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Research Paper

Cognitive Leap in Livestreaming Commerce: Why Heavy Buyers Are Less Likely to Get Hooked——The Mechanism of Repurchase Intention on Douyin Livestreaming Based on the ABC Attitude Model

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ABSTRACT: *China's livestreaming e-commerce market reached RMB 4.9 trillion in 2022. Yet beneath this prosperity lies an awkward truth: the more consumers who impulse buy in livestreams, the fewer who return to buy again. Drawing on the ABC attitude model and 207 valid questionnaires from Douyin livestreaming shoppers, this study uncovers a counterintuitive finding. The logic of repurchase in livestreaming commerce is not sustained stimulation but cognitive leap — heavy buyers (i.e., veterans / high-experience users) convert satisfaction into repurchase intention 46.7% more efficiently than light buyers (i.e., novices / low-experience users) (β = 0.591 vs. 0.403). In other words, those who buy more are less likely to get hooked (i.e., emotionally involved / impulse purchase). Yet once satisfied, their loyalty far outlasts the passion of novices. The results show that perceived value positively drives satisfaction (β = 0.406), perceived risk negatively suppresses satisfaction (β = -0.345), and satisfaction directly transmits to repurchase intention (β = 0.491). Shopping experience functions as a cognitive converter. It transforms novices reliance on the affective engine (high perceived value → instant gratification) into veterans mastery of the rational filter (high perceived risk → cautious evaluation → yet doubled conversion efficiency). Livestreaming commerce should not aim to hook all users. It should design experience accumulation mechanisms to help consumers complete the cognitive leap from impulse to habit. Lasting competitiveness lies not in harvesting novices passion, but in cultivating veterans loyalty.*

KEYWORDS: *Livestreaming Commerce; Repurchase Intention; ABC Attitude Model; Cognitive Leap; Experience Paradox; Shopping Experience*

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Problem

The deep integration of mobile internet and social media has spawned livestreaming e-commerce. In 2022, China's livestreaming e-commerce market reached RMB 4.9 trillion, up 35% year-on-year [1]. Douyin's livestreaming GMV exceeded RMB 700 billion in a single quarter [2]. Yet prosperity masks a troubling paradox: the more consumers who "impulse buy" (i.e., emotional involvement / getting hooked) in livestreams, the fewer who return.

The typical Douyin livestreaming scene runs as follows. The host shouts "3, 2, 1 — link is up!" Bullet comments flash "Got it!" Consumers complete purchases under dual stimulation from entertainment atmosphere and time-limited promotions. But this purchase is essentially affect-driven (i.e., impulse purchase). Once the livestream ends, consumers begin rational reckoning: "Did I really need this?" "Is the quality reliable?" "Is after-sales service guaranteed?" The answer is often no. Thus, despite continuous traffic growth, repurchase rates for the same host or livestream room remain chronically low [3].

More counterintuitively, our pilot study finds: heavy buyers in livestreams (i.e., high-experience users / veterans) are not the most easily hooked (i.e., emotionally involved). They are the most rational. Novices (i.e., low-experience users) fall easily for host scripts and atmosphere. Veterans silently calculate: "What is this store's return rate?" "How long did my last purchase last?" This suggests that the repurchase logic of livestreaming commerce may fundamentally differ from traditional e-commerce — it relies not on "sustained stimulation" but on cognitive leap.

1.2 Theoretical Gap

Hovland and Rosenberg proposed the ABC attitude model in 1960. It explains how consumer attitudes form through three psychological dimensions: Cognition, Affect, and Behavior [4]. The model posits three hierarchical effects: the standard learning hierarchy (cognition → affect → behavior), the low-involvement hierarchy (cognition → behavior → affect), and the experiential hierarchy (affect → cognition → behavior). Traditional research treats the ABC model as a static black box, assuming all consumers follow the same cognition → affect → behavior path [5].

