

The Promotional Power of Social Platform Marketing in the Spending Behavior of College of Accountancy and Business Administration Students at Northeastern College

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how social media marketing (SMM) influences consumer spending behavior in New Public Market at Santiago City's retail industry. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok have become key tools for businesses to connect with customers, raise brand awareness, and encourage purchases through targeted ads, influencer promotions, and customer reviews.

Using a quantitative descriptive research design, the study gathered data from 25 participants of consumers. The results show that social media plays an important role in helping consumers discover new products, learn about brands, and engage with promotions. Features like online reviews, recommendations, and discounts were found to strongly influence buying decisions. Retailers noted that customer feedback and high-quality posts helped build trust with their audience.

However, both retailers and consumers face challenges. Retailers struggle with small budgets, limited skills in using social media tools, and competition. Consumers sometimes doubt the trustworthiness of online promotions and face issues like slow internet connections. Despite these problems, social media remains a powerful way for businesses to connect with customers and grow.

The findings provide practical advice for retailers to improve their social media strategies by creating engaging and reliable content while addressing challenges.

Keyword: Social Media Marketing, Retail, Spending Behavior.

DEDICATION

This research study is proudly dedicated to the support system of the researchers:

To their beloved parents, your continuous inspiration fueled the motivation in making this research happen,

To the respondents/ students who actively share your thoughts and experiences,

To Northeastern College and the College of Accountancy, Business Administration, and Management Accounting (CABAMA), for pushing through limits that the researchers didn't believe might happen

Above all, to Almighty God, Your unmeasured love and guidance keeps the researcher inspired and strive more.

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This research would is not close to possible without the unending support and guidance of the researchers' friends, co- workers, and family. Heartfelt gratitude is not more than enough for the love and inspiration they've given, to make halfway on their kindness, this study is a living proof of your impact to the success of this project.

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CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

➤ *The Problem and It's Background*

In today's digital era, social media has transcended its role as a communication tool and emerged as a powerful platform for influencing consumer behavior and driving business strategies. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok have revolutionized how individuals interact with brands, make purchasing decisions, and share experiences. Research indicates that social media's ability to deliver real-time engagement, personalized interactions, and peer-driven content has positioned it as a cornerstone of modern marketing (Alalwan et al., 2020).

Social media marketing (SMM) has become indispensable for businesses in the retail industry. By leveraging platforms' interactive nature, companies can create tailored content, respond to customer feedback, and implement cost-effective campaigns. Studies reveal that influencer endorsements and user-generated content play a critical role in shaping consumer attitudes and purchase intentions (Lim et al., 2021). Furthermore, research highlights that online word of mouth and brand trust amplified through social media can significantly increase customer engagement and loyalty (Gao & Feng, 2023).

This study examines the impact of social media marketing on consumer purchase behavior within Santiago City's retail sector, a commercial hub in Isabela where businesses actively utilize social media to connect with diverse demographics. Understanding how factors like influencer marketing, targeted advertisements, and peer reviews influence local consumer behavior is vital as digital platforms increasingly shape purchasing decisions (Bratkov, 2024).

By analyzing these dynamics, this research seeks to bridge the gap in understanding how SMM impacts retail businesses in Santiago City. It aims to provide actionable insights for optimizing digital strategies to enhance sales, customer satisfaction, and competitiveness. As the retail sector continues adapting to evolving trends, understanding the interplay between consumer behavior and social media remains crucial for business sustainability and growth (Pentina et al., 2022).

The rapid digitalization of consumer behavior has reshaped marketing strategies, making social media a pivotal tool in modern marketing. Social media marketing leverages platforms' extensive reach and personalization capabilities to engage consumers and drive sales (Alalwan et al., 2022). In the retail sector, platforms such as Facebook and Instagram have become critical in influencing consumer perceptions, preferences, and purchasing decisions (Lim et al., 2023).

Santiago City, a growing commercial hub in Isabela, has witnessed an increased reliance on social media marketing. Businesses in the city, from small enterprises to larger retail chains, recognize the potential of these platforms to reach diverse consumer groups efficiently. Social media channels allow businesses to gather market insights, promote products, and engage directly with customers, thereby enhancing brand visibility and customer loyalty (Gao & Feng, 2023).

Consumer behavior in Santiago City is influenced by elements such as influencer endorsements, peer reviews, and tailored advertisements. Research highlights that social media fosters proactive consumer engagement by providing extensive product information and enabling interactive communication, which enhances consumer trust and brand loyalty (Pentina et al., 2023). However, despite its growing significance, the local impact of social media marketing on purchase behavior in Santiago City remains underexplored.

By examining these dynamics, this study seeks to uncover how social media marketing strategies influence consumer purchasing behavior in Santiago City. Insights from this research will help businesses adapt to evolving digital trends and optimize their marketing efforts to meet consumer demands, ensuring long-term growth and competitiveness (Bratkov, 2024).

➤ *Statement of the Problem*

This study aims to determine “The Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer’s Purchasing Behavior”. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

- *What is the Demographic Profile of the Respondents in Terms of*
 - ✓ Age
 - ✓ Gender
 - ✓ Occupation
- What are social media marketing utilized by consumers in Santiago City?
- What are the factors that influence consumer purchase behavior in Santiago City?

➤ *Theoretical Framework*

This study is anchored on the Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). The Social Exchange Theory posits that relationships are based on a cost-benefit analysis, where individuals engage in interactions when the perceived benefits outweigh the costs. In the context of social media marketing (SMM), this means consumers are more likely to engage with brands that offer value-added services, quality content, discounts, or promotions that outweigh the time, effort, or money spent. Retailers use SMM to build mutual exchanges by providing personalized interactions and fostering customer loyalty. Meanwhile, the Technology Acceptance Model explains how users adopt and utilize technology based on perceived usefulness and ease of use. This framework highlights how platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok simplify interactions between retailers and consumers, enabling businesses to meet consumer demands effectively. By integrating these theories, the study explores how SMM strategies influence consumer behavior and how technology adoption facilitates these exchanges in Santiago City's retail industry.

