



From Community Voice to Marketing Strategy: The Feeder-School Ecosystem as Basis for a Consumer-Centered Marketing Framework

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Abstract

Competition among higher-education institutions in Laguna, Philippines has intensified, increasing the strategic importance of understanding how families and students define educational value in digitally mediated environments. This study examined how feeder-school social-media discourse reflects emotional and cognitive drivers of higher-education choice and how these insights can be translated into university marketing strategy. Guided by consumer-behavior theory and social-media engagement literature, the study used qualitative thematic content analysis of publicly accessible Facebook posts and comment threads from five highly active feeder schools during Academic Year 2024–2025. Schools were selected purposively from a broader feeder network using a Pareto-informed criterion focusing on sustained page activity and visible community engagement. The analysis yielded five integrative themes: Community Belonging and Safety, Creativity and Cultural Expression, Academic Excellence and Collaboration, Leadership and Civic Responsibility, and Integrity and Partnership. Across schools, discourse emphasized relational trust and safety, identity and self-expression, visible achievement and teamwork, youth agency and civic service, and credibility anchored in professional recognition and partnerships. These recurring value signals suggest that feeder-school communities function as cultural ecosystems that shape the evaluative lens families apply when assessing universities. Building on the thematic synthesis, the study proposed a Consumer-Centered Marketing Framework (CCMF) that maps feeder-school values (source meanings) into consumer triggers and corresponding marketing design responses, culminating in outcomes such as strengthened trust, resonance, and recruitment performance. The framework offers actionable guidance for private universities seeking more community-aligned, evidence-aware, and authentic digital positioning.

Keywords: *strategic marketing; consumer behavior; feeder schools; Facebook discourse; higher education marketing; thematic content analysis; school choice drivers; Laguna, Philippines; brand trust; community resonance; university marketing strategy*

1. Introduction

The intensified competition among higher-education institutions (HEIs) in Laguna has placed mounting pressure on private universities to differentiate themselves within a geographically bounded market. With multiple colleges vying for the same pool of graduating senior-high-school students, most institutions have defaulted to familiar promotional phrases—quality education, modern facilities, globally competitive graduates—which, though positive, have become formulaic and undifferentiated. In this environment of message saturation, the ability to identify and articulate what genuinely matters to parents and students has become a key determinant of strategic positioning and recruitment performance.

The digital migration of communication has transformed the dynamics of school choice. Parents

and students now rely on social-media ecosystems as their principal sources of information, forming impressions not only of universities but also of the feeder-school communities from which they come. Facebook, in particular, functions as a living archive of institutional culture: greetings to teachers, celebratory posts about achievements, and civic-minded announcements together shape a collective narrative of what families value in education. Understanding these narratives allows universities to craft marketing messages that speak to real expectations rather than abstract institutional aspirations.

In the context of a private university situated in Laguna, approximately forty (40) secondary schools serve as its feeder network, most located within a 20–25-kilometer radius. These schools represent distinct yet overlapping social micro-cultures whose online discourse reveals the



priorities, hopes, and anxieties of parents and learners. However, while this digital field provides abundant qualitative data, not all feeder schools contribute equally to enrollment or online visibility. Thus, employing the Pareto Principle (80–20 rule) as an analytic lens, the study focuses on the most active and influential schools—those that generate the bulk of student inflow and community engagement—to derive insights that are both manageable and strategically representative.

Conceptual Framework

The study is grounded in the Consumer Behavior Theory of Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard (1995), which describes decision-making as a sequence of need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase (or choice) decision, and post-purchase evaluation. In the higher-education setting, this framework explains how parents and students function as co-consumers, evaluating colleges based on both rational indicators (academic quality, cost, employability) and emotional triggers (trust, belonging, safety). Each stage of the decision process is influenced by social reference groups and digital information cues—precisely the elements found in feeder-school social-media interactions.

To contextualize these behaviors within modern communication environments, the study also adopts the Social-Media Engagement Model (Barger & Labrecque, 2013), which posits that online platforms act simultaneously as information channels and communities of affective exchange. Engagement—through likes, shares, comments, or emojis—represents not mere interaction but value expression. The tone, imagery, and frequency of these engagements serve as proxies for stakeholder sentiment.

Integrating these theories, the conceptual framework situates social-media discourse as both the data source and the behavioral mirror of educational consumers. The feeder-school ecosystem functions as the information and emotional environment influencing parents' and students' cognitive and affective evaluation of universities. The process flows as follows:

- a. Digital Discourse (Input): Social-media posts, comments, and engagement metrics from feeder schools;
- b. Interpretive Analysis (Process): Thematic coding of values, emotions, and community priorities;

- c. Consumer Insights (Output): Emergent themes reflecting decision triggers;
- d. Strategic Translation (Outcome): Development of marketing pillars and digital-engagement strategies aligned with these insights.

This framework operationalizes the link between consumer psychology and institutional strategy: by decoding what families communicate online, the university can reconstruct its value proposition around the language of its market.

Research Gap and Rationale

While prior studies on educational marketing have examined branding or advertising effectiveness, few have analyzed organic digital discourse as a direct source of consumer insight. In the Philippine context, especially in semi-urban provinces such as Laguna, social-media pages of public high schools remain under-studied despite their function as community barometers. This research therefore addresses a methodological gap by using thematic analysis of feeder-school Facebook content as a strategic-intelligence mechanism for higher-education marketing.

1.1 Research Objectives

General Objective

To analyze the social-media discourse of feeder schools within Laguna's educational ecosystem and derive strategic-marketing insights that will strengthen the positioning of a private university in the region.

Specific Objectives

- a. To map the digital presence of the university's feeder schools and identify the most active online engagement channels;
- b. To determine the dominant themes and sentiments expressed in the social-media content of these feeder schools, reflecting the educational values and concerns of parents and students;
- c. To synthesize emergent themes into integrative clusters that define local consumer behavior in higher education;
- d. To formulate marketing recommendations that align the university's digital communication and branding with the identified consumer priorities; and

- e. To propose a contextualized Consumer-Centered Marketing Framework (CCMF) for private universities operating within localized feeder-school networks.

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1 Social Media Engagement and College Choice Behavior

In the contemporary higher-education environment, social-media platforms have become pivotal in shaping how students evaluate, compare, and ultimately choose among universities. Research consistently affirms that social-media engagement now constitutes a central stage of the decision-making process, influencing awareness, interest, and perceived institutional fit (Sola & Zia, 2021; Pires et al., 2020; Dong & Lazaro, 2024). Students increasingly rely on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and WhatsApp to explore academic programs, view campus life, and interact with institutional representatives or enrolled peers. These digital touchpoints offer immediate, user-generated information that traditional media rarely match in accessibility or perceived authenticity.

Sola and Zia (2021) observed that students treat social media as both an informational and relational space—one that allows them to visualize belonging and gauge community culture before admission. Similarly, Pires et al. (2020) found that first-year undergraduates considered social-media content a decisive factor when comparing universities, particularly in assessing social atmosphere and peer endorsement. Dong and Lazaro (2024), focusing on Chinese students in data-science programs, confirmed that social media not only provides program details but also signals technological modernity and institutional transparency, thereby shaping perceived brand image.

