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Exploring the Online Selling Experiences of Pre-Loved Clothing Sellers

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Abstract

This study is to understand the experiences and perspectives of those directly involved in this market, this research will offer valuable insights for both academics and practitioners. The primary objective was to gain a deep understanding of the sellers' motivations, challenges, strategies, and interactions within the e-commerce landscape. The researcher used a qualitative method and utilized a multiple case study design. Through purposive sampling strategy a five (5) individuals with at least three (3) to five (5) years experiences of being online sellers has been selected to provide valuable insights of the study. The data obtained from the participants were analyzed using thematic analysis. The results specify online sellers of pre-loved clothes employ different marketing strategies like teasers, re posting of unsold items, promotions, and live customer comments to pull in and keep customers. Success relies on having a strong online presence, flexible pricing, and a good relationship with customers, which establishes trust and loyalty. Issues are seasonal sales fluctuations, "bogus buyers," and communication breakdowns that hinder the sales process. Moreover, opportunities for personal and financial development, networking, and convenience make online selling pre-loved clothes online a profitable business. It is recommended that online sellers of pre-loved clothes should use a multi-channel approach, including social media, and content creation to attract customers, excellent customer service, ensuring reliable shipping, and diversifying inventory to maintain sales, and expanding product offers will help sellers in growing business and to appeal to the consumer.

Keywords: *Second-hand Clothing, Lived Experiences, and Online Sellers Strategies*

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INTRODUCTION

Despite the abundant opportunities, undergoing this shift will lead retailers into various challenges, which will be discussed below. Retailers will employ different strategies to boost revenue. Finally, the objectives of the study and the gaps it seeks to fill will be discussed. The second-hand clothing market will experience a surge in popularity, driven by a growing interest in sustainability, economic factors, and the desire for unique styles (Zaman 2019). This shift in consumer behavior will transform the fashion industry, with online platforms playing a central role due to their convenience, vast selection, and social features (Styvén 2020). However, the second-hand clothing industry will face several key challenges that will influence consumer behavior and market dynamics. Quality and hygiene concerns will be significant barriers, as consumers will often worry about the cleanliness and durability of pre-worn items, especially for clothing worn close to the body (Nassab 2023 and Hur, 2020). This will lead to the formation of a social stigma around second-hand clothes.

To counteract these challenges to customer perceptions, online sellers will utilize diverse marketing strategies to attract and engage them. These strategies will include sponsored search advertising, social media endorsements, live chat interactions, and influencer marketing (Sun 2019 and Tan 2019). While existing research will explore some of these strategies in general e-commerce settings, there will remain a knowledge gap in understanding the specific experiences and tactics of online sellers operating in the second-hand clothing market.

This qualitative research will aim to address this gap by conducting interviews with online sellers of pre-loved clothes. The interviews will delve into their firsthand experiences, exploring the marketing strategies they will employ, the challenges they will face, and the factors they will perceive as contributing to the success of their profitable online businesses. Furthermore, insights into the opportunities in decision-making processes and the evolution of their marketing approaches will provide a rich and nuanced understanding of the strategies that will be most effective in this unique market segment.

Studying the experiences and perspectives of those directly involved in this market, this research will offer valuable insights for both academics and practitioners. It will contribute to the growing body of knowledge on sustainable fashion and consumer behavior, and provide practical guidance for online sellers who will seek to thrive in this burgeoning market.

Philosophical Foundations

This research adopts phenomenology as the primary philosophical frame, which is concerned with interpreting qualitatively, how people live and understand their lives (van Manen, 1990). Through the stories of online sellers of pre-loved clothing, the authors seek to grasp the essence of their experiences marketing and engaging customers as well as entrepreneurial challenges in the digital world. Moreover, the study also derives from pragmatism, which focuses on the outcomes and implications of concepts (Dewey, 1938). The strategies and business practices adopted by the online sellers are analyzed not only descriptively, but also for their potential to advance commerce in second-hand fashion. The social constructivist framework, which regards knowledge as developed through society, social interaction, and context, remains pertinent (Vygotsky, 1978). Participants' marketing strategies regarding trust and consumer engagement illustrate the ways online sellers respond to the evolving e-commerce landscape shaped by consumers, technology, and social currents.

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Statement of the Objectives

This study aims to explore and understand the various experiences of individuals selling pre-loved clothes online. Specifically, it aims to.

1. Examine the marketing strategies these online sellers employ;
2. Assess the factors that contribute to the success of online pre-loved clothes sellers;
3. Explore the challenges that online sellers face; and
4. Explore the opportunities that online selling brings to them.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research approach to explore the experiences of online sellers in the pre-owned clothing market. The primary objective was to gain a deep understanding of the sellers' motivations, challenges, strategies, and interactions within the e-commerce landscape. Given the exploratory nature of the research objectives, qualitative methods such as semi-structured interviews and focus groups were selected, as they allowed for open-ended responses and provided rich, detailed insights into the participants' experiences. The study utilized a multiple case study design to provide a comprehensive view of the various practices and experiences of online sellers. A cross-case analysis was conducted, facilitating a comparative examination of the differing strategies and outcomes across sellers, and allowing for the identification of common themes, patterns, and variations. To ensure the reliability and consistency of the findings, data was gathered in a way that was comparable across all cases. This approach strengthened the study's ability to draw meaningful conclusions about the dynamics of the pre-owned clothing market.

