THE IMPACT OF LIVE STREAMING ON SHOPPING BEHAVIOURS AND SALES - AN ENTREPRENEURIAL VIEW OF THE THAI MARKET

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A THEMATIC PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF MANAGEMENT
COLLEGE OF MANAGEMENT
MAHIDOL UNIVERSITY
2023

Thematic paper
entitled

THE IMPACT OF LIVE STREAMING ON SHOPPING BEHAVIOURS AND SALES - AN ENTREPRENEURIAL VIEW OF THE THAI MARKET

was submitted to the College of Management, Mahidol University
for the degree of Master of Management
on
April 29, 2023

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

People are now depending on the Internet and online shopping more than traditional shopping styles. And recently, they moved to online streaming shopping where they can purchase products and interact with a seller in real time. The objective of this research is to study how live streaming influences consumers to buy products and the factors that affect their decision-making process. To help people in understanding the live commerce market and how to compete in a live streaming channel. In this study, a qualitative method by an in-depth interview was chosen with twenty-five participants: ten entrepreneurs and fifteen customers. To reduce biases the participants were selected from a variety of ages.

The result has shown that live streaming is one of the channels that can increase customers' trust and create a better shopping experience. Moreover, for sellers, it is a cheaper way to create awareness and sell their products. The most successful strategy is about pricing. Nevertheless, this channel also has some drawbacks for sellers. Sellers are suggested to carefully pick their product portfolio, strategy and platform to maintain competitive advantages and attract customers. Last but not least, it is necessary to have a fun and friendly environment in live streaming as well as maintain the frequency of the live sessions.

KEY WORDS: Live streaming / Live commerce / Online shopping / Shopping behaviours / Thai market

35 pages

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the past, the selling power mostly goes to traditional channels like physical stores and television shopping. However, people have migrated to online channels after the Internet and technology developed. As a result, people are now depending on the Internet and online shopping more than traditional shopping styles. And recently, they moved to online streaming shopping where they can purchase products and interact with a seller in real-time. Today, brands can advertise and sell their product on many platforms. They not only sell on social media like Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok but also on streaming platforms like YouTube and other e-commerce platforms such as Lazada and Shopee.

Live streaming selling or live streaming commerce has become popular recently, accelerated by heavy movement restrictions policy (Lockdown) during the pandemic. Many product categories are sold in live sessions, including home, health, fashion and beauty products. The usage of this channel is growing as a direct selling channel in many countries. China as the first country to adopt streaming commerce reflects the rapid evolution of the live streaming commerce market. Nowadays, live streaming is the most popular destination for Chinese people. According to Figure 1.1, from 2017 to 2020, the market grew at a compound annual rate of more than 280 percent, driving the live streaming market value to hit 1.2 trillion yuan with immediate sales and purchases. Also, in the United States, the revenues from streaming commerce were increasing and are projected to grow continuously in 2023 (Robertson, 2022).

Gross merchandise value (GMV), $ billion
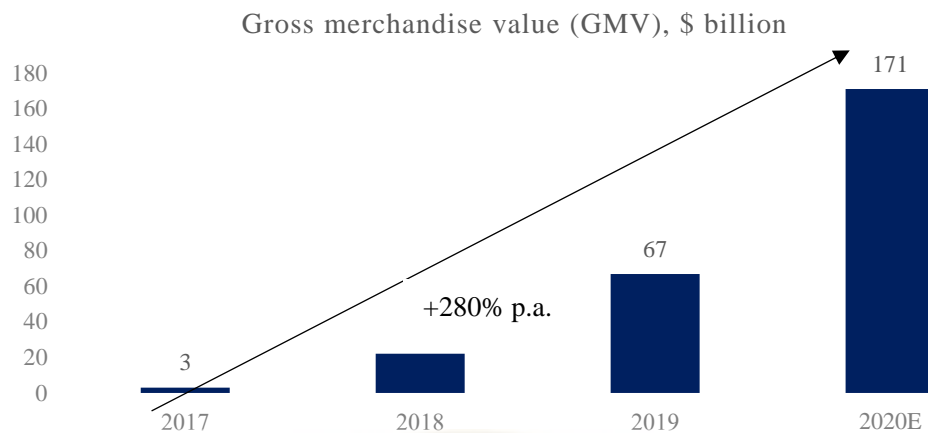
*Total GMV generated by livestreaming in B2C; includes mainstream brands.
influencer brands and refunded items.

Figure 1.1 China's live commerce gross merchandise value between 2017 to 2020 (McKinsey, 2021)

In this digital era, live streaming has shown the potential to stay connected with the audience. During live streaming, brands sell products to their target consumers in real-time. There is no longer limitation in personal connection; both shopper and seller can have a real-time conversation. Sellers can receive instant feedback from customers. Likewise, customers can engage with streamers while they are streaming. From Figure 1.2, it can be seen that the world's Internet usage has been growing especially in the past 15 years. Customers are moving to online channels. Sellers must adapt before they are left behind.

Figure 1.2 Share of world's population using the Internet (Roser et al., 2015)

To become successful in this era, sellers need to know what tools or methods they should focus on to escalate their sales and awarenesses. Therefore, this research is conducted to study how live streaming influences consumers to buy products and the factors that affect their decision-making process. In addition, this study can help people in understanding the live commerce market and how to compete in a live streaming channel.

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

The objective of this research is to study the impact of live streaming on shopping behaviours and sales. Therefore, in this chapter, the information and insight from the literature research will be discussed. There are five main topics, including Live Streaming (2.1), Live Streaming in Thailand (2.2), the factors that affect consumers' shopping behaviours (2.3), The effect of Live Streaming on customers watching and purchasing decisions (2.4), and the limitation of prior research (2.5).

