The influence of social media marketing efforts towards brand perception of customers

Angelie R. Albutra[1], Natalia C Pornes[2], Ronald E. Almagro[3]
Sto. Tomas College of Agriculture Sciences and Technology, Philippines[1-3]
ronald.almagro14.ra@gmail.com[1], albutra.ang@gmail.com[2]

Abstract

Purpose: This study investigates the relationship between social media marketing efforts and brand perception among customers of clothing stores in Davao del Norte, the Philippines.

Research Methodology: A descriptive-correlational research design was employed, involving 200 respondents selected through stratified sampling. Adapted questionnaires were used to measure social media marketing efforts and brand perception, and statistical analysis was conducted to determine the correlation.

Results: The findings indicate a high level of social media marketing efforts, particularly in the areas of entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word-of-mouth. Functional perception has emerged as the most significant factor influencing brand perception. A significant correlation ($p < 0.000$, $R = 0.784$) was found between social media marketing efforts and brand perceptions.

Limitations: The study's generalizability is limited because of its focus on a specific region and sample demographics.

Contribution: This study underscores the critical role of social media marketing in fostering consumer trust and engagement in clothing stores. By leveraging user-generated content and entertainment elements, businesses can amplify brand visibility, deepen their emotional connections with customers, and foster loyalty and repeat purchases. Future research should delve deeper into the interplay between word-of-mouth marketing, affective perceptions, and brand identity to enrich our understanding of consumer behavior in the digital age.

Keywords: *Social Media Marketing Efforts, Brand Perception, Clothing Stores*

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1. Introduction

Brand perception is a cornerstone of consumer behavior as it shapes how individuals perceive, connect with, and interact with brands. It is defined as people's belief in what a brand represents rather than what it claims to represent (Kervyn, Fiske, & Malone, 2012). Various factors influence customers' brand perceptions. One identified issue is the lack of attention given to the consistency of consumer brand personality perceptions (Al-Afridawi & Rasool, 2022).

Studies in the United States have shown that brand perceptions significantly affect purchasing decisions and brand loyalty. The diverse consumer demographics, cultural influences, and competitive market dynamics of the U.S. serve as a microcosm of the global market. This context provides valuable insights for companies aiming to refine their brand positioning strategies (Jhonson, Smith, & Shehzadi, 2023). A recent study conducted at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila, Philippines, explored consumer behavior and brand perceptions (Anggraeni, Jayendra, & Kuntariati, 2023). This research highlights

the challenges posed by consumer behavior and its impact on brand perception, emphasizing the importance of brands engaging with meanings and symbols to understand customer preferences in the fashion sector. The study suggested that consumers are more likely to purchase brands with a unique brand image, underscoring the importance of factors that influence consumer decisions shaped by their desires and requirements (Bilgin, 2018).

There is a significant research gap concerning the influence of social media marketing efforts on brand perceptions among customers in Santo Tomas, Davao del Norte. Despite numerous international studies, there is a noticeable lack of research that addresses this specific context. This gap is significant, as local insights can provide valuable guidance for brand owners to effectively utilize social media marketing efforts. Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie (2014) emphasized this gap, noting the predominantly exploratory nature of existing literature and the scarcity of empirical studies on the relationship between social media marketing efforts and brand perception. Conducting this study in Santo Tomas, Davao del Norte, Philippines is crucial for filling this void and contributing to the empirical understanding of the dynamics between social media marketing and brand perception.

This study explores the impact of social media marketing initiatives on brand perception. Specifically, this study examines how social media marketing activities are perceived, and how they influence consumers' purchasing decisions. The goal is to understand consumers' perceptions of the products they purchase. This study aims to enhance our understanding of the relationships between social media, brand recognition, and consumer attitudes toward product purchases. These findings provide insights into customer experiences and their implications for brand management.

1.1 Significance of the Study
The results of this study support and expand upon previously published research, offering valuable insights into the impact of social media marketing efforts on brand perception. Specifically, the findings of this study will be beneficial to several groups.

Customers: This study benefits customers by highlighting areas where online sellers and businesses can improve. As businesses recognize these areas, they can enhance their online shopping experience and improve product quality and services. Consequently, customers can make informed decisions about the products or services they wish to purchase.

New Entrant Businesses: New entrant businesses gain from this study by acquiring knowledge on how to effectively segment their customers according to their product offerings. The findings provide insights into the advantages and disadvantages of digital marketing and online business, helping new businesses to navigate these challenges.

Future Researchers: This study serves as a valuable reference for future research, particularly in the areas of consumer behavior and decision making related to online shopping and digital marketing. Future researchers can build on these findings to explore these topics further.

1.2 Research Objectives
This study aimed to determine the significant relationship between social media marketing efforts and the brand perception of customers in Santo Tomas Davao del Norte.

This study sought to answer the following questions.
1. What is the level of social media marketing efforts in terms of
    1.1 entertainment;
    1.2 interaction;
    1.3 trendiness;
    1.4 customization; and
    1.5 word of mouth?
2. What is the level of brand perception in terms of
    2.1 functional perception;
    2.2 affective perception;
    2.3 reputation;

2.4 brand experience; and
2.5 interaction?
3. Is there a significant relationship between social media marketing efforts and the brand perception of customers?

