

IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND AFFILIATED DIGITAL MARKETING ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR AND DECISION MAKING

Geeta D. Alwani

M.com, P.G.D.F.M., M.phil.

Ph.D. students, Smt.L.R.T. College, Akola.

Dr. Jyoti H. Lahoti

Professor

M.com, M. phil, M.A., M.B.A., Ph.D.

Abstract

Using a random sample technique, we were able to pick 100 participants from a pool of internet customers in Pune City, Maharashtra, India. A power analysis was used to determine the sample size, ensuring that there was sufficient statistical power. A total of one hundred internet users in Pune City, Maharashtra, India participated in an online survey that was conducted in order to collect quantitative data. The approach of cross-sectional research was utilized in the design of the survey. The sample was selected via the use of a random sampling approach, and the data were analyzed through the use of descriptive statistics in order to summarize the demographic characteristics and evaluate the influence that affiliate marketing has on the decisions that consumers make about their purchases. According to the findings, a large percentage of consumers, particularly those who are between the ages of 50 and 60, believe affiliate marketing to be an essential component that plays a role in assisting them in making decisions regarding their retail purchases. Taking into consideration the gender distribution, it would indicate that the majority of those who responded are male. The research offers a substantial contribution to the understanding of customer behavior in the context of e-business and highlights the significant role that affiliate marketing plays in influencing purchase decisions. Taking everything into consideration, the research represents a big contribution.

Keywords: *social media, Digital Marketing, Consumer Behaviour, Decision Making, Online Advertising.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In the digital age, the influence of social media and related digital marketing on consumer behavior and decision-making has grown significantly, changing how companies engage with customers and affecting their purchase habits. Social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and others have developed into potent marketing tools that let companies communicate with their target

Shaping the future of Research and its Innovative Methodologies in Various Multidisciplinary Streams

August 2024

market directly, increase brand recognition, and cultivate client loyalty through interactive campaigns and tailored content. The efficacy and reach of social media initiatives are further increased by digital marketing techniques including influencer relationships, content marketing, pay-per-click (PPC) advertising, and search engine optimization (SEO). By providing organizations with essential data and insights into customer preferences, these platforms allow businesses to customize their marketing tactics to target specific audience requirements and desires. Consequently, a profusion of information and adverts are continuously shown to customers, greatly influencing their decision-making processes. Consumer attitudes and decisions are significantly influenced by the accessibility of reviews, ratings, and user-generated information on social media platforms. In order for organizations to remain competitive and successfully influence customer behavior in today's digital marketplace, they must comprehend the dynamics of social media and digital marketing.

1.1. Consumer Impact

The development of the internet gave customers more choice, power, and influence in addition to creating a new avenue for communication between them and companies. By giving an online marketing experience that combines usefulness with item and service data, marketers might influence the decisions of consumers. Online activities including data seeking, selection, evaluation, and exchange processing help marketers assess the suitability of their online initiatives. Businesses are investing more money in digital marketing, and they use a variety of strategies to introduce their brands to customers.

Digital marketing is utilized at every stage of the customer journey, from building brand recognition to motivating customers to buy, providing purchase assistance for easy online shopping, managing post-purchase customer service, and helping brands be used. According to research, social media-based digital marketing replaces traditional marketing channels in connecting with customers by using marketing communication channels. These results are consistent with studies that show social media is an effective marketing platform that draws customers and shapes their purchase decisions.

1.2. Consumer Behaviour

Participation in social media and the advent of Web 2.0 have altered consumer behavior with respect to environments, relationships, and activities. Companies are increasingly engaging in digital marketing to reach out to consumers in response to the seismic developments in the media ecosystem. As more and more people use the internet and social media sites, it is crucial for digital marketers to

Shaping the future of Research and its Innovative Methodologies in Various Multidisciplinary Streams August 2024

understand consumer behavior in order to succeed. As a new channel for customer communication, organizations need to be cognizant of how social media has altered consumer buying habits.

