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CONSUMER BEHAVIOR IN THE DIGITAL AGE

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Abstract:
This study's primary goal was to examine how digital marketing affected customer purchasing. The study's specific goals were to identify the product categories that consumers purchase on digital media platforms, analyze the impact of digital marketing on consumer behavior, and look at the different digital media platforms in Nigeria that may affect consumer behavior. A further survey finds that Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google, Instagram, websites/blogs, multimedia advertising, emails, and LinkedIn are among the digital media channels and platforms that have a direct impact on consumer behavior and purchasing decisions. According to the report, in order for businesses to be competitive in today's business environment, they need implement strategies that make the most of the digital universe and technology and enhance brand exposure through digital platforms.

Keywords Strategic marketing, Digital Marketing, consumer behavior, Buying Behavior**,** social media

INTRODUCTION

The use of digital marketing is growing in importance all around the globe. Buying, selling, making financial transactions, and reserving tickets are just some of the many common uses for online marketplaces. Digital platforms are becoming more popular for virtual meetings and education. Because of digital media, consumers have modified their routines and priorities. Customers no longer want to physically visit physical stores to make purchases; rather, they prefer to make purchases through digital platforms for a variety of internal and externally motivated reasons. Motivation and outlook are internal influences, whereas loan availability, payment flexibility, time and cost savings, social pressure, and physical security are all examples of external factors. People are enticed to buy the product or service because of these incentives. The advent of digital marketing has caused a change in consumers' buying behavior. Companies are increasingly turning to digital marketing strategies like search engine optimization (SEO), pay-per-click (PPC) advertising, search engine optimization (SEM), content marketing (CM), and social media marketing (SMM) to reach out to prospective customers online. Customers' choices to buy a service or

product promoted online are influenced by a variety of factors. Customers' ways of life are influenced, and their thoughts are piqued. These factors cause consumers to shift away from more conventional approaches to making purchases. Digital marketing is crucial in today's society since it helps keep people at a safe distance from one another. Digital advertising is cost- and time-efficient. Consumer behavior, particularly that which occurs online, may be influenced by a number of different variables, some of which are more subtle than others. Personal When making a purchase, consumers are constantly susceptible to both internal and external influences. Internal stimuli, also called personal stimuli (Dawson & Kim, 2009), include things like one's own outlook and beliefs as well as one's own learning, motivation, lifestyle, and duties.

Consumer behavior, as defined by Wikipedia, is: Behavioral economics, marketing, and other branches of economics all come together to explain consumer behavior. The article investigates the impact of consumers' mental states on their purchasing decisions. Formal studies of consumer behavior examine various consumer characteristics, including demographics, personality, and lifestyles, as well as behavioral variables like usage rates, usage occasion, loyalty, brand advocacy, and willingness to provide referrals. Studying consumer behavior also involves looking at the ways in which the customer is influenced by their surroundings. The study of consumer behavior encompasses every stage of the buying process, from research and planning through consumption and reflection. Brand-influencers and opinion leaders are also of interest, as are any other people who have a role in consumers' choices and actions. Studies have demonstrated that predicting customer behavior is challenging even for

professionals in the industry. Ethnography and consumer neuroscience, two relatively recent fields of study, are, nonetheless, providing important insights into the decision-making processes of modern consumers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Bing Chen et.al (2022) Especially in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak, livestreaming e-commerce has developed as a very lucrative e-commerce that has altered the retail business. However, studies of livestreamed e-commerce are only getting started. This research provides novel insight into the topic of impulse buying while livestreaming e-commerce. In order to understand the impact of marketing strategy on impulsive purchase behavior in e-commerce livestreaming shopping scenes, this study applies stimulus-organism-response (SOR) theory to introduce the "People-Product-Place" marketing strategy from the perspective of consumer perception. SEM analysis was performed in Amos on 437 answer sets from an anonymous online survey for this investigation. The findings highlight the significance of a "People-Product-Place" marketing approach and the role it plays in triggering impulsive purchases, as well as the effects of perceived e-commerce anchor qualities, perceived scarcity, and immersion. Involvement, in turn, is favorably influenced by perceptions of scarcity and immersion in an online shopping experience, both of which in turn increase the likelihood of an impulsive purchase. Involvement modulates the relationships between perceived scarcity and immersion in an online shopping experience, as well as impulsive purchases. Marketers may use these results to boost the viability of livestreaming e-commerce, and many nations who were hit hard by the COVID-19 epidemic will be able to use the

examples of countries that have already begun the road to economic recovery.