2. Literature review

This study is anchored in Hogg (2016) Social Identity Theory. According to this theory, people's perceptions of themselves are shaped by the groups to which they belong. Tajfel and Turner assert that social identities are formed when individuals classify themselves and others into social groupings. These identities influence people's attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions, affecting their interactions with both in-group and out-group members. Tajfel and Turner suggested that consumers' perceptions of brands may be shaped by the online communities they engage with. Individuals who participate in online communities form relationships and associations with certain brands, linking themselves to the ideals, principles, and lifestyles of those brands. Effective social media initiatives can reinforce this sense of community and meaningful relationships, thereby enhancing customer opinions of the business.

The Brand Equity Theory, proposed by Keller (1993), emphasizes the importance of brand perceptions, affiliations, and loyalty in influencing consumer behavior. This theory posits that strong brands possess high levels of brand equity, which are cultivated over time through positive brand experiences, associations, and impressions in consumers' minds. Keller suggests that engaging content on social media platforms, consistent messaging, and positive brand experiences shared by consumers can all contribute to building and enhancing brand equity. By skillfully managing brand communication and interactions on social media, businesses can shape consumer impressions, establish brand associations, and ultimately increase brand equity, leading to more favorable brand perceptions.

Furthermore, Social Identity Theory, as articulated by Tajfel, Turner, Austin, and Worchel (1979), is relevant to social media marketing efforts and brand perceptions. According to this theory, individuals strive to maintain a positive social identity and derive part of their sense of self from group memberships. This theory explains how social media activities affect brand perceptions in the social media marketing context. People often identify brands that align with their desired social identities or group memberships. Social media marketing strategies can leverage this concept by developing messaging and content that resonates with the target audience's social identities.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework of the study variables. The independent variable was social media marketing efforts, which included entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word of mouth. The dependent variable was brand perception, with indicators such as functional perception, affective perception, reputation, brand experience, and interaction. It is important to acknowledge that the indicators selected for both the independent and dependent variables were deliberately chosen to align with the specific objectives and scope of this study. This conceptual framework serves as a comprehensive guide for exploring the intricate relationships between social media marketing efforts and their impacts on brand perception.
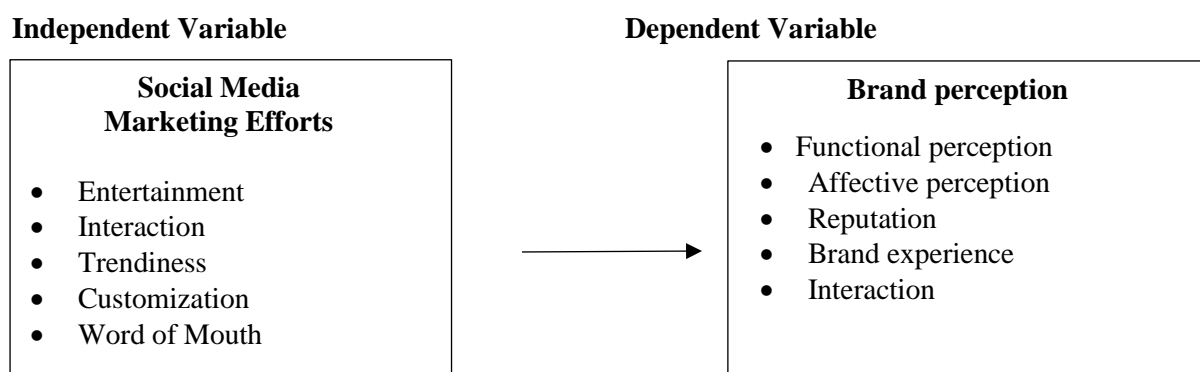
Independent Variable

Social Media Marketing Efforts
• Entertainment • Interaction • Trendiness • Customization • Word of Mouth

Dependent Variable

Brand perception
• Functional perception • Affective perception • Reputation • Brand experience • Interaction

Figure 1. The Conceptual Framework of the Study

2.1 Hypothesis
The following null hypothesis was tested at a significance level of 0.05: there is a significant relationship between social media marketing efforts and customers' brand perception.

3. Research methodology
This chapter discusses the study's methodologies, such as the research design, research subject, research instruments, data-gathering procedures, and statistical tools.

3.1 Research Design
A descriptive-correlational method was employed for the statistical analysis of the collected data. This quantitative, non-experimental research design examines social phenomena without directly influencing the subjects' circumstances (Shah et al., 2020). Descriptive-correlational research aims to elucidate the relationship between two or more variables without speculating on causality. It involves gathering and analyzing data on multiple variables to ascertain whether a relationship exists between them (Bhat et al., 2023).

