

## PLACEBO MARKETING TOWARDS CONSUMER EXPECTATION AND PRODUCT INTEGRITY AMONG HEALTH SUPPLEMENTS USERS IN CAVITE

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<https://doi.org/10.37602/IJREHC.2025.6127>

### ABSTRACT

The study aimed to determine the placebo marketing towards consumer expectation and product integrity among health supplement users in Cavite. This also determines the participants' perception of placebo effect marketing in their consumer expectation about the performance and reliability of the product, ease of use, value for money, and emotional connection towards its consumers. The participant's perception of placebo effect marketing on product integrity in terms of transparency and expectation versus reality. It employed a descriptive-correlational research design using a survey questionnaire administered through Google Forms, considering 120 health supplement users in Cavite. For this study, the researcher also used statistical methods including frequency distribution, mean, percentage, and standard deviation. A Likert scale that used to assess participants' perceptions of marketing strategies and their influence on health supplement use and expectations. Results show that the participants towards the placebo marketing strategies have effectively created a positive initial impression among health supplement users in Cavite. These strategies, such as professional endorsements, scientific language, and attractive packaging, make products seem reliable and valuable. This means that while marketing can create strong first impressions, it is difficult to keep these impressions once the product is used. Results also show a gap between what the marketing promises and what the products actually deliver and to keep consumers' trust and uphold the brand's integrity, companies need to ensure that their marketing claims match the actual benefits of their products. For the sake of brand integrity, businesses should prioritize transparency in product labeling by providing clear and accurate information about ingredients, testing procedures, and certifications. For consumers, it is recommended to remain critical and informed when evaluating health supplement claims. The study emphasizes the need for ethical marketing practices to foster trust and loyalty in the health supplement industry.

**Keywords:** Placebo marketing, Consumer expectation, Product integrity, Health supplements

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Consumer expectations play a big part in the success of health supplements, as they can really affect customer satisfaction and loyalty. When products meet or even go beyond what people expect, it can lead to happy customers, but if those expectations aren't met, it can leave people feeling disappointed or even doubting the product's claims. That's why the integrity of health supplements is so important. Consumers want brands to be clear and honest about what their

products can do. Trust in the product's integrity is key to keeping customers loyal, especially when placebo marketing might make people expect too much. This study looks at how placebo marketing, consumer expectations, and product integrity are connected among health supplement users in Cavite, with the goal of helping create more honest marketing practices in the industry (Brennan et al., 2018).

The health supplement industry has experienced significant growth as consumers increasingly seek wellness and preventive health solutions. This surge in demand has led to the use of various marketing strategies, including placebo marketing, which leverages psychological influences to enhance perceived product efficacy. According to Faber et al., effective marketing communications can shape consumer beliefs and expectations, leading to positive outcomes based on these perceptions rather than the actual effectiveness of the product. As consumer expectations play a critical role in satisfaction and loyalty, understanding the interplay between placebo marketing and product integrity is essential. This study aims to explore these dynamics among health supplement users in Cavite, providing insights that could inform more ethical marketing practices in the industry (Faber et al. 2019).

As safety professionals navigate growing complexities in product integrity—due to factors like environmental issues, legal concerns, and the goal of achieving “zero defects”—there is a shift towards more goal-oriented safety regulations. A critical concept in this context is the “Safety Case,” a documented body of evidence demonstrating that a system is safe for its intended use in specific environments. This approach can redefine safety standards and ensure that consumer expectations for product integrity, particularly in health supplements, are effectively met. Thus, combining insights from placebo effect marketing and user feedback methodologies can enhance consumer trust and satisfaction in health supplements, ultimately improving their market performance (Procedia Computer Science, 8, 443–451).

Thus, this study will investigate the relationship between consumer expectations and product integrity within the health supplement industry in Cavite. It aims to analyze how marketing strategies, particularly those leveraging the placebo effect and user feedback, shape consumers' perceptions and influence their purchasing behavior. Ultimately, this research seeks to provide insights that can enhance consumer trust and satisfaction in health supplements.

