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**EXPLORING INFLUENCES OF PET-RELATED SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT ON  
PERCEPTIONS OF PET ADOPTION**

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**Acceptance Page:**

This paper prepared by **CIPHIA MAY D. MOLINA** with the title: **EXPLORING INFLUENCES OF PET-RELATED SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT ON PERCEPTIONS OF PET ADOPTION** is hereby accepted by the Faculty of Information and Communication Studies, U.P. Open University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Course.

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## Biographical Sketch

Ciphia Molina is an undergraduate student pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree in Multimedia Studies at the University of the Philippines Open University. She was born in Quezon City, Philippines, and graduated from Quezon City Science High School.

Her academic background provided her with a thorough understanding of subjects such as *Multimedia and Society* and *Multimedia and Pop Culture*, which shaped her perspective on how media reflects and influences sociocultural trends. She further expanded her practical expertise through the DigitaljobsPH Training Program – Social Media Marketing for MSMEs, organized by the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), where she gained applied skills in leveraging digital media for communication and advocacy. In addition, she gained professional experience through her internship and part-time work with an e-commerce company, where she developed social media content for multiple brands, including a pet wellness brand. This role allowed her to apply her academic knowledge to real-world digital communication practices while gaining valuable insights into audience engagement within the pet-related digital space.

The culmination of her undergraduate studies is her capstone project, *Exploring Influences of Pet-Related Social Media Content on Perceptions of Pet Adoption*, a multimedia effects study. By undertaking this research, she seeks to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on digital media's sociocultural impact in the Philippines, particularly within the context of animal welfare and responsible pet ownership. She hopes her study will provide a foundation for future researchers exploring similar intersections of media, culture, and advocacy.

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## **Abstract**

Despite the growing literature on social media use, the online presence of pets, and the increasing rates of pet ownership in the country, only limited studies analyze the effects of social media use on perceptions of pet adoption as a method of pet ownership, especially in the context of the Philippines. The study explored the influence of pet-related social media content on perceptions of pet adoption among past, current, and prospective pet owners in Metro Manila. Guided by the Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT), Focus Theory of Normative Conduct (FTNC), and Cultivation Theory (CT), the research examined how exposure to content, motivations, and social norms interact with practical barriers in shaping adoption perceptions. A descriptive-exploratory design was employed through an online survey administered to 154 respondents.

Results of the study revealed that while respondents frequently encountered and engaged with pet-related content for emotional and informational gratifications, this reinforced favorable perceptions of pet adoption rather than direct adoption intent. Normative cues further sustained adoption as a socially desirable practice; however, practical barriers to pet adoption remained the most influential factor among respondents.

Overall, the study demonstrated that social media plays a significant role in cultivating positive perceptions and reinforcing pet adoption as a cultural norm, but its capacity to influence adoption intent is limited without external support. These insights contribute to the growing body of literature on Philippine media studies by extending classical media effects theories into contemporary digital contexts.

**Keywords:** *Media Effects, Social Media, Pet Adoption, Pet Ownership*

## I. INTRODUCTION

### Rationale

The history of Philippine television and cinema highlights a diverse array of materials that anthropomorphize and portray pets as "man's best friend." The television show *A Dog of Flanders* (1992) and *Mari Mar* (1996) became popular in the country, as well as productions like *Aso ni San Roque* (2012), *Bwakaw* (2012), *Unforgettable* (2019), and selected episodes of *Reel Time* from GMA 7 are some notable pieces that celebrate themes of animal companionship and the benefits of pet ownership.

Despite this, stigma against adopting rescued or non-pedigree animals has been noted historically, suggesting that the title of "best friend" does not extend to all companion animals. And while there has been limited use of traditional media in the Philippines to address these issues of animal welfare in the country, or to promote public awareness of pet adoption and its positive contributions to these concerns, recent shifts in online discourse suggest perceptions may already be moving toward greater acceptance among Filipinos.

This underscores the need for a deeper understanding of social media's increasing impact on attitudes and behaviors, particularly in areas of increasing social interest like pet ownership, as these are significant indicators of cultural and societal transformations. As communication mediums continue to evolve, it is crucial to examine how and to what extent such influences impact its audience and users, especially in the Philippines, where existing studies on the topic are limited. Therefore, this study aims to explore the effects of pet-related social media content on the

perceptions of past, current, and potential pet owners regarding pet adoption in Metro Manila. This study aims to address a gap in existing literature by examining pet-related social media content as a form of multimedia influence.

At the time of writing, there is limited literature on Filipinos' perception of pet adoption and even less is known about the role of media in shaping such perceptions. By focusing on the proposed demographic, the study aims to fill a gap in existing literature and gain insights that are both academically valuable and socially relevant.

The study aims to gain findings that are significantly beneficial for government agencies, non-profit organizations, and private entities involved in promoting animal welfare and responsible pet ownership. The proposed study can help stakeholders develop effective strategies and campaigns, encourage responsible pet ownership, and contribute to a better experience for both pets and pet owners in the country. Therefore, the proposed study goes beyond being an academic inquiry – if conducted, it may serve as a stepping stone towards helping address a real-world issue through multimedia studies.

## **Background of the Study**

### *An Ongoing Crisis of Animal Welfare and Public Health in the Philippines*

The uncontrolled population of community animals in urban areas presents significant challenges to both human health and animal welfare. Without consistent care and monitoring, these animals may contribute to the spread of zoonotic parasites, infectious diseases like rabies, and environmental pollution (Overgaauw et al., 2012; Da Silva, 2010; Macpherson & Torgerson, 2013, as cited in Gill et al., 2022).

According to the *Mars State of Homelessness Project Report (2024)*, an estimated 143 million dogs and 203 million cats are without official pet owners and currently living in the streets, while 12 million dogs and 4 million cats are rescued and cared for by shelters globally. In the Philippines, an estimated 13.11 million out of 32.19 million cats and dogs live in the streets without official pet owners. Data from the Quezon City Local Government Unit (LGU) show that less than 1% of animals taken into city pounds are adopted annually, with the remainder euthanized if unclaimed or unadopted within the holding period (An Act Strengthening the Adoption of Stray and Impounded Animals Providing Incentives, 2023).

Unfortunately, public interest in pet adoption remains limited. In the same *Mars State of Homelessness Project Report (2024)*, only an estimated 7% of surveyed Filipinos expressed a willingness to adopt a dog from a shelter, and just an estimated 12% considered adopting a cat—a practice that directly contributes to addressing the country's animal displacement crisis. Pet adoption is one of the many factors that contribute to the control and mitigation of the growing crisis on community animal displacement, while simultaneously offering positive physical and mental benefits

arising from animal companionship (Jalongo et. al, 2004; Knight & Edwards, 2008; Weiss et. al, 2012).

### *Pet Adoption Before Social Media*

Before the explosion of the internet and social network sites (or SNS), the Filipino public heavily relied on traditional media like television, newspapers, and radio for news and updates, entertainment, advertising, and more. Similar to brands and businesses aiming to spread public awareness and traction toward their products and services, advocacy groups also relied on traditional media to expand the reach of their cause and increase awareness toward animal welfare. Given the expensive advertisement rates during this period, pet adoption as an advocacy and a subject of advertisement in Philippine traditional media was limited, if not scarce. Thus, the opportunity to utilize mass media for advocacy remained an opportunity only for large, prominent groups with sufficient funding to support such campaigns.

As one of the earliest and most prominent animal welfare organizations in the Philippines, the Philippine Animal Welfare Society or PAWS has actively engaged in advertising campaigns to promote its advocacy. These campaigns have utilized various media, including posters, television displays, billboards through partner retail brands, and newspapers advertisements. In 2007, PAWS launched the highly recognized “See Beauty Beyond Breed” campaign, featuring prominent celebrities Heart Evangelista and Jericho Rosales alongside adoptable dogs and cats (Kalaw, 2007). The campaign is credited for contributing to a shift in terminology from “askal”, a colloquial and derogatory term for native dogs in the Philippines (short for *asong kalye*), to “Aspin”, meaning *Asong Pinoy* or Filipino dog (Kalaw, 2007). The campaign

released posters in public areas and collaborated with Penshoppe, a Filipino retail brand, to extend its visibility by displaying Heart and Jericho's posters in the window displays of ninety-five of their branches nationwide (Kalaw, 2007). Aside from PAWS, Compassion and Responsibility for Animals Philippines or CARA also initiated campaigns to advertise pet adoption. One campaign used before-and-after photos of dogs and cats that were adopted, along with the line, "Same dog, different owner." These posters were distributed in veterinary clinics, pet stores, and were used as newspaper advertisements (Campaign Asia, 2014).

Unlike the advertising industry, the film and television industry has served as one of the few mediums that regularly highlight pets and animals through shows and local documentaries. Many of these programs, whether animated or live-action, often anthropomorphize animals or portray them with human-like qualities. For instance, the popular Filipino adaptation of Spain's *Mari Mar* featured Pulgoso, an intelligent dog capable of speaking to himself. Similarly, *A Dog of Flanders* (1992) depicted Patrasche as a faithful and loyal companion. In a different vein, an episode of *Reel Time* (2017) on GMA 7 spotlighted Jing, a widow who found solace and companionship in her dog (GMA Public Affairs, 2017). *Bwakaw* (2012) is a film portraying the loyalty of dogs as man's best friend, and *Unforgettable* (2019) turns the spotlight on dogs as reliable beings who provide physical and emotional support to individuals with certain illnesses or disabilities.

While these portrayals did not explicitly promote pet adoption, they have nonetheless influenced public perceptions of pets and animals by showcasing their emotional depth and companionship.

## *Pet Adoption as an Advocacy in the Philippines*

Animal adoption, as part of the greater animal welfare advocacy, has led to fundamental milestones in the Philippine history of animal welfare. This advocacy led individuals from diverse backgrounds and industries to come together, establish non-profit and non-government organizations (NGO's) in the country, and even lobby for laws and provisions on animal welfare and public health.

PAWS, founded in 1954, spearheaded the campaign for the Animal Welfare Act of 1998 that currently protects animals from human harm (Philippine Animal Welfare Society, n.d.). The same organization also lobbied for the Anti-Rabies Act of 2007, a much-needed provision on animal welfare and public health that established measures to control and prevent the spread of the rabies virus (Philippine Animal Welfare Society, n.d.). Along with PAWS, the Animal Kingdom Foundation or AKF, founded in 2002 played a crucial role in the strict enforcement of laws on the dog meat trade in the country. AKF provided essential support for the passage of the Animal Welfare Act of 2012 – amending the law to reinforce longer sentences and heavier punishments for animal abuse cases (Animal Kingdom Foundation, n.d.).

Beyond legislation and law enforcement, the advocacy prompted these organizations, along with other animal welfare and rescue groups, to actively facilitate adoption programs that help rescued animals find loving homes and families across the country. Over recent years, their sustained advocacy for animal welfare and pet adoption gradually gained recognition and momentum. This progress can be attributed, in part, to various phenomena enabled by the internet, including its rapid information dissemination and the interactive engagement fostered by social media platforms, which will be further explored in the following discussion.

As Filipino advocates began to support animal welfare and pet adoption online, the “Adopt, Don’t Shop” movement, which originated in the United States, has gained prominence among organizations and individuals in the Philippines. This slogan has become a rallying cry aimed at challenging the stigma associated with adopting rescued and non-pedigree dogs and cats. Today, “Adopt, Don’t Shop” is widely utilized as a hashtag, campaign title, and conversational phrase to promote the values of animal adoption and to contrast it with the commercial practice of purchasing pets and acquiring them for their looks and breeds. The slogan is also tied to raising awareness about the overcrowding of pounds and open-intake shelters (often misleadingly referred to as “kill shelters”).

Along with the rise of the “Adopt, Don’t Shop” movement came the spur of smaller groups advocating for animal welfare in their own communities through initiatives like animal rescues, voluntary fosters, and formal pet adoptions of rescued animals that involve the thorough and documented application and screening of potential pet owners. *PAWssion Project*, *Liway’s Furry Friends*, *Baby Cat Brigade*, and *Kapon Ampon* are some of many Filipino groups that began online and utilize online platforms as an integral channel for their advocacy. Most of these groups focus their efforts on community care that places heavy emphasis on cats as community animals. Compared to dogs who are subject to the Anti-Rabies Law and are mandated to be impounded (RA 9842), cats do not fall under the same regulation.

Consequently, informal pet adoptions simultaneously began taking place on social media platforms, where photos and initial details about the animals for adoption are simply posted in social media groups and interested adopters are chosen based on the individual’s specific preferences and requirements. Facebook groups like Cat

Lovers PH, CAT LOVERS PHILIPPINES, DOG LOVERS COMMUNITY PHILIPPINES (OFFICIAL), CATS and DOGS RESCUE PHILIPPINES are some of the groups that amass hundreds of thousands of group members – one of many evidences of this growing phenomenon.

### *Bringing the “Social” in “Social Media”*

Another phenomenon observable in online platforms turns the spotlight on Filipino celebrities that cherish and take pride in their rescued-turned-adopted pets.

The online presence of celebrities who support animal adoption played an integral role in raising public awareness on the former. Celebrities such as Heart Evangelista with her adopted dog “Panda”, Jodi Sta. Maria with her rescued cat “Naia”, and Sharon Cuneta with her rescue dog “Pawi” are among the most prominent figures in Philippine television and show business who advocate for animal adoption. Their involvement in animal welfare campaigns and ambassadorships with animal welfare organizations highlights their commitment to the cause. These celebrities, who gained widespread public admiration through their television appearances and traditional media careers, have successfully leveraged social media to further amplify their advocacy.

By sharing their personal testimonies and experiences with adopted pets, they bridge the influence of traditional media with the interactive reach of today’s social platforms, reinforcing the message of responsible pet ownership and animal adoption. Like many individuals who express and act on their chosen beliefs and causes, these personalities utilized social media to take a stand on issues of increasing social

interest, indicating the desire to act beyond the purposes of personal gain and recognition.

The interactive and participatory nature of social media platforms are in stark contrast to the preceding passive traditional media like television and radio. Thus, the crucial role of social media in the development of various social justice movements online must be taken into account, as these platforms transformed into global avenues for social change and transformation. Rappler, for instance, built on this opportunity by taking the comment section a step further with the introduction of a “mood button,” signaling a shift toward more interactive forms of audience engagement. These early practices foreshadowed the crucial role of social media in the development of various social justice movements online, as platforms eventually transformed into global avenues for social change and transformation.

The #MeToo movement that started on X (formerly Twitter) in 2017 opened global conversations and changed public perceptions on abuse and harassment of women. In 2018, #BabaeAko emerged as an online social movement in the Philippines in response to the incarceration of Senator Leila De Lima, challenging former president Duterte’s sexist and misogynist rhetoric (Rappler, 2018). In 2021, the #Tumindig social movement expressed the collective dissent of Filipino artists against the Duterte administration (Baizas, 2021). Most recently, in 2024, the case of Killua, a slain Golden Retriever in Camarines Sur, Bicol, sparked national outrage on social media and prompted numerous advocate groups and individuals to demand justice and exert significant pressure on the case against the dog’s killer (Bolledo, 2024).

These are some of the many examples that demonstrate how social media platforms empower users to collectively challenge beliefs and practices that no longer align with societal values.

Furthermore, the algorithmic nature of social media platforms that amplify human biases and warp user perceptions of idealized lifestyles (Neuroscience News, 2023; Ahmad et al., 2024) cannot be denied. Equivalently, studies that revealed the link between social media and social fragmentation, depression, isolation, loneliness, and the spread of misinformation (Primack et al., 2017; Twenge, 2019; Lazer et al., 2018; Sestir, 2020) are valid and reflective of some of today's persisting sociocultural issues. However, social justice movements that occurred and are occurring online are evidence of social media's potential beyond its negative implications on individuals and our society. Examining influences and phenomena that occur within such online spaces offer valuable insights into potential avenues for social change.

Thus, the study sought to investigate how social media affects users' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors toward pet adoption – a practice that helps address the persistent issue of community animal displacement in Philippine urban areas.

#### *For the Love of Pets and Facebook: Filipinos as Pet Owners and Social Media Users*

While the rest of the world discovered an increased interest towards pet ownership and pet adoption during the COVID-19 outbreak (Ho et al., 2021), the Philippines has a long prevalence of pet ownership, particularly of pet dogs and cats. The lack of strict legislation on pet owner responsibilities in the Philippines translates

into fewer regulations on responsible pet ownership and animal care. The oversight of such an impactful factor contributes to the prevalence of pet ownership in the country.

A survey by Rakuten Insight in 2018 revealed that an estimated 83% of its survey population in the Philippines – the highest across all other respondent countries within the survey – were pet owners. Out of this population, 70.6% were dog owners and 42% owned cats. In 2021, Filipinos remained the leading owner of dogs across multiple countries surveyed in Asia, with an estimated 67% of Filipino participants owning dogs and an estimated 43% of Filipino participants owning cats (Rakuten Insight, 2021). In 2023, Social Weather Stations (2023) conducted a survey within the Philippines and revealed that an estimated 64% of 1,200 Filipino household heads nationwide are pet owners, with preference for dogs and cats as household pets. The survey also identified an estimated 78% of the survey population as dog owners and 50% as cat owners, having an average of two cats or dogs in their households (Social Weather Stations, 2023).

Along with this, a more recent exponential increase in Facebook groups focusing on animal welfare, pet wellbeing, and adoption and rehoming activities online, based in the Philippines, further implies the popularity of pets to pet owners and non-owners alike. Even the boom of the pet industry market in the Philippines suggests the same, with the pet food market alone projected to reach an estimated 37 billion dollars by 2029 (Mordor Intelligence, 2014, as cited in De Lazo, 2024). The growing body of literature on this specific field of study are also testament to the increasing rate of and interest in pet ownership and “pet-parenting” culture in the Philippines and around the world (Zhang et al., 2023; De Lazo, 2024).