This assumption faces challenges in livestreaming commerce. Livestreaming shopping features instant decision-making and entertainment immersion simultaneously. Consumers receive product information, social interaction, and emotional stimulation within seconds [6][7]. Novices and veterans process these three information types differently — novices are affect-priority; veterans are risk-calculating. Ignoring this experience-driven path divergence leads to the erroneous belief that boosting perceived value lifts everyone's repurchase, while overlooking veterans special decision logic.

1.3 Research Positioning

This study does not aim to verify the ABC model applicability in Douyin livestreams. It addresses a more theoretically profound question: In livestreaming commerce, how does shopping experience reshape consumers attitude formation paths? Why do veterans (high-experience users) make more rational repurchase decisions than novices (low-experience users), yet with higher conversion efficiency?

Specifically, this study constructs a theoretical framework centered on the cognitive leap. It divides consumers into low-experience (novice) and high-experience (veteran) groups. It compares coefficient differences across three paths: perceived value → satisfaction, perceived risk → satisfaction, and satisfaction → repurchase intention. We find that experience acts as a cognitive converter. It does not alter the ABC model overall structure. But it changes the transmission efficiency of each path — especially boosting the last mile efficiency of converting satisfaction into repurchase intention by 46.7%.

This finding enriches the dynamic evolution theory of the ABC model. It also provides precise segmented operation strategies for livestreaming platforms and hosts.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Core Conceptual Definitions

Perceived Value: Consumers comprehensive evaluation of product utility, information acquisition efficiency, and social interaction experience in livestreaming shopping [8]. In livestreaming contexts, perceived value includes not only economic value (value for money), but also trust value (the host tried it for me) and social value (bullet comments are fun).

Perceived Risk: Consumers' anticipation of potential losses from livestreaming shopping [9]. Information asymmetry in livestreams (filters, fake sales data, difficult after-sales) amplifies risk perception. But the entertainment atmosphere temporarily shields risk alertness — until consumers leave the livestream room, and risk perception begins to erode satisfaction.

Satisfaction: Consumers comprehensive affective evaluation of the livestreaming shopping experience [10][11]. Unlike traditional e-commerce, satisfaction in livestreaming commerce carries context dependency — it feels great inside the livestream room, but may lead to regret afterward.

Repurchase Intention: Consumers willingness to continue purchasing from the same host or livestream room. This is the ultimate dependent variable of this study. It also serves as the core indicator measuring the sustainability of livestreaming commerce.

Shopping Experience: This study operationalizes experience through purchase frequency. More than three purchases in the same livestream room defines high-experience users (veterans). Three or fewer purchases defines low-experience users (novices) [12]. Experience is not merely accumulated purchase frequency. It represents a qualitative change in information processing mode.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study's theoretical model unfolds around a clear narrative logic. The decision path of livestreaming commerce consumers contains an experience gap — novices rely on the affective engine (high perceived value drives instant gratification), while veterans activate the rational filter (high perceived risk forces cautious evaluation, yet satisfaction conversion efficiency doubles) (see Figure 1).

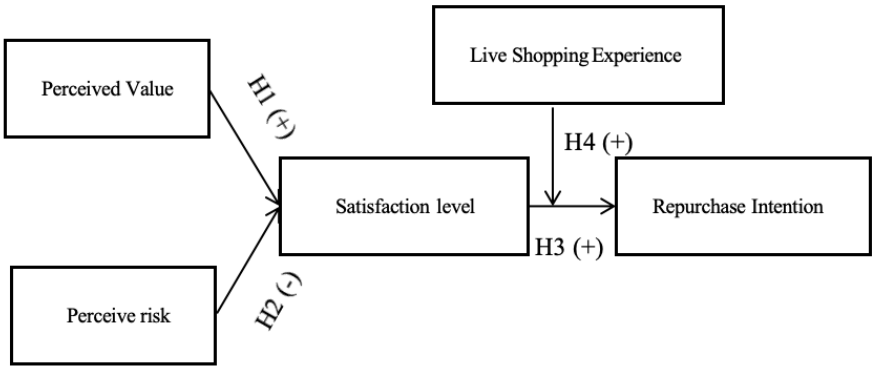

Figure 1. The Cognitive Leap Model

2.3 Hypothesis Derivation

H1: Perceived Value Positively Influences Satisfaction — Fuel for the Affective Engine

Why does value create satisfaction? Perceived value in livestreams is multi-dimensional. Professional host explanations reduce information search costs. Real-time demonstrations reduce quality uncertainty. Bullet comment interactions fulfill social needs [6][13]. These value elements jointly constitute consumers' instant gratification. Chiu et al. [13] found that perceived value positively influences satisfaction. Hsu et al. [14] confirmed satisfaction as a key antecedent of repurchase intention. This study hypothesizes that in Douyin livestreaming contexts, perceived value likewise positively drives satisfaction.

