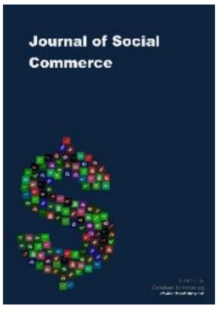

ISSN 2809-929X (Print)
ISSN 2809-9303(Online)

Journal of Social Commerce

Vol. 6 No. 2, 2026 (Page: 185-199)
DOI: https://doi.org/10.56209/jommerce.v6i2.305

The Influence of Endorser Credibility and Swift Guanxi on Consumer Purchase Intention in TikTok Live Streaming: The Mediating Role of Trust

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Article History

Keywords

Endorser Credibility, Swift Guanxi, Trust, Purchase Intention, Live Streaming Tiktok

JEL Classification
M31, M37, D12, L81

Abstract

This study analyzes the influence of endorser credibility and swift guanxi on consumer purchase intentions within TikTok live streaming while evaluating trust as a mediating variable. The research employs a quantitative approach utilizing a survey method to collect data from 110 active TikTok users who have completed purchases through live broadcasts. Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling with the assistance of SmartPLS software. The empirical results reveal that endorser credibility has a positive and significant effect on both purchase intention and consumer trust. Swift guanxi also positively and significantly impacts purchase intention and trust although it exhibits a lower overall influence compared to endorser credibility. Crucially the analysis proves that trust successfully mediates the relationship between endorser credibility and purchase intention but completely fails to mediate the relationship between swift guanxi and purchase intention. These findings highlight a major theoretical divergence indicating that while traditional credibility relies on cognitive trust, the emotional immediacy of swift guanxi bypasses traditional risk assessments to drive spontaneous purchases directly.

Introduction

Advances in digital technology have revolutionized the way people interact and conduct economic activities. The phenomenon of e-commerce live streaming first took off in China through platforms such as Taobao Live and Douyin, before spreading to various Asian countries, including Indonesia. In Indonesia, TikTok has emerged as a key pioneer in delivering an immersive and social digital shopping experience. According to a Statista Report 2024, the growth of live commerce transactions in Southeast Asia has increased by 67% since 2021, with Indonesia recorded as the largest market in the region. This phenomenon signifies that shopping is no longer merely an economic transaction but has evolved into a form of social entertainment (shoppertainment) that combines elements of communication, trust, and emotional experience. This model fosters an emotional connection between consumers and

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hosts or endorsers, where credibility plays a crucial role in building trust and driving purchase intention (Alwafi & Hayu, 2025; Dao et al., 2025; Chen & Yang, 2023; Khan, 2023).

Endorsers with experience, a solid reputation, and honest conduct can boost consumer trust in the products they promote. In e-commerce live streaming, the role of an endorser extends beyond that of an advertiser; they also serve as communicators capable of conveying product information in an authentic and interactive manner (Xue & Liu, 2023; Dong et al., 2025). However, an endorser's credibility alone is not enough without a social connection between consumers and the streamer. This is where the concept of swift guanxi becomes relevant. The concept of guanxi originates from Chinese culture and refers to social relationships based on trust, mutual benefit, and emotional closeness. In the digital world, the term "swift guanxi" has emerged, referring to social relationships that form rapidly between users and sellers on online platforms through intensive yet brief interactions (Purnama et al., 2025). In live streaming, consumers feel a connection as if they are close to the streamer even though they have never met in person.

This phenomenon is clearly evident on the TikTok platform during live streams, where sellers use an informal communication style such as addressing the audience with affectionate terms ("bestie," "honey," "shopping buddy") which creates a sense of emotional closeness. This strategy strengthens virtual social bonds, which in turn influence impulsive purchasing behavior (Anwar et al., 2025). Trust serves as the primary psychological mechanism linking credibility and swift guanxi to consumer purchase intention. In online transactions, consumers cannot physically assess products, so trust in the seller becomes the primary determinant of purchasing decisions (Iskamto & Rahmalia, 2023; Rizkan et al., 2023; Simanjuntak et al., 2025).

