

Effect of Demographic Variables on Consumers' Buying Behaviour of Fashion Products in a Digital Marketing Environment - A Case Study of Uttar Pradesh

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ABSTRACT

Today Companies use different digital channels to connect with their consumers. These channels may include email, affiliates, mobile apps, websites, social media and search engines. Today's consumer is techno-savvy and spends the majority of their time online. With the advent of Digital Marketing, concepts like fast price comparison and digital cashback came into existence and have changed the way consumers buy their products. The primary function of Digital Marketing is to drive brand awareness and generate leads through various free and paid channels. Digital Marketer tries to leverage the potential of each of these channels' potential to have maximum impact on consumers. The current paper explores the various channels used in Digital Marketing and the most influential channel that affects the consumer buying behavior of fashion products.

Keywords- Digital Channels, Email Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Digital Marketing, Buying Behaviour.

1. INTRODUCTION

Digital Marketing is like air which is everywhere right from the moment one picks up the smartphone. A display advertisement is shown on the screen. Even watching an unskippable seconds ad on a favorite OTT platform, reminders on emails or phone messages about the current offer waiting on social media as per the preferences and taste based on the kind of search made on a search engine. It is all connected, and Digital Marketing starts right from the moment one uses a smartphone, laptop, desktop or television connected to the Internet. The Internet has become a necessity for us today, and we spend a large part of our time on the Internet knowingly or unknowingly. We all are exposed to Digital Marketing in some or the other way.

Digital Marketing is carried through various digital channels like email, websites, search engines, social media, affiliates etc. Every Digital Channel has its advantages. These channels play a pivotal role in executing Digital Marketing campaigns. Some of the main elements of Digital Marketing are listed below-

1.1 Search Engine Optimization

It is a technique used by companies for improving their websites' online visibility in the result that occurs in a search engine. It can be achieved both through the organic or paid form. They are often referred to as organic and paid advertisements. With every change in a

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minute, the search engine algorithms also change, which is why working on this strategy is crucial for companies.

1.2 Email Marketing

Email marketing uses electronic mail to promote a company's products or services. The usage of email helps develop relationships with potential customers. The emails are sent to potential customers, persuading them to buy a product. Email marketing helps in the customization of products and also is helpful for business to inform their customers about current offers going on.

1.3 Social Media Marketing

The usage of social networks and social media websites for promoting a company's product and services is social media marketing (SMM). For any company, it is a challenge to reach new customers and retain the existing ones. Social Media Marketing help companies reach out to and helps engage the existing ones by keeping them informed. All the data analytics tool available to marketers helps them keep track of their efforts and provide personalized marketing to the consumer. Some popular social media platforms today are Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.

1.4 Mobile Marketing

Mobile is the most influential medium in digital marketing today. By 2026, there is a projection of 1 billion smartphone users in the country. The main components of mobile marketing include SMS and mobile apps. Mobile works as a medium for other digital media channels too. Consumers quickly access all the social media platforms, emails, and websites of companies through mobile phones as a facilitator for other digital media marketing, as it is imperative. With internet charges affordable in recent years, consumers prefer accessing everything on their mobile phones rather than laptop or desktop. Most consumers involved in online shopping purchase the product from their mobile phones

and use it in every step of the decision-making process.

1.5 Online Affiliate Marketing

Affiliate Marketing is all about promoting other companies products and, in return earning a commission through it. Many companies today have affiliates who promote their product in exchange for a commission. Wiggers, with a webpage that generates read traffic, is associated with companies as affiliates.

1.6 Pay-Per-Click Advertising

PPC advertisements are those wherein an advertiser pays every time their advertisements get clicked by a person using the Internet. Mostly PPC advertisements are done through Advertisers. Advertisers bid for a place on their preferred search engine for their ads. The bidding process helps show them top spots; hence, they gain consumer attention and their websites get clicked on by a larger audience.

1.7 Display Advertising

The commercial messages displayed in animation, logos, videos, pictures and texts are display advertisements. Advertisers today come up with many creative ideas in the form of short video ads and images, which in turn helps attract potential customers.