Earlier foundational studies also established the enduring impact of these digital cues. Constantinides and Stagno (2012) demonstrated that social-media interactions strongly correlate with students' attitudinal trust toward universities, positioning engagement as a non-financial determinant of enrollment intention. Intan and Balqiah (2020) later reinforced this finding in the context of international students, showing that interactive online communication bridges geographic and cultural distance, reducing uncertainty about institutional reliability.

Recent empirical works extend the discussion from influence to strategic outcome. Perera et al. (2022) confirmed that consistent and credible social-media marketing enhances institutional brand equity in emerging countries, especially when combined with authentic storytelling. Barus (2023) likewise

found that student engagement through social-media channels mediates the relationship between brand equity and enrollment decisions, implying that visibility must be coupled with participatory dialogue to translate into recruitment gains. Collectively, these studies indicate that universities no longer compete merely through facilities or rankings but through digital relational capital—the ability to communicate relevance, responsiveness, and community online.

While social media exerts significant influence, researchers also note that its impact is moderated by traditional factors such as family advice, peer reputation, and overall institutional prestige (Pires et al., 2020; Intan & Balqiah, 2020). Thus, social media operates within a broader information ecosystem rather than replacing conventional influences. Nevertheless, among younger cohorts accustomed to continuous connectivity, its persuasive power is unmistakable: engagement metrics—likes, shares, and comments—function as modern proxies for credibility and social proof. Consequently, strategic investment in social-media presence is no longer optional but fundamental to sustaining competitiveness in student recruitment.

Overall, the literature confirms that social-media engagement has evolved from a supplementary marketing channel to a determinant of perceived institutional value. It provides students with dynamic, peer-mediated insights that shape both cognitive evaluation and emotional attachment. For universities, this underscores the necessity of developing an authentic, interactive, and visually coherent digital ecosystem aligned with the informational habits and cultural expectations of the digital-native generation.

2.2 Validity of Thematic Content Analysis in Educational Research

Recent scholarship confirms that thematic content analysis of social-media posts is an effective and credible approach for assessing stakeholder perceptions and institutional reputation within the higher-education sector. Universities increasingly rely on social-media platforms to project their image, communicate values, and engage with diverse publics, and thematic analysis enables researchers to interpret these complex digital narratives systematically. Capriotti, Losada-Díaz, and Martínez-Gras (2023) demonstrated that analyzing the thematic content of institutional Facebook and Twitter accounts can reveal how universities frame their academic identity, societal contribution, and competitive differentiation. Similarly, Capriotti and Zeler (2023) emphasized that content-strategy analysis across higher-education platforms identifies the communicative

techniques that most effectively translate institutional missions into stakeholder-oriented narratives.

The method's utility extends beyond descriptive mapping to deeper reputation analysis. Vogler (2020), examining the Twitter discourse of Swiss universities, showed that thematic content analysis can distinguish between the scientific and corporate dimensions of institutional reputation. By coding stakeholder interactions, his study uncovered how academic audiences emphasize research credibility while external publics focus on social responsibility and visibility—demonstrating the technique's sensitivity to multiple reputation layers.

Further evidence indicates that thematic analysis is equally valuable when triangulated with stakeholder interviews or engagement metrics. Al-Hail, Zguir, and Koç (2024) used thematic analysis to interpret qualitative feedback from faculty and students in Qatar, revealing that social-media integration enhances professional identity and institutional sustainability but also introduces challenges such as content overload and feedback management. Likewise, Kwamboka (2024) applied thematic analysis to Kenyan universities' engagement practices, finding that systematic coding of posts and comments exposed both the strengths and weaknesses of digital stakeholder relationships.

Across these studies, thematic content analysis emerges as a methodologically versatile tool that captures not only the frequency of institutional messages but also their underlying meaning and affective tone. It enables universities to translate unstructured digital data into actionable insights—identifying which narratives resonate, which elicit criticism, and how communication strategies shape stakeholder trust. Although the outcomes may vary by platform, cultural context, or analytic depth, the literature consistently validates thematic content analysis as an indispensable component of modern educational-marketing and reputation-management research.

2.3 Emotional versus Rational Drivers of School Choice

Contemporary research underscores that school choice is rarely a purely rational decision; rather, it reflects a complex interplay between emotional motivations and pragmatic considerations. While cost, facilities, and perceived academic reputation remain significant, emotional factors such as trust, belonging, happiness, and

community identity have gained increasing prominence in recent years. These emotional dimensions shape how parents and students interpret the meaning of education and how they evaluate institutional “fit” beyond measurable indicators.

Debs, Kafka, Makris, and Roda (2023) introduced the concept of happiness-oriented parenting, showing that privileged parents often prioritize their children's emotional well-being and sense of belonging over academic competitiveness or material advantages. Their findings suggest that emotional motivations—such as social connection and psychological safety—frequently outweigh rational factors like tuition cost or school performance. Similarly, Hogan and Barnes (2024) highlighted the cultural politics of emotion in school selection, demonstrating how mothers, in particular, frame school choice as a moral and emotional responsibility rather than a market-driven decision. Their study revealed that emotional logics of care and belonging can dominate parental reasoning even in socioeconomically advantaged contexts.

However, scholars increasingly recognize that emotional and rational drivers operate in tandem rather than opposition. Wu and Hou (2023), through an ethnographic study of African students in Chinese universities, described this relationship as a rationality–emotion nexus, where pragmatic goals (e.g., employability, quality of education) coexist with affective experiences of cultural inclusion and social belonging. This integrative perspective challenges the notion that rational decision-making supersedes emotional influences, instead suggesting that educational choices are multidimensional acts combining cognitive evaluation and emotional intuition.

The complexity of this interplay is further evidenced in cognitive-psychology research. Cash and Oppenheimer (2024) found that parents often misjudge the factors influencing their own choices, believing they are primarily rational when, in fact, emotional motivations subtly guide their decisions. Their study emphasized that metacognitive unawareness—the inability to recognize emotional bias—can lead parents to underestimate the importance of relational and environmental comfort when selecting schools. Hogan and Barnes (2024) echoed this insight, arguing that parental discourses of rationality frequently mask deep emotional investments in identity, safety, and community alignment.

Overall, the literature converges on the view that school choice reflects a dynamic fusion of emotion and reason. Emotional factors—such as trust in educators, attachment to a community, and confidence in institutional care—often serve as the interpretive lens through which rational attributes are assessed. This interdependence varies by socioeconomic background, cultural norms, and local context but remains consistently influential across diverse educational systems. For higher-education marketing, these insights imply that successful engagement requires not only factual persuasion but also emotional resonance. Institutions that communicate empathy, belonging, and authenticity are more likely to attract and retain students whose choices are informed as much by feeling as by logic.