POPULATION AND SAMPLING

This study focused on the experiences of online sellers of pre-loved clothing who have been actively selling these products for a period of three to five years. This time-frame was chosen to ensure that participants possess a thorough understanding of the online selling market, having experienced its evolving dynamics and challenges over time. A purposive sampling strategy was employed to select five individuals with at least three to five years of experience in selling pre-loved clothing online. This approach ensured that the participants had relevant and substantial knowledge of the industry. The selected participants represented a range of perspectives, encompassing various types of pre-loved clothing and different online selling platforms, contributing to a broader understanding of the market. The objective was to leverage the participants' extensive experience to gain deeper insights into the complexities of the online selling industry and identify the practices, challenges, and strategies faced by long-term sellers.

PARTICIPANTS OF THE STUDY

The participants in this study consisted of five online sellers of pre-loved clothing who utilize social media platforms for selling their items and have at least three to five years of experience in this market. These participants

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were selected to provide valuable insights into the experiences, strategies, and challenges faced by online sellers in the pre-loved clothing industry.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

This study utilized a semi-structured interview approach to investigate the experiences of online sellers of pre-loved clothes, offering a detailed understanding of the pre-owned clothing marketplace. The semi-structured format involved a set of open-ended questions designed to guide the conversation while allowing flexibility to explore emerging topics and insights. This approach enabled the researchers to uncover in-depth personal experiences, including the motivations behind selling pre-loved clothes, the challenges faced in the online selling process, and the strategies employed for engaging with buyers. Through using semi-structured interviews, the study captured a comprehensive range of experiences, highlighting both common themes and unique perspectives that might not have been identified through other interview methods. This approach also provided a rich qualitative perspective on the evolving nature of online selling, shedding light on the complex relationship between seller experiences, market trends, and consumer behavior.

VALIDATION OF THE INSTRUMENT

To ensure the validity of the instruments, the researchers sought assistance from research experts and utilized visual research assistance for feedback. The validation process involved an online review of the interview guide questions to refine and improve their clarity and relevance. This careful validation process helped enhance the interview guide, ensuring it was an effective tool for data collection. The researchers consulted validators to assess the appropriateness and reliability of the questions, ensuring that the instrument would yield accurate and consistent results for the study.

DATA GATHERING PROCEDURES

The researchers prepared a letter requesting permission to conduct the study, which was signed by the Dean of the College and the instructor. Subsequently, a consent letter was sent to the study participants, outlining the purpose of the research and their role in the study. An interview guide was developed and validated by the supervising professor to ensure its relevance and effectiveness in capturing the necessary data. The researchers explained the significance of participants' responses and clarified any terms to ensure their full understanding of the study. Participants were encouraged to respond honestly to maintain the integrity and reliability of the collected data. To effectively represent the experiences of pre-loved clothing sellers, the researchers employed purposive sampling, selecting participants based on their expertise and relevance to the study. After gathering the responses, the researchers analyzed the data thematically, identifying patterns and themes that emerged from the experiences of online sellers of pre-loved clothes.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data obtained from the participants were analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a qualitative method that proved useful for investigating the experiences of online sellers of second hand clothes by systematically identifying and analyzing patterns within the qualitative data. This method enabled the researchers to identify common patterns, including pricing strategies, client interactions, platform usability, and satisfaction with sales outcomes. Through classifying and categorizing qualitative data from interviews, the researchers pinpointed recurring challenges and successes experienced by sellers. For instance, identified themes revealed common

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challenges such as negotiating price volatility and the influence of customer feedback on sales performance. This approach not only organized the data but also provided deeper insights into the sellers' perspectives and experiences. Ultimately, thematic analysis enhanced the understanding of the complexities and nuances of selling second hand clothes online, offering valuable insights for improving seller support, enhancing platform functionality, and enriching the overall user experience.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical considerations were central to ensuring responsible research practices. First and foremost, the researchers obtained permission from the participants, who were fully informed about the purpose of the study, the use of the data, and their involvement. Another key concern was confidentiality. To protect the privacy of the participants, the researchers ensured that all information was securely stored. The participants' privacy was especially important as they may have shared personal information. Participation was voluntary, with the option to withdraw at any time without repercussions. The researchers adhered to institutional guidelines for protecting information, and an ethical review was conducted to ensure the study's integrity. Understanding and addressing these ethical concerns assured that the study was conducted with respect for the participants while providing valuable insights into their experiences as online sellers.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Marketing Strategies of Online Sellers of Pre-loved Clothes

Online sellers of pre-loved clothes employ various strategies to effectively market their items and engage with potential buyers. Based on the responses, the following strategies were identified:

1. Teasers and Sneak Peeks (Participants 2, 4)
2. Reposting Unsold Items (Participants 2, 4)
3. Sales and Discounts (Participants 1, 2)
4. Realtime Feedback/ Reply (Participants 1, 3)

1. Teasers and Sneak Peeks (Participants 2, 4)

Teasers and sneak peeks emerged as key strategies used by online sellers of pre-loved clothes to generate excitement and anticipation among potential buyers. These tactics were seen as crucial for effectively marketing items and ensuring customer engagement.

Participant 2 emphasized the importance of creating buzz before launching products, stating, "Ang strategies is yung sneak peak yung magpopost ka muna bago ka maglive, then magsched ka muna ng live" (The strategy is to post a sneak peek before going live, then schedule the live event). This approach allows sellers to inform their audience about upcoming items, ensuring that buyers remain engaged and curious. Offering a preview of upcoming products builds anticipation and drives traffic to live selling events.