Previous research indicates that the relationship between endorser credibility, swift guanxi, trust, and purchase intention continues to yield mixed findings. Earlier studies found that endorser credibility has a positive effect on purchase intention through consumer trust (Garg & Bakshi, 2024; Kemec & Yuksel, 2021) Conversely, other studies found that endorser credibility does not directly influence purchase intention but rather through mediating variables such as trust and brand image (Cahyadiningrum & Rahardjo, 2023). These differing results indicate inconsistencies in the influence of endorser credibility on purchase intention, thus further research is still needed. Research on swift guanxi has also yielded mixed results. Previous studies suggest that interactions during live streaming can foster swift guanxi, which positively impacts consumer trust and purchase intention (Tian, 2024). However, other research indicates that interactive features do not always significantly contribute to the development of interpersonal relationships (Salsabila et al., 2024). These differing findings indicate that the influence of swift guanxi in the context of live streaming still requires further in-depth study, particularly on the TikTok Live platform, which features spontaneous, real-time, and interactive communication.

Based on this phenomenon, a research gap can be identified regarding the consistency of the influence of endorser credibility and swift guanxi on consumer purchase intention, as well as the importance of trust as a mediating variable in the context of e-commerce live streaming. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the influence of endorser credibility and swift guanxi on consumer purchase intention in TikTok Live Streaming, with trust serving as the mediating variable. This study is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of digital marketing literature, particularly regarding consumer behavior in live commerce, as well as practical implications for businesses in designing more effective, interactive, and social trust-based marketing communication strategies.

Literature Review

Endorser credibility refers to consumers' perception of an endorser's competence, honesty, and appeal in conveying product information. In digital marketing, this credibility is a critical factor because consumers tend to place greater trust in recommendations from individuals perceived as competent and trustworthy. The Source Credibility Theory explains that messages delivered by credible sources are more readily accepted and significantly influence consumer attitudes and behavior (Alam et al., 2024; Bogoevska-Gavrilova & Ciunova-Shuleska, 2022; Sachu et al., 2025; Yuen et al., 2023). In the specific context of TikTok live streams, endorsers who can explain products clearly, communicatively, and convincingly can drastically increase consumer trust in the promoted merchandise. The direct interaction that occurs during these live sessions further strengthens the endorser's influence on consumers' purchasing decisions, as empirical evidence shows that an influencer's credible attributes have a positive effect on purchase intention (Kemec & Yuksel, 2021; Garg & Bakshi, 2024).

Beyond the individualistic traits of the endorser, the interpersonal social dynamics between the seller and the audience are equally paramount in the digital ecosystem. This introduces the concept of swift guanxi, which refers to interpersonal relationships that form rapidly through social interactions on digital platforms. This concept emphasizes emotional closeness, warm communication, and mutual trust between sellers and consumers, even though the interactions are incredibly brief. In e-commerce live streaming, swift guanxi emerges through two-way communication, the streamer's spontaneous responses to the audience, and the use of language that creates a profound sense of familiarity. The presence of this dynamic makes consumers feel more comfortable and fosters a personal connection with the streamer, which studies indicate has a positive influence on impulse purchase intention in live-streaming commerce (Tian, 2024; Dotulong et al., 2026; Nguyen-Viet & Nguyen, 2024) and can significantly increase consumer purchase intention on social commerce platforms (John et al., 2024).

Bridging both the endorser's capabilities and these relational bonds is the foundational element of trust, defined as the consumer's belief that a seller or endorser can provide honest and accurate information. In online transactions, trust is a critical factor because consumers cannot inspect products in person, prompting them to rely entirely on the credibility of the information source and the warmth of their virtual interactions. Endorsers who possess competence, experience, and a good reputation find it easier to gain consumer trust, as influencer credibility has been shown to significantly affect brand trust (Cahyadiningrum & Rahardjo, 2023) and trust itself is formed through the perception of influencer credibility (Garg & Bakshi, 2024). Simultaneously, swift guanxi plays a major role in building this trust; the more intense the warm, responsive, and personalized interaction during a live stream, the higher the likelihood of trust forming (Tian, 2024), demonstrating that interpersonal relationships formed rapidly can boost consumer trust in digital transactions (John et al., 2024). Thus, trust acts as a key psychological factor determining online success, reducing perceived risk, and directly driving purchase intention (Garg & Bakshi, 2024; Iskamto & Rahmalia, 2023; Kemec & Yuksel, 2021).