Furthermore, the study utilized a quantitative approach to investigate social media marketing efforts and brand perceptions, involving the collection of numerical data. Quantitative research involves the systematic investigation of phenomena through the collection of numerical information and application of mathematical, statistical, or computational methods. The quantitative method employed in this study followed a systematic research process, beginning with the formulation of research questions, proceeding through research design, data selection, and analysis, and concluding with interpretations and conclusions based on defined principles (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022).

The processing of data in variable experiments was emphasized in this study to uncover the significant relationships between social media marketing efforts and brand perceptions. The descriptive-correlation design was chosen because it focuses more on determining the relationships between variables rather than establishing causal connections (Katzukov, 2020). Descriptive correlation studies provide descriptions and correlations that naturally occur between and among the variables.

3.2 Research Subject
The study was conducted in the Municipality of Santo Tomas, Davao del Norte, Brazil. Respondents were selected using a universal sampling method. Universal sampling, also known as line sampling, is a non-probability sampling method often used in statistical sampling to select a sample from a population. In universal sampling, each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected; however, the probability of selection is unknown (Kabera, 2009).

3.3 Research Instrument
Two adapted research tools were employed in this study, purposefully selected and modified to align with the study objectives.

Social Media Marketing Efforts (SMME): The instrument for the independent variable was adapted from the questionnaire on the conceptualization of social media marketing efforts towards the brand perception of customers by Yadava and Rahman (2017). The SMME questionnaire comprised 22 items, covering aspects such as entertainment (4 items), interaction (5 items), trendiness (4 items), customization (5 items), and Word of Mouth (4 items).

The questionnaire used a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 5 (Strongly Agree) to 4 (agree), 3 (Moderately Agree), 2 (disagree), and 1 (Strongly Disagree). These parameter limits, along with their corresponding descriptions, were applied to gauge the customer experience level.

Scale	Range	Descriptive Equivalent	Interpretation
5	4.20-5.00	Very High	This indicates that social media marketing efforts is always manifested.
4	3.40-4.19	High	This indicates that social media marketing efforts is oftentimes manifested.
3	2.60-3.39	Average	This indicates that social media marketing efforts is sometimes manifested.
2	1.80-2.59	Low	This indicates that social media marketing efforts is rarely manifested.
1	1.00-1.79	Very Low	This indicates that social media marketing efforts is least manifested.

Brand Perception (BP): The instrument for the dependent variable was adapted from Barajas-Portas's (2015) questionnaire on the conceptualization of brand perception (Barajas-Portas et al., Barajas-Portas (2015). The BP questionnaire comprised 17 items, covering dimensions such as Functional Perception (three items), Affective Perception (three items), reputation (three items), Brand Experience (three items), and interaction (five items).

Similarly, this questionnaire utilized a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 5 (Strongly Agree) to 4 (agree), 3 (Moderately Agree), 2 (disagree), and 1 (Strongly Disagree). These parameter limits and their corresponding descriptions were employed to assess the level of customer experience.

Scale	Range	Descriptive Equivalent	Interpretation
5	4.20-5.00	Very High	This specify that brand perception is always Evident.
4	3.40-4.19	High	This specify that brand perception is oftentimes Evident.
3	2.60-3.39	Average	This specify that brand perception is sometimes Evident.
2	1.80-2.59	Low	This specify that brand perception is rarely Evident.

| 1 | 1.00-1.79 | Very Low | This specify that brand perception is least Evident. |

3.4 Statistical Tools

The following statistical tools were employed in the computation of data and hypothesis testing at an alpha level of 0.05:

Mean: The mean was used to determine the level of social media marketing and the brand perception of customers. It is the most frequently used index of central tendency and provides the average value of a set of numbers (Sykes & Gani, 2016).

Pearson Correlation (r) Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to ascertain the significant relationship between social media marketing efforts and customers' brand perceptions. This technique is widely employed to determine linear correlations, expressing the level and direction of the relationship between two variables as a numerical value between -1 and 1 (Akoglu, 2018).

4. Results and discussions

This section presents the results and discussion of this study. In particular, this section shows the data in tables and their corresponding descriptive interpretations. The null hypotheses formulated in this study were also tested.

4.1 Level of Social Media Marketing Efforts in Terms of Entertainment

Table 1 illustrates the level of social media marketing efforts related to entertainment. The item "I believe the contents of brands seem interesting" garnered the highest mean of 4.31, followed closely by "I always like to visit local sites as they are more interesting than the others" with a mean of 4.30. Both means correspond to a descriptive equivalent of "very high." Conversely, the items "I am using brand social media because it is fun" and "I believe the contents used in the website of local fashion are appealing" recorded the lowest mean of 4.24, also categorized as "very high."

The overall level of social media marketing efforts in terms of entertainment yielded a category mean of 4.27, indicating a consistently high manifestation of social media marketing efforts in this aspect. Furthermore, the standard deviation of 0.75 in the category mean suggests a moderate level of variability in social media marketing efforts concerning entertainment, indicating a degree of homogeneity in customer responses to this indicator.