Similarly, Participant 4 highlighted the significance of teaser posts, explaining, "Nagpopost muna ako ng teaser before posting ng items" (I first post a teaser before posting the items). Through sharing teasers that include

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details such as the time and type of products to be sold, sellers create awareness and encourage buyers to prepare for the sale. This strategy not only informs but also sparks interest and excitement for the upcoming event.

The effectiveness of these strategies lies in their ability to capture and sustain the audience's attention, which is crucial for successful sales. Through generating excitement before the official launch, sellers increase the likelihood of higher engagement and conversions during live events.

This proactive approach also fosters a sense of community, as customers eagerly anticipate the chance to purchase their desired items.

As (Sun 2020) notes, a well-defined marketing strategy is vital for online sellers to thrive in a competitive e-commerce environment. Teasers and sneak peeks play a critical role in enhancing brand visibility, engaging potential customers, and driving sales conversions. Without such strategies, sellers risk blending into the vast online marketplace, struggling to stand out and capture the attention of their target audience.

Teasers and sneak peeks are essential marketing tools for online sellers, as they build interest, excitement, and anticipation around their offerings. Through employing these strategies, sellers enhance customer engagement and ultimately increase sales success.

2. Reposting Unsold Items (Participants 2, 4)

Reposting unsold items is an important strategy used by online sellers of pre-loved clothes to maximize sales opportunities and maintain visibility, which helps in engaging potential buyers effectively. This approach allows sellers to keep their inventory in front of customers, increasing the likelihood of additional sales.

Participant 2 described their process after live selling events, stating, "And after ko maglive, may mga natira so ipo-post ko yun, dun ko na ilalagay yung mga info ng mga item para dun na lang nila imine" (And after I go live, there are leftovers, so I will post those, and that's where I will provide the information about the items so they can just claim them). This tactic ensures that unsold items do not go unnoticed, making it easier for potential buyers to understand the value of the remaining items. Through providing detailed information in the reposts, sellers can encourage interest in leftover inventory, thus increasing the chances of closing additional sales.

Participant 4 also emphasized the significance of reposting, explaining their strategy: "Dun sa teaser nandun yung time and date kung kelan ipopost at pictures ng kung anong klaseng items" (In the teaser, there's the time and date when I will post and pictures of what kind of items). This method creates an organized approach to selling by informing buyers about the specific items available and ensuring that they have all necessary details before making a purchase. Including clear visuals and descriptions in reposts helps to capture the attention of potential buyers and prompts them to reconsider items they may have missed during the live session.

The practice of reposting unsold items serves to keep the seller's inventory fresh in the minds of their audience. It provides multiple opportunities for buyers to see items they may have overlooked initially, encouraging further engagement and driving additional sales. This ongoing presence in the marketplace strengthens customer relationships and fosters loyalty by keeping buyers informed about available stock.

Reposting unsold items proves to be a highly effective strategy for online sellers, helping them stay connected with potential buyers and increase their chances of generating sales. Through continuously engaging their audience, sellers are able to capitalize on every opportunity to move their inventory and enhance their sales performance.

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3. Sales and Discounts (Participants 1, 2)

Sales and discounts are integral components of the marketing strategies used by online sellers of pre-loved clothes. These tactics are effective in attracting buyers, boosting sales, and maintaining customer interest in the sellers' offerings.

Participant 1 shared their approach to using sales strategically, stating, "Nakaugalian ko na din na mag sale kapag medyo maganda ang kita pero in a way na hindi ako lugi at masasatisfy ko pa din ang miners ko" (I have a habit of having a sale when the profit is good, but in a way that I don't lose money and still satisfy my buyers). This strategy reflects a careful balance between profitability and customer satisfaction. Implementing sales during profitable periods creates excitement, encouraging buyers to make purchases they might have otherwise delayed. Through offering attractive deals during times of financial gain, sellers ensure that both their bottom line and customer satisfaction are prioritized.

Participant 2 echoed this sentiment, emphasizing the importance of planning sales events. They explained that offering discounts creates a sense of urgency among potential buyers, prompting them to act quickly. Providing limited-time offers or exclusive deals can motivate customers to make impulse purchases, increasing overall sales volume. This approach not only benefits the seller financially but also enhances the shopping experience for customers, who appreciate the value they receive during promotional periods. Through strategically offering discounts, sellers can create a competitive edge that encourages faster purchasing decisions.

Both participants recognized that sales and discounts are not just tools for driving immediate revenue; they also help build a sense of community among buyers. Engaging with customers through promotions and special offers fosters loyalty, encouraging repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth. When buyers feel they are getting a good deal, they are more likely to return for future transactions, which strengthens the seller's relationship with their audience.

Implementing sales and discounts proves to be a vital strategy for online sellers, enabling them to attract new customers, retain loyal buyers, and maximize sales opportunities. These tactics not only generate immediate revenue but also contribute to building lasting relationships with customers in the competitive online marketplace.

4. Realtime Feedback/ Reply (Participants 1, 3)

Realtime feedback and prompt replies are integral strategies for online sellers of pre-loved clothes to engage with customers effectively. Participants emphasized how immediate interaction plays a critical role in enhancing the customer experience and fostering trust.

