

## The Influence of Instagram Influencers' Communication Style on Consumer Trust and Emotional Engagement in Live Streaming Shopping

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### ABSTRACT

The rapid development of social media has given rise to new marketing strategies, one of which is live streaming shopping through platforms such as TikTok Shop. Digital influencers, especially Instagram influencers, play a key role in shaping consumer perceptions and purchasing decisions, particularly for high-involvement products such as perfume. This study aims to analyze the influence of Instagram influencer communication styles (informative, entertaining, interactive) on consumer trust and emotional engagement, and to assess the mediating role of trust and emotional engagement on sharing intention. This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method involving 342 TikTok users who have watched perfume live streaming sessions. The data analysis technique used is Structural Equation Modeling – Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with SmartPLS 4.0 software. The results show that entertaining and informative communication styles have a significant influence on trust and emotional engagement, while the interactive style has a significant influence on emotional engagement. Trust and emotional engagement are proven to mediate the relationship between communication styles and consumer behavioral intentions. This research strengthens the relevance of the SOR (Stimulus–Organism–Response) Model in the context of social commerce and provides practical contributions for brands and influencers in choosing the right communication approach based on audience segments and product characteristics.

**KEYWORDS** Instagram Influencer, Communication Style, Trust, Emotional Engagement, Sharing Intention



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### INTRODUCTION

In the ever-evolving landscape of digital marketing, influencers, particularly Instagram celebrities, have emerged as one of the most effective tools in shaping consumer behavior (Hassan Bana & Shahreen, 2024). This phenomenon is fueled by the growing popularity of social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube, which not only function as communication channels but also as direct sales mediums through features like live streaming shopping. Live streaming shopping has revolutionized the e-commerce industry, especially in Asia, which has become a hub for the adoption of live interaction-based digital marketing technology.

In China, platforms such as Taobao Live have recorded sales of over 13 billion Yuan, or the equivalent of 28 trillion Rupiah in 2019 (Xu et al., 2020), while in Southeast Asia, TikTok has become a dominant player that capitalizes on the growth of internet penetration and social media usage. According to Seasia.co, the total number of TikTok users in Southeast Asia as of April 2024 reached 327 million users. The data only covers Vietnam, Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia (Sukoco, 2024). A study by Hassan Bana & Shahreen (2024) stated that 42.2% of consumers make purchases based on influencer recommendations, indicating a high level of trust in these figures in purchasing decisions. A successful example of influencer collaborations further illustrates this potential.

In Indonesia, local brand Jiniso successfully recorded sales of up to IDR 600 million in a single TikTok live session with a celebrity (Maulia, 2022). This phenomenon reinforces the

importance of understanding the most effective communication styles for influencers in influencing consumer behavior, especially for products that require high engagement.

The Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) Model, introduced by Mehrabian and Russell (1974), is a theoretical framework often used to understand consumer behavior. This model explains how external stimuli (stimulus) influence an individual's internal response (organism) and ultimately result in a specific action or response (response). The components of the SOR Model consist of: (1) Stimulus (S): Stimulus refers to external stimuli that influence an individual. In a marketing context, stimulus can be a communication element such as an influencer's communication style (informative, entertaining, and interactive). This stimulus aims to attract consumers' attention and influence their perception of a product or service. Organism (O): Organism refers to the internal psychological or emotional processes that occur within an individual in response to stimulus. These processes include perception, evaluation, and emotion that influence consumer decisions. In this study, organism includes trust and emotional engagement, which play an important role in purchasing decisions for high-involvement products. Response (R): Response is the result of an individual's internal processes, which can include specific behaviors such as purchase intention and sharing intention.