This study aimed to determine the placebo marketing towards consumer expectation and product integrity among health supplements users in Cavite

In view of the preceding statements, this study was conducted to:

1. Determine the socio-demographic profile of the participants in terms of:
  - a. Age;
  - b. Sex;
  - c. Civil status;
  - d. Monthly income;
  - e. Types of Health Supplement Products;
2. Determine the perception of the participants in placebo effect marketing in their expectation in terms of:

- a. Product performance;
- b. Product Reliability;
- c. Ease of use
- d. Value for Money
- e. Emotional connection;

3. What is the perception of the participants in placebo effect marketing on the product integrity in terms of:

- a. Transparency;
- b. Expectation vs reality;

## 2.0 METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative research design to investigate the impact of placebo marketing on consumer expectations and perceived product integrity among health supplement users in Cavite. The study focused on 120 participants who were health supplement users in Cavite. Data was gathered through an online survey, using survey questionnaires as the research instrument. The study applied a descriptive-correlational analysis to explore the relationships between consumer expectations, product integrity, and placebo marketing. This process and instrument helped gain a deeper understanding of how health supplement marketing influenced consumer trust and expectations in Cavite.

The research analyzed the data and discussed the findings using statistical methods, including frequency distribution, mean, percentage, and standard deviation. In this study, a Likert scale was utilized to assess participants' perceptions regarding the influence of marketing strategies on their use of health supplements, as well as their expectations and perceived product integrity. The scale consisted of a series of statements, each accompanied by five response options. Participants indicated their level of agreement with each statement by selecting from the following options: 5 - Strongly Agree, 4 - Agree, 3 - Slightly Agree, 2 - Disagree, and 1 - Strongly Disagree.

**Table 1. Descriptive interpretation of the customer expectation**

NUMERICAL RANGE	VERBAL INTERPRETATION	DESCRIPTIVE INTERPRETATION
4.21 - 5.00	Strongly Agree	This means customers have very high expectations met consistently.
3.41 - 4.20	Agree	This means customers' expectations are mostly met.
2.61 - 3.40	Slightly agree	This means customers' expectations are somewhat met with occasional gaps.
1.81 - 2.60	Disagree	This means customers' expectations are rarely met.

1.00 - 1.80	Strongly disagree	This means customers' expectations are not met, causing dissatisfaction.
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**Table 2. Descriptive interpretation for product integrity**

NUMERICAL RANGE	VERBAL INTERPRETATION	DESCRIPTIVE INTERPRETATION
4.21 - 5.00	Strongly Agree	This means the product fully upholds its promises and integrity.
3.41 - 4.20	Agree	This means the product mostly aligns with its stated integrity.
2.61 - 3.40	Slightly agree	This means the product somewhat meets its integrity expectations.
1.81 - 2.60	Disagree	This means the product often fails to meet integrity standards.
1.00 - 1.80	Strongly disagree	This means the product lacks integrity and does not fulfill its claims.

### 3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Demographic Profiles of the Participants

Table 3 shows that most participants (75%) belong to the age bracket of 20-24 years old and are predominantly female (55.38%). The majority (86.67%) are single, and a significant portion (45.83%) have a monthly income below ₱10,000, while 25.83% chose not to disclose their income. Most participants (60.83%) prefer multivitamins as their type of health supplement.

**Table 3. Distribution of participants in terms of their socio-demographic profile**

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Age		
20-24	90	75.00
25-29	10	8.33
30-34	5	4.17
35 and above	15	12.50

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<b>Sex</b>		
Female	67	55.38
Male	53	44.17
<b>Civil Status</b>		
Single	104	86.67
Married	15	12.50
Widow	1	0.83
<b>Monthly Income</b>		
Below ₱10,000	55	45.83
₱10,000 to ₱19,999	18	15.00
₱20,000 to ₱29,999	3	2.50
₱30,000 to ₱39,999	5	4.17
₱40,000 to ₱49,999	2	1.67
₱50,000 and above	6	5.00
Prefer not to say	31	25.83
<b>Type of Health Supplement/s Product</b>		
Beauty Supplement	29	24.17
Collagen Supplement	13	10.83
Herbal Supplement	17	14.17
Multivitamins	73	60.83
Mood Enhancer	0	0
Protein Powders and Shakes	13	10.83
Sports Nutrition Supplement	11	9.17
Weight Loss Supplement	9	7.50

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### 3.2 The Perception of the Participants in Placebo Effect Marketing in their Expectation

The table 4 presents participants' perceptions of product performance in placebo marketing. The study shows that participants generally agree that marketing claims, such as improved energy, quick results, and positive reviews, influence their expectations of health supplements. Overall, they have high expectations based on these factors.

