

Consumer Behavior in Clothing Purchases Through Technology Acceptance and the Perceived Effectiveness of Social Networking Sites

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Abstract

As social networking sites increasingly function as shopping platforms, it has become essential to understand the technology acceptance factors that shape consumers' perceptions of their effectiveness. This correlational study examined the relationship between technology acceptance and the perceived effectiveness of social networking sites using the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) framework. There were 159 participants randomly selected from North Eastern Mindanao State University–Cantilan Campus. The findings revealed that students, teachers, and staff believed social networking sites were highly effective in terms of content quality, visual presentations and appeal, customer reviews and feedback, user engagement, and shopping convenience. In addition, they also had very high acceptance level towards the use of social networking sites for clothing purchases based on performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and behavioral intention. Furthermore, correlation analysis showed that technology acceptance was statistically significant with the perceived effectiveness of social networking sites as platforms for clothing purchases. Consumers who view these platforms as useful, easy to use, and supported by people around them are more likely to perceive them as effective for finding products, comparing options, communicating with sellers, and making purchases. In other words, the more consumers accept social networking sites, the more positive they consider them as effective shopping platforms. Businesses seeking to improve the effectiveness of online shopping should focus on enhancing factors that promote technology acceptance, such as usefulness, usability, and social engagement, to encourage more positive consumer perceptions and shopping experiences.

Keywords: consumer behavior, perceived effectiveness, technology acceptance, social networking sites, UTAUT framework

Introduction

The growth of e-commerce has transformed traditional face-to-face transactions into convenient digital shopping experiences. However, this transformation has also introduced new challenges related to consumer trust, information credibility, product authenticity, data security, and the evaluation of product quality in the absence of physical inspection (Dash et al., 2023).

This paper explored the role of technology acceptance in shaping consumers' perceived effectiveness of using social networking sites for clothing purchases. As social networking sites increasingly function as digital marketplaces, understanding the relationship between technology acceptance and

perceived effectiveness has become essential for explaining how consumers evaluate these platforms and make online purchasing decisions (Berliana et al., 2025; Syamillah et al., 2025).

In the Philippines, online shopping has become an integral part of consumers' purchasing behavior, driven by the widespread adoption of smartphones, improved internet connectivity, and the rapid growth of social networking sites and e-commerce platforms. Shopee, Lazada, and TikTok Shop have become major e-commerce platforms that have transformed online shopping by offering convenient purchasing experiences, promotional incentives, and integrated digital services (Moreno et al., 2025).

Shopee experienced substantial growth in the Philippines, with downloads increasing from 0.57 million in 2017 to 12.45 million in 2023, supported by features such as flash deals, coupons, loyalty rewards, and gamified shopping experiences (Bacay et al., 2022). Consumers' online purchasing behavior on these platforms is influenced by product quality, pricing, store reputation, and their understanding of products (Mesatania, 2022). Similarly, Lazada has expanded its presence in Southeast Asia by providing diverse product selections, multiple payment options, reliable customer support, and efficient logistics, while consumer purchasing decisions and satisfaction have been found to depend on product quality, variety, pricing, consumer preferences, and technology (Prasetyo & Fuente, 2020). Meanwhile, TikTok Shop has strengthened social commerce by integrating shopping directly into its social media platform through live selling, affiliate marketing, and an accessible marketplace, which enhances brand trust, consumer engagement, and the overall online shopping experience (Moreno et al., 2025).

The growth of online shopping in the country urged businesses to adapt to the evolving needs and preferences of consumers by enhancing digital platforms, improving customer service, offering competitive pricing, and implementing innovative marketing strategies to remain competitive in the expanding e-commerce market (Calaro et al., 2023). Likewise, customer service has become a critical component of conflict resolution, as timely responses to inquiries, complaints, refund requests, and product-related concerns help build consumer trust and satisfaction (Ibno, 2026; Rellon et al., 2026; Verano et al., 2026).

To address consumer needs, foreign studies adopted the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) as a framework that explains why people accept or reject new technologies. Langah et al. (2026) found that performance expectancy positively influences purchase intention, showing that consumers mainly shop online because of its usefulness and convenience. Effort expectancy was not significant, indicating that ease of use is already assumed and does not strongly affect buying decisions. In contrast, social influence emerged as the strongest predictor, meaning that friends, family, and social trends play a major role in shaping online purchase intentions.