An organization's brand is a symbol that it uses to draw in customers and get a competitive edge. As a marketing tactic, advertisement has a significant impact on drawing customers to a company's goods and influencing their purchasing decisions. Being familiar with the brand and possessing expertise impact consumers' purchasing decisions. Research indicates that ads increase brand recognition.

1.3. Consumer Characteristics

Numerous individual, societal, and cultural factors impact consumers' propensity to make certain purchases. There are three parts to culture: mainstream culture, subcultures, and socioeconomic status. Culture shapes the desires and actions of consumers. Values and perspectives that a consumer acquires from family members or the community they are exposed to shape their culture. Given that culture affects customers' purchasing decisions.

When creating digital marketing ads, businesses need to be aware that various customers will connect with different types of content. Smaller subcultures inside a larger culture can be used to precisely identify how customers have been socialized. Geographical areas, racial groupings, nations, and religions are components of subcultures. Since various customers may respond differently to information, digital marketing channels must be tailored to a particular target market.

Consumers who have similar behaviors, interests, and values are divided into social classes in society, which are hierarchically arranged groups. One way that social classes reflect divisions in society is through the social status of customers, which also has an influence on their media consumption, lifestyle, and involvement.

1.4. Consumer Psychology

Understanding the connection between marketing stimuli and consumers' purchasing decisions requires organizations to be cognizant of five critical psychological processes that influence customers. These include memory, emotions, learning, motivation, and perception. Customers have wants, and when those requirements are strong enough to warrant consideration for action, those needs become the driving force behind their urge to act. A customer is ready to act once they are inspired, and their views have an impact on what they do. A consumer's creation of an illustration through the processes of organizing, choosing, and interpreting information is called a perception. Thanks to technical improvements, consumers are now more exposed to digital marketing content online.

**Shaping the future of Research and its Innovative Methodologies in Various
Multidisciplinary Streams
August 2024**

Customers form memories through learning experiences, keeping the knowledge they have learned over time about things like goods, services, purchases, and product usage experiences. There exist two distinct categories of memories: short-term memory and long-term memory. The latter is considered to be more enduring and houses the experiences and knowledge of a consumer's life. Even if the information is stored in the memory, consumers could not remember it until retrieval cues or reminders are shown to them. Digital marketing is a potent instrument that works well for retrieval cues and reminders.

1.5. Consumer Decision Making

Customers now make their selections at several stages, depending on factors like their initial interaction with the company, their study into the products, or recommendations from friends and family on social media. Businesses that use social media and digital platforms to engage with customers develop connections with them, which increases customer loyalty. Businesses need to understand the impact of social media platforms on customer purchasing decisions. Customers are continuously weighing their options and contemplating future purchases.

As digital technology advances, it is important to comprehend how social media and digital marketing trends affect customers' ability to make decisions. This study intends to investigate this idea from an organizational standpoint.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Voramontri and Klieb (2019) The purpose of this study is to empirically examine how social media influences customers' decision-making process while making complex purchases, such as rare and costly items with well-known brands, products with strong points in terms of engagement and distinction, and transactions involving random chance. The model includes the phases of searching for data, evaluating alternatives, and making a buying decision from the traditional EBM perspective. The use of social media and its impact on experiences is investigated using a quantitative survey. According to the findings, social media usage impacts consumer satisfaction throughout the data search and alternative evaluation stages, with satisfaction rising as the customer moves through the process to the final purchase decision and post-purchase evaluation. This study was carried out among internet-savvy clients from South and Southeast Asia. It only took into account purchases that were actually made by the members; it did not include searches that were abandoned.

