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The Role of Psychological Factors in Self-Leadership Development: An Investigation Among E-Commerce Webcast Streamers

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Abstract

This study explores the development of self-leadership skills among webcast streamers in China's e-commerce industry. We delved into the psychological factors that influence these skills in a unique professional context. This research involved in-depth interviews with 20 webcast streamers from various niches within the Chinese e-commerce sector. Thematic analysis of their insights revealed several key findings. Intrinsic motivation, stemming from a passion for products and live viewer interactions, emerged as a primary driver of self-leadership development among webcast streamers. They use self-control strategies and adaptability to navigate the dynamic e-commerce landscape effectively. Strategies for managing stress and building resilience are essential for sustaining high performance in this challenging environment. This study's significance lies in its contribution to understanding self-leadership dynamics in the evolving digital marketplace. The findings offer valuable insights for webcast streamers, e-commerce businesses, and scholars interested in leadership development. Moreover, this research underscores the importance of considering cultural and contextual factors, emphasizing the need for context-specific approaches in leadership development.

Keywords: *self-leadership, webcast streamer, e-commerce, psychological factors, intrinsic motivation.*

Introduction

The growth of e-commerce platforms and the proliferation of webcast streamers, who serve as online sales and marketing agents, have significantly changed the nature of business in China, in recent years (Udayana et al., 2024). During live broadcasts, these streamers engage and persuade audiences through their charm, knowledge, and relatability. This has the effect of influencing viewer behavior and purchasing decisions. Their impact is significant because they fill the gap between customers and the vast array of products available online, changing what was once a solitary online shopping experience into a social and interactive activity. But there's more to their seeming success than meets the eye—an intriguing psychological aspect. These webcast streamers work in a distinctive setting where they serve as both the public face and the engine of their business's success. This situation calls for the growth of self-leadership abilities (Knotts et a., 2022; Neck et al., 2013), which include the capacity to establish and pursue goals, sustain motivation, exercise self-control, and adjust to the constantly shifting demands of

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their line of work. Webcast streamers are independent contractors, not standard workers, and are responsible for their own time management and motivation (Hoesterey et al., 2023).

We sought to understand the underlying mechanisms that underlie this population's amazing achievement by diving into the complex psychological elements that influenced the formation of self-leadership in this particular group. What drives webcast streamers to succeed in their line of work is one issue that this study aims to answer. How do they manage the difficulties of preserving high levels of vigor and passion throughout live broadcasts? What techniques do they use to deal with pressure and failure? By responding to these inquiries, we intend to not only deepen our understanding of self-leadership in a fresh setting but also to offer useful advice for webcast streamers and elsewhere (Knotts et a., 2022; Neck et al., 2013).

Furthermore, this study has broader ramifications for the study of business and psychology. Understanding the psychological factors that contribute to webcast streamers' success can help develop personal and professional growth strategies as the e-commerce sector continues to develop and have an impact on international marketplaces. Additionally, it can direct scholars as they explore fresh lines of inquiry in the dynamic fields of Internet commerce and the growth of self-leadership. Businesses can benefit from this information by learning how to build productive collaborations with these prominent people. In the end, this study aims to advance the continuing discussion on the influence of psychological elements on leadership and success in the digital era (Rainieri et al., 2023; Suanrueang et al., 2023).

Theoretical Framework

In recent years, the e-commerce sector has undergone a change in basic assumptions, with webcast streamers emerging as significant intermediaries for matching consumers with goods and services (Cheng, 2016). These people hold a special place in the e-commerce ecosystem because they engage, entertain, and persuade audiences, greatly influencing consumer preferences and buy decisions. They frequently work in the digital live streaming space (Xie et al., 2020). Webcast streamers have become into essential elements of the online purchasing experience as e-commerce platforms continue to flourish, especially in big cities in China (Ding et al., 2020).

Understanding the psychological elements that underpin the development of self-leadership skills among webcast streamers has become a relevant research priority due to their significant influence (Min et al, 2023). The ability to set and pursue goals independently is a key component of self-leadership. Webcast streamers need to set clear goals for their broadcasts and personal branding, just like entrepreneurs do (Wang et al., 2019). Their inspiration frequently comes from internal considerations, such love for the things they advertise and the excitement of in-person interactions with viewers (Zhang et al., 2018).

It is critical to look into how webcast streamers channel their motivation to maintain high-performance levels because the research on self-leadership emphasizes the significance of self-motivation and goal alignment in achieving success (Goldsby et al., 2021; Harari et al., 2021). Webcast streamers work in a dynamic environment where they face a variety of difficulties, such as varying viewer involvement and unforeseen technical issues (Liu et al., 2021). Self-leadership places a strong emphasis on self-control, the capacity to successfully manage one's conduct and emotions (Latham & Pinder, 2005). Webcast broadcasters must control their responses to both favorable and unfavorable viewer feedback while adjusting to constantly changing situations (Zhu et al., 2020). To comprehend the mechanisms of self-leadership in this situation, it is essential to comprehend how they develop self-control and adaptability. Webcast streamers frequently

feel the strain to maintain a dependable online presence in the highly competitive and demanding e-commerce streaming market (Li et al., 2021).

Self-leadership includes the ability to overcome adversity and sustain vigor (Breevaart et al., 2016). To overcome obstacles and maintain performance levels, webcast broadcasters must learn to manage their stress and develop resilience. Despite the fact that the literature on self-leadership (Goldsby et al., 2021; Harari et al., 2021) provides helpful insights into the psychological components of leadership in a variety of contexts, there is an obvious knowledge gap regarding the application of these principles to the specific context of webcast streaming in e-commerce. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the psychological factors that foster self-leadership growth among webcast streamers in China (Du et al., 2023). This study intends to shed light on the complexities of self-leadership in this new industry by examining the participants' motivations, self-control strategies, adaptation, and resiliency.

The development of e-commerce has elevated webcast streamers to a prominent position as key actors in influencing customer behavior (Tang, 2024; Udayana et al., 2024). These individuals must demonstrate self-leadership abilities, including drive, self-control, adaptability, and resiliency, in order to survive in this dynamic setting. While self-leadership has been studied extensively in other contexts, its applicability to webcast streamers remains mostly uncharted territory. This literature review highlights the importance of investigating the psychological factors that drive self-leadership development among webcast streamers and sets the stage for the empirical inquiry conducted in this research article (Losa-Iglesias et al., 2023; Suanrueang et al., 2023). We can provide significant counsel to webcast streamers, enterprises, and scholars invested in the dynamic world of e-commerce and self-leadership development by acquiring a greater understanding of these elements (Wei et al., 2024; Wen, 2023).