Participant 1 highlighted the importance of staying responsive to inquiries, stating, "Kailangan mong maging ma BOKA, what I mean is kailangan matanggal ang hiya mo" (You need to be very talkative; what I mean is you must overcome your shyness). This reflects the need for open communication, where engaging with customers in a friendly and approachable manner encourages them to ask questions and seek more information. Being responsive helps to address customer concerns in real-time and creates a welcoming atmosphere, building trust and rapport with potential buyers.

Participant 3 also emphasized the importance of prompt communication, noting that sellers must remain strict and attentive when dealing with buyers. They remarked, "Kailangan maging strikto ka din pag dating sa mga buyer kasi minsan, balewala lang ang mga miners mo" (You need to be strict with buyers because sometimes they

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don't take your offers seriously). This statement underlines the need for sellers to balance friendliness with professionalism, ensuring they provide timely feedback while maintaining clear boundaries and expectations with customers.

The practice of providing immediate replies significantly enhances the customer experience. Quick responses make customers feel valued and increase their confidence in purchasing decisions, leading to higher conversion rates. When inquiries are addressed promptly, potential buyers are less likely to lose interest or look elsewhere for products, which can directly impact sales outcomes.

The impact of real-time feedback extends beyond immediate sales, contributing to customer loyalty and retention. As noted by (Zare 2020 & Wongkitrungrueng 2020), when customers receive prompt responses, personalized recommendations, and feel valued during interactions, they are more likely to become repeat customers and recommend the brand to others. Effective communication is essential for long-term success in a competitive online marketplace, where customer retention is key.

Real-time feedback and prompt replies are crucial strategies for online sellers, improving customer satisfaction and facilitating stronger, long-term relationships. Through prioritizing quick and effective communication, sellers can build trust, increase loyalty, and drive repeat business in the competitive e-commerce environment.

Key Factors Contributing to Success in Selling Pre-Loved Clothes

Online sellers of Pre-loved clothes attribute their success to various key factors that enhance their business operations. Based on the responses, the following factors were identified

1. Creating a Strong Online Presence (Participants 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
2. Being Flexible in Pricing (Participants 1, 2, 4)
3. Maintaining Good Customer Relations (Participants 1, 2, 3, 4)

1. Creating a Strong Online Presence (Participants 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

A strong online presence emerged as a key strategy for online sellers, with participants highlighting various techniques to build visibility and trust. Participant 1 emphasized the role of Facebook stories and posts in previewing restocks and showcasing customer feedback, which not only generates anticipation but also reinforces trust in the product's quality. As Participant 1 shared, "Siguro marami yung nakakakita sa stories ko na magaganda yung items ko [kaya] mas dumadami pa yung nagtitiwala" (Perhaps many see in my stories that my items are of good quality, which is why more people trust me). This approach effectively uses social proof to enhance the credibility of the seller's offerings, fostering a loyal customer base.

Participant 5 furthered this idea by using mini vlogs and reels to create engaging content that attracts potential buyers, presumably to achieve similar outcomes of visibility and trust. Participant 4 highlighted the importance of posting teasers with specific dates and times for product releases, creating a sense of anticipation among buyers. Additionally, Participant 4 emphasized the impact of using quality visuals and videos to attract customers, particularly those seeking high-quality items.

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Participant 2 echoed this sentiment by describing their approach as "power posting," where they carefully photograph items against aesthetically pleasing backgrounds to make the products more visually appealing. They explained, "Pinipicturan ko [yung damit] gamit ang background na maganda para mas nakakaattract tingnan ang items ka" (I take pictures of the clothes with a nice background to make them more attractive). This strategy of thoughtful presentation underscores how product visibility and presentation are essential in capturing buyer interest.

Participant 3 took it a step further by highlighting the importance of having a good camera for Facebook Live sessions. They stressed that clear, high-quality visuals are crucial for ensuring that items appear appealing and "maganda ang dating" (look good) during live sales events.

According to (Sun 2020), the type of product and the specific needs of customers influence their preferred mode of interaction. Some customers may lean towards live chat for immediate assistance, while others may rely on product descriptions, pictures, and reviews to guide their purchasing decisions. The blend of strategic content creation and customer-centric interaction models is key to maintaining an effective online presence. In connection, the participants' shared strategies highlight the importance of a visually strong online presence, with particular emphasis on the use of high-quality photos, videos, and customer-driven content. These elements not only help attract potential buyers but also establish trust and foster engagement.

2. Being Flexible in Pricing (Participants 1, 2, 4)

The concept of flexibility in pricing was highlighted as an effective strategy by the participants, with each of them employing different approaches to adjust prices based on various factors such as the condition of the items, market demand, and initial capital investments.

Participant 1 demonstrated a customer-centered pricing strategy by adjusting prices based on the condition of the items. For example, items with minor defects are offered at a lower price, while high-quality items remain affordable for their target market, which primarily consists of students, or "miners" in their terms. This approach reflects an understanding of the buyer's budget constraints and needs, ensuring that products remain accessible without compromising on profitability. Participant 1's pricing strategy allows for flexibility in meeting market demands while maintaining customer satisfaction and loyalty, particularly in a price-sensitive demographic.

Participant 2 reinforced this idea by emphasizing their practice of halving the price of used items and offering discounts on brand-new ones. This pricing model reflects an adaptable approach that takes into account the varying value of products and their potential appeal to different customer segments. Through offering lower prices on pre-loved items and providing discounts on new ones, Participant 2 effectively responds to customer expectations, catering to both budget-conscious buyers and those seeking brand-new products at reduced prices. This strategy demonstrates an ability to adjust to market demands and enhance competitiveness in the marketplace.