Hypothesis Development

Based on this theoretical synthesis, it becomes clear that an endorser's professional attributes are foundational to predicting consumer behavior. Because consumers rely heavily on the perceived expertise and honesty of the host during a TikTok live stream, higher credibility naturally fosters a stronger inclination to buy the featured items. Therefore, it is proposed that endorser credibility has a positive effect on consumer purchase intention in TikTok Live Streaming (H1). Concurrently, the way endorsers convey product information transparently and authentically directly cultivates consumer confidence in both the product and the seller.

Thus, it is also hypothesized that endorser credibility has a positive effect on consumer trust in TikTok Live Streaming (H3).

The fast-paced, interactive nature of live commerce relies just as heavily on the rapid formation of social bonds to drive economic activity. The sense of psychological comfort and personal connection generated by swift guanxi not only makes consumers more likely to commit to a purchase but also lays the groundwork for a profound reliance on the streamer's claims. Consequently, it is proposed that swift guanxi has a positive influence on consumer purchase intention on TikTok Live Streaming (H2). Furthermore, as warm and reciprocal communication creates a sense of mutual understanding even in the briefest interactions, it is proposed that swift guanxi has a positive effect on consumer trust in TikTok Live Streaming (H4).

Finally, trust acts as the central psychological mechanism linking the streamer's combined efforts to the consumer's final decision. A high level of trust mitigates the inherent risks of online shopping, making consumers feel secure enough to complete a transaction through direct interaction and emotional experiences. Therefore, it is proposed that trust has a positive effect on consumer purchase intention in TikTok Live Streaming (H5). Because trust is established both by the endorser's verifiable competence and the emotional closeness of swift guanxi, it functions not just independently, but as a critical pathway. It is expected that consumers who perceive an endorser as credible or feel a swift relational bond will build trust, which in turn elevates their purchase intentions. Therefore, the final hypotheses state that trust mediates the effect of endorser credibility on consumer purchase intention in TikTok Live Streaming (H6), and trust mediates the effect of swift guanxi on consumer purchase intention in TikTok Live Streaming (H7).

Methods

This study utilizes a quantitative approach functioning as basic research to investigate the impact of endorser credibility and swift guanxi on consumer purchase intention within the context of TikTok Live Streaming, utilizing trust as a mediating variable. The research framework is constructed around four primary variables. The independent variables consist of endorser credibility, denoted as X1, and swift guanxi, denoted as X2. Furthermore, trust, represented as Z, functions as the mediating variable, while purchase intention, represented as Y, serves as the dependent variable. The operationalization of these variables relies on specific indicators; endorser credibility was measured through expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness, while the swift guanxi variable was measured through reciprocal favors and harmonious relationships. Additionally, the mediating variable of trust encompassed the dimensions of integrity, competence, and benevolence, and the dependent variable of purchase intention was measured through consumer interest, desire, and purchase plans.

To gather the necessary primary data, the researchers distributed an online questionnaire developed via Google Forms directly to active TikTok users who had both watched live streaming content and made purchases through that feature. The research instrument was carefully designed using a five-point Likert scale to capture and evaluate respondent perceptions, supported by secondary data acquired from scientific journals and related publications. The sampling technique employed for data collection was purposive sampling, resulting in a final sample size of 110 respondents. This specific quantity was determined based on structural equation modeling guidelines, which dictate that the sample size should be ten times the number of research indicators utilized in the study.

To guarantee the rigorous development of the data collection instrument, its validity and reliability were thoroughly evaluated. Convergent validity was established by assessing the outer loading values of the instrument's indicators, which demonstrated high loading factors ranging from 0.739 to 0.940 for endorser credibility, 0.815 to 0.903 for swift guanxi, 0.873 to 0.910 for purchase intention, and 0.740 to 0.873 for trust. Furthermore, this validity was confirmed as all variables yielded an Average Variance Extracted value above the 0.50 threshold, demonstrating that the latent constructs could adequately explain the variance of their respective indicators. Discriminant validity was also rigorously tested and verified using cross-loading values, which ensured each indicator loaded highest on its measured variable compared to other constructs. This was further supported by the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio test, which confirmed that all construct correlation values remained below the recommended 0.90 threshold, signifying that each construct measures different conceptual dimensions without overlap. Finally, the reliability of the instrument was proven to be excellent, as the Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values for all variables demonstrated a high level of reliability, confirming the instrument's consistency and its suitability for structural model analysis.

