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Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumers in Philippines

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Abstract

Purpose: The aim of the study was to analyze the impact of social media marketing on consumers in Philippines.

Methodology: This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

Findings: The impact of social media marketing on consumers in the Philippines reveals that platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter significantly influence purchasing behavior, especially among younger audiences. Studies show that Filipino consumers are highly engaged with brands on social media, where personalized content, influencer marketing, and customer interaction drive brand loyalty and product awareness. Social media also facilitates quicker decision-making, as consumers rely on peer reviews and recommendations before making purchases. However, challenges include issues with data privacy and the oversaturation of promotional content, which can lead to consumer fatigue.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: Theory of planned behavior (TPB), uses and gratifications theory (UGT) & social influence theory may be used to anchor future studies on the impact of social media marketing on consumers in Philippines. Companies should invest in analytics tools to understand consumer preferences, enabling them to create more personalized and engaging content. Policymakers should develop regulations that ensure transparency in social media advertising and influencer endorsements, particularly in areas like disclosure of paid partnerships.

Keywords: *Social Media, Marketing, Consumers*

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INTRODUCTION

Consumer Purchasing Behavior in developed economies such as the USA, Japan, and the UK, consumer purchasing behavior is heavily influenced by convenience, technology integration, and sustainability. A significant trend is the rapid growth of e-commerce, with 75% of consumers in the USA making at least one online purchase per month (Statista, 2020). In Japan, online shopping has also surged, with 82% of internet users buying products online, particularly electronics and clothing (McKinsey & Company, 2020). Furthermore, sustainability is a rising concern, with 55% of UK consumers willing to pay more for sustainable goods (Nielsen, 2018). Consumers in these regions demonstrate a preference for personalized, seamless experiences, often facilitated by AI and machine learning in digital platforms (Kannan & Li, 2017).

In Canada, consumer purchasing behavior is influenced by convenience, digital access, and sustainability trends. As of 2020, 58% of Canadian consumers preferred online shopping, a trend that surged due to the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in the categories of groceries and electronics (Statista, 2021). Additionally, 50% of Canadians expressed a willingness to pay more for eco-friendly and sustainable products (NielsenIQ, 2019). In Germany, consumers are highly cautious, with 68% comparing prices before making purchases, particularly for electronics and household appliances (PwC, 2020). The rise of mobile commerce is also notable, with 60% of Germans using their smartphones for online shopping, largely driven by the desire for convenience and a seamless shopping experience (eMarketer, 2020).

In Australia, consumer purchasing behavior is increasingly shaped by digital convenience and an appetite for sustainability. E-commerce has experienced significant growth, with over 80% of Australians making online purchases regularly, primarily in sectors like fashion and electronics (Statista, 2021). Australian consumers are also becoming more environmentally conscious, with 62% willing to pay a premium for products that are eco-friendly or produced sustainably (Nielsen, 2019). In France, shopping behaviors are influenced by quality and tradition, with 67% of consumers prioritizing product quality over price, particularly for food products (McKinsey & Company, 2020). However, e-commerce is also growing, with 58% of French consumers shopping online, driven by the convenience of home delivery and product availability (Statista, 2020).

In developing economies, such as India and Brazil, purchasing behavior is shaped by mobile internet penetration and price sensitivity. With 54% of India's population using smartphones, mobile commerce has become the primary mode of online shopping (Statista, 2020). In Brazil, online sales grew by 47% in 2020, with the pandemic accelerating digital adoption, particularly in fashion and electronics (eMarketer, 2021). Consumers in developing economies tend to be highly price-sensitive, seeking discounts and promotions before making purchases (Deloitte, 2019). However, there is a growing preference for convenience, with the rise of quick delivery services such as Jumia in Africa and Flipkart in India (Forrester, 2019).

In Indonesia, consumer behavior is significantly shaped by mobile-first strategies, as over 85% of online shoppers use mobile devices to make purchases (Hootsuite, 2021). The country's growing middle class is driving demand for fashion, beauty products, and electronics, while price sensitivity remains important, with many consumers seeking discounts and promotions. In Mexico, e-commerce has grown steadily, with a 27% increase in online retail sales in 2020 (Statista, 2021). Price remains a key factor for Mexican consumers, particularly for products like groceries, clothing, and personal care items. Interestingly, 70% of Mexican consumers are willing to try new

brands if they offer better value for money (KPMG, 2020), showing low brand loyalty and high price-consciousness.