Table 1. Level of Social Media Marketing Efforts in terms of Entertainment

	Items	SD	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1.	I am using brand social media because it is fun.	0.79	4.24	Very High
2.	I believe the contents of brands seems interesting.	0.77	4.31	Very High
3.	I believe the contents used in the website of local fashion are appealing.	0.66	4.24	Very High
4.	I always like to visit local sites as they are more interesting than the others.	0.80	4.30	Very High
	Category	**0.75**	**4.27**	**Very High**

These results align with the findings of Castello-Martínez and del Pino Romero (2018), who posit that the characteristics of branded content, including entertainment value, empathy, creativity, and indirectness, positively influence consumer satisfaction and intention to share and continue using the content. In addition, branded content offers consumers unique and novel experiences, thereby fostering

a positive relationship with the brand (Guellec, 2013). Moreover, as Jeon et al. (2017) note, Jeon, Qi, and Wang (2017), customers are often drawn to local sites because of their unique and authentic experiences, which are not readily available elsewhere. Furthermore, the increasing proportion of online products, particularly in light of the pandemic, is evident (Aque, Madronero, Nabasca, Edig, & Buladaco, 2021). This underscores the growing importance of digital platforms for consumer engagement and brand perception.

4.2 Level of Social Media Marketing Efforts in Terms of Interaction

Table 2 displays the level of social media marketing effort in terms of interaction. The item "It is easy to provide my opinion through promoting brands on social media" achieved the highest mean of 4.21, closely followed by "Conversation or opinion exchange with others is possible through brand social media" with a mean of 4.20. Both means correspond to a descriptive equivalent of "very high." Conversely, the item "Brand social media enable information" recorded the lowest mean of 4.04, categorized as "high."

Table 2. Level of Social Media Marketing Efforts in terms of Interaction

	Items	SD	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1.	Brand social media enable information.	0.99	4.04	High
2.	Conversation or opinion exchange with others is possible through Brand social media	0.74	4.20	Very High
3.	It is easy to provide my opinion through promoting brand in social media.	0.69	4.21	Very High
4.	My opinion and comments on the product are easily visible.	0.65	4.16	High
5.	I can share my views on the product comfortably.	0.83	4.16	High
	Category	**0.78**	**4.15**	**High**

The level of social media marketing efforts in terms of interaction yields a category mean of 4.15, corresponding to a descriptive equivalent of "high." This suggests that social media marketing efforts, in terms of interaction, are consistently manifested. Furthermore, a standard deviation of 0.78 in the category mean indicates a moderate level of variability, indicating a degree of homogeneity in customer responses to this indicator.

This finding is supported by the insights of Uyar, Ozyirmidokuz, and Stoica (2018), who assert that customers find it easy to provide their opinions by promoting brands on social media because of various advantages, such as low cost, easy and fast communication, and the ability to measure customer sentiment. Moreover, Andriuzzi and Michel (2021) emphasize the importance of brand managers engaging with customers on social media platforms, such as Facebook, to foster brand loyalty. Additionally, the content and characteristics of brand posts on social media positively influence customer attitudes and engagement, thereby encouraging conversations and opinion exchanges. Conversely, brand social media also enable the dissemination of information among users, allowing them to express their opinions and share perceptions about brands with a global audience (Nagarkar, Amarnani, & Doshi, 2021).

4.3 Level of Social Media Marketing Efforts in Terms of Trendiness

Table 3 presents the level of social media marketing in terms of its trendiness. The item "Using a brand on social media is very trendy" achieved the highest mean of 4.50, categorized as "very high." This is

closely followed by the item "The context of social media is the newest information" with a mean of 4.17, categorized as "high." Conversely, the item "The fashion features provided by the sites of local brands are the latest in nature" recorded the lowest mean of 4.00, also categorized as "high." The overall level of social media marketing efforts in terms of trendiness yielded a category mean of 4.18, indicating that these efforts are often manifested. Furthermore, the standard deviation of 0.71 in the category mean suggests a moderate level of variability, indicating a degree of homogeneity in customer responses to this indicator.

Table 3. Level of Social Media Marketing Efforts in terms of Trendiness

Items	SD	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1. The context of social media is the newest information.	0.70	4.17	High
2. Using a brand on social media is very trendy.	0.70	4.50	Very High
3. The fashion features provided by the sites of local brand are the latest in nature.	0.69	4.00	High
4. I found all the necessary updates on the product.	0.75	4.04	High
Category	**0.71**	**4.18**	**High**

These findings align with the insights of Robul, Hrinchenko, and Zalubinska (2019), who suggested that using social media for branding has become increasingly trendy owing to its capacity for brands to interact with customers and cultivate relationships with them. Furthermore, social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram offer brands the opportunity to promote their products, target specific audiences, and enhance their engagement (Prce, 2018). Moreover, as highlighted by Nurmala (2022), information presented on social media platforms can effectively attract users and drive business sales, ultimately leading to improved outcomes.

4.4 Level of Social Media Marketing Efforts in Terms of Customization

Table 4 shows the level of social media marketing efforts in terms of customization. The item "Brands on social media offer a customized information search" had the highest mean of 4.16. This was followed by the item "I used to get text messages on new offers or new product arrivals" with a mean of 4.05. In addition, both means obtained a high descriptive equivalent. On the other hand, the item "The local brand website provides individual customer supports" has the lowest mean of 3.93 with a descriptive equivalent of high.