2.1 Live Streaming

Live streaming is the practice of doing online sales using real-time live video to sell, chat or interact with customers (Ventoniemi, 2023). Live streaming began in China, where people are tech-savvy, driven by the see-now-want-now mentality of modern customers and the COVID-19 situation. China is far ahead of other countries in the digital consumer market or e-commerce especially live streaming commerce. Consequently, live streaming commerce became a popular channels for sellers to promote and sell products. Live stream shopping is predicted to generate $423 billion in sales in China by 2022 (Forbes, 2022). The popularity of live stream commerce was growing and is expected to be higher (Robertson, 2022). In addition, 82 percent of customers prefer watching a live video to content and 80 percent prefer live video to a blog post. Many big players jump into this live commerce as a new big thing for retail (Christopher, 2021). For example, Walmart partnered with TIKTOK to sell their goods through the live streaming channel. Instagram upgraded its live feature to support shopping capabilities. Likewise, Facebook developed its tools and features for online shopping and business owner support. In addition, Facebook positioned itself as the new QVC; Quality Value Convenience offers the in-home shopping experience for users. Live streaming has changed the way of online shopping, and now customers can buy

products right away when the sellers promote it in a live video without recording it before. Live streaming gives interesting conversations, the story behind products, tips, and recommendations from sellers directly. It brings in-store shopping into online platforms. However, product will be sold by influencers (streamers), not shop assistants. For that reason, customers tend to give more trust to the influencers as they have used products before and have high referencing power. Moreover, people love to engage with brands and stay connected; hence they prefer to shop via live streaming.

2.2 Live Streaming in Thailand

Back in 2021 when COVID-19 was spread all over the world. Many countries announced a lockdown policy. People needed to stay at their homes and all physical stores were closed. However, they still need to communicate and buy things from sellers, so people shift to online channels. Based on Figure 2.1, online shopping reaches its peak in 2021, when live streaming happens to be extremely popular because people need entertainment and interaction with sellers. Live streaming is one of the hottest trends in Thailand's retail industry. The trend raises significantly after the pandemic due to the lockdown policy in year 2021. Facebook, Instagram and TikTok have become popular channels for live streaming in Thailand. Many platforms and big players, such as SHOPEE, LAZADA, Seven Eleven Thailand, B2S Thailand and Supersport, are jumping into this trend to catch the customers. This drives live commerce to succeed in Thailand and attracts both seller and buyer to engage in a live stream.
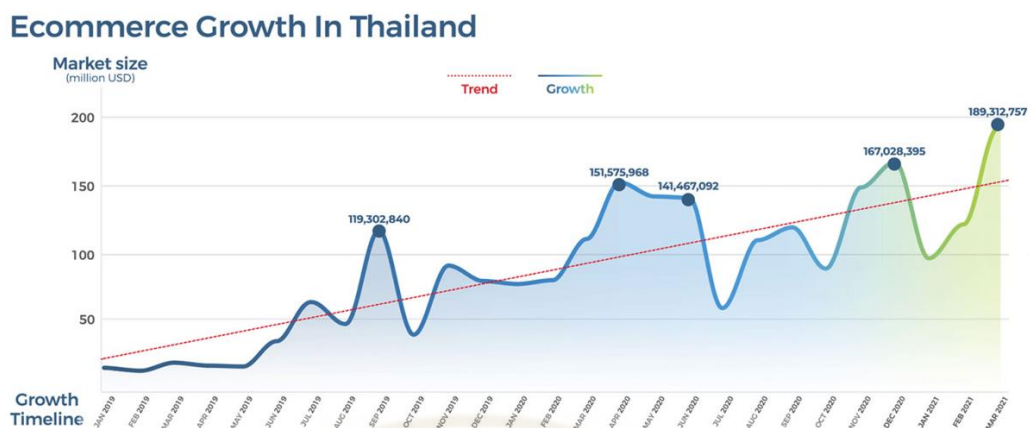
Figure 2.1 Growth rate of Ecommerce in Thailand (Bangkok Post, 2021)

2.3 The factors that affect consumers' shopping behaviours

There are many studies about the factors that affect consumers' behaviours for shopping in both online and offline channels.

For the offline channel, Thangasamy and Patikar (2014) found that in the personal aspect, necessity is ranked top of the reason to purchase, followed by comfort and convenience. Still, the factors that induce the buying behaviours are previous experience, advertisement, relative, friends, goodwill of the manufacturer, the reputation of the retailers and retailer recommendations. Moreover, several more factors affect customers buying studied by Johnson, including design, price, leisure, atmosphere and service (Johnson et al., 2014). In addition, Borges et al. (2010) showed that the shopping companion also has a positive effect on purchase intention.

For online channels, Park and Kim (2003) studied the inducing online store attributes like security perception, information quality, service information quality and user interface quality. The result has shown that information satisfaction and relational benefit play a crucial role in terms of a consumer's commitment to an online store. Likewise, user interface quality, security perception, and product and service information affect both information satisfaction and relational benefit. Therefore, these results represented that information is one of the important factors that can influence the site royalty and purchase behaviour of customers. Furthermore, Chen et al. (2008) described the three related factors groups: technology (security, privacy, usability),

shopping (convenience, trust, delivery) and product (product value, merchandising). The result stated that the most important things for consumers are convenience and security.

2.4 The effect of Live Streaming on customers watching and purchasing decision

For live streaming, many factors affect the customers' intention to buy and watch the streaming.

Chandrruangphen (2022) shows the attributes that motivate consumers to watch and shop for fashion products in live streaming and the relation among them. The attributes that can motivate shoppers are seller image, product quality, price transparency, seller's Facebook fan page, seller pacing, product price and broadcast timing announcement. As a result of this research, price transparency and product quality affect the consumer's trust and has a positive relationship with the trust. In addition, consumer trust is a direct positive influence on customers' intention to watch and shop. Also, announcing the broadcast schedule can increase the intention to watch. However, other attributes like seller image, Facebook fan page and pacing as well as products price have a weak positive influence on consumers' behaviours.

Xu et al. (2020) examine the factors that affect consumers' emotions and cognitive decision process. In this article, streamer attractiveness, para-social interaction, information quality, cognitive assimilation, arousal, hedonic consumption, impulsive consumption and social sharing were studied. The research has found that streamer attractiveness, para-social relationship and information quality directly affect the emotional states of the consumers. Viewers' feelings induce purchasing behaviours and social sharing behaviours as arousal and cognitive assimilation have an impact on hedonic consumption, social sharing and impulsive consumption.