In Vietnam, consumer purchasing behavior is shifting towards digital platforms, as internet penetration reaches 70%. E-commerce is expected to grow by 22% annually, with categories like fashion and electronics leading the charge (Hootsuite, 2021). Vietnamese consumers are highly price-sensitive but are increasingly embracing online shopping for convenience, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. In Egypt, price sensitivity dominates purchasing behavior, with 78% of consumers actively seeking discounts or offers before making a purchase (Deloitte, 2020). However, there is growing digital adoption, as 50% of consumers in Egypt are now engaging in e-commerce, driven by the rise of mobile phones and social media platforms as shopping tools (Statista, 2021).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, consumer behavior is marked by the reliance on mobile money and informal retail channels due to limited financial inclusion. Kenya, for example, saw mobile money transactions surpass \$55 billion in 2020, with over 80% of adults using platforms like M-Pesa for everyday purchases (Central Bank of Kenya, 2021). E-commerce adoption is slower but growing, with Nigeria's online retail market expected to expand by 30% by 2024 (World Bank, 2020). Price sensitivity remains crucial, as consumers prioritize affordability over brand loyalty, often preferring locally produced goods (PwC, 2020). Moreover, informal markets account for 70-90% of retail sales in Sub-Saharan Africa, demonstrating the importance of traditional retail channels (McKinsey & Company, 2020).

In Ghana, purchasing behavior is driven by the informal sector, which accounts for about 90% of all retail transactions (World Bank, 2020). However, with mobile phone penetration at 55%, mobile money has become a critical tool for facilitating transactions, and e-commerce is slowly gaining traction, particularly for fashion and electronics (Statista, 2021). In South Africa, purchasing behavior is becoming more digitally oriented, with 64% of consumers using online platforms to research products before purchasing, although brick-and-mortar stores still dominate overall sales (Deloitte, 2020). South African consumers tend to prioritize value for money, with 75% comparing prices across various platforms before making a final decision (PwC, 2020).

In Nigeria, consumer purchasing behavior is characterized by a preference for affordable goods, often procured from informal markets. With 90% of retail transactions occurring in informal channels, affordability is paramount (McKinsey & Company, 2020). Nonetheless, Nigeria's e-commerce market is expanding rapidly, with a projected growth rate of 20% by 2024, particularly for products like electronics, fashion, and home appliances (Statista, 2020). In Tanzania, consumer behavior remains largely driven by price sensitivity, with 85% of the population relying on informal retail for everyday purchases (World Bank, 2020). However, the penetration of mobile money is transforming how Tanzanian consumers shop, enabling digital transactions for a growing range of products and services (Deloitte, 2020).

Social media marketing strategies are essential for businesses aiming to engage consumers and influence their purchasing behavior. One common strategy is content marketing, where businesses create engaging posts, videos, or blogs that resonate with their audience, leading to increased brand awareness and consumer trust (Hollebeek, 2020). Another approach is influencer marketing, where businesses collaborate with popular figures on platforms like Instagram or TikTok to promote products, significantly impacting consumer buying decisions through social proof (Boerman, 2020). User-generated content (UGC) is a third strategy, encouraging consumers to share their

experiences with a brand, fostering loyalty and creating organic brand advocates (Tuten & Solomon, 2017). Finally, targeted advertising uses data analytics to deliver personalized ads to specific audiences, which increases the likelihood of converting viewers into buyers (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2020).

These social media strategies directly influence consumer purchasing behavior by creating personalized, relatable, and engaging experiences. Content marketing builds brand trust, which 80% of consumers consider when making purchasing decisions (Hollebeek, 2020). Influencer marketing taps into social proof, as consumers are 71% more likely to purchase based on recommendations from trusted influencers (Boerman, 2020). User-generated content builds a sense of community, driving 54% of consumers to try a product based on peer recommendations (Tuten & Solomon, 2017). Finally, targeted advertising improves conversion rates, with personalized ads being 50% more effective than generic ads (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2020), enhancing the overall purchasing journey.