It is strongly recommended that organizations carefully examine their customers before choosing appropriate technology, selecting vendors, and implementing change management strategies to prevent future implementation failures (Yadav et al., 2022). With the rise of smartphones, KYC (Know Your Customer), and KYP (Know Your Product), businesses are increasingly expected to operate in a digital environment that prioritizes speed, efficiency, and quality through digital transformation (Moreno et al., 2025). These developments highlight the importance of examining customer behavior and preferences as a basis for understanding digital adoption in online environments.

This study can guide businesses in designing customer-responsive systems and strategies, ensuring that technological adoption is not only driven by innovation but also grounded in a clear understanding of consumer needs, expectations, and decision-making patterns.

Literature Review

The UTAUT framework has key determinants of technology acceptance such as performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions (Langah et al., 2026; Wibowo et al., 2020). These factors have been widely validated in contexts such as mobile banking, e-learning, and e-commerce, showing strong explanatory power for user behavior (Langah et al., 2026). Recently, platforms

like Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok have transformed into interactive marketing spaces that shape purchase intentions through engagement, personalization, and trend-driven content (Dwivedi et al., 2021).

Online retailers leverage the internet to design user experiences, which increases engagement across digital platforms. Between 2015 and 2023, marketing personalization emerged as a crucial strategy for product positioning and enhancing user experience. It improves marketing efficiency, conversion rates, and user engagement, encouraging companies to continuously improve their strategies to remain competitive (Moreno et al., 2025). In addition, personalized advertisements help strengthen consumer–brand relationships by building stronger emotional connections, attachment, and long-term commitment (Calaro et al., 2023).

Langah et al. (2026) discovered that social influence appears as the most influential determinant of purchase intention. They noted that interpersonal networks, including peers and family members, helped in shaping consumer decision-making. Furthermore, consumers are primarily driven by the perceived utility of online shopping (performance expectancy), particularly its convenience, time-saving benefits, ability to facilitate price comparisons, and access to products that are not readily available in physical markets.

In Decatoria-Condino and Caballero (2025), consumer experience emerged as the strongest predictor of online purchase decision, indicating that positive user experiences and fulfilled expectations significantly influence outcomes. For example, consumers who experience smooth transactions, fast delivery, accurate product descriptions, and responsive customer service are more likely to continue using and trusting the platform. In contrast, negative experiences such as delayed shipments, misleading advertisements, or poor after-sales support can reduce satisfaction and discourage future use.

Although technology acceptance has been extensively studied in recent literature, its relationship with the perceived effectiveness of social networking sites remains underexplored. This gap suggests that established models of technology acceptance, while effective in explaining general adoption behavior, may not fully account for the complexity of social networking environments, where user engagement is influenced not only by perceived usefulness and ease of use but also by interactive features, content credibility, social validation, and platform engagement mechanisms.

Perceived effectiveness refers to an individual's evaluation of how successfully technology enables the achievement of desired objectives relative to alternative methods. In the context of online commercial activities, it describes consumers' assessment of how effectively an online shopping platform facilitates the purchasing process compared with conventional physical retail stores (Sarwar et al., 2023). When consumers perceive that an e-commerce platform delivers greater efficiency, convenience, and overall value, they are more likely to develop favorable evaluations of the platform. Consequently, higher perceived effectiveness is expected to encourage continued patronage and strengthen consumers' intentions to engage in future online shopping activities.

Chau et al. (2023) observed that perceived effectiveness of e-commerce institutional mechanisms significantly enhances customers' active participation in creating value, together with customer experience quality, perceived ease of use, customer-to-customer interaction, and perceived service climate. It also revealed that customers' active involvement in the service process positively influences customer stickiness, customer empowerment, and perceived value, explaining 52.8% of the variation in customer stickiness. These findings suggest that effective e-commerce mechanisms encourage greater customer participation and engagement, which in turn strengthens loyalty and continued use of online travel platforms.

Existing theoretical applications may fail to adequately capture how factors such as content quality, attractiveness, user feedback, engagement levels, and shopping convenience contribute to users' acceptance and continued use of social networking platforms. This limitation highlights the need for more context-specific studies that incorporate these social media–related variables into traditional technology acceptance frameworks to more accurately explain user behavior in digitally mediated environments.

Research Questions

This study determined the level of perceived effectiveness and technology acceptance of social networking sites as a platform for clothing purchases. Below are the specific research questions answered in this study.

1. What is the level of perceived effectiveness of social networking sites for purchasing based on content quality, visual presentations and appeal, customer reviews and feedback, user engagement, and shopping convenience?
2. What is the level of technology acceptance towards the use of social networking sites for clothing purchases based on performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and behavioral intention?
3. Is there a significant relationship between perceived effectiveness and UTAUT level of technology acceptance?