Xueyan Dong et.al (2018) With the advent of social media, it is now possible to build distant connections entirely in cyberspace. It is possible to theorize how the use of technology in online social commerce (OSC) promotes the development of social bonds on the basis of the idea of IT affordances. In this paper, we develop a model to investigate how the six sub-dimensions of OSC IT affordances (viz. visibility, metavoicing, triggered attending, guidance shopping, social connecting, and trading) aid buyers and sellers in establishing strong and weak OSC ties by integrating theories of IT affordances and social ties. Five of the six IT affordances are shown to improve the quality of interaction, which in turn facilitates social bonds (both strong and weak), which in turn contribute to the repurchase intentions, according to a study of 511 WeChat customers. The results also show that PEEIM positively moderates the process of developing strong ties in the context of electronic commerce. This article contributes to the affordances and social tie literature by conducting a more in-depth investigation on the causes and effects of OSC friendships. Not only do our results help scholars better understand how technology influences the development of various kinds of connections in OSC, but they also give practitioners a leg up in the quest to perfect OSC management.

Amelia Carrozzi et.al (2019) Holograms in Augmented Reality (AR) are digital three-dimensional objects that are projected into the real world using mobile devices to engage customers. When augmented reality (AR) holograms are used as possible replacements for actual objects, they provide a novel challenge to established models of product ownership. Using the lens of socially situated cognition, we show how the same augmented reality (AR) hologram may elicit quite different feelings of "ownership" in different consumers. In Study 1, we show how augmented reality holograms may be tailored to give buyers a sense of emotional investment in digital wares. We emphasize the processes of social adaptation linked to assimilation and differentiation that underlie the connection between personalization and the sense of psychological ownership of augmented reality holograms in our second study. In Study 3, we show how the affordances of AR technology affect these processes when consumers use a variety of personal and shared devices. We analyze how this possibly new category of digital consumer items has ramifications for philosophy and marketing practice.

Ali Abdallah Alalwan et.al (2017) Web 2.0 and social media platforms have captured the attention and affection of people all around the globe. At the same time, companies begin to see these innovations as powerful tools for fostering deeper connections with their consumers. In a similar vein, scholars and researchers have focused on the related concerns of social media marketing in an effort to deepen our knowledge of this phenomenon throughout the marketing discipline. Accordingly, the primary objective of this research is to undertake a comprehensive assessment of existing research in the field of social media marketing. The researchers conducted a literature review of around 144 articles to provide a summary of the most important themes and trends in the field, including the impact of social media on advertising, electronic word of mouth, customer relationship management, and the standing and success of brands and businesses. This study has also looked at the most popular research methods used to investigate these same social media marketing-related topics. Additional discussion is presented, followed

by a description of the limits of the present review and suggestions for future research.

Salma S. Abed (2016) The widespread use of social media has a major impact on economic growth. However, many SMEs, particularly in developing nations like Saudi Arabia, are skeptical that they can grow their market and contact clients using social media. In order to understand how small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are using social media to communicate with their target audiences and what effect this is having on their users, this research used a content analysis approach. Sixty small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) were analyzed and their online presences were broken down into four categories: online information supplied and shared by SMEs; online business strategies utilized by SMEs; technology and social media tools and platforms used by SMEs; and consumers' utilization of social media tools and platforms to engage with SMEs. The investigation concluded that companies are leveraging social media to develop online trust, that online business tactics impact customers' perceptions of uncertainty, that innovative firms produce inventive consumers, and that consumers' adoption of new technologies is influenced by the quality of information available online.

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR IN THE DIGITAL ERA

The evolution and widespread use of digital technologies have altered traditional business, advertising, and shopper habits. How people communicate, work, shop, and live is profoundly affected by digital marketing. A mystery Clodagh.

Users have become more discerning and knowledgeable as a result of rapid technological advancements and widespread availability of information. Because of the infinite options accessible at the tap of a screen, consumer tastes and habits are always evolving.

Modern consumers shop in an interactive digital society. Traditional consumer habits are inappropriate in the digital era. The consumer decision-making process is increasingly dependent on technological input.

In many respects, the digital world has helped both consumers and companies. The digital environment is also anticipated to deliver larger economic advantages, such as increased innovation, creativity, learning, fast access, and reduced transactional environmental costs.

Some of the basic trends and facts about changes in consumer behaviour include:

Access to Internet

In 2017, almost a quarter of a billion people got online for the first time, and Kemp believes that more than half of the world's population is now online. The number of people using the internet increased by 7% in 2018, reaching 4.021 billion. Both the number of people who have access to the internet and the amount of time they spend there are on the rise.
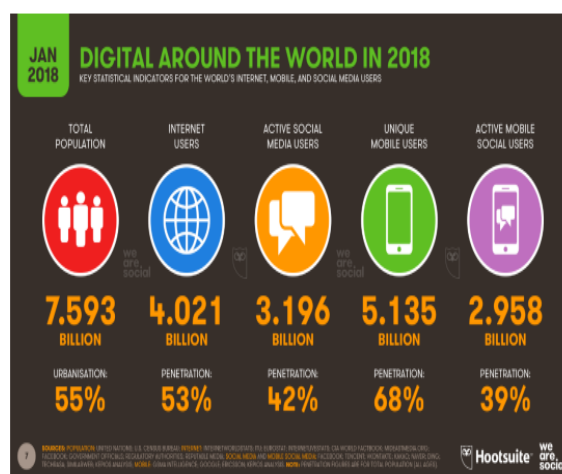

Figure 1: Active Internet Users, Social Media Users, Mobile connection and Active social media users around the world

GlobalWebIndex reports that the typical internet user spends around 6 hours per day, or one-third of their waking hours, using internet-connected devices and services.