Problem Statement

The increasing reliance on social media platforms for marketing in the Philippines has raised questions about its effectiveness in influencing consumer behavior. While businesses have rapidly adopted social media marketing strategies, the extent to which these efforts drive purchasing decisions and brand loyalty remains unclear. Recent studies suggest that Filipino consumers are highly engaged on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, but the correlation between social media marketing and actual purchase conversion requires further investigation (Kemp, 2023). Additionally, there is a growing need to explore how factors such as trust, brand awareness, and peer influence, driven by social media interactions, impact consumer decision-making (Pantea, 2021). Understanding these dynamics is crucial for businesses aiming to optimize their social media strategies and drive sustainable consumer engagement in the Philippines.

Theoretical Framework

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

Originated by Icek Ajzen, the Theory of Planned Behavior posits that an individual's intention to engage in a particular behavior is influenced by their attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). In the context of social media marketing, TPB is relevant because it helps explain how Filipino consumers' attitudes toward brands, social influence from peers, and their control over social media platforms impact their purchasing decisions. This theory is essential for understanding the role of social influence and peer pressure, which are significant drivers of consumer behavior on platforms like Facebook and Instagram (Rosario & Cruz, 2020).

Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT)

Developed by Blumler and Katz, Uses and Gratifications Theory suggests that people actively seek out media to satisfy specific needs, such as entertainment, information, or social interaction (Blumler & Katz, 1974). This theory is relevant for studying how Filipino consumers use social media platforms to fulfill their needs for product information and social validation, which can influence their purchasing decisions. Social media marketing that aligns with these consumer

motivations is more likely to succeed in engaging and converting audiences (Ang & Villa-Real, 2021).

Social Influence Theory

Social Influence Theory, primarily developed by Kelman, examines how individuals' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are shaped by the social environment (Kelman, 1958). In social media marketing, this theory is relevant because consumers in the Philippines are highly influenced by peers and social networks when making purchase decisions. Brands leverage social proof, such as likes, shares, and influencer endorsements, to impact consumer behavior (Gomez & Santos, 2019).

Empirical Review

Delos Reyes & Lacap (2021) explored the impact of social media marketing on purchase intentions among Filipino millennials, recognizing the rising influence of social media platforms in shaping consumer behavior. The purpose of the study was to examine how various aspects of social media marketing, such as content quality, influencer endorsements, and customer engagement, affect millennials' decision-making processes when considering purchasing products online. The researchers employed a survey-based methodology, collecting responses from 500 Filipino millennials who are active on social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Findings revealed that high-quality, engaging content significantly influences consumer interest and purchase intent, particularly when coupled with endorsements from trusted influencers. The study highlighted that influencer endorsements resonate strongly with millennials, fostering trust and credibility, thus enhancing the likelihood of purchase. Additionally, the study found that personalized and interactive content strengthens consumers' emotional connection to the brand, leading to higher engagement and repeat purchases. The researchers recommended that businesses targeting millennials prioritize producing authentic, visually appealing content that reflects the consumers' values and interests. They also suggested that companies collaborate with influencers who align with their brand identity, as this fosters more meaningful connections with consumers. Furthermore, consistent interaction through comments and shares was emphasized as essential to maintaining consumer interest and loyalty over time. Delos Reyes & Lacap also noted the importance of understanding consumer preferences and tailoring content to meet their specific needs and preferences. The authors concluded that social media marketing, if executed strategically, could significantly drive purchase behavior and brand loyalty among Filipino millennials. They advised marketers to invest in understanding the nuances of this demographic to create campaigns that resonate deeply. The study also suggested that businesses regularly analyze social media metrics to refine their strategies. Finally, they recommended ongoing partnerships with influencers to sustain long-term engagement. The research provided valuable insights into how businesses could effectively harness the power of social media marketing to influence the purchasing behavior of Filipino millennials.

Ramos & De Castro (2020) explored the role of user-generated content (UGC) on social media in influencing consumer trust and purchase decisions among Filipino consumers. The study aimed to understand how UGC, such as customer reviews, ratings, and testimonials shared on platforms like Facebook and Instagram, impacts consumer perceptions of brand trustworthiness and reliability. A qualitative research approach was employed, using in-depth interviews with 30 frequent online shoppers in the Philippines who actively engage with UGC when making purchasing decisions.

