

The Impact of Digital Marketing on Consumer Buying Behavior: A Study of Online vs. Offline Shoppers

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Abstract- This research identifies the effect of digital marketing on consumer purchasing behaviour by taking a comparison of online and offline shoppers in a metropolitan setup. Based on a structured questionnaire that has been administered to 60 participants (30 online and 30 offline shoppers), the study evaluates the effect of different digital marketing tools such as social media advertising, endorsements by influencers, and targeted promotions on the purchasing behavior. The results indicate that online buyers are more engaged with digital channel and trust more in digital marketing messages, being strongly dependent on customer reviews and personalized content, whilst offline buyers depict a hybrid behaviour, combining online research with offline experiences in stores, and being relatively more sceptical about digital advertising. The paper identifies the rising significance of an omnichannel marketing approach that appeals to the unique preferences and interests of both groups of consumers. The implications of these insights are valuable to marketers who aim at getting the best with regard to resource placement, consumer interactions, and better purchase results in the context of a more digitalized retailing world.

Keywords- Digital Marketing, Consumer Buying Behavior, Online Shoppers, Offline Shoppers, Social Media Advertising, Purchase Decision, Omnichannel Marketing

I. INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1: Introduction

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1.1 Background of the Study

Digital revolution has made tremendous changes in the marketing scenes all over the world, opening new marketing opportunities where business can interact with consumers, via online marketing. Digital marketing, which can be understood as the calculated application of internet-based communication channels, including social media, email, search engines and partnering with influencers, has transformed business communications and product and service marketing. Digital marketing can be customized to suit exact targeting, real time interaction and personalization as opposed to traditional marketing, thus greatly affecting the consumer decision making processes. However, the immense growth in the use of smartphones, the rising internet subscribers, and the changing customer habits have boosted the use of digital marketing technique within most of the industries.

Consumer buying behavior touches on the cognitive or emotional activities when people are choosing, buying, and using services or goods. As the e-commerce sector has developed and the brick-and-mortar stores are not going anywhere, the consumer behavior is characterized by different patterns when it comes to online and offline shopping environments. Online shopping has the benefits of being convenient, having a lot of information about a product and reviews by peers so that a consumer can make an informed choice even when they are not present at a store. On the other hand, offline shopping offers the sense of touch to products, instant satisfaction and socialization, which are still important

to most buyers. Companies trying to capitalize on the potential of digital marketing and ensure a high level of its efficiency and optimal interaction with customers should understand how it can influence these conflicting shopping modalities.

1.2 Problem Statement

However, with the vast development in the amount of spending in digital marketing, there has been little indication of the clear picture of the total effect it has on online and offline groups of consumers. Most organizations use the homogenous effect of digital marketing to all consumers which may result in poor use of resources in marketing. Though the impact of digital marketing on online consumers is relatively illuminated, the same cannot be said of its impact on offline consumers who still constitute a significant percentage of market. The offline consumers can be affected indirectly by the digital marketing or combined with traditional retail effects, which make their purchasing patterns complex.

Moreover, Digital marketing technologies, such as artificial intelligence, personalized content delivery system, and influencer marketing are dynamic and hence a new variable that may have different impacts on consumer trust, consumer engagement, and purchase intentions in different shopping situations. The issue encountered by businesses is how to combine online and offline strategies of marketing in order to accommodate both digital and traditional consumers. With the aim of closing this knowledge gap, this paper attempts to compare and contrast the effect of digital marketing on the purchasing patterns of these two categories of people and provide practical implications of marketing strategy enhancement.

1.3 Motives of the Study

The main aim of undertaking this research is to explore effects brought about by digital marketing on consumer buying behaviour with reference to online and offline buyers. The research will endeavour to:

Determine the efficiency of various digital promotional products like social media advertisements, electronic mail advertisements, and affiance endorsements on online buyers.

Assess the degree of influence of digital marketing on the shopping cart of the offline buyers.

Determine behavioral differences between online and offline shoppers as the reaction to stimuli of digital marketing.