2.4 Localized and Culture-Sensitive Marketing in Higher Education

Emerging scholarship underscores that localized, culture-sensitive marketing is substantially more effective for private universities than generic, one-size-fits-all institutional messaging. As global competition among higher-education institutions intensifies, universities must position themselves not only through international visibility but also through contextual resonance—that is, aligning their messages with the cultural and emotional realities of their prospective students. Research consistently shows that while institutions benefit from maintaining a universal, forward-looking vision, their operational marketing strategies achieve greater success when they adapt to local expectations and socio-cultural nuances (Sebti & Simon, 2020). In this regard, tailoring communication to community values reduces informational dissonance—the cognitive gap between what institutions claim and what students experience—thereby enhancing authenticity and perceived value.

Comparative analyses of university marketing strategies further confirm this trend. Bamberger, Bronshtein, and Yemini (2020) demonstrated that institutions using national or community-specific branding on social media platforms cultivate stronger emotional attachment and inclusion among prospective students. By analyzing the digital “data trails” of international student recruitment campaigns, their study found that localized content—such as highlighting cultural festivals, student life, and national identity—generates higher engagement than abstract claims of global excellence. Similarly, Xie and Teo (2020) compared self-promotional discourse in American and Chinese universities and found that top-tier institutions increasingly incorporate appraisal resources that

reflect national values, historical identity, and collective pride. This suggests that culture-specific language, when strategically employed, enhances both prestige and relatability.

The importance of cultural resonance extends beyond recruitment to questions of equity, inclusion, and institutional access. Nkhoma (2020) argued that universities that openly communicate shared values, social belonging, and motivational alignment can significantly improve participation among marginalized student groups. Institutional culture, when explicitly framed as accessible and inclusive, becomes a determinant of both choice and retention. Complementing this view, Kipnis et al. (2020) introduced the concept of diversity-and-inclusion-engaged marketing, advocating for campaigns that integrate multicultural representation not as token imagery but as part of a systemic communication ethos. Their research across 11 countries demonstrated that institutions promoting culturally inclusive narratives contribute to the well-being of the multicultural marketplace by fostering identification, trust, and social justice awareness.

Taken together, these findings emphasize that generic “global quality” slogans often dilute strategic impact. Although such slogans align with aspirations for international recognition, they frequently overlook local aspirations, emotional attachments, and cultural particularities that define student identity. As Sebti and Simon (2020) observed, informational dissonance arises when promotional promises of cosmopolitan excellence fail to connect with the everyday experiences of domestic stakeholders. For private universities operating in culturally diverse or regionally rooted environments, localized and culturally grounded messaging therefore becomes not merely an aesthetic choice but a strategic necessity. It allows institutions to differentiate themselves, build community trust, and position their brand as an authentic extension of the values and aspirations of the populations they serve.

2.5 Digital Visibility, Partnerships, and Student Recruitment

The expansion of digital transformation across higher education has significantly reshaped how institutions attract, engage, and retain students. Research consistently supports a positive correlation between digital visibility and student recruitment, indicating that universities investing in digital marketing and online engagement achieve stronger enrollment performance and broader stakeholder involvement (Surjawan et al., 2025; Oladipo & Sugandi, 2021; Al-Abdallah & Ababakr, 2025). Digital visibility—measured through online presence, social-media engagement, and search-



engine prominence—has evolved into a key determinant of institutional competitiveness, particularly in an environment where students' decision journeys are increasingly mediated by online platforms.

Surjawan, Langi, and Imbar (2025) emphasized that digital transformation, encompassing the use of social-media channels, integrated platforms, and smart campus technologies, enhances institutional agility and operational efficiency. Their review concluded that higher-education institutions that embed digital infrastructure into admissions and marketing systems achieve greater responsiveness and personalization in student recruitment. Similarly, Oladipo and Sugandi (2021) found that international universities with strong digital visibility, particularly those employing targeted online content and virtual outreach programs, experienced higher conversion rates among prospective international students. Their study underscored that digital communication not only extends institutional reach but also builds emotional connection by allowing students to visualize belonging before arrival.

Complementing these findings, Al-Abdallah and Ababakr (2025) demonstrated that digital marketing communications exert a stronger mediating effect on students' higher-education choices than traditional marketing tools. In their comparative study, online advertising, interactive campaigns, and social-media storytelling produced higher engagement and conversion rates than print or physical promotions. These results affirm that digital presence is now integral to brand credibility, shaping perceptions of modernity, transparency, and accessibility—qualities that strongly influence student decision-making.

While the reviewed literature robustly links digital visibility with recruitment success, there remains limited direct empirical evidence connecting feeder-school partnerships specifically to enrollment outcomes or institutional reputation. However, parallel studies on stakeholder engagement and collaboration offer conceptual support for such relationships. Patriche, Stoica, Schin, and Sava (2025) observed that universities maintaining sustained partnerships and external engagement initiatives strengthen their reputation capital through trust and relational visibility. This finding implies that feeder-school collaboration—when integrated within broader digital and stakeholder strategies—may indirectly reinforce institutional reputation by positioning the university

as a community-embedded and relationally responsive entity.

Overall, the literature suggests that digital visibility and partnership-based engagement function as complementary drivers of recruitment and reputation. Digital platforms provide reach and immediacy, while collaborations with trusted institutions such as feeder schools supply authenticity and social validation. Although further empirical research is needed to establish direct causal links, existing evidence indicates that integrating digital transformation with relationship-based outreach constitutes a strategic path toward sustainable growth in student recruitment and institutional brand equity.

2.6 Synthesis and Research Gaps

The review of literature collectively illustrates how strategic marketing in higher education has evolved from a transactional activity to a relationship-centered and digitally mediated process. Across five thematic domains—(1) social-media engagement and college-choice behavior, (2) thematic content analysis as a valid interpretive method, (3) emotional versus rational decision drivers, (4) localized and culture-sensitive marketing, and (5) digital visibility and institutional collaboration—scholars converge on the conclusion that university marketing effectiveness depends on the authenticity, cultural resonance, and interactivity of its communications.

The first stream of studies (Šola & Zia, 2021; Pires et al., 2020; Dong & Lazaro, 2024) underscores that social-media ecosystems are now integral to student decision-making. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube provide real-time, peer-endorsed insights that heavily shape perceptions of institutional image and belonging. The second body of work (Capriotti & Zeler, 2023; Vogler, 2020; Kwamboka, 2024) validates thematic content analysis as a rigorous tool for decoding stakeholder sentiment from these digital spaces, allowing researchers to translate unstructured data into actionable strategic intelligence.

The third cluster (Debs et al., 2023; Hogan & Barnes, 2024; Wu & Hou, 2023) expands the behavioral dimension by revealing that emotional motivations—trust, safety, and belonging—often outweigh purely rational considerations such as cost or facilities. This finding reframes marketing not as persuasion through information but as the cultivation of emotional resonance and relational continuity. The fourth group of studies (Sebti &

Simon, 2020; Bamberger et al., 2020; Nkhoma, 2020; Kipnis et al., 2020) adds a cultural perspective, demonstrating that localized and community-based communication outperforms generic global slogans, particularly in markets where educational identity is intertwined with cultural heritage and social inclusion. Finally, the fifth stream (Surjawan et al., 2025; Oladipo & Sugandi, 2021; Patriche et al., 2025) establishes a clear link between digital visibility and recruitment success, emphasizing that digital transformation and online engagement amplify institutional competitiveness and stakeholder trust.