The findings revealed that UGC plays a pivotal role in building consumer trust, with most respondents indicating that they were more likely to trust a brand when they saw positive reviews or recommendations from other consumers. Respondents noted that peer recommendations through UGC felt more authentic and credible compared to traditional advertising, which they often viewed as biased or exaggerated. The study also found that consumers who regularly engaged with UGC were more likely to exhibit loyalty to the brand and recommend it to others, creating a cycle of positive reinforcement for the brand. Ramos & De Castro recommended that businesses actively encourage their customers to share reviews and experiences on social media, as this fosters a sense of community and trust around the brand. They also suggested that companies should highlight positive UGC in their marketing campaigns to further enhance brand credibility. Additionally, brands were advised to engage with UGC by responding to customer reviews, whether positive or negative, as this interaction helps build a stronger relationship with the audience. The study concluded that UGC is a powerful tool in social media marketing that can significantly enhance consumer trust and brand loyalty. Ramos & De Castro suggested that brands implement strategies that facilitate and promote the sharing of UGC across social media platforms. Finally, they highlighted the importance of monitoring UGC to address any negative feedback swiftly, preventing potential damage to brand reputation.

Santos (2019) examined the effect of social media advertising on the purchase behavior of Filipino consumers, focusing specifically on the impact of personalized and targeted advertising on social media platforms. The purpose of the study was to assess how effective personalized social media advertisements are in driving purchase intent and influencing consumer behavior in the Philippines. The researchers conducted a quantitative study involving 300 Filipino participants who regularly use social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. The participants were exposed to various forms of personalized advertisements, including product recommendations based on previous browsing behavior and targeted ads that aligned with their interests and preferences. The findings showed that personalized ads had a significant positive impact on consumers' purchase intentions, with 72% of respondents indicating they were more likely to consider purchasing a product when the advertisement was tailored to their specific preferences. The study revealed that personalized ads increased consumer engagement with the brand, as respondents felt that the ads were relevant and addressed their individual needs. Additionally, the research highlighted that targeted advertising was more effective in converting consumers into buyers than generic ads, which were often ignored or viewed as irrelevant. Santos et al. recommended that businesses in the Philippines invest in data analytics to better understand consumer behavior and preferences, allowing them to create more personalized marketing campaigns. They also suggested that brands should leverage social media platforms' advanced targeting capabilities to reach specific audiences more effectively. Furthermore, the study emphasized the importance of ensuring that personalized ads are not overly intrusive, as this could lead to negative reactions from consumers. The researchers concluded that personalization in social media advertising is a key factor in influencing purchase behavior and increasing brand engagement. They recommended ongoing optimization of targeted ads to keep them relevant to evolving consumer preferences. Lastly, the study proposed further research into how different demographic groups respond to personalized advertising.

Garcia & Cruz (2022) analyzed the impact of influencer marketing on brand perception and consumer behavior in the Philippines, particularly in the fashion and beauty industries. The study aimed to explore how partnerships with social media influencers affect Filipino consumers'

attitudes toward brands and their purchasing decisions. A mixed-method research approach was employed, combining surveys of 400 consumers and interviews with 10 marketing professionals from various brands. The findings revealed that influencers have a strong influence on consumer behavior, with 68% of respondents indicating that they were more likely to purchase products endorsed by influencers they follow. The study also found that influencer marketing significantly boosts brand credibility, particularly when the influencer is perceived as trustworthy and relatable. Respondents noted that influencers help humanize brands, making them more approachable and authentic in the eyes of consumers. Garcia & Cruz recommended that businesses in the fashion and beauty industries carefully select influencers whose values and style align with their brand identity, as this ensures a more genuine connection with the audience. They also suggested that brands invest in long-term partnerships with influencers rather than one-off collaborations, as sustained engagement yields better results in terms of consumer loyalty and brand perception. Additionally, the study emphasized the importance of micro-influencers, who, despite having smaller followings, tend to have higher engagement rates and a more loyal audience base. The researchers concluded that influencer marketing is a powerful tool for shaping consumer behavior and enhancing brand perception in the Philippines. They recommended that businesses continually monitor the performance of their influencer campaigns to ensure they are effectively reaching and engaging their target audience. Finally, the study proposed further exploration into the effectiveness of influencer marketing in other sectors beyond fashion and beauty.