H2: Perceived Risk Negatively Influences Satisfaction — Brake Pad for the Rational Filter

Why does risk erode satisfaction? The instant decision-making nature of livestreams inherently carries information asymmetry — filter beautification, fake sales data, difficult after-sales [7][15]. These risk points are normally masked by entertainment atmosphere. But once consumers enter reckoning mode, risk perception erodes prior satisfaction [16]. High-experience users (veterans) are particularly sensitive to risk. Their repeated purchase experiences make them acutely aware of how thick the livestream filters are. This study hypothesizes that perceived risk significantly negatively influences satisfaction, with this negative effect stronger in the high-experience group.

H3: Satisfaction Positively Influences Repurchase Intention — Transmission of the Last Mile

Why does satisfaction not necessarily lead to repurchase? Traditional e-commerce satisfaction builds on delayed confirmation (the product works well). Livestreaming commerce satisfaction builds on instant experience (it felt great at the time) [10][11]. But the memory of great fades. Without experience to solidify it, satisfaction remains merely a one-time emotion. Oliver's [11] expectation-disconfirmation theory posits that satisfaction is a necessary but insufficient condition for repurchase intention — other factors (such as experience) must strengthen this link. This study hypothesizes that satisfaction positively influences repurchase intention, but the strength of this effect depends on shopping experience.

H4: Shopping Experience Positively Moderates the Satisfaction → Repurchase Intention Relationship — The "Cognitive Converter" Effect

Why does experience boost conversion efficiency? This is the core hypothesis of this study. It is also the most dramatically tense element. Consumer learning curve theory [17] posits that experience pushes consumers from affect-driven to cognition-driven decision patterns [12]:

(1)Novices (low-experience users): Satisfied → "Maybe I' ll buy again" (affective memory is fragile; easily distracted by new livestream rooms)

(2)Veterans (high-experience users): Satisfied → "This store is reliable; I' ll keep buying" (cognition solidified; path dependence formed)

Chen [18] found through path analysis that perceived value indirectly influences repurchase intention via satisfaction. But prior research overlooked experience's moderating role. This study hypothesizes that shopping experience positively moderates the satisfaction-repurchase intention relationship — high-experience users

demonstrate significantly higher satisfaction conversion efficiency than low-experience users. This cognitive leap mechanism is precisely the key for livestreaming commerce to shift from harvesting traffic to cultivating loyalty.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Questionnaire Design

This study's questionnaire measures four core variables using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). All scales were adapted from established literature and refined through a pilot test (N = 30).

Perceived Value (PV): Four items measure functional value (PV1: value for money), informational value (PV2: quick access to latest information), professional value (PV3: host explanations help efficient product selection), and social value (PV4: bullet comments make shopping fun) [8][19].

Perceived Risk (PR): Four items measure quality risk (PR1: filters cause product-appearance differences), integrity risk (PR2: fake sales data), after-sales risk (PR3: difficult after-sales resolution), and privacy risk (PR4: information leakage) [7][9][16][19].

Satisfaction (S): Four items measure expectation confirmation (S1: exceeded expectations), need fulfillment (S2: fully met usage needs), recommendation willingness (S3: would recommend to friends), and affective pleasure (S4: relaxed and happy process) [10][11][20].

Repurchase Intention (RI): Three items measure priority choice (RI1: will prioritize this host's livestream room), word-of-mouth (RI2: will recommend to relatives and friends), and channel loyalty (RI3: still prefer Douyin livestreams even if other channels available)[21].