In parallel, Filipinos are also found to be chronically online with significant interest toward social media use. According to the Digital 2021 Report by Hootsuite and We Are Social, Filipinos topped the survey for spending the most time online and on social media platforms with a whopping average of 10 hours and 56 minutes daily use through any device (Baclig, 2021). In 2023, Filipinos remained as top social media users on mobile devices with 23% of users spending more than 7 hours a day on social media – the highest percentage in the region (Telenor Asia, 2023 as cited in Dela Peña, 2023). In 2024, research claims that there are now 86.98 million Filipino identities online, with 99.2% of the users aged 16 to 64 actively using social media platforms (Howe, 2024) and spending an average of 8 hours and 52 minutes daily – 3 hours and 34 minutes of which are committed to social media use alone. The same study revealed that 43.4% of the respondents use social media to kill time and unwind while another 43% browse through entertaining content such as memes, parody accounts, and the likes (Howe, 2024).

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Tiktok, and Instagram are go-to platforms of Filipino users with 94.6%, 80%, and 72.5% monthly login rates respectively – Tiktok having a strong hold on short-form content viewers with a whopping monthly average of 40 hours and 46 minutes watch time, compared to only 26 hours and 54 minutes of screen time on Facebook (Howe, 2024).

Spending such enormous amounts of time on the internet potentially leads a user to a rabbit hole of diverse content on social media platforms – from mukbang videos, ASMR content and podcasts, conspiracy theories, down to pet memes and pet-related social media content. After all, the internet and social media platforms are home to cute pet photos, funny cat and dog memes, and more recently, social media

accounts of pets – casually called pup-stars and *catfluencers* online – who dominate the world stage with their fluffy and adorable appearance and personalities.

The emergence of such trends and phenomena on social media and digital media platforms – a distinct social environment where global and local socio-cultural exchange occurs at lightning speed – is a topic worth exploring, given the undeniable influence of social media on many aspects of our daily lives. Social media use and online content consumption subconsciously influences and transforms perceptions, biases, and beliefs that drive attitudes, behaviors, and decision-making executed beyond the online world.

Despite the growing literature on social media use, the online presence of pets, and the increasing rates of pet ownership in the country, only limited studies analyze the effects of social media use on perceptions of pet adoption as a method of pet ownership, especially in the context of the Philippines. This study aimed to address the gap by contributing to the existing body of knowledge and asking how potential and pet owners are influenced by social media.

## **Statement of the Problem**

Social media has increasingly solidified its role in shaping the attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions of its users, influencing various aspects of individual and social life. Understanding this form of media consumption and its potential impact on users' lifestyles and decision-making processes is a crucial and necessary endeavor. A comprehensive examination of how social media influences past, current, and potential pet owners' perceptions of pet adoption is essential, especially given the limited existing research on the topic. Therefore, the following research problems have been identified to guide the study:

**Main Problem:** How do pet-related social media content affect the attitudes and intentions toward pet adoption of past, current, and potential pet owners in Metro Manila, Philippines?

### **Sub Problems:**

1. Which social media platforms are most commonly used by past, current, and potential pet owners to access pet-related content?
2. What are common motivations for pet ownership and perceived barriers to pet adoption among past, current, and potential pet owners in Metro Manila?
3. How do pet-related social media content influence the motivations and intentions of past, current, and potential pet owners to own and adopt pets?
4. How is pet-related social media content perceived to influence users' perceived barriers and motivations toward pet adoption?

## **Objectives**

The study aims to observe and analyze how pet-related social media content is perceived by past, current, and potential pet owners to influence their attitudes and perceptions of pet adoption. Perceived influence, along with other factors, are explored to gain a better understanding of current perceptions toward pet adoption.

1. To identify the social media platforms used by past, current, and potential pet owners in Metro Manila and their level of exposure to pet-related social media content.
2. To determine the common motivations behind pet ownership and perceived barriers to pet adoption among past, current, and potential pet owners.
3. To explore how general pet-related and pet adoption-related social media content is perceived to influence individuals' perceptions and attitudes toward pet adoption.
4. To investigate the relationship between perceived social media influence and intention to adopt pets.

## **Significance of the Study**

Currently, existing literature on media effects in the Philippines are focused largely on traditional media such as television and cinema more than other media formats. By examining pet-related social media content as a form of media influence, the study hopes to contribute to filling this gap in existing literature and add to the growing body of knowledge on digital and social media's influence on sociocultural trends and norms, and the evolution of mass media communications and its representation of domestic animals through various mediums. It also hopes to present a deeper and more nuanced understanding of social media platforms to help address growing societal issues involving social trends and behaviors. Thus, the study aligns with broader multimedia studies that examine how digital content affects attitudes, norms, and behaviors, more particularly in non-Western populations.

From an academic standpoint, pet adoption and animal welfare in the Philippines is a unique social issue that has currently received little attention. Because of this, the researcher hopes to academically contribute in understanding attitudes and behaviors of past, current, and potential pet owners in the Philippines by providing empirical evidence on how modern media environments (in the form of multiple social media platforms) shape perceptions and behavioral intentions in the Filipino context. The study contributes to academic multimedia research by extending traditional media effects theories – including Cultivation Theory, Uses and Gratifications Theory, and the Focus Theory of Normative Conduct – into the bounds of social media content on pet adoption. Furthermore, the descriptive-exploratory nature of the study also serves as a potential framework that can be referenced or adapted for use in future studies on social media influence and other socially relevant topics.

Methodologically, the study demonstrates a multi-dimensional approach to measuring media influence, which can guide future research in both socially-oriented and entertainment-focused digital content. By investigating a socially relevant, yet under-studied topic in the Philippine context, this study expands the academic understanding of digital media's role in shaping cultural perceptions and norms.

The displacement of community animals in our urban areas and the ballooning population of rescue animals within non-government shelters and public city pounds are some of the many prevalent issues in the Philippines in need of government attention and action. Through this study, the researcher hopes to offer whatever potential aid it may serve to legislative bodies in establishing policies and regulations for responsible pet ownership and pet adoption in the Philippines.

### **Scope and Limitations of the Study**

The study focused on analyzing the influence of pet-related social media content on perceptions of past, current, and potential pet owners regarding pet adoption. Particularly, to examine the exposure of past, current, and potential pet owners in Metro Manila to pet-related social media content, their attitudes and perceptions toward pet adoption as a means of pet ownership, their intention to adopt from animal shelters, pounds, and animal rescue organizations, and the barriers and motivations that shape these intentions.

While the study was conducted through an online survey, it took place in the Philippines and with a population limited to residents of cities within the National Capital Region (NCR) who are eighteen to forty-three (18-43) years old and are planning to acquire a pet dog or cat within the next twelve (12) months upon

participating in the study. The population group should have an existing social media account on Facebook, Instagram, or Tiktok. The study was limited to dogs and cats as pets included in consideration of pet acquisition. Thus, past, current, and potential pet owners planning to acquire other animals as pets were excluded from the study.

Given the growing number of social media platforms available online, the study was limited to the use of Facebook, Instagram, and Tiktok as platforms for analysis, given the platforms' usage dominance in the country. To further narrow down the study, it excluded exposure to pet-related social media content outside of the said platforms in analysis and observations.

### **Operational Definition of Terms**

*Adoption/Pet Adoption* – as defined by Rao et al. (2017), pet adoption is “the process of taking responsibility for a pet that has been abandoned, lost, or surrendered by its previous owner.” For this study, the term “pet adoption” or “adoption” were used interchangeably to refer to the adoption of dogs or cats from public city pounds, rescue dogs and cats from non-government pet shelters, and rescue dogs and cats currently being fostered by individuals or organizations while in search of an official pet owner. This excluded the act of picking up strays from the streets and taking them in as new pets, or taking in dogs or cats from friends and family.

*Community Animal* – in this study, Community Animal/s are defined as dogs or cats within a community and not officially claimed to be owned by any individual or organization, but are taken care of by members of the community.

*Formal Adoption* – Formal adoption involves the process of undergoing a thorough and documented screening of applicant pet adopters interested in adopting rescue dogs and cats. While the screening process varies across organizations and groups, its general purpose is to ensure that the potential pet owner is physically, emotionally, and financially capable of responsible pet ownership. Formal adoptions are commonly conducted by registered animal welfare organizations, shelters, and smaller rescue groups who impose a strict screening process for interested adopters.

*Foster* – Merriam-Webster (n.d.) defines foster as “being, relating to, or involved in a situation in which temporary care is given to an animal (such as one that is injured or awaiting adoption) in a household or similar setting.”

*Informal Adoption* – Unlike formal adoption, informal adoption does not require a thorough and documented screening process for potential pet owners. Informal adoptions are more commonly practiced by individuals outside of animal welfare and rescue groups; thus, requirements for potential pet owners, if any, are greatly dependent only on what the adoptee believes are necessary and will greatly vary from person to person. An example of an informal adoption would be the numerous online posts by individuals as posted within online animal welfare groups, showing photos of the dog or cat up for adoption along with a few details in the caption.

*Pet* – a dog or cat officially claimed to be owned by an individual or organization.

*Pet Adoption-related Social Media Content* – any form of content found within social media platforms more focused on the topic of pet adoption, its related processes, personal experiences, and any other social media content related to the specific topic.

*Pet-related Social Media Content* – any form of content found within social media platforms showcasing dogs or cats and pet ownership, or is in any way related to or in discussion of the former.

*past, current, and potential pet owners* – individuals or organizations with concrete intentions of taking responsibility for pet dogs or cats. For this study, “past, current, and potential pet owners” and “potential pet owners” were used to refer to individuals or organizations in active search of potential pet dogs or cats to be owned, regardless of their preferred method for gaining a pet.

*Rehoming* – The term is defined by Merriam-Webster Dictionary (n.d.) as “to transfer ownership or possession of (an animal and especially a pet).” However, this proposed study will use the term “Rehoming” in the same way as it is colloquially used in the Philippines to refer to the sale of dogs or cats – most of which are pure-bred or cross-breeds. Through time, the use of the term “rehoming” by breeders in the country became more prominent to avoid platform restrictions on animal trade and selling.

*Rescue* – the act of taking in dogs or cats who are in need of immediate care and attention, providing first aid or bringing them to veterinary clinics if necessary. The term “rescue” may also refer to rescued dogs or cats who are in the temporary care of individuals or organizations.

*Responsible Pet Ownership* – in the Philippine context, a responsible pet owner is one who abides by all the responsibilities of a pet owner under all current Animal Welfare Laws in the country. For the purpose of this study, responsible pet ownership was similarly referred to as the responsible fulfillment of the pet owners’ duty to abide by all current laws relating to animal welfare in the country. Being a responsible pet owner means that one is providing adequate care and sustenance for every pet, is

liable for every harm and damage that one's pet may cause, and is willing to take preventive care and action to eliminate the possibility of violating both.

*Stray* – the term “stray” was used in this study to refer to free-roaming dogs or cats without official pet owners and are not taken care of by any individual or community.

## II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### *Pet Influencers and the Online Presence of Pets*

Social media introduced trends and conventions unique to the nature of this medium of communication. One such trend that recently emerged is the rise in pet ownership accompanied by the increase in online presence of pet influencers, driven in part by the influence of social media.

The rise of pet-related social media accounts and content led to studies highlighting its various effects and benefits across social media users. Studies indicate that pet-related social media content offers enhanced advertising and marketing opportunities, awareness and promotion of animal welfare and well-being, and awareness on pet adoption, among others (Markowitz, 2019; Myers et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2023; Asteria & Ninin Ernawati, 2024).

Animal shelters and non-profit groups fostering strays and handling adoptions similarly utilize social media and online platforms to increase the chances of adoption. A study conducted by the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals or ASPCA (2018) showed increased rates in adoption, donations for pets, and general awareness of the organization and its mission. The study also revealed the prevalence of Facebook as a platform used by animal shelters and rescuers (ASPCA, 2018).

A study by Maddox (2021) further revealed the impact of Instagram pet images in invoking joy to users while Hartama (2021) concludes the positive effect of pet social media accounts in counterbalancing a “hectic” social media environment and Hänninen (2021) argues the positive link between purchase intention and involvement

of pet social media influencers in promotions. These studies jointly imply the growing power and influence of pet and pet-related accounts in the social media realm.

### *Pet Ownership Preferences*

Existing literature on preferred methods for owning pets reveal the prevalence of purchasing from pet breeders and adopting from rescue shelters as the most preferred methods of obtaining pets in different countries.

In 2017, Courtney Bir, Nicole Widmar, and Candace Croney conducted a study entitled “*Stated Preferences for Dog Characteristics and Sources of Acquisition*” which revealed that numerous factors influence past, current, and potential pet owners’ preferred method of gaining pets. Factors explored in the study included human values and beliefs, preference over specific types and breeds of pets, socioeconomic and demographic factors, and barriers to adopting from shelters, among others. A year later, Bir et. al (2018) expounded on this study and found that survey respondents from the United States mostly preferred adoption as a method of pet acquisition, but with the term “adoption” being loosely defined by respondents’ own varying meanings given the lack of a single definition used in the study. In the United Kingdom, a study entitled “*Acquiring a Pet Dog: A Review of Factors Affecting Decision-Making of past, current, and potential Dog Owners*” by Katrina Holland (2019) revealed the dominance of purchasing from pet breeders.

While there is a growing body of literature on preferences over various pet ownership methods worldwide, only a few studies exist on Filipinos’ preferred methods of getting a pet and the motivations behind such preferences. At the time of writing,

there is limited literature exploring the topic and even less studies delving into social media as a communication tool potentially influencing past, current, and potential and actual pet owners' perceptions of and attitudes towards pet adoption as a method of getting a pet in the Philippines.

### *Altruistic Behaviors and Social Norms*

C. Daniel Batson refers to altruism as “helping others in the absence of an external reward...” (Batson, 1991 as cited in Rodina & Prudkov, 2015). In this sense, altruistic behaviors involve the act of helping others, including nonhuman animals, without expectations of reward or benefit. Motivations for such behaviors include empathy and attachment, concerns involving civil responsibility, circumstances involving living beings and environments, or egoistic motivations (Rodina & Prudkov, 2015; D’Ingeo et al., 2022). Studies reveal the influence of altruistic behavior within social media platforms on motivating prosocial behaviors like supporting green consumption and purchase intention and online knowledge sharing, among others (Ma & Chan, 2014; Alam et al., 2023; Kumar & Pandey, 2023).

Stemming from empathy and attachment, pet adoption – an altruistic behavior – leads to one’s investment of time, effort, and resources to “protect and care for animals in need” (Rodina & Prudkov, 2015) and improve their conditions. By adopting a dog or a cat and getting it out of the streets, pets gain access to food, shelter, and potentially develop positive relationships with their new owners or with fellow pets. This is supported by a study in the United States, where it was revealed that preference for adoption from shelters was found to be strongly motivated by the desire to help dogs (Maddalena et al., 2012 as cited by Bir et al., 2017). Beyond internal and

self-conflicting factors influencing behavior toward animals, external influence such as societal norms and social approval also affects and potentially dictate one's perception of certain practices, including pet adoption.

Adherence to socially approved behaviors—such as pet adoption—along with the social rewards associated with these behaviors, motivates individuals to conform to standards and expectations. Injunctive norms, defined as group-based expectations of what is acceptable or unacceptable, are closely tied to social sanctions (Cialdini et al., 1990). These sanctions involve rewards for aligning with socially approved behaviors and consequences for deviating from such norms (Lapinski & Rimal, 2005 as cited in Kryston & Fitzgerald, 2021). In online environments like social media platforms, such social norms and sanctions are observed through social cues in the form of likes, comments, and other forms of engagement with online content. In turn, these observed norms become perceptions that motivate or discourage certain views or actions to achieve benefits or avoid potential ostracization (Cialdini et al., 1990; Lapinski & Rimal, 2005 as cited in Kryston & Fitzgerald, 2021).

Studies abroad highlight the significant impact of adhering to socially approved norms on individuals' perceptions of pet adoption as a method of obtaining pets (Bir et al., 2018; Kryston & Fitzgerald, 2021), regardless of any existing barriers towards the former. While certain barriers toward pet adoption exist, study respondents reflected positive perceptions of pet adoption, partly due to it being a socially approved norm with potential positive social sanctions. However, there is a notable lack of research on this topic within the Philippine context, particularly on the role of social media in reinforcing such norms. Little attention has also been given to how social

media content shapes barriers and motivations related to pet adoption in the Filipino consciousness.

### *The Cute Economy*

The internet's "cute economy," prominently featuring pets, babies, cartoons, mascots, and everything else imbued in cuteness (Meese, 2014) has cemented the reputation of cute dogs and cats on the internet. The cute aesthetic which drives the cute economy "...creates a specific type of relationship between consumer subject and the (weak) cute object predicated on feelings of care and empathy" (Plourde, 2018 as cited in Maddox, 2021). Impressions of needing assistance and being incapable of helping itself evokes feelings of purity, innocence and vulnerability in viewers, further strengthening affinity towards cute pets and creating "an indexicality of wanting to care for the animals in question" (Maddox, 2021). While social norms potentially validate the act of adopting pets, the internet's cute economy potentially induces an initial sense of affinity that could evolve into specific wants or needs for a pet.

The implications of the cute economy not only extended to cuteness as a form of labor in an attempt to gain financial and social capital (Luckas, 2015; Maddox, 2021), but has also proven positive implications for pets and the animal welfare advocacy. The success of social media as a tool that helped increase public support towards animal shelters and pet adoptions were observed by the ASPCA (2018). Non-government rescue groups leveraged social media platforms in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic to raise awareness on their cause, by featuring adoptable dogs and cats as cute, adorable, and worthy of love, care, and a permanent home.

