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Social Media Entrepreneur-Influencer, Mis/Disinformation and Its Effect on Purchasing Decisions of NSHS Student

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Abstract

The conducted study entitled Social Media Entrepreneur-Influencer, Mis/Disinformation, and Its Effect on Purchasing Decisions of NSHS Student seeks to provide insights on how SMIs spread misleading information and the effects this has on consumers' purchasing decisions. SMIs have been significant players in marketing in recent years thanks to their visually appealing and humorous content, which has had a considerable impact. Furthermore, it sought to provide an understanding with the relationship of the two variables of the study. A cross-sectional research design is applied in the study to investigate the impact of Social Media Entrepreneur-Influencers and Mis/Disinformation on the purchasing decisions of NSHS. One hundred thirteen (113) respondents served as

participants for the quantitative phase of the study. The respondents were selected A random sampling method will be employed to select participants, ensuring a representative sample. The inclusion criteria encompass students actively using social media platforms. Findings of the examined variables revealed that the Students in Noveleta Senior High School have a Moderate Exposure level on Social Media Influencer, Misinformation, And Disinformation. On the other hand, the respondents have a high level of Purchasing power. Using Pearson R- Correlation, the researcher found that there is a significant positive correlation between Social media Mis/Disinformation and Purchasing power of NSHS students.

Keywords: Social Media, Entrepreneur, Influencer, Philippines

Introduction

There has been a recent surge in the popularity of online social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, and others (Dwivedi *et al.*, 2018) ^[4]. The effectiveness of social media advertising and the online promotion of products through business accounts underscore the growing significance of social media presence in marketing strategies (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020) ^[8]. Social media users actively create and publish multimedia material, including their opinions on brands and items, in addition to branded postings and fan sites. User-generated content, or UG content, is more effective and popular than traditional advertising.

Social media entrepreneurs (SMEs) have become influential players in the marketing industry. Through their online platforms, they can engage with wide-ranging audiences and promote various goods and services. This development signifies a significant change in the marketing landscape by providing businesses with an adaptable way to connect with their target market (Ismagilova *et al.*, 2020). Social media is used for brand promotion, audience expansion, customer retention, and product and service awareness. Social media marketing benefits from social networking by increasing brand visibility, brand value, and customer reach (Jamil *et al.*, 2021) ^[5]. (Steinmann *et al.*, 2018) ^[9] Stated that the advantage of self-leadership lies in its ability to manage risks, serving as the initiator of systems that expand and enhance the possibilities of pursuing a goal. To achieve individual success, a good strategy is required. Success is a long-term strategy for the organization, and great leaders can set their agenda with wants as they proceed. An individual's pace and purpose are determined by self-leadership. However, an individual's will may suffer from fatigue and personal limitations.

According to research, social media entrepreneurs (SMEs) significantly impact customers' decisions. However, as this influence increases, concerns about the spread of false or misleading information on social media also rise. This raises questions about how SMEs may unintentionally or deliberately contribute to spreading incorrect information and how this may

impact consumer behavior. Understanding the relationships between SMEs, misconceptions, and their effects on purchase decisions is imperative. False narratives have existed for as long as people have lived in groups, although the production and spread of false information are not new phenomena (Di Domenico, 2020). Misinformation, commonly referred to as "fake news," has become more widely disseminated through social media platforms in recent years. Misinformation is false or inaccurate information spread intentionally or unintentionally, leading to misunderstandings, incorrect beliefs, or decisions based on incomplete or erroneous information.

This study aims to determine how SMEs spread misleading information and the effects this has on students' purchasing decisions. SMEs have been significant players in marketing in recent years due to their visually appealing and humorous content, which has had a considerable impact. On the other hand, some people question the morality and effectiveness of social media platforms due to the abundance of false and misleading information. The study also seeks to determine students' exposure to Social Media Entrepreneur Misinformation and Disinformation and its impact on their purchasing decisions.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to assess students' exposure to misinformation and disinformation propagated by social media entrepreneurs and influencers, exploring its connection to their purchasing decisions. The research also intended to scrutinize the interplay between these variables and their impact on students' purchasing decisions. Specifically, the objectives included (1) evaluating the extent of exposure on social media, (2) determining students' exposure levels to Social Media Misinformation and Disinformation, (3) uncovering the relationship between these exposure levels, and (4) assessing the effects of social media influencer Mis/Disinformation on students' purchasing decisions.