In this context, response reflects the effectiveness of the influencer's communication style in driving consumer action. This study considers perfume as a high-involvement product because perfume is a complex sensory product whose aroma will vary from person to person (Raza et al., 2013). The sale of perfume through live streaming shopping also strengthens the view that perfume is included in the high-involvement product category. This is supported by a study conducted by de Paula et al. (2020), which states that because the description of the aroma and other attributes of the perfume depends solely on the description of the live streaming host, this can increase the level of consumer engagement before purchasing the product. Therefore, this study focuses on how influencers communicate in the context of social media, specifically live streaming shopping for perfume as a high-involvement product, because, as stated in previous studies, the availability of information plays a crucial role for products that fall into the high-involvement category.

In the context of live streaming shopping, communication styles have three main dimensions: informative, entertaining, and interactive. Informative communication provides comprehensive product details, thereby reducing consumer risk and increasing engagement (Luo et al., 2024). Entertaining communication through humor and entertainment elements creates a pleasant shopping experience, distinguishing live streaming shopping from conventional online shopping and increasing consumer satisfaction (Wu et al., 2024). Meanwhile, interactive communication allows consumers to interact directly with the host, making it easier to find products that suit their needs and to assess the product and the seller's credibility through specific information (Gu et al., 2023). According to Batara & Sugiarto (2024), if the information conveyed by the seller—in the context of this study, the celebrity who holds the live streaming shopping session—is clear enough and meets consumer expectations, this can not only increase consumer purchase intentions but also provide an entertainment aspect to consumers who are watching and shopping during the live streaming session.

Trust in the context of live streaming shopping is more complex than in conventional online shopping. A study by Sun et al. (2019) demonstrated the crucial role of trust, where the level of trust given to celebrities hosting live streaming shopping sessions is directly proportional to increased consumer purchase intentions. In other words, this study shows that trust is a crucial point worthy of research. According to Luo et al. (2024), emotional engagement serves as an indicator that describes the extent to which consumers are emotionally influenced in their interactions with the relevant celebrity. Emotional engagement is created because the interaction occurs in real time; thus, this condition makes consumers feel connected to each other (Shen et al., 2022). Sharing intention will be the variable that represents response in Stimulus–Organism–Response theory. Sharing intention is a term that measures the willingness of consumers to share their experience in live streaming shopping with their friends or relatives (Al-Kurdi et al., 2020).

### **Hypothesis Development**

The research method used in the problem experiment includes analytical methods and contains the type of method, time, place, and research materials and tools. Picture captions are placed as part of the picture title (figure caption), not part of the picture itself. The methods used in completing the research are listed in this section.

An entertaining communication style creates an emotional connection between the celebrity and their audience (Ho et al., 2022). When viewers feel happy or entertained, they subconsciously associate that positive experience with the celebrity. This builds a personal connection that makes consumers more likely to trust the celebrity as a reliable source of information. The psychological basis for this is as follows: when someone feels emotionally comfortable with the messenger, they are more likely to believe what is said (Chang et al., 2019).

H1: The entertaining communication style has a positive influence on consumer trust.

Gefen et al. (2003) state that trust is a form of socially acceptable behavior of others without any intention of opportunistic actions. Therefore, in the context of live streaming shopping, providing essential information, or information requested by consumers, is crucial, such as conducting two-way communication, answering audience questions, responding to comments, or providing product demonstrations. This style is more effective in building a sense of consumer participation and trust, especially in the long term (Sun et al., 2019).

H2: Informative communication style has a positive influence on consumer trust.

The interactive communication style of Instagram celebrities positively influences consumer trust because it creates a stronger sense of engagement and authenticity. According to Clement Addo et al. (2021), when Instagram celebrities communicate directly with their audiences through Q&A sessions or product demonstrations, consumers feel more engaged and heard, strengthening their emotional connection. This active engagement fosters the perception that Instagram celebrities genuinely care about consumers' needs, increasing their overall trust. Furthermore, interactivity is thought to enhance perceptions of Instagram celebrities' authenticity because two-way communication demonstrates more authentic, spontaneous responses. Research by Zhang et al. (2020) suggests that interactive communication reduces consumer resistance to commercial promotions because consumers feel they have control and direct access to verify product claims. Consumers who trust Instagram celebrities are more likely to follow their recommendations, demonstrating the importance of an interactive

communication style in creating a trusting relationship between Instagram celebrities and their audiences.

