# User and Gratifications Theory in Knowing Donation Intentions During Live Streaming

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## Abstract

This study investigates the factors that influence viewers' donation intentions to content creators in the context of live streaming in Indonesia by applying the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT). This research framework focuses on four independent variables, namely entertainment, escapism, social interaction, and social identity, which influence the dependent variable of donation intention. This quantitative study involved 189 respondents through a purposive sampling technique, with data collected using an online questionnaire and analyzed using regression analysis. The results show that the research model explains 52.7% of the variance in donation intention, with all independent variables contributing statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). Entertainment is the factor with the largest influence ($\beta=0.829$), followed by social interaction ($\beta=0.358$), social identity ($\beta=0.178$), and escape ($\beta=0.141$). These findings emphasize the importance of entertainment value, emotional connection, and community identity in motivating financial support from audiences. This research provides important insights for content creators and digital platforms to increase audience engagement and monetization through content strategy management.

**Keywords: live streaming, content creators, donation intentions, user and gratifications theory.**

## INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Indonesia has experienced significant growth in content creation, particularly through platforms such as YouTube and TikTok. This growth is characterized by a vibrant ecosystem where creators interact directly with their audiences, often through live streaming sessions. Audiences are increasingly giving money to creators during live streaming, reflecting a unique cultural shift in the consumption and monetization of digital content. According to research "The Influence of Content Creation, Collaboration, Instagram Endorsement on Consumer Decisions (Case Study of 'Bella Saphira's Make-Up)," (2023), effective content creation can increase brand consumption by up to 89.7%. This dynamic demonstrates the potential for creators not only to entertain but also to drive economic activity through their digital presence.

The Indonesian market is particularly well-suited for this trend, as its young and tech-savvy population increasingly turns to social media for entertainment and social interaction. As a result, creators have emerged as influential figures, often shaping consumer preferences and behavior. The ability of content creators to connect with their audiences on a personal level fosters a sense of community and further encourages financial support through donations (Zhao & Yao, 2020). This context provides the foundation for a deeper exploration of the motivations behind audience donations, specifically through the framework of the Uses and Gratifications Theory.

Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) provides a powerful framework for understanding the motivations behind media consumption and user engagement. Originally developed to explain traditional media usage, UGT posits that individual actively seek media to satisfy specific needs, such as entertainment, information, and social interaction (Lev-On, 2015). In the context of social media and content creation, this theory is particularly relevant because it enables researchers to explore how different gratifications influence user behavior, including the intention to donate to content creators. In UGT, audiences engage with media content based on their perceived needs and the gratifications they seek to obtain. For example, viewers may seek entertainment, an escape from everyday life, social interaction with other viewers, or a sense of belonging to a community that aligns with their social identity (Hsu & Lin, 2021; Humaizi et al., 2020). This framework serves as an important tool for analyzing the drivers of consumer donation, as it highlights the motivations that drive audience engagement with content creators. By applying UGT, this study aims to empirically investigate how enjoyment, escapism, social interaction, and social identity function as independent variables that influence the dependent variable of the audience's intention to donate.

Furthermore, the application of Uses and Gratifications Theory in the context of live streaming services has gained attention in recent research, emphasizing the importance of understanding audience motivations in the unique digital landscape (Hou et al., 2019). Audiences navigate through various content options, and their decision to financially support a content creator reflects the gratifications they seek and obtain. This research will contribute to the existing literature by providing insights into how these motivations manifest in the context of Indonesian audiences, thereby enriching the understanding of the evolving relationship between content creators and their audiences.

The relationship between content creation and audience engagement in Indonesia is an intriguing area of study. By leveraging the Uses and Gratifications Theory, this study aims to uncover the motivating factors that encourage consumer donations to content creators, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of digital content monetization in the Indonesian market. Despite the growing interest in online donations to content creators, there remains a significant gap in the literature regarding the motivating factors behind donation behavior, particularly in the context of Indonesian audiences. While several studies have explored the factors influencing donation behavior in various contexts, such as charity fundraising and blood donation, the specific motivations driving audiences to financially support content creators during live streaming remain largely under-researched (Manggarani & Ahmad, 2020; Shier & Handy, 2012). Existing research has primarily focused on offline donation behavior, often failing to account for the unique dynamics of online interactions and the role of social media in shaping such behavior (Shier & Handy, 2012; Sisco & Weber, 2019).