Kurdi, B., et.al., (2022) With technical advancement, the organization's operations have been a piece of contemporary marketing efforts to advertise its labor and products. The importance of significant

**Shaping the future of Research and its Innovative Methodologies in Various
Multidisciplinary Streams
August 2024**

different digital marketing channels is highlighted in this review. To investigate the effect of electronic informal (eWOM) on customer buying decisions, the review used a variety of utilizations, including social media, online advertising, email marketing, and internet search engines. With the use of a tailored survey questionnaire in the retail business, a quantitative research technique was utilized to meet review objectives and investigate the proposed research framework. SmartPLS3 software was used to perform the essential analyses on 255 legitimate replies, which were then taken into consideration for extra examination. As indicated by the discoveries, all digital marketing channels have a significant effect on customers' buying decisions. However, the influence of eWOM on these decisions is mitigated. To help readers better understand the subject issue, the review provides further increments to the assemblage of current literature and bolsters the underlying suspicions.

Dolega, L., et.al., (2021) The rapid proliferation of digital technology has led to the rise of social media as a crucial digital marketing tactic for promoting business products and, ultimately, increasing profits. Having said that, actual studies examining the efficacy of social media marketing have not been conducted yet. Using one-of-a-kind data acquired over a year from a well-known online store, this essay delves at the impact of regular social media interaction on mundane business results like website traffic, orders, and sales. Although social media does boost website traffic, it has little effect on product orders or sales income, according to the main ends. On the other hand, bigger social media campaigns often bring in more orders and more money from sales, with Facebook turning out to be the most effective stage. Complexity, pricing, and brand awareness all have a role in how various products react to social media marketing, according to our findings. When taken as a whole, these findings provide light on the implications of social media marketing for businesses and give direction for allocating resources to develop effective campaigns.

Dahiya and Gayatri (2018) The impact of digital marketing contact on several product categories, such as books, music, design accessories, clothing, banking, and online gaming, has been the subject of substantial research. Academics, particularly in India, have paid little attention to the automobile industry, despite the fact that it is one of the largest users of digital media. Understanding how digital marketing correspondence influences client purchasing decisions in the Indian passenger automotive sector is the goal of the present review. A combination of methods was used in the review. The 784 "Delhi" respondents who participated in the area-wise relative testing gave us the data we needed. A chi-square test, a one-sample binomial test, and a one-sample Wilcoxon Signed Rank test were utilized for significance testing. The findings of the analysis show that while purchasing a car, 75% of the participants used at least one digital channel of communication. Websites, followed by mobile phones

**Shaping the future of Research and its Innovative Methodologies in Various
Multidisciplinary Streams
August 2024**

and social media sites, were the most popular digital contact mediums used in the car-buying process. Digital marketing communication "fundamentally" affected the whole decision-making process of purchasing a car, beginning with "need recognition" and continuing through "post purchase," with the stage of "evaluation" being the most commonly affected. According to the results of the investigation, digital marketing correspondence might even lead to need awareness in a very complex product category like automobiles. Consumers are receptive to digital contact, trust reviews from other buyers, and express their post-purchase emotions through digital media, according to the findings. Despite customers' appreciation for digital channels as decision-making tools, the poll found that they seldom book cars online.

3. OBJECTIVES

1. To investigate the impact of affiliate marketing on customers' e-commerce sector decision-making.
2. To contribute the corpus of research on affiliate marketing's effects on e-business and how they affect customer behavior.

4. METHODOLOGY

In order to explore the aims and put the hypotheses to the test, the research technique that was implemented in this study was quantifiable. Data was collected from a varied sample of customers in the e-commerce business as part of the study, which utilized a cross-sectional methodology. The following are the sequence of stages that comprised the methodology:

Sampling: Using a random sample technique, we were able to pick 100 participants from a pool of internet customers in Pune City, Maharashtra, India. A power analysis was used to determine the sample size, ensuring that there was sufficient statistical power.

Data Collection: A platform for conducting an online survey, which took around five to ten minutes to complete, was used to gather the data. The gathering of data was carried out over a predetermined amount of time in order to guarantee an acceptable number of replies.