For the data analysis phase, the study implemented the Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling method, commonly referred to as PLS-SEM, to examine the formulated models. The analytical procedures were systematically executed with the assistance of SmartPLS software, which was selected because it is highly capable of handling complex research models and remains highly suitable and effective for relatively small sample sizes (Hair & Sabol, 2025). Through this analytical approach, the predictive ability of the model was evaluated via R-square measurements, while the specific relationships between variables, including mediating effects, were robustly tested using path coefficients alongside t-statistics and p-values.

Results and Discussion

Before exploring the relationships between these variables, it is imperative to first establish the integrity of the data. The following section initially presents the evaluation of the measurement model, confirming the validity and reliability of the specific indicators used to capture consumer perceptions. Once the robustness of the research instrument is verified, the focus shifts to the structural model. This subsequent phase directly addresses the study's core narrative by testing the proposed hypotheses, ultimately mapping the direct influences of streamer interactions and exploring whether consumer trust actively mediates the path to a final purchasing decision.

Table 1. Outer Loading Value

	X1	X2	Y	Z
X1.1	0.938			
X1.2	0.910			
X1.3	0.739			
X1.4	0.940			
X1.5	0.922			
X1.6	0.920			
X2.1		0.815		
X2.2		0.864		
X2.3		0.903		
X2.4		0.830		

Y.1	0.875	
Y.2	0.873	
Y.3	0.881	
Y.4	0.887	
Y.5	0.888	
Y.6	0.910	
Z.1		0.795
Z.2		0.793
Z.3		0.838
Z.4		0.873
Z.5		0.740
Z.6		0.859

Based on Table 1 on the Endorser Credibility variable (X1), all indicators have a high *loading factor* value, which ranges from 0.739 to 0.940. The highest value is found in the X1.4 indicators of 0.940, while the lowest value is found in X1.3 of 0.739. In the Swift Guanxi variable (X2), the *loading factor* value ranges from 0.815 to 0.903. The X2.3 indicator has the highest value of 0.903, followed by X2.2 of 0.864, X2.4 of 0.830, and X2.1 of 0.815. In the Purchase Intention (Y) variable, the *loading factor* value showed excellent consistency with a range between 0.873 to 0.910. Indicator Y.6 has the highest value of 0.910, while indicator Y.2 has the lowest value of 0.873. In the Trust (Z) variable, the *loading factor* value is in the range of 0.740 to 0.873. The Z.4 indicator has the highest value of 0.873, while the Z.5 indicator has tfhe lowesft value of 0.740.