Recently, more and more pet adoption-related social media content are moving away from very serious narratives that appeal to man's altruistic natures. While these types of content still exist, a lighter, less serious approach towards pet adoption-related social media content are on the rise. By showcasing adoptable dogs and cats as cute, lovable, and as warm and fuzzy as all other pets are, these types of content maximize the impact of the internet's cute economy toward content distribution and potential pet adoption.

For one, an Instagram-famous cat named Nala was once a kitten rescued in Los Angeles. Today, Nala's Instagram account (@nala\_cat) features a variety of pet-related content, including cute and entertaining videos of its everyday life, encouragement to visit animal shelters, and other adoptable pets that get highlighted in her page. In the local context, a rising *catfluencer* named "Ponpon Alarcon D Ampon" is starting to fill local social media feeds. Ponpon, a cat rescued by a cat owner with an existing Instagram handle for his other cats (@presidentleet), slowly became internet-famous with his "a day in a life" short vlogs. While most of their content feature the cat's daily mischief and cuteness, the person behind the account continues to promote responsible pet ownership and appreciation towards cats of all breeds – including Puspins.

### *The Application of Cultivation Theory to Social Media*

In the context of nonhuman animals, media is considered as "our single greatest source of knowledge" (Baker 1993; Berger, 1977 as cited in Murdock, 2022). With dogs being the most common pets, studies revealed the impact of film and television on obtaining dogs, as the popularity of certain dog breeds surged during periods of

time when movies or television shows featuring the said breed of dog were released (Ghirlanda et al., 2014; Murdock, 2022).

Cultivation Theory, proposed by George Gerbner in the 1960s, suggests that chronic and continuous exposure to worldviews and realities as portrayed in media — particularly on television — influences audiences' perceptions of reality and may lead to the adoption of similar worldviews in real life (Murdock, 2022; Park et al., 2022). Gerbner highlights the significance of narrative storytelling as a crucial factor in cultivation, noting that audiences tend to be less critical of representations in fictional media compared to their real-life counterparts (Morgan and Shanahan, 2010, as cited in Murdock, 2022). Furthermore, Gerbner emphasizes the role of the frequency and consistency of media exposure, as well as the uniformity of the portrayed realities and worldviews across various television programs, in shaping audiences' "assessments of reality" (Park et al., 2022).

Recent studies have extended Gerbner's theory to social media platforms, where targeted content creation and algorithm-based production of content support the cultivation effect by constantly exposing social media users to similar narratives and worldviews. Hermann et al. (2023) however caution against such use of the Cultivation Theory on studies exploring exposure to social media platforms due to multiple reasons. For one, cultivation, as originally theorized by Gerbner, assumes non-selectivity among television viewers while social media use is highly selective in nature given the personalization of content that appears in each individual's feed (Hermann et al., 2023). Furthermore, studies on social media use reveal its correlation to fragmentation, while cultivation "assumes that media contribute to homogenization" (Hermann et al., 2023).

Nonetheless, studies extending Gerbner's theory of cultivation to social media platforms argue for the flexibility of the said theory's underlying principles and the presence of recurring themes and conversations across audiences' highly individualized content feed as a form of uniformity that applies to the study of social media platforms (Sestir, 2020; Murdock, 2022; Park et al., 2023). Importantly, traditional media had long cultivated the idea of pets, particularly dogs, as being "man's best friend", embedding this perception within societal consciousness. Building on this foundation, recurring themes and conversations on animal companionship and pet ownership within social media platforms, especially those featuring pet dogs and cats, now serve as contemporary basis for uniformity in adapting Gerbner's Theory of Cultivation within the online realm.

In the context of pet adoption, platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Tiktok often depict pet ownership as a desirable and fulfilling lifestyle choice, which may influence the decisions of past, current, and potential pet owners. Understanding the dynamics between such factors is essential in assessing the broader implications of social media on societal behaviors, particularly the adoption of pets.

The abundance of studies revealing the influence of constant exposure to specific worldviews or perceptions of reality on an individual's understanding of reality underscores the importance of exploring how social media affects the perceptions of potential pet owners regarding pet adoption. For this study, the researcher used the Cultivation Theory as guidance in observation of the constructs at play.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The study anchored on the combination of Cultivation Theory (CT), Focus Theory of Normative Conduct (FTNC), and Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) in exploring the influence of pet-related social media content on perceptions of pet adoption as a method of pet acquisition among past, current, and potential Filipino pet owners in Metro Manila.

As previously mentioned, Cultivation Theory (CT) was initially applied to television and has been extended to social media platforms by subsequent studies as it constantly exposes users to curated content and reinforces certain narratives and worldviews. For the context of this study, Cultivation Theory can help observe how continuous exposure to pet-related content on social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Tiktok can influence perceptions of past, current, and potential pet owners toward pet adoption and potentially, shape perceptions to make pet adoption seem more desirable.

The Focus Theory of Normative Conduct, developed by Robert Cialdini, posits that there are two types of norms that significantly impact human behavior – injunctive norms or “what most others approve/disapprove”, and descriptive norms or “what most others do” (Cialdini, 2012). The theory was developed as a response to a growing need for a deeper understanding of social norms and its role in human behavior and was initially utilized to analyze “environment-relevant activities” within naturally occurring settings (Cialdini, 2012). In the case of this study, FTNC, with focus on descriptive and injunctive norms, were of significance in analyzing the influence of normative perceptions established through social cues within social media platforms

(likes, comments, engagement with content) on how individuals perceive pet adoption as a method of obtaining a pet dog or cat.

Lastly, the Uses and Gratification theory (UGT) developed by Jay Blumler and Elihu Katz posits that “media users actively select and employ media to fulfill specific needs” (Sichach, 2023) and considers audiences as active contributors in shaping their own media choices by seeking out content that will satisfy their specific wants and needs. For this study, UGT helped observe and understand motivations behind user engagement and how these simultaneously contribute to their own perceptions of pet adoption, offering a more nuanced approach to analyzing how such attitudes and behaviors are formed.

## Conceptual Framework

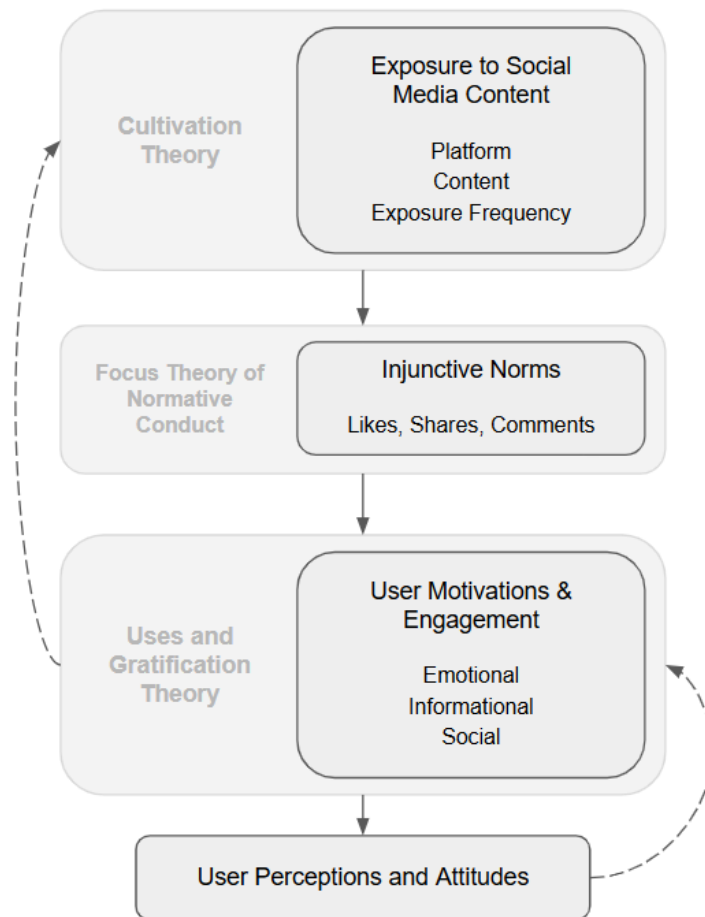


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework integrated Cultivation Theory (CT), Focus Theory of Normative Conduct (FTNC), and Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) to help understand how pet-related social media content influences respondent's perceptions and intentions toward pet adoption. Each theory provided a lens for exploring and understanding different aspects of the research objectives.

First, UGT helped explain why respondents use social media platforms and what they seek from pet-related content. Motivations for pet ownership, like companionship or emotional support, align with UFT's emotional and social

gratifications. This tied to the study's objectives on identifying platforms and exposure and examining motivations and barriers (Objectives 1 and 2).

On the other hand, CT situates the role of repeated exposure to pet-related and pet adoption-related content, as repeated exposure normalizes pet adoption as a compassionate and responsible act. Through frequent exposure, pet adoption is cultivated as a socially valued behavior. This tied to the study's objective on exploring how content shapes the respondents' perceptions and attitudes towards pet adoption (Objective 3).

FTNC then accounts for normative influence. Injunctive norms – represented by likes, shares, and positive comments – signal community approval and social desirability of pet adoption. Consequently, these cues reinforce perceptions of pet adoption as a legitimate and moral choice. This ties to the study's objectives observing and exploring the influence of norms on perceptions and adoption intent (Objectives 3 and 4).

Lastly, the researcher recognized that while exposure and normative cues positively shape perceptions, structural barriers such as financial cost, space restrictions, and other commitments limit the transition from favorable perception to actual adoption intent. As such, the framework explains both the reinforcement of perceptions (through FT and FTNC) and the moderation of intentions by barriers and motivations (through UGT and contextual factors).

The framework positions social media as both a source of gratifications (through UGT) and a cultivator of norms (through CT and FTNC), influencing perceptions of pet adoption positively but still constrained by practical barriers in terms of adoption intent.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### Research Design

The study analyzed how exposure to pet-related social media content affects past, current, and potential pet owners' perceptions and attitudes towards pet adoption. Specifically, it aimed to investigate whether such content influences their intention to adopt pets over other methods of pet acquisition.

The researcher employed a quantitative approach and a descriptive-exploratory research design to systematically explore and examine the influence of pet-related social media content on the perceptions and attitudes of past, current, and potential pet owners in Metro Manila. The descriptive aspect of the study provided an overview of respondents' perceptions of pet adoption, while the exploratory aspect of the study examined emerging patterns and associations between exposure to social media content and factors such as motivations, barriers, and attitudes toward adoption.

Integrating these two approaches helped the researcher gain an understanding of the characteristics and the reasons behind the occurrence of a phenomenon. As noted by Manjunatha (2019), descriptive research focuses on "describing the characteristics of the population or phenomenon being studied" and emphasizes the "what" rather than the "why" of the research subject. This approach is suitable for the study as it allows for a detailed examination of constructs without manipulation, providing an accurate depiction of the current state of attitudes and perceptions. This approach allowed the researcher to both describe respondents' perceptions of pet adoption and explore possible associations between social media exposure,

motivations, and barriers. The study sought to observe patterns that could provide a nuanced understanding of how multiple factors intersect with perceptions and intentions toward pet adoption among respondents.

### **Locale of the Study**

The study was conducted using an online survey targeting respondents from the National Capital Region (NCR) of the Philippines. This region was selected due to the researcher's assumption that residents from this region are predominantly active social media users, therefore aligning with the researcher's focus of study on social media content. This region is also home to a growing number of animal welfare organizations actively participating in animal rescue and adoption programs. Thus, residents in this region are conveniently in close proximity to adoption centers which could greatly contribute to consideration of pet ownership and adoption. Lastly, participants in the NCR are expected to be more accessible to the researcher than those from other regions, facilitating easier collection of data. These factors helped support the feasibility of the project and contribute to its overall effectiveness.

### **Respondents of the Study**

The study focused on past, current, and potential pet owners residing in the National Capital Region (NCR) of the Philippines. The study focused on the Generation X, Millennials and Generation Z group cohorts, aged 18 to 54 years (Dimock, 2019). These groups were selected due to their extensive engagement with social media platforms, likely including frequent exposure to pet-related content. Millennials and Gen Z groups are known for their high online activity, which aligns with

the study's interest in how social media influences pet adoption perceptions. Participants were selected based on whether they actively use a social media platform and have previously owned, are currently owning, or are interested in owning a pet dog or cat in the future, irrespective of their preferred method of pet acquisition.

### **Key Constructs and Measures**

Instead of independent and dependent variables, the study explored several key constructs drawn from the literature and aligned with the research objectives.

These constructs were measured through survey items:

1. **Social Media Exposure** - this refers to respondents; self-reported frequency of use of different social media platforms and their exposure to general pet-related and pet adoption-related content. Exposure to content was measured using frequency-based questions (Daily, A few times a week, A few times a month, Rarely, Never)
2. **Perceived Motivations for Pet Ownership** - motivations such as companionship, emotional support, entertainment, and social belonging were measured. Respondents rated the extent to which these motivations influenced their interest in pet ownership.
3. **Perceived Barriers to Pet Adoption** - included are financial cost, lack of time, space constraints, and perceived challenges of adoption. Respondents rated how strongly they agreed that these barriers applied to them.
4. **Perceptions of Pet Adoption** - General perceptions and attitudes toward pet adoption were assessed. These included perceived benefits of adoption,

attitudes toward adopting versus buying, and beliefs about responsible ownership.

5. Perceived Social Media Influence - The study assessed respondents' perceptions of how social media content influenced their views on pet adoption.

These were grouped into:

- a. Motivational Influences - content making pet adoption appear rewarding or beneficial (UGT)
  - b. Normative Influences - content showing social approval of adoption practices (FTNC)
6. Adoption Intent - refers to respondents' indicated level of interest to adopt a pet within the next twelve months.

By structuring the study around these constructs and measures, the analysis captured how social media functions as a medium of influence and situated adoption attitudes within broader personal, social, and contextual factors.

As previously mentioned, the study collected quantitative data using a descriptive-exploratory research design. The data were collected using a survey that contained questions with multiple sets of possible responses to evaluate these constructs.

## **Sampling Procedure**

The sample population for this study was presumed to have active accounts on Facebook, Instagram, or Tiktok, and has seen any pet-related social media content within the said platforms. The study utilized a purposive sampling technique, where chosen respondents were qualified based on their pet ownership status (previous, current, or potential dog or cat owner).

With an unknown total population size for the target population, the researcher aimed to gather a sample population of at least 150 respondents to ensure statistical power and sufficient sample size to support all statistical methods conducted for this study.

## **Data Gathering Procedure**

The study was conducted through an online survey and used an online data gathering platform, specifically Google Forms. In summary, the survey was comprised of the following sections:

1. An introductory section where the researcher and the research study is introduced, particularly its objectives and specific use of the term “pet adoption” as defined in the study
2. A separate section explaining the Data Privacy Act and how this applies to the study, along with a short description on the voluntary raffle prize for respondents.
3. Section 1 encompasses demographic questions such as age, gender, residence, monthly household income, and current pet ownership status.

4. Sections 2 to 7 include questions that aim to address the study's objectives, such as:
  - a. Respondents' exposure to social media platforms, pet-related social media content, and specific formats of social media content
  - b. Barriers and motivations for pet ownership adoption, intentions to adopt of respondents.
  - c. The attitudes and perceptions of respondents regarding pet-related social media content and how these influence their views on pet ownership and adoption.
5. The last section of the survey includes an optional raffle entry where respondents can submit their e-mail address or GCash number as an entry to the raffle. It also extends gratitude to the respondents for participating in the survey.

Most sections of the survey made use of Likert-scale statements which measured how respondents agree or disagree with certain pet ownership and adoption-related beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. In this study, responses to Likert-scale questions will range from a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) to best reflect respondents' level of agreement to each statement. Aside from this, the survey also utilized multiple choices and checklist-type questions to determine various factors that potentially contributed to respondents' views on pet ownership and adoption.

Other sections of the survey utilized ranking to determine respondents' most used platforms and preference for new pet sources. In the original survey, a question was dedicated to ranking four (4) social media platforms from 1 (most frequently seen pet-related content) to 4 (least frequently seen pet-related content). However, due to

an oversight in customizing Google Forms' settings, many respondents selected the same rank for multiple platforms and resulted in a majority of invalid. Thus, the responses were treated as ordinal visibility ratings instead of strict ranks. The mean and standard deviation for each platform's visibility score were used to summarize respondents perceived exposure to pet-related content across the mentioned platforms.

The survey was then posted on chosen social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok), and respondents were not forced to answer the form. The survey was posted within social media groups and Messenger communities that focus on pet and animal welfare to quickly reach the intended population.

Alternatively, the survey was also offered to individuals who expressed interest in pet adoption through Facebook group comments, interacted with and showed interest in pet adoption posts, and previous adopters whose experiences were publicly posted on Facebook and Instagram. Lastly, well-known pet influencers and pet-owner influencers were invited to join the study through privately reaching out to their social media accounts.

To further entice respondents to join the study, an optional and voluntary raffle draw was offered to every respondent through at the end of the survey.

After the survey period, the researcher gathered a total of 157 respondents across Metro Manila who participated in the study voluntarily and accomplished the survey online through Google Forms. After reviewing and cleaning up initially gathered data, a total of 154 respondents qualified for all requirements of the study: (1) that they were anywhere between 18-54 years old and living anywhere within Metro Manila or the National Capital Region (NCR) at the time of answering the survey; (2) they

actively use a social media platform of their preference; (3) either they previously had a pet dog or cat, or currently has a pet dog or cat, or are interested in owning a pet dog or cat in the future.

## **Ethical Considerations**

With the main objective of understanding human attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions, the study requires careful and ethical gathering and handling of respondent information to ensure that the subjects' privacy and anonymity are well-protected. Thus, respondents are informed at the beginning of the survey that participation is entirely voluntary and that sharing private details and information are not required in accomplishing the survey form. Disclosing the respondent identity was optional, and the research process ensured that maintaining the anonymity of respondents was of utmost importance throughout the study.

