



Exploring How Shopee's Sales Event Trends Shape Brand Preferences among Gordon College Marketing Students

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative phenomenological study explored how Shopee's sales event trends shape the brand preferences of Gordon College Marketing students. Twelve (12) purposively selected students participated in semi-structured interviews, and data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Findings revealed that students are highly exposed to Shopee's promotional campaigns, including double-digit sales, flash sales, vouchers, and free shipping offer. These promotional strategies increase brand awareness, encourage product exploration, and influence purchasing decisions. Brand preference formation was mainly affected by discounts, reviews, product quality, social media exposure, and influencer recommendations. The study concludes that Shopee sales event trends significantly influence students' perceptions of brands and their purchasing behavior in digital marketplaces.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of digital technology has transformed how consumers discover, evaluate, and purchase products. Social media and e-commerce platforms have become important channels where businesses promote products, communicate with customers, and influence purchasing decisions. Through these digital platforms, consumers are continuously exposed to advertisements, influencer content, product reviews, and promotional campaigns that shape their perceptions of different brands.

In the Philippines, e-commerce has experienced significant growth due to increasing internet access, smartphone use, and the popularity of online shopping. The industry is projected to reach approximately ₱2.2 trillion by 2028, driven by digital adoption and the expansion of social commerce (Philippine Star, 2024). Among the leading e-commerce platforms, Shopee has become one of the most widely used because of its user-friendly features and aggressive promotional strategies. According to BusinessWorld (2024), Shopee combines social media with e-commerce by using influencer marketing, live selling, short-form videos, and personalized promotions to attract and engage consumers.

One of Shopee's most recognized marketing strategies is its recurring sales events, including the 9.9, 10.10, 11.11, and 12.12 campaigns. These events offer discounts, vouchers, free shipping, flash sales, and other limited-time promotions that encourage consumers to make purchases. Through continuous promotion on social media, these campaigns increase product visibility and strengthen consumer engagement with brands (BusinessWorld, 2024; Philippine Star, 2024).

Several studies have shown that Shopee's promotional activities influence consumers' buying behavior. Bulacan et al. (2022) found that price, convenience, trust, and time-limited promotions significantly affect purchasing decisions on Shopee. Similarly, Bacay et al. (2022) reported that discounts, vouchers, and promotional timing have a stronger influence on consumers' purchase intentions than celebrity endorsements or advertisements. These findings suggest that sales event trends are effective marketing strategies that encourage online shopping and increase consumer interest in brands.

Beyond encouraging purchases, recurring sales events may also influence consumers' brand preferences. Frequent exposure to promotional campaigns, influencer recommendations, and customer reviews can increase brand awareness and make consumers more likely to choose certain brands over others (Chiu et al., 2021). As these promotional activities become a regular part of online shopping, they may shape consumers' perceptions and long-term preferences for specific brands.

Marketing students are a relevant group for examining this phenomenon because they study branding, consumer behavior, and digital marketing while also actively participating in online shopping. Their academic background may influence how they understand and evaluate promotional campaigns, yet they remain exposed to the same sales events as other consumers. This combination of theoretical knowledge and personal shopping experience provides a unique perspective on how digital marketing strategies affect brand preferences.

This study is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12: Responsible Consumption and Production, which encourages responsible consumption and informed purchasing decisions (United Nations, 2020). Asio (2023; 2026) also emphasized that information sources influence students' awareness and decision-making related to sustainable development. Understanding how sales event promotions affect consumer choices may provide valuable insights for educators, marketers, and consumers in promoting more informed purchasing behavior.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital marketing has a significant influence on young consumers due to its convenience and the accessibility of online promotions. Gupta et al. (2020) found that during online sales events, digital advertisements and shopping platform features significantly affect brand preference among youth consumers. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok exert a major influence on the buying behavior and purchase intentions of consumers through targeted advertising and online influencer endorsements (Kamal & Shnarbekova, 2021). Furthermore, social media platforms help shape public memory and influence public understanding (Realubit et al., 2026). Beyond basic advertising, these platforms enable young consumers to actively engage with brands, creating a personalized, data-driven approach to marketing (Mróz, 2023). Social media also transforms traditional word-of-mouth communication, as peer interactions and influencer recommendations often exert a stronger effect on purchase decisions than conventional marketing channels (Rzayeva et al., 2022).

