model. During livestream shopping, consumers have the opportunity to inquire about product details and receive immediate responses from the influencer. Moreover, the influencer showcases the products during the livestream, providing consumers with a first-hand visual experience, as pointed out by Cai and Wohn (2019). The high-quality product facts provided by the influencer can significantly enhance consumers' purchase intention (Cheng et al., 2020).

**Influencer's interaction** with consumers can take two primary forms: sales-focused and non-sales focused, as outlined by Giertz et al. (2020). Sales-focused interactions often involve responding to consumers' requests to showcase or demonstrate product usage and offering additional discounts or coupons during the livestream. Non-sales

focused interactions may include activities such as chitchat, storytelling or sharing life experience. Kang et al. (2021) claimed that the interaction between the influencer and the consumers can stimulate the consumers' emotional states and affect their purchase intention. Cai and Wohn (2019) observed that consumers are more inclined to watch livestreams before making a purchase if they have previously had positive interactions with the influencer, such as receiving valuable feedback or engaging in meaningful conversations.

The characteristics of the influencer play a critical role in stimulating consumers' emotional reaction (Xu et al., 2020) and cultivating an imagined, one-sided intimate connection with the influencer, commonly referred to as a parasocial relationship (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020).

#### *2.4.1.2 Parasocial relationship as organism*

In the S-O-R model, the organism represents an individual's emotional reaction (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Lin et al. (2021) suggested that experienced influencers are particularly skilled at generating positive emotional reaction from the audience during livestreams. The characteristics of the influencer serve as stimuli that trigger the individual's internal emotions and foster parasocial relationships on an individual level. This parasocial relationship is a feeling of intimacy with the influencer formed inside the audience's mind. According to Xu et al. (2020), parasocial relationship is mainly developed from the interaction with the influencer. This means that the level of interactivity allows the audience to form a social bond with the influencer, creating the impression that the influencer is a genuine friend to the audience. Over time, this connection tends to grow stronger (Kang et al., 2021). Especially when the influencer speaks to the audience in a friendly tone and answers the audience's questions quickly and attentively during livestream shopping, the audience will gradually feel emotionally attached to the influencer. Consequently, they are more likely to build trust in the influencer and develop a parasocial relationship, which, in turn, influences their purchase intention (Chen et al., 2020).

#### *2.4.1.3 Impulsive buying as response*

Response refers to the behavioral reactions that evolve from emotional reactions (organism), which are initially triggered by environmental stimuli (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). In the context of livestream shopping, consumers may be influenced by one or more of the influencer's characteristics, leading to an attachment to the influencer (Kang

et al., 2021). Subsequently, this attachment can develop into parasocial relationship with the influencer over time (Xiang et al., 2016). Their parasocial relationship with the influencer will finally result in their impulsive buying behaviour. Vazquez et al. (2020) confirmed that consumers develop a sense of belonging which will evolve into parasocial relationship, and parasocial relationship with the influencer increases the possibility of their impulsive buying behavior.

However, certain characteristics of livestream shopping can directly prompt consumers to engage in impulsive buying behaviour, even in the absence of parasocial relationship with the influencer. For instance, promotional strategies like limited-time promotions have been demonstrated to significantly influence consumer's impulsive buying (Hosseini, 2020; Jin et al., 2021; Xu et al., 2020; Wongkitrungrueng et al., 2020). These studies highlight that consumers may make unplanned purchases driven by such promotional stimuli, indicating that impulsive buying can be initiated by external environmental factors beyond the development of parasocial relationship.

## **2.5 Summary of theoretical framework**

This study aims to identify the characteristics of influencer livestream shopping that influence consumers' impulsive buying in the context of cosmetics shopping, from a consumer's perspective. The characteristics of influencer livestream shopping encompass both the characteristics of the influencer and the characteristics of livestream shopping.

Both the characteristics of the influencer and the characteristics of livestream shopping play distinct roles in driving consumers toward impulsive buying. The characteristics of influencer are instrumental in stimulating emotional reactions in consumers and nurturing parasocial relationships, which, in turn, lead to impulsive buying behaviour. On the other hand, the characteristics of the livestream shopping such as promotions can directly trigger impulsive buying without necessarily influencing consumers' emotional responses.

To delve into the dynamic relationship between the characteristics of influencer livestream shopping and consumers' impulsive buying behaviour, the author has adapted the theoretical framework based on the S-O-R (Stimulus-Organism-Response) model employed by Xiang et al. (2016) to study impulsive buying behaviour in the context of social commerce platforms. This modified framework offers a comprehensive

perspective on how the characteristics of influencer livestream shopping can encourage impulsive buying behaviour among consumers.

### **3 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH**

In this chapter, the author first introduces the method of the empirical research. Subsequently, the methodologies employed in this research including data collection and sampling techniques are explained. After discussing the process of data collection, the author explains how the data analysis was conducted. Finally, the chapter concludes with an evaluation of data quality.

#### **3.1 Research method**

This part of the chapter introduces the research method and explains the reasons for the chosen method. The study is conducted with the aim of finding answers to the following research questions:

RQ1: What characteristics of influencer livestream shopping do consumers perceive affect their purchase intention?

RQ2: How do the characteristics of influencer livestream shopping impact consumers' impulsive buying according to consumers?

Most of the existing research on parasocial relationships and consumers' impulsive buying during livestream shopping has primarily adopted quantitative research methods (Xu et al., 2020; Kang et al., 2021; Vazquez et al., 2020). However, in this study, a qualitative research approach was chosen. The rationale behind this choice is rooted in the novelty of livestream shopping as a research context. Qualitative research methods are well-suited for the exploration of new phenomena and provide a foundational understanding of the subject before quantitative research is conducted to validate prior findings. Moreover, in line with the modified theoretical framework for this research (Figure 3), it is evident that the characteristics of the influencer evoke consumers' internal emotional reactions and contribute to the development of parasocial relationships. Parasocial relationship is inherently a one-sided and emotion-based connection formed within consumers' minds. Qualitative research methods are deemed more effective in uncovering the deeper emotions and sentiments of participants compared to quantitative approaches. Additionally, qualitative methods focus on studying smaller samples in-depth, which is particularly relevant in this context (Patton, 2015).

Furthermore, it is important to note that this research is specifically focused on the cosmetics category. According to a report from Sinolink Securities (2017), women

constitute the majority of cosmetics consumers, accounting for 87% of the cosmetics consumer base. Given this gender skew and the nature of the cosmetics category, randomly selecting cases could potentially introduce irrelevant participants into the study. These irrelevant cases may include individuals who do not purchase cosmetic products during livestreams, those who buy cosmetics for someone else during livestreams, and those who have never engaged in impulsive buying during livestream shopping. These participants would not provide valuable insights into the relationship between the characteristics of influencer livestream shopping and consumers' impulsive buying behaviour in the context of cosmetic products.

To address this concern and ensure the relevance and efficiency of the research, a purposeful sampling approach is employed. The prerequisite for inclusion in the sample is that consumers have engaged in impulsive buying of cosmetic products at least once during influencer livestream shopping on Taobao. This selection method allows for the gathering of relevant, information-rich, and emotion-related data within the specific context of livestream shopping. In summary, qualitative research is the most suitable approach for this study, as it facilitates the collection of pertinent data in the unique context of livestream shopping for cosmetic products.

### **3.2 Sampling**

Before making sampling strategies, it is fundamental to have a clear idea of the purpose of the research. This helps to define the population (Furrer & Sudharshan, 2001): what is being studied in the research. And the population defines what samples to be drawn (Eisenhardt, 1989).

The target population for this research comprises Chinese female consumers who purchase cosmetic products during livestream shopping on Taobao. To obtain relevant and information-rich data, a purposeful sampling strategy is employed. It is important to note that this research delves into consumers' feelings and emotions, which are better evoked when respondents have some familiarity with the interviewer. However, relying solely on acquaintances could introduce biases. To strike a balance, the author opted for a snowball sampling approach.