Access to information

As a result of the information age, customers have a far deeper grasp of goods and services, and businesses can no longer dictate the level of detail provided to them. Information and views may be easily accessed by consumers, arming them with the knowledge they need to make educated purchasing decisions.

One may argue that consumers find it simpler to acquire content (whether it information, services, or goods) in the digital world since it contains offerings from public sector providers, charities, and other non-profits.

Online Shopping

Using a computer with an Internet connection and a web browser, customers may do business with merchants directly.

With the rise of mobile devices like tablets and smartphones as well as streamlined payment methods and improved security measures, online shopping has never been more convenient or accessible than it is now in the digital age.

Shoppers may learn more about a product of interest by visiting the retailer's website or by utilizing a shopping search engine, which shows the availability and price of the goods at several online merchants.

It has been shown via research that other aspects, such as product feature, qualities, and trust towards online marketing, also have an impact on the usability and pleasure of purchasing online. The popularity of online marketplaces in Nigeria is skyrocketing. They make it simple and easy for shoppers to buy goods online.

Online Reviews and Word of Mouth

Although the patterns, role, and impact of word-of-mouth have changed with the advent of interactive and social media, and new forms of online communities have been shaped, digital has become the marketing strategy of choice for businesses today, and word-of-mouth still remains a powerful tool for marketing a business, especially given the interconnected network of digital channels at our fingertips. Reviews left on websites are the modern equivalent of word-of-mouth advertising; they can make or ruin a company.

Customers may do wonders for or terribly damage businesses through customer forums and social media. It's true that word of mouth has always been the most influential form of marketing. Friends and family recommendations have always had a powerful influence on consumers, but now they are reinforced by the endorsements of strangers on social media. There is no time to waste when it comes to building or destroying a brand's image via word-of-mouth.

Brand Loyalty

The notion of brand loyalty is dying out in today's diversified new environment of increasing customer demands driven by shifting demographics and cultural shifts in the market.

Brand loyalty refers to the propensity of customers to repeatedly buy products from the same company. Loyalty and rewards programs, trials, brand ambassadors, and incentives like free samples are just a few examples of the ingenious marketing tactics used by companies to win and keep customers. According to Investopedia (n.d.), " Brand loyalty has decreased as a result of globalization, increased consumer expectations, digitization, convenience, and

other reasons; loyalty programs have had little to no effect on this trend.

Product and Services on Demand

People have come to expect instantaneous responses and easy navigation because of the prevalence of smartphone messaging, email, media, and other online functionalities. The research demonstrates that the expansion of the on-demand economy is due to the fact that it caters to customers' insatiable need for increased ease, speed, and simplicity, whether it be via the simplicity of scheduled deliveries or the commensurate decrease in time required.

The term "On-Demand Economy" is used to describe the market for products and services that has been developed by technology firms to meet the needs of its customers in real time.

Middle-class Millennials are the primary market for the mobile technology that have enabled the rise of on-demand services in industries like transportation, retail, hotel, eating, and grocery shopping.

Over the last four years, the on-demand economy, which has grown to be worth billions of dollars, has erupted again with volcanic intensity throughout the globe, quickly displacing more established forms of doing business. When these services are used in conjunction with a few mobile applications, immediate delivery of commodities is made possible. The On Demand market is dominated by companies like Airbnb (an online rental service), Uber (an online transportation network company), Deliveroo (an online food delivery service), Instacart (an Internet-based grocery delivery service), Lyft (a transportation network company), Udemy (an online education platform), Urban Sitter (an online babysitting platform), and Your Mechanic (an online auto service platform).

The Need for Personalization

Due to the rise of tech-savvy consumers, individualized service has emerged as a key differentiator in the market. It's a method for observing and analyzing consumer behavior, as well as for anticipating and satisfying their needs and wants. Customers now anticipate individualized interactions across all touchpoints (sales, marketing, and support). The message is meant to strike a chord with consumers and make them feel important.