The functional features of shopping platforms such as accessibility, time-saving capabilities, and effective user interface design play a critical role in driving consumer purchase intentions, with well-designed platforms proving particularly persuasive (Rizvan et al., 2022). Advertising content on social media builds consumer-brand trust, directly affecting brand preference and purchase intent (Jakhar, 2025). Broader social factors, including product availability and platform convenience, further shape the shopping interests of young consumers (Maity & Sandhu, 2021). In the context of e-commerce, studies involving international students in China indicate that despite financial risks that might otherwise discourage online shopping, purchase intentions are positively driven by trust and ease of platform use, underscoring the importance of platform usability and dependability (Siyal et al., 2021).

A substantial body of literature examines the specific drivers of Generation Z and student consumer behavior on e-commerce platforms in the Asian marketplace. University students' purchasing decisions on Shopee are heavily influenced by well-known influencer endorsements and free-shipping incentives, alongside the persuasive power of online customer reviews (Said et al., 2023). Saleem et al. (2022) reported that e-commerce platforms facilitate the transition from traditional retail to online shopping by providing seamless access, fast connectivity, and extensive product variety. Complementing these infrastructure factors, student online buying habits are motivated by perceived

time and cost savings, convenience, platform utility, ease of use, and privacy controls (Chelvarayan et al., 2024).

Online promotional strategies, evolving consumer preferences, and individual buyer needs interact to drive purchasing decisions on platforms like Shopee (Munandar et al., 2024). Customer trust, consumer perception, online behavior, and e-service quality are essential determinants of brand preference and brand loyalty among youth consumers (Alasrani & Wulandari, 2022). While psychological factors remain central, consumer preferences can occasionally exert a negative effect on consumer attitudes, whereas primary motivational drivers positively impact actual purchase decisions (Alfredo & Maryati, 2025). Moreover, brand image significantly impacts Shopee purchasing decisions, acting as a foundational driver of shopping brand loyalty (Tresna et al., 2021).

Influencer endorsements and social media promotions remain highly effective because they allow consumers to examine product details clearly (Said, 2022; Tasriastuti et al., 2024). However, other empirical findings suggest that core factors like price, product performance, and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) can exert an even stronger influence on buying intent (Firmanza & Artanti, 2022). Price often emerges as the single most decisive factor in consumer decision-making especially among young shoppers followed by brand image and creator influence (Tasriastuti et al., 2024). Furthermore, a company's brand image, product quality, and customer service standards strengthen long-term customer loyalty toward brands on Shopee (Ulfa & Ma'ruf, 2025). Active communication between seller and buyer via live chat or instant messaging also significantly impacts purchase decisions (Andria et al., 2023). In instances where direct influencer impact is minimal, Gen Z purchase intentions are still positively driven by social media advertising, service quality, and overall corporate image (Putra & Darma, 2024). Purchase choices are also heavily guided by lifestyle trends and digital shopping routines (Solichah et al., 2024; Mandagi et al., 2024). Indeed, consumer trust and satisfaction strongly predict online shopping behavior, accounting for over three-quarters of purchasing variance in empirical modeling (Septia et al., 2025). Furthermore, promotions, customer reviews, and star ratings significantly affect product choice such as in niche markets like Muslim apparel on Shopee highlighting the combined efficacy of social proof and promotional execution (Anggreani & A'yuni, 2023).

In the Philippine context, the expansion of e-commerce has substantially altered college students' purchasing habits, particularly through social media-driven sales campaigns. Shopee utilizes flash discounts, gamification, and targeted promotions to engage student shoppers, inspire impulse buying, and build brand loyalty. According to Reyes and Santos (2021), interactive social media marketing such as flash sales and double-date "11.11" events dramatically increases student purchase intentions by instilling a sense of consumer urgency and excitement. Similarly, Cruz et al. (2021) demonstrated that targeted marketing and push notifications influence student brand selections and purchasing routines.