The process began with two initial respondents selected from the author's acquaintances, each of whom was asked to recommend one additional potential respondent. To ensure data relevance, the author contacted these potential respondents on WeChat (a Chinese instant messenger application) to inquire if they had made impulsive purchases of

cosmetic products during influencer livestream shopping on Taobao. The author provided a brief explanation of impulsive buying to enhance the respondents' understanding of the topic. If the respondent answered 'No', they were requested to suggest another potential respondent who may have made impulsive cosmetic product purchases during influencer livestreams. The author approached a total of seventeen potential respondents, of which seven did not meet the prerequisite, resulting in a final sample of ten respondents. This sampling method was chosen to strike a balance between respondents who are familiar with the author and the risk of introducing bias into the study.

### **3.3 Data collection**

Interviews are a commonly employed research tool in qualitative research, facilitating the exploration of respondents' inner perspectives (Patton, 2015). To gain an in-depth understanding of how the characteristics of influencer livestream shopping impact consumer impulsive buying behaviour, the author conducted semi-structured interviews. DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019) suggest that semi-structured interviews are particularly effective for gathering data on respondents' thoughts and feelings. In contrast to structured interviews, semi-structured interviews provide a greater opportunity to dive deeply into respondents' personal experiences. Furthermore, given that respondents' knowledge about livestream shopping varies, and some may respond briefly to certain questions, semi-structured interviews offer flexibility. They enable the author to ask unplanned questions, ensuring that as many relevant responses as possible are obtained from the respondents. This approach enhances the richness of the data collected and supports a more thorough exploration of the research topic.

At the beginning of each interview, the author provided a clear explanation of the research's objectives and requested the respondents' consent for recording the interviews. It was emphasized that the full interview transcript would be kept strictly confidential, and any quotes used in the research would be attributed anonymously. To encourage open and detailed responses while minimizing the risk of leading or biased answers, the author structured all questions as open-ended inquiries. This approach aligns with the recommendations of Patton (2015) and ensures that the responses collected are in-depth and reflect the authentic perspectives of the participants.

The interviews were conducted in Chinese, which is the native language of all the respondents. Conducting the interviews in their mother tongue enabled the respondents

to freely and accurately express their feelings and thoughts without any language barriers. Given the geographical separation between the respondents (in China) and the author (in Finland), the interviews were carried out online using Tencent Meeting. This software was selected for its user-friendliness and convenience for the respondents.

During each interview session, recordings were made within Tencent Meeting. Subsequently, the author transcribed these recordings using the Chinese transcription software Iflyrec. To ensure the accuracy of the data and translations, all the transcripts were translated into English by the author. These English translations were then shared with the respondents for validation. It's worth noting that nine out of the ten respondents have a strong command of English and were able to confirm the accuracy of the author's translations. This rigorous process helped maintain the integrity of the data and its interpretation.

### ***3.3.1 Interview guide***

The interviews were conducted using a pre-established interview guide that featured open-ended questions formulated into six themes. These themes were designed in alignment with the research objectives, intending to capture information-rich data. As advocated by Patton (2015), the utilization of open-ended questions was chosen to facilitate the collection of comprehensive information and prevent leading responses. During the interview process, certain questions from the interview guide (Table 2) were adapted slightly in response to feedback from the respondents. Moreover, the author introduced some unscripted questions to encourage the respondents to provide more elaborate responses. While the original interview guide was in Chinese, the version provided below has been translated from Chinese to English by the author.

Table 2 Interview guide

Theme	Questions	Purpose
<b>Opinion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What specific characteristics of influencer livestream shopping do you have knowledge of?</li> <li>- Could you share your thoughts and feelings about influencers?</li> </ul>	To understand the respondents' perceptions of influencers and influencer livestream shopping.
<b>Behaviour</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How often do you engage with influencer livestream shopping?</li> <li>- How often do you buy cosmetic products during influencer livestream shopping?</li> </ul>	To gather insights into the respondents' frequency of participating in influencer livestream shopping and making purchases during influencer livestreams.
<b>Characteristics of influencer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Please name some influencers whose livestreams you watch most frequently.</li> <li>- Please describe the characteristics of the influencer you just named.</li> </ul>	To understand what characteristics of the influencer attract the respondents and differentiate the characteristics of livestream shopping from the characteristics of the influencer.

<b>Emotion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How do you feel about the influencer's ..... (any characteristic mentioned before)</li> </ul>	To investigate the presence of parasocial relationship between the respondents and the influencer and explore its influence on their impulsive buying behaviour.
<b>Impulsive buying behaviour</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Please recall one specific time you ended up buying cosmetic products impulsively during influencer livestream shopping.</li> <li>- Why did you buy something you didn't intend to buy?</li> <li>- What did the influencer(s) do to make you buy something you didn't intend to buy?</li> <li>- What actions of the influencer(s) have had positive effects on you?</li> </ul>	To understand the influencer livestream shopping characteristics that drive impulsive buying behaviour among the respondents and identify the characteristics that positively influence their purchase intention.
<b>Recommendation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As a consumer, what recommendations do you have for influencers to enhance your purchase intention during livestream shopping for cosmetics?</li> </ul>	To gather recommendations from the respondents on best practices in livestream shopping for cosmetics.

### 3.3.2 Respondent presentation

Table 3 provides a summary of respondent information and their respective interviews. It is important to note that, due to the snowball sampling strategy employed, some potential respondents recommended by prior respondents did not meet the study's prerequisite. Despite this, they were still asked to recommend another potential respondent who could qualify for the interview. These potential respondents who were not selected for this interview are referred to as X1, X2, and so on in the table, serving as sources for some of the final respondents. The final set of respondents, who met the research criteria, are named as R1 to R10. Table 3 includes details such as the interviewee's age, the source of the interviewee (how they were connected to the study), their location, the interview date, the length of the interview, and the frequency of watching influencer livestreams.

**Table 3 Respondents for the interviews**

<b>Interviewee</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>R1</b>	Author	28	Tencent Meeting	17.03.2022	19 min	Whenever free
<b>R2</b>	Author	30	Tencent Meeting	17.03.2022	29 min	1-3 times/week
<b>R3</b>	R2	27	Tencent Meeting	21.03.2022	21 min	Every day
<b>R4</b>	X2	26	Tencent Meeting	23.03.2022	33 min	Every day
<b>R5</b>	X3	25	Tencent Meeting	23.03.2022	25 min	Once every 2-3 days
<b>R6</b>	R4	25	Tencent Meeting	24.03.2022	29 min	Rarely
<b>R7</b>	X6	30	Tencent Meeting	24.03.2022	28 min	Before: every day

						Now: rarely
<b>R8</b>	X7	34	Tencent Meeting	26.03.2022	15 min	When there are sales
<b>R9</b>	R8	18	Tencent Meeting	27.03.2022	21 min	Every day
<b>R10</b>	R7	28	Tencent Meeting	29.03.2022	16 min	Every day

### 3.4 Data analysis

The analysis of qualitative data is a crucial process involving the organization of data, extraction of meaning from the data, drawing conclusions based on the findings, and ultimately contributing to the development of broader theories (Spiggle, 1994). Once the data had been collected, the author followed a structured data analysis process for this study according to the steps formulated by Spiggle (1994): categorization, abstraction, comparison, dimension and integration.

#### 3.4.1 Categorization

Categorization, as the initial step of data analysis, involves the systematic coding of gathered data (Spiggle, 1994). This step is foundational, serving the purpose of identifying and segregating data that may not be pertinent to the research objectives (Spiggle, 1994). The interviews conducted for this study were semi-structured, with some respondents providing elaborate responses that occasionally strayed from the research focus. Consequently, the categorization process not only enhanced the efficiency of data analysis but also facilitated the filtering of irrelevant information, ensuring that the analysis focused on the most relevant and meaningful data.

A total of 57 pages of Chinese-language transcriptions were collected. All the data related to consumers' perceptions of influencer livestream shopping were highlighted. In this phase, the author employed a technique outlined by Gioia et al. (2013), where 1st-order categories were created using informant terms extracted directly from the interview transcripts. These 1st-order categories were then organized and transferred into Excel spreadsheets for more detailed analysis. The data were sorted based on the

characteristics of influencer livestream shopping, resulting in the identification of 20 distinct 1st-order categories. An illustrative example of this categorization process is presented in Appendix 2, featuring categories such as attachment to influencer, enthusiasm, feeling of intimacy, exclusive discount, popularity, and more. These categories were distilled from the extensive responses provided by the respondents as they elucidated their perspectives on the characteristics of influencer and livestream shopping.