Methods and Materials

The research conducted utilized a Cross-Sectional Method, as indicated by Thomas (2020). A cross-sectional study is a research design that involves collecting data from various individuals at a single point in time, without influencing the observed variables. This method was employed to investigate the relationship between Social Media Entrepreneur-Influencers, Mis/Disinformation, and its impact on the purchasing decisions of National Senior High School (NSHS) students. The choice of the cross-sectional research method was based on its capacity to capture a snapshot of a specific moment in time, allowing for the comprehensive examination of a diverse group of NSHS students' current attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors related to social media influencers and the information they encounter.

In focusing on NSHS students, the research aims to explore the intricate interplay between social media content, misinformation, and consumer choices within a critical developmental stage. Given the dynamic nature of social media, the cross-sectional research design enables the examination of how exposure to Entrepreneur-Influencers and Mis/Disinformation on these platforms influences the decision-making process regarding purchases. This approach facilitates the identification of patterns and

correlations, shedding light on the multifaceted impact of social media on the purchasing decisions of young consumers.

Research Design

In this study, the researchers employ a correlational research design investigating the influence of Social Media Entrepreneur-Influencer, Mis/Disinformation on the purchasing decisions of NSHS students is essential for understanding the complex interrelationships between these variables. By examining correlations without manipulating variables, researchers can discern patterns and associations that elucidate the dynamics shaping students' consumer behavior. This approach allows for the exploration of how exposure to social media influencers and various forms of misinformation and disinformation may impact students' purchasing decisions. Additionally, correlational research facilitates the identification of potential causal relationships, providing insights into the extent to which social media content influences students' consumer choices. Overall, the use of a correlational research design enables a comprehensive examination of the multifaceted interactions between social media content and purchasing behavior among NSHS students, contributing to a deeper understanding of the role of digital platforms in shaping consumer decisions.

Data Gathering Procedure

The procedure for collecting data is a crucial aspect of any research or analysis endeavor. It's essential for researchers to grasp this step thoroughly to ensure simplicity in analysis and meaningful results. In this article, we delve into various data gathering procedures and the appropriate circumstances for each method. Data gathering and procedure involve examining issues, addressing inquiries, analyzing outcomes, and foreseeing trends and possibilities. Researchers employ this method uniquely to streamline the process.

Step 1 Formally drafting a letter to the superintendent of Noveleta National Senior High School to seek permission for the study initiates the process.

Step 2 During November, the study's context and procedure were meticulously planned, including the formulation of questions for consumers and sellers in Noveleta, Cavite.

Step 3 An online survey questionnaire form will be utilized for data collection.

Step 4 Employing this method makes conducting the survey more convenient and straightforward for all researchers involved.

Step 5 Following validation by the leader of the research group, the online survey questionnaire form is distributed. Researchers elucidate the importance of respondents' input to the study and clarify any terms to ensure respondents fully understand their role as study subjects.

Population and Sampling

The selection of one hundred and thirteen (113) NSHS students from diverse grade levels ensures a comprehensive representation of the student body, allowing for a more robust analysis of the influence of social media on purchasing decisions across different age groups and academic levels. By employing a random sampling method, the study aims to mitigate potential biases and enhance the generalizability of the findings to the broader NSHS population. The inclusion criteria focusing on students

actively using social media platforms underscore the relevance of this research to contemporary digital environments, where social media plays a central role in shaping consumer behaviors and perceptions.

In the proposed framework, exposure to social media influencers serves as a significant factor in shaping the purchasing decisions of NSHS students. These influencers wield considerable persuasive power over their followers, often showcasing products or services in a favorable light, which can influence the purchasing behaviors of impressionable students within the NSHS community. Moreover, misinformation and disinformation further compound this influence by distorting perceptions and fostering a sense of urgency or necessity around certain products or services. As NSHS students navigate through a sea of information, the mediator variable, their purchasing power, plays a crucial role in moderating the relationship between exposure to influencers, misinformation, and disinformation, and their ultimate purchasing decisions. The purchasing power of NSHS students acts as a filter through which their exposure to various stimuli translates into actual consumer behavior, reflecting their financial capacity and decision-making autonomy amidst a complex landscape of social media influences and information flows.

Results and Discussion

This section delves into the key findings and analytical insights derived from an investigation into the nexus of Social Media Entrepreneur-Influencers, mis/disinformation, and its consequential impact on the purchasing decisions of NSHS students. Through a meticulous examination of data gathered from surveys, the study aims to unravel the intricate web of influences shaping students' consumer behavior. A total of 113 participants from Noveleta Senior High School completed the survey with a mean age of 17.27. Most participants were female (n=74[65.5%]), Humss (n=43[38.1%]) and ABM (n=25[25.7%]).