As stated by Tamjidyamcholo et al. (2017), the performance of health supplements is significantly influenced by placebo marketing strategies, such as endorsements by trusted professionals like doctors or nutritionists, which build consumer confidence and perceived reliability. Claims like "Medically Proven" or "Scientifically Tested" further amplify trust, even when detailed evidence is absent. Furthermore, elements like premium packaging, strong branding, and advertisements showcasing long-term user feedback enhance consumer perception, emphasizing the pivotal role of marketing in shaping expectations and confidence in the performance of health supplements.

**Table 4. Placebo marketing in terms of product performance**

<b>PRODUCT PERFORMANCE</b>	<b>WEIGHTED MEAN</b>	<b>STANDARD DEVIATION</b>	<b>REMARKS</b>
1. When a supplement claims to improve my energy or focus, I expect to feel those effects.	3.95	3.561	Strongly Agree
2. Health supplements that advertise quick results make me think they will work fast for me.	3.37	3.050	Slightly agree
3. If a supplement is marketed as 'long-lasting,' I believe the effects will stay with me throughout the day.	3.54	3.186	Agree
4. I expect a health supplement to work as promised in the ads, especially if they claim specific benefits.	3.66	3.291	Agree
5. When I see positive reviews about how well a supplement worked for others, I expect similar results for myself.	3.78	3.386	Agree
<b>OVER-ALL</b>	<b>3.66</b>	<b>3.295</b>	<b>Agree</b>

The table 5 summarizes participants' perceptions of product reliability in placebo marketing, showing that endorsements from professionals, terms like "medically proven," premium packaging, user feedback, and established brands significantly enhance their trust in the supplements' reliability.

As reported by Tamjidyamcholo et al. (2017), endorsements by professionals such as doctors or nutritionists play a vital role in fostering consumer trust in health supplements, emphasizing the significance of expert credibility in perceived product reliability. Phrases like "Medically Proven" or "Scientifically Tested" bolster this trust, even when detailed evidence is not provided. Additionally, factors such as premium packaging, branding, and advertisements highlighting long-term user feedback further enhance consumer confidence, underscoring the pivotal role of strategic marketing in shaping expectations and perceptions of health supplement reliability.

**Table 5. Placebo marketing in terms of product reliability**

PRODUCT RELIABILITY	WEIGHTED MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	REMARKS
1. When a health supplement is endorsed by a well-known professional, such as a doctor or nutritionist, I feel it as being more reliable.	3.94	3.582	Strongly Agree
2. Health supplements marketed with phrases like 'Medically proven' or 'scientifically tested' make me feel confident about their reliability, even without detailed evidence.	3.70	3.367	Agree
3. Premium packaging and branding often lead me to believe that a health supplement is of higher quality and more dependable.	3.55	3.220	Slightly Agree
4. Advertisements highlighting long-term user feedback strongly influence my trust in the consistency and reliability of a health supplement.	3.69	3.324	Agree
5. If a health supplement is promoted by a reliable and established brand, I am more likely to trust its quality and reliability without additional research.	3.61	3.261	Agree
<b>OVER-ALL</b>	<b>3.70</b>	<b>3.351</b>	<b>Agree</b>

The table 6 summarizes participants' perceptions of ease of use in placebo marketing, showing that claims such as "quick and easy to use" strongly influence their perception of the product fitting into their daily routine. Features like resealable containers, individual servings, and



travel-friendly packaging contribute to their confidence in the supplement's convenience. Additionally, clear and simple dosage instructions reassure participants about the product's usability, while transparency regarding the sourcing and quality of ingredients strengthens trust in its overall practicality. Overall, participants agree that these marketing strategies enhance the perceived ease of use of health supplements.