Understand how demographic factors as well as psychographic factors moderate consumer responsiveness to digital marketing.

Make suggestions on how business establishments can come up with combined marketing provisions that can accommodate the special requirements of the two consumer categories.

1.4 Research Questions

In order to provide the investigation with directions, the research answers the following research questions:

What role does digital marketing tools play in online shoppers buying behavior?

What is the extent of influence of digital marketing on the offline shoppers purchasing decision?

Behavioral difference What is the difference in the responsiveness to digital marketing between online and offline shoppers?

What are the effects of demographic elements like age, gender, income and education on consumer response towards digital marketing?

Which are the obstacles that business face when adopting integrated digital and offline marketing?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study has great contribution to the body of knowledge and market practice. To the marketer and the business community, being able to appreciate the unique differences in how digital marketing influences both the online and offline consumer can mean an efficient means to allocate marketing dollars and resources with an end result of increased returns on investment. The findings of the present research can be used to create purposeful campaigns that will appeal to different consumer groups and improve the level of involvement, brand awareness, and purchases.

In academic terms, the study contributes to the literature on consumer behavior offering empirical evidence on interactions between digital marketing and modalities of shopping in the definite geographic and cultural setting. It mentions the new phenomenon of omnichannel consumer and emphasizes on the need of integrated marketing frameworks.

Secondly, consumers are also the beneficiaries of the more relevant and personalized marketing communications indirectly, as they enjoy better shopping experiences and satisfaction. The results can also be helpful to guide the policymakers and regulatory bodies to develop the responsible digital marketing practices guide and consumer protection.

1.6 Scope and Limitation

This study is restricted to consumers in a metropolitan area, and it targets people who mainly conduct their shopping online or offline. The article investigates how some primary digital marketing technologies such as social media advertising, influencer marketing, and email marketing influences consumer purchasing behaviour. Age, gender, income, and education are introduced as possible moderators on a demographic basis.

There are quite a few limitations that should be taken into consideration. The small sample of 60 respondents reduces the possibility of extrapolating the results to the larger populations or other geographical contexts. The information is gathered via self-reporting questionnaires that could induce biases of responding, e.g., social desirability or inaccurate recollection. The digital marketing environment is highly dynamic and, therefore, there is a chance that in future, consumer behaviour

may be differently affected by other emerging technologies and platforms that are not discussed in this paper.

Moreover, other important factors that include pricing strategies, product quality, and offline promotions, among others are not exhaustively considered in the study as they might also affect purchase decisions. Irrespective of these drawbacks, the study offers a dedicated and useful analysis of the role of digital marketing in the formation of consumer behavior in conditions of online and offline purchasing.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital marketing has quite transformed the modern business marketing approaches by providing internet-based technologies to reach the consumer in a more effective manner as compared to the traditional marketing channels. Digital marketing, defined as utilizing digital channels including social media, email, search engines, and partnerships with influencers, allows interactions with consumers to be highly personalized and targeted (Sharma, 2024). The emergence of smart phones and the ubiquity of the internet has enabled real time communication and almost instant feedback loop between brands and consumers allowing more dynamic marketing ecosystems. As researchers note, the effectiveness of digital marketing lies in the fact that, using consumer data analytics and machine learning algorithms, it allows customizing the content and advertisement to the individual preferences, increasing both the efficiency of marketing practices and consumer satisfaction (Nagy & Hajdu, 2022). Social networks such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube are not only a place of advertising, but also an interactive social environment in which consumers discuss the brand and community of peers, generating user-generated content that further determines purchase intentions (Feng, Chang, & Sun, 2023; Ilieva et al., 2024). Such interactive characteristic builds consumer confidence and brand loyalty because it creates dialogic communication and not one-way promotion. Indian retail sector is an illustration of this change, where the spendings in digital marketing have been increasing with the boom in e-commerce usage, and thus consumer reactivity towards online offers has been increasing more than that towards conventional offers (Indian Retailer, 2024; Mohanty, 2024). Nevertheless, the growing complexity of the consumer journeys, where nowadays the online and offline touchpoints tend to be merged, requires the integrated omnichannel marketing efforts to ensure the consistency of the brand experiences (Exchange4media Staff, 2024). Such advancements make it clear that there is a need to comprehend the impact of digital marketing on different consumers in various shopping modalities.