Despite this growing body of evidence, several critical research gaps remain.

- a. Limited integration of behavioral and communicative dimensions. Most studies isolate either consumer psychology or digital strategy; few examine how emotional and cultural values expressed through social-media discourse translate into actual marketing frameworks for higher-education institutions.
- b. Underexplored role of feeder-school ecosystems. While digital engagement and institutional visibility are widely studied, the specific contribution of feeder-school social-media narratives to university branding and recruitment has received minimal empirical attention, particularly in emerging-market contexts such as the Philippines.
- c. Geographic and contextual imbalance. The majority of cited works originate from Western, Chinese, or Middle-Eastern settings, leaving a gap in literature contextualized to Southeast Asian educational markets where local culture, family involvement, and community trust strongly influence college choice.
- d. Methodological underrepresentation of qualitative digital analysis. Quantitative metrics (clicks, likes, conversion rates) dominate prior studies, whereas qualitative thematic analysis of feeder-school content remains a largely untapped approach for deriving consumer insight.

Addressing these gaps, the present study proposes to analyze the social-media discourse of selected feeder schools in Laguna through thematic content analysis. By identifying integrative themes that reflect parents' and students' priorities and aligning them with consumer-behavior theory, the research contributes a contextualized Consumer-Centered Marketing Framework (CCMF) for private universities. This framework bridges the current divide between behavioral theory and strategic communication practice, offering both academic and

managerial implications for localized higher-education marketing in the digital age.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative exploratory design anchored in thematic content analysis of social-media discourse. The intent was to uncover the latent meanings, values, and behavioral cues embedded in feeder-school communication, thereby translating digital narratives into actionable marketing insight for the focal university.

Because the goal was interpretive understanding rather than statistical generalization, the design emphasized depth of analysis and contextual sensitivity. Quantitative indicators such as reaction counts or comment frequencies were used only to support interpretation, providing secondary evidence of salience and engagement strength.

3.2 Research Locale and Context

The study was conducted in Laguna Province, a semi-urban educational corridor in Southern Luzon where several private and public higher-education institutions compete for a finite pool of high-school graduates. The focal university is located within this area, drawing most of its freshmen from a network of approximately forty (40) feeder schools situated within a 20–25 kilometer radius.

These feeder schools maintain active social-media pages—predominantly Facebook—which serve as their public platforms for announcements, celebrations, and community interaction. Such digital environments were treated as virtual ethnographic spaces representing the sentiments of students, parents, and educators.

3.3 Sampling Procedure

Although forty feeder schools comprise the total population, it was methodologically and strategically impractical to analyze all. Therefore, a purposive sampling strategy guided by the Pareto Principle (80–20 rule) was employed. In strategic marketing, the Pareto logic posits that roughly 20 percent of sources often account for 80 percent of visibility or influence.

For this study, 'high activity' was operationalized as sustained posting frequency across the observation window combined with visible engagement (reactions, comment threads, and shares) relative to other feeder-school pages in the network.



Following this criterion, the five most active and influential schools were selected for in-depth analysis:

1. Mamatid Senior High School (Cabuyao City)
2. Kapayapaan Integrated School (Calamba City)
3. Lecheria Integrated School (Calamba City)
4. Punta Integrated School (Calamba City)
5. Eduardo Barretto Sr. Integrated School (Calamba City)

Inclusion criteria included:

- a. Regular posting activity during Academic Year 2024–2025;
- b. Public accessibility of posts and comment threads;
- c. Substantive audience engagement (likes, shares, comments); and
- d. Documented linkage to the focal university's enrolment pipeline.

This selection ensured that the sample represented the digital “voice” of the most influential market segments rather than isolated or inactive accounts.

3.4 Data Collection Procedures

Data collection covered a twelve-month period (November 2024 to October 2025). The researcher manually accessed each official feeder-school Facebook page and archived posts, captions, and public comments relevant to academic life, student activities, values promotion, and community engagement

Each captured post was coded with metadata (date, source school, engagement level) and stored as text or screenshot files in a secured digital repository. Posts unrelated to education (e.g., purely logistical notices) or containing identifiable personal information were excluded.

Complementary observation notes documented page layout, tone of interaction, and symbolic elements such as emojis, hashtags, and imagery style. These contextual features enriched the interpretive dimension of the analysis.

The final corpus consisted of archived public posts and their associated comment threads that met the inclusion criteria; the study reports themes at an aggregate level rather than enumerating post counts because the intent was interpretive synthesis rather than frequency-based inference.

3.5 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using the six-phase thematic analysis framework of Braun and Clarke (2006):

- a. Familiarization – repeated immersion in posts and comment threads to identify initial impressions;
- b. Initial Coding – generation of short descriptive codes (e.g., faculty appreciation, student leadership, safety reminder);
- c. Theme Searching – clustering codes across schools into broader conceptual categories;
- d. Theme Review – cross-checking coherence within and across categories;
- e. Theme Definition and Naming – refinement into five integrative themes; and
- f. Interpretive Reporting – synthesis of findings and alignment with consumer-behavior constructs.

To strengthen dependability, the dataset was coded by the principal researcher and a trained peer reviewer using a shared codebook; coding differences were resolved through documented consensus discussions, and the final theme structure was agreed upon after iterative review.

Engagement metrics (number of reactions, comments, and shares) served as quantitative corroboration of theme salience but did not drive interpretation. The outcome was a set of five thematic clusters reflecting the local consumer mindset:

1. Community Belonging and Safety;
2. Creativity and Cultural Expression;
3. Academic Excellence and Collaboration;
4. Leadership and Civic Responsibility; and
5. Integrity and Partnership.

3.6 Trustworthiness and Validity

To enhance the credibility and transferability of findings, multiple validation strategies were employed:

- a. Triangulation through comparison of results across schools and across content types (posts, comments, imagery);
- b. Peer Debriefing with faculty experts in marketing and communication for external audit of coding accuracy;

- c. Thick Description to convey contextual depth, enabling analytical rather than statistical generalization; and
- d. Audit Trail Maintenance, documenting all analytic decisions and data management procedures.

These measures ensured that interpretations were traceable, replicable, and grounded in transparent evidence.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

The research complied with ethical guidelines for online and social-media research (British Psychological Society, 2021). Only publicly accessible content was analyzed; no attempts were made to join private groups or access restricted data. Personal names of students or commenters were anonymized or omitted in reporting. All screenshots and textual extracts were stored in password-protected folders and used solely for academic purposes. The study's interpretive orientation avoided evaluative judgment of schools, focusing instead on aggregate communication patterns relevant to marketing insight.

3.8 Summary of Methodological Rationale

The methodological approach integrates qualitative rigor with strategic pragmatism. By purposively analyzing the most active feeder schools through thematic content analysis, the study captures the authentic sentiments shaping college-choice behavior in Laguna. The procedure operationalizes the conceptual framework presented in Chapter 1: social-media discourse (input) → thematic interpretation (process) → consumer insights (output) → strategic-marketing framework (outcome).