In the opinion of Hsee, Zhang, and Xu (2016), marketing strategies that highlight the ease of use of a product, such as "quick and easy to use" claims, significantly influence consumer perceptions of health supplements. Packaging features that emphasize convenience, like resealable containers or individual servings, reinforce this perception. Similarly, marketing that emphasizes travel-friendliness and clear, simple dosage instructions further assures consumers of the supplement's practicality and ease of use. These strategies demonstrate the powerful impact of marketing in shaping consumer expectations and perceptions of a product's usability, underscoring the importance of clear communication in health supplement advertisements.

**Table 6. Placebo marketing in terms of ease of use**

EASE OF USE	WEIGHTED MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	REMARKS
1. Health supplements marketed as 'quick and easy to use' influence my perception that they will fit perfectly into my daily routine.	3.55	3.582	Strongly Agree
2. When packaging highlights convenience features, such as resealable containers or individual servings, I expect the supplement to be easy to use	4.15	3.367	Agree
3. 3. Supplements advertised as 'travel-friendly' make me more confident about their practicality for on-the-go use.	4.03	3.220	Agree
4. Marketing that emphasizes clear and simple dosage instructions reassures me that the product will be simple to take.	4.460	0.609	Agree
5. I find it easy to understand and follow the health supplement's recommended dosage.	4.18	3.261	Strongly Agree
<b>OVER-ALL</b>	<b>4.01</b>	<b>3.65</b>	<b>Agree</b>

The table 7 summarizes participants' perceptions of the value for money in placebo marketing. The study shows that when health supplements are advertised as having "premium quality,"



participants agree that they perceive them as worth the higher price. Promises of great benefits also lead participants to believe that spending more money on the supplement is justified. Positive reviews enhance their belief that the product is a good investment for their health, while endorsements by trusted brands make participants more willing to pay a higher price. Overall, participants agree that placebo marketing strategies enhance their perception of the value for money in health supplements.

In accordance with Smith et al. (2021), marketing strategies that emphasize "premium quality" or highlight supplements as "medically proven" can significantly influence consumer perceptions of value for money. These strategies create a sense of justification for higher prices by aligning with consumer expectations of quality and efficacy. Jones and Taylor (2022) found that positive reviews further reinforce the perception that the product is a worthwhile investment in health, fostering confidence in its value.

**Table 7. Placebo marketing in terms of value of money**

VALUE OF MONEY	WEIGHTED MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	REMARKS
1. When a supplement is advertised as 'premium quality,' I feel it is worth the higher price.	3.77	3.374	Agree
2. If a supplement promises great benefits, I think it's worth spending more money on.	3.86	3.474	Agree
3. Health supplements that are marketed as 'medically proven' make me feel like they offer good value for the price.	3.76	3.369	Agree
4. Seeing positive reviews makes me think that the supplement is a good investment for my health.	3.86	3.467	Agree
5. If a supplement is endorsed by a trusted brand, I'm willing to pay more because I believe it's worth the cost.	3.66	3.317	Agree
<b>OVER-ALL</b>	<b>3.78</b>	<b>3.200</b>	<b>Agree</b>

The table 8 highlights participants' perceptions of emotional connections in placebo marketing. Participants strongly agree that advertisements showcasing happy, healthy individuals enhance their connection to the brand. They also agree that supplements promising improved well-being, fitting into their wellness routines, and sharing positive stories foster a sense of pride and trust. Overall, the participants feel emotionally aligned with health supplements that resonate with their personal health goals and aspirations.

As cited by Wang et al. (2018), marketing strategies that focus on establishing an emotional connection with consumers can significantly influence their perception of health products. Advertising campaigns that depict happy, healthy individuals using the product resonate emotionally, fostering a sense of connection and trust with the brand. Similarly, messages that emphasize improvements in well-being or promote positive health outcomes create a feeling of making a worthwhile investment in personal health. As highlighted by Dube and Morgan (2020), positive user stories and reviews can strengthen this connection, driving customer loyalty and advocacy. These strategies emphasize the importance of appealing to emotional values to enhance consumer perceptions of health supplements.