Methodology

Research Design

This study explored the application of technology acceptance in clothing purchase behavior of students, teachers and staff from North Eastern Mindanao State University–Cantilan Campus. The study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to describe the levels of technology acceptance and purchasing behavior, as well as to determine the relationships among the study variables. This design helped identify associations among the study variables without establishing causal relationships (Mukattil et al., 2023).

Sampling and Participants

The participants were randomly selected from the official list of students, faculty members, and staff obtained from the Registrar's Office. Simple random sampling was employed to ensure that every eligible individual had an equal chance of being included in the study, to help minimize selection bias and enhance the representativeness of the sample (Ahmed, 2024). A total of 159 participants were selected, comprising 47 faculty members, 22 administrative staff, and 90 students.

Instrumentation

The study utilized a structured survey questionnaire as the primary data collection instrument to examine consumers' clothing purchase behavior. The instrument was developed based on the UTAUT framework. It consisted of four sections: (1) consumer behavior, measuring constructs such as purchase intention, brand loyalty, user participation, trust, customer satisfaction, and perceived price fairness; (2) perceived effectiveness of social networking sites, assessing content quality, visual appeal, customer reviews, user engagement, and shopping convenience; and (4) UTAUT constructs, including performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and behavioral intention, to examine the relationship between technology acceptance and clothing purchase behavior.

Data Gathering Procedure

Approval to conduct the research was obtained from the Campus Director of North Eastern Mindanao State University–Cantilan Campus, and all ethical guidelines established by the University Research and Development Office were observed to protect the participants' rights, privacy, and confidentiality. The survey questionnaire was administered through Google Forms to the randomly selected faculty, staff, and students who actively used social networking sites, with the survey link distributed via email and messaging platforms. Upon completion of the data collection, the responses were organized, tabulated, and analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques.

Data Analysis

The data collected were processed and analyzed using Microsoft Excel for data management and preliminary tabulation. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to quantify social media usage, and perceptions of the UTAUT and consumer behavior constructs. Weighted means were computed to interpret responses on the 5-point Likert scale (see **Table 1** for interpretations). Pearson correlation analysis was performed to examine the relationships between the UTAUT constructs and clothing purchase behavior, with statistical significance determined at 0.05 level. The results were subsequently interpreted based on the correlation coefficients and p-values.

Table 1. Interpretation of key variables used in this study

Scale	Range	Verbal Response	Description
<i>Perceived Effectiveness</i>			
5	4.21–5.00	Highly Effective (HE)	All intended dimensions are highly agreeable.
4	3.41–4.20	Effective (E)	All intended dimensions are agreeable.
3	2.61–3.40	Moderately Effective (ME)	Some intended dimensions are moderately agreeable.
2	1.81–2.60	Less Effective (LE)	Few intended dimensions are agreeable.
1	1.00–1.80	Not Effective (NE)	All intended dimensions are not agreeable.
<i>Technology Acceptance</i>			
5	4.21–5.00	Very Highly Acceptable (VHA)	All intended dimensions are highly acceptable.
4	3.41–4.20	Highly Acceptable (HA)	All intended dimensions are acceptable.
3	2.61–3.40	Acceptable (A)	Some intended dimensions are acceptable.
2	1.81–2.60	Less Acceptable (LA)	Few intended dimensions are acceptable.
1	1.00–1.80	Not Acceptable (NA)	All intended dimensions are not acceptable.

Results

RQ1: What is the level of perceived effectiveness of social networking sites for purchasing based on content quality, visual presentations and appeal, customer reviews and feedback, user engagement, and shopping convenience?

In **Table 2**, participants perceived social networking sites as highly effective methods ($M = 4.27$). Among the effectiveness dimensions, Shopping Convenience ($M = 4.41$, $SD = 0.5776$) received the highest rating, followed by Customer Reviews and Feedback ($M = 4.37$, $SD = 0.5099$) and User Engagement ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 0.6346$) were perceived as Very Highly Effective. Meanwhile, Visual Presentations and Appeal ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 0.5921$) and Content Quality ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 0.6076$) were perceived as Highly Effective.