1.8 Digital Marketing in the Fashion Industry

Because of the coronavirus outbreak, the fashion industry has evidenced many struggles, but with situations getting better, it is all set to revive its situation. In the coming years, the Indian fashion industry is anticipated to exhibit strong growth. The country's large youth population contributes to the fashion industry's growth. Also, because of the pandemic, many people have shifted from offline buying to online buying. With online retailers giving the best products at the best prices, consumers are more prone to purchase online.

The Indian apparel retail industry has seen a rise of 26% in comparison to last year (Apparel Resources News-Desk 2022). With the removal of pandemic restrictions, apparel growth sales are rising all over the country. The retail apparel industry consists of products ranging from women, men, and kids. The apparel market comprises active wear, footwear, casual wear, formal wear, essentials, and outerwear. Today most e-commerce companies have a presence on social media. They all have Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts. Through their social media pages, they regularly communicate with their customers. There are various channels digitally available through which companies communicate. These channels include Emails, SMS, Websites, social media, online advertisements etc. Today, all companies understand the importance of digital presence and its impact on consumers' buying behavior.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital marketing has completely altered the way businesses promote their products and services today. Convenience, consumer trust, time saving and security are the main factors that affect consumer buying behavior. It is the benefits associated with marketing through digital channels that companies are shifting more towards using digital marketing from traditional marketing in order to reach their customers. Purchasing products through digital channels provides much convenience to consumers also. With affordable smartphones and easy data availability, customers today are aware of digital marketing and prefer shopping for goods through digital channels. Customers prefer digital devices for online shopping instead of going to physical stores.

Diges & Debasa (2010) found that implementing personalized marketing with the help of various digital marketing strategies like SEM, SEO, and SMM is the core to attaining profitable results in different types of

businesses. Digital marketing can be done through mobile technologies, social media, and warm. It has become an integral part of our life and these new ways of communication can be used by companies in different ways to promote their products. Online Market covers a more extensive base of customers in minimum time as compared to traditional channels. Because of the advantages of online shopping, like the convenient variety of products, many customers choose online shopping as their means to shop, thus increasing the profitability of companies.

One of the studies conducted in Jordan evaluated the role of different digital marketing channels like Mobile Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Email Marketing, and Online advertising. The study analyzed the effect of these channels on the student purchasing decision. The study's results confirmed that all the Digital Marketing channels positively affected student purchase decisions. Out of the four, the most neglected Digital Marketing channel was Email Marketing.

Digital Channels (Retargeting, Mobile Marketing and Email Marketing) help in each stage of the consumer decision-making process and are relevant at different decision-making stages. At the same time, mail has a highly positive impact on two stages of consumer decision-making. These two stages are post-purchase and information research. Re-targeting has a high impact on the consumer decision-making process in almost all the stages of consumer decision-making which is at the evaluation stage; information research needs recognition, purchase decision, and post-purchase.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is conducted based on both primary and secondary data sources. A primary source is a source from which we collect first-hand information or original data

on a topic. A structured questionnaire was used for the collection of primary data. The data was collected online with the help of google docs. A secondary source is where we collect data that is already available. The secondary data was collected from research papers published in journals, books and articles.

The research paper aims to study different digital channels and the channels influencing consumers' buying behavior when buyer explores. The study also explores the relationship between demographic variables and digital channels. The period of the study was from March 2022-April 2022.

Data were collected from 100 shoppers who buy fashion products promoted through different Digital channels, either online or offline. The data was collected through a structured questionnaire for analyzing the influence of digital marketing channels on consumer buying behavior of fashion products. The geographical area considered for the study was tier II cities of Uttar Pradesh. The Chi-square test was applied as a test of significance.

3.1 Objective of the Study

1. To study which Digital Marketing channel influences consumers the most when buying fashion products
2. To understand the relationship between demographic variables and the channel influencing them.