Gamification mechanics such as collectable vouchers and interactive mini-games boost student engagement during Shopee sales events and encourage

repeat purchases (Mendoza, 2022). Combining promotional discounts, active social media engagement, and time-limited offers reinforces brand attachment among university students (Garcia & Torres, 2021). Peer influence on social media channels also elevates brand trust, motivating students to participate in online shopping events (Tan, 2023). Furthermore, peer validation through online reviews, likes, and shares plays a vital role in guiding purchase choices during Shopee campaigns (Villanueva & Salazar, 2022). Student engagement with Shopee's social media advertising correlates positively with brand awareness and platform loyalty (Lopez & Bautista, 2021), while time-bound offers and gamified elements generate high conversion rates by increasing urgency (Dizon, 2022). Entertaining advertising formats lead student consumers to favor brands featured during major sales events (Santos & Reyes, 2023), and social validation via user-generated content enhances brand trust, positively affecting purchase intention and repeat buying (Fernandez, 2020).

Regular participation in Shopee sales events strengthens overall brand connection among college students (Abella & Morales, 2021). Localized advertising and regional promotional strategies deployed during mega-sales campaigns are particularly effective in directing student brand choices (Cruz et al., 2020). Interactive social media campaigns, mini-games, and targeted ad placements improve brand recognition and favorably influence purchasing decisions (Dela Cruz, 2021). Gamified promotions also encourage students to explore new storefronts, increasing overall brand exposure and engagement (Santos, 2022). Finally, urgency-driven marketing campaigns increase purchase motivation while visually influencing brand evaluation (Villanueva, 2023).

Collectively, these studies confirm that Shopee's social media sales events affect student motivation through both internal and external mechanisms. Financial incentives and deep discounts serve as primary external motivators for purchase actions (Ramirez & Santos, 2021). Conversely, repeated exposure to promoted brands during recurring campaigns enhances long-term brand recognition and trust (Cruz & Herrera, 2022). Social interaction, gamification, and perceived value shape student brand preferences (Diaz, 2021), while interactive platform features foster brand engagement and loyalty (Reyes & Manalo, 2022). Ultimately, recurring sales events modify students' overall decision-making frameworks and guide their final brand choices (Lopez, 2021).

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological approach to explore how Shopee's sales event trends shape the brand preferences of Gordon College Marketing students. Phenomenology focuses on understanding individuals' lived experiences and the meanings they attach to those experiences, making it appropriate for examining how students perceive and respond to Shopee's promotional campaigns. According to Creswell and Poth (2018) and Asio (2021), phenomenological research seeks to describe the essence of a phenomenon through the shared experiences of participants.

The study involved twelve (12) Marketing students who are active Shopee users and were selected through purposive sampling. This sampling

technique ensured that participants possessed firsthand experience relevant to the phenomenon being investigated. The sample size was considered sufficient for qualitative research, which prioritizes depth and richness of information rather than statistical generalization. Data collection ended upon reaching saturation, wherein no new significant insights or themes emerged from the interviews.

Data were collected through a semi-structured interview guide composed of open-ended questions designed to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and consumer behaviors related to Shopee's sales events. To ensure validity, the interview guide underwent expert validation by three professors and was pilot-tested with selected students who were not included in the actual study. Feedback from the validators and pilot participants was incorporated to improve the clarity, relevance, and alignment of the questions with the research objectives.

Following the data collection process, all interviews were transcribed verbatim and carefully reviewed for accuracy. Significant statements and recurring ideas were identified through coding and were subsequently organized into broader themes. These themes formed the basis for the thematic analysis and interpretation of the participants' lived experiences regarding Shopee's sales event trends and their influence on brand preferences.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Theme 1: Exposure to Shopee Sales Event Trends

THEME	SUB-THEMES	CODES
Exposure to Shopee Sales Event Trends	Commonly Encountered Sales Promotions	Frequent Promo Exposure; Discount Awareness; Price Reduction Recognition; Promotional Familiarity
	Promotional Features that Capture Attention	Attention Capture; Sense of Urgency; Promotional Appeal; Purchase Encouragement
	Social media and Platform Visibility	Platform Accessibility; Advertisement Visibility; Social Media Exposure; Trend Awareness
	Frequently Seen Brands and Products	Brand Familiarity; Product Recall; Repeated Brand Exposure; Consumer Recognition
	Engaging Marketing Content	Entertainment Value; Visual Attraction; Memorability; Consumer Engagement

Theme 1: Exposure to Shopee Sales Event Trends

The findings of this study reveal that Gordon College Marketing students are consistently exposed to various Shopee sales event trends through promotional campaigns, social media advertisements, and recurring online shopping events. Participants commonly identified Shopee's double-digit sales such as "9.9," "10.10," "11.11," and "12.12," together with flash sales, free shipping vouchers, payday sales, and discount promotions as the most visible trends they encounter on the platform. Students also shared that these promotions frequently appear while browsing TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, and Shopee itself, making the sales events highly familiar and memorable.