Research Objectives

The purpose of this study is to investigate the role of psychological factors in the development of self-leadership skills among e-commerce webcast streamers in China. Specifically, the study aims to:

1. explore the extent to which intrinsic motivational factors, such as passion for products and live interaction with viewers, contribute to the development of self-leadership skills among webcast streamers in the Chinese e-commerce industry.
2. examine how webcast streamers in China effectively employ self-control strategies and adaptability to navigate the dynamic and challenging environment of e-commerce live streaming and how these strategies impact their self-leadership development.
3. investigate the strategies used by webcast streamers in China to manage stress, overcome setbacks, and build resilience as part of their self-leadership development.

The target audience for this study included researchers in the fields of psychology, business, and e-commerce, as well as e-commerce platform operators and webcast streamers themselves. The rationale for the chosen research design was to develop a comprehensive understanding of the psychological factors that influenced self-leadership development among webcast streamers in the unique context of the Chinese e-commerce industry.

This study employed a qualitative approach to explore the experiences, motivations, and strategies of webcast streamers, aiming to build a theoretical framework that can inform personal and professional growth strategies, provide insights into the dynamic e-commerce sector, and contribute to the broader discussion on the influence of psychological elements on leadership and success in the digital era. The design aligned

with the goal of developing understanding and theory building in this specific context (Farrelly, 2013).

Qualitative research was well-suited to the objectives and research rationale of this study, which sought to explore the complex and nuanced experiences of webcast streamers in the Chinese e-commerce industry and understand the psychological factors that influenced their self-leadership development. Qualitative research allows for in-depth exploration of participants' experiences, motivations, and strategies (Bengtsson, 2016; Blandford, 2013). It provided a platform for participants to express their perspectives and narratives, helping understand the psychological aspects of self-leadership. The phenomena under investigation, such as intrinsic motivation, self-control, adaptability, stress management, and resilience, are multifaceted and context-dependent (Fishbach & Woolley, 2022; Tang et al., 2022; Velana et al., 2022). Qualitative methods enable us to capture this complexity and the contextual factors (Bengtsson, 2016; Blandford, 2013).

Qualitative research is particularly apt for constructing and developing theories (Blandford, 2013). Through open-ended interviews and thematic analysis, this study aimed to identify patterns, themes, and theoretical constructs that contributed to our understanding of self-leadership development among webcast streamers. The study focused on webcast streamers in the Chinese e-commerce industry, a specific cultural and occupational context. Qualitative research allows for the exploration of cultural nuances and contextual factors that may influence self-leadership in this particular setting (Wei et al., 2024; Wen, 2023). Qualitative research prioritized the voices and perspectives of participants (Blandford, 2013). By engaging with webcast streamers directly, the study aimed to provide a platform for them to share their insights and contribute to the understanding of self-leadership.

Research Questions

Intrinsic motivation, driven by personal passion and a genuine interest in the products they promote, is a crucial factor in self-leadership development (Fishbach & Woolley, 2022). It's essential to investigate the extent to which this intrinsic motivation contributes to the cultivation of self-leadership skills among webcast streamers. Understanding how their passion for products and the interaction with viewers influence their self-leadership growth can provide valuable insights into what drives their success (Knotts et a., 2022; Neck et al., 2013). This knowledge can be beneficial not only for webcast streamers themselves but also for businesses and scholars interested in enhancing self-leadership in the e-commerce domain. Thus, we pose the questions below:

RQ 1: To what extent do intrinsic motivational factors, such as passion for products and live interaction with viewers, contribute to the development of self-leadership skills among webcast streamers in the e-commerce industry?

Self-control and adaptability are critical components of self-leadership (Knotts et a., 2022; Neck et al., 2013), particularly in the ever-changing landscape of e-commerce live streaming. Investigating how webcast streamers employ self-control strategies to manage their behavior and emotions in response to viewer feedback and unexpected challenges is essential. Additionally, understanding how they adapt to the dynamic and demanding environment of e-commerce streaming and how these strategies impact their self-leadership development is vital. We wished to offer practical insights into effective self-control and adaptability techniques for webcast streamers, benefiting their success and well-being, as well as contributing to the broader understanding of self-leadership in the context of e-commerce. Thus, we pose the question below:

RQ 2: How do webcast streamers effectively employ self-control strategies and adaptability to navigate the dynamic and challenging environment of e-commerce live streaming, and how do these strategies impact their self-leadership development?

Stress management and resilience are critical aspects of self-leadership (Troy et al., 2023; Velana et al., 2022), particularly in the context of webcast streaming where streamers often face intense competition and high-pressure situations. Investigating how webcast streamers effectively manage stress and develop resilience can provide valuable insights into the psychological factors that contribute to their self-leadership development (Velana et al., 2022; Troy et al., 2023). Understanding the strategies they employ to cope with stress and bounce back from setbacks can offer practical guidance for streamers seeking to thrive in this challenging profession. Furthermore, we wished to contribute to the broader understanding of stress management and resilience as integral components of self-leadership, with implications for various domains beyond e-commerce live streaming. Thus, we pose the question below:

RQ 3: How do webcast streamers effectively manage stress and develop resilience in the highly competitive and demanding environment of e-commerce live streaming, and how does this stress management impact their self-leadership development?

Method

Research Design

In the study on the role of psychological factors in self-leadership development among e-commerce webcast streamers in China, qualitative research methods, particularly interviews, serve as an essential tool for collecting rich and nuanced data from participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Qualitative research is well-suited for exploring complex, context-specific phenomena like self-leadership within the unique domain of webcast streaming in the e-commerce industry (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The research design for this study was primarily qualitative, incorporating in-depth interviews and content analysis (Bengtsson, 2016). This choice was grounded in the complex nature of the research questions and the need for a deep, context-rich exploration of the psychological factors influencing self-leadership development among webcast streamers in the e-commerce industry. Here's the rationale for selecting this design:

The study aimed to understand the intricate psychological processes that drive self-leadership among webcast streamers, a relatively understudied group in the context of self-leadership. Qualitative research is well-suited for exploratory research where the goal was to generate insights and theories rather than testing hypotheses (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In-depth interviews provide an opportunity to collect rich, detailed data directly from webcast streamers. These interviews can capture the nuances, experiences, and perspectives of participants, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The qualitative design enables the research to consider the specific context of the e-commerce industry. It recognizes that self-leadership development may be influenced by unique contextual factors, which can be explored in depth through qualitative methods.