Table 1: Level of Social Media Exposure

	Mean	Rank	Interpretation
Using social media for buying products?	3.31	1	Moderate exposure
How frequently do you use social media platforms?	3.27	2	Moderate exposure
Do you encounter content from social media entrepreneur or influencers?	3.25	3	Moderate exposure
Purchase a product based on recommendation from social media entrepreneurs or influencers?	3.21	4	Moderate exposure

The mean scores across different aspects suggest that respondents have a moderate level of exposure to social media in various dimensions related to purchasing decisions. Using social media for buying products (Mean = 3.31), respondents exhibit a moderate level of exposure, implying a balanced engagement with product-related content on these platforms (Yahya, 2022). Additionally, the frequency of social media platform usage (Mean = 3.27) indicates a moderate level of engagement, with respondents regularly but not excessively using social media platforms (Yahya, 2022).

Furthermore, respondents moderately encounter content from social media entrepreneurs or influencers (Mean =

3.25), suggesting a balanced exposure to influencer content within their social media activities (Yahya, 2022). In terms of making purchase decisions based on influencer recommendations (Mean = 3.21), the moderate inclination indicates that respondents consider influencer opinions, but this factor is not dominant in their decision-making process (Yahya, 2022).

The total mean (Overall = 3.26) reflects a consistent pattern of moderate engagement across various aspects (Yahya, 2022). This implies a balanced involvement with social media content related to product purchasing decisions. In summary, the interpretation underscores that social media plays a moderately influential role in shaping respondents' purchasing decisions across multiple dimensions of use.

Table 2: Level of Misinformation Exposure

	Mean	Rank	Interpretation
How often do you encounter misinformation or false information on social media	3.31	1	Moderate exposure
Does false information from social media entrepreneurs or influencers led you to make an incorrect purchasing decision?	3.09	3	Moderate exposure
How frequent are you to fact-check or verify information before making a purchase based on social media content?	3.28	3	Moderate exposure
Total mean	3.23		Moderate exposure

The provided table presents the results of a survey related to exposure to misinformation on social media, its impact on purchasing decisions, and the frequency of fact-checking before making a purchase based on social media content. The data is summarized in terms of mean values and ranks, with a total mean indicating a moderate exposure level. In the study by Nuseir (2018) [6], it was observed that misleading advertisements tend to excessively emphasize positive information, leading to negative experiences for customers. This aligns with the finding in the present study where respondents reported moderate exposure to misinformation on social media (Mean = 3.23). The mean rank for the question about encountering misinformation on social media is 1, indicating a moderate level of exposure. Furthermore, the impact of false information from social media entrepreneurs or influencers on purchasing decisions is evident in the study's results (Mean = 3.09, Rank = 3), with respondents reporting a moderate level of exposure leading to incorrect purchasing decisions. This finding resonates with Sachdev and Ashfaq's (2023) [7] assertion that misleading information negatively impacts the lives of the audience consuming it. The frequency of fact-checking or verifying information before making a purchase based on social media content is reflected in the mean value of 3.28 (Rank = 3), indicating a moderate level of engagement in fact-checking. This aligns with the challenges highlighted by Cao (2023) [1], who pointed out that fake information reviews on the Internet create obstacles for consumers in making informed purchase decisions and can easily mislead them into making incorrect choices.

In conclusion, the study's results suggest a moderate exposure to misinformation on social media, which, in line with previous research, can influence purchasing decisions and necessitates a moderate level of fact-checking among

consumers. These findings highlight the significance of addressing misinformation on social media platforms to enhance consumer decision-making processes.

collectively play a significant role in shaping the online shopping experience for the surveyed individuals.

Table 3: Level of Disinformation Exposure

	Mean	Rank	Interpretation
1. Have you encountered disinformation or false claims on social media related to products?	3.13	2	Moderate exposure
2. Does false claims from social media entrepreneurs or influencers led you to make an incorrect purchasing decision?	3.12	3	Moderate exposure
3. How likely are you to fact-check or verify information before making a purchase based on social media content?	3.32	1	Moderate exposure
Total mean	3.19		Moderate exposure

The table presents survey findings on exposure to disinformation on social media related to products. Mean scores indicate moderate levels of exposure (M = 3.13) to disinformation and a moderate likelihood (M = 3.12) of false claims leading to incorrect purchasing decisions. Respondents exhibit a moderate inclination to fact-check before purchases (M = 3.32), yielding an overall mean of 3.19.