Social patterning can create a viral and has a powerful force thus, the influencers are usually cited by customers as a top reason to buy especially in live streaming commerce (Robertson, 2022). Normally, the live stream videos are provided by the host who usually are KOLs or key opinion leaders. Hosts are chosen to have matching characteristics, knowledge or power with the brands or target audiences to

create a better experience for customers in terms of entertainment and relaxation. Moreover, with the rise of the Internet and technology, social media has become the greatest channel for many brands as designed to be sticky and attractive. It has a high power of referencing and matching with the live streaming patterns. Thus, people are more addicted to live streaming and online shopping. In addition, live stream commerce generates an emotional sense for consumers. It provides a community sense and companion feelings which give shoppers positive effects and pleasurable moments while older online shopping cannot provide these kinds of senses. After conducting the interviews with some executives, the findings can be concluded that there are five objectives in live streaming; new target customers, immediate sales, introducing new products, creating viral and educating customers and one of the critical factors is the influencer.

The intention to purchase hedonic products on Taobao live streaming channel is directly influenced by the attitude toward products that has a positive relationship with the source of attractiveness or live anchor (influencers) (Wang et al., 2018). Nevertheless, the source of attractiveness depends on the perceived popularity of each influencer. In the same way, interactivity also has a positive effect on argument quality, which means that the level of argument quality depends on communication. Moreover, an argument quality has a significant positive relation on attitude toward a product for both hedonic and utilitarian, but the effects are stronger for the utilitarian product. Therefore, in the development of Taobao, they should focus on celebrities who can increase popularity and sell especially the hedonic product.

Live streaming technology provides a sense of communication and additional services and synchronizes between streamers and viewers (Wang et al., 2022). Viewers can react, text and comment during the live sessions, while streamers can get real-time feedback or answer the question immediately. According to the study, the results can be concluded as live streaming technology provides the accessibility of information for a customer and allows them to reach quality and precise information. Moreover, the sense of competition among customers has a positive impact on the customers buying decision and makes them buy easier. Also, the benefits and rewards can gain more viewers' pleasure and attention. Nonetheless, there are some challenges for live stream technology in terms of one-to-many communication and time.

For the tourism industry, they studied and explained that first, information, interactivity and entertainment have a positive impact on viewers' attention (Lv et al., 2022). Towards informativity, tourism live streaming provides extensive, appropriate, precise, useful and up-to-date information about products in real-time through live videos. Second, attention or immersion can positively influence the interest in products and interest in watching the live stream. Then, product interest affects buying intention and continuous watching intentions. Lastly, considering gender, females are more likely to engage and immediately buy products in the live stream than males. Moreover, considering their age, younger generations have more buying intentions than older generations when product interest increase. For the experience and time aspects, those viewers who have lower watching experience and time tend to buy products quicker and easier due to the experience and time pressure. However, those who have more time also have more chances to stick with the live session with more time for deciding.

Cai et al. (2018) stated that different motivations connect with different intentions. Utilitarian motivation can predict utilitarian intention, like the relation between hedonic motivation and intention. Furthermore, they found the gap between shopping platforms and streaming platforms, which later became a huge opportunity for e-commerce platforms like Shopee and Lazada to create their streaming channel. The reasons why people prefer live streaming shopping over traditional online shopping are mostly product-related occasions such as product demonstrations.

This research mainly focused on the key psychological factors of live streaming that are different from traditional online shopping and make streaming distinguishable (Ma et al., 2022). The factors include professionalization, entertainment, visualization and interactivity. The findings represent that trust can be built up by the professionalization of the seller (making good advice or recommendation) and better customer experiences from the synergy between buyer and seller. Additionally, trust and engagement fully impact customers' intention to buy. Interestingly, this research found that females are less satisfied with the interactivity of live streaming than males.

According to the study, on the Instagram platform voicing, visibility and guidance only impact communication and interaction (Saffanah et al., 2022). However, the features of Instagram platforms at that time did not support active interactions that could induce the purchase intention and actual purchase of customers.

2.5 The limitations of prior research

According to the prior studies, the number of research is limited since live streaming commerce is a new trend in many countries, especially in Thailand. Some topics might have not been discovered. Some might study in different contexts across countries and areas of study. Therefore, the findings cannot be concluded that can explain and cover all aspects.

This article only focused on one online shopping platform, Taobao which is the largest platform in China (Zheng et al., 2022). However, many online shopping platforms and social media platforms offer live stream selling that may represent the distinguish findings. Moreover, some platforms provide an incentive and reward system to customers that can attract viewers to participate in live sessions and increase the possibility to shop. This can be another factor that influences the success of live stream selling. Also, the consumers' behaviours were summarized by the literature reviews and lack the details of consumer psychology and behaviours engagement from an empirical study which can be expanded further in future research.

Even if this research is conducted in Thailand, they only focused on Facebook live streaming and one area of product category, fashion clothing (Chandrruangphen et al., 2022). Further research can study the effect of each attribute in other categories or drive into the details to confirm and explain more about the impact of each attribute. Also, in the demographic aspect, it can be expanded to study other provinces samples apart from Bangkok or compare between two demographic groups.

This study is limited to only the Instagram platform and only studied the relationship between the platform's features (information technology) and actual purchase (Saffanah et al., 2022). Further research can study other factors and relativity.

The research is limited to only one platform and country (Wang et al., 2018).

According to the study, only one industry; tourism and one platform; Trip.com, is studied at a point in time. To study further, the researcher can conduct a comparative study between platforms and other industries (Lv et al., 2022).

In conclusion, regarding the prior studies, most of the research is limited to only a single platform and country, which cannot explain and adapt to Thai's market because of the cross-cultural distinctions. Therefore, future research could conduct some study for the Thai context and comparative studies between platforms or channels.

CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, data collection (3.1), sampling method (3.2), and interview questions (3.3) will be discussed.

3.1 Data collection

The objective of this research is to study the impact of the live stream on shopping behaviours and sales of people in Thailand. Therefore, the qualitative method is selected to explore further and understand the reason behind a success of livecommerce in Thailand. Semi-structured interviews will be used to collect the data for this research. Typically, semi-structured interviews are used to collect the data by asking questions within the scope of the study (George, 2022). Nevertheless, this interview is a mix of structured and unstructured interviews. The interviewer knows what questions will be asked, but the order of each question is not set. Also, an interviewer can ask additional questions to explore the detail they want to know more about. In a semi-structured interview, the interviewer asks open-ended questions rather than going strictly through the patterned interview questions (Doyle, 2022). Additionally, a semi-structured interview is a two-way communication. Both interviewer and interviewee can talk further and ask in detail to expand their conversation.

3.2 Sampling method

According to the plan and time constraints, 10 owners and 15 customers are selected using a non-probability sampling method: haphazard (convenience) (Statistics Canada, 2021). A convenience sampling method assumes that all samples are alike and can represent the population. Therefore, any units can be selected based on screening

and qualification. Nonetheless, for this study, respondents need to participate in Thailand's live streaming commerce. In addition, they must shop or sell in Thailand's live streaming market.

The owners are chosen to do this interview as they know the insight about the live streaming system and how to perform it. As a result, they can identify the factors and give some profound knowledge about live streaming and its success factors. Customers are picked for this interview to discuss their experience in live streaming shopping and their opinion on how live streaming seems to be very successful in Thailand. In consequence, this research can explore both customers' and sellers' perspectives on live streaming.

3.3 Interview questions

Regarding the interview, the questions are divided into two main parts: demographic questions and perspective questions. The first part is 5 simple demographic questions consisting of age, occupation, living place, income and level of study. The second part is the perspective questions towards live streaming commerce. This part consists of 10-15 questions that can vary based on the interviewees' answers. Moreover, the questions will be different for owners and customers. These questions are developed from five study questions to assess and explore respondents' opinions about live streaming and its success story. The study questions are:

1. Why selling products through live streaming like Facebook or TIKTOK can attract many customers and influence them to buy products within a short time of thinking?

2. What is the key success factor of the seller in live streaming?

3. What do people think about live streaming?

4. Does live streaming help boost the sale? How?

5. What are the differences from other online channels from a consumer perspective?

6. Did products sell faster? Did customers buy it easier or quicker?

Each interview will be anonymous and lasts approximately 15 to 30 minutes. The list of interview questions will be shown below (Table 3.1).

Part 1: Demographic questions

1. How old are you?

2. Where do you live?

3. What do you do for a living?

4. What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed?

5. Could you please identify your range of income per month? (optional)

Part 2: Perspective questions

Table 3.1 List of interview questions

Customers	Owners
1. What do you think about live streaming?	1. What do you think about live streaming? What product do you sell?
2. Which platform do you use to watch live streaming? Are there any differences from other platforms?	2. Which platform do you use to provide live streaming? Are there any differences from other platforms?
3. What is the difference between live streaming channels and other online channels?	3. What is the difference between live streaming channels and other online channels?
4. What is the potential of live streaming, in your opinion?	4. What is the potential of live streaming, in your opinion?
5. What do you find so attractive about shopping or watching the live stream selling? Why?	5. Why can live streaming attract many customers?
6. How much time did you use before buying products via live streaming? Why?	6. How much time do you use in selling products compared to other channels? How many minutes do customers spend for thinking?
7. What do you think are the key success factors of live streaming (e.g., product, time, and the reputation of stores or streamers)?	7. What do you think are the key success factors of live streaming (e.g., product, time, and the reputation of stores or streamers)?

Table 3.1 List of interview questions (cont.)

Customers	Owners
8. What are the criteria you use to decide whether to buy products?	8. What are the important criteria of customers in buying your product?
9. How was the payment and purchasing method in live streaming? What is the difference when compared with other channels?	9. What did you do in a live session that was very successful? Can you provide details, please?
10. How about the shipping and return policy? What is the difference when compared with other channels?	10. Does live streaming help boost your sales? How?
11. Does the platform you use in buying and watching the live stream support you? How?	11. What is the purchasing and payment method that you use for live streaming? What is the difference when compared with other channels?
12. What do you think the streamer or platform can improve to make it better?	12. How about your shipping and return policy? What is the difference when compared with other channels?
13. Which product type do you buy in live streaming?	13. Does the platform you use in live streaming support you? How
14. Normally, what time do you watch the live streaming?	14. What do you think you can improve to make it better? What about the platform you use? Can it be improved?
15. Why do you watch the live streaming? For entertainment or shopping?	15. Normally, what time do you provide the live streaming? Did you tell customer in advance? Did you show products to customers in advance?

Regarding the questions, the interviews will be conducted online using voice-based communications like Zoom and LINE calls. However, according to the nationality and language barriers, the interview sessions will be transcribed into Thai and translated into English. The interview sessions were held from February 20 to March 11, 2023. All findings will be analyzed and organized into groups of each attribute, described in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV
RESEARCH FINDINGS

Following the interviews and data analysis, the findings about the impact of Thailand's live streaming commerce will be discussed in this chapter. The results will be organized and explained according to the theme of the findings. The topics are divided into seven main parts: respondents' demographic (4.1), perspectives towards live commerce (4.2-4.3), platforms (4.4), reasons for watching live streaming (4.5), live commerce potentials (4.6), weaknesses (4.7) and customers' criteria of purchasing products in live streaming (4.8).