Martinez & Mendoza (2018) explored the impact of social media promotions on brand loyalty in the Philippine food industry, particularly focusing on discount-based promotions. The purpose of the study was to determine how promotional campaigns on platforms like Facebook and Instagram influence consumer loyalty and repeat purchases. A cross-sectional survey of 250 Filipino consumers who regularly dine out or order food online was conducted. The findings indicated that discount-based promotions were highly effective in attracting first-time buyers, with 65% of respondents stating that they were more likely to try a new restaurant or food delivery service if they encountered a promotion on social media. However, the study found that while promotions helped attract new customers, they were less effective in retaining them, as brand loyalty tended to wane once the promotion ended. Martinez & Mendoza recommended that food industry brands complement their promotional campaigns with continuous engagement strategies, such as loyalty programs or personalized follow-up offers, to retain customers after their initial purchase. They also suggested that businesses invest in data analytics to track customer behavior post-promotion and identify opportunities for retention. The researchers emphasized the need for a balanced approach between promotional incentives and customer engagement to build long-term loyalty. They concluded that while social media promotions are a powerful tool for driving short-term sales, brands must focus on customer experience and engagement to sustain loyalty in the long run. Martinez & Mendoza also recommended further research into the role of promotions in other industries, as the food sector may exhibit different consumer behaviors compared to sectors like fashion or electronics.

Lopez & Aquino (2021) studied the effectiveness of video content in driving consumer behavior on social media platforms in the Philippines, focusing on industries like retail, travel, and entertainment. The purpose of the study was to examine how video advertisements and content influence Filipino consumers' engagement, brand awareness, and purchase decisions. The researchers conducted a controlled experiment with 200 participants, exposing them to various video ads on platforms like YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram. The findings revealed that video

content significantly increases consumer engagement, with 80% of respondents stating that they were more likely to engage with a brand after watching a visually appealing video ad. Additionally, the study found that video ads were more effective in conveying brand messages and eliciting emotional responses compared to static image ads or text-based posts. Lopez & Aquino recommended that businesses prioritize video marketing in their social media strategies, as it drives higher engagement and conversion rates. They also suggested that brands create short, impactful video content that captures consumers' attention within the first few seconds, as attention spans on social media are typically brief. Furthermore, the study emphasized the importance of storytelling in video content, as consumers are more likely to remember and connect with brands that tell compelling stories. The researchers concluded that video content is a crucial element of social media marketing and plays a significant role in influencing consumer behavior. They recommended that businesses continuously test and optimize their video content to ensure it resonates with their target audience. Finally, the study proposed further research into the effectiveness of live video content, which was not covered in this study.

Villanueva & Lim (2020) examined the long-term effects of social media engagement on customer retention in the Philippines, with a focus on retail and e-commerce sectors. The study aimed to explore how continuous interaction with consumers on social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram impacts their loyalty and repeat purchase behavior over time. A survey was conducted among 300 Filipino consumers, followed by an analysis of their social media activity and purchasing habits over a 12-month period. The findings revealed that consistent social media engagement, such as responding to comments, posting regular updates, and offering personalized promotions, significantly improves customer retention rates. Consumers who interacted regularly with a brand on social media were 70% more likely to make repeat purchases compared to those who did not engage as frequently. Villanueva & Lim recommended that businesses adopt a long-term, relationship-building approach to social media management, focusing on sustained interactions rather than short-term promotional pushes. They also suggested that brands use social media as a platform to provide customer service and resolve issues, as this enhances customer satisfaction and loyalty. Additionally, the study emphasized the importance of personalized content in maintaining consumer interest, as generic posts were found to be less effective in driving engagement. The researchers concluded that social media engagement is a key factor in fostering long-term customer loyalty and should be a central component of any business's digital marketing strategy. They recommended further research into how different social media platforms influence consumer retention, as each platform may offer unique engagement opportunities. Finally, they proposed that businesses invest in tools that track customer engagement and behavior to optimize their social media strategies over time.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low-cost advantage as compared to field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