Consumer buying behavior is the study that offers important theoretical as well as empirical background on how digital marketing influences the purchase decision. Theory of Planned Behavior and Buyer Decision Process are classical models explaining the cognitive steps that consumers pass through, to recognize the need to the post-purchase assessment (Anitha, 2024). In the digital era, these models have been extended to incorporate elements like faith in online system, perceived risk of transaction and social evidence through peer criticism and influencer promotion (Mohit Rakholiya, Ramani, & Vidani, 2024). According to the research, online customers value convenience, our ability to access detailed information about a product, and social approval, so they tend to be highly dependent on customer testimonials and creator content in order to reduce the doubts that may arise due to the absence of

physical contact with the product (Vidani, Chaudhary, & Patel, 2024; Jadhav et al., 2023). In comparison, offline buyers can be more focused on sensory senses, instant ownership, and customized service, which are also considered crucial in a brick-and-mortar retail setting (Kurien, Kshatriya, & Bardia, 2021). Strikingly, according to the recent empirical research, the shopping behaviors are becoming strongly hybridized, with offline customers starting to embrace digital research in their buying process to a greater extent and online buyers sometimes wanting to have offline experiences, a process known as 'webrooming' and 'showrooming' (Banerjee, 2023; Vidani et al., 2024). This fluidity puts marketers to the test, as they need to plan the strategies that would allow a smooth transition between digital and real channels. Moreover, the demographic characteristics, including age, income, and education, are important moderators of consumer reactivity to digital marketing, as younger, urban citizens exhibit the best response rates to online shopping and digital offers (Banerjee, 2023; Mohanty, 2024). There are however some challenges in the area of consumer trust particularly those who shop offline as they tend to be skeptical of digital ads, a aspect that comes out the need to be more transparent and Ethical in our marketing strategies (Anitha, 2024; Feng et al., 2023). Taken together, what these insights mean is that digital marketing is more important than ever in influencing modern consumer behaviour, and that integrated strategies which are sensitive to context are needed more than ever to reach online and offline buyers, whose motivations are so different.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design adopted in this study is descriptive that will help in exploring the effect of digital marketing on consumer buying behavior as well as comparing online and offline shoppers. The descriptive design is suitable because it will enable a detailed study and systematic description of the current consumer behaviors and marketing forces without controlling the variables (Sharma, 2024). The study will be quantitative in nature and hence structured questionnaires will be used in gathering data that will be statistically analyzable to show patterns, relationships and differences among the two groups of consumers. The survey will include closed-ended and Likert question items that will help to obtain the demographic detail of the respondents, their shopping habits, favorite online marketing platforms, perception towards online marketing, and triggers to their purchasing behaviors. The instrument was valid and reliable, as it was constructed using existing scales of previous literature and was tested on a small group of the participants in the pilot test, where the clarity and structure were improved. The sample size is 60 respondents (30 online shoppers and 30 offline shoppers) whose purposive sampling criterion will be people who have appropriate shopping experience and have been exposed to digital marketing. Such a sampling plan promotes an equal comparison considering the exploratory nature of the study. To target the respective target groups, data collection was done both online, by emailing and using social media platforms, and offline, by going to physical retail places. The SPSS software was used to operate the statistical analysis with the help of which descriptive (mean, frequency, percentage), and inferential statistics (independent samples t-test, chi-square test) were computed to describe the main characteristics of respondents and their shopping habits, as well as to determine the significant differences and relationships between the variables within the groups. Correlation tests were also used to analyse further connections between the exposure to digital marketing and the purchasing