4.1 Respondents' demographic data

To reduce bias and errors, in this research variety of respondents are picked for an interview. The interviewees' demographic findings are represented in table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Demographic information of respondents

No.	Age	Address	Occupation	Degree	Income	Category
1.	26	Bangkok	Full-time employee	Bachelor	50,000-60,000	Seller
2.	24	Hat Yai	Business owner	Bachelor	50,000-60,000	Buyer
3.	25	Bangkok	Family business	Bachelor	10,000-12,000	Seller
4.	26	Bangkok	Freelancer	Master	30,000-50,000	Buyer
5.	26	Pathum Thani	Full-time student	Master	20,000-30,000	Buyer
6.	26	Bangkok	Business owner	Bachelor	70,000-80,000	Seller
7.	27	Bangkok	Full-time employee	Bachelor	>50,000	Seller
8.	61	Bangkok	Retired, Family business	Bachelor	60,000-100,000	Buyer
9.	24	Bangkok	Family and own business	Master	50,000-70,000	Seller
10.	25	Bangkok	Full-time employee	Bachelor	30,000-50,000	Buyer
11.	26	Nan	Family business, student	Bachelor	30,000-40,000	Buyer
12.	27	Bangkok	Business owner	Bachelor	>100,000	Seller
13.	30	Ayutthaya	Full-time employee	Diploma	30,000-60,000	Seller

Table 4.1 Demographic information of respondents (cont.)

No.	Age	Address	Occupation	Degree	Income	Category
14.	41	Chon Buri	Business owner	Bachelor	>200,000	Seller
15.	28	Nonthaburi	Business owner	Bachelor	>50,000	Buyer
16.	47	Bangkok	Housewife	Bachelor	>500,000	Buyer
17.	47	Bangkok	Full-time employee	Bachelor	80,000-200,000	Buyer
18.	67	Bangkok	Retired, housewife	Bachelor	>30,000	Buyer
19.	27	Bangkok	Full-time employee	Master	40,000-60,000	Buyer
20.	33	Bangkok	Personal nurse	Master	50,000-70,000	Buyer
21.	50	Bangkok	Full-time employee	Bachelor	>200,000	Buyer
22.	42	Bangkok	Brand manager	Bachelor	>100,000	Seller
23.	36	Bangkok	Housewife	Bachelor	50,000	Buyer
24.	26	Bangkok	Full-time employee	Bachelor	25,000-30,000	Buyer
25.	33	Bangkok	Secretary	Bachelor	100,000-200,000	Seller

A total of 25 interviewees were interviewed, with 15 people being customers and 10 being shop owners or managers. Most of the respondents are women between the age of 24-30 years old. Additionally, most of the samples live in Bangkok.

4.2 Perspectives of customers towards live commerce in Thailand

According to the interviews, customers think that live streaming commerce is a convenient channel for shopping. They can buy products immediately without talking or chatting with the sellers. Furthermore, they can ask questions and see a real product in a real-time live video which is clearer than products in the pictures. In addition, some interviewees mentioned that they can ask the seller to show or try on products for them.

"I don't have to wait for the seller to answer my question. Moreover, most of the fashion brands, they don't tell product's price in the post or picture, so I have to contact them and ask for the price." – Participant 19.

Besides, some interviewees talked about the sense of community, friendship and competition. They enjoy shopping and competing with other customers as well as enjoy talking with the streamer. For some people, live streaming is more than a shopping channel it is entertainment for them. Also, people found live streaming attractive and provide in-shop shopping experiences alike.

There are two main reasons for customers to watch the live stream: shopping and entertainment. Many people find themselves spending more than 2 hours a day watching live streaming. Some watch the live video that pops up on their news feed, but most people watch the live streaming from the shop they followed or the streamer they liked.

Participants buy every product category in live streaming, but the most popular are fashion and beauty like clothes and cosmetics.

4.3 Perspective of sellers towards live commerce in Thailand

"Live stream is a new way to do your marketing, no limitation in target customers. Any person who uses social media can watch your live stream. Moreover, it's the cheapest way to promote your products." – Participant 25.

For sellers and shop owners, live streaming is one of the most powerful channels to sell their products. It can boost their sales and reduce the time used in selling products. They can interact with customers at that moment and build good relationships. A good relationship impacts consumers' trust and willingness to buy, which can attract them to repeat visiting the shops. However, it needs time, effort and consistency to create a successful live streaming channel. Sellers need to build their online personalities, post the contents and perform livestreamimg frequently to attract viewers and increase trustworthiness. Moreover, live streaming is a double-edged sword because sellers have to promote themselves in live video. They may be carped by viewers and cannot do something wrong. Regarding respondent 7, *"The more viewers, the more I have to be careful because they are watching me all the time during the live session. I have to think a lot before speaking or moving. If I make a mistake, it might be my last chance. They will lose their trust and tell others about it and the worst is they will keep watching and digging out my past."* Another disadvantage of live streaming is customers' expectations about the price and promotions. For mass product and big brands when selling in live streaming channels they need to lower the price and provide many promotions. *"Therefore, live streaming for big brands is used for clearance sale purpose." – Participant 22*

Nonetheless, the smaller brands that mainly sell products in live streaming. Product is unique and scarce and hence can be sold at a higher price.

"Normally I perform a live session on Monday and Wednesday night, My product sold fast within 1 hour even though I sell it around 1,000 to 3,000 Baht." – Participant 9

4.4 Live commerce platforms

Regarding the interviews, the most popular platform for the seller is TikTok followed by Instagram and Facebook, respectively. Usually, famous brands will use Facebook pages for live streaming as they have followers already. However, TIKTOK provides the most support for shop owners and streamers on their platforms. According to respondent 1, *"Cart system on TikTok allow viewers to shop while watching without leaving the live streaming, just click on products they want and pay. Moreover, TikTok has a good back-end system to support sellers by generating the order bill automatically. We just need to print it, attach it to the package and wait for the shipping company to come and pick it up. Easier and more convenient for both seller and shopper."*

In addition, Facebook asks users to pay for advertising, increasing their monthly cost; only followers will get the notifications and see the live video. Instagram is mainly used by online fashion brands within their target audience (followers). Therefore, small businesses moved to TikTok, which is cheaper with a new target audience (mostly Gen Z and millennials).