Qualitative research methods are flexible and adaptive (Creswell & Poth, 2018).. They allow for the emergence of unexpected themes and insights during data collection and analysis. Given the dynamic nature of the e-commerce industry, this flexibility was crucial. Self-leadership is a multifaceted construct influenced by various psychological factors such as motivation, self-control, adaptability, and resilience. Qualitative methods are well-suited to explore these complex interactions and their impact on self-leadership (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). In-depth interviews prioritize the voices and perspectives of webcast streamers themselves. This participant-centric approach ensures that the study captures the lived experiences and subjective viewpoints of those directly involved in the industry. Combining in-depth interviews with content analysis allows for data triangulation, enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings (Jonsen & Jehn, 2009).

Content analysis of webcast streams and related materials can provide additional context and support the themes emerging from interviews (Jonsen & Jehn, 2009).

The possibility to dive extensively into the perceptions, living experiences, and opinions of webcast streamers is provided via interviews (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). They enable researchers to learn more about the complex psychological aspects, such as motivations, self-control techniques, flexibility, and resilience, that affect the growth of self-leadership (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Troy et al., 2023). Interviews offer a forum to learn how cultural elements and industry dynamics specifically impact self-leadership techniques among webcast streamers in this region. Participants can share their ideas, feelings, and experiences during interviews in their own words, giving them a voice in the research process. This participant-centered methodology makes sure that the study records the real stories of webcast viewers.

Participants

The research team conducting this study on self-leadership development among webcast streamers in the e-commerce industry consists of individuals with diverse backgrounds and expertise, which collectively enriches the research approach and understanding of the phenomena under study. Collectively, the research team possesses a strong understanding of the phenomena under study, rooted in prior research and practical experience. Their backgrounds encompass self-leadership, motivation, self-regulation, qualitative research methods, and the e-commerce industry itself. This multidisciplinary approach ensures a well-rounded perspective on the psychological factors influencing self-leadership development among webcast streamers. Moreover, the industry experience adds a real- world dimension to the academic insights, fostering a deeper and more practical understanding of the phenomena.

The research team's prior understandings of the phenomena under study played a crucial role in shaping the research approach, data collection, and data analysis in several ways. The team's prior expertise in self-leadership and organizational psychology allowed for the development of comprehensive and relevant interview protocols. These protocols included questions specifically designed to explore factors such as intrinsic motivation, self-control, adaptability, and resilience, which are known to be critical in self-leadership development.

We, with their prior knowledge, were able to identify key participants in the webcast streaming industry in China who exhibited self-leadership qualities. This targeted sampling approach ensured that the data collected would be directly relevant to the study's objectives. The research team's prior experience with thematic analysis was instrumental in structuring the data analysis process. They were able to identify and define key themes related to self-leadership, guided by their existing knowledge of the psychological factors at play. The team's awareness of potential biases, such as confirmation bias, enabled them to implement strategies to mitigate these biases during data collection and analysis. They approached the research with an open mindset, willing to explore unexpected findings. We' prior understanding of self-leadership theories and psychological factors served as a theoretical framework for data analysis. This structured approach ensured that the analysis was aligned with established theories while also allowing for the emergence of new insights.

The research team's prior understandings of the phenomena under study significantly enhanced the research by informing the development of interview protocols, guiding data collection and analysis, and ensuring a theoretically grounded approach. However, they also remained vigilant to potential biases and limitations, striving for an objective and comprehensive exploration of self-leadership development among webcast streamers.

The study involves a diverse group of 20 webcast streamers from various regions across China. These participants were selected to represent the broad spectrum of the Chinese e-commerce streaming industry. The participants in this study encompass a wide range of demographics, including age (ranging from 20 to 45 years), gender (approximately 60% female and 40% male), and regional diversity (representing different provinces and cities across China). This diversity in demographics is intended to capture a comprehensive understanding of the e-commerce streaming landscape in China. Table 1 delineates the participants' characteristics.

Table 1 *Participant Profile*

No.	Reference Code	Age	Gender	Experience (years)	Niche Markets	Follower Counts
1	A	26	Female	4	Fashion and Beauty	25,000
2	B	28	Male	4	Electronics and Gadgets	22,000
3	C	34	Female	6	Parenting and Childcare	28,500
4	D	32	Male	3	Fitness and Health	25,000
5	E	36	Female	5	Cooking & Culinary Arts	20,500
6	F	32	Male	3	Home Improvement	32,500
7	G	24	Female	4	Fashion and Lifestyle	28,000
8	H	37	Male	5	Gaming and Esports	30,000
9	I	28	Female	6	Travel and Adventure	24,000
10	G	29	Female	4	Finance and Investment	35,000
11	K	33	Male	5	Fashion and Beauty	21,000
12	L	32	Female	4	Electronics and Gadgets	22,500
13	M	35	Male	5	Parenting and Childcare	29,000
14	N	35	Female	6	Fitness and Health	26,000
15	O	36	Male	5	Cooking & Culinary Arts	21,000
16	P	45	Female	4	Home Improvement	23,000
17	Q	29	Female	5	Fashion and Lifestyle	29,000
18	R	28	Male	4	Gaming and Esports	28,000
19	S	26	Female	5	Travel and Adventure	23,000
20	T	29	Female	6	Finance and Investment	32,000

The primary data sources for this study include in-depth interviews with the webcast streamers. These interviews are semi-structured and cover various aspects of self- leadership development, including motivation, goal-setting, self-control, adaptability, and resilience. The raw data collected from interviews, observations, and online sources have been securely stored and organized in a digital data repository maintained by the research team. This repository ensures the confidentiality and integrity of the data. The research team also plans to make de-identified datasets available for future research and educational purposes through a reputable data-sharing platform.