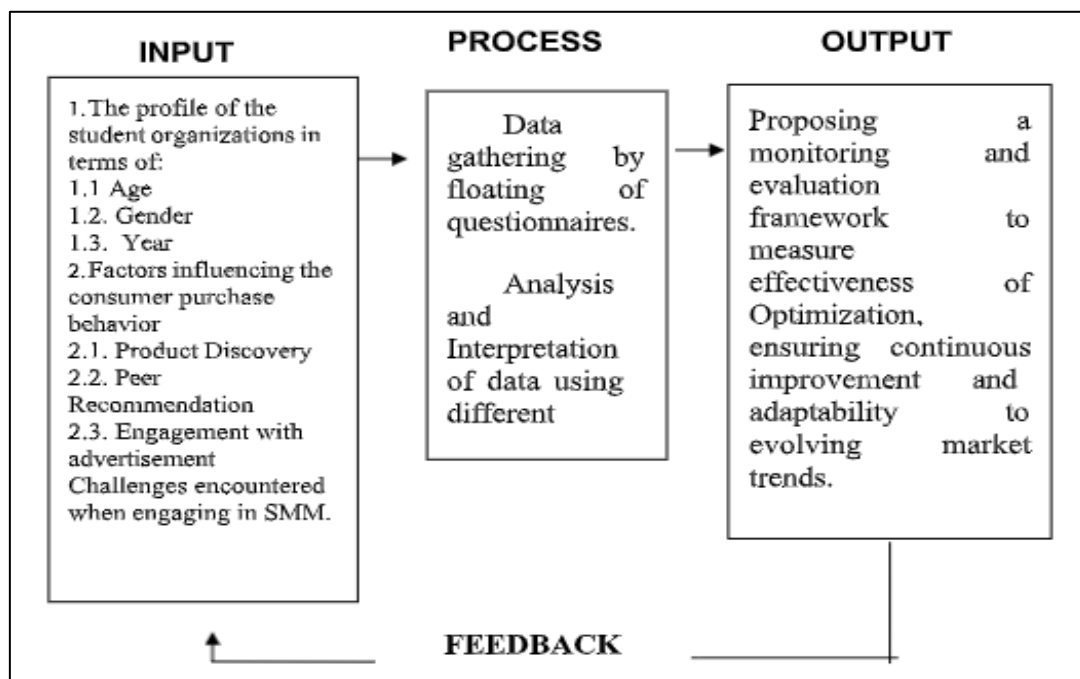


Fig 1 The Paradigm of the Study

The paradigm shows the flow of the study to be assessed by the researchers in which the input in the study contains the independent variables which include the profile of the respondents, utilization of SMM by retailers, factors influence to the consumer purchase behavior, and the challenges encountered by consumers in engaging in SMM. The researcher will obtain data by floating a questionnaire for interpretation and analysis. The variables will serve as output by proposing a monitoring and evaluation framework to measure the effectiveness of optimization, ensuring continuous improvement and adaptability to evolving market trends.

➤ *Research Hypotheses*

The study will be anchored on the following hypotheses:

- There is no significant difference in the utilization of social media marketing when respondents are grouped according to profile variables (e.g., age, gender, business type).
- There is no significant difference in the factors influencing consumer purchase behavior when respondents are grouped according to profile variables.
- There is no significant difference in the challenges encountered in social media marketing when respondents are grouped according to profile variables.

➤ *Significance of the Study*

The following could benefit significantly from the study's findings:

- For Retailers It provides practical insights to refine social media marketing strategies, enhance customer engagement, and drive sales growth while identifying challenges and opportunities in leveraging digital platforms.
- For consumers It deepens their understanding of how social media marketing influences their purchasing decisions and empowers them to make more informed choices when interacting with retail brands online.

- Academia benefits from this research as it contributes to the existing literature on social media marketing and consumer behavior within the context of Santiago City, serving as a valuable reference for future studies in digital marketing and retail management.
- Policy Makers can use the findings to formulate guidelines and initiatives that support the digital transformation of local businesses, enhancing their competitiveness and sustainability in the evolving retail landscape.

➤ *Scope and Limitation*

This study focuses on the impact of social media marketing on consumer purchase behavior in the retail industry in Santiago City, Isabela. It covers consumers and retailers actively engaged on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok and examines how social media strategies, including influencer marketing and targeted ads, influence purchase decisions. However, the study is limited to the retail sector, excluding non-retail industries and consumers who are not active on social media. Additionally, data collection relies on self-reported behaviors, which may introduce biases, and the findings are confined to the specific geographic area of Santiago City, Isabela.

➤ *Definition of Terms*

- Social Media Marketing (SMM). The use of social media platforms to promote products, engage with customers, and drive business growth.
- Consumer Purchase Behavior. The decision-making process of individuals when identifying, selecting, and buying products or services.
- Influencer Marketing. Collaborations with individuals who have a large online following to promote products and influence consumer choices.
- Peer Reviews and Recommendations. Feedback and endorsements from other consumers shared on social media platforms.
- Retail Industry. Businesses involved in selling goods or services directly to consumers for personal use.
- New Public Market. A commercial hub in Isabela, Philippines, where businesses increasingly utilize social media for marketing.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents a comprehensive review of related studies and literature relevant to the impact of social media marketing (SMM) on consumer purchase behavior in the retail industry. It encompasses discussions on theoretical foundations, empirical studies, and a synthesis of findings to highlight existing research gaps and align them with the objectives of this study.