### **3.4.2 Abstraction and comparison**

The process of abstraction builds upon categorization and serves to classify the categorized data into broader and more conceptual classes (Spiggle, 1994). During this phase, the author identified overlapping 1st-order categories, such as "free gift" and "exclusive discount." Notably, giving out a free gift can also be considered a form of discount. The author examined the differences and similarities among the categories of characteristics and abstracted them into 2nd-order themes. Subsequently, these 2nd-order themes were further condensed into higher-level dimensions, as recommended by Gioia et al. (2013). It is important to highlight that certain themes blur the lines between characteristics of the influencer and characteristics of livestream shopping. In other words, some characteristics do not solely belong to the influencer or livestream shopping. For instance, enthusiasm can be a characteristic of the influencer's hosting style, but it can also be a characteristic of livestream shopping due to common practices like time-limited offers during livestreams.

**Table 4 Themes and categories**

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Example quotes</b>
<b>Attractiveness</b>	- Popularity	“Has a large fan base, tens of millions of followers.”
	- Funny personality	“The way he introduces products is interesting and funny.”
<b>Hosting style</b>	- Passionate style	“He’s so passionate, it kind of gives you the desire to buy”
	- Peaceful style	

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	- Pushy style	<p>“He’s not as enthusiastic as XXX. He is a quite peaceful influencer, explaining the product ingredients calmly.”</p> <p>“They say the discount will be gone if I don’t buy it today, it puts a lot of pressure on me, and it makes me feel like they are forcing me to buy.”</p>
<b>Atmosphere</b>	- Enthusiasm	“Such a large quantity can be sold in such a short time, people are so enthusiastic about this product.”
	- Limited offer	“They say they will stop selling the product in 5 minutes, then the purchase link will be taken off.”
<b>Expertise</b>	- Product information	“They are really skilled when applying the product, so I feel the visual effect is better.”
	- Try on	
	- Product selection	
	- Reveal the shortcomings	“He applied the product to his face, I could really see it made a difference.”
	- Professional	<p>“His only sells the brands that are known to us.”</p> <p>“He will talk about the advantages and disadvantages of the</p>

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		<p>ingredients, and if it is not suitable, he will really say that it is not suitable.”</p> <p>“I feel that their team is very professional. They rarely make any mistakes; they always have enough coupons and the price they announce is always the same as what we finally pay.”</p>
<b>Promotion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Free gift</li> <li>- Price</li> <li>- Exclusive discount</li> </ul>	<p>“He gave a lot of free gifts. The amount of the gifts is almost as much as a normal product.”</p> <p>“The price during livestream shopping is lower than offline shops.”</p> <p>“The price he can get is basically the lowest among all the influencers.”</p>
<b>Interaction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interact with influencer</li> <li>- Involvement of other consumers</li> </ul>	<p>“I left comments, but there were too many people leaving comments, so there was barely interaction.”</p> <p>“Some people commented that they have bought it before, and said the colour is pretty versatile (in different occasions).”</p>

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<b>Parasocial relationship</b>	- Trust	<p>“I feel that when he says this product is very good, I will believe that this product is really good, I just trust him quite a lot.”</p> <p>“I feel like he’s more like a friend to us, chatting and sharing a lot with us.”</p> <p>“Once you establish a sense of attachment, you’ll find yourself consistently following their livestreams.”</p>
	- Attachment to influencer	
	- Feeling of intimacy	

Table 4 represents the 1<sup>st</sup>-order categories, 2<sup>nd</sup>-order themes condensed from the categories, and includes example quotes that validate the abstraction process. There are six 2<sup>nd</sup>-order themes: attractiveness, hosting style, atmosphere, expertise, promotion, interaction and parasocial relationship. In this step, the characteristics of the influencer and the characteristics of livestream shopping are not yet separate. Therefore, in the following step, the author separates these characteristics according to their attributes and then regrouped the themes into aggregate dimensions of the characteristics of the influencer and the characteristics of livestream shopping.

**Table 5 Aggregate dimensions**

<b>2<sup>nd</sup>-order themes</b>	<b>Aggregate dimensions</b>
Attractiveness	<b>Characteristics of the influencer</b>
Hosting style	
Expertise	
Interaction	
(Parasocial relationship)	<b>Organism)</b>

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Atmosphere	<b>Characteristics of livestream shopping</b>
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Promotion

Involvement of other consumers

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The characteristics of the influencer encompass influencer's attractiveness, hosting style, expertise, and interaction. Parasocial relationship, viewed as an organism, falls under the characteristics of the influencer since it is closely linked to the influencer. The characteristics of livestream shopping include the enthusiastic atmosphere, exclusive livestream promotion, and the involvement of other consumers.

### ***3.4.3 Dimensionalization and integration***

According to Spiggle (1994), dimensionalization is useful in constructing theory as it helps define the relationships among different categories. The range of dimensions may assist in understanding the phenomenon being studied (Gioia et al., 2013). After identifying the 1st-order categories, 2nd-order themes, and aggregate dimensions, the author examined the characteristics of the influencer and their effects on respondents' impulsive buying at the dimension level. This analysis was performed based on the attitudes expressed by the respondents when describing these characteristics.

**Table 6 Dimensionalization of the effects of characteristics on impulsive buying**

Dimensional range	
<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
Passionate style	Pushy style
Popular/well-known influencer	Unknown influencer
Good deal	Low price as the only selling point
Positive comments from other consumers	Negative comments from other consumers
Professional explanation and application of product	Lack of professional explanation

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The last step of data analysis is integration, involving the mapping of elements and theory construction. Spiggle (1994) emphasizes that theory integration can be

accomplished by observing that certain conditions, contexts, strategies, and outcomes tend to cluster together in the data. The key to building a theory is to consider the dynamic interrelationships among the categories (Gioia et al., 2013). The author identifies these interrelationships and constructs a theory that explains how the characteristics of influencer livestream shopping influence consumers' impulsive buying. The results will be presented in the final chapter.

### **3.5 Quality of data**

In this section, the quality of the data is discussed. To ensure the trustworthiness of the research, the author must assess the quality of the data and the interpretation of the data (Wallendorf & Belk, 1989). This evaluation of qualitative research methods encompasses credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and integrity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), and it directly influences the reliability of the findings.

Credibility is determined by whether the representations of the constructions of reality in the study are adequate and believable (Wallendorf and Belk, 1989). The author conducted 10 semi-structured interviews, and although some responses may seem duplicated across different respondents, it can be deduced that data saturation was achieved. Additionally, the author employed a sampling strategy where the first two respondents were selected initially by the author, and the rest were recommended by each preceding respondent. This approach aimed to mitigate the risk of biased responses from acquaintances and enhance the credibility of the research.

Transferability concerns the extent to which the research findings can be applied to other contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Unfortunately, most respondents in this study shared a similar age range, which could potentially hinder the transferability of the collected data. Additionally, various factors including income levels might influence impulsive buying; however, the author did not account for each respondent's income, further limiting transferability. Furthermore, it is essential to acknowledge that Taobao's customer base primarily consists of Chinese consumers, which could affect the generalizability of these findings to other markets.

Dependability assesses whether repeating the interviews with the same participants in the same context would yield consistent findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Dependability can evolve over time, especially in a rapidly changing landscape like influencer livestream shopping in China. To address this, the author should observe changes over time and provide explanations as needed (Wallendorf & Belk, 1989).

Confirmability refers to the extent to which the survey results are determined by the respondents and the survey conditions, rather than by the researcher's biases, motivation, interest, or opinion (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Photographs, videos, recordings, reflexive journal can enhance confirmability to a certain degree (Wallendorf & Belk, 1989). During interview, the author took fieldnotes and recordings in order to ensure the confirmability of the data. The findings of the interview were shown to all the respondents and the respondents assessed whether the findings were biased. No indication of such biases was found.