Participant 4's approach, on the other hand, is more grounded in practical business considerations. She shared that her pricing strategy is based on the initial capital invested in the items. For example, if the initial capital is 3,000 pesos and the bulk order contains 90 items, the total capital is divided by the number of items, and a small markup is added. This ensures that each item is priced attractively, balancing profitability with the need to encourage sales. This approach reflects a pragmatic method of pricing that accounts for both the cost of goods and the need for a reasonable profit margin, while remaining mindful of the price sensitivity of buyers.

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In essence, all three participants shared the common theme of flexible pricing, adapting their prices to different variables such as item condition, customer demographic, and cost of goods. Each approach serves to meet customer expectations, maximize sales, and ensure profitability. This flexibility in pricing demonstrates the sellers' understanding of their target market, as well as their ability to strategically adjust to market conditions and optimize their offerings for maximum appeal.

3. Maintaining Good Customer Relations (Participants 1, 2, 3, 4)

Maintaining strong customer relations emerged as a central strategy for the success of online sellers of pre-loved clothes, with participants consistently emphasizing the importance of trust, loyalty, and transparency in building lasting connections with customers.

Participants 2 and 4 underscored the value of loyalty programs and rewards as a key element in fostering strong relationships with repeat customers. Participant 2 shared that offering discounts and freebies to loyal buyers helps establish a sense of appreciation and recognition, ensuring that customers feel valued and incentivized to return for future purchases. Participant 4 took this concept a step further by organizing contests, where customers who shared their posts the most were rewarded with free items or bundles. This not only reinforces loyalty but also amplifies the business's reach through social sharing. Through combining rewards with outreach strategies, these sellers create a mutually beneficial dynamic that strengthens customer retention while expanding their brand visibility.

Participant 1 also highlighted the importance of discounts as a means to "satisfy customers," especially during peak sales periods. This indicates a customer-centric approach that focuses on maintaining competitive pricing while ensuring that customers feel they are receiving value for their money. Offering discounts at key moments helps solidify customer satisfaction, which in turn drives repeat business.

Beyond loyalty, building customer trust is another critical component in maintaining good relationships. Participant 3 emphasized the need for honesty and transparency, advising sellers to be straightforward about the quality and sizes of their items. This honesty creates an environment of trust, where customers feel confident in their purchase decisions. Similarly, Participant 1 shared their practice of disclosing any flaws, such as minor damages or stains, during Facebook live sessions, and offering such items at a lower price. Through being open about product conditions, sellers demonstrate integrity, which significantly enhances customer satisfaction. This transparency can also help avoid misunderstandings or disappointments, which could otherwise harm customer trust and future sales.

The collective strategies shared by the participants highlight a multi-faceted approach to customer relations, combining loyalty-building incentives with transparent communication. These practices not only improve immediate sales outcomes but also contribute to long-term customer loyalty and retention, which are essential for the sustainability of a business. Positive online interactions, built on trust and mutual respect, encourage repeat purchases and foster a positive reputation for the seller. According to (Zare 2020), such interactions are pivotal in ensuring long-term success in a competitive online marketplace, reinforcing the critical role of customer relations in driving business growth.

The strategies outlined by the participants reflect a comprehensive understanding of the importance of maintaining good customer relations. Through loyalty rewards, honest communication, and a focus on customer

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satisfaction, sellers can cultivate lasting relationships with their clientele, ensuring continued success in their businesses.

Challenges Faced by Online Sellers of Pre-Loved Clothes

Online sellers of pre-loved clothes encounter several challenges in their day-to-day operations. Based on the responses, the following challenges were identified:

1. Seasonal Sales (Participants 1, 4)
2. Bogus Buyers / Joyjoy Miners (Participants 1, 3, 4)
3. Delivery and Communication Issues (Participants 1, 2, 3)

1. Seasonal Sales (Participants 1, 4)

One of the key challenges highlighted by participants is the seasonal nature of sales, a pattern that leads to fluctuations in demand and income. Both participants emphasized the unpredictable nature of sales, with periods of strong demand followed by times of significant sales slowdowns.

Participant 1 shared, "May mga moment talaga na maeexperience ko na mahina talaga yung paninda ko, matumal" (There are really moments when I experience very slow sales, it's sluggish). This comment reflects the reality that pre-loved clothing markets are subject to seasonal changes, where sales can dramatically dip at certain times. These fluctuations are often linked to external factors, such as holidays, weather changes, or shifting consumer preferences. For online sellers, this seasonal variation creates a challenge in maintaining consistent income, as demand can wane during off-peak periods, leaving inventory unsold and impacting overall revenue.

Similarly, Participant 4 echoed this concern, stating, "Minsan mahina ang benta" (Sometimes, sales are slow). This simple but effective statement underscores the experience of many online sellers who face irregular sales patterns. When demand is low, sellers may struggle with inventory management and maintaining cash flow, leading to financial strain and increased pressure to find ways to boost sales during slower periods.

The seasonal nature of sales is particularly evident in niche markets like pre-loved clothing, where consumer interest is influenced by trends, seasons, and cultural shifts. These irregular sales cycles require sellers to be proactive in their strategies, anticipating slower periods and planning accordingly. For example, sellers might implement targeted promotions, offer discounts, or introduce seasonal sales to counteract low-demand months. In addition, maintaining a balance between inventory and cash flow becomes crucial to managing these fluctuations.