The participants in this study have diverse perspectives influenced by their regional backgrounds, personal experiences, and niches within the e-commerce streaming industry. These perspectives enrich the data collected and enable a more nuanced analysis of self-leadership development in the Chinese context. By expanding the scope of your study to include a larger and more diverse participant pool across China, we can gather a wealth of data that reflects the complexities and variations within the Chinese e-commerce streaming industry. This broader approach enhances the richness and applicability of your research findings.

The relationships and interactions between researchers and participants in this study were characterized by several key considerations. Prior to the research, we established ethical guidelines to ensure the well-being and privacy of the participants (Sanjari et al., 2014). Informed consent was obtained from each participant, outlining the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks, and the rights of the participants. Participants were informed that their identities would be kept confidential in any publications resulting from the research.

In this study, there were no preexisting relationships between the researchers and the webcast streamer participants. This was essential to maintain objectivity and avoid any potential biases in data collection and analysis. We approached the interactions with participants with a high degree of respect and sensitivity. They acknowledged the unique challenges and pressures faced by webcast streamers in the e-commerce industry (Katzman & Oehler, 2023; Mohallem et al., 2023)and aimed to create a safe and supportive environment for participants to share their experiences.

Throughout the research process, we maintained open and transparent communication with participants. Any questions or concerns raised by participants were addressed promptly, and we ensured that participants felt heard and valued. Given that webcast streamers often have busy schedules and demanding work commitments, we took care to minimize any disruptions to participants' routines. Interviews and observations were scheduled at times convenient for the participants.

We remained neutral and non-judgmental during interactions with participants. This was crucial to encourage participants to share their experiences honestly, even if they faced challenges or setbacks in their work. As the research progressed, we periodically shared preliminary findings with participants to gather their feedback and validate the interpretations of the data. This iterative process helped ensure the accuracy and credibility of the research. After the data collection phase, we continued to maintain ethical standards by respecting participants' wishes regarding their involvement in any follow-up research or publication of findings.

Overall, the interactions between researchers and participants were characterized by professionalism, respect, and a commitment to ethical research practices. These considerations helped establish a positive and trusting relationship between the two parties and contributed to the success of the research process .

Participant Recruitment

The recruitment process for participants in this study followed a structured approach to ensure ethical conduct and data collection integrity . Potential participants were initially contacted through email, which included an introduction to the research project, its purpose, and its significance. The email also contained an invitation to participate in the study. The email clearly outlined the informed consent process. Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary, and they were provided with a detailed consent form to review. As an incentive to participate, webcast streamers were offered a small financial compensation for their time and expertise. This compensation was provided as a token of appreciation for their involvement. The study protocol, including the recruitment process and informed consent procedures, was reviewed and approved by the institutional review board (IRB). The IRB ensured that the research adhered to ethical standards and was conducted with participants' well-being in mind.

The determination of the number of participants in this study was guided by the principle of data saturation (Farrelly, 2013). Data saturation refers to the point in qualitative research where new data no longer yield substantially new insights or themes. Given the complexity of the research questions and the diversity of experiences among webcast streamers, we aimed to achieve data saturation, rather than predefining a specific number of participants. The objective was to continue data collection until thematic saturation was reached.

Throughout the data collection process, there were no significant attrition or dropout rates among participants. All participants who initially agreed to participate in the study completed their interviews and provided data as per the research plan. Data collection was halted when thematic saturation was achieved. This decision was made collaboratively by the research team and was based on a rigorous analysis of the data collected up to that point. We determined that additional data collection would not likely yield substantially new insights into the research questions.

The study's purpose, as portrayed to participants, aligned with the purpose stated in the research proposal. Participants were informed that the study aimed to investigate the psychological factors influencing self-leadership development among webcast streamers in the e-commerce industry. The emphasis on exploring their experiences, motivations, and strategies for success was clearly communicated to participants.

Overall, the recruitment process adhered to ethical standards, ensured informed consent, and provided appropriate incentives to participants. The study's approach to participant recruitment and data collection was designed to maintain the integrity and validity of the research findings.

Participant Selection

The participants were selected using a purposive sampling method, specifically maximum variation sampling. The goal was to include a diverse range of webcast streamers from the e-commerce industry in China to capture a broad spectrum of experiences and perspectives. Purposive sampling was chosen because it allows researchers to intentionally select participants who can provide rich and varied insights into the phenomenon under investigation.

We selected participants by first identifying key characteristics that were relevant to the research questions. These characteristics included years of experience, niche markets, follower counts, and gender. Using their knowledge of the e-commerce webcast streaming industry and online platforms, we identified potential participants who met the defined characteristics. We reached out to these individuals via email or through professional networking platforms, introducing the study and inviting them to participate. To be eligible for participation, individuals had to meet the following criteria:

- Being actively engaged in webcast streaming in the e-commerce industry.
- Having an experience of more than three years in the business.
- Representing various niche markets within the e-commerce sector.
- Boasting a follower count exceeding two thousand.
- Including both female and male participants to ensure gender diversity.

We intentionally selected participants who varied in terms of the identified characteristics (Blandford, 2013). This approach aimed to capture a comprehensive view of the experiences and strategies of webcast streamers in the e-commerce industry. The data for this study were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted online. Participants were located across different regions of China, reflecting the nationwide scope of the e-commerce webcast streaming industry. Interviews were conducted over a period of several months to accommodate participants' schedules and ensure data richness.

Data Collection

The form of data collected for this study primarily consisted of in-depth interviews with webcast streamers in the e-commerce industry. These interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format (Blandford, 2013), allowing for flexibility in exploring participants'

experiences, motivations, self-leadership practices, and challenges. The data-collection protocol evolved from initial pilot interviews with a small group of webcast streamers. These pilot interviews helped refine the interview questions and approach, ensuring that they were relevant to the participants' experiences and the study's objectives.

Alterations to the data-collection strategy were made in response to evolving findings and the study rationale. As the research team gained a deeper understanding of the factors influencing self-leadership development among webcast streamers (Yu et al., 2023), additional probing questions were incorporated into the interview protocol to explore specific themes in greater depth. This iterative process ensured that the data collected were comprehensive and aligned with the study's goals.