These findings align with (Vinerean *et al.*'s (2019) study, emphasizing the role of internet, social media, and online information in individuals' purchase decisions. The research reveals that a considerable percentage (66%) of individuals are uncertain about the authenticity of the news they encounter, influencing consumer behavior. This corroborates the importance of understanding and addressing the prevalence of misinformation in online spaces, as it can significantly shape consumer decision-making processes.

Table 4: Level of Purchasing Power

	Mean	Rank	Interpretation
How do you likely check the importance of information/features (e.g., product descriptions, customer reviews, return policy) when evaluating the overall value and purchasing power of an online store	3.49	2	Moderate level
How often do you use online tools or calculators to evaluate your purchasing power for specific items or categories?	3.19	3	Moderate level
On a scale of 1 to 5, Rate the impact of online reviews on your decision-making process when making an online purchase	3.76	1	Moderate level
Total mean	3.48		High level

The table summarizes survey findings related to factors influencing the evaluation and decision-making processes in online shopping. Respondents, on average, assign a significant level of importance (M = 3.49) to evaluating information and features, such as product descriptions, customer reviews, and return policies, when assessing the overall value and purchasing power of an online store. Additionally, respondents moderately utilize online tools or calculators to evaluate their purchasing power for specific items or categories (M = 3.19). The impact of online reviews on decision-making processes when making online purchases is notably higher, with a mean score of 3.76. The overall mean (M = 3.48) suggests that these factors

Table 5: Correlation Matrix between the Variables

		SMI_AVE	MISIN-AVE	DISIN_AVE	PP_AVE
SMI_AVE	Pearson's r	—			
	df	—			
	p-value	—			
MISIN-AVE	Pearson's r	0.331 ***	—		
	df	112	—		
	p-value	<.001	—		
DISIN_AVE	Pearson's r	0.366 ***	0.556 ***	—	
	df	112	112	—	
	p-value	<.001	<.001	—	
PP_AVE	Pearson's r	0.474 ***	0.413 ***	0.366 ***	—
	df	112	112	112	—
	p-value	<.001	<.001	<.001	—

Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

The study reveals several statistically significant correlations among key variables. There is a positive and significant correlation between misinformation and social media exposure (Pearson's r = 0.331, p < 0.001), indicating that higher levels of social media exposure are associated with increased exposure to misinformation. Similarly, disinformation is positively correlated with social media exposure (Pearson's r = 0.336, p < 0.001), demonstrating that individuals with greater social media exposure are more likely to encounter disinformation. Furthermore, a strong positive correlation is observed between disinformation and misinformation (Pearson's r = 0.556, p < 0.001), emphasizing the interrelated nature of these two phenomena. Regarding purchasing power, positive and significant correlations are found with social media exposure (Pearson's r = 0.474, p < 0.001), misinformation (Pearson's r = 0.413, p < 0.001), and disinformation (Pearson's r = 0.366, p < 0.001), suggesting that higher purchasing power is associated with increased exposure to social media, misinformation, and disinformation. These findings underscore the intricate relationships between social media exposure, misinformation, disinformation, and purchasing power within the scope of the study.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the comprehensive analysis of survey results and correlation coefficients sheds light on the nuanced relationship between social media exposure, misinformation, disinformation, and their impact on purchasing decisions among students. The mean scores across various dimensions indicate a moderate level of engagement with social media, where individuals use these platforms for product-related information and exhibit a balanced involvement with influencer content. The correlations further affirm these findings, revealing significant positive relationships between social media exposure and both misinformation and disinformation. Additionally, purchasing power is positively correlated with social media exposure, misinformation, and disinformation, emphasizing the influence of these factors on consumer decision-making.

The prevalence of misinformation and disinformation on social media, as highlighted in correlation results, aligns with previous research demonstrating the potential negative consequences on purchasing decisions. The interconnectedness of these variables underscores the need

for consumers to critically evaluate information encountered on social media platforms and emphasizes the role of influencers in shaping consumer perceptions.

Moreover, the study's objectives centered around assessing exposure levels and understanding the impact of social media misinformation and disinformation on purchasing decisions have been effectively addressed. The cross-sectional research design proved apt in capturing a snapshot of students' attitudes and behaviors, providing valuable insights into the complexities of their decision-making processes in the context of social media.

In the broader context, these findings highlight the importance of media literacy and critical thinking skills, especially among younger consumers, to navigate the information landscape effectively. Educational initiatives and interventions should focus on empowering individuals to discern between reliable and misleading content on social media platforms, ultimately fostering more informed and resilient consumer behavior.

Overall, this study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on the intersection of social media, misinformation, disinformation, and consumer decision-making, offering practical implications for educators, policymakers, and marketers alike.

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