Furthermore, part of the survey questionnaire was attributed to informing respondents of the study's nature and purpose, along with information on how gathered data will be analyzed and utilized by the researcher. Respondents were ensured that their right to privacy and confidentiality was not violated in accordance with the Data Privacy Act (R.A. 10173), as gathered information that was strictly confidential were not be used for other purposes unrelated to the proposed study. Respondents were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study if, at any point, they felt uncomfortable for any reason.

Upon completion of the data gathering period, one respondent who opted to join the raffle contest was randomly chosen through an online random picker website

and won a small incentive for participating in the study. The winner's information was not revealed to any other participants, and the winning respondent was privately informed and given the incentive as a token of appreciation.

Throughout the writing process, the researcher also utilized OpenAI's ChatGPT (GPT-4 and GPT-5) as an auxiliary tool for refining grammar, improving clarity, and establishing the structural coherence of this paper. The researcher ensured that this tool was used ethically and within the University's (UPOU) Guidelines for AI Use. The researcher did not utilize any form of AI tool to aid the data gathering procedure, ensuring that respondent information remains private and confidential. Furthermore, all theoretical discussions and practical applications relating to this study were synthesized and executed by the researcher.

## **Data Analysis**

Data gathered from the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics and were supported by associative analyses to highlight observed relationships among constructs. All measures were analyzed quantitatively using the following and further utilized to understand existing relationships between them, if any. The researcher used Google Sheets and JASP to organize gathered data and conduct statistical analyses and computations. Additionally, the research used OpenAI's ChatGPT (GPT-4 and GPT-5) as an auxiliary tool in gaining insights on the statistical significance of results from computations; however, all findings, interpretations, and conclusions remain the responsibility of the researcher.

### *Descriptive statistics*

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize data and interpret categorical and ordinal data from yes-no and scale-based questions. For the study, the mean, media, and mode were utilized for analysis.

### *Frequency Distributions*

Frequencies will be used in the study to determine raw counts as percentages of specific groups and of the total study population.

### *Cronbach's Alpha for Reliability Testing*

To test the validity and reliability of the survey questions, the Cronbach's Alpha test was utilized by the researcher for both the pilot survey and the final survey questionnaires. Cronbach's Alpha was used to determine how closely related the set of items are in a certain group, ensuring internal consistency and reliability of each set of Likert-scale questions.

$$\alpha = \frac{N\bar{c}}{v + (N-1)\bar{c}}$$

Where:

$\alpha$  = Cronbach's Alpha coefficient

$N$  = number of items

$\bar{c}$  = average inter-item covariance among the items

$v$  = average variance

No	Coefficient of Cronbach's Alpha	Reliability Level
1	More than 0.90	Excellent
2	0.80-0.89	Good
3	0.70-0.79	Acceptable
4	0.6-.69	Questionable
5	0.5-0.59	Poor
6	Less than 0.59	Unacceptable

Figure 2: Interpretation of Cronbach's Alpha Values. Retrieved from George and Mallery, 2003, as cited in Arof et al. (2018)

### *Associative Analysis (Exploratory)*

To explore potential relationships among constructs, cross-tabulations and correlations were conducted. It must be noted that the researcher only utilized these methods to identify patterns of association between constructs and were not used for hypothesis testing. The results were presented in the appendices and referenced in the Discussion section as supporting observations.

### *Chi-Square Test*

For this study, the Chi-Square Test was conducted to support observations on the relationship between respondents' (1) demographics and the frequency of exposure to pet adoption content, (2) the platforms they use the most and the type of pet content that they most frequently see, (3) motivations for pet ownership and current pet ownership status, (4) motivations for pet ownership and pet adoption, and (5) most common barriers to pet adoption and past adoption experience.

### *Spearman's Rank Correlation*

The study conducted the Spearman's Rank Correlation to support the researcher's observations on the strength and direction of association between two constructs within the sample population. This test analyzed the relationships between respondents' motivational influence, normative influence, and social media influence on adoption intent and general adoption perceptions and intent.

This test supported the researcher's observations on whether higher levels of social media influence are associated with more favorable perceptions of pet adoption.

### *ANOVA*

For this study, One-way ANOVA test was utilized to support observations on (1) Differences in Motivational Influence Across Levels of Exposure to Adoption Content, (2) Differences in Normative Influence Across Levels of Exposure to Adoption-Related Content, (3) Differences in General Adoption Perceptions Across Levels of Exposure to Adoption-Related Content, (4) Differences in Adoption Intent Across Levels of Exposure to Adoption-Related Content.

For data analysis involving the respondents' exposure to pet adoption-related and pet-related content, the "never" exposure category was excluded despite being part of the survey as no respondents selected the said option.

### *Kruskal-Wallis Test*

For this study, the Kruskal-Wallis's test was utilized to support observations on (1) Motivational Influence Across Levels of Exposure to Pet-Related Content, (2) Normative Influence Across Levels of Exposure to Pet-Related Content, (3) General

Adoption Perceptions Across Levels of Exposure to Adoption-Related Content, and  
(4) Adoption Intent Across Levels of Exposure to Pet-Related Content.

### **Validity and Reliability**

An initial survey test was distributed to ensure the validity and reliability of the initial questionnaire. This pilot survey further allowed the researcher to determine whether each question is relevant and necessary for the study, while also gaining insights on whether the survey was easy to understand and accomplish for the target respondents. The pilot survey had sixteen (16) Likert-scale type of questions which were subjected to the Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test.

The pilot survey consisted of six (6) questions for Perceptions of Pet Adoption (Cronbach's Alpha = ), five (5) questions for Social Media Influence on Perceptions of Pet Adoption (Cronbach's Alpha = ), and five (5) questions on Social Media's Influence on Adoption Intent (Cronbach's Alpha = ). The last portion of the survey was dedicated to gaining insights on ease of accomplishing the survey and potential lapses that the pilot survey might have had. The survey was answered by fifteen (15) initial respondents.

Following the initial test, the researcher adjusted the questionnaire based on results and suggestions from initial respondents. Aside from using simpler and more straightforward language, additional sections were added to the survey to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the constructs that the study aims to analyze and understand. Questions on existing sections were also reviewed and revised to ensure better internal consistency and reliability.

From an initial sixteen (16) Likert-scale questions, the final survey consisted of a total of thirty (30) Likert-scale questions consisting eight (8) questions on Perceptions of Pet Adoption, fourteen (14) questions on Social Media Content Influence on Perceptions of Pet Adoption, eight (8) questions on Social Media Influence on Adoption Intent, along with other additional questions for the Barriers and Intention to Adopt Section.

#### **IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of data from 154 qualified respondents in Metro Manila. The study aims to observe and analyze how pet-related social media content is perceived by past, current, and potential pet owners in Metro Manila to influence their attitudes and perceptions of pet adoption.

With this, the Results and Discussion Chapter is organized according to the specific objectives of the study. The chapter begins with a description of the respondents' demographic profiles, followed by their social media usage patterns and exposure to pet and pet adoption-related content. Subsequently, the chapter will discuss motivations for pet ownership and barriers to pet adoption that may influence respondents' perceptions, providing context for understanding attitudes and intentions toward pet adoption.

This is followed by a detailed presentation of respondents' general perceptions of pet adoption, and an examination of perceived social media influence, showing how exposure to pet-related and pet adoption-related social media content – along with motivations and barriers – relate to these perceptions. The chapter then presents adoption intent and respondents' preferred sources for acquiring pets, including patterns in how social media may influence these decisions and preferences.

Finally, a summary of key findings integrates insights from all mentioned sections, highlighting how respondents' perceptions may or may not translate into adoption intent due to the interplay of personal and external factors. Each section analyzes data through descriptive and inferential statistics with the support of tables and figures that highlight significant patterns and insights relevant to the study.

## Sociodemographic Profile

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
18-24 years old	58	37.66
25-34 years old	71	46.10
35-44 years old	17	11.04
45-54 years old	8	5.19
Total	154	100.00

Table 1. Table of Age Range frequencies and percentages.

As shown in Table 1, the age group of “25-34 years old” has the highest frequency with a total of 71 respondents and consisting of 46.10% of the sample population; meanwhile, 58 respondents reported to be under the “18-24 years old” age group and is 37.66% of the sample population. 17 respondents reported to be under the “35-44 years old” group and 8 respondents are anywhere from 45-54 years old. These age groups accounted for 11.04% and 5.19% of the respondents accordingly. The table above shows how the majority of the study’s respondents come from the Millennial and Gen-Z cohort groups who utilize and interact with social media on a more regular basis.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Man	47	30.52
Woman	100	64.94
Transgender	2	1.30
Non-binary/non-conforming	3	1.95
Prefer not to say	2	1.30
Total	154	100.00

Table 2. Table of Gender frequencies and percentages.

Table 2 above reveals that the majority of the respondents – 100 respondents accounting for 64.94% of the respondents – were women. Meanwhile, 48 respondents (30.52%) were men, three (1.95%) were non-binary or non-conforming, two (1.30%) were transgenders, and two (1.30%) other respondents preferred to keep their gender unannounced.

Income Range	Frequency	Percentage
Less than P11,000	16	10.39
P11,000 to P21,000	19	12.34
P21,000 to P44,000	33	21.43
P44,000 to P77,000	26	16.88
P77,000 to P132,000	22	14.29
P132,000 to P220,000	18	11.69
P220,000 and above	20	12.99
Total	154	100.00

*Table 3. Table of Household Income frequencies and percentages.*

Table 3 above shows each respondent's monthly household income with 21.43% of the respondents reporting a monthly household income of P21,000-P44,000, 16.88% of the respondents reporting P44,000-P77,000 of monthly income, 14.29% of respondents earning P77,000-P32,000, 12.34% of respondents earning between P11,000-P21,000 and earning P220,000 and above, 11.69% of respondents earning P132,000-P220,000, and 10.39% of respondents earning less than P11,000 a month.

City	Frequency	Percentage
Caloocan	16	10.39
Las Piñas	3	1.95
Makati	11	7.14
Malabon	2	1.30
Mandaluyong	6	3.90
Manila	20	12.99
Marikina	10	6.49
Muntinlupa	8	5.19
Parañaque	4	2.60
Pasay	2	1.30
Pasig	15	9.74
Quezon City	46	29.87
Taguig	8	5.19
Valenzuela	3	1.95
Total	154	100.00

Table 4. Table of Residence Location frequencies and percentages.

Table 4 above shows how respondents are spread across the National Capital Region (NCR). 46 respondents (29.87%) claim to reside in Quezon City, while 20 respondents (12.99%) reported to be Manila residents, 17 respondents (10.39%) are from Caloocan City, 15 respondents (9.74%) are from Pasig, 11 (7.14%) are from Makati, 10 (6.49%) are from Marikina, and 8 (5.19%) are each from Muntinlupa City and Taguig City. Other respondents reported to currently reside in Mandaluyong (3.90%), Parañaque (2.60%), Las Piñas (1.95%), Valenzuela (1.95%), Malabon (1.30%), and Pasay City (1.30%).

<b>Pet Ownership Status</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Past pet owner	26	16.88
Current pet owner	120	77.92
Interested to own pet/s	8	5.19
Total	154	100.00

*Table 5. Table of Pet Ownership Status frequencies and percentages.*

This preliminary question on current pet ownership status revealed that the majority of the respondents are current pet owners, with 120 respondents (77.92%) reporting themselves as currently owning a pet dog/s and/or cat/s. This is followed by 27 respondents (16.88%) who are past pet owners and 8 respondents (5.19%) who are potential first-time pet owners.

Taken together, the sociodemographic profile of the sample population indicates that the respondent pool was largely composed of young, female individuals who are frequent users of social media. This aligns with the study’s target of potential and current pet owners in Metro Manila, and provides a strong baseline for examining their exposure to pet-related social media content.

While respondents represented a wide range of household incomes and cities of residence, the concentration of middle-income, socially active respondents suggests both accessibility to pets and receptivity to online content. Aside from this, the high percentage of current pet owners within the sample population provides a useful context in understanding their motivations, barriers, and attitudes toward adoption.

To explore potential associations between demographics and adoption-related constructs, further analyses were conducted (see Appendix A). Results indicated that

respondents' current pet ownership status was not significantly associated with perceived barriers to adoption or motivations for pet ownership. This suggests that both pet owners and non-pet owners shared similar views regarding adoption challenges and pet ownership drivers.

These analyses also revealed that demographic differences only played a minimal role in shaping perceptions. This finding supports that social and cultural factors are more salient in influencing adoption perceptions and behaviors than demographic markers.

### Social Media Use and Exposure

*What type/s of pet-related content do you usually encounter?*

Content Type	Frequency	Percentage
"Adoption success stories"	84	54.55
"Pet care tutorials"	80	51.95
"Rescue/shelter videos"	89	57.79
"Funny pet videos"	143	92.86
"Emotional pet stories"	82	53.25
"Cute/funny pet videos or photos"	124	80.52
"Rescue transformation stories (before-and-after)"	84	54.55
"Personal adoption success stories"	48	31.17
"Advocacy campaigns promoting adoption"	60	38.96
"Posts about shelter overcrowding, failed adoptions, or pet surrender cases"	54	35.06
"Posts about abandoned, neglected, or abused pets"	97	62.99
"Pet care advice & responsible ownership tips"	82	53.25

Table 6. Table of most encountered pet-related content frequencies and percentages.

Table 6 above shows that “Funny pet videos” are the type of pet-related social media content that respondents most frequently encounter online (143 respondents, 92.86%), followed by “Cute/funny pet videos or photos” (124 respondents, 80.52%), “Posts about abandoned, neglected, or abused pets” (97 respondents, 62.99%), “Rescue/shelter videos” (89 respondents, 57.79%), “Adoption success stories” (84 respondents, 54.55%), “Rescue transformation stories (before-and-after)” (84 respondents, 54.55%), “Pet care advice & responsible ownership tips” (82 respondents, 53.25%), “Emotional pet stories” (82 respondents, 53.25%), “Pet care tutorials” (80 respondents, 51.95%), “Advocacy campaigns promoting adoption” (60 respondents, 38.96%), “Posts about shelter overcrowding, failed adoptions, or pet surrender cases” (54 respondents, 35.06%), and “Personal adoption success stories” (48 respondents, 31.17%).

The results above reveal that entertaining pet-related content, like cute and funny pet photos and videos, are the content types most frequently exposed to the study population. Aside from this, Table 6 also indicates how respondents are frequently exposed to and are aware of seeing specific social media content related to animal welfare and adoption (albeit some being indirectly related), with content types like “Posts about abandoned, neglected, or abused pets”, “Adoption success stories”, “Rescue/shelter videos”, and “Rescue transformation stories (before-and-after)” being reported to be seen by more than half of the respondents.

*How often do pet-related posts appear on your social media feed?*

<b>Exposure to Pet-related Content</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Daily	108	70.13
A few times a week	40	25.97
A few times a month	4	2.60
Rarely	2	1.30
Never	0	0.00
Total	154	100.00

*Table 7. Table of Exposure to Pet-related Content frequencies and percentages.*

Respondents were asked about their frequency of seeing pet-related social media content across all social media platforms and majority of the respondents reported to see pet-related content appearing in their social media feeds daily (108 respondents, 70.13.98%). Next to this, 40 respondents (25.97%) reported seeing pet-related content a few times a week, 4 respondents (2.60%) reported seeing pet-related content a few times a month, and only 2 respondents (1.30%) claim to rarely see such content. No respondent reported to have never seen pet-related posts appear on social media. This indicates that many respondents not only use social media every day, but are also exposed to pet-related social media content daily.

*How often do pet-adoption related posts appear on your social media feed?*

<b>Exposure to Pet Adoption-related Content</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Daily	39	25.32
A few times a week	55	35.71
A few times a month	33	21.43
Rarely	27	17.53
Never	0	0.00
Total	154	100.00

*Table 8. Table of Exposure to Pet Adoption-related Content frequencies and percentages.*

When asked about how often pet-adoption related posts appear on their social media feed, more respondents reported only seeing them a few times a month (55 respondents, 35.71%) than on a daily basis (39 respondents, 25.32%). 33 respondents (21.43%) reported seeing pet adoption-related posts a few times a month, 27 respondents (17.53%) reported rarely seeing them on social media. Again, no respondent reported to have never seen pet adoption-related posts in their social media feed. In contrast to Table 9, Table 10 reveals that less than half (36.1%) of respondents with daily exposure to pet-related content are also exposed to pet adoption-related content every day.

Aside from this, the table above also reveals that a considerable number of respondents are not as exposed to pet adoption-related content as compared to other types of pet-related content within social media platforms.

*On which social media platforms do you see the most pet-related content?*

Social Media Platform	Mean Visibility Score	SD	# Ranked as "1"	Percentage
Facebook	2.21	1.159	60	38.96
Instagram	2.51	1.139	40	25.97
Tiktok	2.27	1.247	64	41.56
YouTube	2.75	1.080	25	16.23

*Table 9. Descriptive Statistics on Respondents' Social Media Platform Use.*

Using ordinal visibility scores from 1 (most encountered pet-related content) to 4 (least frequently seen), four social media platforms were evaluated by respondents on how often they encounter pet-related content within each platform. Table 7 revealed that Facebook and Tiktok are the platforms where respondents see the most pet-related content, with Facebook having the lowest mean visibility score ( $M = 2.21$ ,  $SD = 1.159$ ), and Tiktok receiving the highest number of top rankings (64 respondents, 41.56%) of study population. Facebook followed closely with 60 respondents (38.96%) assigning it a score of 1.

Despite its lower average score, Table 7 revealed that Tiktok had the highest variability in responses ( $SD = 1.247$ ), suggesting diverse perceptions among users. Meanwhile, Instagram had a higher mean score ( $M = 2.51$ ,  $SD = 1.139$ ) but was selected by only 25.97% of the respondents.

Lastly, YouTube was ranked as lowest in visibility and ( $M = 2.75$ ) and only 16.23% of respondents selected it as the platform where they see pet-related content the most. Table 11 also shows that YouTube has the least variability ( $SD = 1.080$ ), indicating strong agreement about its lower visibility in this context.