H3: Interactive communication style has a positive influence on consumer trust.

An entertaining communication style influences emotional engagement because the entertainment element creates a fun and engaging experience for consumers during live streaming sessions. A study by Chen & Lin (2018) shows that consumers tend to be more emotionally engaged when the content delivered is entertaining, for example through humor, storytelling, or an energetic communication style. Entertainment helps create a relaxed atmosphere that strengthens the emotional connection between consumers and the celebrity. When viewers feel happy, they are more likely to connect deeply with the content, strengthening their emotional involvement with the promoted product. Furthermore, entertainment creates positive associations with the live streaming session, encouraging consumers to feel emotionally connected. Supporting this, Elsholiha et al. (2023) found that enjoyable experiences often strengthen consumers' feelings of satisfaction, making them more likely to engage emotionally. For example, celebrities who use a humorous style or engaging narrative not only retain viewers' attention but also increase their emotional engagement because they feel more valued and involved in the experience.

H4: Entertaining communication style has a positive influence on consumer emotional engagement.

Budhaye & Oktavia (2023) stated that informativeness refers to consumers' perceptions of receiving information displayed on a particular e-commerce platform, in this context, live streaming shopping. In relation to this study, emotional engagement can be created because consumers feel confident and positive about the experience. According to Talafubieke et al. (2021), positive feelings about something are a key factor in emotional engagement.

H5: Informative communication style has a positive influence on emotional engagement.

Interactive style has a positive influence on emotional engagement because interactivity creates a direct connection between the celebrity and consumers. In studies by Zhong et al. (2022), it was found that two-way communication increases consumers' feelings of involvement, as viewers feel personally involved in the conversation and decision-making process during live streaming sessions. When celebrities answer questions or respond to consumer comments directly, consumers feel that their needs are valued, which strengthens their emotional engagement with the session. Interactivity also creates a sense of active participation, making consumers feel part of the live streaming experience. Ye et al. (2022) stated that when consumers feel involved in the communication process, they develop a stronger emotional connection with the celebrity, thereby increasing their connection to the promoted content. For example, when a celebrity asks viewers for their opinion on a product color or a special demonstration, viewers feel they are contributing to the process, strengthening emotional engagement.

H6: Interactive communication style has a positive influence on consumer emotional engagement.

When consumers feel emotionally connected to a celebrity or the content they display, they are more likely to share that positive experience with others as a form of recommendation (Xu et al., 2020). A study by Sun et al. (2021) found that consumers who feel emotionally engaged are more likely to share information about a product or shopping experience,

especially if the experience provides entertainment value or a personal connection. Zheng et al. (2022) stated that consumers who enjoy live streaming sessions often share links, comments, or reviews on social media to involve their friends in similar experiences. This sharing process not only strengthens their relationship with celebrities but also increases their social connectedness with their wider social network. Therefore, emotional engagement is a crucial driver in increasing consumers' sharing intention.

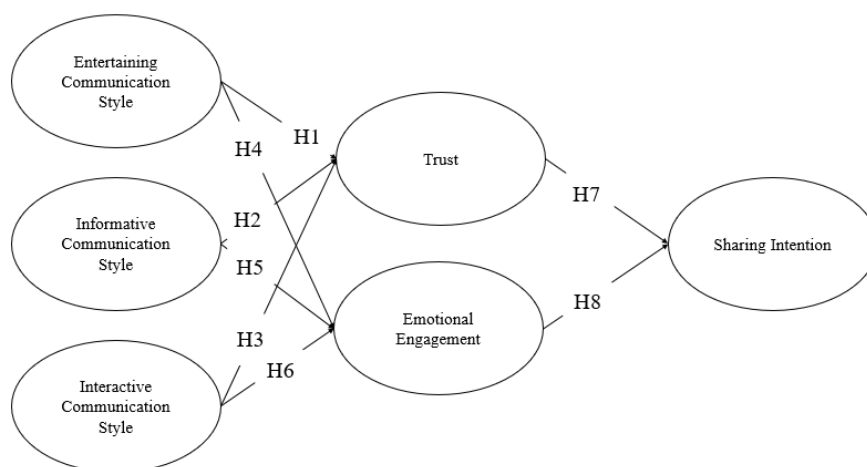
H7: Emotional engagement has a positive influence on sharing intention.