It is crucial to recognize that consumers in the digital economy may not always act in accordance with textbook prediction, and that firms may want to profit from such non-textbook consumer behavior, if they are to have a thorough knowledge of consumers in the digital economy. The purchasing choice process is crucial to our examination of consumer behavior in the online setting.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE CONSUMER BUYING DECISION IN THE DIGITAL ERA

Customers now have a plethora of online resources at their fingertips, allowing them to do extensive research before making any purchases. The proliferation of the Internet, the enhancement of the algorithm of full-text search engines, the rise of social networks, and the maturation of mobile technologies have all contributed to a substantial increase in the accessibility of information. As a result, buyers may now more accurately and rapidly gauge their level of interest in a product. However, information noise may be detrimental if it leaves customers unsure of where to turn or if a given source can be trusted. It's easy to get overwhelmed by the barrage of data provided by the media and other sources of information.

Based on his findings, Bertilsson (2009) concludes that consumers' purchasing decisions are influenced by a variety of marketing channels, particularly in the case of online purchases. The study also

demonstrates the role of digital media in raising consumer consciousness prior to purchase.

Price, product perception, product quality, convenience, Brand Image, purchasing power, information, customer service, Internet access, security, trust, and so on are just some of the factors that influence a consumer's final buying decision.

THE INFLUENCE OF DIGITAL MARKETING ON CONSUMER DECISION MAKING PROCESS

Consumer Decision Making Process

Consumer behavior refers to the mental and emotional process shoppers go through before, during, and after making a purchase. Most people don't just decide to buy anything without first doing extensive research, comparing different options, and weighing the pros and cons.

Understanding consumer motivation and decision-making strategies, as well as the impact of the consumer's environment (including culture, family, and media) on his or her purchasing decisions, is essential to the successful marketing and sale of goods and services.

When making a purchase, customers typically go through five distinct phases, according to the standard model of the consumer decision-making process. Need identification, information gathering, alternative weighing, final choice, and post-purchase behavior make up the five pillars of John Dewey's original consumer decision making model proposed in 1910 (Bruner & Pomazal, 1988).

Figure 2: Five-stage model of the consumer buying process

Each individual customer's actions may vary somewhat from the norm, depending on factors like the nature of the product, the customer's budget, the availability of the customer's preferred digital devices, etc. The marketing mix can't be designed effectively without first understanding the consumer decision making process. Consumer choice may be straightforward or complex, depending on a number of variables. Finding a need is the first step. The fact that you've eaten the last of the veggies in the fridge might be the culprit. Next, the buyer conducts a search for information, using both internal and external sources. In the alternative assessment process, the customer begins to weigh the pros and disadvantages of the many options that have been uncovered. A customer chooses between competing products or services after considering all available options. A customer's experience with a product or service begins after the sale has closed.

We will analyze how digital advertising affects choice at each juncture.

Need Recognition

Each consumer's path to a purchase decision begins with a need. Consumers become aware of a need when they encounter a discrepancy between their current situation and an ideal one. Two distinct categories of consumer requirements exist. An instant desire may be triggered by an internal stimulation as simple as an involuntary physical sensation of hunger. The term "external stimulus" refers to any factor outside the control of the individual that impacts a decision to buy, such as a price cut at a preferred shop.

Whether at their desks, in stores, or online, consumers may receive and respond to marketing messages at any time thanks to digital marketing and technological advancements. It's useful for marketers since it allows them to tailor their products and

services to each individual consumer. Digital marketing communications may serve as contextual clues that prompt customers to reflect on their own needs, perhaps leading to a purchase. Consumers may be prompted to begin the purchase process when they realize how much time, energy, and money they may save thanks to digital marketing and technology.

Information Search

The second phase, information search, involves the customer learning more about the various products available to them. An internal or external search for information may be conducted. Remembering details about the product or service, or drawing on other personal experiences, are all examples of searching for knowledge from inside. Using people, places, and things outside your immediate sphere of influence to learn something new is an example of an external information search.

When compared to more archaic forms of advertising like radio, television, and print, digital platforms allow consumers to learn about products and services whenever it's most convenient for them. Mobile internet has made it possible for consumers to have instantaneous access to vast amounts of product information and user reviews, allowing them to make more educated purchasing choices.

CONCLUSION

From the perspective of Indian consumers, this research looked at how digital marketing has influenced their purchasing habits. Additional research shows that social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google, Instagram, websites/blogs, multimedia advertising, emails, and LinkedIn have a significant impact on consumer behavior and purchase decisions. Convenience goods, shopping goods, specialist goods, and unsought goods

have all been recognized as top product categories purchased through digital platforms. The expansion of the e-commerce sector and the rise of the digital consumer both contribute to the rise of online shopping. Price, Product characteristics, Product quality, Convenience, Income/Purchasing power, Product information, Customer service, Internet Access, Security, Trust, Online Reviews, etc. are only few of the elements that impact customer behavior and purchasing decisions on digital channels. Organizations may use these elements as strategic tools to acquire a competitive edge and boost profits.

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