*On which social media platforms do you actively engage with pet-related content (liking, commenting, sharing, following pet pages)?*

<b>Social Media Platform</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Facebook	129	83.77
Instagram	97	62.99
Tiktok	80	51.95
YouTube	45	29.22

*Table 10. Table of Social Media Platforms used for Engagement frequencies and percentages.*

Out of 154 respondents, Facebook was consistently the most commonly engaged platform for pet-related content with 83.77%. In terms of engagement and interaction, Instagram (62.99%), was the most selected platform over Tiktok (51.95%) and Youtube (29.22%) – this indicates active interactions such as liking, commenting, sharing content, and following pet-related accounts in the platform. This is contrary to exposure results in Table 12 where Tiktok is more selected by respondents over Instagram. This indicates that while more respondents are exposed to pet-related content in Tiktok, Instagram is preferred by more respondents for engaging and interacting with pet-related content.

## Motivations and Barriers

*What are your primary motivations for pet ownership?*

Motivations	Frequency	Percentage
"I love animals"	128	83.12
"Companionship"	107	69.48
"Emotional support"	89	57.79
"Family/kids want a pet"	39	25.32
"Security purposes"	22	14.29
"I grew up with pets"	60	38.96

*Table 11. Descriptive Statistics on Respondents' Motivations for Pet Ownership*

When asked about primary motivations for pet ownership, a majority of respondents reported love for animals as one of their primary motivations (128 respondents, 83.12%), followed by companionship (107 respondents, 69.48%) and emotional support (89 respondents, 57.79%).

Furthermore, 60 respondents (38.96%) reported to have grown up with pets, thus contributing as a motivation for pet ownership. 39 respondents (25.32%) reported their family wanting pets as a primary motivation for pet ownership, while 22 respondents (14.29%) reported security purposes as a primary motivation for pet ownership. Table 11 above implies stronger emotional connections and motivations for pet ownership over practical benefits.

*What concerns do you have about pet adoption?*

<b>Content Type</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
"Financial costs of pet ownership"	96	62.34
"Long-term responsibility"	80	51.95
"Restrictions (housing, landlord, etc.)"	82	53.25
"Lack of time"	65	42.21
"Allergies/health concerns"	52	33.77
"Uncertainty about shelter pets' behavior"	62	40.26
"Uncertainty about the credibility of animal shelters or city pounds"	50	32.47

*Table 12. Descriptive Statistics on Respondents' Barriers to Pet Adoption*

Table 12 above reveals that the most reported concern about adopting pets are financially-motivated, with 96 respondents (62.34%) selecting "Financial costs of pet ownership" among the choices. This is followed by "Restrictions (housing, landlord, etc.)" (82 respondents, 53.25%), "Long-term responsibility" (80 respondents, 51.95%), "Lack of time" (65 respondents, 42.21%), "Uncertainty about shelter pets' behavior" (62 respondents, 40.26%), "Allergies/health concerns" (52 respondents, 33.77%), and "Uncertainty about the credibility of animal shelters or city pounds" (50 respondents, 32.47%)

To further explore potential associations between respondents' motivations, barriers, and social media exposure, the researcher conducted analyses to support observations (see Appendix B). While current pet ownership status and household income showed minimal differences in respondents' reported motivations or barriers, a few trends were observed.

Respondents with more frequent exposure to general pet-related content were somewhat more likely to report “*love for animals*” and “*family wants pets*” as motivations for pet ownership. Furthermore, respondents with frequent exposure to pet adoption-related content more often reported “*past experience with pets*” as a motivation. Other potential associations were less pronounced, and across all comparisons, perceived barriers to pet adoption remained broadly similar across all sociodemographic and exposure groups within the sample population. These observations highlight subtle patterns without implying casual relationships among observed measures.

### Perceptions of Pet Adoption

The section below explores the general perceptions of respondents toward pet adoption.

*Reliability of Scales*

<b>Cronbach’s Alpha</b>	<b>No. of Items</b>
0.712	8

*Figure 3. Reliability Statistics of Respondents’ Perceptions of Pet Adoption*

The Cronbach’s Alpha test revealed that the questionnaires for the subscale on general perceptions of pet adoption has “acceptable” internal consistency, indicating that the set of questions are reliable and valid for data analysis.

Table 13: Respondents' General Perceptions of Pet Adoption

Indicators		Mean	SD
1.	I believe adopting a pet is better than buying one.	4.46	0.810
2.	I view pet adoption as a responsible and ethical choice.	4.67	0.696
3.	I believe stray and rescued animals deserve to be adopted into loving homes.	4.80	0.609
4.	I believe the adoption process is too complicated and inconvenient.	2.67	1.067
5.	I believe pet adoption allows me to find the right pet for my lifestyle or preferences.	3.83	1.021
6.	I believe adopting a pet is just as easy as buying one.	3.32	1.225
7.	I believe adopting a pet is a meaningful way to help animals in need.	4.77	0.662
8.	I believe adoption is just as fulfilling as other ways of getting a pet.	4.47	0.965
<b>OVERALL:</b>		<b>4.12</b>	<b>0.473</b>

Note: Verbal Interpretation of Mean: Strongly Agree ~ Very Positive (4.20 - 5.00), Agree ~ Positive (3.40 - 4.19), Neutral (2.60 - 3.39), Disagree ~ Negative (1.80 - 2.59), Strongly Disagree ~ Very Negative (1.00- 1.79).

Table 13 above reveals that respondents strongly agreed with five (5) out of eight (8) statements, agreed with one (1) statement, and remained neutral with two (2) statements.

The statement, "I believe stray and rescued animals deserve to be adopted into loving homes" received the highest mean score of 4.80 (SD = 0.609), reflecting very strong agreement and an overwhelmingly positive perception toward adopting stray and rescued animals.

This was closely followed by the statement, "I believe adopting a pet is a meaningful way to help animals in need", garnering an average mean of 4.77 (SD = 0.662) and the statement "I view adoption as a responsible and ethical choice" with a mean score of 4.67 (SD = 0.696). The statement "I believe adoption is just as fulfilling

as other ways of getting a pet” received a mean score of 4.47 (SD = 0.965) and the statement “I believe adopting a pet is better than buying one” earned 4.46 (SD = 0.810).

Meanwhile, the statement “I believe pet adoption allows me to find the right pet for my lifestyle or preferences” received a mean score of 3.83 (SD = 1.021), indicating moderate agreement that pet adoption considers compatibility between adopters and pets.

Lastly, the statements “I believe adopting a pet is just as easy as buying one” and “I believe the adoption process is too complicated and inconvenient” received mean scores of 3.32 (SD = 1.225) and 2.67 (SD = 1.067) respectively, indicating neutrality among respondents. Along with high standard deviation scores, this suggests that respondents have varying perceptions of the complexity, accessibility, and convenience of proceeding with the pet adoption process.

The overall mean score of 4.12 (SD = 0.473 ) for this section translates to “very positive” general perceptions of pet adoption, highlighting shared norms and beliefs that adoption is a desirable act among respondents.

## **Social Media Influence and Perceptions of Pet Adoption**

The following section explores how social media content, when fulfilling informational and emotional needs, is perceived to shape perceptions of pet adoption. The Likert-scale items used in this part of the survey capture informational, emotional, and social drivers such as increased awareness, emotional connection, and perceived accessibility of pet adoption.

Consistent with the Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) component of the conceptual framework, these perceptions reflect how exposure to purposeful and resonant content impacts respondents' opinion formation, attitude and perception reinforcement, and belief changes surrounding pet adoption.

*Reliability of Scales*

<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>No. of Items</b>
0.844	9

*Figure 4. Reliability Statistics of Motivational Influence of Social Media on Perceptions of Pet Adoption*

The Cronbach's Alpha test revealed that the questionnaires for the subscale on respondents' perceived influence of social media on user motivations has "good" internal consistency, indicating that the set of questions are reliable and valid for data analysis.

*Table 14: Respondents' Perceived Motivational Influence of Social Media on Perceptions of Pet Adoption*

<b>Indicators</b>		<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
1.	Social media has increased my awareness of pet adoption as an alternative to buying a pet.	4.23	0.960
2.	I believe that pet-related social media content presents adoption as a more ethical and responsible choice.	4.42	0.773
3.	Social media posts have helped me realize that stray and rescued animals deserve loving homes.	4.60	0.710
4.	Seeing pet-related social media content has made the pet adoption process seem easier and more accessible than I previously thought.	4.02	0.987
5.	I've encountered social media content that has made me more aware of the challenges of adopting pets.	3.96	1.069
6.	Social media has made me more likely to view adoption as a good deed or an act of kindness.	4.46	0.760

7.	Social media has changed the way I evaluate whether adoption fits my personal needs or preferences.	3.97	1.022
8.	I've seen pet adoption stories on social media that have influenced how I emotionally connect with the idea of adoption.	4.22	0.916
9.	Because of social media, I believe adoption can be just as fulfilling as buying a pet.	4.38	0.856
<b>OVERALL:</b>		<b>4.25</b>	<b>0.560</b>

*Note: Verbal Interpretation of Mean: Strongly Agree ~ Very Influential (4.20 - 5.00), Agree ~ Influential (3.40 - 4.19), Neutral (2.60 - 3.39), Disagree ~ Uninfluential (1.80 - 2.59), Strongly Disagree ~ Very Uninfluential (1.00- 1.79).*

In this study, Motivational Influence refers to how pet-related and pet adoption-related content on adoption-related motivations. It records the effect of content exposure on emotional, relational, and evaluative motivations toward pet adoption. This is not to be confused with respondents' motivations to use social media or with general pet ownership motivations. Thus, items for this subscale measure how exposure to pet-related social media content affects respondents' various motivations toward pet adoption.

Table 14 above reveals that out of nine (9) Likert-scale statements for this subscale, respondents strongly agreed to six (6) statements and agreed to three (3) statements. Having consistent highest mean scores in Table 14 (Respondents' General Perceptions of Adoption) and Table 16 (Respondents' Perceived Influence of social media on User Motivations). The statement, "Social media posts have helped me realize that stray and rescued animals deserve loving homes" received the highest mean rating, with a mean of 4.60 (SD = 0.710).

This was followed by the statement, "Social media has made me more likely to view adoption as a good deed or an act of kindness", gaining an average mean of 4.46 (SD = 0.760) and the statement "I believe that pet-related social media content presents adoption as a more ethical and responsible choice" with a mean score of

4.42 (SD = 0.773). The statement “Because of social media, I believe adoption can be just as fulfilling as buying a pet” received a mean score of 4.38 (SD = 0.856) and the statement “Social media has increased my awareness of pet adoption as an alternative to buying a pet” earned a mean score of 4.23 (SD = 0.960). Lastly, the statement “I’ve seen pet adoption stories on social media that have influenced how I emotionally connect with the idea of adoption” earned a mean score of 4.22 (SD = 0.916). These indicators all fall within the “Very Influential” verbal interpretation of mean scores.

Meanwhile, the statements “Seeing pet-related social media content has made the pet adoption process seem easier and more accessible than I previously thought” (M = 4.02, SD = 0.987), “Social media has changed the way I evaluate whether adoption fits my personal needs or preferences” (M = 3.97, SD = 1.022), and “I’ve encountered social media content that has made me more aware of the challenges of adopting pets” (M = 3.96, SD = 1.069) all fall under the “Influential” verbal interpretation of mean scores.

The overall mean score of 4.25 (SD = 0.560 ) for this section indicates the strong influence of pet-related social media content on respondents’ informational, emotional, and social motivational drivers which also positively impacts their perceptions of pet adoption. However, higher standard deviation scores were revealed in statements discussing the applicability of pet adoption in their personal context.

The following section examines the perceived influence of descriptive and injunctive norms on respondents’ perceptions of pet adoption. Specifically, the study focuses on how such norms manifest within social media platforms (likes, comments, engagement with content) and how these influence users’ perceptions and attitudes.

The Likert-scale items used in this part of the survey explores how respondents perceive pet adoption as a viable method for obtaining a pet dog or cat, as informed by their exposure to these normative cues online.

*Reliability of Scales*

Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
0.833	5

Figure 5. Reliability Statistics of Normative Influence of Social Media on Perceptions of Pet Adoption

The Cronbach's Alpha test revealed that the questionnaires for the subscale on respondent's perceived influence of descriptive and injunctive social media norms on adoption perceptions has "good" internal consistency, indicating that the set of questions are reliable and valid for data analysis.

Table 15: Respondents' Perceived Normative Influence of Social Media on Perceptions of Pet Adoption

Indicators		Mean	SD
1.	I often look at how others engage with pet adoption posts before forming an opinion about adoption.	3.51	1.233
2.	I feel that many people approve of pet adoption when I see posts about adoption with high engagement.	4.23	0.913
3.	When I see pet adoption content with positive feedback (likes, shares), I am more likely to consider it a socially responsible action.	4.16	0.918
4.	I am more likely to view pet adoption positively when I see others engaging with pet adoption posts.	4.03	1.081
5.	Seeing social media users share adoption success stories makes me feel that adoption is a widely accepted and supported action.	4.50	0.725
<b>OVERALL:</b>		<b>4.09</b>	<b>0.763</b>

Note: Verbal Interpretation of Mean: Strongly Agree ~ Very Influential (4.20 - 5.00), Agree ~ Influential (3.40 - 4.19), Neutral (2.60 - 3.39), Disagree ~ Uninfluential (1.80 - 2.59), Strongly Disagree ~ Very Uninfluential (1.00- 1.79).

In line with the Focus Theory of Normative Conduct (FTNC), the table above presents the subscale measuring perceived normative cues like descriptive and injunctive norms from both pet-related and pet adoption-related social media content. This includes how respondents are influenced by observed online actions and engagement within social media platforms such as liking, sharing, commenting, or endorsing online.

Table 15 above reveals that out of five (5) Likert-scale statements for this subscale, respondents strongly agreed to two (2) statements and agreed to three (3) statements. This indicates that all five statements fall within the “Influential” to “Strongly Influential” range of verbal interpretation for mean scores.

The highest-rated statement was “Seeing social media users share adoption success stories makes me feel that adoption is a widely accepted and supported action” ( $M = 4.50$ ,  $S = 0.725$ ), followed by “I feel that many people approve of pet adoption when I see posts about adoption with high engagement” ( $M = 4.23$ ,  $SD = 0.913$ ). Similarly, the statement “When I see pet adoption content with positive feedback (likes, shares), I am more likely to consider it a socially responsible action” ( $M = 4.16$ ,  $SD = 0.918$ ) received relatively high mean scores. This suggests that engagement metrics serve as normative cues that influence user attitudes.

Lastly, the statements “I am more likely to view pet adoption positively when I see others engage with pet adoption posts” ( $M = 4.03$ ,  $SD = 1.081$ ) and “I often look at how others engage with pet adoption posts before forming an opinion about adoption” ( $M = 3.51$ ,  $SD = 1.233$ ) still fall within the “Agree” range of verbal interpretation, but high standard deviation scores imply variety in respondents’ reports.

The overall mean score of 4.09 (SD = 0.763) for this section indicates the strong influence of descriptive and injunctive norms within social media platforms on respondents' perceptions of pet adoption. Higher standard deviation scores were revealed in statements discussing the adoption perceptions in their personal contexts.

Findings suggest that motivational factors play the most decisive role in shaping respondents' perception and attitudes towards pet adoption. Social media content that emotionally resonates with the audience, whether through pet transformations or rescue stories, strengthens positive perceptions of pet adoption and reinforces adoption as a rewarding and meaningful act. This motivational pull was observed to be more influential than social norms and approval, indicating that personal resonance with content most strongly sustains positive adoption beliefs.

On the other hand, the study still revealed that normative influence had a meaningful contribution to perceptions of pet adoption. Seeing likes, shares, and positive comments on adoption-related content formed cues that socially endorse adoption as a positive act. Respondents who were more frequently exposed to pet adoption-related content reported stronger perceptions of these social signals. This suggests that pet adoption-related social media content doesn't just provide information, but also creates an environment where pet adoption feels socially validated and reinforced by community engagement.

Interestingly, general pet-related content did not reveal a similar relationship with motivational or normative influences. Despite being widely encountered across social media platforms, pet adoption-related content specifically elevated both emotional motivation and perceptions of descriptive and injunctive norms. This

distinction points to the importance of content type and framing: *not all pet-related online media exerts the same influence towards the sample population.*

As such, motivational and normative influences both contribute to how social media content shapes perceptions of pet adoption and intention to adopt. Motivation acts as the stronger, more personal driver while normative cues amplify this effect by embedding adoption within a socially desirable framework. Both are most effective as when respondents encounter pet adoption-related content frequently, suggesting that frequent exposure to such content reinforces a cycle of personal conviction and social endorsement.

### **Adoption Intent**

*How likely are you to adopt a pet in the next year?*

<b>Rating</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1 (Least likely)	36	23.38
2	21	13.64
3	34	22.08
4	29	18.83
5 (Most likely)	34	22.08
Total	154	100.00

*Table 16. Descriptive Statistics on Respondents' Adoption Intent*

When asked to rate their likelihood of adopting a pet dog or cat within the next year using a scale of 1 (least likely) to 5 (most likely), 36 respondents (23.38%) voted for 1 which indicates that they are least likely to adopt, while 34 respondents (22.08%) voted for 5 which indicates being most likely to adopt and another 34 respondents

(22.08%) voted for 3, which means they were feeling neutral about adopting within the next year. This was followed by 29 respondents (18.83%) voting for 4 and 21 respondents (13.64%) voting for 2.

Table 21 reveals that respondents hold mixed intentions regarding the adoption of a pet dog or cat within the next year. The researcher notes that respondents who reported being least likely to adopt is nearly equal to those who reported being most likely to adopt.