The level of social media marketing efforts in terms of customization had a category mean of 4.04 with a descriptive equivalent of high. This indicates that social media marketing efforts in terms of customization are often manifested. Moreover, the standard deviation of 0.71 in the category mean indicates that the measure of variability of social media marketing efforts in terms of customization is close to the mean. This shows the homogeneity of customer responses to this indicator.

Table 4. Level of Social Media Marketing Efforts in terms of Customization

Items	SD	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1. Brands on social media offer a customized information search.	0.67	4.16	High
2. Brands on social media provide customized service.	0.76	4.00	High

	Items				
3.	The local brand website provides individual customer supports.	0.63	3.93		High
4.	I get personalized support according to my choice of products.	0.67	4.04		High
5.	I used to get text messages on new offers or new product arrivals.	0.80	4.05		High
	Category	**0.71**	**4.04**		**High**

These results support the idea of Ferencová, Jeleňová, and Kakalejčík (2015), who state that social media platforms have become powerful tools in shaping consumer decision-making processes, providing buyers with access to a wealth of information, product reviews, and user-generated content, enabling them to make informed purchase decisions. Additionally, sending location-based sales offer notifications through mobile applications is a way to overcome the problem of customers being away from shops and increase their attraction towards the offers (Saluwadana, Hemachandra, Jayasinghe, Hassanar, & Gamage, 2019).

4.5 Level of Social Media Marketing Efforts in Terms of Word of Mouth

Table 5 shows the level of social media marketing efforts in terms of word-of-mouth. The item "I would like to get information on brand product or services from my friends" had the highest mean of 4.14. This is followed by the item "I already have or I would like to have the website or blog of the local fashion brand in my mobile or personal device" with a mean of 4.00. Additionally, both means obtained a high descriptive equivalent. On the other hand, the item "I would like to upload context from social media on my blog or micro blog" had the lowest mean of 3.83 with a descriptive equivalent of high.

The level of social media marketing efforts in terms of word of mouth had a category mean of 3.97 with a descriptive equivalent of high. This indicates that social media marketing efforts in terms of word-of-mouth are often manifested. Moreover, the standard deviation of 0.74 in the category mean indicates that the measure of variability of social media marketing efforts in terms of word of mouth is close to the mean. This shows the homogeneity of customer responses to this indicator.

Table 5. Level of Social Media Marketing Efforts in terms of Word of Mouth

	Items	SD	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1.	I would like to get information on brand product or services from my friends.	0.71	4.14	High
2.	I would like to upload context from social media on my blog or micro blog.	0.74	3.83	High
3.	I already have or I would like to have the website or blog of the local fashion brand in my mobile or personal device.	0.77	4.00	High
4.	I share or I want to share the information	0.74	3.92	High

about the local fashion brand website on my personal social media like Facebook, Twitter, etc.			
Category	**0.74**	**3.97**	**High**

These findings support the idea of Atayev and Janssen (2023), who stated that customers would like to get information on branded products or services from their friends because word-of-mouth communication plays a significant role in influencing consumer behavior. Additionally, when consumers receive information about brands from their friends, they can benefit from their friends' experiences and opinions, which helps them make informed decisions (Soni, 2022).

4.6 Summary on the level of Social Media Marketing Efforts

Table 6 summarizes the levels of social media marketing efforts. Among the five indicators, entertainment had the highest mean of 4.27 with a very high descriptive equivalent. This was followed by trendiness, with a mean of 4.18, a descriptive equivalent of high. Next to trendiness is interaction, with a mean of 4.15, followed by customization, with a mean of 4.04. In contrast, word-of-mouth had the lowest mean of 3.97. Additionally, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word of mouth had a descriptive equivalent of high. Furthermore, entertainment items always manifest themselves. Items in interaction, trendiness, customization, and word of mouth are often manifested.

The level of social media marketing efforts had an overall mean of 4.12 with a descriptive equivalent of high. This means that the level of social media marketing effort is often manifested. The standard deviation of 0.74 in the overall mean indicates that the measures of variability of social media marketing efforts were close to the mean. This shows the homogeneity of customer responses in this variable.

Table 6. Summary on the level of Social Media Marketing Efforts

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1. Entertainment	0.75	4.27	Very High
2. Interaction	0.78	4.15	High
3. Trendiness	0.71	4.18	High
4. Customization	0.71	4.04	High
5. Word of mouth	0.74	3.97	High
Category	**0.74**	**4.12**	High

These findings are supported by the works of (Štreimikienė, Mikalauskienė, Sturienė, & Kyriakopoulos, 2021) who emphasized that high entertainment value in social media content contribute significantly to user engagement and interaction. Craig and Cunningham (2019) found that the use of social media for sales promotion in the entertainment sector showed that regular communication, influencer collaborations, and user engagement are key factors in promoting sales effectively. According to Fayyaz (2022), trendiness influences consumer behavior on social media platforms, ultimately impacting their ongoing search behavior and repurchase intention. Moreover, word of mouth has been recognized as a valuable source of information for consumers, influencing their purchasing decisions (Anggraeni et al., 2023).