**Table 8. Placebo marketing in terms of emotional connections**

<b>EMOTIONAL CONENNECTIONS</b>	<b>WEIGHTED MEAN</b>	<b>STANDARD DEVIATION</b>	<b>REMARKS</b>
6. When I see ads showing happy, healthy people using the supplement, I feel more connected to the brand.	3.36	3.058	Strongly Agree
7. Seeing a supplement that promises to improve my well-being makes me feel like I'm making a positive choice for my health.	3.60	3.230	Agree
8. This health supplement feels like an essential part of my daily wellness routine.	3.64	2.276	Agree
9. When a supplement has positive stories or reviews, I feel proud to use it and recommend it to others.	3.73	3.357	Agree
10. I feel a sense of trust and comfort when I see a supplement that aligns with my personal health goals.	3.88	3.493	Strongly Agree
<b>OVER-ALL</b>	<b>4.300</b>	<b>0.918</b>	<b>Agree</b>

### 3.3 The Perception of the Participants in Placebo Effect Marketing on the Product Integrity

Table 9 presents the participants' perceptions of transparency in placebo marketing for health supplements. The data reveals that participants agree that health supplements often lack clear information about their ingredients and effectiveness. When marketing is vague or lacks detailed information, participants become suspicious about the product's true effectiveness. They also expect clear explanations about how supplements are tested or proven, which many advertisements fail to provide. However, participants express a slightly stronger agreement that

supplements with transparent sourcing and ingredient quality build more trust. Overall, the participants agree that transparency significantly impacts their trust in health supplements study by Salazar (2020), transparency in marketing is crucial in building consumer trust, especially in the health supplement industry. When brands fail to provide clear information about ingredients, sourcing, or testing, it leads to consumer skepticism and concerns about product effectiveness. This aligns with the participants' perception, where the highest computed mean of 4.18 suggests that consumers feel more confident when supplements openly share details about their ingredients and sourcing. However, the general lack of transparency, as indicated by the overall computed weighted mean of 4.006, shows that many health supplement brands still fall short in providing sufficient information, influencing consumer trust and purchasing decisions.

**Table 9. Placebo marketing in terms of transparency**

TRANSPARENCY	WEIGHTED MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	REMARKS
1. I feel that health supplements often don't provide enough clear information about the ingredients or how they work.	3.55	3.230	Agree
2. When a supplement's marketing is unclear or doesn't share details, I become suspicious about its true effectiveness.	4.15	3.764	Agree
3. I expect health supplements to clearly explain how they were tested or proven, but many advertisements don't provide that information.	4.03	3.624	Agree
4. If a supplement doesn't show clear proof of its claims, I question whether it's truly effective.	4.12	3.744	Agree
5. I trust health supplements more when they openly share information about the sourcing and quality of their ingredients.	4.18	3.788	Slightly Agree
<b>OVER-ALL</b>	<b>4.06</b>	<b>3.630</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Table 10 illustrates participants' perceptions of expectation versus reality in placebo marketing for health supplements. The results show that participants slightly agree that the outcomes they expect from supplements based on marketing often differ from their actual experiences. While they generally agree that health supplements often don't work as well as advertised, leading to disappointment, they also feel that the promises made in advertisements rarely align with the results they observe. The marketing tends to make health supplements appear more effective

than they are in reality. Overall, participants agree that the results of health supplements frequently fall short of the expectations set by their marketing.

As reported by Tamjidyamcholo et al. (2017), placebo marketing strategies play a significant role in shaping consumer expectations and perceptions of health supplements. Marketing tactics, such as endorsements from professionals and the use of terms like "scientifically proven," create high expectations that may not always align with the actual effectiveness of the product. This discrepancy between expectation and reality influences consumers' experiences, as seen in the participants' perception that health supplements often appear more effective in advertisements than in real life, reflected in the computed mean of 3.68. The gap between the advertised promises and actual results suggests that marketing significantly shapes consumer expectations, even when the reality falls short.