This design not only addresses the study objectives but also offers a replicable model for educational institutions seeking data-driven yet community-sensitive marketing intelligence.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Overview of Data and Analytical Process

The study analyzed publicly accessible social-media posts and interactions from five feeder schools located within a 20–25-kilometer radius of a private university in Laguna: Mamatid Senior High School (Cabuyao City), Kapayapaan Integrated School, Lecheria Integrated School, Punta Integrated School, and Eduardo Barretto Sr. Integrated School (Calamba City). These schools constitute the most active digital communities within a broader network of forty feeder institutions and collectively represent the primary source of incoming college students for the university.

Following the Pareto Principle (80–20 rule), the five schools were purposively chosen for their consistently high engagement rates and visible digital presence. Data were collected from their official Facebook pages over the Academic Year 2024–2025, focusing on public posts, captions, and comment threads related to academic events, student achievements, community activities, and values promotion. All screenshots were anonymized and archived in a coded database; names and identifiers were removed to ensure ethical compliance.

Each post was treated as a textual artifact conveying social meaning and stakeholder sentiment. The data were processed through Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis framework—familiarization, coding, theme generation, review, naming, and synthesis. Coding focused on linguistic tone, imagery, and emotive or value-laden expressions, with peer review used to ensure interpretive consistency.

Engagement indicators (e.g., reactions and comment activity) were treated as contextual cues of visibility and resonance and were not interpreted as quantitative measures of marketing effectiveness or enrollment influence.

To illustrate analytic grounding, representative excerpts from the dataset are provided below (punctuation retained as in the original posts):

“Mamatid Senior High School would like to greet Ma'am R.E.* a very Happy Birthday!” (Mamatid SHS, 2024) *masked for privacy concerns

→ reflected Community Belonging and Safety, capturing warmth, relational culture, and collective identity.

“Some stories aren't captured—they're discovered 'Lihim na Pahina: sa likod ng bawat mali...'” (Kapayapaan Integrated School, 2024)

→ exemplified Creativity and Cultural Expression, highlighting artistry and storytelling as forms of learning.

“Cluster-based School Press Conference 2024—One Step at a Time!” (Lecheria Integrated School, 2024)

→ aligned with Academic Excellence and Collaboration, showing scholarly participation and teamwork.



“ALAB NG PAG-ASA, ESTUDYANTE ANG UNA! Lakas ng kabataan, pinag-isang kinabukasan!” (Punta Integrated School, 2024)

→ embodied Leadership and Civic Responsibility, expressing youth activism and patriotic motivation.

“Congratulations! Ma’am EBF*—your Eduardo Barretto family is proud of you!” (EBSIS, 2024)
*masked for privacy concerns

→ represented Integrity and Partnership, illustrating respect for professionalism and institutional pride.

These excerpts exemplify the linguistic and affective markers that guided thematic coding—expressions of gratitude, solidarity, celebration, and civic purpose recurring across institutions. Engagement metrics (likes, shares, comment chains) were used as contextual indicators of resonance but did not determine interpretive weight.

Through iterative cross-case comparison, five integrative themes emerged:

1. Community Belonging and Safety
2. Creativity and Cultural Expression
3. Academic Excellence and Collaboration
4. Leadership and Civic Responsibility
5. Integrity and Partnership

Together, these themes reveal the collective moral and emotional architecture of the feeder-school ecosystem—an environment characterized by care, creativity, civic engagement, and trust. The following section (4.2) elaborates on each theme in detail, supported by interpretive commentary linking these grassroots narratives to consumer-behavior theory and strategic-marketing implications for the university.

4.2 Emergent Themes from the Feeder-School Ecosystem

The cross-case thematic analysis of five highly active feeder schools surfaced five integrative themes that collectively describe Laguna’s secondary-school value discourse: (1) Community Belonging and Safety, (2) Creativity and Cultural Expression, (3) Academic Excellence and Collaboration, (4) Leadership and Civic Responsibility, and (5) Integrity and Partnership.

Below, each theme is evidenced with representative verbal artifacts and linked to the consumer decision process established in the conceptual framework.

4.2.1 Community Belonging and Safety

Representative excerpts (public posts):

“Mamatid Senior High School would like to greet Ma’am RDE* a very Happy Birthday!” — Mamatid SHS

“Mamatid Senior High School would like to greet Ma’am LTA* a very Happy Birthday!” — Mamatid SHS

“Magingat po ang lahat.. 🧑🏻🧑🏻🧑🏻 (Take care, everyone..) ... INGAT, CALAMBEÑOS!” — Eduardo Barretto Sr. Integrated School (EBSIS)

Interpretation. Birthday tributes and safety advisories recur as rituals of care and guardianship. The affective register (greetings, emojis, communal imperatives like *ingat*) signals a familial school identity, foregrounding psychological safety and moral stewardship as baseline expectations. Within the consumer journey, these cues address need recognition (desire for continuity of care) and risk reduction (perceived campus safety).

Strategic implication for the university. Anchor top-funnel messaging in care, continuity, and well-being (e.g., mentorship, counseling, parent liaisons), using warm visual grammar and parent/student testimonials that mirror the feeder-school idiom of belonging and *ingat*.

4.2.2 Creativity and Cultural Expression

Representative excerpts:

“Some stories aren’t captured – they’re discovered. Lihim na Phina: sa likod ng bawat mali..” (video reel, 0:00–7:24) — Kapayapaan IS

Use of poetic Filipino captions, stylized typography, and long-form narrative reels — Kapayapaan IS

Interpretation. The platform is deployed as a creative stage—poetry, long-form reels, and aesthetic curation construct an expressive school identity. This positions learning as story-making and signals to families that holistic development (arts, identity work) is valued. In the decision model, such content shapes the information-search filter: institutions that look and feel expressive are perceived as student-centered and future-ready.

Strategic implication. Elevate student-generated media (short films, design, music) on university channels; co-curate feeder-school showcases; emphasize creative pathways (communication, design, performing arts) with authentic, student-voice storytelling rather than admin-led copy.

4.2.3 Academic Excellence and Collaboration

Representative excerpts:

“CLUSTER-BASED SCHOOL PRESS CONFERENCE ... One Step At A Time” — Lecheria IS (Paskil-Balita)

Multiple album posts of inter-school journalism with headlines, captions, and team photos — Lecheria IS

Interpretation. Lecheria’s newswire cadence and cluster-conference coverage establish an evidence-of-competence discourse: disciplined writing, teamwork, and peer recognition. The tone is cognitive and professional, mapping to evaluation of alternatives in which families seek verifiable performance signals (awards, outputs, structured collaboration).

Strategic implication. Deploy proof-of-learning content: capstone features, undergraduate research spotlights, board-exam outcomes, industry-mentored studios. Use collaborative rhetoric (“learning together, leading together”) and present faculty credentials in context of student outcomes.