4.7 Level of Brand Perception in terms of Functional Perception

Table 7 presents the level of brand perception in terms of functional perceptions. The item "*The product of this brand is a high quality*" has the highest mean of 4.27. This followed by the item "*The product of this brand is useful*" with a mean of 4.25. Both means obtained a very high descriptive equivalence. On

the other hand, the item "*This brand pays attention on my needs*" has the lowest mean of 4.17 with a descriptive equivalent of high.

The level of brand perception in terms of functional perception had a category mean of 4.23 with a descriptive equivalent of very high. This indicates that brand perception in terms of functional perception always manifests itself. Moreover, the standard deviation of 0.80 in the category mean indicates that the measure of variability of brand perception in terms of functional perception is close to the mean. This shows the homogeneity of customer responses in this indicator.

Table 7. Level of Brand Perception in terms of Functional Perception

Items	SD	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1. This brand pays attention on my needs.	0.81	4.17	High
2. The product of this brand is a high quality.	0.77	4.27	Very High
3. The product of this brand is useful.	0.83	4.25	Very High
Category	**0.80**	**4.23**	**Very High**

Based on Gelici (2020), customers have high expectations from successful e-commerce brands, including quick and reliable delivery, highly available customer service, and high-quality products and services. Moreover, the brand can serve as a signal of quality, with customers perceiving higher-quality products associated with well-established brands (Kral & Janoskova, 2020).

4.8 Level of Brand Perception in terms of Affective Perception
Table 8 presents the level of brand perception in terms of affective perceptions. The item "*This brand induces feelings and sentiments*" has the highest mean of 4.17. This is followed by the item "*I have strong emotions to this brand*" and "*This brand is an emotional brand*" which has the lowest mean of 3.96. Furthermore, all indicators got a descriptive equivalent of high which collectively means that all items mentioned above are oftentimes evident

Table 8. Level of Brand Perception in terms of Affective Perception

Items	SD	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1. This brand induces feelings and sentiments.	0.67	4.17	High
2. I have strong emotions to this brand.	0.63	3.96	High
3. This brand is an emotional brand.	0.69	3.96	High
Category	**0.66**	**4.03**	**High**

The level of brand perception in terms of affective perception had a category mean of 4.03 with a descriptive equivalent of high. This indicates that brand perception in terms of affective perception is often evident. Moreover, the standard deviation of 0.66 in the category mean indicates that the measures of variability of brand perception in terms of affective perception are close to the mean. This shows the homogeneity of customer responses to this indicator.

These results support the idea of Raeesi Vanani (2019), who stated that brands induce feelings and sentiments in customers' brand perceptions because emotional branding is a marketing strategy that appeals to clients' emotions to increase brand loyalty. In addition, emotions play a role in building strong brand ties between customers and brands. (Lopez, Guerra, Gonzalez, & Madero, 2020) Moreover,

brands use emotions to influence a customer's reaction to a product, driving engagements and creating an emotional attachment (Koschembahr-Łyskowska, 2018).

4.9 Level of Brand Perception in terms of Reputation

Table 9 presents the level of brand perception in terms of reputation. The item "*This brand has the best products*" has the highest mean of 4.16. This followed by the item "*This brand is socially responsible*" with a mean of 4.14. The item "*I know the origin of the products of this brand*" had the lowest mean of 3.95. Furthermore, all indicators had a descriptive equivalent of high, which collectively means that all items mentioned above are often evident.

The level of brand perception in terms of reputation had a category mean of 4.08 with a descriptive equivalent of high. This indicates that brand perception in terms of reputation is often evident. Moreover, the standard deviation of 0.68 in the category mean indicates that the measures of variability of brand perception in terms of reputation are close to the mean. Therefore, this shows the homogeneity of the responses of customers to this indicator.

Table 9. Level of Brand Perception in terms of Reputation

Items	SD	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1. This brand has the best products.	0.68	4.16	High
2. This brand is socially responsible.	0.64	4.14	High
3. I know the origin of the products of this brand.	0.74	3.95	High
Category	**0.68**	**4.08**	**High**

These findings support the idea of Kral and Janoskova (2020) that successful branding strategies consider customers' changing expectations and desires over time. Additionally, customers' brand perception is influenced by the social responsibility of a brand (Ding 2023). According to Wang, Liao, Wu, and Le (2021) that when a brand demonstrates corporate social responsibility, it enhances its image and credibility, leading to increased customer trustworthiness and loyalty.

4.10 Level of Brand Perception in terms of Brand Experience

Table 10 presents the brand perception level in terms of brand experience. The item "*This brand results in bodily experience*" has the highest mean of 4.17. This is followed by the item "*This brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses,* with a mean of 4.12. On the other hand, the item *"I find this brand interesting in a sensory way*" has the lowest mean of 4.04. Collectively, all items had a high descriptive equivalent, which means that all items are often manifested.