A study by Chandruangphen et al. (2022) showed that trust strengthens consumers' intention to share their shopping experiences because they feel confident that the information they share is accurate and useful to others. Trust also reduces the fear of making false recommendations, thus increasing the tendency to share experiences voluntarily. Furthermore, trust creates a stronger sense of social connection between consumers and celebrities, which encourages consumers to support the celebrity by sharing content or recommending live streaming sessions to friends and family. Thus, trust not only builds deeper relationships between consumers and celebrities but also becomes a crucial factor in encouraging sharing intentions within the live streaming shopping community.

H8: Trust has a positive influence on sharing intention.

Based on the hypothesis developed, the following framework is the theoretical framework used in this study;

**Figure 1.** Theoretical framework



## METHOD

This study used a quantitative method with a convenience sampling technique on 342 respondents aged  $\geq 18$  years, residing in Greater Jakarta (Jabodetabek), actively watching TikTok or YouTube, and having experience purchasing perfume through live streaming shopping. The research instrument used a questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), based on 21 indicators adopted from previous research. The sample size met the requirements of Hair et al. (2021) which required 5–10 times the number of indicators, thus achieving a minimum of 210 samples. Hypothesis testing was conducted using SEM based on Smart PLS 4.0, using a t-value (c.r.)  $\geq 1.96$  or a probability value  $\leq 0.05$  as the basis for accepting the research hypothesis

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study involved 342 respondents selected from a total of 400 participants through an online questionnaire with the main criteria of having watched and purchased perfume through a live streaming shopping service. Most respondents were in the 18–33 years old range (71%), with a predominance of women (66.96%) and an educational background of undergraduate (38.60%) and high school/equivalent (32.75%). The highest frequency of perfume purchases in the last 6 months was in the 2–3 times category (41.52%), while the most dominant duration of watching live streaming was 1–2 hours (42.7%). In terms of spending, respondents tended to allocate IDR 100,000–IDR 200,000 per transaction (37.13%). These findings indicate that live streaming shopping services, particularly in the perfume category, are most popular among young people with middle to high education with moderate purchasing power and have consumption patterns that indicate active involvement in live streaming-based shopping activities.

### A. Reliability & Validity Testing

Reliability in this study was assessed using Composite Reliability, which measures the proportion of true score variance relative to total variance. A threshold of  $\geq 0.7$  is generally considered acceptable (Hair et al., 2021), though  $\geq 0.6$  is permissible in exploratory research (Ghozali & Latan, 2015). Validity was examined through Convergent Validity, using Average Variance Extracted (AVE) as an indicator, where  $AVE \geq 0.5$  signifies a strong relationship between variables (Carlson & Herdman, 2010). Additionally, Discriminant Validity was tested with the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT), with values below 0.9 indicating satisfactory validity (Nikolopoulou, 2022).

**Table 1.** Reliability and Validity Test Result

Variabel	Measurement Item	Outer Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Entertaining	ENT1	<b>0.810</b>	<b>0.738</b>	<b>0.835</b>	<b>0.560</b>
	ENT2	<b>0.770</b>			
	ENT3	<b>0.723</b>			
	ENT4	<b>0.684</b>			
Informative	INF1	<b>0.815</b>	<b>0.733</b>	<b>0.848</b>	<b>0.650</b>
	INF2	<b>0.776</b>			
	INF3	<b>0.827</b>			
Interactive	INT1	<b>0.680</b>	<b>0.725</b>	<b>0.829</b>	<b>0.549</b>
	INT2	<b>0.744</b>			
	INT3	<b>0.740</b>			
	INT4	<b>0.797</b>			
Trust	TR1	<b>0.840</b>	<b>0.738</b>	<b>0.852</b>	<b>0.657</b>
	TR2	<b>0.778</b>			
	TR3	<b>0.813</b>			
Emotional Engagement	EE1	<b>0.799</b>	<b>0.733</b>	<b>0.849</b>	<b>0.652</b>
	EE2	<b>0.781</b>			
	EE3	<b>0.840</b>			
Sharing Intention	SI1	<b>0.827</b>	<b>0.781</b>	<b>0.857</b>	<b>0.602</b>
	SI2	<b>0.805</b>			
	SI3	<b>0.792</b>			
	SI4	<b>0.671</b>			