➤ *Related Literature*

Social media marketing (SMM) has emerged as a cornerstone of modern business strategies, significantly influencing consumer behavior. Alalwan et al. (2023) emphasized the interactive and cost-effective nature of SMM, allowing businesses to engage with customers through personalized content, real-time feedback, and the cultivation of a loyal customer base. Their study revealed the importance of social media in shaping customer perceptions, driving engagement, and fostering trust in the retail industry. Similarly, Gao and Feng (2023) further explored how social media builds consumer trust and loyalty by providing transparent information, facilitating real-time interactions, and empowering consumers to participate in brand narratives.

The role of influencers in SMM has garnered significant attention in academic literature. Lim et al. (2023) examined the power of influencers in affecting consumer purchase decisions. They highlighted that the credibility and relatability of influencers are central to driving consumer engagement. Influencers, by virtue of their authenticity, contribute significantly to shaping consumer opinions, particularly in the retail sector, where consumer decisions are strongly swayed by peer recommendations and social proof. Research by Djafarova and Rushworth (2023) corroborates this, indicating that consumers tend to trust influencers more than traditional advertising, especially on platforms like Instagram and YouTube, where personal connections and lifestyle portrayals dominate.

Pentina et al. (2023) explored consumer engagement behaviors on social media and found that interactive marketing campaigns, including polls, quizzes, and live streams, promote greater trust and facilitate the decision-making process. This study highlights the need for businesses to employ strategic content delivery, ensuring that it not only builds brand visibility but also fosters loyalty through consistent engagement. Additionally, research for a new hybrid element of promotion in social media that interactive content that aligns with consumer preferences increases purchase intentions (Mangold & Faulds, 2021).

➤ *Related Studies*

Empirical studies have provided valuable insights into the role of SMM across various geographic regions. Bratkov (2024) focused on the evolving role of digital marketing in shaping consumer behavior in emerging economies. The study found that consumers are increasingly influenced by targeted advertisements, peer recommendations, and influencer endorsements, which significantly drive purchasing behavior. In these economies, social media platforms provide a dynamic space for personalized advertisements, real-time feedback, and customer engagement, thus enhancing the efficacy of SMM strategies.

In the Philippine context, a study by Dela Cruz et al. (2022) examined the impact of SMM on consumer behavior in local retail businesses. Their findings revealed that personalized content, frequent engagement on social media platforms, and effective influencer partnerships were crucial in driving sales and enhancing customer retention. The study also identified challenges, such as technological limitations and issues related to consumer trust, which hinder the full potential of SMM for local businesses. These findings suggest that while social media offers vast opportunities for growth, businesses need to address these challenges to optimize their marketing efforts.

Another notable study by Soriano and Ramirez (2021) explored the effectiveness of Facebook as a marketing platform for small enterprises in Santiago City. The study concluded that visually appealing advertisements, regular content scheduling, and active consumer engagement significantly improved consumer engagement and purchase intentions. This study aligns with the broader consensus that a consistent, well-timed social media presence is crucial for retail success, as it reinforces brand awareness and fosters customer loyalty.

➤ *Platform Usage*

Social media platforms are fundamental to the success of social media marketing (SMM), as they provide various features tailored to different forms of engagement. Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter are among the most widely used platforms in retail marketing, each serving distinct purposes based on the audience and type of content shared. Facebook, for example, is recognized for its broad user base and robust advertising tools. It allows businesses to connect directly with consumers through targeted advertisements, product listings, and community-driven interactions as indicated in the role of social media in building consumer's trust and loyalty by (Gao & Feng, 2023). The platform's ability to segment audiences based on location, behavior, and demographics makes it an effective tool for personalized marketing.

Instagram is another popular platform that excels in visual storytelling, making it an ideal choice for brands in the retail sector. Through high-quality images and short-form videos, businesses can create immersive experiences that showcase product features,

brand identity, and user testimonials. Instagram's "Stories" and "Reels" features have significantly enhanced its capacity to engage audiences with interactive content, live videos, and polls, which create a dynamic relationship between businesses and consumers as explore the credibility of online celebrities Instagram profile in influencing purchase decision of young female users by (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2021). Additionally, Instagram's collaboration with influencers allows brands to reach a broader and more diverse audience, leveraging social proof to increase consumer trust and loyalty (Lim et al., 2021).

TikTok, on the other hand, captures attention with its short-form, viral video format. As one of the fastest-growing platforms, TikTok has proven to be highly effective in reaching younger, tech-savvy consumers. Its algorithm-driven content delivery system promotes highly engaging videos based on user preferences, which businesses can capitalize on by creating creative, attention-grabbing content that resonates with the target audience in a digital marketing strategy, implementation and practice (Chaffey, 2020). TikTok's potential for viral marketing, especially through influencer partnerships and challenges, makes it a powerful tool for driving brand awareness and consumer engagement.

Each platform has its unique strengths, but the key to successful SMM is selecting the right platform based on the nature of the brand and its target audience. Gao and Feng (2023) explores the role of social media in building consumer trust and loyalty and suggest that businesses should tailor their marketing efforts to align with platform-specific characteristics and consumer preferences to maximize engagement and conversion rates.

➤ *Content Strategies*

The success of social media marketing largely hinges on the quality and creativity of content. Content strategy is crucial for driving engagement, building brand loyalty, and ultimately increasing purchase behavior. As highlighted in the impact of social media influencers on consumer behavior by Lim et al. (2021), content that is authentic, relatable, and visually appealing plays a vital role in shaping consumer attitudes. Promotional content, product showcases, and user-generated content (UGC) are some of the most effective forms of content in driving consumer engagement and trust.