Table 2. Level of perceived effectiveness of social networking sites

Effectiveness Dimensions	Mean	SD (σ)	Interpretation
Content Quality	4.15	0.6076	Effective
Visual Presentations and Appeal	4.2	0.5921	Effective
Customer Reviews and Feedback	4.37	0.5099	Highly Effective
User Engagement	4.23	0.6346	Highly Effective
Shopping Convenience	4.41	0.5776	Highly Effective
Overall Weighted Mean	4.27	—	Very Highly Effective

Note. The weighted mean was interpreted using the following categorical ranges: 4.21–5.00 = Highly Effective (HE); 3.41–4.20 = Effective (E); 2.61–3.40 = Moderately Effective (ME); 1.81–2.60 = Less Effective (LE); and 1.00–1.80 = Not Effective (NE).

RQ2: What is the level of technology acceptance towards the use of social networking sites for clothing purchases based on performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and behavioral intention?

In **Table 3**, exhibited a very high level of technology acceptance toward the use of social networking sites ($M = 4.29$). Among the UTAUT constructs, Performance Expectancy ($M = 4.38$, $SD = 0.6505$) obtained the highest mean, followed by Effort Expectancy ($M = 4.37$, $SD = 0.6351$) and Social Influence ($M = 4.24$, $SD = 0.6605$). Behavioral Intention ($M = 4.17$, $SD = 0.6987$) was rated as Highly Acceptable. Participants demonstrated a strong acceptance of social networking sites for clothing purchases across the measured UTAUT constructs.

Table 3. UTAUT level of technology acceptance towards the use of social networking sites

UTAUT Constructs	Mean	SD (σ)	Interpretation
Performance Expectancy	4.38	0.6505	Very Highly Acceptable
Effort Expectancy	4.37	0.6351	Very Highly Acceptable
Social Influence	4.24	0.6605	Very Highly Acceptable
Behavioral Intention	4.17	0.6987	Highly Acceptable
Overall Weighted Mean	4.29	—	Very Highly Acceptable

Note. The weighted mean was interpreted using the following categorical ranges: 4.21–5.00 = Very Highly Acceptable (VHA); 3.41–4.20 = Highly Acceptable (HA); 2.61–3.40 = Acceptable (A); 1.81–2.60 = Less Acceptable (LA); and 1.00–1.80 = Not Acceptable (NA).

RQ3: Is there a significant relationship between perceived effectiveness and UTAUT level of technology acceptance?

Table 4 presents the correlation matrix between the UTAUT constructs and perceived effectiveness of social networking sites. Generally, high technology acceptance can be linked to high level of perceived effectiveness of social networking sites in clothing purchases.

Specifically, Performance Expectancy exhibited the strongest relationship with Shopping Convenience ($r = 0.779$), followed by Visual Presentation and Appeal ($r = 0.638$), Content Quality ($r = 0.617$), Customer Reviews and Feedback ($r = 0.614$), and User Engagement ($r = 0.614$). Participants believed these platforms enhanced their shopping experience by making it easier to discover clothing products, compare alternatives, and access detailed product information.

Similarly, Effort Expectancy showed its strongest correlation with Shopping Convenience ($r = 0.777$). Participants considered social networking sites to provide a simple, intuitive, and user-friendly shopping experience, enabling them to complete clothing purchases with ease.

Social Influence demonstrated the highest association with Shopping Convenience ($r = 0.712$). Consumers who receive encouragement or recommendations from peers, family members, influencers, or online communities tend to perceive social networking sites as more convenient platforms for clothing purchases.

Behavioral Intention was mostly correlated with User Engagement ($r = 0.686$) and Visual Presentation and Appeal ($r = 0.678$). Consumers who intend to use social networking sites for clothing purchases tend to interact more with platform content and are more influenced by visually appealing product presentations.

Table 4. Correlation matrix of UTAUT constructs and perceived effectiveness

UTAUT Constructs	Perceived Effectiveness				
	CQ	VPA	CRF	UE	SC
Performance Expectancy	0.617*	0.638*	0.614*	0.614*	0.779*
Effort Expectancy	0.595*	0.657*	0.651*	0.622*	0.777*
Social Influence	0.611*	0.621*	0.625*	0.66*	0.712*
Behavioral Intention	0.661*	0.678*	0.582*	0.686*	0.687*

Note: Content Quality (CQ), Visual Presentation and Appeal (VPA), Customer Reviews and Feedback (CRF), User Engagement (UE), Shopping Convenience (SC)

*significant when $p < 0.05$

Discussion

This paper explored the relationship between technology acceptance and perceived effectiveness of social networking sites for clothing purchases. The findings indicated that technology acceptance was positively associated with consumers' perceptions of the effectiveness of social networking sites across key dimensions, including content quality, visual presentation and appeal, customer reviews and feedback, user engagement, and shopping convenience.