Integrity implies the extent to which the interpretation was unimpaired by lies, misinformation, or misrepresentations by informants (Wallendorf & Belk, 1989). Before the interview, the respondents were informed of the purpose of the research. Moreover, eight of the ten respondents are recommended to the author by previous respondents, that is to say, they have some connection with the author. Moreover, the interview setting is private, the respondents are, therefore, more likely to open up and be honest with the author. Research ethics, including strict adherence to GDPR guidelines, were paramount throughout the study, ensuring informed consent and data privacy to protect the rights and privacy of all participants.

## 4 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the findings of the empirical research are structured based on the modified theoretical framework for this research. The findings are intended to address the research questions initially proposed by the author at the beginning of the research. The results are divided into two distinct sections: characteristics of the influencer and characteristics of livestream shopping.

### 4.1 Effects of characteristics of influencer livestream shopping on consumers' impulsive buying

The characteristics of influencer livestream shopping can be classified into two main categories: the characteristics of the influencer and the characteristics of livestream shopping. It is considered appropriate to examine the effects of these two aspects on consumers' impulsive buying behaviour separately. This division is supported by the research findings; specifically, the characteristics of influencers may operate through the development of parasocial relationships or directly influence impulsive buying behaviour, whereas the characteristics of the livestream shopping do not involve parasocial relationships at all.

#### 4.1.1 Characteristics of the influencer

Characteristics of the influencer are composed of influencer's attractiveness, hosting style, expertise and interaction with the audience. These characteristics of the influencer are likely to develop into consumers' parasocial relationship with the influencer, which we will discuss later. According to the findings of this research, the characteristics of the influencer have major influences on consumers' impulsive buying with the help of the organism of consumers' parasocial relationship. Some of the characteristics have more significant effects than the others, and consumers might have different reaction to the same characteristic.

##### 4.1.1.1 Attractiveness

According to previous research, attractiveness is a characteristic determined by influencer's physical appearance and personality. However, none of the interview respondents mentioned the influencer's physical appearance, which suggests that the consumers may not perceive influencer's attractiveness as a significant factor when engaging in cosmetics livestream shopping. It's worth noting that influencers, in general, are good-looking, which could be a default characteristic easily overlooked by the consumers. The findings show that consumers tend to be more attracted to the

influencers who are popular and have a large number of followers. Popularity, on the other hand, is a sign of the influencer's trustworthiness and reliability. The influencer's funny personality is also one of the reasons that consumers choose to watch the influencer's livestream, as the influencer makes the consumers feel entertained during livestream shopping.

When asked to describe the characteristics of influencers hosting livestream shopping on Taobao, 8 out of 10 respondents emphasized that these influencers are widely recognized individuals with a strong online presence and a dedicated fan base.

Respondents 1 and 9 maintained that individuals must be famous to be considered influencers.

Respondent 1: "Those who are fairly **famous** on social networks."

Respondent 9: "First of all, he needs to be **famous**. And many people watch his livestreams."

Respondents 2, 4, 5, and 7 asserted that a fundamental characteristic of influencers is having a substantial number of followers

Respondent 2: "Influencers...people with a certain number of fans, some relatively well-known celebrities or bloggers, more than **one million** followers."

Respondent 4: "Influencers are people with a **fan base**."

Respondent 5: "An influencer is very famous himself, he can attract a lot of traffic, and when he hosts livestreams, maybe he will have tens of thousands of viewers... actually it should be more than **tens of thousands** of viewers."

Respondent 7: "They have **many** followers, and most of the purchases are made by their followers."

Respondents 6 and 8 associated influencer's popularity with their trustworthiness. Respondent 8 thinks that influencers having a large fan base is a sign of positive reputation.

Respondent 6: "Some influencers who have **very few** followers, less than 100,000, I don't really trust them."

Respondent 6 does not trust influencers with a small fan base, which according to her is less than 100,000 followers.

Respondent 8: "I will see if he is **popular**, usually if he is followed by many people, that shows he has good reputation."

Apart from watching influencers' livestreams for their popularity, Respondent 2 chooses to watch some influencers' livestream because of their funny personality, and she feels entertained when watching their livestreams.

Respondent 2: "He is quite **funny**, and his livestream is interesting and **entertaining** to watch."

It can be affirmed that the majority of the respondents have a preference for watching livestreams hosted by renowned influencers. Influencers with a strong follower base are considered more trustworthy than those who are less known, and the products they promote during livestream shopping are perceived as more reliable. Selling counterfeit products on Taobao is illegal and could ruin an influencer's reputation; hence, a popular influencer is unlikely to take such risks. None of the respondents correlated an influencer's popularity or funny personality as triggers for their impulsive buying behaviour. However, the influencer's attractiveness encompassing influencer's popularity and personality is linked to consumers' trust in the influencer, which is a part of their parasocial relationship with the influencer.

In conclusion, the attractiveness of the influencer plays a role in attracting consumers to watch their livestreams and develop a parasocial relationship. Nevertheless, this characteristic has only a minor influence on encouraging impulsive buying behaviour among consumers.

#### 4.1.1.2 *Hosting style*

The influencer's hosting style is a critical characteristic that influences consumers' impulsive buying behaviour. Different influencers may choose to have different style when hosting their own livestreams. When asked to describe the characteristics of the influencers they usually watch, Respondents 1, 8, 9 and 10 said that the influencers were full of passion and managed to drive an enthusiastic atmosphere, which makes them feel an urge to purchase.

Respondent 1: "The characteristic of his livestream is that he has always been very **excited** and **passionate**, and he gives you that kind of desire that makes you want to move your fingers and place and order quickly."

Respondent 8: "He is good at making the atmosphere even more **enthusiastic**, once you see him, you feel like buying things from him."

Respondent 9: "He sounds very **excited**, that is, he brings that emotion to the atmosphere, and the audience would be excited too."

Respondent 10: "The way he speaks is very exaggerating. He really knows how to make the atmosphere **full of passion**."

Respondents 2 and 7 claimed that the influencer they watch the most employs a passionate hosting style and consistently speaks loudly, a commonly used technique to foster a more enthusiastic atmosphere during livestream shopping

Respondent 2: “He speaks quite **loud**, which makes me have this urge.”

Respondent 7: “The characteristic of his livestream is that he has a really **loud** voice.”

Respondent 4 doesn't have a preference between peaceful atmosphere and enthusiastic atmosphere, and atmosphere in general does not affect her purchase intention.

Respondent 4: “Not as passionate as A, B is more peaceful. B's team is smaller, and you can feel they put their heart into B's livestream. A's livestream is full of passion, it is interesting to watch, I can just watch without buying.”

It is worth noting that when an influencer's hosting style is excessively passionate, it can come across as pushy. Respondent 6 showed negative attitudes towards the influencers who pressured the consumers into making quick purchases within a limited time. This approach made her feel forced and led to a loss of purchase intention.

Respondent 6: “They say the discount will be gone if I don't buy it today, it puts a lot of **pressure** on me, and it makes me feel like they are **forcing** me to buy.”

An influencer's hosting style can directly influence consumers' impulsive buying behaviour without the need for developing parasocial relationship. In general, a passionate hosting style tends to be more efficient than a peaceful one in encouraging impulsive buying, as it amplifies the already enthusiastic atmosphere of regular livestream shopping. However, it is important for the influencers to take good control of their level of passion and avoid sounding pushy, as some consumers might have negative feelings when they feel they are forced to make a purchase.

#### 4.1.1.3 Expertise

Expertise is another critical characteristic of the influencer that can encourage consumers' impulsive buying behaviour. According to the findings, expertise can be perceived in several ways: 1) when influencers explain the ingredients, effects, and usage of a product, 2) through the visible results when influencers apply a product, and 3) by the influencers' selection of product that they promote. All the respondents mentioned influencers' expertise when asked to recall one specific time when they ended up buying cosmetics impulsively during influencer livestream.

Respondents 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 had positive attitudes when the influencers provided detailed and thorough information about the products, especially regarding the functions of the ingredients contained in the product.

Respondent 1: “When he introduced the product, he had a very clear idea of what he was saying. For example, he was **comparing** his offer with the price of some competitors. He also told us the **history price** of this product during each big sale. And he told all the **features** of the product that I wanted to know, he was very well-prepared. In fact, I felt very relieved, and I didn't even need to use my brain.”