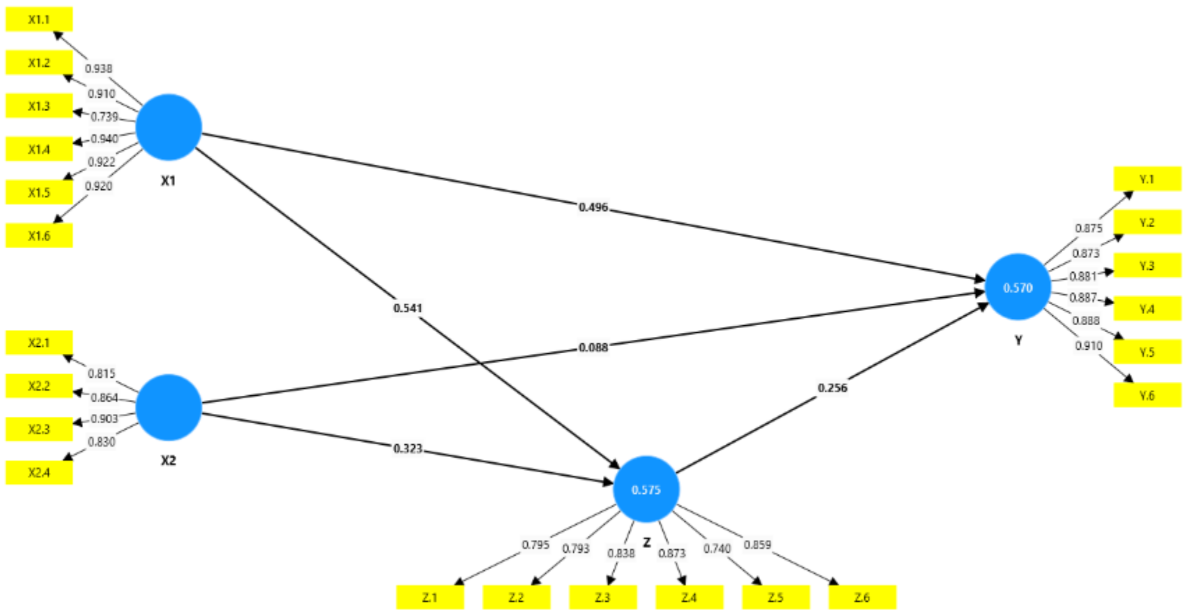

Figure 1. *Outer Model*

Table 2. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) Value

	Average variance extracted (AVE)
X1	0.806
X2	0.729
Y	0.785
Z	0.669

Based on Table 2, the *Average Variance Extracted* (AVE) value of the Endorser Credibility variable (X1) has an AVE value of 0.806, which means that more than 80% of the indicator's variance can be explained by latent constructs. The Swift Guanxi variable (X2) obtained an AVE value of 0.729. The Purchase Intention (Y) variable has an AVE value of 0.785 which indicates that this construct has a strong ability to explain the variance of its indicators. The Trust variable (Z) has an AVE value of 0.669. All variables in this study had an AVE value above 0.50, which indicates that the measurement model has met the *convergent validity criteria*.

Table 3. Cross Loading Value

	X1	X2	Y	Z
X1.1	0.938	0.443	0.642	0.649
X1.2	0.910	0.397	0.675	0.624
X1.3	0.739	0.326	0.588	0.551
X1.4	0.940	0.406	0.684	0.632
X1.5	0.922	0.593	0.647	0.675
X1.6	0.920	0.557	0.644	0.657
X2.1	0.445	0.815	0.387	0.602
X2.2	0.515	0.864	0.421	0.515
X2.3	0.426	0.903	0.485	0.500
X2.4	0.333	0.830	0.386	0.402
Y.1	0.667	0.384	0.875	0.580
Y.2	0.693	0.426	0.873	0.590
Y.3	0.572	0.367	0.881	0.526
Y.4	0.583	0.440	0.887	0.535
Y.5	0.653	0.500	0.888	0.630
Y.6	0.649	0.493	0.910	0.624
Z.1	0.556	0.484	0.554	0.795
Z.2	0.572	0.464	0.525	0.793
Z.3	0.555	0.470	0.547	0.838
Z.4	0.601	0.574	0.553	0.873
Z.5	0.497	0.359	0.469	0.740
Z.6	0.664	0.556	0.574	0.859

Based on Table 3 on the Endorser Credibility variable (X1), all indicators such as X1.1 to X1.6 have the highest loading values in the X1 construct compared to other constructs. The X1.1 indicator has a *loading* value of 0.938 on X1, which is higher than on X2 (0.443), Y (0.642), and Z (0.649). In the Swift Guanxi variable (X2), the indicators X2.1 to X2.4 also show the highest *loading* values in the X2 construct, at 0.815; 0.864; 0.903; and 0.830, respectively. This value is higher than the correlation with other constructs. In the Purchase Intention (Y) variable, all indicators Y.1 to Y.6 have the highest *loading* value in the Y construct, with a range between 0.873 to 0.910. This value is consistently higher than the value in other constructs. In the Trust (Z) variable, the Z.1 to Z.6 indicator also shows the highest *loading* value in the Z construct, which ranges from 0.740 to 0.873. Overall, the results of *the cross-loading* test showed that each indicator had the highest *loading* value on the measured variable compared to the other variables.