Additionally, the application of established theories, such as Uses and Gratifications Theory, to understand the motivations behind online donations is still in its early stages. Studies have explored the influence of social networks and individual characteristics on donation behavior, yet their application to the online environment where content creators operate is often less effective (Chetioui et al., 2022; Joanly et al., 2022). For instance, live streaming platforms like YouTube and TikTok, particularly in Indonesia where cultural factors significantly shape consumer behavior, have not sufficiently discussed the influence of social interaction and sense of community on donation intentions (Aji & Muslichah, 2022; Hamby, 2016). Furthermore, existing literature tends to overlook the relationship between multiple independent variables, such as entertainment, escapism, social interaction, and social identity, and how these variables collectively influence audiences' intentions to donate. This lack of comprehensive understanding highlights the need for empirical investigations

specifically targeting audiences in Indonesia, which has unique cultural and social dynamics (Merav & Lena, 2011; Wei et al., 2021). By addressing these gaps, this study aims to provide insights into the motivations behind audience donations to content creators, thereby enhancing the understanding of digital content monetization in Indonesia.

The main objective of this study is to empirically examine the factors driving consumer donation behavior toward content creators in Indonesia using the Uses and Gratifications Theory framework. This study will focus on four independent variables: entertainment, escapism, social interaction, and social identity, and their expected relationships with the dependent variable, namely audience intention to donate.

## METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research design and utilized a structured questionnaire to collect data from live streaming audiences in Surakarta, Indonesia. The focus of this research was on live streaming donors and individuals with an intention to donate. These approaches provided a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing donation behavior in the context of live streaming content.

Respondents were selected using a purposive sampling technique, based on specific criteria relevant to this study. The criteria for inclusion were as follows: 1) Individuals who had previously donated to content creators during live streaming sessions on platforms such as YouTube or TikTok; and 2) Individuals who had not yet donated but demonstrated a clear intention to donate in the future based on their engagement with live streaming content.

The study targeted a sample size of 200 respondents, which was deemed sufficient to achieve statistical significance and ensure the reliability of the findings. This sample size enabled robust analysis using SPSS software, facilitating the examination of the relationship between the independent variables (entertainment, escapism, social interaction, and social identity) and the dependent variable, namely the audience's intention to donate.

Data collection was conducted through an online questionnaire specifically designed to address the context of live streaming in Indonesia. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS software, focusing on the relationships between the studied variables.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Researchers performed a regression analysis to examine the relationship between the intention to donate and the statistically significant influences of entertainment, escapism, social interaction, and social identity. Table 3 presents the proportion of variance in the dependent variable (intention to donate) explained by the proposed model. The R-squared value of 0.527 indicates that this model accounts for 52.7% of the variance in the intention to donate.

### Table 1. Sample Description

| | | N | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Gender** | Male | 156 | 82% |
| | Female | 33 | 18% |
| | **Total** | 189 | 100% |
| **Age** | 18-24 | 13 | 8,4% |
| | 25-30 | 47 | 24,8% |
| | 31-40 | 87 | 46,1% |
| | 41-50 | 17 | 12,6% |
| | 51-60 | 12 | 6,3% |
| | 61-70 | 1 | 1,5% |
| | **Total** | 189 | 100% |
| **Occupation** | Students | 11 | 5,8% |
| | Entrepreneur | 150 | 79,3% |
| | Fulltime Professional | 28 | 14,9% |
| | **Total** | 189 | 100% |

**Source:** Author

### Table 2. Reliability Analysis and Descriptive Statistics of the Constructs

| Scale | N of items | Cronbach Alpha |
|---|---|---|
| Intention to donate | 4 | 0,799 |
| Enjoyment | 4 | 0,827 |
| Escapism | 4 | 0,817 |
| Social interaction | 4 | 0,829 |
| Social Identity | 4 | 0,830 |

**Source:** Author

### Table 3. Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0,726 | 0, 527 | 0,516 | 1,657 |
| a. | Predictors: (Constant), Social Identity, Escapism, Social Interaction, Enjoyment | | | |

**Source:** Author

Table 4 displays the Anova test's results. Explaining that Sig = .000, i.e., p < 0.0005, indicates a statistically significant result in the model summary table.