Respondent 3: “He gave us some small **lessons** about the products before his livestreams, and he talked about the **manufacturer** of the product, which continued to build my trust in him.”

Respondent 4: “He was a beauty product salesperson for several years before he got famous, he actually has a lot of his own **interpretations** on the ingredients and functions of the products.”

Respondent 5: “He was really **introducing** the product, not just promoting it.”

Respondent 6: “I need to listen to someone **professional** because I don't know much about the products and ingredients myself.”

Respondents 2, 7 and 8 experienced an urge to make the purchase when the influencer provided a positive description about the effects of the products.

Respondent 2: “The way he **described** the effects of the product really gave me the desire to buy on an impulse.”

Respondent 7: “He said how **good** the product was, how **good** the ingredients were, how **good** the skin would be after using it, and after listening to what he said, I felt that I needed to buy it as if it would really **improve** my skin.”

Respondent 8: “He and his assistant had been talking about how **good** this product was, and that many people who had used it said their skin became very **soft**.”

The visual results when influencers apply a product are persuasive, as the effects are immediate and direct. Respondents 2, 4, 5, 6, 9 and 10 mentioned that the difference between before and after applying the product was the key factor that influenced them to change their minds and make an impulsive purchase.

Respondent 2: “The first reason was that he **tried on** the product. Of course he would say the product was good, but then he applied the product, you could really see the **effects** with your own eyes.”

Respondent 4: “When he **used** it in the livestream, I could see clearly the **effects** I had wished for.”

Respondent 5: “He just **applied** it on another girl, I felt that the girl seemed to have similar skin tone as me, and the product looked pretty **good** on her.”

Respondent 6: “He **applied** the product on his eyes or hands or face, he really tried to show you the **effects** of this product.”

Respondent 9: “He first introduced a beauty product, and then he **applied** it on his face and showed everyone what kind of skin it was suitable for. His assistants also came to **test** the colors of the lipsticks and showed what it looked like on yellowish skin tone.”

Respondent 10: “I was watching his livestream, and I saw the **differences** between before and after makeup. It looked really **good**, so I bought it.”

An influencer's in-depth product knowledge and honesty with consumers also yield positive effects on purchase intention. Respondent 5 values a more objective product evaluation from the influencer, which, while not necessarily resulting in impulsive buying behaviour, helps foster trust among consumers

Respondent 5: “He talked about the **advantages** and **disadvantages** of the product, and if it was not suitable, he would really say it. For example, if you have yellowish skin tone, he will say it would not fit, or he would say this kind is suitable for white skin tone.”

The same applies to the selection of products; when an influencer maintains a careful and strict approach to product selection, consumers develop positive attitudes and gradually build trust in the influencer. However, it is important to note that the selection of products does not have a significant impact on consumers' impulsive buying.

Respondent 4: “He has a much **wider** selection of makeup products than other influencers.”

Respondent 5: “The products he promotes are mainly from relatively **well-known** brands, which makes me feel **safe**.”

Respondent 9: “The things he sells are from relatively **famous** brands. I checked that he did not have any dishonest behavior of selling counterfeit during his previous livestreams.”

Influencers' expertise is a critical characteristic of the influencer. Influencers' honesty about the products and strict selection of products contribute to gaining trust from the consumers, these attributes are efficient in developing consumer's parasocial relationship. Remarkably, influencers' expertise is also likely to encouraging consumers' impulsive buying directly, especially when the influencer's expertise makes what he/she says sound convincing to the consumers.

#### 4.1.1.4 Interaction

According to the research findings, interaction with influencers does not significantly impact consumers' impulsive buying behaviour. This can be attributed to the fact that popular influencers generally have a large audience, making it challenging for them to address most of the comments left by viewers. Out of the 10 respondents, only 2 attempted to interact with the influencers, while the remaining 8 did not try to interact at all. Respondents 7 and 9 occasionally left comments during influencer livestreams, but

often received no response from the influencers. Notably, they did not exhibit any negative attitudes about not receiving responses, understanding the constraints faced by popular influencers in replying to every single comment.

Respondent 7: “Sometimes I post comments and ask some questions, but they **don’t always see** my comments.”

Respondent 9: “I left comments, but there were **too many people** leaving comments, so there was barely interaction.”

Almost all the respondents mentioned the same influencer, Jiaqi Li, who is the most successful and popular influencer at this moment in China. The impact of interaction with popular influencers like Jiaqi Li on consumers' impulsive buying is not particularly significant. However, for influencers with fewer followers, interaction may still be crucial for maintaining relationships with consumers, which can potentially develop into parasocial relationships over time. Interaction is recognized as a characteristic of the influencer since it is contingent on the influencer's approach and engagement with the audience. The nature and quality of interaction, shaped by the influencer, contribute significantly to the overall livestream shopping experience for consumers. It is essential to distinguish this influencer-driven interaction from the involvement of other consumers, which is a part of the livestream shopping characteristic. We will delve into this aspect in a later section.

Interaction as a characteristic of the influencer does not have significant effects on consumers' impulsive buying behaviour according to the consumers, and this research's findings suggest that it has limited effects on the development of parasocial relationships.

#### **4.1.2 Parasocial relationship as organism**

Parasocial relationship is developed within consumers' mind when consumers keep following influencers' livestreams, and it is closely connected to the characteristics of the influencer. Parasocial relationship can be reflected in consumers' trust in the influencer and feelings of intimacy with the influencer. 9 out of 10 respondents expressed trust in the influencers they usually follow. Respondents 3, 4, 5 and 7 felt that the influencer was close to them, and that he put himself in the consumers' shoes.

Respondent 3: “The way he introduced the product made me feel that he was **thinking for me**, for us consumers.”

Respondent 4: “I feel he is more like a **friend** to us, chatting and sharing a lot with us.”

Respondent 5: “First of all, he talks like a **friend**, and I feel that he is always introducing the products from our perspective.”

Respondent 7: “He **thinks for us** consumers, and he thrives to help us find the right product as well as save money.”

Respondents 1, 2, 3, 5, 7 and 8 believe in the quality and authenticity of the products presented by the influencers they trust.

Respondent 1: “I don't need to think about whether this product is good or not, I just **believe** what he said.”

Respondent 2: “Generally speaking, I have bought all kinds of products from his livestreams, **everything** was fairly good.”

Respondent 3: “The first thing comes to my mind is that the products he sells are definitely **authentic**.”

Respondent 5: “I **trust** him up to 80%.”

Respondent 7: “I feel that when he says this product is very good, I will **believe** that this product is really good, I just **trust** him quite a lot.”

Respondent 8: “I **believe** him quite much. I think at least the products he sells are **authentic**.”

Contrary to the author's expectations, only Respondents 1 and 9 directly linked the parasocial relationship to their impulsive buying behaviour.

Respondent 1: “I don't have to compare whether this product is better than other ones, I just **believe** him and buy.”

Respondent 9: “**Every time** I watch his livestream, I would end up buying something. I just trust his recommendations.”

It is worth noting that although parasocial relationship, on its own, might not have a significant impact on consumers' impulsive buying, it complements other characteristics and reinforces their effects on consumers' impulsive buying to a great extent.

#### **4.1.3 Characteristics of livestream shopping**

In contrast to the characteristics of the influencer, the characteristics of livestream shopping have more direct effects on consumers' impulsive buying behaviour. They lead directly to impulsive buying without necessitating the development of a parasocial relationship with the influencers. Key characteristics of livestream shopping include atmosphere, promotion, and involvement of other consumers.

#### 4.1.3.1 *Atmosphere*

The atmosphere of livestream shopping is determined by factors including limited stock and shopping time, as well as the presence of other consumers. In general, the atmosphere of livestream shopping is more intense than conventional online shopping. The presence of other consumers heightens the enthusiasm of the atmosphere, as it creates a sense of competition; if consumers do not place an order quickly, they may miss out on the products and feel as if they have lost to others. The limited time and quantity of the offer may encourage impulsive buying in some consumers but can also hinder the purchase intention of others. Respondent 1 expressed a positive reaction when a product sold out quickly.