*Where would you consider getting a pet from?*

<b>Considered Pet Source</b>	<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Frequency of "5"</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Frequency of "1"</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Animal shelters (whether adopting from their social media pages or going directly to their facility)	2.65	1.453	26	16.88	47	30.52
Pet-Related Social Media Groups (e.g. FB groups like CATS and DOGS RESCUE PHILIPPINES, Cat Lovers PH, etc.)	2.69	1.271	14	9.09	36	23.38
Stray dogs or cats rescued by you or by someone you personally know (not adoption, but added for comparison)	2.70	1.424	28	18.18	37	24.03
Pet shops (whether from their social media pages or going directly to their shops), (not adoption, but for comparison)	2.88	1.263	17	11.04	37	24.03
Breeders (whether from their social media pages or going directly to their facility), (not	2.91	1.269	35	22.73	30	19.48

adoption, but for comparison)						
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Table 17. Descriptive Statistics on Respondents' Preferred Sources of Pet

Table 17 presents respondents' preferences for gaining a pet dog or cat, where respondents were asked to rate five potential sources of pets in terms of their preference (1 = most preferred, 5 = least preferred). In the survey, the researcher noted that other options are not considered as a form of adoption but are included to reflect their actual preferences for acquiring pets.

Aside from this, the researcher noted a limitation in the design survey where ranking in Google Forms was not limited to a single rank per option. Therefore, these values reflect favorability scores rather than strict ordinal rankings, where multiple survey options could be rated with the same level of preference by respondents. Consequently, the results should be interpreted as general trends in preference rather than a definitive hierarchy of choice.

Based on results, "*Animal Shelters*" received the lowest mean score ( $M = 2.65$ ,  $SD = 1.453$ ), indicating that animal shelters emerged as the most preferred pet source among respondents. This is followed by "*Pet-related Social Media Groups*" ( $M = 2.69$ ,  $SD = 1.271$ ) and "*Stray dogs or cats rescued by you or by someone you personally know*" ( $M = 2.70$ ,  $SD = 1.424$ ). However, these options also gained the high frequencies of "least preferred" ratings (rating of 5) with 26 respondents (16.88%) reporting "*Animal Shelters*" as their least preferred source of pet and 14 respondents (9.09%) reporting "*Stray dogs or cats rescued by you or by someone you personally know*" as their least preferred source of pets.

In contrast, the option "*Breeders*" gained the highest mean score ( $M = 2.91$ ,  $SD = 1.269$ ) which indicates that this is the least preferred source of pet for the population

study. Consistently, this option received the highest frequency of “5” ratings (35 respondents, 22.73%) and lowest frequency of “1” ratings (30 respondents, 19.48%).

This is followed by “*Pet Shops*” which garnered a mean score of 2.88 (SD = 1.263). Interestingly, “*Pet Shops*” gained a relatively very high frequency for “1 rating” (37 respondents, 24.03%) despite having a relatively low mean score. This option also garnered a lower frequency of “5” ratings (17 respondents, 11.04%), reflecting a clear divide among respondents—some strongly favoring pets from pet shops, perhaps due to preferences for specific breeds or perceived quality, while others disapprove.

Overall, the high standard deviations across all options in this section suggest varied and conflicting preferences and attitudes among respondents toward different methods of obtaining pet dogs or cats. These results highlight a growing awareness and preference for alternative adoption methods. However, they also indicate that traditional pet acquisition methods remain top-of-mind for many Filipinos.

The following section explores the perceived influence of social media on respondents’ their adoption intent. The Likert-scale items used in this part of the survey capture how social media influences respondents’ interest to adopt pet dogs or cats.

*Reliability of Scales*

<b>Cronbach’s Alpha</b>	<b>No. of Items</b>
0.882	8

*Figure 6. Reliability Statistics on Perceived Influence of Social Media on Adoption Intent*

The Cronbach's Alpha test revealed that the questionnaires for the subscale on respondents' perceived influence of social media on adoption intent has "good" internal consistency, indicating that the set of questions are reliable and valid for data analysis.

*Table 18: Respondents' Perceived Influence of Social Media on Adoption Intent*

Indicators		Mean	SD
1.	Social media helped me learn about adoption processes, making me more confident in considering adoption.	3.97	1.140
2.	Social media made me consider adopting a pet because I learned more about adoption as an alternative to buying.	4.10	0.991
3.	Social media posts with a lot of likes and shares made me more interested in adopting a pet.	3.79	1.114
4.	When I see influential users endorsing pet adoption through posts with high engagement, I feel more motivated to consider adoption.	3.64	1.181
5.	Trending pet adoption videos increased my interest because they showed the emotional side of adoption.	4.01	1.094
6.	I follow pet adoption pages because social media exposed me to the positive aspects of adoption and made it feel more accessible.	3.72	1.255
7.	Seeing my social circle engage with pet adoption content makes me more likely to consider adoption as a valid option.	3.89	1.070
8.	The more comments or discussions there are about pet adoption on social media, the more I am inclined to explore adoption as an option.	3.88	1.090
<b>OVERALL:</b>		<b>3.88</b>	<b>0.882</b>

*Note: Verbal Interpretation of Mean: Strongly Agree ~ Very Influential (4.20 - 5.00), Agree ~ Influential (3.40 - 4.19), Neutral (2.60 - 3.39), Disagree ~ Uninfluential (1.80 - 2.59), Strongly Disagree ~ Very Uninfluential (1.00- 1.79).*

Table 18 above presents the perceived influence of social media on respondents' adoption intent. This subscale represents the extent to which exposure to social media content impacts the self-reported likelihood of respondents to adopt a

pet. This reflects perceived behavioral influence rather than attitudes toward pet adoption.

The table above reveals all eight (8) Likert-scale statements yielded mean scores within the *“Influential”* verbal interpretation of means. The statement, *“Social media made me consider adopting a pet because I learned more about adoption as an alternative to buying”* received the highest mean score (M = 4.10, SD = 0.991). This suggests that pet-related content had a particularly strong influence on respondents’ intention to adopt, as well as on their awareness of adoption as a viable alternative to purchasing pets.

This is followed by the statement *“Trending pet adoption videos increased my interest because they showed the emotional side of adoption”* (M = 4.01, SD = 1.094) and *“Social media helped me learn about adoption processes, making me more confident in considering adoption”* (M = 3.97, SD = 1.140). While these statements garnered relatively high mean scores, the accompanying high standard deviations suggest that respondents held varied opinions, reflecting differing levels of agreement or emotional resonance with the statement.

The statement *“Social media helped me learn about adoption processes, making me more confident in considering adoption”* gained a mean score of 3.97 (SD = 1.140), followed by the statements *“Seeing my social circle engage with pet adoption content makes me more likely to consider adoption as a valid option”* (M = 3.89, SD = 1.070), *“The more comments or discussions there are about pet adoption on social media, the more I am inclined to explore adoption as an option”* (M = 3.88, SD = 1.090), *“Social media posts with a lot of likes and shares made me more interested in adopting a pet”* (M = 3.79, SD = 1.114), *“I follow pet adoption pages because social media*

*exposed me to the positive aspects of adoption and made it feel more accessible”* (M = 3.72, SD = 1.255), and *“When I see influential users endorsing pet adoption through posts with high engagement, I feel more motivated to consider adoption”* (M = 3.63, SD = 1.181).

While these last two indicators ranked lowest in terms of mean scores, their standard deviations are highest in this subscale, indicating a wide variation in respondent agreement. This stipulates that perceptions of injunctive norms or socially approved behavior (e.g. following adoption pages or being persuaded by influencer endorsement) evoked polarized views, with some respondents resonating strongly while others remained skeptical .

Compared to other subscales that measured the influence of social media through Likert-scale statements, this section garnered the lowest overall mean score of 3.88 and an overall standard deviation of 0.882.

Exploring the role of social media influence adds further nuance to the researcher’s observations (see Appendix C). While motivational and normative influences of social media were positively associated with adoption intent, exposure alone to pet-related or pet adoption-related social media content did not consistently translate into stronger intentions to adopt a pet. This suggests that while pet-related social media content potentially cultivates positive perceptions of pet adoption, these do not uniformly overcome practical barriers that are crucial in decision-making involving pet adoption. This further supports that social media influence proves to be more effective in shaping perceptions than in driving decisions towards adoption.

## Summary of Findings

### *Demographics and Social Media Context*

The study population consisted of 154 respondents from Metro Manila, representing a variety of age groups, genders, household incomes, and residences. Millennials and Gen Zs comprised the majority of respondents, reflecting that the sample population regularly engages with social media. Despite varying backgrounds and sociodemographic profiles, frequent engagement with social media content suggests that social media could influence perceptions, motivations, and behaviors that relate to pet adoption.

Most of the respondents reported daily use of social media platforms, establishing a baseline for pet-related social media content exposure. Respondents reported funny and entertaining posts to be a dominant type of pet-related content within their feeds, while pet adoption-related content (e.g., adoption success stories, posts relating to rescued animals, advocacy posts) were less frequently seen.

In terms of social media platform use, Facebook emerged as the platform most used for active engagement with pet-related content, followed by Instagram, Tiktok, and YouTube. Interestingly, Tiktok was more frequently cited for exposure than Instagram, yet Instagram was preferred for interactive engagement (likes, comments, sharing). This indicates that while users encounter adoption or pet-related content across multiple platforms, their choice of engagement platform differs from simple exposure, reflecting selective behaviors and preferences.

This directly relates to Objective 1 of this study, which sought to identify the platforms and exposure patterns most relevant to the respondents.

### *Pet Ownership Motivations & Adoption Barriers*

Motivations for pet ownership highlighted stronger emotional and relational drivers over practical benefits. Key motivations included love for animals, companionship, and emotional support. On the other hand, barriers to pet adoption remained primarily practical, with financial costs, space restrictions, long-term responsibility, and lack of time being the most reported barriers to adoption. Further analyses (see appendix B) revealed that these barriers were generally consistent across respondents, regardless of household income, current pet ownership status, or exposure to social media content. The researcher notes that exposure to pet adoption-related content revealed moderate associations with certain motivations such as past experiences with pets. These findings reflect that while emotional motivations are strong, tangible constraints significantly shape actual adoption behavior and intentions.

This relates to Objective 2 of the study by presenting how social media motivations interact with drivers and practical barriers to adoption.

### *General Perceptions of Pet Adoption*

Survey results indicate that respondents collectively endorse adoption as ethical, responsible, and meaningful. This established a strong attitudinal baseline among respondents. However, perceptions of the adoption process as complex and inconvenient resulted in uncertainty about the practicality of pet adoption. This aligns with previously observed barriers such as financial costs, housing restrictions, and time commitment. This suggests that while moral approval among respondents is high,

structural and logistical factors temper respondents' preference for actually adopting pets.

Supporting analyses provided further nuance (see Appendix C). Differences in general perceptions of pet adoption across exposure to pet-related and pet adoption-related content were not significant. These results indicate that perceptions are largely consistent across all exposure levels and suggest that the baseline ethical approval on pet adoption is already strong. Furthermore, supporting analyses suggested positive associations between perceptions of pet adoption and motivational influence, normative influence, and social media influence on adoption intent. This implies that respondents' interaction with content may still reinforce emotional, social, and normative factors that drive adoption intentions rather than shifting their core attitudinal baseline.

This underscores that social media potentially functions as a reinforcement mechanism for motivational and normative influences than as a direct determinant of baseline perceptions.

### *Motivational and Normative Influences of Social Media*

The motivational influence subscale captured the effect of exposure to pet-related and adoption-related content on emotional, relational, and evaluative motivations toward adoption. Respondents strongly agreed or agreed with most items, particularly those related to empathy, altruism, and recognizing the needs of stray or rescued animals. Respondents revealed higher variations of responses to statements discussing the accessibility of adoption, alignment of pet adoption with their personal needs, and their awareness of adoption-related challenges.

The normative influence subscale measured respondents' perceptions of social approval for adoption, reflecting descriptive and injunctive norms. Gaining high scores for such indicators stipulates that respondents are responsive to visible signs of social approval and support. Engagement metrics such as likes, shares, and comments serve as visible normative cues that shape individual attitudes.

High mean scores suggest that social media norms are influential in reinforcing positive perceptions of pet adoption, though variability exists depending on personal context and selectivity in social evaluation. Furthermore, highly positive perceptions of pet adoption, as revealed by high mean scores of discussed subscales, suggests that respondents are more selective when it involves their personal perceptions and intentions toward pet adoption.

Although direct effects of social media exposure on perceptions of pet adoption were limited, patterns on respondents' exposure levels suggest that social media may play a reinforcing role on perceptions. The moderate influences of social media imply that while social media may not shift adoption perceptions, it supports motivations and signals social approval which consequently consolidates already favorable attitudes toward pet adoption. This finding further supports that practical barriers to adoption remain dominant over perceptions that fail to translate into actionable commitment towards adoption.

### *Adoption Intent*

Respondents' adoption intent presented a more neutral distribution compared to strong perceptions of pet adoption. While some reported that they are willing to adopt within the near future, a substantial portion of the study population remained

undecided and reflects the ambivalence that sets adoption intent apart from perception. This neutrality positions many respondents in a transitional phase where they are open to being influenced by motivational appeal or normative cues online. However, this neutrality may also refer to hesitation caused by reported barriers to adoption. This reflects a potential to further explore the complexities of social media influence and an existing hesitation among respondents that's rooted in practical barriers to adoption.

When asked about sources of pet acquisition, respondents revealed varied results. While many favored adopting from shelters and rescue organizations, many respondents still preferred to obtain pets from breeders or pet shops. This polarization points to the persisting culture and that shapes such preferences. Thus, adoption intent does not always translate into a firm commitment to adopt pets.

Overall, adoption intent is best understood as a tension between reinforcement (through social media influence and social approval) and constraint (through practical and cultural barriers). This neutrality is not representative of disinterest; rather, it indicates an opportunity for interventions that could have significant impact. Highlighting this transitional state underscores the importance of the study and its contribution – it identifies a segment of potential adopters who are currently constrained but are receptive to influence. This offers a practical starting point to close the gap between favorable perceptions of pet adoption and actual adoption behavior.

## V. CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusion

This study set out to explore how pet-related social media content influences perceptions of pet adoption among past, current, and potential pet owners in Metro Manila, Philippines. Anchoring on the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), Focus Normative Theory of Normative Conduct (FTNC), and Cultivation Theory (CT), the study observed and analyzed exposure to pet-related social media content, motivations, barriers, adoption perceptions, perceptions of social media influence, and adoption intents of the respondents. These were evaluated using quantitative responses and statistical analyses presented in the Methodology section.

The findings of this study indicate that respondents generally hold very positive perceptions of pet adoption, viewing it as ethical, responsible, and favorable among respondents. The reinforcing role of social media is evident in these perceptions. Consistent with UGT, respondents actively engage with pet-related content primarily satisfying emotional and informational needs, fostering favorable impressions of adoption. Consistent with FTNC, visible signs of online community approval signal positive social approval and reinforce adoption as a socially desirable practice. Lastly, CT further explains how repeated exposure to pet-related content sustains and normalizes pro-adoption perceptions and attitudes across digital platforms.

However, this positive perception of pet adoption does not directly translate to positive adoption intent, leaving adoption intent among respondents to be largely neutral. This highlights a key insight, as neutrality identifies a transitional phase among respondents who are open to influence but are constrained by practical considerations

such as financial costs and time commitment. These results suggest that while social media strengthens motivations and reinforces normative cues, it cannot fully overcome practical barriers to pet adoption. As such, the study underscores that positive perceptions of pet adoption on its own do not translate to actual pet adoption and acknowledges the need to consider practical and structural factors alongside media influence in further exploring the topic.

This research study offers a number of contributions from a multimedia studies perspective:

1. The study demonstrates how social media serves as a significant channel for shaping motivations, social norms, and perceptions around pet adoption, even if this does not directly drive pet adoption.
2. The study identifies neutral adoption intent among respondents as a space of opportunity where exposure to social media content could influence potential pet adopters.
3. The study extends classical media effects theories (UGT, FTNC, CT) to social media platforms and contemporary digital contexts in the Philippines, showing how emotional gratifications, social approval, and repeated exposure to social media content interact with practical and real-life barriers to form attitudes and influence decision-making.

These insights offer a foundation for future research and exploration of the topic. Moreover, the study affirms the value of considering descriptive patterns in understanding how multimedia content shapes social perceptions and attitudes.

## **Recommendations**

The findings of this study, along with its academic and practical significance, point to several recommendations for stakeholders and future researchers.

Future studies on this topic should continue distinguishing between these two dimensions to capture the nuanced effects of social media. Building on this study's integration of exposure and motivational and normative influences, future researchers should continue refining multi-dimensional frameworks for investigating such media effects studies and should measure the numerous layers of media influence across varying cultural contexts.

Furthermore, the study explored self-reported measures of exposure, influences, and perceived attitudes toward pet adoption while future studies might consider exploring studies on the topic that will quantitatively measure such constructs and expand the study to explore perceived influences and actual impact of such influences Filipinos.

Lastly, the methodological design of this study may be adapted to investigate how social media influences attitudes and behaviors in other areas such as public health, civic engagement, or environmental campaigns to broaden the contribution of multimedia studies in shaping societal norms and practices in the Philippines.

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## Appendices

# APPENDIX A

## Survey Instrument

### *!!Important to Read Before Answering the Survey*

This research study is conducted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Capstone Project under the degree program BA Multimedia Studies in University of the Philippines Open University. The research study aims to explore the influences of pet-related social media content on perceptions of Filipinos toward pet adoption. Specifically, the study aims to:

1. Identify the platforms used by prospective pet owners in Metro Manila and their exposure to pet-related social media content in these platforms.
2. Determine the motivations behind pet ownership intentions and the extent to which these motivations are influenced by pet-related social media content.
3. Explore barriers and motivations to pet adoption as shaped by exposure to pet-related social media content.