The level of brand perception in terms of brand experience in terms of brand experience has a category mean of 4.11 with a descriptive equivalent of high. This indicates that brand perception in terms of brand experience is often evident. Moreover, the standard deviation of 0.67 in the category mean indicates that the measures of variability of brand perception in terms of brand experience are close to the mean. This shows the homogeneity of customer responses in this indicator.

Table 10. Level of Brand Perception in terms of Brand Experience

Items	SD	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1. This brand makes strong impression on my visual sense or other senses.	0.67	4.12	High

	Items	SD	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
2.	I find this brand interesting in a sensory way.	0.68	4.04	High
3.	This brand results in bodily experiences.	0.66	4.17	High
	Category	**0.67**	**4.11**	**High**

Based on the idea of Zha, Foroudi, Melewar, and Jin (2022) stating that brand experiences result in bodily experiences and make strong impressions on customers' visual sense and other senses in their perceptions. The embodiment perspective suggests that consumers interact with brands in corporeal, instinctive, and sensual ways, leading to sensory activation and corporeal rationality. Additionally, the sensory brand experience (SBE) involves the mining, processing, and application of brand-related sensory data through multisensory cues, such as visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile, and taste (Martini, Shidqi, Hurriyati, & Widjajanta, 2022).

4.11 Level of Brand Perception in terms of Interaction

Table 11 shows the level of brand perception in terms of interaction. The item "*I think the content shared by this brand the social media networks is interesting*" had the highest mean of 4.30. This was followed by the item "*I visit the brand page on social media networks regularly*" with a mean of 4.21. Additionally, both means obtained a very high descriptive equivalence. On the other hand, the items "*I follow the brand pages in order to obtain recent information of the brand/ products*", "*I follow the brand pages to get in contact with other people who have similar interests to me*" and "*I follow the brand pages because of my attachment to the brand*" has the lowest mean of 4.08 with a descriptive equivalent of high.

The level of brand perception in terms of interaction had a category mean of 4.15 with a descriptive equivalent of high. This finding indicates that brand perception is often evident in terms of interaction. Moreover, the standard deviation of 0.72 in the category mean indicates that the measures of variability of brand perception in terms of interaction are close to the mean. This shows the homogeneity of customer responses in this indicator.

Table 11. Level of Brand Perception in terms of Interaction

	Items	SD	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1.	I think the content shared by this brand the social media networks is interesting.	0.75	4.30	Very High
2.	I follow the brand pages in order to obtain recent information of the brand/products.	0.85	4.08	High
3.	I visit the brand page on social media networks regularly.	0.72	4.21	Very High
4.	I follow the brand pages to get in contact with other people who have similar interests to me.	0.61	4.08	High
5.	I follow the brand pages because of my attachment to the brand.	0.69	4.08	High
	Category	**0.72**	**4.15**	**High**

These results support the idea of Wang et al. (2021) that the content shared by a brand on social media networks is interesting to customers because it influences their perceptions of the brand and their willingness to engage with it. Customers perceive brand page post characteristics and content as positive, leading to positive attitudes and engagement with the brand. Additionally, customers' perceptions of brand personality and brand-owned social media content marketing positively impact their brand attitudes (Ahmad, Zakaria, & Seman, 2022).

4.12 Summary on the level of Brand Perception
Table 12 summarizes the levels of brand perception. Among the five indicators, functional perception had the highest mean of 4.23 with a very high descriptive equivalent. This is followed by an interaction with a mean of 4.15, a descriptive equivalent of high. After interaction, brand experience had a mean of 4.11, followed by brand experience with a mean of 4.08. Additionally, affective perception, reputation, brand experience, and interaction have descriptive equivalents of high. Furthermore, items in functional perception are always evident, whereas affective perception, reputation, brand experience, and interaction are often evident.

Table 12. Summary on the level of Brand Perception

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1. Functional perception	0.80	4.23	Very High
2. Affective perception	0.66	4.03	High
3. Reputation	0.68	4.08	High
4. Brand experience	0.67	4.11	High
5. Interaction	0.72	4.15	High
Category	**0.71**	**4.12**	**High**

The level of brand perception had an overall mean of 4.12 with a descriptive equivalent of high. This means that the level of brand perception is oftentimes evident. The standard deviation of 0.71 in the overall mean indicates that the measure of variability in brand perception is close to the mean. This shows the homogeneity of customer responses to this indicator.

These findings are supported by the work of Guliyev (2023), who found that brand perceptions have a significant impact on consumer behavior. Consumers consider brand perception and image when choosing between competing brands. Additionally, brand perception is analyzed as a mental association that plays an important role in creating emotional connections with consumers (Nomalisa & Wisni, 2022). It also influences consumers' purchasing behavior and attitudes towards brands (Changqi, 2022). On the other hand, brand image has a positive impact on consumers' purchasing behavior (Zhao, Butt, Murad, Mirza, & Saleh Al-Faryan, 2022). Consumers tend to prefer branded products because of their social status associated with them (Choi & Burnham, 2021).