"Big discounts during double digits or voucher & free shipping vouchers." – P2

"Double digit sales or flash sales." – P8

"On Shopee I usually see big sale events like 9.9, 10.10, 11.11, and 12.12, flash sales, free shipping promos, and big discounts on different products." – P9

These suggest that Shopee's repetitive and aggressive promotional strategies strengthen students' awareness of online shopping campaigns and increase their familiarity with digital marketing trends. The findings support the idea that repeated promotional exposure increases consumer attention and campaign recall, especially among young consumers who are highly active online. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), repetitive promotional exposure improves consumer recall and strengthens awareness toward brands and marketing campaigns. Similarly, Tiago and Veríssimo (2014) emphasized that social media marketing significantly influences consumer awareness and engagement, particularly among younger digital consumers.

Subtheme 1.1: Commonly Encountered Sales Promotions

Recurring promotional campaigns were the most recognizable Shopee sales events among the respondents, particularly double-digit sales, flash sales, vouchers, and free shipping promotions.

"On Shopee I usually see big sale events like 9.9, 10.10, 11.11, and 12.12, flash sales, free shipping promos, and big discounts on different products." – P9

"Monthly sales like 1.1, 12.12." – P6

"Double digit sales or flash sales." – P8

Chen and Yao (2018) explained that recurring online promotions increase consumer engagement, while Kotler and Armstrong (2018) emphasized that discounts and vouchers effectively attract consumer attention. In comparison, the present findings indicate that continuous exposure contributes to marketing students' familiarity with specific Shopee sales events.

Subtheme 1.2: Promotional Features that Capture Attention

Promotional features that offer financial savings were found to attract the greatest attention among the respondents. Cialdini (2009) explained that scarcity

creates a sense of urgency, whereas Xu and Huang (2014) found that promotional discounts influence purchase intention.

"Yes, I usually notice promotions like big discounts, flash sales, ₱1 deals, and free shipping. These promos catch my attention because they can help me save money." – P9

"50% off sales or b1t1." – P4

"Limited time offers." – P8

This suggest that discounts, vouchers, and limited-time offers first capture students' attention through perceived savings before influencing their purchasing decisions.

Subtheme 1.3: Social Media and Platform Visibility

Social media platforms emerged as the primary channels through which Shopee sales promotions were encountered. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) described social media as an effective marketing channel, while Duffett (2017) emphasized its influence on young consumers.

"TikTok and Facebook." – P10

"Facebook & TikTok." – P12

"Pinaka-talamak ngayon sa TikTok (yung mga 'budol' finds) at Facebook Groups/Reels." – P10

The findings indicate that repeated exposure through TikTok and Facebook increases marketing students' familiarity with Shopee's recurring sales campaigns.

Subtheme 1.4: Frequently Seen Brands and Products

Brands that were repeatedly promoted during Shopee sales events were easily recalled by the respondents.

"Beauty and skincare products such as Maybelline, Garnier etc." – P2

"Cellphone brand like Poco." – P5

"Xiaomi or Samsung." – P10

Keller (2013) explained that consistent brand visibility strengthens brand recall. Similarly, the present findings indicate that recurring promotional campaigns enhance not only recognition of sales events but also the recall of brands frequently associated with these promotions.

Subtheme 1.5: Engaging Marketing Content

Visually appealing promotional content was identified as the most engaging form of marketing during Shopee sales events. De Vries et al. (2012) found that interactive content enhances consumer engagement, whereas Ashley and Tuten (2015) emphasized the effectiveness of entertaining digital content.