To sustain their businesses, sellers need to adapt to these market patterns by diversifying their offerings or finding creative ways to keep customers engaged throughout the year. Recognizing the seasonal nature of sales allows sellers to better prepare for periods of slower demand and capitalize on peak times, ensuring long-term business viability despite these inevitable fluctuations.

2. Bogus Buyers / Joyjoy Miners (Participants 1, 3, 4)

A significant challenge that online sellers of pre-loved clothes face is the issue of "bogus buyers," colloquially referred to as "joyjoy miners." These individuals participate in live selling events, claiming items with the intention to purchase but ultimately fail to follow through, leading to wasted time and frustration for sellers.

Participant 1 highlighted this problem, saying, "Mag eeffort ka sa live ng ilang oras para makabenta tapos icacancel or hindi icclaim yung item" (You put in the effort during a live selling session for hours just to sell, then they

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cancel or don't claim the item). This statement underscores the emotional and time-related investment that sellers make during live events, only to be let down when buyers back out at the last moment. The term "joyjoy miners" refers to these buyers who engage in the process for the thrill of claiming an item without genuine intent to purchase. The unpredictability and unreliability of such buyers create a barrier for sellers who are seeking to maintain a consistent flow of sales.

Participant 3 echoed the frustration, stating, "Isa sa nakaharap kong challenges is yung mga joyjoy miners sa tuwing magllive po ako" (One of the challenges I face is the joyjoy miners every time I go live). This indicates that the issue is not isolated but rather a recurring problem faced by many sellers, especially those who rely on live selling as a key strategy. The prevalence of "joyjoy miners" not only disrupts the selling process but also makes the selling experience more stressful and unpredictable.

Similarly, Participant 4 pointed out the impact of these buyers, saying, "Minsan mahina ang benta at maraming mga joy miner/bogus buyer" (Sometimes sales are slow, and there are many joy miners/bogus buyers). This highlights how the presence of unreliable buyers not only hampers individual transactions but can also negatively affect overall sales. The additional presence of "joyjoy miners" can exacerbate already slow sales, leaving sellers feeling demotivated and questioning their strategies.

Further, Participant 4 expressed, "Sayang din ang effort at time ng seller" (The seller's effort and time are wasted as well). This sentiment encapsulates the emotional toll that dealing with uncommitted buyers can have on sellers. When time and effort are invested in securing a sale, only to have it fall through, it can lead to feelings of disillusionment, frustration, and fatigue. The cumulative effect of these experiences can harm a seller's motivation and undermine their commitment to their business.

The widespread occurrence of "joyjoy miners" thus creates a significant obstacle for online sellers, contributing to a negative selling experience that hinders not only individual sales but the overall sustainability of the business. Sellers may become disheartened by the constant need to manage these uncommitted buyers, potentially leading to burnout and a decline in enthusiasm for continuing the business. Consequently, this issue presents a major challenge that online sellers must navigate in the competitive pre-loved clothing market.

3. Delivery and Communication Issues (Participants 1, 2, 3)

Online sellers of pre-loved clothes often face delivery and communication challenges that complicate the sales process. These difficulties frequently arise during the arrangement of deliveries or meet-ups, where miscommunication and logistical problems can lead to customer dissatisfaction and wasted time for sellers.

Participant 1 shared their frustration with communication issues, stating, "May cases na mahirap ma-contact ang umorder or kaya naman puro bukas" (There are cases where it's difficult to contact the buyer, or they just keep saying they're busy). This highlights the obstacles sellers face when trying to finalize transactions or coordinate deliveries. When customers are unresponsive or continuously defer communication, it creates delays and uncertainty, further complicating the seller's ability to complete the sale and deliver the product as promised.

Participant 2 expanded on this, noting, "Medyo mahirap kasi may ibang hindi pwede na kapag nagsabi ka ng schedule mo, may magsasabi na hindi sila pwede" (It's a bit difficult because some people can't meet when you propose a schedule, and they'll just come up with excuses). This suggests that scheduling conflicts are common and are a source of frustration for sellers, who often find themselves rearranging plans or dealing with last-minute

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cancellations. These unpredictable delays can disrupt sellers' schedules, leading to inefficiencies and even lost sales opportunities.

Participant 3 added to the discussion by emphasizing the logistical challenges of delivery, saying, "Isa sa pinakamahirap na aking naranasan ay yung araw na nang deliver minsan napakalayo ng deliver tapos hindi mo macontact yung nag order" (One of the hardest experiences I had was on delivery day; sometimes the delivery location is far, and you can't contact the buyer). This reflects the difficulty in managing the physical aspects of delivery, especially when the delivery location is distant and communication with the buyer is cut off. Such situations not only cause delays but also increase the cost and effort involved in completing the transaction.

These delivery and communication barriers pose significant obstacles for online sellers, making it difficult to finalize transactions smoothly and ensure customer satisfaction. The challenges in coordinating deliveries, combined with unreliable communication, can discourage sellers from continuing their businesses, especially in the high-energy environment of live selling. Over time, these recurring issues may lead to burnout and frustration, negatively impacting sales performance and the sustainability of the business.