### Table 4. Anova

| | Model | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 561.932 | 4 | 140.483 | 51.184 | .000b |
| | Residual | 505.020 | 184 | 2.745 | | |
| | Total | 1066.952 | 188 | | | |
| a. Dependent Variable: Intention to donate | | | | | | |
| b. Predictors: (Constant), Social Identity, Escapism, Social Interaction, Enjoyment | | | | | | |

**Source:** Author

Table 5 shows the variables that provide the greatest contribution to the intention to donate. The significance column (sig.) shows that entertainment, escapism, social interaction, and social identity statistically have a significant influence ($p < 0.05$) on the intention to donate.

**Table 5. Regression Coefficient**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 3,415 | 0, 856 | | 3,988 | 0,000 |
| | Enjoyment | 0,829 | 0,175 | 0,815 | 4,748 | 0,000 |
| | Escapism | 0,141 | 0,057 | 0, 158 | 2,472 | 0, 014 |
| | Social Interaction | 0,358 | 0,161 | 0,358 | 2,226 | 0,027 |
| | Social Identity | 0,178 | 0,059 | 0,191 | 3,005 | 0,003 |
| a. Dependent Variable: Intention to donate | | | | | | |

**Source:** Author

With beta values of entertainment (enjoyment) ($\beta = 0.829$), escapism ($\beta = 0.141$), social interaction ($\beta = 0.358$), and social identity ($\beta = 0.178$) showing a positive influence on the intention to donate.

The positive relationship between entertainment and donation intent highlights the importance of creators prioritizing entertainment value in their broadcasts. When presented with engaging and entertaining content, audiences are more likely to donate. Therefore, creators should focus on producing high-quality content that can captivate audiences. This can include the use of humor, storytelling, and interactive elements that enhance the viewing experience. Additionally, creators can leverage audience feedback to tailor their content to meet audience preferences, thereby increasing loyalty and financial support.

The significant impact of escapism on donation intent suggests that creators can strategically position their broadcasts as a form of escape for audiences. By creating immersive experiences that allow audiences to temporarily escape from their daily routines, creators can strengthen emotional connections and encourage financial contributions. For example, creating content that transports audiences to different worlds or scenarios can fulfill their need for escapism. Platforms like TikTok and YouTube can also promote content that effectively fulfills this purpose, thereby increasing engagement and donations.

The findings related to social interactions highlight the importance of building community in the live streaming environment. Creators should actively engage their audiences through real-time interactions, such as responding to comments, hosting Q&A sessions, and encouraging audience participation in the content creation process. By fostering a sense of community, creators can increase emotional investment and audience loyalty, which is critical to driving donations. Platforms can support this by providing tools that facilitate interaction, such as chat features, polls, and collaborative content creation options.

The positive relationship between social identity and intention to donate suggests that creators need to build a strong sense of community identity among their audiences. By aligning their content with the values and interests of their target audience, creators can create a sense of community that motivates viewers to contribute financially. This can include creating content that reflects the cultural and social identities of their audiences and strengthens their connection to the creator. Platforms can also help by promoting creators who align with specific communities, which increases the visibility of content that aligns with

the audience's identity.

**CONCLUSION**

This study successfully identified and confirmed the factors driving consumer donation behavior toward content creators in the context of live streaming in Indonesia. Empirical findings indicate that entertainment, escapism, social interaction, and social identity significantly influence audiences' intention to donate. These results contribute to the existing literature by providing a deeper understanding of the motivations that drive financial support for content creators, especially in the rapidly growing digital content consumption landscape. The positive relationships found between these variables and an intention to donate highlight the importance of emotional and social factors in driving audience engagement and loyalty. The implications of these findings are highly relevant for content creators and digital platforms operating in the live streaming industry. By prioritizing entertainment, creating escapist experiences, building social interactions, and developing a strong community identity, content creators can increase their chances of receiving donations.

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