4.2.4 Leadership and Civic Responsibility

Representative excerpts:

“ALAB NG PAG-ASA, ESTUDYANTE ANG UNA / LAKAS NG KABATAAN, PINAG-ISANG KINABUKASAN” — Punta IS – SSLG

“Tapos na ba ang SSLG 2025? ... hindi po ate!”
😊 — Punta IS – SSLG

“**PISolusyon:** Barya para sa malinis na kampus
♻️” — Punta IS – SSLG

Interpretation. The SSLG page performs youth agency: persistence (“hindi po ate!”), environmental micro-initiatives (PISolusyon), and patriotic framing. Leadership is cast as service and stewardship, shaping value alignment at the choice point: students and parents prefer institutions that legitimate youth voice and public purpose.

Strategic implication. Make servant-leadership visible: embed civic immersion, NSS/SDG projects, LGU/NGO co-ops; circulate student-leader narratives and alumni changemaker profiles; present governance training and service-learning as distinctive assets.

4.2.5 Integrity and Partnership

Representative excerpts:

“Congratulations...Ma’am EBF**! ... your Eduardo Barretto family is proud of you!” — EBSIS

Civic reposts (e.g., Mayor’s safety advisory): “INGAT, CALAMBEÑOS!” — EBSIS

Interpretation. Public recognition of educators and LGU-aligned advisories project institutional probity and social legitimacy. The page curates a trust repertoire—professional pride, transparency, and public-interest messaging—feeding the post-purchase assurance loop (parents expect stable, ethical stewardship).

Strategic implication. Showcase third-party validations (accreditation, LGU/industry MOUs), ethics statements, and partnership outcomes (internships, community clinics). Maintain a confident but transparent tone with periodic outcome dashboards.

Cross-Theme Interaction (Meta-Pattern)

The five themes combine into a hybrid identity: warm and protective (belonging), aesthetically expressive (creativity), goal-oriented and verifiable (excellence), socially purposeful (leadership), and ethically grounded (integrity). This composite narrative functions as the local evaluative schema parents and students apply when scanning university signals. In short, feeder-school discourse supplies the lexicon of trust; institutions that speak this lexicon—consistently and credibly—gain advantage at every stage of the consumer decision process.

Data–Insight Traceability Note

For each theme above, illustrative excerpts were selected from the anonymized archive for AY 2024–2025. Selection criteria: (a) clarity of value-expression, (b) recurrence across time/threads, and (c) engagement visibility (reaction and comment chains). Excerpts are indicative, not exhaustive; full coded inventories are available in the audit trail.

4.3 Thematic Synthesis

The thematic synthesis weaves together the five integrative domains—Community Belonging and Safety, Creativity and Cultural Expression, Academic Excellence and Collaboration, Leadership and Civic Responsibility, and Integrity and Partnership—into a coherent cultural map of the feeder-school ecosystem. Across schools, these discourses intersect to produce a values-driven social contract that shapes how families and students perceive education as both a personal and communal investment.



4.3.1 From Social Ritual to Brand Affinity

Recurring posts celebrating birthdays, teachers, and milestones exemplify the ritualization of care within the feeder-school environment. Such expressions of gratitude and affection create a continuity of belonging—an affective bridge parents subconsciously seek when evaluating higher-education options. In consumer-behavior terms, this represents emotional conditioning, wherein repeated exposure to communal warmth establishes expectations of relational safety. Universities that replicate this tone in their own online communications can translate community attachment into brand loyalty. Strategically, this requires shifting social-media positioning from institutional promotion to relationship storytelling, foregrounding mentorship, safety, and community support as trust anchors.

4.3.2 Creativity as Identity Capital

Kapayapaan Integrated School's creative reels and stylized captions illustrate how art, language, and emotion function as identity capital. In the digital marketplace of education, creativity signals not merely aesthetic taste but pedagogical modernity—a readiness to nurture self-expression, innovation, and cultural pride. This theme integrates hedonic and symbolic values (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982) into the decision calculus: families perceive creative institutions as more capable of fostering holistic growth. For the university, integrating student-generated media and visual storytelling into its digital marketing strengthens authentic resonance—a trait consistently shown to enhance engagement among Gen Z audiences.

4.3.3 Evidence of Competence and Collaborative Merit

Lecheria Integrated School's journalism coverage positions academic achievement as a collective enterprise, where success is measured through teamwork and recognition. This discourse mirrors the performance-cue dimension of consumer evaluation—families look for visible, verifiable proofs of learning. The theme underscores the importance of transparent excellence, suggesting that data-driven storytelling (competition outcomes, board-exam results, alumni placement) can substitute for abstract claims of “quality education.” Strategically, the university can translate this insight into evidence-based marketing, aligning with the evaluation of alternatives stage in the consumer-decision model.

4.3.4 Civic Purpose and Youth Agency

The SSLG content from Punta Integrated School dramatizes civic responsibility and empowerment: slogans such as “Estudyante ang una, lakas ng kabataan” position students as co-architects of social good. This theme introduces moral-purpose signaling into the marketing equation—families desire institutions that cultivate agency and public virtue, not mere academic credentials. In branding logic, this converts into transformative value propositions (T-value), wherein education is marketed as a means of social participation. For the university, highlighting community-service programs, SDG initiatives, and civic immersion activities can therefore deepen perceived brand meaning and differentiate it from purely transactional competitors.

4.3.5 Integrity, Trust, and Reputation Linkages

Eduardo Barretto Sr. Integrated School's congratulatory posts and civic advisories project institutional maturity and alignment with public interest. Here, integrity functions as a reputational heuristic—a cue families use to infer reliability and accountability. In the digital era, such content performs the same role as third-party endorsements in traditional marketing, reinforcing brand credibility (Perera et al., 2022). Universities that publicize transparent partnerships with local government units, accrediting bodies, and industry linkages extend this trust architecture, creating a feedback loop between external validation and consumer assurance.

4.3.6 Integrated Interpretive Model

Synthesizing the five domains reveals a dual-axis framework:

The Affective Axis—Belonging → Creativity → Purpose—captures the emotional energy that binds families to educational brands.

The Cognitive Axis—Excellence → Integrity—captures the evaluative rationality guiding school comparison and selection.

At their intersection lies the Consumer-Centered Marketing Framework (CCMF) proposed in this study, positing that effective higher-education marketing must harmonize emotional continuity from feeder schools with rational credibility expected of tertiary institutions. The feeder-school ecosystem therefore operates as a cultural supply chain: it transfers emotional capital (trust, identity,

belonging) that the university must receive, refine, and amplify through consistent messaging and program design.

4.3.7 Implications for Strategic Positioning

Message Architecture: Build narratives around continuity of care, creativity, collaboration, citizenship, and credibility—the five cultural values empirically observed.

Visual Grammar: Employ warm, community-centric imagery and student-voice content to mirror feeder-school communication style.

Engagement Design: Partner with feeder schools for co-branded events and social-media collaborations, converting relational capital into recruitment pipelines.

Value Translation: Map each theme to specific marketing touchpoints—admissions campaigns (belonging), program showcases (creativity), results infographics (excellence), service features (leadership), and public reports (integrity).