**Table 10. Placebo marketing in terms of expectation vs. reality**

EXPECTATION VS REALITY	WEIGHTED MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	REMARKS
1. The results I expect from a health supplement based on its marketing are often different from what I actually experience.	3.67	3.304	Slightly Agree
2. Health supplements usually don't work as well as advertised, and I feel disappointed when they don't meet my expectations.	3.61	3.215	Agree
3. I often feel that the promises made in supplement ads don't match what I actually see or feel after using them.	3.53	3.160	Agree
4. The marketing makes health supplements seem more effective than they actually are in real life.	3.68	3.314	Agree
5. When I buy a supplement based on its ads, the actual results rarely live up to the expectations created by the marketing.	3.58	3.196	Slightly Agree
<b>OVER-ALL</b>	<b>3.61</b>	<b>3.238</b>	<b>Agree</b>

**3.4 Summary of Perception of the Participants Towards Placebo Marketing**

Table 11 summarizes the participants' perceptions of placebo marketing across various terms. The results indicate that participants generally agree with the statements regarding product performance (3.66), product reliability (3.70), value for money (3.78), ease of use (4.01),

emotional connections (3.64), expectation vs. reality (3.61), and transparency (4.01). Overall, the participants' perceptions align with agreement across all terms, with a strong emphasis on ease of use and transparency, reflecting positive perceptions of placebo marketing strategies in health supplements.

According to Kareem et al. (2023), the effectiveness of placebo marketing strategies is significantly shaped by factors such as product performance, reliability, and transparency. These elements help create a strong emotional connection with consumers, influencing their expectations and perceptions. The study indicates that clear communication, ease of use, and perceived value for money play crucial roles in shaping consumer experiences, with transparency and ease of use being particularly influential. As seen in the participants' perceptions, these factors contribute to overall satisfaction, highlighting the importance of transparent and reliable marketing strategies in maintaining consumer trust.

**Table 11. Summary of perception of the participants towards placebo marketing**

TERMS	WEIGHTD MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
Product Performance	3.66	3.295	Agree
Product Reliability	3.70	3.351	Agree
Value of Money	3.78	3.200	Agree
Ease of Use	4.01	3.655	Agree
Emotional Connections	3.64	3.370	Agree
Expectation vs Reality	3.61	3.238	Agree
Transparency	4.01	3.63	Agree
<b>OVER-ALL</b>	<b>2.61</b>	<b>0.947</b>	<b>AGREE</b>

#### 4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study examined the effects of placebo marketing on consumer expectations and product integrity among health supplement users in Cavite. Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Most participants are young adults, predominantly female, and single, with the majority earning modest monthly incomes. Multivitamins emerged as the most commonly consumed supplement, followed by beauty supplements.
2. Participants generally have positive perceptions of placebo marketing strategies, finding them effective across various aspects. Key factors such as ease of use and value for money emerge as the most influential, while product reliability and performance are also positively rated, contributing to a favorable overall impression. Marketing claims play a significant role in shaping expectations about the product's functionality, reliability, and ease of use. Techniques like professional endorsements, scientific terminology, and appealing packaging enhance the perception of reliability and value while fostering an emotional connection. Although the emotional aspect is less

prominent, it still contributes to shaping consumer attitudes, aligning expectations with product characteristics.

3. Participants felt that marketing was transparent, which built trust in the products. However, there was a noticeable difference between what the marketing promised and what the products actually delivered. This means that while marketing created positive first impressions, the products often did not meet these expectations.

Based on the conclusions drawn from the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

The study explores the perceived effects of placebo marketing on consumer expectations and product integrity among health supplement users in Cavite. Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed for businesses, consumers, and future researchers to uphold brand integrity and support informed purchasing decisions:

1. For the sake of brand integrity, businesses should prioritize transparency in product labeling by providing clear and accurate information about ingredients, testing procedures, and certifications. Marketing claims must align with actual product performance to prevent unrealistic consumer expectations. Professional endorsements from healthcare experts should be backed by verifiable evidence to enhance credibility and foster trust. Additionally, businesses should focus on improving product convenience and ease of use, as these factors play a significant role in influencing consumer purchasing decisions. This approach will help build long-term customer loyalty and sustain the brand's reputation.
2. For consumers, it is recommended to remain critical and informed when evaluating health supplement claims. Consumers should prioritize products with transparent labeling and endorsements from credible professionals. It is also essential to compare product claims with actual reviews and experiences to make informed purchasing decisions.
3. For future researchers, may use the study as a reference in further studying the placebo marketing towards consumer expectation and product integrity among health supplements users in Cavite. Expanding the study to include other demographic areas or exploring additional factors influencing consumer behavior could provide deeper insights into health supplement marketing strategies.

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