"I moved from Facebook to TikTok because my target audiences use TikTok more than Facebook. TikTok users are increasing and people shop more in TikTok live videos. Furthermore, TikTok provides more support functions to streamers and sellers compared to Facebook. It shows live videos on viewers' news feeds and has in-app support functions and many discount codes. In TikTok, I can reach more viewers and gain more sales. On the other hand, I have to pay for advertisement on Facebook to promote my live streaming videos." – Participant 12

"I only use Instagram, as my product is a niche, vintage fashion clothes. On this platform, I have followers who have a high willingness to pay for my product already and I can sell it at a higher price." – Participant 9

"I sell fashion clothes using 2 platforms, TikTok for mass, second-hand and cheaper brands and Instagram for my designer brand. In TikTok people are more price sensitive, they only want low price goods. Instagram's customers are focusing more on quality and design." – Participant 25

From a customer's perspective, the platform they used will differ depending on products, purpose and age. Most young adults will use TikTok; they watch the streaming for entertainment and sometimes buy some products they are interested in. But, if they want to purchase high-quality or specific goods (mostly clothes), they will use Instagram. In addition, people who watch the live streaming on Instagram usually came with high intention to buy not for entertainment.

"Every day I watch live streaming on TikTok for entertainment purposes as there are many videos to choose and it is cheaper. I might end up buying some products without thinking because it was fun and cheap. However, when I really want something like professional clothes, high quality or nice design products, I will go to Instagram, looking for the brands I liked." – Participant 2

Middle aged (40s and above), people mainly use Facebook to watch live streaming and mostly buy kitchenware and small stuff or order products from other countries.

"I like to watch the live streaming on the page I followed as I know their product is good. Also, sometimes seller will take us to a tour to US department and we can pre-order that product right away." – Participant 21

"I only use Facebook because I'm familiar with this platform. Also, there are many shops on Facebook to fulfil my wants and needs with reasonable prices products. So that I don't need to use another platform that I'm not familiar with." – Participant 18

4.5 Customers' reasons for watching the live streaming

Some participants mentioned that they mostly watch live streaming in their free time for entertainment purposes. They like watching live streaming or leaving it open when alone to relieve their loneliness. In addition, live streaming for these people is TV shows that they can enjoy at night after work. And most of the time they buy products unexpectedly without enough consideration. Therefore, this type of customer can watch the live streaming from any shop or streamer. They usually surf for the video to watch. According to participant 2 *"Most of the time I didn't intend to buy anything, I didn't want it, but I watch the live streaming to pamper myself and relax from work. Sometimes I stay up until 2 AM in the morning watching the live stream. I love when streamer making jokes, eating their product or using it in front of the camera. I end up buying more products than when I really planned to shop."*

Nonetheless, many customers watch the live streaming just for shopping purposes. They usually watch live videos only from the shop or streamer they trust and are familiar with. They will not stay up until late at night but only focus on products they are interested in.

"I will watch that live sessions if it has products I want that time, or if I am in the mood of shopping. If I don't know product lists, I will watch the live streaming from the shop I followed as I know the category and style of products already." – Participant 8

"I only watch the streaming from familiar shop as they showed some product previews and match my style" – Participant 16

"I watch the live streaming only when I need to buy something. For example, if I have to go for the wedding ceremony, I will start looking for the brands and live streaming that sell the clothes I want." – Participant 20

4.6 Potential and success factors of live streaming commerce

Live streaming commerce shows a high potential to generate traffic and sales in Thailand. There are many product categories sold in live streaming. It can even be seen that holy object like amulet is sold in live videos. The potential of live streaming in most customers' opinion is **the interaction between shopper and seller**. Customers

can ask the seller (streamer) to show products, try them on, move them, or use them in front of the camera to demonstrate how to use them. Most respondents mentioned that streamer is the first thing that attracts them to watch the live video. He or she should talk at a good pace, with no bad words, and use a clear voice and tone. In addition, they should not stay quiet during the live session; otherwise, watchers will be bored. Customers love when streamers talk with the viewers, play jokes and do activities. The second factor is the light and sound of the videos, and it should not be too dark or too light to prevent the eyes of viewers from hurting. Good lighting helps customers to stay in live sessions longer without hurting their eyes. Moreover, background music is also important; opening a piece of good music can catch customers' attention and enhance their experience. Nevertheless, the music should not be too loud so that viewers can hear the streamer clearly. Lastly, when the background setting is nice and clean, viewers can see products clearer. Additionally, viewers are more concerned about the light and sound than products, as they can easily find a new shop selling the same products with one click or touch. Some shops place their product in the back of live streaming videos so watchers can notice products they sell.

"The first thing that attracts me is a streamer, I always choose a streamer who talks with a good tone and voice. No bad words. After that is about products, I will continue watching the live sessions if I like their product. However, I once watch live streaming where it is too dark and loud which is really bad for me. I can't stand it, the music is too loud. There are only 6 people in this streaming. I can't hear what the streamer says, there are many confusions in communication. Moreover, since it is dark, it really causes me a headache and I have to quit watching it." – Participant 19

"I like the shops that have a good environment setting. For example, the clothes shop usually shows many kinds of clothes at the back, which attracts me to watch the live videos as I know what I can expect and buy from them in this live session. I can wait and stay a little bit longer knowing that they will sell products I want." – Participant 4

"The main thing that makes me stop to watch each live video is the seller, the seller needs to speak with a clear voice and a good rhythm. I don't like when the seller uses bad words or open the music too loud, I will swipe up and close the video

immediately. Furthermore, the background environment is also important. With a clean and light background, we as a consumer can see products clearer." – Participant 11

"In my point of view, what I really care about is the streamer. I can buy products from any shop so I'll buy it from the one I like the most." – Participant 23

For sellers, the potential of live streaming is **the broader target and customers' experiences**. They can reach more customers with no boundaries and limitations. Any people who use social media can be their customers. Moreover, with real-time interactions, they can create better shopping experiences for their customers. Most sellers think that customers buy the streamer not products as sometimes they sell the same product in every shop. However, streamers have to keep their characters or find streamers who matched the target customers and are aware of their actions. Bad actions can lead to many consequences in a streamer's life, as we see in the digital world.