In sum, the synthesis demonstrates that local educational discourse provides the emotional and moral vocabulary through which college-choice decisions are made. By decoding this vocabulary, universities can move beyond generic “quality education” appeals and articulate community-anchored, emotionally intelligent marketing strategies that align institutional identity with the lived values of their feeder-school constituencies.

4.4 Strategic Implications for University Marketing Design

The emergent themes from the feeder-school ecosystem converge into a framework for Consumer-Centered Strategic Marketing (CCSM)—a model that aligns emotional and cognitive triggers embedded in secondary-school discourse with higher-education marketing design.

Rather than treating promotion as a transactional activity, the CCSM model positions marketing as a continuum of relational meaning—one that extends the values nurtured in feeder-school communities into the university’s identity narrative. (See Table 1)

4.4.1 Integrating Marketing Across the Consumer Journey

Applying the CCSM framework to the five-stage consumer decision model reveals how each thematic insight can be embedded throughout the recruitment funnel:

Table 1. CCSM Framework for Strategic Marketing Design

Theme	Consumer-Behavior Cue	Strategic Marketing Focus	Expected Outcome
Community Belonging & Safety	Desire for relational continuity, reassurance, and emotional security.	Showcase mentorship, student-life support, and safety programs; use community-oriented visuals and testimonials.	Increased trust and parental confidence leading to higher inquiry-to-enrollment conversion.
Creativity & Cultural Expression	Pursuit of self-discovery and identity affirmation.	Highlight creative outputs, student media, and cultural events; encourage student-generated storytelling on digital channels.	Strengthened brand authenticity and appeal to Gen Z students seeking self-expression.
Academic Excellence & Collaboration	Need for verifiable performance and peer recognition.	Present outcome data, collaborative projects, research showcases, and faculty credentials linked to student success.	Enhanced perceived academic credibility and differentiation from competitors.
Leadership & Civic Responsibility	Valuation of service, agency, and moral purpose.	Feature service-learning, SDG initiatives, and community-based leadership training; include civic partners in campaigns.	Increased alignment with parent and student values; reputation as a socially responsible university.
Integrity & Partnership	Search for reliability and transparency in institutional conduct.	Publicize accreditation, LGU/industry linkages, ethics statements, and public	Reinforced brand credibility and stakeholder loyalty.



Theme	Consumer-Behavior Cue	Strategic Marketing Focus	Expected Outcome
		reports on outcomes.	

a. Problem Recognition / Awareness.

Families recognize the need for higher education within a context of safety and belonging. Marketing at this stage should emphasize community continuity—messages that suggest “Your next home of learning” or “Where your journey continues.”

b. Information Search.

During exploration, creativity and authenticity dominate perception. Digital storytelling featuring students and parents, vlogs, and artistic showcases provide credible, emotive cues that reinforce authenticity and identity resonance.

c. Evaluation of Alternatives.

Prospective students compare institutions based on evidence of excellence and collaboration opportunities. Transparent presentation of outcomes and peer testimonials satisfies rational evaluation needs.

d. Purchase Decision / Enrollment.

Messaging should pivot to leadership and civic engagement, connecting enrollment to meaningful participation in society. Enrollment becomes not just an academic decision but a moral and aspirational act.

e. Post-Purchase Behavior / Retention.

Trust-building through integrity and partnership ensures satisfaction and positive word-of-mouth. Consistent communication of ethical standards and external validations sustains long-term loyalty.

4.4.2 Communication Architecture and Content Design

To operationalize these insights, marketing communication should adopt a multi-layered architecture:

1. Core Narrative: “From Community to Career—Belonging, Creativity, Excellence, Leadership, and Integrity.”
2. Visual Grammar: Warm color palettes, human-centered photography, and

Filipino-language inclusions to echo the emotional tone of feeder-school discourse

3. Tone of Voice: Conversational yet aspirational, blending English and Filipino registers (e.g., Sama-sama sa tagumpay).
4. Channel Strategy:
 - a. Facebook for parental engagement and event visibility.
 - b. Instagram / TikTok for creative storytelling and student life.
 - c. YouTube for academic proof points and alumni testimonials.
 - d. Messenger / WhatsApp for personalized follow-ups and retention outreach.

4.4.3 Institutional and Operational Implications

Cross-Functional Alignment. Marketing teams should collaborate with Student Affairs, Alumni Relations, and Academic Departments to ensure message coherence.

Training for Digital Ambassadors. Empower current students and alumni as peer influencers to communicate authenticity and belonging.

Analytics and Feedback Loop. Monitor engagement sentiment to continuously recalibrate message tone and frequency.

Feeder-School Partnerships. Institutionalize co-branded events, scholarships, and joint media features to sustain relational pipelines.

4.4.4 Strategic Outcome

By aligning marketing with the value system articulated in feeder-school discourse, the university shifts from promotional parity (“quality education”) to relational distinction (“trusted community for growth”).

The CCSM framework transforms digital marketing into an instrument of cultural continuity and emotional assurance, bridging the gap between what families feel they need and what the institution promises to deliver.

Ultimately, this approach redefines recruitment as a process of value resonance, not persuasion—anchoring the university’s competitive advantage in the lived social identity of its community.

4.5 Proposed Consumer-Centered Marketing Framework (CCMF)

The findings of this study converge into a Consumer-Centered Marketing Framework (CCMF) that visualizes how values expressed in feeder-school social-media discourse can be systematically translated into higher-education marketing design. The framework depicts an interactive value chain moving from community culture to institutional strategy, anchored on the dual dimensions identified in Section 4.3—the Affective Axis (belonging → creativity → purpose) and the Cognitive Axis (excellence → integrity).

At the left of the model lies the Feeder-School Discourse, the origin point of social meaning. Here, recurring communicative patterns reveal five cultural values:

1. Community Belonging and Safety
2. Creativity and Cultural Expression
3. Academic Excellence and Collaboration
4. Leadership and Civic Responsibility
5. Integrity and Partnership

These values generate Consumer-Behavior Triggers—the psychological mechanisms that influence student and parent choice (e.g., trust, identity affirmation, perceived competence, social purpose, and credibility). In the model's center, these triggers flow into the University Marketing Design Layer, where they are converted into actionable strategies: narrative tone, content architecture, program branding, and partnership communication. Finally, at the right side, the framework culminates in Institutional Outcomes such as strengthened reputation, enrollment growth, stakeholder loyalty, and long-term community alignment.

The CCMF (see Figure 1) thus operates as a feedback system rather than a linear pipeline: successful university messaging reinforces feeder-school trust, which in turn regenerates the value discourse that sustains recruitment. This cyclical dynamic situates marketing not as a detached promotional act but as a co-created social relationship between secondary- and tertiary-level communities.

Interpretation of the Proposed Consumer-Centered Marketing Framework (CCMF)

(Espelita & Atento, 2025)

The Consumer-Centered Marketing Framework (CCMF) conceptualizes how values communicated within feeder-school communities evolve into higher-education marketing strategies that resonate with both emotional and cognitive dimensions of consumer decision-making. As

visualized in Figure 1, the framework presents four interconnected layers—Source of Meaning, Psychological Conversion, Strategic Translation, and Outcome Layer—linked by a continuous feedback loop that represents the dynamic and cyclical nature of marketing in educational ecosystems.