Influencer marketing, which involves collaborations between brands and popular figures on social media, has gained considerable attention for its ability to boost engagement. Influencers provide social proof, as consumers are more likely to trust recommendations from individuals they follow compared to traditional advertising as highlighted in the study on the credibility of celebrities' Instagram profiles in shaping purchase decisions (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2020). By curating content that aligns with the influencer's personal brand and audience, businesses can establish credibility and foster a sense of community among consumers.

Storytelling is another important content strategy. According to Pentina et al. (2021), as noted on social media and consumer engagement, effective storytelling helps create emotional connections with consumers, which can influence their purchasing decisions. Brands that can tell compelling stories about their products whether through customer experiences, brand history, or ethical practices can differentiate themselves in a crowded market. Furthermore, interactive features, such as polls, quizzes, and live streams, can increase user participation and contribute to the overall consumer experience emphasized on the new hybrid elements of the promotion in social media (Mangold & Faulds, 2022).

Content should not only be aligned with the interests of the target audience but also be consistent with the brand's identity and values. Tailoring content to the platform and audience, while maintaining a cohesive message across all channels, is crucial for building a strong and recognizable brand as outlined in the digital marketing strategy, implementation and practices (Chaffey, 2020). Regular posting, coupled with varied content formats (images, videos, blogs, etc.), ensures that businesses stay visible and relevant in the minds of their customers.

Frequency and consistency in posting content are crucial elements of any successful social media marketing campaign. Regular posting helps maintain brand visibility, while consistency in messaging and style ensures that consumers receive a coherent experience. Research by Bratkov (2024), noted the role of digital marketing in shaping consumer behavior, found that businesses that maintain a consistent social media presence build stronger relationships with their customers, enhancing trust and engagement.

However, finding the right balance in posting frequency is important. Posting too often may overwhelm consumers, leading to disengagement, while infrequent posts could result in reduced consumer awareness and engagement. According to Gao and Feng (2023), as emphasized in their study on the role of social media in building consumer trust and loyalty, businesses need to monitor consumer behavior and adjust their posting schedules to align with peak times for audience activity. It is essential to understand the preferences and habits of the target audience to avoid fatigue and maximize engagement.

Consistent content also contributes to the development of a strong brand identity. Regular interaction with consumers through comments, messages, and feedback helps brands stay top-of-mind, while steady content scheduling reinforces the brand's commitment to its audience. Moreover, consistent posting enables businesses to refine their strategies based on consumer responses and engagement metrics, making it easier to improve campaign effectiveness over time as highlighted in the study on exploring social media engagement (Pentina et al., 2020).

One of the primary benefits of social media marketing is its ability to introduce new products and build brand awareness among a broad audience. Social media platforms provide businesses with cost-effective and efficient ways to reach large consumer groups. Through targeted ads and creative content, businesses can introduce their products to potential customers, significantly increasing the likelihood of product discovery in the review and analysis of social media marketing (Alalwan et al., 2021). Platforms like Instagram and TikTok, with their emphasis on visual and video content, are especially effective in showcasing product features and generating interest among users.

Moreover, the use of hashtags and collaborations with influencers can further amplify brand visibility. Hashtags help categorize content, making it easier for users to discover products that match their interests or needs. As noted by Lim et al. (2022), when businesses align their content with trending hashtags, they tap into wider conversations, expanding their reach. In addition, influencer partnerships play a critical role in enhancing product visibility. Influencers, who have established trust with their followers, can drive product awareness and facilitate product discovery by introducing items that fit their followers' preferences.

Alalwan et al. (2023) emphasized in their review and analysis on social media marketing that the real-time nature of social media helps businesses promote limited-time offers, flash sales, and exclusive deals, which can spur immediate consumer interest and purchases. Through consistent engagement and strategic content, businesses can enhance brand recall and foster loyalty.

➤ *Peer Recommendations and Review*

Peer recommendations and online reviews are increasingly important in shaping consumer decisions. Consumers frequently turn to social media for recommendations from family, friends, and fellow consumers before making purchase decisions. Research by Djafarova and Rushworth (2023) found that the authenticity of user-generated content (UGC), such as customer reviews and product feedback, significantly influences consumer trust and purchase intentions. Positive reviews can create social proof, validating the quality and credibility of a product, while negative feedback can prompt businesses to address customer concerns.

Social media platforms allow businesses to engage with customers directly, addressing issues and encouraging satisfied customers to share their experiences. Engaging with reviews and feedback on social media platforms demonstrates transparency and builds trust with potential customers as highlighted in the study on the new hybrid element of promotion of social media (Mangold & Faulds, 2023). As noted on exploring social media engagement by Pentina et al. (2023), businesses that encourage UGC and respond to feedback in a timely manner are more likely to build long-term relationships with their audience.

Social media offers various tools to businesses to advertise their products. Sponsored posts, carousel ads, video ads, and influencer promotions provide creative ways to reach potential customers. According to Pentina et al. (2023), as highlighted on exploring social media engagement, advertisements that feature compelling visuals, clear calls to action, and personalized offers are more likely to generate consumer engagement and conversions. These advertisements capture the audience's attention and encourage them to take immediate action, whether by visiting the business's website or making a purchase directly on the platform.

Moreover, leveraging limited-time promotions, flash sales, and discount codes on social media platforms has proven to be an effective tactic in driving consumer behavior. Research evolving the role of digital marketing in shaping consumer behavior by Bratkov (2024) suggests that time-sensitive promotions create a sense of urgency, which motivates consumers to make faster decisions.