4.13 Significance of the relationship between Social Media Marketing Efforts and Brand Perception
Table 13 shows the relationship between social media marketing efforts and brand perceptions.

Table 13. Summary on the Correlation on Social Media Marketing Efforts and Brand Perception

Variables Correlated	R	p-value	Decision on Ho	Decision on Relationship
Social media marketing efforts and Brand perception of customers	0.784	0.000	Reject	Significant

The correlation analysis revealed a significant relationship between social media marketing efforts and customer brand perception (p < 0.000), with an R-value of 0.784. Consequently, the null hypothesis

was rejected. This strong positive correlation indicates that social media marketing efforts and brand perception are significantly intertwined, with both variables having substantial importance in influencing each other. The significance of the p-value, which was less than 0.05 level of significance, underscores the importance of this relationship.

These findings underscore the pivotal role of social media marketing efforts in shaping customer brand perceptions and vice versa. It is evident that social media marketing efforts significantly impact customer brand perception, while brand perceptions also influence social media marketing efforts, particularly in the context of brand-purchasing decisions.

Moreover, the research elucidates the significant impact of social media marketing activities on brand image and loyalty, with brand perception emerging as a key driver. Additionally, the study reveals the interconnectedness of brand perception, brand image, and brand loyalty, emphasizing their collective influence on consumer behavior and brand success (Bilgin, 2018)).

5. Conclusion
5.1 Conclusion
The major findings of this study are as follows.
1. The level of influence of social media marketing efforts varies across dimensions. Entertainment yielded the highest mean of 4.27, indicating a "very high" level, with a standard deviation (SD) of 0.75. Trendiness followed, with a mean of 4.18, categorized as "high," and an SD of 0.78. Perceived control ranked next with a mean of 4.15 and an SD of 0.78. Conversely, customization obtained a mean of 4.04 and an SD of 0.71, while word of mouth (WOM) had the lowest mean of 3.97 and an SD of 0.74, both categorized as "high." The overall mean for social media marketing efforts was 4.12, with an SD of 0.74, indicating a "high" level.
2. In terms of brand perception, functional perception garnered the highest mean of 4.23, with an SD of 0.80, followed by interaction, with a mean of 4.15 and an SD of 0.72. Brand experience obtained a mean of 4.11 and an SD of 0.67, while reputation had a mean of 4.08 and an SD of 0.68. Affective perception had the lowest mean score of 4.03, with an SD of 0.66. The overall mean for brand perception was 4.12, with an SD of 0.71, indicating a "high" level.
3. The correlation coefficient (r-value) between social media marketing efforts and the brand perception of customers was 0.784, with a p-value greater than 0.000. This implies that the null hypothesis (Ho) was accepted. The strong positive correlation between the two variables, along with the significance of the p-value (less than 0.05), indicates a significant relationship.

In conclusion, this study reveals the high perception levels of both social media marketing efforts and brands among customers. Furthermore, a significant relationship between these two factors was identified, emphasizing the pivotal role of social media marketing in shaping brand perception. These findings underscore the importance of effectively leveraging social media platforms to enhance brand image and foster customer engagement in contemporary marketplaces.

5.2 Recommendations
Building upon the study's conclusions, several recommendations are proposed for clothing stores to optimize their social media marketing strategies.
Enhance word-of-mouth marketing: Implementation strategies to improve word-of-mouth promotion on social media platforms, leverage user-generated content, and encourage customer reviews and recommendations. This approach can foster consumer trust and loyalty, ultimately driving profitability.
Utilize Entertainment Content: Maintain a balance between informative and entertaining content in social media marketing efforts to engage customers effectively. Entertainment-oriented content can enhance brand legitimacy and facilitate customer interaction, thereby solidifying brand perceptions and loyalty.
Focus on Affective Perception: Prioritize initiatives that enhance emotional connections with customers as positive emotional experiences lead to higher rates of return purchases and brand loyalty.

By fostering emotional engagement through social media channels, clothing stores can cultivate long-term relationships with their customer bases.

Optimize Functional Perception: Improve consumer awareness and product communication through enhanced branding and labeling strategies. Clear and informative product messaging can influence perceptions and usage patterns, thus strengthening brand identity and customer satisfaction.

5.3 Significance of the Study

Beyond its immediate implications, this study has significant value for various stakeholders.

Customers: The insights provided by this study empower customers to make informed purchasing decisions, foster a better online shopping experience, and improve product quality and services.

New Entrants Businesses: By offering insights into effective customer segmentation and digital marketing strategies, this study equips new entrants with the knowledge necessary to effectively navigate the online marketplace.

Future Researchers: Serving as a foundational reference point, this study contributes to the broader body of literature on consumer behavior and decision making in the context of online shopping and digital marketing, guiding future research endeavors in this domain.

Through rigorous analysis and practical recommendations, this study contributes to advancing the understanding and practices in the realm of social media marketing and brand perception, thereby enriching both scholarly discourse and practical industry applications.

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