Of the 21 indicators tested, almost all had outer loading values above 0.7, except for ENT4, which had a value of 0.684, INT1, which had a value of 0.680, PI3, which had a value of 0.696, and SI4, which had a value of 0.671. Despite having values below 0.7, these indicators were still considered valid because they still had values above 0.5, which is the minimum criterion, as explained in the previous section. The strength of the validity of the indicators tested in this study was also strengthened by the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values, which were above 0.5, indicating that all indicators were deemed valid and usable. The lowest AVE value was for the Interactive variable, with a value of 0.547, and the highest AVE value was for the Credibility variable, with a value of 0.839.

**Table 2.** Discriminant Validity Test

	<b>Emotional Engagement</b>	<b>Entertaining</b>	<b>Informative</b>	<b>Interactive</b>	<b>Sharing Intention</b>	<b>Trust</b>
<b>Emotional Engagement</b>						
<b>Entertaining</b>	<b>0.821</b>					
<b>Informative</b>	<b>0.635</b>	<b>0.599</b>				
<b>Interactive</b>	<b>0.780</b>	<b>0.769</b>	<b>0.706</b>			
<b>Sharing Intention</b>	<b>0.894</b>	<b>0.786</b>	<b>0.654</b>	<b>0.758</b>		
<b>Trust</b>	<b>0.887</b>	<b>0.762</b>	<b>0.570</b>	<b>0.731</b>	<b>0.865</b>	

The table above shows the results of the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio obtained in this study. Based on the results in the table above, all HTMT values for each variable in this study were below 0.9. Therefore, it can be concluded that discriminant validity has a good value (Hair et al., 2014).

**Table 3.** Reliability Test

	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Composite Reliability</b>
<b>Emotional Engagement</b>	0.733	0.849
<b>Entertaining</b>	0.738	0.835
<b>Informative</b>	0.733	0.848
<b>Interactive</b>	0.725	0.829
<b>Sharing Intention</b>	0.781	0.857
<b>Trust</b>	0.738	0.852

All variables in this study have exceeded composite reliability minimum values of 0.6, indicating that the variables and their indicators in this study can be declared reliable. The lowest composite reliability value is for the Interactive and Sharing Intention variables with a value of 0.829, and the highest composite reliability value is for the Sharing Intention variable with a value of 0.857. Meanwhile, the lowest Cronbach's alpha value is for the Interactive variable with a value of 0.725, and the variable with the highest Cronbach's alpha value is Sharing Intention with a value of 0.781.

## B. Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis testing methods used in this research were the R-Square test and the p-value test. Table 4 below showed that there is only 1 hypothesis rejected with the p-value result above 0.05, which is H2. As for the R-square test, Trust (0.404), Emotional Engagement (0.466) and Sharing Intention (0.562) are classified as moderate.