Despite its benefits, social media marketing presents several challenges for both retailers and consumers. Retailers often struggle with platform algorithms, which may limit the reach of their posts or advertisements. Additionally, managing negative feedback and maintaining consumer interest amidst rising competition are significant obstacles. For small businesses, limited marketing budgets and a lack of expertise can hinder the execution of effective SMM campaigns as noted in the study of effectiveness of FB as a marketing platform (Soriano & Ramirez, 2021).

On the consumer side, the oversaturation of ads and privacy concerns can affect trust and engagement. As consumers become more conscious of data privacy and the potential intrusiveness of targeted advertising, brands must be transparent and prioritize ethical marketing practices. Failure to address these concerns may result in disengagement and diminished brand loyalty as emphasized in the study of digital marketing its strategy implementation and practices (Chaffey, 2020).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the methodology employed in the study, detailing the research design, population, sampling techniques, data collection instruments, and procedures. The study aims to explore the impact of social media marketing on consumer purchase behavior within Santiago City's retail industry. The methods outlined ensure the collection of reliable, valid, and relevant data to address the research questions effectively. Moreover, the chapter discusses the ethical considerations and limitations of the study.

➤ *Research Design*

The study adopts a quantitative research design, which is well-suited for exploring relationships between variables and describing phenomena based on numerical data. Quantitative research allows researchers to measure the extent to which social media marketing influences consumer behavior in the retail sector objectively. This approach is ideal for identifying specific trends, correlations, and patterns, providing a systematic examination of how social media marketing strategies impact consumer purchase decisions in Santiago City.

As highlighted by Creswell and Creswell (2020), quantitative descriptive research is particularly effective in examining large populations, allowing for the collection of measurable data that can be analyzed to reveal broad trends. This design is appropriate for the study's goal of generating generalizable results, which can identify patterns in consumer responses to social media marketing campaigns. By using structured data collection tools such as surveys, the study aims to quantify the relationship between social media marketing exposure and its influence on purchasing decisions, providing valuable insights for retailers in Santiago City.

In this context, the research focuses on how various aspects of social media marketing, such as influencer endorsements, advertisements, and peer reviews, shape consumer awareness, engagement, and purchase behavior. The quantitative descriptive design will provide a robust framework for understanding the factors that drive consumer decisions in response to digital marketing strategies, thus offering actionable recommendations for businesses in the retail sector.

➤ *Research Participants/ Population*

The participants in this study will consist of two key groups: retail consumers and retailers/marketers in Santiago City. A total of 25 consumers, aged 18 years or older, will be selected to explore the behaviors of individuals regularly exposed to social media marketing from local retailers. These participants must reside within Santiago City and actively use social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, and be exposed to retail marketing through these channels. The survey will examine participants' engagement with advertising content, the influence of social media on purchasing decisions, and the impact of ads, reviews, and influencers on their buying behavior.

The second group will consist of 25 retailers, managers, and marketers in Santiago City who use social media as part of their marketing strategy. This group will offer insights from a business perspective, particularly how local retailers leverage social media to influence consumer behavior. Together, these two groups—retail consumers and retailers/marketers—will provide a balanced perspective on the effectiveness of social media marketing in Santiago City's retail sector, capturing both consumer behavior and business strategies. However, only the 25 consumers will be considered as the respondents for this study.

➤ *Research Locale*

The study will be conducted in the new public market of Santiago City, a thriving commercial center in the Philippines with a diverse retail landscape. This area is home to both small businesses and larger establishments that increasingly rely on social media marketing. Retailers in the new public market actively engage consumers through platforms like Facebook and Instagram, making it an ideal location to explore how social media marketing impacts consumer behavior in a dynamic retail environment.



Fig 2 Locational Map of Santiago City

➤ *Sampling Technique*

This study will utilize a convenience sampling technique. Convenience sampling, a non-probability sampling method, allows for the selection of participants who are readily accessible and willing to participate. This approach is practical given the target population of social media users in Santiago City and provides a cost-effective means of gathering data. However, the researchers recognize that this sampling method may introduce limitations related to representativeness, as discussed in the limitations section.

While convenience sampling has its drawbacks, it is commonly used in research where timely and efficient data collection is a priority (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2021). To enhance the representativeness of the sample, the researchers may also consider incorporating stratified sampling elements. By stratifying the sample based on key demographic variables (such as age, gender, and socio-economic status), the study can ensure that different segments of the consumer demographic engaging with social media marketing are adequately represented. This combined approach will strengthen the relevance of the sample to the research questions while addressing some of the limitations associated with convenience sampling.

➤ *Data Gathering Procedure*

The researcher will undertake the following steps to gather all necessary information:

The researchers will formulate the research proposal and the instrument and submit it to the adviser and the Dean of the College of Accountancy and Business Administration for checking and validation.

- After acquiring such approval from the adviser and the dean, a request letter will be given to the consumer asking permission to conduct the study and for their participation.
- The request letter will be sent to the different consumers and retailers in Santiago City, researchers will explain to them the purpose of the study, including all the rights of the respondents adhering to the ethical considerations.
- Once permission is granted, the researchers will disseminate the questionnaire in a face-to-face survey for a period of 1 week.
- The questionnaires with the attached consent form will be distributed to the respondents. Upon retrieval of the questionnaires, the researchers will check if the respondents completed answering it. The responses will be tallied and subjected to statistical analysis.

➤ *Data Analysis*

The data that the researchers collected from the questionnaire was subjected to the following statistical tools:

- *Frequency and Percentage*

Percentage = (Frequency of Response / Total Number of Responses) × 100

• *Mean*

Part II to III were rated using the Likert scale and was interpreted as follows:

$$\text{Mean} = (\Sigma X) / N$$

Where:

- ✓ ΣX represents the sum of all individual responses.
- ✓ N is the total number of respondents.