Respondent 1: “There was **limited** quantity of 300,000, 500,000, and within two minutes, the item was already sold out. Such a large quantity can be sold in such a short time, people must **like** this product very much.”

However, Respondent 6 expressed a negative reaction towards the limited-time offers, a common practice in livestream shopping.

Respondent 6: “The influencer said that the product was on sale **for 5 minutes**, and then they would remove the product link. This made me feel **uncomfortable**.”

The atmosphere during livestream shopping is more enthusiastic than conventional online shopping, as it allows millions of consumers to watch and purchase simultaneously. The feeling of competition among consumers encourages their intention to purchase and increases the possibility of conducting impulsive buying behaviour. However, it is crucial to balance the sense of urgency and enthusiasm with an awareness of potential panic and discomfort that may arise from the competitive environment.

#### 4.1.3.2 *Promotion*

Promotion is a key characteristic of livestream shopping that has significant effects on consumers' impulsive buying. Livestream shopping promotions may involve an influencer's exclusive discounts during the livestream or can be determined by platform-wide campaigns on Taobao, such as Double 11, Black Friday, Chinese New Year sales, etc. To distinguish from regular online shop prices, livestream shopping often features additional incentives like coupons and extra benefits, such as free gifts, for consumers. Respondent 7 noted that the final prices during livestream shopping are usually lower than the prices at online shops."

Respondent 7: “Buying during livestream is much **cheaper** than buying from the shop.”

For respondents 2, 5, 6, 9 and 10, price is a determining factor that can lead to their impulsive buying behaviour.

Respondent 2: “The **price** was really low, it has never been so **cheap** before.”

Respondent 5: “The **price** was really low; I just don’t want to miss the huge discount, it doesn’t bother me even if the product is not that good.”

Respondent 6: “**Discount** is still an important factor for me. For example, if this product, first, it is not bad, and second, the discount today is very good, I will buy it.”

Respondent 9: “I would consider buying as long as the **price** is good.”

Respondent 10: “I will buy if the price is suitable for me.”

Respondent 5 is drawn to the coupons distributed during livestream shopping, allowing her to pay less.

Respondent 5: “They gave out some **coupons** which you can use now or in the future. So, I went and get some coupons first, no matter whether I buy something or not, I feel that I might have a potential desire to buy in the future. I just find the coupons very attractive.”

It is worth noting that influencers, in general, should possess the ability to negotiate prices with brand owners. Therefore, promotion is not solely a characteristic of livestream shopping, it also depends partially on influencers. According to the findings, an influencer’s exclusive price has positive effects on consumers’ impulsive buying. Respondents 2, 3 and 4 watched the specific influencer’s livestream because of the good price the influencer could secure for his audience during his own livestreams.

Respondent 2: “As one of the **top** influencers, he can get really good **discount**.”

Respondent 3: “He **negotiates** with the brand owners and tries to **lower** the price as much as possible.”

Respondent 4: “He is quite demanding during the whole process of communication with the brand, so the price he can get is basically the **lowest** among all the influencers.”

Respondents 1, 2, 7, 8 and 9 recalled that they felt an urge to purchase because the influencers offered a lot of free gifts.

Respondent 1: “He gave a lot of **free gifts**. The amount of the gifts was almost as much as a normal product.”

Respondent 2: “He gave a lot of small **samples** of the product I bought, and that was like almost **60% to 70% off**.”

Respondent 7: “He gave a lot of **samples** at that time, many bottles of the same product. I felt that it was a good deal.”

Respondent 8: “The samples he gave were all authentic, these **samples** added together was equal to the amount of one normal product, so I think it was really good price.”

Respondent 9: “He said that **free gifts** included a 7ml mini perfume and a mini lipstick (of the same brand), usually the brand doesn’t give that many free gifts when we buy from their official website. That is, I spend money on one lipstick but got two colors and a perfume, really good deal.”

However, Respondent 4 showed negative attitudes towards influencers who rely solely on low prices as the selling point for the products they promote.

Respondent 4: “They kept yelling how **cheap** it was. Definitely not buying this kind of purely **price-oriented** products.”

In summary, promotion tends to be a characteristic associated with influencers, especially when the influencer is popular and has great influence. Promotion is more effective in increasing consumers’ impulsive buying when the consumers know about the product, and it is bonded with parasocial relationship with the influencer due to their trust in the influencer’s good and strict selection of products. However, in cases where the price is significantly low, consumers may engage in impulsive buying behaviour without the direct influence of parasocial relationship.

#### 4.1.3.3 *Involvement of other consumers*

Livestream shopping allows consumers to leave comments and, simultaneously, to refer to other consumers’ comments on the product, creating a sense of shopping together with other consumers. The fact that many other consumers were purchasing at the same time positively influenced Respondent 1’s perception of the product.

Respondent 1: “In such a short period of time, so many products were sold, so I thought everyone must like it, it seemed **everyone really tried to get it**. Naturally I thought this product must be very **good**, and I wanted to buy it.”

Respondents 2 and 5 had positive feelings about the product when seeing consumers who had used the product leaving good comments about it, and the positive comments of other consumers made them feel an urge to buy.

Respondent 2: “Everyone was **speaking good of it**, I was intrigued.”

Respondent 5: “Some people who have bought the product before **commented** that the color was pretty versatile (in different occasions). Everyone in the livestream was cheering for it, and I kind of felt an urge to buy.”

The involvement of other consumers during livestream shopping provides the audience with feedback from individuals who have already purchased or tried the product. Consumers tend to perceive feedback from fellow consumers as more genuine and

convincing than what influencers communicate about the product. The findings indicate that consumers feel positive about the product if they see positive feedbacks from other consumers, and this is likely to lead to their impulsive buying. However, it is essential to note that influencers have limited control over the feedback provided by other consumers. To enhance the likelihood of positive feedback, it becomes crucial for the influencer to maintain a strict and high-quality selection of products.

#### 4.2 Summary of findings

Table 7 below provides a summary of the effects of the characteristics of influencer livestream shopping on consumers' buying intention, their contribution to the development of parasocial relationships, and whether they lead to consumers' impulsive buying behaviour.

**Table 7 Summary of the effects of the characteristics**

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Attribute</b>	<b>Buying intention</b>	<b>Parasocial relationship?</b>	<b>Impulsive buying?</b>
<b>Attractiveness</b>	Popularity	No impact	Yes	No
	Funny personality	No impact	Yes	No
<b>Hosting style</b>	Passionate style	Increase	No	Yes
	Peaceful style	Increase	Yes	No
	Pushy style	Decrease	No	No
<b>Expertise</b>	Product information	Increase	Yes	Yes
	Try on	Increase	Yes	Yes
	Product selection	No impact	Yes	No

	Reveal the shortcomings	No impact	Yes	No
<b>Interaction</b>	Response to consumers' comments	No impact	No	No
<b>Promotion</b>	Influencer exclusive discount	Increase	Yes	Yes
	Free gifts	Increase	No	Yes
<b>Atmosphere</b>	Enthusiasm	Increase	N/A	Yes
	Limited offer	Increase	N/A	Yes
<b>Involvement of other consumers</b>	Comments on product	Increase	N/A	Yes

The findings indicate that certain characteristics of the influencer can have direct effects on impulsive buying without the need for the development of a parasocial relationship. Attractiveness, while not perceived by the consumers to have an impact on their buying intention, may play a role in fostering the development of parasocial relationship and is a reason for watching the specific influencer's livestream in the first place. Hosting style has the potential to enhance buying intention and even lead to impulsive buying, however, this effect diminishes if it becomes overly pushy, ultimately decreasing buying intention. It is worth noting that only peaceful hosting style is correlated with the development of parasocial relationship. Expertise contributes to the development of parasocial relationship, with product information and try-on effect positively influencing buying intention and potentially leading to impulsive buying. However, product selection and revealing product shortcomings solely affect parasocial relationship. Interaction, in contrast, has minimal influence on buying intention and is not associated with parasocial relationships. Promotion generally heightens customers' buying

intention and may lead to impulsive buying. Notably, only an influencer's inclusive discount contributes to the development of parasocial relationship.