**Table 4.** Path coefficient

	Hypothesis Path	Path Coefficient	Standar Deviation	T Statistic	P Values	Kesimpulan
<b>H1</b>	Entertaining -> Trust	0.365	0.067	5.490	<b>0.000</b>	<i>Supported</i>
<b>H2</b>	Informative -> Trust	0.118	0.063	1.894	<b>0.059</b>	<i>Not Supported</i>
<b>H3</b>	Interactive -> Trust	0.270	0.068	3.963	<b>0.000</b>	<i>Supported</i>
<b>H4</b>	Entertaining -> Emotional Engagement	0.389	0.064	6.037	<b>0.000</b>	<i>Supported</i>
<b>H5</b>	Informative -> Emotional Engagement	0.160	0.059	2.685	<b>0.007</b>	<i>Supported</i>
<b>H6</b>	Interactive -> Emotional Engagement	0.268	0.069	3.897	<b>0.000</b>	<i>Supported</i>
<b>H7</b>	Trust -> Sharing Intention	0.383	0.068	5.600	<b>0.000</b>	<i>Supported</i>
<b>H8</b>	Emotional Engagement -> Sharing Intention	0.441	0.064	6.852	<b>0.000</b>	<i>Supported</i>

The results of the hypothesis test show that the entertaining communication style of celebrity Instagram has a positive and significant effect on trust ( $p=0.000$ ;  $\beta=0.365$ ) and emotional engagement ( $p=0.000$ ;  $\beta=0.389$ ), although the strength of the relationship is relatively small. In contrast, the informative style does not have a significant effect on trust ( $p=0.059$ ;  $\beta=0.118$ ) but has a significant effect on emotional engagement ( $p=0.007$ ;  $\beta=0.160$ ). The interactive style of delivery is proven to increase trust ( $p=0.000$ ;  $\beta=0.270$ ) and emotional engagement ( $p=0.000$ ;  $\beta=0.268$ ), although the relationship is also relatively small. The impact of consumer trust on behavior is also significant: trust increases sharing intention ( $p=0.000$ ;  $\beta=0.383$ ). Meanwhile, emotional engagement influencing sharing intention ( $p=0.000$ ;  $\beta=0.441$ ).

In live streaming shopping sessions, the products displayed by celebrities in the live streaming shopping session can only be seen virtually by consumers. However, this can be overcome by conveying information by the celebrity. Gu et al. (2023), stated that the level of real-time interaction that occurs between consumers and celebrities who hold live streaming shopping sessions is high enough so that consumers can find the products they want and need easily.

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, it can be concluded that the communication style used by celebrities in live streaming shopping sessions has a significant influence on consumer trust and emotional engagement. However, the differences in the levels of significance produced by this study are not uniform and have found that an informative delivery style has no significant influence on consumer trust. Although in theory, an informative delivery style can increase trust through the delivery of actual and real-time information (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Celebrities' informative delivery style has little impact on high-involvement products because consumers tend to prioritize trust in the product itself,

independent research, and in-depth assessment when choosing expensive and complex products, rather than just the celebrity's appearance or style. Celebrities are more effective in building brand awareness and creating a positive brand image, but for high-involvement products, the credibility and authority of the product itself are the main determinants of consumer trust, rather than just information from the celebrity.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the hypothesis testing in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that the findings of this study are important for broadening our understanding of celebrity communication styles in the context of live streaming shopping sessions selling high-involvement products. In this study, the high-involvement product used as an example is perfume. Based on the data analyzed in Chapter IV, an entertaining delivery style has been shown to influence consumer trust and emotional engagement. This indicates that when celebrities deliver messages in an entertaining manner, they build not only trust but also an emotional bond with consumers. The entertaining aspect in this study functions as an affective stimulus that can trigger a positive response.

The research findings on the influence of informative delivery style on trust contradicted those of entertaining delivery style. While informative delivery style had no significant relationship with trust, it did have a significant relationship with emotional engagement. This suggests that providing up-to-date and complete information is not sufficient to build trust. However, an informative delivery style can still foster emotional engagement with consumers, as consumers perceive that they are benefiting from the live streaming shopping session, particularly in the context of sharing intentions, which require rational consideration. Compared to the previous two variables, interactive communication style had the most consistent results, with a positive influence on both trust and emotional engagement. Strong trust and the resulting emotional experiences occur within the two-way personal connection between celebrities and consumers. This suggests that communication in these digital interactions is not only informative and entertaining but also builds social closeness, which is the foundation of consumer trust.

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