Table 1 Interpretation of Respondents' Response

Scale	Limit of Value	Verbal Description	Interpretation
4	3.26-4.00	Always	Excellent
3	2.51-3.25	Sometimes	Good
2	1.76-2.50	Often	Satisfactory
1	1.00-1.75	Never	Poor

- The challenges encountered by consumer and retailers in engaging social media marketing were rated using the Likert scale and was interpreted as follows:

Table 2 Interpretation of the Challenges Encountered by the Respondents

Scale	Limit of Value	Verbal Description	Interpretation
4	3.26-4.00	Strongly Agree	Very Serious
3	2.51-3.25	Agree	Serious
2	1.76-2.50	Disagree	Moderately Serious
1	1.00-1.75	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Serious

➤ *Limitations of the Study*

Several limitations may affect the study:

Sampling Bias: The use of convenience sampling may limit the generalizability of the findings, as the sample may not fully represent the wider population of Santiago City. The study may overrepresent those who are more active on social media and underrepresent those who engage less frequently with digital platforms.

Self-Reported Data: The data relies on self-reported information from respondents, which may be subject to biases such as social desirability or inaccurate recall. Participants may overstate or understate their engagement with social media marketing based on perceived norms.

Geographical Scope: The study focuses exclusively on Santiago City, and the findings may not be applicable to other regions with different consumer behaviors and social media usage patterns.

CHAPTER FOUR RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

➤ *Demographic Profile of the Respondents*

- Age

Table 3 Demographic Profile of the Respondents: Age Pertaining to Consumer

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18	1	4%
19	5	20%
20	9	36%
21	3	12%
22	5	20%
23	2	8%
Total	25	100%

The data in Table 3 highlights the age distribution of consumer respondents, with the majority being 20 years old, comprising 36% of the sample. This is followed by respondents aged 19 and 22, each representing 20%, while those aged 21 and 23 constitute 12% and 8%, respectively. The youngest respondent, aged 18, accounts for only 4%, making it the least represented group. This age distribution is significant as it places the majority of respondents within the early adulthood stage, a demographic commonly associated with active social media engagement and higher responsiveness to marketing strategies. Gao and Feng (2023) emphasized the importance of tailoring social media marketing efforts to the preferences of younger, tech-savvy audiences, noting that platforms like Instagram and TikTok, with their emphasis on interactive and visually engaging content, are particularly effective in influencing purchase behavior. The predominance of this age group in the sample underscores the relevance of leveraging these platforms to enhance brand visibility and consumer trust.

- Gender

Table 4 Demographic Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	21	84%
Male	4	16%
Total	25	100%

The data in Table 4 reveals the gender distribution of consumer respondents, with females comprising the majority at 84% (n=21), while males account for only 16% (n=4). This significant disparity indicates that female consumers are the dominant demographic in this study. As noted by Gao and Feng (2023), social media marketing strategies must consider demographic characteristics to effectively engage target audiences. Platforms like Instagram and TikTok, known for their strong female user base, can be leveraged to create personalized and visually appealing content that aligns with the preferences of this group. The overwhelming presence of female respondents underscores the need for gender-specific marketing strategies to maximize engagement and influence purchase behavior effectively.

- Year Level

Table 5 Demographic Profile of the Respondents: Student's Year

Year	Frequency	Percentage
4th year student	1	4%
3rd year student	16	64%
2nd year student	8	32%
Total	25	100%

Table 5 illustrates the occupation distribution of consumer respondents, with the majority being 3rd year students, comprising 64% (n=16) of the sample. This is followed by 2nd year students, who make up 32% (n=8), while 4th year students represent only 4% (n=1) of the respondents. This distribution highlights that the largest segment of the consumer sample is composed of students in the middle stages of their academic careers. As noted by Gao and Feng (2023), younger consumers, particularly those in the college or university demographic, are highly active on social media and receptive to digital marketing strategies. This age group, which is more likely to engage with social media platforms, represents a prime target for businesses looking to influence purchasing behavior through tailored, engaging, and interactive content. The predominance of 3rd year and 2nd year students suggests that strategies focusing on affordability and lifestyle-oriented content could be especially effective for this group.

➤ Respondents’ response

- Awareness on Social Media Marketing

Table 6 Factors on Consumer Purchase Behavior: Product Discovery and Brand Awareness

Indicators	Mean	Verbal Description	Interpretation
1. I learn about new products or brands through social media platforms.	3.44	Always	Excellent
2. Social media helps me recognize brands I wouldn't have known otherwise.	3.44	Always	Excellent
3. I rely on social media to explore product options before making a purchase.	3.44	Always	Excellent
4. Social media posts often influence my interest in trying out new products.	3.4	Always	Excellent
5. Promotions or giveaways on social media encourage me to discover new brands.	3.28	Always	Excellent
Category Mean	3.4	Always	Excellent

Table 6 presents the data on product discovery and brand awareness through social media. The findings suggest that consumers consistently rely on social media to discover new products and brands, as evidenced by high mean scores across all indicators. Specifically, consumers report that they always learn about new products or brands (M = 3.44, "Excellent"), and social media significantly aids in recognizing brands that they otherwise might not have encountered (M = 3.44, "Excellent"). Furthermore, social media serves as a key platform for exploring product options before making a purchase decision (M = 3.44, "Excellent") and often influences their interest in trying new products (M = 3.40, "Excellent"). Promotions and giveaways also play a crucial role in encouraging the discovery of new brands (M = 3.28, "Excellent").

With an overall category mean of 3.4, interpreted as "Always" and categorized as Excellent, it is clear that social media plays an essential role in enhancing product discovery and brand awareness. This finding aligns with Alalwan et al. (2017), who emphasized that social media platforms significantly contribute to the visibility of new products and brands, creating opportunities for businesses to reach a broader audience and influence consumer decisions.