Figure 1. *Proposed Consumer-Centered Marketing Framework*

The Source of Meaning constitutes the cultural foundation of the model. It reflects the recurring values extracted from feeder-school social-media discourse, which express how parents, students, and teachers collectively define educational worth. These include community belonging and safety, creativity and cultural expression, academic excellence and collaboration, leadership and civic responsibility, and integrity and partnership. Each of these values embodies a distinct social expectation: care and protection, self-expression, competence, purpose, and trust. Within the model, they represent the raw social inputs that shape how communities perceive a desirable university environment.

The second layer, Psychological Conversion, illustrates the process through which these cultural values become consumer-behavior triggers. Emotional and social values are reframed into motivational mechanisms that guide educational choices. Community belonging translates into the pursuit of trust; creativity becomes self-expression; academic excellence manifests as an achievement motive; leadership and civic responsibility generate a sense of social purpose; and integrity fosters credibility. This conversion represents the cognitive bridge between cultural sentiment and behavioral intention, showing how deeply held communal meanings are internalized as personal criteria for school selection.

The third layer, Strategic Translation, demonstrates how universities can operationalize these triggers into concrete marketing design. Each psychological driver corresponds to a specific institutional response. Trust is sustained through community storytelling that communicates continuity of care and belonging. Self-expression is



enabled through student-generated media, reflecting authenticity and the lived voice of learners. Achievement motive aligns with evidence-based excellence, emphasizing transparency in outcomes, research, and performance indicators. Social purpose is realized through service-learning branding and the visibility of civic engagement, while credibility is reinforced through accreditation transparency and public demonstration of accountability. These translation mechanisms collectively transform insight into strategy, positioning marketing as a deliberate extension of the university's values system.

The fourth layer, the Outcome Layer, identifies the institutional results that can emerge when marketing is grounded in cultural and psychological alignment. The model posits that when feeder-school values are authentically integrated into university communication, four key outcomes are realized: enrollment growth, brand loyalty, stakeholder trust, and reputation strengthening. These outcomes reflect not only the effectiveness of recruitment campaigns but also the long-term consolidation of institutional legitimacy and relational capital.

The Feedback Loop, located at the base of the model, symbolizes the framework's cyclical and reflexive character. It depicts how outcomes such as trust, loyalty, and reputation feed back into the broader community discourse, thereby reinforcing the very meanings that initiated the process. As students and parents share positive experiences, they contribute new narratives of belonging and satisfaction that circulate within feeder-school networks, closing the loop through continuous improvement and relational renewal. This cyclical relationship reframes marketing from a unidirectional promotional activity into an evolving dialogue between the university and its cultural ecosystem.

In sum, the CCMF articulates a shift from transactional promotion toward relational resonance. It suggests that effective higher-education marketing emerges when institutions actively listen to and mirror the affective language of their communities while maintaining cognitive credibility through transparency and excellence. By translating social values into strategic actions and by institutionalizing feedback as a driver of adaptation, the framework positions marketing as a process of cultural co-creation—where universities and their feeder schools jointly construct a shared narrative of belonging, purpose, and trust. This model, therefore,

provides both an explanatory lens for understanding local market behavior and a practical guide for designing sustainable, community-anchored marketing strategies in higher education.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

This study explored how the social-media discourse of selected feeder schools in Laguna reveals the affective and cognitive values that shape the higher-education decision process. Through thematic content analysis of five public feeder-school pages—Mamatid Senior High School, Kapayapaan Integrated School, Lecheria Integrated School, Punta Integrated School, and Eduardo Barretto Sr. Integrated School—the research identified five integrative value domains: Community Belonging and Safety, Creativity and Cultural Expression, Academic Excellence and Collaboration, Leadership and Civic Responsibility, and Integrity and Partnership.

The findings demonstrate that feeder-school social-media environments function as cultural incubators of consumer expectations. These online communities collectively construct a moral and emotional vocabulary—anchored in trust, expression, achievement, purpose, and credibility—that parents and students subconsciously apply when evaluating potential universities. Thematic synthesis confirmed that these values correspond to specific psychological triggers influencing school choice and that they can be systematically translated into marketing design through the Consumer-Centered Marketing Framework (CCMF) proposed in this study.

The research therefore concludes that effective higher-education marketing depends less on promotional novelty and more on relational continuity—that is, the university's capacity to echo, respect, and extend the community values cultivated in its feeder-school ecosystem. By aligning marketing messages with the emotional grammar of belonging and the cognitive expectations of excellence and integrity, institutions can strengthen brand authenticity, deepen stakeholder trust, and differentiate themselves in competitive regional markets. Ultimately, this study affirms that social-media analysis, when grounded in qualitative rigor, offers a credible pathway for uncovering latent consumer values and designing strategies that humanize institutional communication.

5.2 Recommendations

For Institutional Marketing Practice

1. Adopt the CCMF as a Strategic Guide.

Integrate the five thematic domains into marketing planning, ensuring that campaigns and digital content explicitly mirror community-derived values. The framework should serve as a decision tool for message design, channel selection, and performance evaluation.

2. Strengthen Feeder-School Partnerships.

Formalize collaboration with high-engagement feeder schools through co-branded events, scholarship linkages, and social-media collaborations that reinforce continuity of belonging.

3. Institutionalize Community Storytelling.

Encourage authentic narratives from students, parents, and alumni that embody trust, creativity, collaboration, civic purpose, and integrity. Such narratives can serve as relational proof more persuasive than traditional advertising.

4. Embed Evidence-Based Transparency.

Regularly publish verifiable data on academic performance, employability outcomes, and accreditation status to sustain credibility and rational trust among stakeholders.

5. Create a Continuous-Feedback Mechanism.

Monitor digital sentiment across feeder-school and university channels using content-analysis dashboards. Feedback should inform iterative message refinement and community-relationship management.

For Policy and Research

1. Institutional Policy Integration.

University administrators may incorporate cultural-value alignment into official marketing and admissions policies, ensuring consistency across departments and communication platforms.

2. Future Research Expansion.

Replicate the study across a broader range of feeder schools or other Philippine regions to test the transferability of the CCMF and to examine quantitative correlations between digital visibility and enrollment outcomes.

3. Comparative and Longitudinal Studies.

Future scholars may extend this inquiry to include comparative analyses among public, private,

and faith-based institutions, or track thematic evolution of feeder-school discourse over multiple academic years to observe shifting community priorities.

4. Interdisciplinary Applications.

The CCMF can be adapted for use in health education, vocational programs, or international recruitment, offering a flexible framework for culturally responsive marketing beyond higher education.

5.3 Closing Statement

The study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on strategic marketing in education by reframing marketing as a process of cultural translation and relationship stewardship rather than mere promotion. In doing so, it bridges behavioral theory, digital communication, and community engagement into a unified, context-sensitive model. By recognizing that educational choice is simultaneously emotional, moral, and cognitive, universities can build not only stronger brands but also more enduring partnerships with the communities they serve.

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