Data Analysis: Statistical methods that were appropriate were utilized in order to analyze the data that was obtained. For the purpose of providing a concise summary of the demographic features of the sample, descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations were measured and computed.

5. FINDINGS

The results which were derived from the analysis of the relevant data. For the purpose of providing support for the findings that were derived from the study, the significance levels, effect sizes, and other pertinent information were reported.

Table 1: Age

		Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid	18-30 Years	15	15	15
	30-40 Years	20	20	20
	40-50 Years	14	14	14
	50-60 Years	35	35	35
	Above 60 Years	16	16	16
	Total	100	100	

Interpretation: The age distribution of a certain population is presented in Table 1, which includes the frequencies, percentages, and valid percentages for each age group according to the population. According to the data presented in the table, the age group that constitutes the biggest proportion of the overall population is comprised of persons aged 50 to 60 years. After this comes the age group of thirty to forty years old, which accounts for twenty percent of the total population. The percentage of the population that falls into the age brackets of 18-30 years and 40-50 years is comprised of 15% and 14%, respectively. Those who are above the age of sixty make up sixteen percent of the total population. With a total frequency of one hundred, it is clear that the distribution encompasses the whole population, with one hundred percent of it being represented. Taking into consideration the data shown in this table, it appears that the population is pretty evenly divided throughout the various age categories, with a small preference for persons aged 50-60 years.

Table 2. Gender

		Frequency	%
Valid	Male	65	65
	Female	35	35

**Shaping the future of Research and its Innovative Methodologies in Various
Multidisciplinary Streams
August 2024**

	Total	100	100
--	-------	-----	-----

Interpretation: The gender distribution of a population is presented in Table 2, which includes the representation of frequencies, percentages, and valid percentages for both males and females. As can be seen in the table, men make up the bulk of the population, with a frequency of 65, which accounts for 65 percent of the total population. On the other side, the frequency of females is 35, which results in them being 35 percent of the total population. 100 is the total frequency, which indicates that every single member of the population has been taken into consideration. A gender gap exists among the population, as evidenced by the fact that men are approximately twice as numerous as females, as seen in this table.

Table 3. In the e-commerce sector, affiliate marketing affects my purchasing habits.

		Frequency	%
Valid	Strongly agree	21	21
	Disagree	16	16
	Neutral	18	18
	Agree	30	30
	Strongly Disagree	15	15
	Total	100	100

Interpretation: In the e-commerce sector, the information shown in Table 3 sheds light on the ways in which affiliate marketing impacts consumers' decisions to make purchases. There are five different groups that the replies fall into for distribution. Thirty percent of respondents are in agreement that affiliate marketing has an effect on their choosing to make a purchase. Twenty-one percent of respondents are in complete agreement with this statement, showing that there is a major beneficial effect. Eighteen percent of those who participated in the survey had a neutral attitude, indicating that they have a mixed opinion regarding the influence of affiliate marketing. On the other hand, sixteen percent of those who completed the survey disagree with the statement, and fifteen percent of them strongly disagree. As a result of the fact that the overall frequency is equal to one hundred, the perspectives of the entire population are adequately represented. While a sizeable proportion of the

**Shaping the future of Research and its Innovative Methodologies in Various
Multidisciplinary Streams
August 2024**

population views affiliate marketing as influential, this table demonstrates that there is still a sizeable section of the population that is either indifferent or disagrees with the influence that it has.

6. CONCLUSION

The study of the data acquired from one hundred participants offers significant insights into the demographic distribution of the participants as well as the perceived effect that affiliate marketing has on the purchase decisions of consumers. According to the findings of the survey, the age group that is comprised of individuals between the ages of 50 and 60 years creates the largest sector of the population, and the majority of the respondents are male. Regarding the impact of affiliate marketing, a sizeable majority of respondents (51%) agree or strongly agree that affiliate marketing impacts their purchase decisions. This demonstrates the substantial role that affiliate marketing plays in the e-commerce business. Nevertheless, a sizeable portion of the population adheres to a neutral stance or expresses disagreement, indicating that there is a range of perspectives and the requirement for more research into the elements that influence consumer behavior. This study highlights the significance of affiliate marketing in the e-commerce industry and its consequences for customer behavior. It also lays the groundwork for further research in this field by giving a basis for future research.