"The most important thing that shop owners should focus on in live commerce is a streamer. Customers buy the seller not products. Even though live streaming can increase the demand and willingness to pay, customers still don't buy products from the seller they don't like. And they have tons of choices to choose from."
– Participant 7

"I always carefully prepare myself before performing a live session. I do make up and plan what to say or do in the live sessions. I have to make sure that I look beautiful and confident in front of the customers. I do these to respect my customers, I know that they want to watch something nice and beautiful that can be adapted with any products I sold; charm amulets and perfumes." – Participant 14

4.7 Weakness of live streaming

Based on the interviewees' answers, a few weaknesses of live streaming can be improved. The first point is that sometimes social media platform is not designed to use as live selling channel. Facebook and Instagram do not have any support systems for live streaming. Sellers needs to use the system from the outside, which is unstable. Moreover, with many products sold during live streaming, some customers might change their minds and want to cancel their orders. However, the system does not support when customers cancel the order, and the seller needs to manage it by

themselves, causing much confusion and work. As a result, people moved to TikTok as it has a cart function where customers can easily put products in their cart or delete it before the live session ends. Second, when dealing with the algorithm and strict rules, sellers need a lot of time and effort. To appear in the consumers' feed, the seller needs to pay or create content related to their product and post it on their accounts almost every day. Furthermore, streamers have to be careful of what they do online as it has a digital footprint, and they might be banned from the platforms. Shoppers can be haters sometimes.

"TikTok has very strict rules about a live streaming hour per month and the number of contents you need to post just to appear in the suggestion feed. I need to live 3 hours a day and post the content of me going to the temple or doing something holy as I sell amulets. It really consume my time, not all seller do this as a main job, I also have my full-time work. I don't think people can meet the target." – Participant 13

"I once was banned from TikTok because I accidentally did something against the rules. It took me 2 weeks to fix my account and I lost my viewers and followers." – Participant 3

4.8 Customers' criteria of purchasing products in live streaming

Regarding the interviews, all respondents agree that people spend less time thinking before buying products on live streaming. Moreover, there are three main criteria that most customers use when making a purchase; **product, price and streamer**.

The price of a product in live streaming usually is lower when compared to other shops and channels. People tend to shop more and think less when products are scarce and cheap. Therefore, many live commerce shops usually provide promotions and discounts during live sessions to catch customers' attention. For instance, limited discount codes or limited time for promotional price.

"The most successful thing that I used to do is the discount code. I gave a limited amount of discount codes to customers and they had to compete with each other to get those discounts. Many people participated in this activity and I can sell more than 100 units of products within 5 minutes." – Participant 1

"I ever ask the viewers to share the live video with their friends and once the viewers or followers reach my target I gave them a discount or rare products as a promise. I also use a bidding strategy in my live-streaming sessions. I show a product, tell customers about it then set the time and the start price. Usually, the first price will be lower than the market price, however, I end up selling it at a hugely higher price. The tip is to keep products limited, the less stock I have the more expensive price it will be sold for." – Participant 12

On the other hand, few customers worry less about the price but care more about product rarity, quality and uniqueness.

"I only watch the live streaming from the shop I followed, they always have a new product that is popular at the time. I can pay more to get products faster and to confirm that it is not a fake one. The shops that I followed can find rare products to sell and I can ask for what I wanted during the live session. In addition, they always find products that viewers asked for in the last live session." – Participant 17

"I only watch the live streaming from the official shop or trustable shop. I love niche brands and I love to be unique. I don't care about its price as long as it is real and I can have it before other people do." – Participant 21

For streamers, shoppers will choose trustable streamers who have a similar style or characteristic to them. So, they can relate and connect with those streamers easier. According to respondent 19 *"I will watch the live streaming which is run by influencers only because I trusted their words and stories. They know products well and sometimes they used it before. Nevertheless, if the information they gave me is wrong, I'll lose trust and stop watching this live streaming."*

"I like to find a seller who has similar style and shape to me because they will sell products that I like and dress like me. I can see the picture of me wearing those clothes or using those kinds of products." – Participant 20

CHAPTER V
CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion presents a findings summary (5.1), recommendations (5.2) and limitation of this research (5.3).

5.1 Summary and discussion of the findings

Based on the interviews, live commerce shows a high potential to grow in the Thai market from both consumers' and sellers' perspectives. It enhances the shopping experience of customers and supports sellers to sell products easier. Most people prefer live streaming shopping to other channels as it provides real-time communication and product demonstration. The findings are mostly related to the prior studies in the literatures review and can be described in two aspects – consumers and sellers.

From the consumers' aspect, it is the most convenient channel for shopping. Also, it is entertainment for them. The main things that attract consumers to watch live streaming are streamers and a good environment setting: background, light and sound. Normally, the customers will mainly watch the live streaming from a familiar shop or the person they like. Align with Xu et al. (2020), the viewers' feeling was induced by the relationship and streamers' attractiveness which later affected the purchasing behaviours. Likewise, the real-time interaction between sellers and buyers can create a bonding between them, leading to the consumer's trust and a good experience (Ma et al, 2022). As a result, repeated purchase and visit rate increase. Besides, most respondents mentioned that product price in live streaming is lower with many promotions, coupons and discounts. Therefore, they need less time for a decision. However, there are some people that are less price sensitive but focus on products.

In the sellers' aspect, live commerce gives a chance for small businesses to establish themselves and create awareness at less cost. It can reach more people than

other channels with fewer limitations. Most people think that live streaming is the fastest and cheapest way to gain awareness and promote their products. In addition, it can enhance their sales within a short period of time. Nevertheless, every coin has two sides, and live streaming also has some disadvantages for sellers. Streamers have to build strong online personalities and characters as some customers buy the streamers, not products. Sellers need to be reliable and have the same energy as customers. Furthermore, they need to be aware of their actions in live streaming and follow the rules of each platform. Lastly, they should know who is their main customers in order to treat them correctly. Different target customers love different actions and selling styles.