The data-selection process involved conducting multiple rounds of interviews with webcast streamers. Participants were interviewed individually to allow for open and detailed discussions. Each interview typically lasted between 60 to 90 minutes, depending on the participant's willingness to share insights and experiences. The interviews were held in a private and comfortable setting, encouraging participants to express themselves freely.

The engagement with participants was extensive, focusing on achieving a deep understanding of their self-leadership practices, motivations, and challenges in the context of e-commerce webcast streaming. The research team conducted a total of 20 in-depth interviews with webcast streamers, ensuring a diverse sample that represented various niches within the e-commerce industry. These interviews provided rich and detailed qualitative data (Farrelly, 2013), capturing the nuances of self-leadership development among webcast streamers in China.

Reflexivity was an integral part of the data-collection process in this study. It involved the research team's ongoing awareness of their own perspectives, biases, and preconceptions and how these might influence interactions with participants and the interpretation of collected data (Creswell & Clark, 2004). To manage reflexivity, the research team engaged in regular discussions and reflections on their roles as researchers and the potential impact of their backgrounds and experiences on the data-collection process. These discussions were aimed at minimizing bias and ensuring that participants' voices and experiences were accurately represented in the study.

In terms of questions asked during data collection, the central questions in the interviews were open-ended. These questions encouraged participants to share their experiences, motivations, self-leadership practices, and challenges in their own words. Open-ended questions allowed for a deeper exploration of participants' perspectives and provided space for them to express themselves freely (Zhang et al., 2023).

Examples of central open-ended questions included: "Can you describe your journey as a webcast streamer in the e-commerce industry?" "What motivates you to engage in live webcast streaming?" "Could you share some of the challenges you've encountered during live broadcasts and how you've addressed them?" and "Tell me about your strategies for setting and achieving goals in your webcast streaming career." These open-ended questions encouraged participants to provide detailed narratives and insights, contributing to a rich dataset that captured the complexity of self-leadership development among webcast streamers in China.

Data-Analytic Strategies

The analysis process in this study followed a qualitative approach, specifically thematic analysis. Thematic analysis was chosen to identify, analyze, and report patterns (themes) within the collected data, allowing for a deeper understanding of the research questions. All interview transcripts were transcribed verbatim and reviewed for accuracy. The data included in the analysis consisted of transcripts of semi-structured interviews

with webcast streamers. The research team began by becoming familiar with the data. Each researcher read through the transcripts independently to gain an initial sense of the content. An initial set of codes was developed based on the research questions and key concepts related to self-leadership development among webcast streamers. This initial coding was done independently by multiple researchers.

We held regular group discussions to review and refine the initial codes. This process involved comparing and contrasting codes, identifying patterns, and discussing differences in interpretation. Through these discussions, the research team developed a shared understanding of the emerging themes. Once a set of preliminary codes was established, the research team worked collaboratively to define and name the emerging themes. Themes were identified based on patterns in the data and their relevance to the research questions.

The transcripts were then systematically coded using the refined coding scheme. Researchers reviewed and coded the data independently, with ongoing discussions to ensure consistency and accuracy. Data saturation was assessed to determine when additional data collection would not yield new insights or themes. This was an iterative process that continued until thematic saturation was reached. Themes were developed by grouping related codes together. Each theme was described and supported with illustrative quotes from the transcripts (Jonsen & Jehn, 2009).

To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, member checking was conducted. This involved sharing the identified themes with a subset of participants to validate the accuracy of the interpretations. The research team consisted of multiple coders who were experienced in qualitative research methods. Coders had diverse backgrounds in psychology, business, and sociology. Training sessions were held to ensure consistency in coding and to discuss the nuances of thematic analysis. Regular meetings and discussions were held throughout the analysis process to maintain inter-coder reliability.

Coding categories emerged primarily from the data, following an inductive approach. While the research questions provided a broad framework, the specific themes and categories were developed based on patterns observed in the participants' narratives. The units of analysis were entire interview transcripts. Each interview transcript represented a comprehensive dataset for a single participant.

The analytic scheme was developed through an iterative process. It evolved as we progressed through the analysis of the data. Initially, a set of broad codes and themes was established based on the research questions. These broad themes were further refined and subdivided into more specific sub-themes as the analysis proceeded.

Methodological Integrity

Cross-validation is a valuable method employed in research to enhance the credibility and reliability of findings, particularly in qualitative research (Creswell & Clark, 2004). It involves having multiple researchers independently analyze a subset of the data and then comparing their interpretations, insights, and conclusions (Sanjari et al., 2014). This approach serves several important purposes:

Cross-validation helps mitigate potential bias and subjectivity that individual researchers might introduce into the analysis process. Different researchers bring their unique perspectives, experiences, and assumptions to the table. By having multiple researchers independently review and interpret the data, the research team can identify and address any discrepancies or areas of potential bias.

During the course of this study, the cross-validation was performed to enhance the credibility and reliability of the findings. We assembled a research team with expertise in various relevant fields, including psychology, self-leadership, e-commerce, and qualitative research methods. This diverse team brought a range of perspectives to the

analysis. We carefully segmented the collected data into subsets, ensuring that each subset contained transcripts, notes, and materials from different webcast streamers. This approach aimed to capture the diversity of experiences and perspectives within the study. Each member of the research team was responsible for independently analyzing their assigned subset of data. We conducted thorough examinations of the materials, identifying recurring themes, patterns, and significant insights related to self-leadership development.

After completing the individual analyses, the research team convened to compare and discuss their findings. This collaborative process allowed for a comprehensive examination of the data and facilitated the identification of commonalities and differences in interpretation. In cases where there were discrepancies or differences in interpretation, the research team engaged in open discussions to resolve these issues. This involved revisiting the original data, seeking clarifications when possible, and refining the analysis criteria to ensure alignment. Finally, the findings were synthesized from the independent analyses into a coherent and comprehensive understanding of self-leadership development among e-commerce webcast streamers. This synthesis represented the collective insights gained from the different subsets of data.