"What makes me stop is when I see big discounts, free shipping, or products I like. Sometimes the design of the post or the countdown timer also makes me curious." – P9

"Seeing a real person unboxing a product or showing a 'price drop.'" – P10

This indicates that unboxing videos, price-drop announcements, and visually appealing posts are particularly effective in capturing the attention of marketing students

Table 2. Theme 2: Influence of Shopee Sales Event Trends on Brand Perception and Brand Choice

THEME	SUB-THEMES	CODES
Influence of Shopee Sales Event Trends on Brand Perception and Brand Choice	Perceived Brand Value	Affordability; Accessibility; Popularity Appeal; Quality Perception; Value for Money
	Consumer Engagement and Attention	Attention Capture; Curiosity Stimulation; Product Exploration; Review Checking; Social Proof
	Social media and Platform Promotional Influence on Decision-Making	Discount Attraction; Urgency Creation; Influencer Persuasion; Deal Evaluation; Purchase Motivation
	Brand Preference Formation	Brand Visibility; Brand Attractiveness; Voucher Influence; Review Dependence; Promotional Recall
	Trial and Brand Switching Behavior	New Brand Trial: Risk Reduction; Brand Experimentation; Satisfaction Response; Repeat Purchase Decision

Theme 2: Influence of Shopee Sales Event Trends on Brand Perception and Brand Choice

The findings of this study reveal that Shopee sales event trends significantly influence how Gordon College Marketing students perceive and choose brands on the platform. Participants explained that sales promotions, discounts, vouchers, influencer posts, and social media advertisements shape their impressions of brands by making products appear more affordable,

attractive, and worth purchasing. Many respondents shared that these promotional strategies increase their curiosity toward brands, encourage them to explore products, and affect their purchasing decisions during online shopping activities.

"It hooks me and makes me buy because of the benefit I'm getting." – P1

"These posts also highlight the features, benefits, and reviews of the products, which helps me understand the brand better." – P2

"Shopee sales posts make brands look affordable and popular, so I see them as trusted and worth buying, though sometimes I question the quality if they're always on sale." – P12

These responses suggest that Shopee sales event trends strongly affect students' perceptions of brand value, accessibility, and credibility. Promotional campaigns help brands become more visible and appealing, while repeated exposure to discounts and social media advertisements influences students' purchasing interest and brand preferences. This finding is supported by Yadav and Rahman (2020), who explained that social media marketing activities significantly influence consumer engagement, perceived value, and brand responses. Similarly, Dwivedi et al. (2021) emphasized that digital promotional strategies shape consumer perceptions and influence purchasing behavior in online marketplaces.

Subtheme 2.1: Perceived Brand Value and Credibility

Participants viewed brands involved in sales events as more affordable and accessible.

"These posts make the brands look more affordable and interesting." – P9

"Sales events can make a brand seem accessible and active." – P10

"They make brands feel more accessible and affordable." – P11

However, some respondents also mentioned that brands that are always on sale may sometimes be perceived as lower in quality or less premium.

"If a brand is always on sale, it might be perceived as budget-friendly rather than premium." – P10

"Sometimes I question the quality if they're always on sale." – P12

Sales events positively influence perceptions of affordability and accessibility; however, excessive promotions may affect perceptions of quality and prestige. This finding supports Khalid et al. (2021) and Cheng and Jiang (2022), who noted that promotional campaigns influence perceived value and consumer trust.

Subtheme 2.2: Consumer Curiosity and Engagement

Promotions stimulate curiosity and encourage students to explore products further.

"When I see posts about big discounts, flash sales, or limited-time offers, it makes me interested in looking at the brand's products." – P2

"Yes, every time they're on sale, I click the products to check the products and vouchers before checking out." – P7

"When I see a big discount or a trending product, I sometimes open the Shopee app to check the price, reviews, and ratings." – P9

Some respondents also explained that social proof influences their curiosity, especially when products become popular on social media.

"When people see others sharing their hauls, it creates a social proof effect." – P6

Promotional activities encourage product exploration and customer engagement. This supports Sanny et al. (2020), who found that online promotions increase customer curiosity, and Bilgin (2020), who emphasized the role of social media marketing in consumer engagement.

Subtheme 2.3: Influence of Discounts, Countdowns, and Influencers

Students acknowledged the strong influence of discounts, countdown timers, and influencer endorsements.

"The discounts make me feel like I'm getting a good deal." – P7

"Discounts make the brand look more worth buying." – P9

"Discounts and countdowns make the brand feel affordable and urgent." – P12

Influencer promotions were also viewed as effective in increasing trust and convincing students to consider products.

"Influencer posts make the product look more convincing." – P9

"If a trusted creator uses a product, the brand's cool factor or reliability rating goes up instantly." – P10

However, one participant mentioned that excessive discounts may reduce product value.