Opportunities from Selling Pre-Loved Clothes Online

Participants identified several opportunities that selling pre-loved clothes online has provided them, highlighting various benefits of this entrepreneurial venture. The following opportunities were noted:

1. Source of income (Participant 1, 3, 5)
2. Convenience of Online Selling (Participants 4)
3. Networking Opportunities (Participant 2)

1. Source of Extra Income (Participant 1, 3, 5)

The theme of financial independence emerged strongly in the experiences shared by the participants, particularly in how online selling has become a source of extra income that facilitates self-sufficiency. Participant 1 highlighted this shift in their financial autonomy, stating, "Personally, nagging independent ako" (Personally, I've become independent). For Participant 1, online selling became more than just a side hustle; it marked a significant transition from relying on parental support to taking control of their own finances. This newfound independence was not just a financial change, but also a developmental one, as they reflected, "Natuto ako mag ipon and mag provide ng needs ko without asking money from my parents" (I learned how to save and provide for my needs without asking money from my parents). Through managing their income through online selling, they not only achieved financial independence but also developed key life skills in budgeting and saving. This sense of empowerment extended beyond simply meeting immediate needs, helping them gain confidence in their ability to manage and plan for the future.

Participant 5 further echoed the theme of using online selling as a means to build long-term financial stability, sharing how they had invested the proceeds from their sales in "buying properties/assets." This illustrates the transformative potential of online selling as a tool for wealth-building and achieving financial goals. Through channeling income from their side business into tangible assets, Participant 5 demonstrated how online selling can serve not only as a source of immediate income but also as a foundation for long-term financial growth.

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These insights show how online selling can offer more than just a way to earn extra income—it can be a path to financial self-sufficiency, empowerment, and long-term financial security. For these participants, the venture into online selling has provided the financial independence needed to enhance their personal and professional lives, making it a valuable resource for both immediate needs and future investments.

2. Convenience of Online Selling (Participants 4)

Participant 4 emphasized the convenience of online selling, highlighting its ease and efficiency for both sellers and buyers. They stated, "Mas madaling magbenta thru online, less hassle for both seller and buyer" (It's easier to sell online, less hassle for both seller and buyer). This insight underscores one of the key advantages of online selling—the ability for sellers to operate from the comfort of their own homes while minimizing the effort and complexity involved in traditional selling methods. The flexibility of online selling allows sellers to reach customers without the need for physical stores, offering a streamlined experience for both parties involved.

Participant 4 further elaborated on the broader reach provided by online selling, saying, "Sa online mas wide yung audience na narireach kesa sa physical stores na sa isang lugar lang" (Online, you reach a wider audience compared to physical stores that are limited to one location). This expands on the idea that online platforms offer a much larger potential customer base than brick-and-mortar stores, which are confined to a specific geographical area. Through social media, online marketplaces, and other digital tools, sellers can easily share and promote their products to a global audience, drastically increasing their exposure and potential for sales.

Moreover, online selling alleviates many of the logistical challenges associated with traditional retail. The ability to operate without a physical store reduces costs related to rent, utilities, and in-person interactions, making it a more cost-effective option for sellers. The convenience of managing the business from home also enables sellers to balance other commitments, such as work or studies, making online selling an attractive and practical business model. With easy posting, sharing, and customer engagement, the reduced logistical burden, combined with the opportunity to reach a broader audience, makes online selling an increasingly preferred option for many.

This analysis highlights how online selling simplifies the selling process, offers broader reach, and eliminates the constraints of physical store operations, making it a viable and attractive option for entrepreneurs looking for convenience and efficiency.

3. Networking Opportunities (Participant 2)

Participant 2 highlighted the significant networking opportunities that arise from online selling, which extend far beyond immediate transactional relationships. They explained, "Madali din akong nakikilala, [gaya ng] classmate na nagiging customer ko" (I easily get to know people, including classmates who become my customers). This reflects the ease with which online selling fosters connections, turning acquaintances into customers, and potentially deepening personal and professional relationships. The ability to network and expand one's social circle is a key benefit of online selling, as it allows individuals to engage with a diverse array of people that they might not otherwise meet in a traditional retail setting.

In addition to connecting with potential customers, Participant 2 noted the longer-term value of these relationships, stating that they may "unexpectedly help you in the future." This insight underscores the lasting impact of networking in the context of online selling. Beyond securing immediate sales, the connections made through online selling platforms can evolve into collaborative opportunities, referrals, or professional partnerships. For

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instance, classmates or friends who initially purchase items may later support the seller's business in different ways, such as recommending the seller to others, providing business advice, or even partnering in future ventures.

The opportunity to build a broad and diverse network is particularly valuable in the digital era, where word-of-mouth and online recommendations can significantly influence business growth. These networks not only increase the potential customer base but also offer ongoing support, mentorship, and advice, which are crucial for business success in the long term. The networking potential associated with online selling can also create a supportive community, where entrepreneurs share experiences, challenges, and solutions.

In addition to the business advantages, social influence plays a crucial role in motivating consumer behavior, as consumers may be influenced by their peers or social groups to engage in second-hand shopping (Amaral 2023). This social influence can be a powerful tool for sellers, as word-of-mouth recommendations within social networks can lead to increased visibility and sales. As such, online selling serves as not only a business platform but also a valuable space for creating and nurturing social connections that have the potential to drive future success.

This analysis demonstrates how online selling fosters both personal and professional growth by creating valuable networks, which can lead to long-term opportunities, as well as by leveraging the influence of social connections to enhance business prospects.