For the purposes of this study, the term “**pet adoption**” or “**adoption**” will be used interchangeably to refer to:

1. The adoption of dogs or cats from public city pounds
2. The adoption of rescued dogs and cats from non-government pet shelters
3. The adoption of rescued dogs or cats currently being fostered by individuals or organizations

The use of the terms “**pet adoption**” and “**adoption**” will **not include**:

1. Picking up stray dogs or cats from the streets and taking them in as pets
2. Accepting dogs or cats from friends or family members

Your participation in this study is **completely voluntary**, and you may choose to withdraw at any time if you feel uncomfortable. The survey will take approximately **10–15 minutes** to complete.

#### **Data Privacy and Confidentiality**

In accordance with the Data Privacy Act (R.A. 10173), all responses recorded will be kept strictly confidential and will only be used for the purpose of this study. No personal information will be released and data will be stored securely. Responses will be presented in **aggregated form** to ensure anonymity.

#### **Raffle Incentive (Optional)**

To thank everyone for your time, **one (1) respondent will be randomly selected to win ₱500 via GCash** after the survey period ends 🎉

- To join the raffle, you may choose to provide an email address or GCash number at the end of the survey.
- Your **survey answers will remain completely anonymous**, and your raffle entry will be stored **separately** from your responses.
- **Submitting your contact info is optional** and will only be used to notify the winner. It will be deleted after the raffle is concluded.

### **PART 1: Sociodemographic Profile**

To help us understand the background of our respondents, please provide some basic information about yourself. No judgment here—just answer honestly! 🙏🐾

Age

- 18-24 years old
- 25-34 years old
- 35-44 years old
- 45-54 years old

#### Gender

- Woman
- Man
- Transgender
- Non-binary/non-conforming
- Prefer not to say

#### Area of Residence in NCR

- Caloocan
- Las Piñas
- Makati
- Malabon
- Mandaluyong
- Manila
- Marikina
- Muntinlupa
- Navotas
- Parañaque
- Pasay
- Pasig
- Pateros
- Quezon City
- San Juan
- Taguig
- Valenzuela

#### Monthly Household Income

- Less than P11,000
- P11,000 to P21,000
- P21,000 to P44,000
- P44,000 to P77,000
- P77,000 to P132,000
- P132,000 to P220,000
- P220,00 and above

#### Current Pet Ownership Status

- I currently have no pets but I previously had a pet dog or cat
- I currently own a pet dog/s and/or cat/s
- I have never owned any pet dog or cat before but I'm interested to have one

### **PART 2: Exposure to Pet-related Social Media Content**

This section asks about the kind of pet-related content you come across online. Just think about what usually pops up when you scroll on social media.

On which social media platforms do you actively engage with pet-related content (liking, commenting, sharing, following pet pages)? (Select all that apply)

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Tiktok
- YouTube
- I do not engage actively with pet-related content

On which social media platforms do you see the most pet-related content? (Rank the platforms with 1 being the highest and 4 being the lowest.)

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Tiktok
- YouTube

How often do pet-related posts appear on your social media feed?

- Daily
- A few times a week
- A few times a month
- Rarely
- Never

How often do pet adoption-related posts appear on your social media feed?

How often do pet-related posts appear on your social media feed?

- Daily
- A few times a week
- A few times a month
- Rarely
- Never

What type/s of pet-related content do you usually encounter?

- Adoption success stories
- Pet care tutorials
- Rescue/shelter videos
- Funny pet videos
- Emotional pet stories
- Cute/funny pet videos or photos
- Rescue transformation stories (before-and-after)
- Personal adoption success stories
- Advocacy campaigns promoting adoption
- Posts about shelter overcrowding, failed adoptions, or pet surrender cases
- Posts about abandoned, neglected, or abused pets
- Pet care advice & responsible ownership tips
- Others

### **PART 3: Pet Ownership Motivations**

What are your primary motivations for pet ownership? (Select all that apply)

- I love animals
- Companionship
- Emotional support
- Family/kids want a pet
- Security purposes
- I grew up with pets

#### PART 4: Perceptions of Pet Adoption

For each statement, please select the response that best reflects your personal opinion on pet adoption. Use the scale provided:

1. Strongly Disagree – You completely disagree with the statement.
2. Disagree – You somewhat disagree with the statement.
3. Neutral – You neither agree nor disagree.
4. Agree – You somewhat agree with the statement.
5. Strongly Agree – You completely agree with the statement.

There are no right or wrong answers—just choose what best represents your thoughts! 🐾

	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	I believe adopting a pet is better than buying one.	5	4	3	2	1
2.	I view pet adoption as a responsible and ethical choice.	5	4	3	2	1
3.	I believe stray and rescued animals deserve to be adopted into loving homes.	5	4	3	2	1
4.	I believe the adoption process is too complicated and inconvenient.	5	4	3	2	1
5.	I believe pet adoption allows me to find the right pet for my lifestyle or preferences	5	4	3	2	1
6.	I believe adopting a pet is just as easy as buying one.	5	4	3	2	1
7.	I believe adopting a pet is a meaningful way to help animals in need.	5	4	3	2	1
8.	I believe adoption is just as fulfilling as other ways of getting a pet.	5	4	3	2	1

#### PART 5: Social Media Influence on Perceptions of Pet Adoption (Part 1)

For each statement, please select the response that best reflects your personal opinion on pet adoption. Use the scale provided:

1. Strongly Disagree – You completely disagree with the statement.
2. Disagree – You somewhat disagree with the statement.
3. Neutral – You neither agree nor disagree.
4. Agree – You somewhat agree with the statement.
5. Strongly Agree – You completely agree with the statement.

There are no right or wrong answers—just choose what best represents your thoughts! 🐾

	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	Social media has increased my awareness of pet adoption as an alternative to buying a pet.	5	4	3	2	1
2.	I often look at how others engage with pet adoption posts (e.g., likes, shares, comments) before forming an opinion about adoption.	5	4	3	2	1
3.	I believe that pet-related social media content presents adoption as a more ethical and responsible choice.	5	4	3	2	1
4.	Social media posts have helped me realize that stray and rescued animals deserve loving homes.	5	4	3	2	1
5.	Seeing pet-related social media content has made the pet adoption process seem easier and more accessible than I previously thought.	5	4	3	2	1
6.	I've encountered social media content that has made me more aware of the challenges of adopting pets.	5	4	3	2	1
7.	Because of social media, I believe adoption can be just as fulfilling as buying a pet.	5	4	3	2	1

### PART 5: Social Media Influence on Perceptions of Pet Adoption (Part 2)

For each statement, please select the response that best reflects your personal opinion on pet adoption. Use the scale provided:

1. Strongly Disagree – You completely disagree with the statement.
2. Disagree – You somewhat disagree with the statement.
3. Neutral – You neither agree nor disagree.
4. Agree – You somewhat agree with the statement.
5. Strongly Agree – You completely agree with the statement.

There are no right or wrong answers—just choose what best represents your thoughts! 🐾

	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	Social media has made me more likely to view adoption as a good deed or an act of kindness.	5	4	3	2	1
2.	Social media has changed the way I evaluate whether adoption fits my personal needs or preferences.	5	4	3	2	1

3.	I've seen pet adoption stories on social media that have influenced how I emotionally connect with the idea of adoption.	5	4	3	2	1
4.	I feel that many people approve of pet adoption when I see posts about adoption with high engagement (likes, shares, comments).	5	4	3	2	1
5.	When I see pet adoption content with positive feedback (likes, shares), I am more likely to consider it a socially responsible action.	5	4	3	2	1
6.	I am more likely to view pet adoption positively when I see others engaging (liking, sharing, commenting) with pet adoption posts.	5	4	3	2	1
7.	Seeing social media users share adoption success stories makes me feel that adoption is a widely accepted and supported action.	5	4	3	2	1

#### **PART 6: Barriers and Intentions for Pet Adoption**

We'd like to know what might be stopping you from adopting and how likely you are to adopt in the future. Again, no pressure with answering - your insights are what matter the most! (Select all that apply).

- Financial costs of pet ownership
- Long-term responsibility
- Restrictions (housing, landlord, etc.)
- Lack of time
- Allergies/health concerns
- Uncertainty about shelter pets' behavior
- Uncertainty about the credibility of animal shelters or city pounds

How likely are you to adopt a pet in the next year?

1. Very Unlikely
2. Unlikely
3. Neutral
4. Likely
5. Very Likely

Where would you consider getting a pet from?

*Rank the options with 1 being the highest and 5 being the lowest.*

	Options	Highest				Lowest
1.	Animal shelters (whether adopting from their social media pages or going directly to their facility)	5	4	3	2	1
2.	Pet-Related Social Media Groups (e.g. FB groups like CATS and DOGS RESCUE PHILIPPINES, Cat Lovers PH, etc.)	5	4	3	2	1
3.	Stray dogs or cats rescued by you or by someone you personally know (not adoption, but added for comparison)	5	4	3	2	1

4.	Pet shops (whether from their social media pages or going directly to their shops), (not adoption, but for comparison)	5	4	3	2	1
5.	Breeders (whether from their social media pages or going directly to their facility), (not adoption, but for comparison)	5	4	3	2	1

What specific influences contribute to your decision to adopt a particular pet? (Short statement answers are acceptable)

**PART 7: Social Media Influence on Adoption Intent**

For each statement, please select the response that best reflects your personal opinion on pet adoption. Use the scale provided:

1. Strongly Disagree – You completely disagree with the statement.
2. Disagree – You somewhat disagree with the statement.
3. Neutral – You neither agree nor disagree.
4. Agree – You somewhat agree with the statement.
5. Strongly Agree – You completely agree with the statement.

There are no right or wrong answers—just choose what best represents your thoughts! 🐾


	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	Social media helped me learn about adoption processes, making me more confident in considering adoption.	5	4	3	2	1
2.	Social media made me consider adopting a pet because I learned more about adoption as an alternative to buying.	5	4	3	2	1
3.	Social media posts with a lot of likes and shares made me more interested in adopting a pet, as it seemed to have wide approval.	5	4	3	2	1
4.	When I see influential users (e.g., celebrities, influencers, pet influencers, etc.) endorsing pet adoption through posts with high engagement, I feel more motivated to consider adoption.	5	4	3	2	1
5.	Trending pet adoption videos increased my interest because they showed the emotional side of adoption and the need for loving homes.	5	4	3	2	1
6.	I follow pet adoption pages because social media exposed me to the positive aspects of adoption and made it feel more accessible.	5	4	3	2	1
7.	Seeing my social circle engage with pet adoption content (liking, commenting,	5	4	3	2	1

	sharing) makes me more likely to consider adoption as a valid option.					
8.	The more comments or discussions there are about pet adoption on social media, the more I am inclined to explore adoption as an option.	5	4	3	2	1

**PART 8: Optional Raffle Entry**

Thank you for completing the survey! To show appreciation for your time, you can enter a raffle to win ₱500 via GCash. Only one (1) winner will be randomly selected after the survey closes.

If you'd like to join, please enter your email address or GCash number below.

 *Your contact information will be stored separately from your survey answers to protect your anonymity. It will only be used to contact the winner and will be deleted after the raffle ends.*

 *This step is completely optional. You may skip it if you prefer to stay anonymous.*

## APPENDIX B

### Cross-Tabulations

*Table B1. Ownership status - Perceived barriers Cross Tabulation & Chi-square Test Results*

Barrier Category	Current (n=120)	Former (n=26)	Potential (n=8)	X2	df	p value	Cramer's V
Financial Cost	74 (61.67%)	15 (57.69%)	7 (87.50%)	2.419	2	0.298	0.125
New Responsibility	61 (50.83%)	16 (61.54%)	3 (37.50%)	1.687	2	0.430	0.105
Space Restrictions	62 (51.67%)	15 (57.69%)	5 (62.50%)	0.602	2	0.740	0.063
Time Constraints	47 (39.17%)	14 (53.85%)	4 (50.00%)	2.098	2	0.350	0.117
Health Concerns	39 (32.50%)	9 (34.62%)	4 (50.00%)	1.037	2	0.595	0.082
Behavior of Pet from Shelter	47 (39.17%)	10 (38.46%)	5 (62.50%)	1.740	2	0.419	0.106
Source Credibility	40 (33.33%)	10 (38.46%)	0 (0.00%)	4.313	2	0.116	0.167

The table above presents a cross-tabulation examining respondents' current pet ownership status and their perceived barriers to pet adoption. Overall, both pet owners and non-owners reported similar perceived barriers which suggest that current ownership status does not strongly shape individuals' perceptions of challenges when it comes to adopting. This indicates that perceived barriers to adoption are widely shared across respondents, regardless of whether they own pets or not. This highlights the importance of practical constraints in making decisions regarding pet adoption.

*Table B2: Household Income - Perceived Barriers Cross Tabulation & Chi-square Test Results*

Barrier Category	Low income (n=35)	Middle income (n=81)	High income (n=38)	X2	df	p value	Cramer's V
Financial Cost	23 (65.71%)	53 (65.43%)	20 (52.63%)	2.025	2	0.363	0.115
New Responsibility	20 (57.14%)	42 (51.82%)	18 (47.37%)	0.698	2	0.705	0.067
Space Restrictions	20 (57.14%)	42 (51.85%)	20 (52.63%)	0.283	2	0.868	0.043
Time Constraints	11 (31.43%)	40 (49.38%)	14 (36.84%)	3.825	2	0.148	0.158
Health Concerns	14 (40.00%)	29 (35.80%)	9 (23.69%)	2.485	2	0.289	0.127
Behavior of Pet from Shelter	14 (40.00%)	31 (38.27%)	17 (44.74%)	0.451	2	0.798	0.054

Source Credibility	15 (42.86%)	23 (28.40%)	12 (31.58%)	2.349	2	0.309	0.124
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Note: Household Income Classification: Low-income ~ less than P11,000 and P11,000 to P21,000, Middle-income ~ P21,000 to P44,000, P44,000 to P77,000, and P77,000 to P132,000, High-income ~ P132,000 to P220,000 and P220,000 and above.

The table above presents a cross-tabulation examining respondents' current household income and their perceived barriers to pet adoption. For clarity, respondents' reported household incomes were collapsed from seven classifications to three: (1) low-income, (2) middle-income, and (3) high-income respondents. The findings indicate that perceived barriers remain similar across respondents with differing household incomes, highlighting that socioeconomic differences do not strongly shape perceived barriers to pet adoption.

Table B3. Exposure to Pet Adoption-related Content - Perceived barriers Cross Tabulation & Chi-square Test Results

Barrier Category	Daily (n=39)	Few times a week (n=55)	Few times a month (n=33)	Rarely (n=27)	X2	df	p value	Cramer's V
Financial Cost	24 (61.54%)	36 (65.46%)	20 (60.61%)	16 (59.26%)	0.389	3	0.942	0.050
Long-Term Responsibility	22 (56.41%)	31 (56.36%)	15 (45.46%)	12 (44.44%)	1.907	3	0.592	0.111
Space Restrictions	17 (43.59%)	35 (63.64%)	17 (51.52%)	13 (48.15%)	4.167	3	0.244	0.165
Time Constraints	14 (35.90%)	22 (40.00%)	16 (48.49%)	12 (48.15%)	1.670	3	0.644	0.104
Health Concerns	13 (33.33%)	19 (34.55%)	9 (27.27%)	11 (40.74%)	1.228	3	0.746	0.089
Behavior of Pet from Shelter	11 (28.21%)	20 (36.36%)	16 (48.49%)	15 (55.56%)	6.358	3	0.100	0.202
Source Credibility	12 (30.77%)	18 (32.73%)	10 (30.30%)	10 (37.04%)	0.381	3	0.944	0.050

Table B3 above shows a cross-tabulation examining respondents' reported exposure to pet adoption-related content and their perceived barriers to pet adoption. Perceived barriers were similar across all levels of exposure which suggests that encountering pet adoption-related content does not directly change respondents' perceptions of barriers to pet adoption. This indicates that while exposure to pet adoption-related content may shape perceptions and motivations, it does not directly alleviate or amplify perceived barriers to adoption.

*Table B4. Exposure to Pet-related Content - Pet Adoption Barriers Cross Tabulation & Chi-square Test Results*

<b>Barrier Category</b>	<b>Daily (n=39)</b>	<b>Few times a week (n=55)</b>	<b>Few times a month (n=33)</b>	<b>Rarely (n=27)</b>	<b>X2</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p value</b>	<b>Cramer's V</b>
Financial Cost	71 (65.74%)	21 (52.50%)	3 (75.00%)	1 (50.00%)	2.584	3	0.460	0.130
Long-Term Responsibility	58 (53.70%)	18 (45.00%)	2 (50.00%)	2 (100.00%)	2.763	3	0.430	0.134
Space Restrictions	56 (51.85%)	24 (60.00%)	1 (25.00%)	1 (100.00%)	2.108	3	0.550	0.117
Time Constraints	46 (42.59%)	16 (40.00%)	1 (25.00%)	2 (100.00%)	3.311	3	0.346	0.147
Health Concerns	34 (34.48%)	15 (37.50%)	1 (25.00%)	2 (100.00%)	4.562	3	0.207	0.172
Behavior of Pet from Shelter	38 (35.19%)	20 (50.00%)	2 (50.00%)	2 (100.00%)	5.860	3	0.119	0.195
Source Credibility	33 (30.56%)	13 (32.50%)	2 (50.00%)	2 (100.00%)	4.901	3	0.179	0.178

Table B4 above presents a cross-tabulation examining respondents' reported exposure to general pet-related content and their perceived barriers to pet adoption. Similar to the previous results, respondents' perceived barriers to pet adoption remained similar across all levels of exposure to more general pet-related social media content. Thus, this indicates that both pet-related and pet adoption-related content do not directly alleviate or amplify reported perceived barriers, while still having the potential to shape perceptions and motivations toward pet adoption.