REFERENCES

- 1) Ali Taha, V., Pencarelli, T., Škerháková, V., Fedorko, R., & Košíková, M. (2021). *The use of social media and its impact on shopping behavior of Slovak and Italian consumers during COVID-19 pandemic. Sustainability, 13(4), 1710.*
- 2) Bala, M., & Verma, D. (2018). *A critical review of digital marketing. M. Bala, D. Verma (2018). A Critical Review of Digital Marketing. International Journal of Management, IT & Engineering, 8(10), 321-339.*
- 3) Bay, S. W. (2018). *The effects of social media on consumer behaviour in tourism: A study among university students (Doctoral dissertation, UTAR).*
- 4) Cooley, D., & Parks-Yancy, R. (2019). *The effect of social media on perceived information credibility and decision making. Journal of Internet Commerce, 18(3), 249-269.*
- 5) Dahiya, R., & Gayatri. (2018). *A research paper on digital marketing communication and consumer buying decision process: An empirical study in the Indian passenger car market. Journal of Global Marketing, 31(2), 73-95.*

**Shaping the future of Research and its Innovative Methodologies in Various
Multidisciplinary Streams
August 2024**

- 6)** Dolega, L., Rowe, F., & Branagan, E. (2021). *Going digital? The impact of social media marketing on retail website traffic, orders and sales. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 60, 102501.
- 7)** Dwivedi, Y. K., Ismagilova, E., Hughes, D. L., Carlson, J., Filieri, R., Jacobson, J., ... & Wang, Y. (2021). *Setting the future of digital and social media marketing research: Perspectives and research propositions. International journal of information management*, 59, 102168.
- 8)** Hanaysha, J. R. (2022). *Impact of social media marketing features on consumer's purchase decision in the fast-food industry: Brand trust as a mediator. International Journal of Information Management Data Insights*, 2(2), 100102.
- 9)** Kurdi, B., Alshurideh, M., Akour, I., Alzoubi, H., Obeidat, B., & Alhamad, A. (2022). *The role of digital marketing channels on consumer buying decisions through eWOM in the Jordanian markets. International Journal of Data and Network Science*, 6(4), 1175-1186.
- 10)** Mason, A. N., Narcum, J., & Mason, K. (2021). *Social media marketing gains importance after Covid-19. Cogent Business & Management*, 8(1), 1870797.
- 11)** Omar, A. M., & Atteya, N. (2020). *The impact of digital marketing on consumer buying decision process in the Egyptian market. International Journal of Business and Management*, 15(7), 120.
- 12)** Pop, R. A., Săplăcan, Z., Dabija, D. C., & Alt, M. A. (2022). *The impact of social media influencers on travel decisions: The role of trust in consumer decision journey. Current Issues in Tourism*, 25(5), 823-843.
- 13)** Sharma, P., Gupta, S., & Kapoor, D. (2020). *Digital marketing and consumer millennials: A comparative study of men, women, and transgender consumers' buying behaviour in Punjab. Indian Journal of Marketing*, 50(3), 47-57.
- 14)** Voramontri, D., & Klieb, L. (2019). *Impact of social media on consumer behaviour. International Journal of Information and Decision Sciences*, 11(3), 209-233.
- 15)** Wibowo, A., Chen, S. C., Wiangin, U., Ma, Y., & Ruangkanjanases, A. (2020). *Customer behavior as an outcome of social media marketing: The role of social media marketing activity and customer experience. Sustainability*, 13(1), 189.