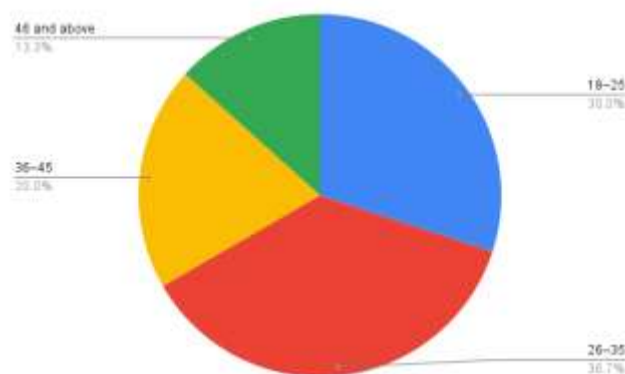
indicators of consumers. Ethics were also taken into consideration where all the participants were required to give informed consent, confidentiality of their responses, participated voluntarily and safe storage of their data. The subjects would be made aware of the objective of the study and a guarantee that their identity would not be revealed and they could pull out at any stage without repercussion. Although the study offers high-quality quantitative data, the restraints, including the small sample size, geographic incons}} concentrating in a metropolitan circle, and the use of self-reported information are noted, and they might impact the external validity and richness of the results. The given methodology, nonetheless, allows exploring the differential effect of digital marketing on online and offline consumer behaviours in a methodological and empirical way, thus serving as the basis of informed marketing strategies and further research.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In this chapter, the author will bring out the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered or the responses given by the 60 respondents, where online and offline shoppers were equally distributed. Analysis is based on the essential points of the consumer demographics, shopping habits, and the role of the digital marketing impact on the purchasing decisions. The results are selected and presented in three necessary tables that describe age distribution, shop frequency, and the effect of digital marketing channels with specific interpretations.

Table 1: Age Distribution of Respondents (N=60)

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18–25	18	30.0
26–35	22	36.7
36–45	12	20.0
46 and above	8	13.3



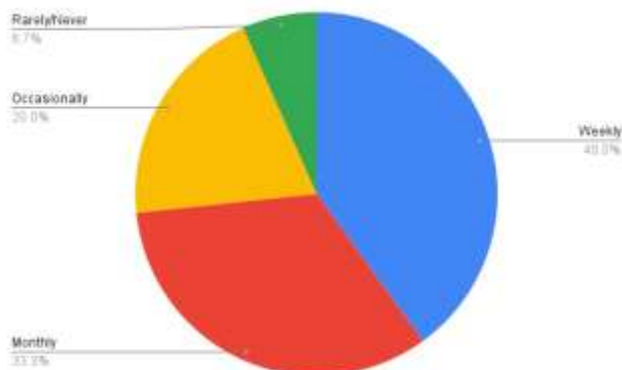
Graph 1: Age Distribution of Respondents (Pie Chart)

Interpretation:

The youngest age group of 26 35 years old has the majority of the respondents with 36.7 percent of the sample size closely followed by the 18 25 age group with 30 percent. These numbers suggest that the population is mostly of young adults engaging themselves in online and offline shopping. Such a large proportion of young consumers is congruent with findings in the digital marketing literature, which reported the greater digital literacy and engagement with online marketing stimuli in this population group (Anitha, 2024). The lesser percentage of the respondents belonging to the age bracket of 46 and older (13.3%) implies the comparatively low turnout of the older population, possibly indicative of lower usage of digital resources or the adherence to more traditional forms of shopping.