Results

In this study on the role of psychological factors in self-leadership development among e- commerce webcast streamers in China, the qualitative interviews yielded a wealth of insights and nuanced perspectives. Below, we provide selected interview excerpts that shed light on key themes and findings from the study as follows:

Theme 1: *Motivation*

In the realm of webcast streaming, Participant A and Participant B offered insightful glimpses into the profound role of intrinsic motivation and passion in driving this dynamic industry. Participant A poignantly shared, "I started webcast streaming because I truly loved the products I promoted. It wasn't just about the money; it was about sharing my passion with my viewers. That intrinsic motivation kept me going, even on the toughest days." This declaration illuminated a fundamental aspect of webcast streamers' journeys – their intrinsic motivation, deeply rooted in a genuine affection forthe products they highlighted. It transcended financial gains and acted as an unwavering force that propelled them forward, even in the face of adversity.

Participant B enriched this narrative by noting, "Viewers could sense when you weren't genuinely interested in what you were selling. So, being passionate about the products isn't only good for me but also for business. It drove engagement and trust." This astute observation underscored that viewers were discerning; we could detect authenticity. Thus, the passion webcast streamers had for their products didn't only serve as a personal motivator but also significantly influenced business outcomes. Authenticity and genuine enthusiasm became linchpins for viewer engagement and trust, crucial elements in the webcast streaming realm.

These excerpts collectively emphasized the symbiotic relationship between intrinsic motivation, passion, and success among webcast streamers. Their genuine love for the products they endorsed fueled their intrinsic motivation, driving them to exhibit self-leadership qualities such as goal setting, self-control, and adaptability, all integral to their success. Simultaneously, this authenticity fortified their bond with viewers, nurturing deeper engagement and trust, which were pivotal for thriving in the e-commerce webcast streaming domain.

As they navigated the intricate landscape of self-leadership development among webcast streamers, these intermittent insights underscored the central role played by intrinsic motivation and passion. They served as compelling indicators of how authenticity and passion-driven intrinsic motivation intertwined in this industry, offering

rich avenues for further exploration and highlighting the profound significance of these factors in the dynamic world of e-commerce webcast streaming.

Theme 2: *Self-Control*

Participant C provided valuable insights into the challenges associated with maintaining self-control during live broadcasts, especially when faced with negative comments: "Maintaining self-control during live broadcasts can be challenging, especially when faced with negative comments. But I've learnt to keep my cool and not let it bother me. It is critical for maintaining a pleasant atmosphere." The emotional demands of webcast streaming are highlighted by this participant's experience, as is the need for streamers to build self-control skills to effectively manage these obstacles.

In addition, Participant D described their proactive approach to self-leadership, highlighting the value of discipline and routine: "I stick to rigorous schedules, which demands discipline. There is no one instructing me what to do; it is entirely up to me. I've developed a routine that helps me stay on track." This participant's account underscores the self-discipline required to excel in the webcast streaming industry. Their routine-based approach reflects how webcast streamers take ownership of their self-leadership development. Together, these excerpts shed light on the strategies employed by webcast streamers to navigate the emotional ups and downs of live broadcasting, emphasizing the critical role of composure and self-discipline in maintaining a positive viewer experience and achieving success in the field.

Theme 3: *Adaptability*

Participant E and Participant F provide invaluable insights into the dynamic and ever-evolving nature of the e-commerce industry and highlight the crucial role of adaptability in the self-leadership of webcast streamers. Participant E aptly observes, "The e-commerce industry changes so fast; what worked last month might not work today. You have to be quick on your feet and adapt to new trends and technologies." This perspective underscores the relentless pace at which the e-commerce landscape evolves. The strategies and techniques that were effective in the recent past may no longer yield the same results. Therefore, webcast streamers must possess the agility to swiftly respond to shifting consumer preferences, emerging trends, and evolving technologies. This adaptability ensures that they remain relevant and effective in a field where staying ahead of the curve is imperative.

Participant F concisely encapsulates the nature of the job, stating, "Sometimes, technical issues happen during live streams. You have to be ready to troubleshoot on the fly. It's all part of the job." This statement underscores the unpredictable nature of webcast streaming, where technical glitches and unforeseen challenges can arise during live broadcasts. In such instances, the ability to troubleshoot and adapt in real-time becomes an essential aspect of a webcast streamer's role. It not only ensures the seamless continuation of broadcasts but also reflects the streamer's capacity to maintain composure and professionalism under pressure.

These perspectives collectively underscore the paramount importance of adaptability in the self-leadership of webcast streamers. The e-commerce industry's rapid evolution demands that streamers possess the agility to pivot in response to changing circumstances. Adaptability emerges as a fundamental component of their self-leadership, enabling them to navigate the fast-paced, competitive, and unpredictable terrain of webcast streaming. In essence, their capacity to adapt becomes a hallmark of their resilience and their ability to thrive in an environment where change is the only constant.

Theme 4: *Resilience*

Participant G and Participant H offer profound insights into the indispensable quality of resilience within the realm of webcast streaming. Participant G aptly states, "Failure is part of the journey. I've had broadcasts where nobody bought anything, and it

was disheartening. But you can't let that deter you. You bounce back and keep going." This perspective highlights the inevitability of setbacks in the webcast streaming profession. It underscores that these setbacks are not a reflection of failure but rather an inherent part of the journey towards success. The ability to rebound from disappointments and continue striving is a hallmark of resilience, a quality that distinguishes successful webcast streamers.

Participant H reinforces the importance of resilience, noting, "Stress is always there, but I've learned to cope. I take breaks, practice mindfulness, and talk to fellow streamers for support. It's about staying mentally strong." This statement underscores that stress is an omnipresent companion in the world of webcast streaming. However, the key lies in how streamers manage and overcome stress. Practices such as taking breaks, mindfulness, and seeking support from peers are emblematic of a resilient approach. These strategies enable webcast streamers to not only navigate the challenges effectively but also maintain their mental fortitude in the face of adversity.

These excerpts collectively emphasize the paramount importance of resilience among webcast streamers. In acknowledging setbacks as an intrinsic aspect of their profession (Troy et al., 2023), they exemplify the resilience needed to persevere and ultimately succeed. The strategies they employ, ranging from a resilient mindset to stress management techniques and seeking support, underscore the pivotal role of resilience in the development of self-leadership within the demanding and ever-evolving world of webcast streaming. In essence, resilience becomes the cornerstone of their ability to weather storms and emerge stronger in the highly competitive and dynamic e-commerce streaming industry.

Overall, these interview excerpts illustrate the complex interplay of motivation, self-control, adaptability, and resilience in the self-leadership development of e-commerce webcast streamers in China. The findings underscore the significance of these psychological factors in shaping their success within the dynamic and competitive e-commerce landscape.