"The product sometimes will feel less valuable when there's always a discount." – P11

Urgency-based promotions and influencer marketing positively affect purchase intentions and brand perceptions. These findings support Lou and Yuan (2019) and Lee and Chen (2021), who highlighted the influence of influencer credibility and limited-time promotions on consumer behavior.

Subtheme 2.4: Social Media Influence on Brand Preference

The findings indicate that social media sales posts strongly affect students' brand preferences and purchasing choices on Shopee. Participants explained that they often rely on reviews, influencer recommendations, attractive posts, and promotional offers when choosing between brands.

"I also pay attention to influencer reviews and product demos shared on social media." – P2

"Social media sales posts can affect my decision because they make some brands look more attractive." – P7

"If I see a brand offering bigger discounts, free shipping, or better deals, I am more likely to choose that brand." – P9

Social media visibility and promotional exposure increase brand attractiveness and influence purchasing decisions. This finding aligns with Godey et al., (2020) and Appel et al., (2020), who emphasized the impact of social media marketing on consumer preferences.

Subtheme 2.5: Trial of New Brands During Sales Events

The findings additionally reveal that Shopee sales events encourage students to try new brands because promotional discounts reduce the perceived risk of purchasing unfamiliar products. Many respondents stated that they experimented with new brands during flash sales and promotional campaigns due to lower prices and positive reviews.

"Yes, I tried checking out a new brand and ended up liking it." – P7

"During Flash Sales. Because the risk is lower due to the low price." – P10

"Yes, I tried a new brand because of a sale, and it turned out okay." – P12

However, some participants also reported dissatisfaction after trying unfamiliar products.

"Yes, sometimes it didn't satisfy me." – P3

"Sometimes I get disappointed because the product doesn't suit my taste." – P8

Discounts reduce perceived purchasing risk and encourage experimentation with unfamiliar brands. This supports Arya et al. (2021) and Nguyen et al. (2022), who found that promotions encourage trial purchases and brand switching behavior.

Table 3. Theme 3: Brand Preference Formation Through Shopee Sales Event Trends

THEME	SUB-THEMES	CODES
Brand Preference Formation Through Shopee Sales Event Trends	Influence of Promotions on Brand Choice	Purchase Influence; Impulse Buying; Promotional Motivation; Checkout Encouragement; Decision Impact
	Effect of Vouchers and Flash Sales on Buying Priorities	Price Prioritization; Voucher Dependence; Flash Sale Urgency; Savings Motivation; Quick Purchase Behavior
	Encouragement to try New Brands	Brand Experimentation; Curiosity Stimulation; Social Proof Influence; Trial Purchase Motivation; Risk Reduction
	Considerations of Price, Reviews, and Quality	Review Dependence; Quality Evaluation; Credibility Assessment; Value Balancing; Informed Decision-Making
	Formation of Brand Loyalty Through Repeated Exposure	Brand Familiarity; Trust Development; Repeated Exposure; Loyalty Formation; Brand Retention

Theme 3: Brand Preference Formation Through Shopee Sales Event Trends

The findings reveal that Shopee sales event trends influence the factors Gordon College Marketing students consider when forming brand preferences. Participants explained that discounts, reviews, influencer promotions, and social media visibility affect how they evaluate brands and make purchasing decisions.

"Reviews + promos affect decision." – P7

"Price + reviews." – P9

"Influencer + reviews." – P10

The responses highlight the role of promotions and online information in shaping brand preferences. Exposure to sales campaigns encourages students to compare brands based on value, credibility, and affordability. This finding

supports Dwivedi et al. (2021) and Yadav and Rahman (2020), who emphasized the influence of digital marketing activities on consumer preferences and purchasing behavior.

Subtheme 3.1: Influence of Promotions on Brand Choice

Promotional campaigns were found to influence students' final brand choices by increasing the perceived value of products.

"Affect my choice a lot." – P1

"Last push to check out." – P3

"Impulsive buying." – P4

Lee and Chen (2021) and Lim et al. (2020) states that discounts and flash sales encourage online purchase intention. The present findings further indicate that these promotions often serve as the final factor that motivates students to complete a purchase.

Subtheme 3.2: Effect of Vouchers and Flash Sales on Buying Priorities

Savings opportunities through vouchers and flash sales emerged as important factors in students' buying priorities.

"Prioritize lowest price." – P1

"Vouchers." – P3

"Buy quickly." – P12

Bilgin (2020) and Cheng and Jiang (2022) emphasized that online promotions increase purchase motivation. Similarly, the present findings suggest that promotional savings encourage students to prioritize affordability and make faster purchasing decisions.