➤ Peer Recommendation and Reviews

Table 7 Factors on Consumer Purchase Behavior: Peer Recommendations and Reviews

Indicators	Mean	Verbal Description	Interpretation
I consider online reviews and ratings on social media before purchasing a product.	3.6	Always	Excellent
2. Friends’ or peers’ recommendations on social media influence my buying decisions.	3.24	Often	Good
3. I trust user-generated content, such as photos or testimonials, when shopping online.	3.12	Often	Good
4. I share my opinions or reviews about products I purchase on social media.	3.08	Often	Good
5. Social media reviews help me decide between competing brands or products.	3.28	Always	Excellent
Category Mean	3.264	Always	Excellent

Table 7 highlights the significant influence of peer recommendations and online reviews on consumer purchasing decisions. The highest mean score of 3.6 for "I consider online reviews and ratings on social media before purchasing a product" indicates that consumers strongly rely on reviews. Peer recommendations (M = 3.24) and trust in user-generated content (M = 3.12) also play key roles. Sharing product reviews is common (M= 3.08), and social media reviews help consumers compare competing brands (M = 3.28). With an overall mean of 3.264, the data reflects the essential impact of social media reviews and peer recommendations on consumer behavior, aligning with Djafarova and Rushworth’s (2017) findings on trust-building through online content.

➤ Purchasing Behavior in Connection to Social Media Marketing

Table 8 Factors on Consumer Purchase Behavior

Indicators	Mean	Verbal Description	Interpretation
1. I click on advertisements that appear on my social media feed.	3	Often	Good
2. I actively engage (e.g., like, comment, or share) with promotional content from brands.	2.92	Often	Good

3. Special discounts or limited-time offers on social media encourage me to purchase.	3.12	Often	Good
4. Advertisements on social media influence my perception of a brand or product.	3.36	Always	Excellent
5. I follow brands on social media to stay updated on.	3.24	Often	Good
Category Mean	3.128	Often	Good

The data presented in Table 8 indicates that consumers often engage with advertisements and promotions on social media, with a mean score of 3.128, which is categorized as "Good." Consumers frequently click on ads ($M = 3.00$) and actively engage with promotional content through actions like liking, commenting, or sharing ($M = 2.92$). Special discounts and limited-time offer also encourage purchases, with a mean of 3.12. The highest mean (3.36) was observed for the influence of advertisements on brand perception, demonstrating that social media ads play a significant role in shaping consumer attitudes. This aligns with findings by Alalwan et al. (2017), who emphasized the importance of social media platforms in influencing consumer behavior, particularly in driving engagement and shaping purchase intentions.

➤ Challenges in Social Media Marketing

Table 9 Challenges Encountered by Consumer and Retailer in Engaging SMM

Indicators	Mean	Verbal Description	Interpretation
Retailers and consumers in Santiago City experience issues with poor internet connectivity when engaging with social media marketing.	3.3	Strongly Agree	Very Serious
Retailers struggle to effectively differentiate their brand in the crowded social media market.	3.14	Agree	Serious
Consumers often distrust the authenticity of products and promotions on social media platforms.	3.06	Agree	Serious
Small retailers face challenges due to limited budgets for social media marketing campaigns.	3.22	Agree	Serious
Social media marketing strategies are not always tailored to the cultural preferences of consumers in Santiago City.	2.98	Agree	Serious
Consumers engage inconsistently with social media marketing campaigns from local retailers.	3.02	Agree	Serious
Retailers lack advanced digital skills and tools to maximize their social media marketing efforts.	3.08	Agree	Serious
Category Mean	3.114	Agree	Serious

Table 9 highlights the challenges faced by both consumers and retailers in Santiago City when engaging with social media marketing (SMM). The category means of 3.114, described as "Agree" and interpreted as "Serious," indicates a notable level of difficulty in these engagements. The most pressing issue is poor internet connectivity, which is strongly agreed upon by respondents ($M = 3.3$, Very Serious). Retailers also struggle to differentiate their brands in the crowded social media space ($M = 3.14$, Serious), while consumers express skepticism about the authenticity of products and promotions on social media ($M = 3.06$, Serious). Small retailers face budget limitations for effective social media campaigns ($M = 3.22$, Serious), and the lack of tailored marketing strategies to fit the cultural preferences of Santiago City's consumers adds another layer of complexity ($M = 2.98$, Serious). Additionally, inconsistent consumer engagement ($M = 3.02$, Serious) and the lack of advanced digital skills among retailers ($M = 3.08$, Serious) further exacerbate these challenges. These findings suggest that addressing these issues is crucial for optimizing social media marketing efforts in Santiago City, aligning with the observations made by Alalwan et al. (2020) regarding the obstacles in implementing effective social media strategies.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

➤ *Summary*

This study investigates the influence of social media marketing (SMM) on consumer purchase behavior in the retail sector of Santiago City, Isabela. By analyzing the use of platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, the research highlights key trends, behaviors, and challenges faced by consumers. The results show that most consumers were young adults (20–23 years old). On the other hand, consumer's social media marketing significantly influenced product discovery, brand awareness, and peer recommendations, but challenges such as mistrust in online promotions and poor internet connectivity hindered engagement. Overall, the study underscores the crucial role of social media in driving consumer decisions while pointing to areas where improvement could increase effectiveness.

➤ *Conclusion*

The study concludes that social media marketing has a significant impact on consumer purchasing decisions in Santiago City's new public market sector. Platforms like Facebook play a key role in consumer engagement and brand promotion, but the limited use of Instagram and TikTok indicates missed opportunities, particularly with younger consumers who are highly active on these platforms. Consumer behaviors, such as relying on peer recommendations and engaging with promotions, suggest that social media has reshaped how people discover and evaluate products. Despite these challenges, there is clear potential for small businesses to further leverage social media to build brand loyalty, increase sales, and improve their overall market competitiveness.