Discussion

The study found that intrinsic motivational factors play a substantial role in the development of self-leadership skills among webcast streamers in the e-commerce industry. Passion for the products they promote and the genuine enthusiasm they have for interacting with viewers serve as powerful drivers of self-leadership. Webcast streamers who are genuinely passionate about the items they showcase on their broadcasts tend to exhibit higher levels of self-motivation, self-control, and adaptability. This passion not only sustains their energy and motivation throughout live broadcasts but also fosters a sense of authenticity and relatability with their audience, which are key components of self-leadership. The study revealed that this intrinsic motivation contributes significantly to their ability to set and pursue goals, manage stress, and overcome challenges, all of which were fundamental aspects of self-leadership development.

We found webcast streamers in China employed a range of self-control strategies and demonstrated adaptability to successfully navigate the dynamic and challenging environment of e-commerce live streaming. Self-control strategies observed in the study included mindfulness techniques, deep breathing exercises, and cognitive reframing. These strategies helped streamers manage their emotions, particularly in response to viewer feedback and unexpected technical issues. By maintaining emotional composure, webcast streamers could stay focused and provide a more engaging and relatable experience for their audience.

Adaptability was another critical aspect of self-leadership development among webcast streamers. The study found that successful streamers were highly adaptable and quick to respond to changing circumstances during live broadcasts. They stayed updated on emerging trends and technology in the e-commerce industry, allowing them to incorporate new strategies and tools into their broadcasts. This adaptability not only enhanced their performance but also contributed to their ability to set and achieve goals, as they could pivot their strategies when necessary.

Overall, the effective use of self-control strategies and adaptability positively impacted self-leadership development among webcast streamers in China. These skills enabled them to maintain composure under pressure (Roffarello & De Russis, 2023; Tang et al., 2022), to deliver high-quality broadcasts, and to build strong connections with their audience (Neck et al., 2013a; Sjöblom et al., 2022).

Resilience played a vital role in the self-leadership development of webcast streamers in China's e-commerce industry. The study revealed that these streamers often faced a range of challenges, including technical issues during live broadcasts, fluctuating viewer engagement, and intense competition. Resilience enabled them to bounce back from setbacks, to adapt to changing circumstances, and to maintain their enthusiasm and motivation (Troy et al., 2023).

Webcast streamers developed resilience through several strategies. Regular breaks and physical activity were commonly used to manage stress and prevent burnout. Seeking support from fellow streamers and participating in peer networks provided opportunities for sharing experiences and coping strategies. Additionally, some streamers engage in mindfulness practices to enhance their emotional resilience, helping them stay calm and composed during challenging moments.

Resilience contributed significantly to self-leadership development by enabling webcast streamers to persist in the face of adversity, maintained their self-motivation, and continued setting and achieving their goals (Troy et al., 2023). It acted as a protective factor that ensured their long-term success in the e-commerce streaming industry. Table 2 provides a concise overview of the main findings and their implications for self-leadership among webcast streamers in the context of the Chinese e-commerce industry.

Table 2 *Key Findings*

Key Findings	Implications for Self-Leadership Development
Intrinsic Motivation	Passion for products and genuine enthusiasm are significant drivers of self-leadership. Intrinsic motivation sustains energy, motivation, and authenticity, contributing to goal setting, stress management, and resilience.
Self-Control Strategies	Employing self-control strategies like mindfulness and deep breathing helps manage emotions during live broadcasts. Emotional composure enhances audience engagement and contributes to self-leadership development.
Adaptability	Successful webcast streamers exhibit adaptability by staying informed about industry trends and quickly adjusting strategies to changing circumstances. This flexibility enhances performance and goal achievement, displaying effective self- leadership.
Resilience	Resilience is crucial for self-leadership development. Streamers overcome challenges, adapt to changes, and maintain motivation through strategies like breaks, physical activity, peer support, and mindfulness. Resilience ensures long-term success in the e-commerce streaming industry.

The interviews demonstrated that the growth of self-leadership in webcast streamers was significantly influenced by intrinsic motivation (Fishbach & Woolley, 2022). Participants demonstrated genuine enthusiasm for the goods they advertise, highlighting how this enthusiasm not only motivated them personally but also improved their performance as streamers. This is consistent with current research on self-leadership, which emphasizes the significance of internal drive in defining and achieving goals (Knotts et al., 2022a; Neck et al., 2013). The results imply that encouraging and upholding this intrinsic desire may be a critical component of webcast streamers' self-leadership development (Mohallem et al., 2023; Wen, 2023). Both of these queries were likely to yield useful information about the psychological factors that encouraged webcast broadcasters to develop self-leadership.

Furthermore, they were consistent with the themes raised in the literature review, offering a thorough evaluation of the specific difficulties and driving forces existing within this industry. A combination of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, including interviews, surveys, and observations, may be effective in fully capturing the complex nature of webcast streamers' experiences. The ability to maintain self-control during live broadcasts was a prominent theme in the interviews (Jonsen & Jehn, 2009; Roffarello & De Russis, 2023; Tang et al., 2022). Participants underlined the importance of being calm in the face of negative remarks or unexpected obstacles. The discipline required to stick to self-imposed deadlines and routines was also highlighted. These findings are congruent with the literature on self-leadership, which emphasizes self-control as an important component of self-leadership (Latham & Pinder, 2005).

We found that gaining self-control and discipline skills may help webcast broadcasters develop a sense of self-leadership. The interviews also revealed the dynamic character of the e-commerce market. Webcast broadcasters must constantly adapt to evolving trends and technology in order to remain competitive. This adaptability is consistent with the self-leadership principle of self-regulation (Roffarello & De Russis, 2023; Tang et al., 2022), which requires keeping an eye on and adapting to changing surroundings (Neck et al., 2013; Sjöblom et al., 2022). The study underlines the importance of adaptation as a critical component of the development of self-leadership in this specific situation.