FINDINGS

The results were analyzed into various research gap categories that is conceptual, contextual and methodological gaps

Conceptual Gaps: While studies like Delos Reyes & Lacap (2021) and Garcia & Cruz (2022) have explored the impact of social media marketing on Filipino consumers, these studies largely focus on influencer endorsements, content quality, and consumer engagement. However, there is limited research on the integration of emerging social media technologies, such as AI-driven marketing tools, chatbots, and augmented reality (AR) in social media campaigns. Additionally, cross-platform strategies have not been sufficiently explored—how consumers interact with multiple social platforms simultaneously and how these interactions shape purchasing behavior. Moreover, psychological factors such as consumer emotions and their role in social media purchasing decisions remain under-researched in the Filipino context.

Contextual Gaps: Most studies, including those by Delos Reyes & Lacap (2021) and Santos (2019), examine millennials and urban consumers, leaving significant gaps regarding other consumer demographics. There is little emphasis on rural Filipino consumers or older generations who may engage with social media differently. Additionally, the long-term effects of social media marketing on consumer loyalty and repeat purchases are underexplored. For example, studies like Villanueva & Lim (2020) examine customer retention but do not delve deeply into how social media marketing influences long-term brand loyalty beyond initial engagement.

Geographical Gaps: Existing studies are concentrated primarily in urban areas, particularly Metro Manila, with little focus on regional differences in social media marketing impact. The consumer behavior of rural and provincial areas in the Philippines, where access to technology and the internet may differ, is inadequately studied. Furthermore, studies like Ramos & De Castro (2020) and Martinez & Mendoza (2018) focus on the food, fashion, and beauty industries, but there is a lack of research exploring social media marketing's effects in other key sectors such as agriculture, healthcare, or tourism, which are vital in rural Philippine regions.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The impact of social media marketing on consumer behavior in the Philippines is significant, particularly as more Filipinos increasingly rely on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube for brand discovery, engagement, and purchasing decisions. Studies show that strategies such as influencer marketing, personalized content, user-generated content (UGC), and targeted ads effectively build consumer trust, enhance brand perception, and drive purchase intent. Millennials, in particular, are highly responsive to these approaches, with influencer endorsements and interactive content playing a crucial role in shaping their buying behavior. However, there remains a need to explore the effects of social media marketing on different demographics, such as rural consumers and older generations, and to assess its long-term impact on brand loyalty across various industries. Overall, social media marketing is a powerful tool that, when strategically implemented, can significantly influence consumer behavior and brand success in the Philippine market.

Recommendations

Theory

Future research should expand on existing theories such as the Theory of Planned Behavior and Uses and Gratifications Theory by incorporating the role of emerging technologies like AI and augmented reality (AR) in social media marketing. Researchers should also examine the

psychological effects of social media engagement, such as how emotional appeals and peer influence impact consumer decisions in the Filipino context. A new framework that integrates cross-platform consumer behavior would provide valuable insights into how consumers navigate between multiple social media channels and make purchasing decisions.

Practice

For businesses, a data-driven approach to social media marketing is critical. Companies should invest in analytics tools to understand consumer preferences, enabling them to create more personalized and engaging content. Collaborating with local influencers, particularly micro-influencers, can enhance authenticity and trust with Filipino consumers, who value relatable and trustworthy endorsements. Brands should also consider engaging rural and older demographics by tailoring content to suit their preferences, including the use of vernacular language and addressing region-specific needs. Additionally, investing in interactive and video content, as shown by Lopez & Aquino (2021), can drive higher engagement and conversion rates.

Policy

Policymakers should develop regulations that ensure transparency in social media advertising and influencer endorsements, particularly in areas like disclosure of paid partnerships. Implementing policies that promote digital literacy across urban and rural areas is essential to ensure that consumers can make informed decisions. Furthermore, data privacy protections must be reinforced to safeguard consumer data, especially as businesses increasingly rely on personalized and targeted advertising strategies. Government support for digital infrastructure expansion in rural areas would also enable more equitable access to e-commerce and social media marketing benefits.

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