The characteristics of livestream shopping, including the atmosphere and the involvement of other consumers, have positive effects on increasing consumers' buying intention, and may lead to impulsive buying directly, independent of the influence of parasocial relationships.

## 5 DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The objective of this research is to find out what characteristics of influencer livestream shopping encourage impulsive buying, specifically within the context of shopping for cosmetics, from a consumer's perspective. This concluding chapter encompasses a thorough examination of the primary findings and draws conclusions from the study. The author initiates the discussion by addressing the research questions, followed by an exploration of managerial implications. To provide a comprehensive view, the chapter concludes by addressing the study's limitations and presenting recommendations for future research.

### 5.1 Key findings

With the findings the author has summarized in Table 7, it is possible to address the research questions that the author proposed earlier.

#### **RQ1: What characteristics of influencer livestream shopping do consumers perceive affect their purchase intention?**

Consumers' purchase intention is considered to have increased when they showed positive attitudes towards the characteristics. It is important to differentiate purchase intention from purchase behaviour, as purchase intention does not necessarily lead to consumers' final purchase. This research question primarily identifies consumers' attitudes and the changes in their purchase intention during influencer livestream shopping.

It is worth emphasizing that, throughout the research, the characteristics of influencer livestream shopping are classified into two dimensions: the characteristics of the influencer and the characteristics of livestream shopping.

In terms of the characteristics of the influencer, consumers perceive that influencer's hosting style, expertise and promotion affect their purchase intention. The influencer's hosting style emerged as an unexpected finding during the interviews, diverging from the conventional S-O-R model. This novel insight highlights the subtle effects of different hosting styles – while a passionate approach may boost purchase intention for some, it can simultaneously lead others to feel pressured, resulting in a loss of purchase intention.

The expertise of the influencer stands out as a crucial characteristic capable of positively influencing consumers' purchase intention, aligning with the predictions made in the

modified S-O-R model for this research. The influencer's proficiency in explaining product details and usage, along with showcasing the visual effects after applying the product, serves to heighten consumers' purchase intention, in accordance with the findings of Sokolova and Kefi (2020) and Chen et al. (2017). This finding reinforces the significance of an influencer's expertise in shaping consumer's buying intention, thereby substantiating the relevance of the theoretical framework in anticipating such impacts.

Somewhat surprisingly, the respondents did not perceive that the influencer's attractiveness would have impact on consumers' purchase intention. However, the findings reveal that the attractiveness of the influencer is a primary reason for consumers choosing to watch their livestream, and this aligns with the previous finding that the physical attractiveness of an influencer contributes to attracting followers and gaining popularity (Xu et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2018). Popular influencers generally have good physical appearance; therefore, consumers may not perceive their purchase intention to be affected by an influencer's attractiveness. On the other hand, consumers automatically filter attractive influencers to watch in the first place.

Contrary to predictions in the theoretical framework, influencer's interaction does not affect consumers' purchase intention, which was suggested by Kang et al. (2021). There is a lack of perceived importance in interaction, especially when the influencer is popular, as it becomes challenging to receive feedback among numerous audience comments. Promotion during livestream shopping emerges as the most effective characteristic in increasing consumers' purchase intention. Previous research categorizes promotion as a characteristic of livestream shopping (Hosseini, 2020; Jin et al., 2021; Xu et al., 2020; Wongkitrungrueng et al., 2020), which formed the basis of the theoretical framework. However, the findings indicate that promotion is more akin to a characteristic of the influencer, particularly for popular influencers who possess the ability to negotiate prices with brand owners. The influencer's exclusive pricing and the practice of offering free gifts significantly elevate consumers' purchase intention.

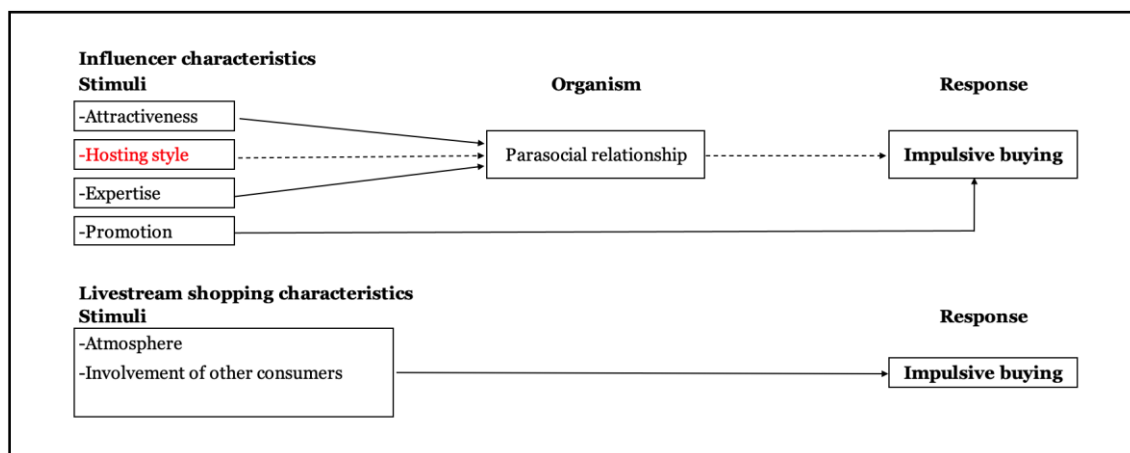
Regarding the characteristics of livestream shopping, both the atmosphere and the involvement of other consumers significantly influence consumers' purchase intention. The atmosphere during livestream shopping is notably more intense than conventional online shopping, attributed to limited offers and a large audience presence, and this heightened enthusiasm positively impacts consumers' purchase intention, aligning with finding from Xu et al. (2020) and Wongkitrungrueng et al. (2020). The involvement of other consumers including other consumers' leaving comments and feedbacks on the

products during livestream shopping. Consumers' purchase intention increases significantly when exposed to positive comments on products from fellow consumers, as confirmed by Cai and Wohn (2019).

**RQ2: How do the characteristics of influencer livestream shopping impact consumers' impulsive buying according to consumers?**

To answer this research question, the paths of the characteristics of the influencer and the characteristics of livestream shopping to consumers' impulsive buying are presented using the S-O-R model modified according to the findings. This research question seeks to uncover the complete process of the effects of influencer livestream shopping on consumers' impulsive buying.

In Figure 5 presented below, the interaction, initially considered as a characteristic of the influencer in the theoretical framework for this research, was removed as it was not perceived as important by the respondents. Instead, influencer's hosting style is added and highlighted in red since the respondents described it as efficient in increasing their purchase intention and prompting an urge to purchase.



**Figure 5 S-O-R model modified according to the findings**

The characteristics of the influencer, including attractiveness, hosting style, and expertise, are perceived as critical in influencing consumers' purchase intention. Consumers hold positive attitudes towards the influencer due to these characteristics. When consumers regularly engage in influencer livestream shopping, they are likely to develop parasocial relationship with the influencer in their minds. This connection is often reflected in their trust in the influencer. According to the findings, promotion, which is more of an influencer characteristic and includes influencer's exclusive discount

and free gifts, can directly encourage consumers' impulsive buying without developing parasocial relationship.

Based on the interviews, consumers choose to follow the influencers when: 1) the influencer is popular, signifying reliability and trustworthiness, 2) the influencer is funny and entertaining, 3) the influencer's hosting style makes them comfortable to watch, 4) the influencer is professional when explaining and demonstrating the product, and 5) the influencer usually provides good offers. Consumers tend to develop parasocial relationship when they hold positive attitudes towards one or more of these influencers' characteristics. Parasocial relationship as organism within consumers' minds reinforces the effects of the characteristics of influencer and lead to their impulsive buying behaviour. The promotion during livestream can take different forms; sometimes it can be the influencer's exclusive discount, and sometimes it can be extra free gifts. Either way, it creates a feeling for the consumers that the offer is cheaper than usual. As presented in Figure 5, promotion has been moved under the characteristic of the influencer, as influencers have the possibility to negotiate the price and offer exclusive discounts. The more popular the influencer is, the lower the price the influencer is likely to have. Promotion is the most efficient means to encourage consumers' impulsive buying behaviour; if the price is low enough, consumers will buy without considering much about the consequences. Hence, promotion can directly encourage consumers' impulsive buying without developing parasocial relationship.