In the interviews, resilience emerged as a crucial psychological trait c. Participants offered coping mechanisms and recovery techniques while acknowledging that stress and setbacks are inevitable in their line of work. This is in line with the resilience quality of self-leadership, which calls for bouncing back from failures while keeping one's vitality (Breevaart et al., 2016). The study discovered that for webcast streamers to develop self-leadership, building resilience and stress management abilities was essential (Velana et al., 2022). The results also showed how unique self-leadership was among webcast broadcasters in terms of culture and environment (Harari et al., 2021; Knotts et al., 2022). Although self-leadership ideas are universal, this particular cultural and professional setting has its own unique ways of presenting and applying these ideas . This highlights how crucial it is to include cultural nuances while researching self- leadership in varied contexts.

Limitations and Future Research

The study's limitations include its qualitative nature. Quantitative methodologies could be used in future study to validate these findings across a larger sample size. Furthermore, greater research into the influence of external factors like platform dynamics and industry trends in determining self-leadership development among webcast streamers is warranted. The extremely small sample size of individuals from China, is one of the study's key drawbacks. While the findings are insightful into the experiences of webcast streamers in this unique location, their generalizability to a larger audience may be

restricted. To improve the external validity of the findings, future research could benefit from larger and more diverse samples. The study concentrated on a specific cultural and regional context, which may limit its application to webcast streamers from other cultural backgrounds. Cultural influences can have a substantial impact on self- leadership development, and future research should incorporate cross-cultural comparisons to investigate potential differences (Spector, 2019).

Participants in qualitative interviews may be prone to self-report bias, in which they provide socially acceptable answers or fail to accurately portray their experiences (Creswell & Clark, 2004). While every attempt was taken to confirm the validity of the responses, future study could include observational or longitudinal data to supplement the interviews. The data for this study was gathered entirely through qualitative interviews. A more thorough method that includes questionnaires, observational data, or diary studies could provide a fuller knowledge of self-leadership growth among webcast streamers.

The study captured webcast streamers' experiences at a precise point in time. Temporal considerations, such as career stage and industry trends, are likely to influence self-leadership growth. Longitudinal research could shed light on how self-leadership evolves over time. Future study could build on the qualitative findings by undertaking quantitative studies to confirm and generalize the observed connections between psychological characteristics and the development of self-leadership among webcast streamers. This approach would allow statistical analysis to be used to measure the strength and importance of these correlations.

Future research should look into webcast streamers' experiences in different cultural contexts to better understand the role of culture on self-leadership development. Comparing and contrasting findings from other regions can provide a more comprehensive picture of culture's influence in self-leadership. A longitudinal approach would provide insights into how a webcast streamer's self-leadership skills improve and alter over the course of their career. Researchers could see changes in motivation, self-control, adaptability, and resilience in subjects over time.

Combining qualitative and quantitative tools, like surveys and interviews, can provide a more comprehensive picture of the development of self-leadership. Quantitative data can provide statistical validation, whereas qualitative data can provide context and depth. Future research should look into the impact of external elements including platform dynamics, technology improvements, and industry trends on the growth of self-leadership among webcast streamers. Understanding how these components interact with psychological factors is critical for a thorough examination. Researchers can investigate the efficacy of interventions aimed at improving self-leadership qualities in webcast streamers. Creating and putting to the test training programs that focus on motivation, self-control, flexibility, and resilience could provide practical insights for personal and professional development within the sector.

Implications for Practice

Understanding the significance of intrinsic drive, self-control, flexibility, and resilience can help streamers build personal growth plans. They can concentrate on cultivating their passion, practicing self-control strategies, remaining adaptable, and developing resilience in order to achieve in their careers (Indrawati et al., 2022; Smith, 2022). Recognizing the importance of these psychological aspects in the development of self-leadership among webcast streamers can inform recruitment, training, and support programs for enterprises. Creating an atmosphere that fosters intrinsic drive, provides tools for self-control, encourages adaptability, and promotes resilience can help webcast streamers and, by extension, the business. Webcast streamers should actively nurture their intrinsic motivation by identifying their passions and aligning them with the products or services they promote. This can not only enhance personal fulfillment but also contribute to increased viewer engagement and trust (Gong et al., 2023).

Developing self-control skills is critical for remaining calm during live broadcasts. Streamers can benefit from strategies like mindfulness, deep breathing, and cognitive reframing to effectively deal with unpleasant comments or unforeseen problems. Given the ever-changing nature of the e-commerce market, broadcasters must invest in continuing training and professional development to remain adaptive (Indrawati et al., 2022; Smith, 2022). They can improve their flexibility by being educated about emerging trends and technology and actively exploring opportunities for skill growth. Building resilience is essential for dealing with setbacks and stress. Streamers can incorporate stress management methods such as regular breaks, physical activity, and seeking assistance from peers or mental health specialists as needed into their routines (Velana et al., 2022). By recognizing the issues that webcast streamers experience and providing resources for stress management and personal growth, e-commerce enterprises can foster a supportive work environment for them. It might be very advantageous to provide mental health support and counseling services.

Companies can create and implement training programs aimed at improving self-leadership skills in their webcast streamers. To assist personal and professional growth, these programs might include themes such as goal planning, time management, and emotional intelligence. Providing streamers with regular feedback and praise can enhance motivation and self-esteem (Indrawati et al., 2022; Smith, 2022). Companies can set up processes for delivering constructive comments and recognizing the accomplishments of webcast broadcasters, promoting a good and stimulating environment.

E-commerce platforms can invest in improving their technical support to reduce interruptions and technical glitches during live broadcasts. Providing webcast streamers with reliable tools and resources can enhance their self-control and adaptability. Webcast streamers can establish peer support networks or communities where they can share experiences, strategies, and emotional support. Collaborative efforts can help address the challenges and stressors unique to the profession. Experienced streamers can mentor newcomers in the industry, offering guidance and sharing insights on self-leadership development. Mentorship programs can facilitate knowledge transfer and professional growth.

Researchers should continue to explore the evolving landscape of self-leadership among webcast streamers, considering cultural and contextual variations. Ongoing research can provide updated insights and strategies for self-leadership development. The findings from research on self-leadership can be disseminated through workshops, seminars, and industry conferences to benefit webcast streamers and e-commerce businesses. Collaboration between academia and industry can foster a culture of continuous learning and improvement. Incorporating these practical implications into the daily practices of webcast streamers and e-commerce companies can contribute to the personal and professional development of individuals in the industry, enhance their effectiveness, and promote a positive and thriving e-commerce ecosystem and beyond.

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