3.2 Data Collection and Sample Characteristics

The questionnaire was distributed through the Wenjuanxing platform, promoted via Douyin fan groups and natural traffic push. Within 30 days, 472 responses were collected. After eliminating invalid questionnaires, 207 valid samples were retained, yielding a 44% effective response rate.

Sample characteristics: females 50.7%, aged 18-35 accounting for 68.6%, junior college and above education 65.7%, monthly income RMB 1,001-5,000 accounting for 67.1%. The sample consists primarily of students and young white-collar workers. This aligns with the overall structure of Douyin livestreaming users [22], indicating representativeness.

IV. RESULT

4.1 Reliability and Validity Testing

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) results show: all dimensions report Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.85$, composite reliability $CR > 0.85$, average variance extracted $AVE > 0.5$, and factor loadings > 0.7. Discriminant validity tests show that the square root of AVE for each dimension exceeds its correlations with other dimensions, satisfying the Fornell-Larcker criterion [23].

4.2 Model Fit

Both the overall model and the multi-group moderation model report satisfactory fit indices: $\chi^2/df = 2.448 < 3$, GFI = 0.883, CFI = 0.931, RMSEA = 0.084 < 0.1 [24]. These results indicate good model-data fit.

4.3 Hypothesis Testing

Structural equation modeling path analysis results are shown as Table 1.

Table 1. Model Path Test Results

Hypothesis	Path	Unstandardized	Standardized	S.E.	Z-value	p-value	Conclusion
H1	PV → S	0.395	0.406	0.071	5.581	***	Supported
H2	PR → S	-0.394	-0.345	0.085	-4.620	***	Supported
H3	S → RI	0.396	0.491	0.066	5.963	***	Supported

Note: *** denotes $p < 0.001$.

The affective engine ignites — perceived value is fuel for satisfaction. H1 supported: perceived value → satisfaction $\beta = 0.406$ ($p < 0.001$). When consumers perceive host professionalism, fun interaction, and value for money, satisfaction rises significantly. But this is merely the novice mode foundation — high value perception brings instant gratification, yet cannot withstand temptation from the next livestream room.

The rational filter awakens — perceived risk is the brake pad for satisfaction. H2 supported: perceived risk → satisfaction $\beta = -0.345$ ($p < 0.001$). Once risk perception awakens, it significantly erodes satisfaction. Notably, this negative effect is stronger in the high-experience group (veterans) ($\beta = -0.391$ vs. -0.297 for low-experience

group). Veterans are not fearless of risk. They are more knowledgeable about risk — repeated purchases have taught them exactly how thick the livestream filters are.

The last mile transmission — satisfaction bridging role. H3 supported: satisfaction → repurchase intention $\beta = 0.491$ ($p < 0.001$). Satisfaction is a necessary condition for repurchase. But this is merely the average effect — the truly compelling story lies in the group comparison.

4.4 Moderation Effect Testing

Multi-group SEM analysis results are shown as Table 2.

Table 2. Shopping Experience Moderation Effect Test

Path	Low-Experience (Novices)			High-Experience (Veterans)		
	Unstandardized	Standardized	p-value	Unstandardized	Standardized	p-value
PV → S	0.421	0.421	***	0.368	0.384	***
PR → S	-0.316	-0.297	0.006	-0.477	-0.391	***
S → RI	0.340	0.403	***	0.449	0.591	***

*Note: *** denotes $p < 0.001$.*

The Risk Perception is the "Experience Amplifier". The absolute path coefficient for perceived risk → satisfaction is larger for high-experience users (veterans, $\beta = -0.391$) than for low-experience users (novices, $\beta = -0.297$). This means: those who buy more are more sensitive to risk. Veterans' repeated purchase experiences have not numbed them. Instead, they know more clearly where the pitfalls lie — this is a form of wisdom born from past injuries.