*Table B5. Pet Ownership Status - Pet Ownership Motivations Cross Tabulation & Chi-square Test Results*

<b>Motivation Category</b>	<b>Current (n=120)</b>	<b>Former (n=26)</b>	<b>Potential (n=8)</b>	<b>X2</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p value</b>	<b>Cramer's V</b>
Love for animals	102 (85.00%)	20 (76.92%)	6 (75.00%)	1.390	2	0.499	0.095
Companionship	82 (68.33%)	20 (76.92%)	5 (62.50%)	0.937	2	0.626	0.078
Emotional Support	69 (57.50%)	17 (65.39%)	3 (37.50%)	1.969	2	0.374	0.113
Family wants pets	32 (26.67%)	6 (23.08%)	1 (12.50%)	0.880	2	0.644	0.076
Safety & Security	19 (15.83%)	3 (11.54%)	0 (0.00%)	1.728	2	0.421	0.106
<b>Past exp. with pets</b>	<b>49 (40.83%)</b>	<b>11 (42.31%)</b>	<b>0 (0.00%)</b>	<b>5.406</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.067</b>	<b>0.187</b>

Table B5 above shows cross-tabulation data examining respondents' current pet ownership status and their perceived motivations for pet ownership. Motivations for pet ownership were revealed to be similar in both pet owners and non-pet owners. This indicates that respondents' current pet ownership status does not directly amplify or alleviate respondents' motivations for pet ownership.

*Table B6: Household Income - Pet Ownership Motivations Cross Tabulation & Chi-square Test Results*

Motivation Category	Low income (n=35)	Middle income (n=81)	High income (n=38)	X2	df	p value	Cramer's V
Love for animals	32 (91.43%)	65 (80.25%)	31 (81.58%)	2.263	2	0.323	0.121
Companionship	23 (65.71%)	62 (76.54%)	22 (57.90%)	4.545	2	0.103	0.172
Emotional Support	19 (54.29%)	53 (65.34%)	17 (44.74%)	4.770	2	0.092	0.176
Family wants pets	7 (20.00%)	26 (32.10%)	6 (15.79%)	4.317	2	0.115	0.167
Safety & Security	4 (11.43%)	16 (19.75%)	2 (5.26%)	4.737	2	0.094	0.175
Past exp. with pets	14 (40.00%)	34 (41.96%)	12 (31.58%)	1.196	2	0.550	0.088

*Note: Household Income Classification: Low-income ~ less than P11,000 and P11,000 to P21,000, Middle-income ~ P21,000 to P44,000, P44,000 to P77,000, and P77,000 to P132,000, High-income ~ P132,000 to P220,000 and P220,000 and above.*

Table B6 above presents cross-tabulation data examining respondents' household income and their perceived motivations for pet ownership. For practicality and interpretability, respondents' reported household incomes were collapsed from seven classifications to three: (1) low-income, (2) middle-income, and (3) high-income respondents. Similar to previous results, motivations for pet ownership remained similar across different household income levels. This highlights that socioeconomic differences do not strongly shape motivations for pet ownership.

*Table B7. Exposure to Adoption-related Content - Pet Ownership Motivations Cross Tabulation & Chi-square Test Results*

Motivation Category	Daily (n=39)	Few times a week (n=55)	Few times a month (n=33)	Rarely (n=27)	X2	df	p value	Cramer's V
Love for animals	33 (84.65%)	50 (90.91%)	26 (78.79%)	19 (70.37%)	6.009	3	0.111	0.198
Companionship	24 (61.54%)	38 (69.09%)	25 (75.76%)	20 (74.07%)	2.046	3	0.563	0.115
Emotional Support	21 (53.85%)	32 (58.18%)	19 (57.58%)	17 (62.96%)	0.549	3	0.908	0.060
Family wants pets	5 (12.82%)	13 (23.64%)	13 (39.39%)	8 (29.63%)	7.026	3	0.071	0.214
Safety & Security	5 (12.82%)	8 (14.55%)	4 (12.12%)	5 (18.52%)	0.593	3	0.898	0.062

<b>Past exp. with pets</b>	<b>22 (56.41%)</b>	<b>22 (40.00%)</b>	<b>8 (24.24%)</b>	<b>8 (29.63%)</b>	<b>9.013</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.029</b>	<b>0.242</b>
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Table B7 above presents cross-tabulation data examining respondents' exposure to pet adoption-related content and their perceived motivations for pet ownership. Across most categories, motivations appeared similar regardless of exposure levels. However, respondents with higher exposure to adoption-related content more frequently identified past experiences with pets as a key motivation for pet ownership. More particularly, those who encountered adoption content daily most often cited previous pet ownership as an important factor contributing to their current motivations. This suggests that personal history with pets may interact with online adoption narratives, reinforcing emotional or experiential connections to the idea of adopting pets.

*Table B8. Exposure to Pet-related Content - Pet Ownership Motivations Cross Tabulation & Chi-square Test Results*

<b>Barrier Category</b>	<b>Daily (n=39)</b>	<b>Few times a week (n=55)</b>	<b>Few times a month (n=33)</b>	<b>Rarely (n=27)</b>	<b>X2</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p value</b>	<b>Cramer's V</b>
<b>Love for animals</b>	<b>95 (87.96%)</b>	<b>29 (72.50%)</b>	<b>2 (50.00%)</b>	<b>2 (100.00%)</b>	<b>8.553</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.036</b>	<b>0.236</b>
Companionship	76 (70.37%)	27 (67.50%)	2 (50.00%)	2 (100.00%)	1.709	3	0.635	0.105
Emotional Support	64 (59.26%)	21 (52.50%)	3 (75.00%)	1 (50.00%)	1.090	3	0.780	0.084
<b>Family wants pets</b>	<b>21 (19.44%)</b>	<b>15 (37.50%)</b>	<b>1 (25.00%)</b>	<b>2 (100.00%)</b>	<b>11.008</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.012</b>	<b>0.267</b>
Safety & Security	11 (10.19%)	9 (22.500%)	1 (25.00%)	1 (50.00%)	6.146	3	0.105	0.200
Past exp. with pets	45 (41.67%)	13 (32.50%)	1 (25.00%)	1 (50.00%)	1.465	3	0.690	0.098

After exploring associations between pet adoption-related content and perceived motivations, the researcher then observed if similar patterns exist between general pet-related content with respondents' reported motivations for pet ownership.

Respondents with higher exposure to pet-related content more frequently cited "love for animals" as a motivation for pet ownership. This suggests that frequently encountering pets online may reinforce or validate emotional bonds toward pets.

Aside from this, respondents who reported higher exposure to pet-related social media content were also more likely to cite "family wants pets" as a motivation. This indicates that pet-related content may indirectly strengthen motivations that are family-oriented and possibly normalize the idea that pets are a part of household life.

These findings highlight that while most motivations remained similar across exposure levels, certain emotional and social drivers appeared to interact more closely with respondents' online experiences.

## APPENDIX C

### Correlations & Other Inferential Tests

*Table C1. Correlation of Social Media Influences on Perceptions of Pet Adoption*

Social Media Influences	r (Spearman's rho)	p-value
Motivational Influence	.475***	<.001
Normative Influence	.367***	<.001
Social Media Influence on Intent	.369***	<.001

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

The table C1 presents the relationship between the study's main constructs. The results above reveal that motivational influence, normative influence, and social media influence on adoption intent are all positively related to perceptions of pet adoption. Among these, motivational influence emerged as most strongly associated with adoption perceptions, suggesting that when respondents felt that social media content meaningfully shaped their motivations, they also tended to hold more positive views toward pet adoption.

On the other hand, normative influence and social media influence on adoption intent also revealed meaningful associations with adoption perceptions. This indicates that social approval and broader beliefs on the role of social media in shaping behavior both reinforce favorable attitudes toward pet adoption.

These patterns highlight that motivational and normative factors actively reinforce positive perceptions of pet adoption. While social media content may not directly overcome practical barriers to pet adoption, it appears to consolidate pro-adoption attitudes by sustaining emotional, social, and normative drivers.

*Table C2. Correlation of Social Media Influences on Adoption Intent*

Social Media Influences	r (Spearman's rho)	p-value
Motivational Influence	.500***	<.001
Normative Influence	.478***	<.001
Social Media Influence on Intent	.439***	<.001

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

When specific Social Media Influences were then tested against adoption intent, Motivational Influence, Normative Influence, and Social Media Influence on Adoption Intent all showed positive associations. Similar to the previous table's results, motivational influence emerged as the strongest factor among the three, indicating that when respondents felt emotionally moved or personally

motivated by pet adoption-related social media content, they were more likely to express stronger intent towards pet adoption.

Normative influence and social media influence on adoption intent also showed meaningful links with adoption intent. This suggests that visible signs of community approval and respondents' belief that social media can shape decisions both play reinforcing roles in strengthening adoption intent.

Overall, these findings highlight that while adoption intent remains more neutral than adoption perceptions, social media influence still contributes to shaping respondents' openness toward pet adoption. This underscores social media's role as reinforcing rather than determinative, with adoption intent still mediated by perceived barriers to adoption.

*Table C3. Differences in Motivational Influence Across Levels of Exposure to Pet Adoption-related Content*

Exposure to Adoption-Related Content	Frequency	Mean Motivational Influence Score	SD
Daily	39	4.40	0.572
A few times a week	55	4.32	0.558
A few times a month	33	4.26	0.583
Rarely	27	3.90	0.646

*Note. Values are group means (M) and standard deviations (SD) of motivational influence scores across levels of exposure to adoption-related content.*

ANOVA Result
F(3, 150) = 4.34, p = 0.006, $\eta^2 = 0.080$

*Note: Effect size ( $\eta^2$ ) reflects the proportion of variance explained, with .08 interpreted as a moderate effect*

Findings show that respondents who were more frequently exposed to pet adoption-related content tended to report higher levels of motivational influence. In contrast, those who rarely came across such social media content reflected lower levels of motivational influence. This pattern suggests that consistent exposure to pet adoption-related content is linked with stronger motivation toward pet adoption. This also highlights the reinforcing role of repeated visibility in shaping adoption-related attitudes.

Table C4. Differences in Normative Influence Across Levels of Exposure to Pet Adoption-Related Content

Exposure to Adoption-Related Content	Frequency	Mean Normative Influence Score	SD
Daily	39	4.37	0.107
A few times a week	55	4.01	0.808
A few times a month	33	4.10	0.776
Rarely	27	3.82	0.693

Note. Values are group means (M) and standard deviations (SD) of normative influence scores across levels of exposure to adoption-related content.

ANOVA Result
F(3, 150) = 3.32, p = 0.022, $\eta^2 = 0.062$

Note: Effect size ( $\eta^2$ ) reflects the proportion of variance explained, with .06 interpreted as a moderate effect

The table above presents data on respondents' exposure to pet adoption-related content and their reported normative influence. Results revealed that respondents who encountered pet adoption-related content on a daily basis reported stronger perceptions of social norms surrounding adoption compared to those who rarely came across such content. This indicates that more frequent exposure to pet adoption-related posts appears to reinforce the sense that pet adoption is viewed positively and encouraged within one's social circle. Meanwhile, respondents with less exposure to pet adoption-related content reflected weaker normative influence, suggesting that consistent visibility of pet adoption messages helps strengthen the perception of adoption as a socially acceptable and supported practice.

Table C5. Differences in Perceptions of Pet Adoption Across Levels of Exposure to Pet Adoption-Related Content

Exposure to Pet-Related Content	Frequency	Mean Adoption Perception Score	SD
Daily	39	4.17	0.453
A few times a week	55	4.12	0.511
A few times a month	33	4.18	0.325
Rarely	27	3.99	0.574

Note. Values are group means (M) and standard deviations (SD) of adoption perception scores across levels of exposure to adoption-related content.

ANOVA Result
F(3, 150) = 0.994, p = 0.398, $\eta^2 = 0.019$

*Note: Effect size ( $\eta^2$ ) reflects the proportion of variance explained, with .019 interpreted as a small effect*

Table C5 above presents data on respondents' exposure to pet adoption-related content and their reported perceptions of pet adoption. Respondents' overall perception of pet adoption appeared generally consistent, regardless of how often they were exposed to pet adoption-related social media content. Whether they encountered such content daily, weekly, monthly, or rarely, their views toward adoption remained consistent and did not differ significantly. This suggests that while adoption-related content may shape motivations or reinforce social norms, it does not directly alter respondent's overall perception of pet adoption itself.

*Table C6. Differences in Adoption Intent Across Levels of Exposure to Pet Adoption-Related Content*

Exposure to Pet Adoption-related Content	Adoption Intent (Frequency, % of Row Total)					
	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Daily	5 (12.82%)	1 (2.56%)	9 (23.08%)	7 (17.95%)	17 (43.59%)	39 (25.32%)
A few times a week	10 (18.18%)	9 (16.36%)	13 (23.64%)	10 (18.18%)	13 (23.64%)	55 (35.71%)
A few times a month	13 (39.39%)	6 (18.18%)	7 (21.21%)	6 (18.18%)	1 (3.03%)	33 (21.43%)
Rarely	8 (29.63%)	5 (18.52)	5 (18.52%)	6 (22.22%)	3 (11.11%)	27 (17.53%)
<b>Total</b>	36 (23.38%)	21 (13.64%)	34 (22.08%)	29 (18.83%)	34 (22.08%)	154 (100%)

*Note. The "never" exposure category was excluded due to zero responses.*

ANOVA Result
F(3, 150) = 7.759, p =<.001, $\eta^2 = 0.134$

*Note: Effect size ( $\eta^2$ ) reflects the proportion of variance explained, with 0.13 interpreted as a small effect*

Table C6 above presents data on respondents' exposure to pet adoption-related content and their reported intent to adopt pets within the next 12 months. Results indicated meaningful differences across exposure groups, with those more frequently exposed to pet adoption-related content reporting

stronger adoption intent. This suggests that repeated exposure to pet adoption-related messages may play a role in encouraging individuals to consider adoption more seriously.

Table C7. Distribution of Motivational Influence Across Levels of Exposure to Pet-Related Content

Exposure to Pet-Related Content	Median	Inter-Quartile Range (IQR)
Daily	4.444	0.889
A few times a week	4.111	0.917
A few times a month	3.889	0.750
Rarely	3.556	1.222

Note. DV = motivational influence (mean scores per respondent); IV = exposure to pet-related content. Descriptive statistics are reported as **median** and **interquartile range (IQR)**. The “never” exposure category was excluded due to zero responses.

Kruskal-Wallis Test Result
H(3) = 4.888, p = 0.180

Note. Significance thresholds:  $p < .05$  = statistically significant;  $p < .01$  = highly significant;  $p < .001$  = very highly significant.

The table above presents data on respondents’ exposure to pet-related content and their reported motivational influence. These findings suggest that there is no meaningful difference in respondents’ motivational influence across different exposure groups. Motivational influence remained relatively consistent, regardless of how often respondents encounter pet-related social media content.

Table C8. Distribution of Normative Influence Across Levels of Exposure to Pet-Related Content

Exposure to Pet-Related Content	Median	Inter-Quartile Range (IQR)
Daily	4.200	1.050
A few times a week	3.800	1.200
A few times a month	4.00	0.950
Rarely	3.500	1.500

Note. DV = normative influence (mean scores per respondent); IV = exposure to pet-related content. Descriptive statistics are reported as **median** and **interquartile range (IQR)**. The “never” exposure category was excluded due to zero responses.

<b>Kruskal-Wallis Test Result</b>
H(3) = 3.675 p = 0.299

Note. Significance thresholds:  $p < .05$  = statistically significant;  $p < .01$  = highly significant;  $p < .001$  = very highly significant.

The table above presents data on respondents' exposure to pet-related content and their reported normative influence. Similarly, results suggest that there is no meaningful difference in respondents' normative influence across different exposure groups. Normative influence remained relatively consistent, regardless of how often respondents encounter pet-related social media content.

Table C9. Distribution of Perceptions of Pet Adoption Across Levels of Exposure to Pet-Related Content

<b>Exposure to Pet-Related Content</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Inter-Quartile Range (IQR)</b>
Daily	4.250	0.500
A few times a week	4.125	0.656
A few times a month	4.125	0.719
Rarely	3.063	0.688

Note. DV = general adoption perceptions (mean scores per respondent); IV = exposure to pet-related content. Descriptive statistics are reported as **median** and **interquartile range (IQR)**. The "never" exposure category was excluded due to zero responses.

<b>Kruskal-Wallis Test Result</b>
H(3) = 7.435 p = 0.059

Note. Significance thresholds:  $p < .05$  = statistically significant;  $p < .01$  = highly significant;  $p < .001$  = very highly significant.

Table C9 above presents data on respondents' exposure to pet-related content and their reported adoption perceptions. While there was a slight trend suggesting that perceptions might differ across exposure groups, the differences were not strong enough to suggest a clear association. Overall, respondents' general perceptions of pet adoption appeared similar across varying levels of exposure to pet-related social media content.

Table C10. Distribution of Adoption Intent Across Levels of Exposure to Pet-Related Content

Exposure to Pet-Related Content	Median	Inter-Quartile Range (IQR)
Daily	3.000	2.000
A few times a week	3.000	2.000
A few times a month	2.000	2.250
Rarely	3.500	1.500

Note. DV = general adoption perceptions (mean scores per respondent); IV = exposure to pet-related content. Descriptive statistics are reported as **median** and **interquartile range (IQR)**. The “never” exposure category was excluded due to zero responses.

Kruskal-Wallis Test
H(3) = 1.475 p = 0.688

Note. Significance thresholds:  $p < .05$  = statistically significant;  $p < .01$  = highly significant;  $p < .001$  = very highly significant.

The table above presents data on respondents’ exposure to pet-related content and their reported intent to adopt pets within the next 12 months. Similar to results from the previous table, the findings suggest that adoption intent was consistent across all exposure groups, with no clear differences observed based on how frequently respondents encountered pet-related social media content.