Subtheme 3.3: Encouragement to Try New Brands

Sales event promotions encouraged students to explore unfamiliar brands, particularly when supported by discounts and positive reviews.

"Yes, try new brands." – P1

"Curious because trending." – P2

"Check reviews before trying." – P5

Islam et al. (2021) and Nguyen et al. (2022) found that promotional incentives and online reviews encourage product trials. In comparison, the present findings indicate that students remain willing to try new brands but still rely on customer reviews to reduce perceived risk.

Subtheme 3.4: Considerations of Price, Reviews, and Quality

Price, product reviews, and quality remained important considerations despite the influence of promotional campaigns. Godey et al. (2020) and Appel

et al. (2020) emphasized the importance of online reviews and credibility in consumer decision-making.

"Price + reviews." – P1

"Discount first but still review." – P3

"Balance affordability and quality." – P4

Likewise, the present findings indicate that promotions attract initial interest, while product quality and reviews ultimately influence brand selection.

Subtheme 3.5: Formation of Brand Loyalty Through Repeated Exposure

Repeated exposure to Shopee's promotional campaigns contributed to greater familiarity and trust toward featured brands. Alalwan (2021) and Ismagilova et al. (2020) explained that familiarity and trust support the development of brand loyalty.

"Become loyal due to repeated exposure." – P1

"Trust increases." – P2

"Quality matters more." – P7

However, the findings also suggest that repeated promotions, vouchers, and free shipping may strengthen loyalty to the Shopee platform itself, as students continue returning to Shopee because of its promotional benefits regardless of the brand they purchase. This indicates that while repeated exposure can encourage brand preference, promotional incentives may simultaneously reinforce platform loyalty, with long-term brand loyalty remaining dependent on product quality and overall customer experience.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that Shopee sales event trends influence the brand preferences of Gordon College Marketing students through repeated promotional exposure and social media visibility. Double-digit sales, flash sales, vouchers, free shipping, and influencer promotions increased students' awareness of brands and encouraged them to explore both familiar and unfamiliar products. Although these promotional strategies influenced brand evaluation and purchasing decisions, students consistently considered product quality, customer reviews, ratings, and credibility before making their final brand choices. The findings also suggest that repeated exposure to Shopee's promotional campaigns may strengthen loyalty to the Shopee platform, while long-term loyalty to featured brands remains dependent on positive product experiences and perceived quality.

These findings imply that promotional strategies alone may not be sufficient to establish lasting brand preference. While sales event campaigns effectively attract consumer attention and encourage product exploration, maintaining consumer preference requires brands to deliver quality products, credible information, and positive customer experiences. The study also

highlights the importance of integrating effective promotional strategies with strong brand value to develop sustainable consumer relationships, providing insights for marketers, educators, and future researchers on the role of social commerce in shaping brand preferences among marketing students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, students are encouraged to practice responsible and critical online shopping behaviors during Shopee sales events. Although discounts, vouchers, flash sales, and other promotional offers provide opportunities for savings, students should carefully evaluate product quality, credibility, necessity, and value before making purchasing decisions. Developing financial discipline and consumer awareness may help minimize impulsive buying behavior and promote more informed purchasing choices.

Furthermore, educators and academic institutions are encouraged to strengthen discussions on digital marketing, consumer behavior, social media influence, and e-commerce trends within academic programs. This may help students better understand how promotional strategies affect consumer decision-making and develop stronger critical thinking skills when evaluating online advertisements and marketing content.

Marketing practitioners and Shopee sellers are also encouraged to continue implementing effective promotional strategies to increase consumer engagement and brand visibility. However, equal emphasis should be placed on maintaining product quality, transparency, credibility, and customer satisfaction, as these factors remain essential in building long-term consumer trust and brand loyalty.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

Future researchers may consider examining additional factors that influence brand preference formation and online purchasing behavior, such as financial literacy, peer influence, lifestyle trends, customer satisfaction, and brand loyalty. Future studies may also involve larger and more diverse populations or compare different e-commerce platforms to provide a broader understanding of how sales event trends shape consumer behavior. Furthermore, the use of quantitative or mixed-method research designs may provide more comprehensive insights into the relationship between promotional strategies and brand preference formation in digital marketplaces.

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