Table 4. HTMT Value

	X1	X2	Y	Z
X1				
X2	0.550			
Y	0.759	0.538		
Z	0.760	0.661	0.710	

Based on Table 4, the results of the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) test indicate that all construct correlation values are below the recommended threshold of 0.90, demonstrating adequate discriminant validity among the variables in the research model. The HTMT value between Endorser Credibility (X1) and Swift Guanxi (X2) is 0.550, indicating a moderate relationship while still confirming that the two constructs are conceptually distinct. The HTMT value between Endorser Credibility (X1) and Purchase Intention (Y) is 0.759, whereas the value between Endorser Credibility (X1) and Trust (Z) is 0.760, suggesting relatively strong associations without indicating construct overlap. T the HTMT value between Swift Guanxi (X2) and Purchase Intention (Y) is 0.538, while the value between Swift Guanxi (X2) and Trust (Z) is 0.661, reflecting moderate relationships among these variables. The HTMT value between Purchase Intention (Y) and Trust (Z) is 0.710, indicating a substantial but acceptable level of association. Since all HTMT values are well below the critical threshold of 0.90, it can be concluded that each construct possesses satisfactory discriminant validity and measures different conceptual dimensions, thereby confirming that the research model is free from discriminant validity issues and suitable for further structural model analysis.

Table 5. Cronbach Alpha and Composite Reliability Value

	Cronbach's alpha	**Composite reliability (rho_c)**
X1	0.950	0.961
X2	0.876	0.915
Y	0.945	0.956
Z	0.900	0.924

Based on Table 5, the Endorser Credibility variable (X1) has a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.950 and a rho_c of 0.961 indicating a very high level of reliability. The Swift Guanxi variable (X2) also showed good reliability with Cronbach's alpha value of 0.876 and rho_c of 0.915. The Purchase Intention (Y) variable has Cronbach's alpha value of 0.945 and rho_c of 0.956. In the Trust (Z) variable, Cronbach's alpha value is 0.900 and rho_c is 0.924. This shows that the indicators in the trust variable are able to measure constructs consistently. All variables have excellent reliability values and are suitable for further analysis on structural models.

Table 6. R Square Value

	R-square	**R-square adjusted**
Y	0.570	0.557
Z	0.575	0.567

Based on Table 6 on the Purchase Intention (Y) variable, the R^2 value was 0.570 and the adjusted R^2 was 0.557. This shows that 57.0% of the variation in consumer purchase intention can be explained by the variables of endorser credibility, *swift guanxi*, and trust in the research model. Meanwhile, the remaining 43.0% was influenced by other variables outside the model. Based on the criteria of (Hair et al., 2021) this value falls into the moderate category. In the Trust variable (Z), the R^2 value was 0.575 and the adjusted R^2 was 0.567. This value shows that 57.5% of the variation in trust can be explained by the endorser and *swift guanxi credibility* variables. The remaining 42.5% was explained by other factors outside the research model. This value falls into the strong category, which indicates that the model has a high predictive ability in explaining the Trust variable.

Table 7. Path Coefficient Test

	Original sample (O)	**Sample mean (M)**	**Standard deviation (STDEV)**	**T statistics (|O/STDEV|)**	**P values**
X1 -> Y	0.634	0.638	0.055	11.509	0.000

X1 -> Z	0.541	0.544	0.066	8.176	0.000
X2 -> Y	0.171	0.169	0.074	2.304	0.021
X2 -> Z	0.323	0.326	0.077	4.169	0.000
Z -> Y	0.256	0.257	0.119	2.144	0.032

Based on Table 7, the relationship between Endorser Credibility (X1) and Purchase Intention (Y) has a coefficient of 0.634 with a t-statistics value of 11.509 and p-values of 0.000. This shows that the credibility of the endorser has a positive and significant effect on the purchase intention. The relationship between Endorser Credibility (X1) and Trust (Z) showed a coefficient of 0.541 with t-statistics of 8.176 and p-values of 0.000. These results indicate that the credibility of the endorser has a positive and significant influence on trust. The relationship between Swift Guanxi (X2) and Purchase Intention (Y) was obtained with a coefficient of 0.171 with t-statistics of 2.304 and p-values of 0.021. These results show that swift guanxi has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention. The relationship of Swift Guanxi (X2) to Trust (Z) has a coefficient of 0.323with a t-statistic of 4.169 and a p-value of 0.000. This shows that swift guanxi has a positive and significant effect on trust. The relationship between Trust (Z) and Purchase Intention (Y) showed a coefficient of 0.256 with a t-statistic of 2.144 and p-values of 0.032 < 0.05, so it can be concluded that trust has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention.