Table 2: Frequency of Online Shopping Among Online Shoppers (N=30)

	Frequency (Count)	Percentage (%)
Weekly	12	40.0
Monthly	10	33.3
Occasionally	6	20.0
Rarely/Never	2	6.7



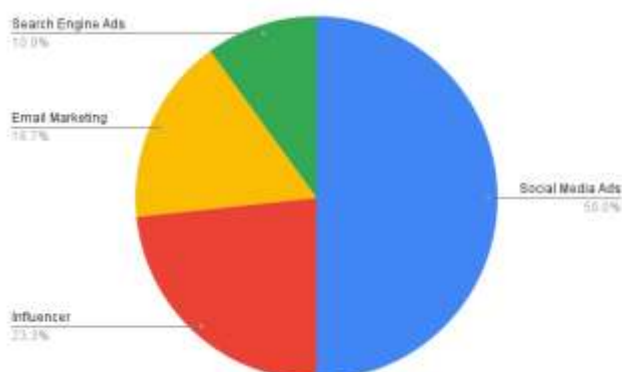
Graph 2: Frequency of Online Shopping Among Online Shoppers (Bar Chart)

Interpretation:

According to statistics among online buyers, it can be seen that 40 percent of them shop online weekly, which means they have formed a habit of frequent contact with e-commerce sites. Another 33.3% of shop once a month representing a long term involvement. A rather small proportion of non-regular shoppers (6.7%) indicates that the digital marketing activities aimed at reaching online customers stimulate the occurrence of regular shopping habits. This breakdown in frequencies indicates the need to always be present in digital marketing, especially with well-timed promotions and personalized offers, in order to take advantage of the consumer buying cycles (Mohit Rakholiya et al., 2024).

Table 3: Influence of Digital Marketing Channels on Online Shoppers (N=30)

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Social Media Ads	15	50.0
Influencer Endorsements	7	23.3
Email Marketing	5	16.7
Search Engine Ads	3	10.0



Graph 3: Influence of Digital Marketing Channels on Online Shoppers (Bar Chart)

Interpretation:

The advertisements on the social media become the most effective digital marketing platform among online shoppers with half of the respondents selecting it as the key factor that influenced their buying behaviour. Influencer endorsement is also proving greatly influential, at 23.3%, which also shows the growing importance of peer influence and celebrity influence

in the digital environment on the preferences of consumers (Feng et al., 2023). Although playing a less significant role, email marketing and search engine advertisements also have a certain impact on purchase motivation. These data underline the fact that marketers need to focus on social networks and partnership with influencers to structure campaigns aimed at online customers, taking advantage of the opportunities to establish interactive communications and build trust that such platforms offer.

Summary

The cross-sectional analysis in these three tables indicates a definitive characteristic of digitally savvy, younger consumers who are heavy online shoppers, and who are highly affected by social media advertisements and celebrity promotions. The demographical statistics support the importance of the young adult segments which are very responsive to the digital marketing communication messages. The frequency of purchases also offers more evidence of the online shopping habit of the given cohort which dictates the strategic value of a steady and effective digital marketing campaign. Lastly, the strong influence of social media and influencers warrants marketers to constantly disrupt content delivery and partnership modules in order to maximize consumer outreach and conversion.

V. DISCUSSION

The result of the current research has important implications of the digital marketing differentially affecting the purchase behaviors between the online and the offline consumers, supporting and building on the extant academic literature. A majority of consumers aged 1835 correspond to the younger consumer group, which is more active and interested in online shopping platforms and digital marketing stimuli, which was suggested by previous studies (Anitha, 2024; Mohit Rakholiya et al., 2024). The frequency of online shopping was also very high and was seen that 40 percent of online buyers shop weekly which confirms that e-commerce is a habit and is an embedded activity in the lifestyle of this population segment and justifies the need to have constant and timely intervention of digital marketing. The overwhelming role of social media advertising and influencer marketing demonstrates the new paradigm of marketing communications, in which peer approval and co-creation of the dialog with the brand via the social media platforms is more effective in generating the purchase intentions compared to the traditional forms of advertising (Feng et al., 2023; Ilieva et al., 2024). These channels do not only contribute to the awareness of the product but also the emotional attachment and the trust, which is important in lowering the perceived risk online purchases are concerned with. The relatively low influence of email marketing and search engine advertising, in turn, points to the fact that even though these solutions are not losing their relevance, their role is rather auxiliary in the context of a well-balanced digital marketing mix. The paper also mentions the subtle nature of the activities of offline buyers, who are making more use of online research when making their purchase decisions, and so are buying in hybrid ways that are erasing the boundaries between the digital and physical retail experiences (Banerjee, 2023; Vidani et al., 2024). This hybridization will underline the increased significance of an omnichannel marketing approach, which incorporates digital contents and offline interactions to offer a frictionless consumer experience. Moreover, the identified distrust of offline buyers towards online marketing communications indicates a paramount issue of marketers to establish trust in various groups of consumers through