The research also highlights that while social media marketing presents great potential, retailers must address several challenges such as limited budgets, inconsistent posting schedules, and lack of advanced digital skills. Overcoming these barriers will enable businesses to take full advantage of the dynamic nature of social media to engage with consumers more effectively. With proper guidance, training, and strategic investment, retailers in Santiago City can enhance their social media presence, drive higher engagement, and boost overall sales.

➤ *Recommendations*

• *For Policymakers and Business Organizations:*

- ✓ **Provide Support for Digital Skills Development:** Policymakers and business organizations should offer training and support programs to help small business owners develop the necessary digital marketing skills. This could include workshops on using platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, creating engaging content, and understanding digital marketing analytics. Offering subsidies or grants to small businesses to help them invest in digital tools would also be beneficial.
- ✓ **Improve Internet Connectivity:** Many retailers and consumers reported poor internet connectivity, which hinders effective engagement with social media marketing. Local governments and service providers should consider improving internet infrastructure, particularly in underserved areas. By offering affordable high-speed internet access, small businesses can engage more effectively with customers through social media.
- ✓ **Encourage Ethical Marketing Practices:** To help address consumer concerns about the authenticity of social media promotions, policymakers can help promote guidelines for ethical marketing. These guidelines would encourage businesses to be transparent about product quality, pricing, and promotional tactics, building consumer trust in the digital space.

• *For Consumers:*

- ✓ **Engage with Trusted Brands and Review Products:** Consumers should engage more actively with brands they trust, providing feedback and reviews to help improve product offerings. By participating in online reviews, consumers help shape the future of marketing by making their voices heard, which can also influence other potential buyers.
- ✓ **Verify Product Authenticity:** As social media marketing continues to influence purchasing decisions, consumers should take steps to verify the authenticity of online products. This includes checking customer reviews, brand ratings, and product details to ensure they are making informed purchasing decisions.

In conclusion, to maximize the potential of social media marketing, both retailers and policymakers must work together to address the challenges identified in this study. Retailers need to adopt more sophisticated strategies, enhance their digital skills, and build trust with consumers.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

Sir/Ma'am:

We, the faculty of College of Accountancy and Business Administration at Northeastern College is conducting a study entitled: "The Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer's Purchasing Behavior" aims to (Analyze Consumer Engagement and Evaluate Marketing Strategies).

In line with this, may we ask you to be our respondent who will answer some questionnaire to provide us information that we believe to be vital in the success of our study. Rest assures the full confidentiality of any information you will give and it will be just used for research purposes.

Thank you for your widest consideration.

Respectfully, Researchers

APPENDIX B

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Research Title “The Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer’s Purchasing Behavior.”

Dear Respondent

We are conducting research to better understand the impact of social media marketing on consumer’s purchasing behavior. Your insights will help us explore how social media influences shopping decisions. Participation is voluntary, and your responses will remain anonymous and confidential. The information gathered will solely be used for academic purposes.

Please take about 10-15 minutes to complete this questionnaire. Your participation is greatly appreciated!

Kindly fill in your details below:

➤ *Part I: Respondent’s Profile*

- Direction: Please answer the questionnaire honestly without mental reservation. Your responses will be dealt with utmost confidentiality.
- ✓ If you are a consumer/buyer fill out below if not leave it blank: Age:
 - Gender:
 - Year:

➤ *Part II. Factors influence to the consumer purchase behavior*

- Direction: Below is a list of statements dealing with factors that influence the purchase behavior of consumer. For consumer, please answer how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement by putting a check mark (✓) on your chosen answer.

STATEMENT	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never
A. Product discovery and brand awareness				
1. I learn about new products or brands through social media platforms.				
2. Social media helps me recognize brands I wouldn’t have known otherwise.				
3. I rely on social media to explore product options before making a purchase.				
4. Social media posts often influence my interest in trying out new products.				
5. Promotions or giveaways on social media encourage me to discover new brands.				
B. Peer recommendations and Reviews				
1. I consider online reviews and ratings on social media before purchasing a product.				
2. Friends’ or peers’ recommendations on social media influence my buying decisions.				
3. I trust user-generated content, such as photos or testimonials, when shopping online.				
4. I share my opinions or reviews about products I purchase on social media.				
5. Social media reviews help me decide between competing brands or products.				
C. Engagement with Advertisements and Promotions				
1. I click on advertisements that appear on my social media feed.				
2. I actively engage (e.g., like, comment, or share) with promotional content from brands.				
3. Special discounts or limited-time offers on social media encourage me to purchase.				

4. Advertisements on social media influence my perception of a brand or product.				
5. I follow brands on social media to stay updated on.				

➤ *Part III. Challenges Encountered by Retailers and Consumers in terms of engaging in Social Media Marketing.*

- Direction: Below is a list of statements dealing with the financial practices of your organization. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement by putting a check mark (✓) on your chosen answer.

STATEMENT	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Retailers and consumers in Santiago City experience issues with poor internet connectivity when engaging with social media marketing.				
2. Retailers struggle to effectively differentiate their brand in the crowded social media market.				
3. Consumers often distrust the authenticity of products and promotions on social media platforms.				
4. Small retailers face challenges due to limited budgets for social media marketing campaigns.				
5. Social media marketing strategies are not always tailored to the cultural preferences of consumers in Santiago City.				
6. Consumers engage inconsistently with social media marketing campaigns from local retailers.				
7. Retailers lack advanced digital skills and tools to maximize their social media marketing efforts.				