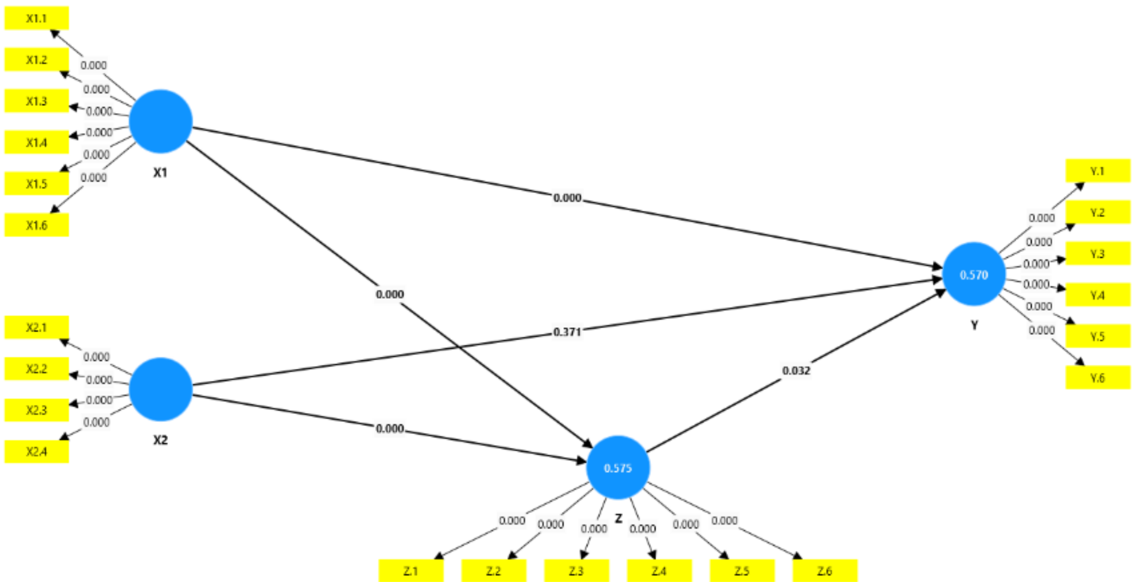

Figure 2. *Inner Model*

Table 8. Indirect Effect Test

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values
X1 -> Z -> Y	0.138	0.137	0.061	2.269	0.023
X2 -> Z -> Y	0.083	0.086	0.048	1.712	0.087

Based on Table 8 on the Endorser Credibility (X1) path through Trust (Z) to Purchase Intention (Y), a coefficient of 0.138 was obtained with *a t-statistical value* of 2.269 and *p-values* of 0.023 < 0.05 which means that trust is able to mediate the relationship between the credibility of the endorser and the purchase intention. In the Swift Guanxi (X2) path through Trust (Z) to Purchase Intention (Y), a coefficient of 0.083 was obtained with *a t-statistical value* of 1.712 and *p-values* of 0.087 > 0.05 which means that trust is unable to mediate the relationship between *swift guanxi* and purchase intention.

The findings of this study offer a critical theoretical contribution to the evolving landscape of social commerce by contrasting the cognitive evaluation of source credibility against the relational immediacy of swift guanxi. The data confirms that endorser credibility operates as the dominant and rational anchor in consumer decision making which significantly increases both trust and direct purchase intention. Traditional literature has long established that source credibility is the main determinant of the effectiveness of marketing communications (Erdogan, 1999; Ohanian, 1990). This dynamic remains highly relevant in modern live commerce where the competence and integrity and goodwill of the host serve as the fundamental basis for the formation of trust (Mayer et al., 1995). In the digital sphere an influencer's credibility significantly increases consumer trust (Rahmanisah & Fadli, 2022) and exerts a strong influence on brand trust (Kemeç & Yuksel, 2021). These credible attributes such as expertise and honesty actively increase trust and ultimately drive purchasing decisions (Garg & Bakshi, 2024). Consequently the credibility of the endorser is solidified as a key factor influencing consumer behavior on e-commerce live streaming (Sharapova & Ferinia, 2026; Hu et al., 2023; Ju et al., 2025; Mahendra et al., 2024) and demonstrates a significant direct effect on purchase intention on social media platforms (Kemeç & Yuksel, 2021).