Three main platforms are used for live streaming commerce; TikTok, Facebook and Instagram. Streamers will choose a platform based on their products and target audience. On the other hand, customers may use multiple platforms to shop depending on product category, the brand they like, their age and purpose of watching. Most customers spend more time on TikTok for entertainment purposes. They may buy some products, especially mass products, followed by Instagram to buy fashion designer brands and Facebook for elderly or home applicant products. In addition, Facebook is more common among the elderly while other platforms are usually used by middle age and young adults.

Moreover, considers the factors that affect the success of live commerce, they mainly came from streamers and how they perform the live session. Streamers with high energy, selling skill, entertainment skill or speaking skill tend to be more successful than other streamers, because they can give a better experience to customers. Additionally, channels also affect live commerce. For example, if a platform provides a support system to streamers, such as a discount coupon, support the shipping fee or a cart system, it can attract consumers to watch more live streaming. In addition, the users of each channel are different, and some might be more ready to adopt the new technology or a new way of shopping. Therefore, platform choosing is also important for sellers.

In conclusion, live streaming is a new channel for sellers and shoppers. It has many advantages to expanding the target audience and enhancing the shopping experiences. With real-time interaction, live commerce can boost sales and increase

consumers' willingness to pay. Many platforms offer a live streaming option for users, but the three most popular platforms are Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. People have a variety of reasons and need for watching live streaming. Some might love to shop, and some might watch it for entertainment. Nonetheless, apart from the advantages, there are some weaknesses and cautions that users should be aware of and improve. People should know how to use it correctly and safely.

5.2 Recommendations for live commerce adoption

After analysing the data, there are some key interesting points and suggestions that should be elaborated.

5.2.1 Fun and friendly environment

There are two reasons that people watch live streaming; shopping and amusement. Therefore, the live streaming provider should make it fun and easy to consume especially when you sell a mass product that can be found easily. Furthermore, the background environment of live videos must be clean and light. Sellers can show some products at the back when they are performing the live session or open some kinds of music with low volume to attract viewers. Moreover, the key success factor of live streaming is the streamers who reflect the brand's image and identity. Streamers should be reliable and can answer all questions without any hesitations. They should talk with a clear voice, having some tone and pace that is easy to follow.

5.2.2 Platform choosing

Each platform has different potentials and weaknesses. For example, the TikTok platform subsidizes coupons and discounts for customers, sellers can sell the product at a normal price without any losses. Moreover, TikTok provides many support systems to sellers like a cart system and also shows an insight report of each live streaming to sellers. While Facebook and Instagram do not have any in-platform support systems, sellers have to buy it from outside such as AIS, KBANK and other software suppliers. In addition, TikTok has an in-feed video advertisement where it shows live videos among other videos in the customers' news feed. However, sellers need at least

1000 followers and approval from TikTok before starting a live streaming feature. On the other hand, Facebook and Instagram do not require minimum followers or approval to start live streaming. Nonetheless, only followers can see the live videos on their news feeds. Therefore, as it requires different strategies and approaches to competing in different channels, sellers should select the most suitable platform to perform their live sessions.

5.2.3 Product choosing

Live commerce provides the sense of lower price products from most customers' perspectives. Customers will seek for the cheapest products. However, some people care more about quality and design, especially those who buy beauty and fashion products such as skin care, niche designer brands and make-up. Furthermore, if product is limited, customers will compete with each other and want to win. Hence, the seller needs to carefully pick their product. The more unique and scarce, the more you earn from live streaming. For instance, one respondent stated that he sells vintage clothes and each design has only one item. Hence, he can sell the product at a higher price. Another case is from a handmade tie-dye shop. Handmade tie-dye items have unique patterns every time it is produced. So it sold fast even with a higher price compared to other shops like what we can see from the limited collections of popular brands such as Nike shoes and Swatch. Besides, products can also be unique by their quality and features rather than designs. Moreover, sellers can limit the number of products produced to make them scarce and rare.

5.2.4 Strategy choosing

The most common theme of live commerce is low prices and easy-to-buy products. In consequence, many shops dump the price down to attract customers and some shops choose TikTok as their main platform because they have many discount coupons for customers. However, people tend to be less price sensitive when they need to compete with each other or when products are inadequate. In addition, the scarce product strategy is the most effective strategy in live commerce. Likewise, a bidding strategy (auction) that provides a sense of competition is also effective for live commerce, especially when combined with the scarce product strategy. Sellers will set

the starter price at discount and set the time for customers to bid for the product. For example, sellers may ask customers to do an auction for the last item of each product. Furthermore, rather than giving a discount to the customers, sellers can set the lowest price for their products and then allow customers to join an online auction in live streaming. In consequence, there are many people who participated in this kind of activity and sellers might end up selling their products at a higher price than they thought. Another successful strategy is a promotion campaign. In the special occasion or early stage of establishment, the streamer can conduct some games or campaigns for customers to participate in and then give a discount as a reward. This can increase followers and viewers. Nonetheless, streamers should avoid offering too many promotions as people will learn to wait for them.

5.3 Limitation and suggestion for further research

Regarding the time constraints, this research contains some limitations that can be expanded to study further in the future.

This research mainly studies the success factors of live commerce in Thailand. Its key theme is the advantages of live streaming. Future research can be expanded to include the disadvantages of live streaming in more detail such as challenges in performing a live streaming, the effects of live streaming to streamers and how to deal with the negative feedback. In addition, it also can be further studied to find other factors that affect the live streaming market such as consumers' demographic (age, gender and social class), product brand name (positioning) or seller's profile.

Furthermore, this study mainly covered the three most popular platforms; Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. However, there are other platforms that provide a live streaming feature for users like Shopee and LAZADA which can be studied and compared in future research.

Moreover, this research studied the general market products. Each product type may have distinct market strategies and target audiences. Therefore, future research can consider the differences between product categories or explore the detail of each category.

Lastly, this research is conducted in Thailand and does not consider a different cultural context. Future research can potentially study and compare the results of different national backgrounds.

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