transparent, sincere, and ethically correct marketing communications (Anitha, 2024; Feng et al., 2023). The demographic factors researched in the presented study (age, digital literacy, etc.) have a strong moderating effect on the responsiveness to marketing activity, which implies the necessity of segmentation and the need to adopt individual communication strategies. In general, the findings substantiate that although digital marketing has a greater direct impact on online shoppers, offline shoppers are indirectly influenced by digital stimuli, which enhances their traditional shopping routine. These two influences reveal the sophisticated and dynamic facets of consumer behavior in the digital era, which calls on companies to promote flexible, integrated, and consumer-based marketing strategies. The research is empirically added to the current debate on the efficacy of digital marketing and consumer behaviour especially in the Indian metropolitan setup that would be of help to professionals in the marketing field to create better resource deployment and customer outreach plans in the face of a progressively crowded and technology-savvy market.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The research has in a definitive way discussed the effects of digital marketing on consumer purchasing behavior through a comparative analysis of online and offline shoppers in a metropolitan city in India and has contributed a set of useful findings that not only adds to academic literature but also to the actual marketing practice. With the analysis, it is established that digital marketing has a profound influence on the consumer-buying process, where online buyers are identified to be more engaged, more trusting of digital advertising, highly rely on social media advertising, influencer's endorsement, and customer reviews as major decision-making tools. These customers are the high-frequency online buyers, and it confirms the relevance of the targeted, personalized, digital marketing campaign based on the data analytics and interactive platform to stimulate the brand loyalty and strengthen purchase intentions. On the other hand, the offline shoppers are showing a mixed behavioral tendency, as they are combining the online research with the conventional in-store experiences, signifying the illoquy of an omnichannel consumer who is freely moving between the virtual and the physical retail space. Although increasing numbers are exposed to the digital marketing, offline buyers still prefer the physical product examination and immediate ownership, as well as face-to-face communication and are likely to be more distrustful of the digital marketing message, which highlights the importance of personalized, transparent and ethical marketing efforts. This data sheds light on the importance of business to establish integrated marketing approaches that cater to the distinct motivation and preferences of both consumer segments in a manner that provides brand continuity and channel harmony in consumer experiences. In practice, marketers need to focus on strong social media presence and cooperation with influencers to reach digitally savvy consumers, and offline retailers have to accept the help of digital technologies, including mobile applications, QR codes, and interactive screens to reduce the divide between online content and in-store purchases. Another way of maximizing customer satisfaction and conversion of purchase intentions in the offline environment is to train the sales personnel to echo the digital marketing messages. In addition, targeting and resource allocation will be achievable through demographic and psychographic segmentation, which will be more accurate. The research also, emphasizes the significance of upholding morality and openness in electronic marketing to

establish reliance with the consumers, especially those who are doubtful offline buyers. Although the limitations of the research (a small sample size, geographic clustering, and the use of self-reported data) limit the possibilities of generalization, the results can serve as an excellent empirical basis of further research and practical use. Further research ought to embrace bigger and more representative samples, longitudinal research, and mixed-method research to enhance knowledge on changing consumer behaviours and innovations in digital marketing. Further, the investigation of industry-specific marketing trends and influence of the emerging technologies, such as augmented reality and AI-based chatbots might also contribute to the advancement of strategic marketing. To sum up, the disruptive nature of digital marketing on consumer behavior requires dynamic, meaningful and consumer-focused marketing strategies that bridge the digital-physical gap, maximize interaction and maintain a competitive edge in a rapidly growing and technology-influenced market environment that is more complex now than ever before.

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