Parallel to this cognitive evaluation the study highlights the distinct role of swift guanxi in successfully building interpersonal relationships that heavily influence consumer behavior in the digital environment (Lu et al., 2023; Ou et al., 2014). Social relationships formed through warm and reciprocal communication are able to create trust even without face to face interaction (John et al., 2024) which positions swift guanxi as an important factor in building trust in e-commerce (Ou et al., 2014). The real time interactions inherent to live streaming help create a sense of mutual understanding that deeply strengthens this trust (Lin et al., 2018). Furthermore this warm and responsive social interaction directly increases purchase intention (Nandini et al., 2024; Ma et al., 2022). As a traditional mechanism trust continues to be one of the main determinants of purchase intention in e-commerce environments (Kim et al., 2011; Lukiyana & Anjani, 2022) and it successfully mediates the relationship between endorser credibility and consumer purchase intention (Garg & Bakshi, 2024; Kemeç & Yuksel, 2021).

The most profound theoretical contribution of this study emerges from the unexpected discovery that trust is entirely unable to mediate the relationship between swift guanxi and purchase intention. This finding directly challenges existing social commerce paradigms which have previously argued that trust successfully mediates the relationship between swift guanxi and purchase intention (John et al., 2024; Nandini et al., 2024). By demonstrating this divergence the current study illuminates how the unique affordances of TikTok live streaming bypass traditional cognitive risk assessments. These platforms are characterized by gamification and high speed interaction and intense emotional arousal. It becomes evident that consumers are more affected by the direct performance of the endorser than the in depth trust evaluation process (Yanti et al., 2026). In this hyper interactive ecosystem consumers respond to social relationships emotionally meaning real time interactions can trigger impulse purchases that are not always based on long term trust (Zhang et al., 2019; Sanjaya et al., 2025; Monisha & Chellamuthu, 2026; Pezeshgi et al., 2025). This confirms that in modern live commerce the sheer emotional velocity of swift guanxi directly stimulates spontaneous transactions which renders the slower cognitive bridge of trust theoretically obsolete in highly relational and spontaneous buying contexts.

Despite the significant theoretical and practical contributions presented the current study acknowledges several limitations that provide clear avenues for future academic exploration. The primary limitation stems from the specific focus on a single platform which restricts the data entirely to TikTok live streaming. This specific boundary implies that the findings might not universally apply to other digital marketplaces. Furthermore the research model is confined to a specific set of psychological and relational variables. To address these boundaries future researchers are strongly encouraged to expand the research object by testing the proposed interactions on alternative platforms. It is also highly recommended to develop a more comprehensive research model by incorporating additional variables such as impulsive buying and perceived value and parasocial interaction. Integrating these specific factors would yield a much more holistic understanding of consumer behavior within e-commerce live streaming. Finally future studies should consider adopting a mixed methods approach to get more in depth results and a more comprehensive understanding of the underlying motivations of virtual shoppers.

Conclusion

This study successfully redefines the understanding of consumer behavior within the rapid ecosystem of TikTok live streaming by demonstrating that emotional immediacy often supersedes calculated trust. The empirical evidence confirms that while endorser credibility remains the foundational pillar for driving both trust and purchase intention the rapid formation of swift guanxi operates on an entirely different psychological pathway. Because trust completely fails to mediate the relationship between swift guanxi and purchase intention it is clear that modern live commerce relies heavily on spontaneous and emotionally driven consumer decisions rather than traditional cognitive risk assessments. This shift signifies a major departure from conventional electronic commerce models where long term trust was considered an absolute prerequisite for generating sales. These theoretical insights translate into highly actionable practical implications for business practitioners and digital marketers. Brands must fundamentally rethink their live streaming strategies by prioritizing the selection of endorsers who possess proven expertise and high communication appeal as these traits exert the strongest direct influence on consumer purchasing behavior. Furthermore companies should actively train their streamers to cultivate swift guanxi through highly responsive interactions and warm personal engagement to trigger the emotional closeness that bypasses traditional trust barriers. Although maintaining foundational transparency remains important for long term brand equity marketers must recognize that capitalizing on the impulsive nature of platform specific interactions will yield the highest immediate commercial success.

Declaration of AI Use

During the preparation of this work the authors used Gemini 3.1 Pro in order to edit the sentences and improve the overall language and delivery of the manuscript. After using this tool the authors reviewed and edited the content as needed and take full responsibility for the content of the publication. This technology was applied strictly with human oversight to refine readability and did not replace human critical thinking or the core academic analysis.

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