CONCLUSION

Based on the summary of the findings, the following conclusions were made:

Marketing Strategies of Online Sellers of Pre-Loved Clothes

The marketing strategies employed by online sellers of pre-loved clothes are crucial in maintaining customer interest and driving sales. Through utilizing teasers, reposting unsold items, offering discounts, and ensuring prompt communication, sellers effectively navigate the competitive online market. These strategies not only help in attracting new customers but also in retaining loyal ones, ensuring the sustained success and growth of their businesses.

Key Factors Contributing to Success in Selling Pre-Loved Clothes

The findings highlight that a combination of strategic approaches, such as strong online visibility, adaptable pricing strategies, and cultivating trust with customers, is crucial for success in the pre-loved clothing market. Through effectively leveraging these factors, sellers can create sustainable business models that thrive in the competitive online marketplace, build long-term customer loyalty, and capitalize on networking opportunities.

Challenges Faced by Online Sellers of Pre-Loved Clothes

The challenges faced by online sellers of pre-loved clothes highlight the complexities of managing an online business in a competitive and unpredictable environment. Seasonal sales fluctuations, uncommitted buyers, and delivery-related issues require sellers to be adaptable and resourceful. Through understanding these challenges, sellers can better anticipate market demands, implement strategies to mitigate customer disengagement, and enhance their overall business processes, ensuring long-term success in the pre-loved clothing market.

Opportunities from Selling Pre-Loved Clothes Online

Selling pre-loved clothes online presents valuable opportunities for entrepreneurs, including financial independence, ease of operation, and expanded social and professional networks. The convenience of reaching a

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broader audience through online platforms, coupled with the potential for long-term relationships and collaboration, makes it an attractive business model. As demonstrated by the participants, these opportunities not only provide immediate income but also empower individuals to grow personally and professionally, positioning them for long-term success in the evolving e-commerce landscape.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations will be proposed to enhance the experiences and success of online sellers of pre-loved clothes.

Marketing Strategies of Online Sellers of Pre-Loved Clothes

To enhance the marketing strategies of online sellers of pre-loved clothes, it is recommended that they engage in a multi-channel approach, including social media, influencer partnerships, and content creation. Through using platforms such as Instagram and Facebook, sellers will be able to showcase their unique inventory through high-quality visuals and storytelling to captivate buyers. Engaging with the right influencers will demonstrate alignment with sustainable fashion values, potentially expanding reach and credibility to new audiences. Interactive features like live sales events and Q&A sessions will stimulate community engagement and help build customer trust. The use of targeted advertising will allow sellers to attract specific audiences interested in sustainable fashion. Sellers will then benefit from regularly examining customer feedback and sales data, enabling them to adjust their strategies in response to market trends and focus on sustained growth and customer loyalty in this burgeoning online sellers.

Key Factors Contributing to Success in Selling Pre-Loved Clothes

To achieve success in selling pre-loved clothes, several major factors that will enhance the business operations of the seller must be considered. First, a strong online presence through a well-designed website and active participation in social media activities should be pursued to attract and retain customers. Building a recognizable brand identity that will reflect values resonating with the target market will be the top priority of the seller. Additionally, cultivating good customer relationships through timely responses, recommendations, and exceptional service will foster customer loyalty and encourage repeat purchases. Flexibility in pricing, including special offers or quantity discounts, will attract price-conscious consumers, thereby increasing sales volume. Moreover, the seller will improve the quality of stock by acquiring items from reputable suppliers to meet customer expectations. Furthermore, focusing on these key factors, sellers will differentiate themselves as leading competitors in the pre-loved clothing market and will drive sustainable growth.

Challenges Faced by Online Sellers of Pre-Loved Clothes

To effectively address the challenges that online sellers of pre-loved clothes will face, it is recommended that sellers implement strategic measures to mitigate risks and enhance operational efficiency. Firstly, a strong vetting process for buyers will minimize instances of scammers and will ensure that sellers are better able to allocate their time and effort to constructive purposes. On the other hand, maintaining good communication with clients and using reliable shipping companies will prevent delays in delivery, thus building customer confidence and satisfaction. Diversifying inventory supply will also help avoid seasonal sales fluctuations, ensuring a constant flow of high-quality goods. For instance, hosting online events will create a social network where sellers can exchange ideas on overcoming common challenges. Finally, investing in training or resources to help sellers manage their time and

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improve their marketing will equip them to navigate marketplace complexities successfully and will propel them toward achieving their goals.

Opportunities for Selling Pre-Loved Clothes Online

To capitalize on the opportunities that will be presented by selling pre-loved clothes, sellers will need to adopt a proactive approach that will emphasize sustainability and community engagement. They will need to highlight the environmental benefits in their marketing strategies to appeal to consumers who will become increasingly interested in sustainable fashion. Through creating content that will be engaging and that will reveal the story behind each product, sellers will be able to connect more closely with eco-conscious buyers. Selling cooperatives will also be able to engage local charities or organizations in hosting donation drives or events to further demonstrate their presence and social responsibility within the community. The use of social media platforms to establish a loyal customer base through engagement-based campaigns, such as styling challenges or customer spotlights, will improve brand exposure and encourage repeat business. Additionally, product range development, including accessories or products made from recycled materials, will allow sellers to target different market segments and create further sales opportunities. These strategies will not only enhance the prospects of their businesses but will also contribute to the growing movement of sustainable fashion.

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