The study of consumer behavior is fundamental for understanding how consumers develop positive perceptions of technology, particularly when they expect it to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their purchasing activities (Dash et al., 2023). In Calaro et al. (2023), consumers' purchasing decisions are influenced by social media marketing efforts, particularly the availability of product information, competitive pricing, promotional discounts, quality customer service, positive customer reviews, appealing store presentation, and a strong emphasis on safety and security. Similarly, the findings in the present study showed that consumers considered customer reviews and feedback, user engagement, and shopping convenience to be the most influential dimensions contributing to the effectiveness of social networking sites for clothing purchases. While content quality and visual presentation remained important components of social networking sites, the findings suggest that they played a comparatively smaller role in shaping consumers' perceptions of platform effectiveness than customer reviews, user engagement, and shopping convenience.

Essentially, consumers place greater value on the experiences and opinions shared by other customers than on the visual presentation of products alone. Reviews and experiences from previous customers provide reassurance about product quality, reliability, and overall satisfaction, enabling consumers to make more informed and confident purchasing decisions (Sutriani et al., 2024).

Furthermore, technology acceptance was also necessary in understanding the behavior of online consumers. In Berliana et al. (2025), the UTAUT framework helps identify whether technological, functional, or social factors serve as stimuli that influence individuals' psychological responses toward technology use. Likewise, the present study found that performance expectancy, effort expectancy, and social influence were among the most notable dimensions of technology acceptance in the context of clothing purchases through social networking sites. Consumers are more likely to adopt social networking sites when they perceive them as useful, easy to use, and supported by their social environment. Collectively, these factors enhance consumers' confidence in using social networking sites, shape favorable perceptions of the platforms, and ultimately strengthen their intention to engage in online clothing purchases (Syamillah et al., 2025).

This study observed that when consumers exhibit high levels of technology acceptance, they are more likely to perceive purchasing clothing online as useful, convenient, and effective. Specifically, they tend to recognize the value of social networking sites in facilitating product discovery, providing reliable information, simplifying the purchasing process, and enhancing the overall shopping experience.

As consumers increasingly evaluate social networking sites based on their usefulness, ease of use, and social validation, these platforms evolve from communication channels into integrated commercial environments where information exchange, social interaction, and purchasing decisions occur simultaneously. Technology acceptance and perceived effectiveness suggest that successful online commerce depends not only on technological functionality but also on consumers' psychological acceptance of digital platforms. Consequently, the sustainability of social commerce relies on the ability of these platforms to build trust, encourage meaningful user engagement, and create efficient positive experiences (Calaro et al., 2023; Verano et al., 2026).

From a business perspective, competitive advantage is no longer achieved solely through attractive product displays or promotional campaigns. Instead, firms must cultivate digital ecosystems that encourage authentic customer participation through reviews, recommendations, and interactive engagement. As consumers increasingly rely on user-generated content to reduce uncertainty and evaluate product quality, customer experiences become valuable strategic resources that influence purchasing decisions across wider online communities. This transformation shifts marketing from a firm-centered approach toward a consumer-driven model, where value is co-created through continuous interaction among consumers, businesses, and digital platforms.

Conclusion

Social networking sites are highly effective platforms for clothing purchases when used effectively. They are widely accepted by consumers as reliable digital shopping channels, especially when purchasing clothes online. Among the dimensions of perceived effectiveness, customer reviews and feedback, user engagement, and shopping convenience emerged as the most notable factors, emphasizing the importance of interactive and experience-based features over purely informational or visual elements. The findings suggested that consumers placed greater value on authentic user experiences and efficient shopping processes, as these increased confidence in online purchasing decisions.

Consumers who perceived social networking sites as useful, easy to use, and socially supported were more likely to evaluate these platforms as effective shopping tools. Finally, technology acceptance shaped consumers' overall assessment of platform effectiveness, influencing how effectively social networking sites supported product discovery, purchase evaluation, and transaction completion.

Sustainable success in digital commerce depends not only on technology but also on building trust, meaningful user participation, and convenient shopping experiences. As online shopping continued to expand, businesses needed to prioritize customer-centered digital strategies that encouraged authentic engagement, strengthened consumer confidence, and supported long-term relationships with customers. This emphasizes importance of understanding technology acceptance as a key mechanism for explaining contemporary consumer behavior in increasingly digital marketplaces, especially because technology acceptance may also vary depending on the product offered.

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