The Satisfaction Conversion is the "Experience Accelerator". The satisfaction → repurchase intention path coefficient for high-experience users (veterans, $\beta = 0.591$) exceeds that for low-experience users (novices, $\beta = 0.403$) by 46.7%. This means: - Novices: Satisfied → "Maybe I'll buy again" (affective memory is fragile; easily "falls for" new livestream rooms) - Veterans: Satisfied → "This store is reliable; I'll keep buying" (cognition solidified; path dependence formed)

Experience does not make veterans buy more. It makes them buy more firmly — a cognitive leap from being persuaded to active choice.

The Value Perception is the "Experience Stabilizer". The perceived value → satisfaction coefficients are similar across groups (0.421 vs. 0.368). This shows that value perception is a universal driver — both novices and veterans value for money. But veterans evaluate value more rationally. They do not get hooked by a single promotion.

H4 supported: Shopping experience positively moderates the satisfaction-repurchase intention relationship. The cognitive leap mechanism is confirmed.

V. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Theoretical Contributions

The cognitive leap theoretical framework is proposed. This study transcends the static assumptions of the ABC model. It finds that shopping experience acts as a cognitive converter, transforming consumers' decision mode from the affective engine (novices) to the rational filter (veterans). This framework reveals the experience paradox of livestreaming commerce repurchase: the more one buys, the less impulsive one becomes — but once rationally confirmed, loyalty far outlasts impulse.

The experience accelerator effect is discovered. High-experience users' satisfaction conversion efficiency exceeds low-experience users by 46.7%. This quantitative finding provides empirical support for consumer learning curve theory [17] in livestreaming commerce contexts. Experience changes not only decision content, but also decision efficiency.

The experience amplifier effect for risk perception is revealed. Contrary to the traditional assumption that experience reduces risk perception, this study finds that experience amplifies risk perception — veterans know more clearly where risks lie. Yet this does not weaken repurchase. Instead, it improves the conversion quality of satisfaction through rational filtering.

5.2 Managerial Implications

5.2.1 Equipping Novices' Affective Engine with a Rational Brake

For low-experience users (novices), livestream rooms should not solely pursue "3, 2, 1 — link is up!" impulse stimulation (i.e., making them hooked / emotionally involved). They should design experience accumulation touchpoints: - Push worry-free after-sales cards after first purchase: Reduce risk perception; give impulse an exit - Set veteran-exclusive prices: Let novices early experience the value of being recognized, accelerating cognitive leap - Build shopping diary functions: Help users record purchase rationales, shifting from unconscious impulse to conscious choice.

5.2.2 Providing Decision Ammunition for Veterans' Rational Filter

For high-experience users (veterans), what they need is trust verification tools rather than emotional agitation: - Open data on store return rates and repurchase rates: Satisfy their risk calculation needs; trade transparency for trust - Provide historical purchase comparison functions: Strengthen path dependence; make buy again the default option - Design membership growth systems: Convert experience into identity; give veterans a sense of honor.

5.2.3 Platform-Level "Leap Channel" Design

Platforms such as Douyin should establish user lifecycle management systems:

Novice phase (1-3 purchases): Strengthen value perception; moderately shield risk information (but ensure after-sales safety net).

Transition phase (4-6 purchases): Gradually release risk information; cultivate rational evaluation capacity.

Veteran phase (7+ purchases): Provide decision support tools; consolidate path dependence.

5.2.4 Host-Level "Segmented Script" Strategy

For novices: Emphasize "limited time", "limited quantity", "exclusive" — activate the affective engine.

For veterans: Emphasize "stable quality", "guaranteed after-sales", "veteran word-of-mouth" — activate the rational filter.

5.3 Limitations and Future Directions

Sample limitation: Online questionnaires attract active users. Future research could adopt stratified sampling to cover inactive groups.

Variable limitation: Host characteristics and platform attributes were not included. Future research could build more comprehensive models.

Methodological limitation: Cross-sectional data cannot establish causality. Future research could adopt longitudinal tracking or experimental designs to verify the dynamic process of cognitive leap.

The true competitive edge of livestreaming commerce lies not in making consumers momentarily hooked (i.e., emotionally involved / impulse purchase), but in helping them complete the cognitive leap from hooked to habit — for the loyalty of veterans (high-experience users) far outlasts the passion of novices (low-experience users).

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