3.2 Hypotheses of the Study

The hypotheses of the study are as follows:

- There is no relationship between the Age of the consumer and the type of digital media that influences them.
- There is no relationship between the Education of the consumer and the type of digital media that influences them.
- There is no relationship between the Profession of the consumer and the type of digital media that influences them.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data were analyzed with the help of SPSS version 26. A pilot study was undertaken by getting the questionnaire filled out from 20 respondents. Finally, the main instrument was developed after making pilot study results as per pilot study results. The questionnaire was then administered to 100 people, and the results are as follows.

Table 1 : Marketing Channels that Influence Consumers

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Websites	21	21.0	21.0
Fashion Blogs	6	6.0	27.0
Social Networking Sites	25	25.0	52.0
You Tube	13	13.0	65.0
Smart Phone Applications	25	25.0	90.0
Other Digital Channels	2	2.0	92.0
Traditional Channels	8	8.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	

From the frequency table, it is evident that two Marketing channels influence consumers the most when buying Fashion products. Both Social Networking Sites(25%) and Smart Phone Applications (25%) influence consumers the most, followed by Websites of companies (21%) and videos on Youtube

(13%). Fashion Blogs (6%) still need to be added to the list of consumers seeking fashion-related information in a digital world. Traditional Channels (8%) and other Digital Channels (2%) have the lowest influence on consumers when purchasing fashion products.

Table 2 : Age and Type of Channel that Influences them

Age	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
18-25	27	27.0	27.0
26-30	21	21.0	48.0
31-35	26	26.0	74.0
36-40	14	14.0	88.0
41 & above	12	12.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	

Table 3 : Chi-Square Test

	Value	Df	Asymptotic significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	16.058 ^a	24	.886
Likelihood Ratio	15.938	24	.890
Linear-by-Linear Association	.012	1	.913
N of Valid Cases	100		

The Pearson Chi-Square Test showed that Age has no relationship with the marketing channel type influencing them as the chi-square value is 16.058, which is not

significant at 24 degrees of freedom as $P > 0.05$. From the above results, the null hypothesis is accepted, and the alternate hypothesis is rejected.

Table 4 : Education and the Type of Channel that Influences them

Age	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Undergraduate	5	5.0	5.0
Graduate	31	31.0	36.0
Postgraduate	56	56.0	92.0
Others	8	8.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	

Table 5 : Chi-Square Test

	Frequency	Percent	Asymptotic significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	37.970 ^a	18	.004
Likelihood Ratio	27.299	18	.074
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.961	1	.015
N of Valid Cases	100		

The Pearson Chi-Square Test showed a significant relationship between Education and the type of channel that influences them. The chi-square value is 37.970, significant at 18

degrees of freedom as $P < 0.05$. From the above results, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternate hypothesis is accepted.

Table 6 : Profession and Type of Channel that Influences

Profession	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Service	31	31.0	31.0
Homemaker	11	11.0	42.0
Business	17	17.0	59.0
Student	36	36.0	95.0
Others	5	5.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	

Table 7 : Chi-Square Test

	Value	Df	Asymptotic significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	48.207 ^a	24	.002
Likelihood Ratio	44.334	24	.007
Linear-by-Linear Association	.090	1	.765
N of Valid Cases	100	36.0	

The Pearson Chi-Square Test showed a significant relationship between Profession, and the type of channel that influences them as the chi-square value is 48.207 which is significant at 24 degrees of freedom as $P < 0.05$. From the above results, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternate hypothesis is accepted.

5. CONCLUSION

It is clear from the above study that Digital Marketing channels that influence consumers the most when buying Fashion products are Social Networking Sites and Smart Phone Applications. So, companies must focus on user-friendly, highly interactive Mobile Applications as consumer purchasing decisions are based on retailers' mobile apps. Also, it is crucial to have a solid social media presence for companies, as consumers today spend a considerable amount of their time on social networking sites like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. High mobile phone usage and cheap data availability have made Traditional Marketing channels less influential. So, although consumers get exposed to Traditional Marketing channels, they need to pay attention to them and thereby do not get influenced. The demographic variables that influence them are consumer education levels and the type of Profession they are into. According to the study,

consumers' Age does not impact what influences them.

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