The characteristics of livestream shopping, on the other hand, can lead to consumers' impulsive buying directly without passing the organism of parasocial relationship at all. The enthusiastic atmosphere caused by limited offers among a large number of audiences stimulates consumers' impulsive buying. Consumers feel the urge to purchase when they see other consumers as competitors; if they do not make the purchase in time, they will lose to the other consumers. The involvement of other consumers, such as leaving positive comments about the product during livestream shopping also encourages consumers' impulsive buying to a great extent.

## **5.2 Managerial implications**

The findings of the research are highly relevant to cosmetic companies aiming to enter Chinese e-commerce and boost their online sales. Collaborating with influencers during livestream shopping has become a common online marketing practice for many international cosmetics brands, such as Estée Lauder, Shiseido, Lancôme, Kiehl's, and

so on. Given the low return rate of cosmetics, encouraging consumers' impulsive buying is considered a useful technique to boost sales without sacrificing benefits due to later returns.

According to the findings, the author has confirmed that the characteristics of livestream shopping can lead directly to consumers' impulsive buying. However, the characteristics of the influencer can lead either to the development of parasocial relationship or directly to consumers' impulsive buying. The characteristics of the influencer should be taken more into consideration by the brand companies as they are controllable. The brand companies should conduct a thorough background check on the influencer to ensure that the influencer does not have any scandal related to selling counterfeit or poor-quality products. Influencer's attractiveness is closely linked to influencer's reputation, serving as a sign of reliability and trustworthiness. The brand companies should also choose influencers with a more passionate hosting style, as the findings indicate that passionate hosting style is more efficient than peaceful hosting style in encouraging impulsive buying. It is important for the brand companies to remind the influencers to have control over their passion during livestream shopping to avoid making consumers feel pushed. Instead of pressuring consumers, influencers should sound reasonable and use factual information, such as historical price levels, to convince consumers. For cosmetic companies, it is crucial to choose the influencers who are experts in this field. Moreover, the influencer should have tested the product before promoting to consumers. When influencers have tried the products, they are more likely to provide subjective comments and practical recommendations on product usage, which can be more convincing for consumers to engage in impulsive buying behaviour. Even if these actions do not lead to consumers' final purchases, they contribute to developing parasocial relationship within consumers' minds.

Last but not least, it's crucial to address certain sensitive subjects that must be avoided during influencer livestreams in China. There have been instances where influencers were detained or even banned from the platform, resulting in reputational damage to the brand companies. Therefore, influencers should familiarize themselves with the red lines defined by local government to maintain a positive and compliant online presence especially when it comes to certain history event and political issues.

### **5.3 Limitations and recommendations for future research**

There are some limitations of the study that are worth discussing. First of all, the phenomenon of influencer livestream shopping is fairly new, and there is very limited amount of research that focus on the impulsive buying during influencer livestream shopping. Therefore, the characteristics of the influencers are summarized based mainly on the literature related to influencer marketing. As a result, the characteristics summarized might not be the most up to date.

Second, even though the author used snowball sampling strategy, the respondents chosen in the end have some similarities, such as similar age and location. This homogeneity raises a potential concern about the representativeness of the findings since consumers in Shanghai may hold different opinions compared to those in other parts of China. It is crucial to note the substantial regional wealth disparity in China, with Shanghai being one of the wealthiest cities. People in wealthier regions may have higher incomes, engage more in online shopping, and possibly have larger budgets for hedonic shopping. Consequently, their priorities and the influencer characteristics they value may differ from those in less wealthy areas. This regional variation adds a layer of complexity to the interpretation of the study's findings.

Third, the author focused more on finding the characteristics of influencer that can encourage consumers' impulsive buying and did not delve deep enough into consumers' parasocial relationship with the influencer.

Fourth, the author conducted interviews in March 2022 and the research is finalized in November 2023. There could have been some development in livestream shopping given the rapid evolution of e-commerce in China.

Now that the author has identified what characteristics of influencer livestream shopping encourage consumers' impulsive buying, the author could conduct quantitative for future research. Respondents could be randomly selected to ensure a broader range of ages and locations. With a larger sample size, the results of the research would be more representative.

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## APPENDIX 1      CONSENT FORM

# CONSENT FORM

## Consent form for interviews

The data will be analyzed for the Master's thesis by Xiaoting Chen-Leino, master student at Hanken School of Economics, major in Marketing.

(Check the box if you agree)

- |  |  |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. I understand what the study is about, and I have had the opportunity to ask questions.  | <input type="checkbox"/>   |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| 2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the interview at any time without any reasons.                               | <input type="checkbox"/>   |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| 3. I agree to take part in this study.   | <input type="checkbox"/>   |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| 4. I agree that my interview will be recorded.   | <table border="0"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Yes</td> <td style="text-align: center;">NO</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table> | Yes                      | NO                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Yes  | NO   |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>   |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| 5. I agree that the interview responses I have provided can be used as anonymized statements in the publication (translated by the interviewer into English) | <table border="0"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>   |                          |                          |                          |                          |

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Respondent's name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 2 EXAMPLE OF CATEGORIZATION

Category	Attitude	Respondent	Quote
Attachment to influencer	Positive	Respondent 3	你就会慢慢的建立一个粘合度以后, 就只会遵守它的直播间, 然后之后他
Enthusiasm	Positive	Respondent 1	他的直播特点感觉就是一直很兴奋, 很有激情, 会呃就是让你以后要动动
Enthusiasm	Positive	Respondent 2	嗓声音比较大, 然后价格很便宜, 就是很让人有这种冲动
Enthusiasm	Neutral	Respondent 6	他们俩风格不太一样, 更注重分析一点
Enthusiasm	Positive	Respondent 7	他的直播特点, 就是可能嗓门比较大
Enthusiasm	Positive	Respondent 8	他会带动你就是把那个气氛调动得很, 就是你一看他就想买这东西
Enthusiasm	Positive	Respondent 9	感觉会比较激动, 就是他那个情绪带到那个氛围, 然后大家也会就是不
Enthusiasm	Positive	Respondent 10	他就是很夸张的, 他说话我感觉就是很带动气氛
Enthusiasm	Positive	Respondent 5	直播间里人的轰动, 就是大家都在那能叫好。那种氛围, 然后就可能就会
Exclusive discount	Positive	Respondent 6	比较独家的那种折扣
Feeling of intimacy	Positive	Respondent 3	让你感觉他是站在你的你的就是角度在介绍产品
Feeling of intimacy	Positive	Respondent 4	就是他的直播间给你感觉会更像一个朋友聊天一样, 会跟你分享很多
Feeling of intimacy	Positive	Respondent 5	首先他就是非常的有那种亲和力, 就感觉他介绍的商品就是站在我们的

Popularity	Neutral	Respondent 1	不是那种非常有名的明星
Popularity	Positive	Respondent 1	一些这种社交网络上比较稍微有一点名气的这种
Popularity	Positive	Respondent 2	拥有一定粉丝量的人, 就是比较知名的明星博主, 大于百万级别的都可以
Popularity	Positive	Respondent 4	网红直播就是——一些有一些粉丝基础的人
Popularity	Positive	Respondent 5	他自己比较有名气, 就是算是比较有流量的, 然后就可能他一上播那可能
Popularity	Negative	Respondent 6	比较小的一些博主, 就是其实是我是不太信任的
Popularity	Positive	Respondent 7	有一定的粉丝量, 好多也是粉丝购买的
Popularity	Positive	Respondent 8	一定的知名度, 一般也会看这种就是他的信誉比较好
Popularity	Positive	Respondent 9	名人, 然后要有很多人来看他的直播
Price	Positive	Respondent 3	跟品牌方的谈判, 然后就是把它压价格
Price	Positive	Respondent 4	所以在整个跟品牌沟通的过程中也算比较强势, 所以它能到手的价格基本
Price	Positive	Respondent 1	然后它相对来说它的选品还有它的价格都是比较优势的,