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Digital Marketing in the Post-Pandemic Era: Trends and Consumer Behavior Shifts

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Abstract:

The COVID-19 epidemic has had a profound impact on digital marketing, speeding up the uptake of online platforms and changing customer behavior. With an emphasis on the change in customer preferences and the tactics companies are trying to adjust, this study looks at the major developments in digital marketing following the pandemic. In order to spot shifts in customer engagement, buying habits, and brand loyalty, the study examines data from a variety of industries. Additionally, it examines the expanding significance of social media marketing, e-commerce, and tailored content. Through examining these patterns, the study seeks to offer perceptions on how companies might use digital tools to adapt to changing customer demands in the post-pandemic period. For marketers looking to negotiate this changed environment and develop robust, customer-focused strategies, the findings will provide insightful counsel.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Marketing Trends, Pandemic, Consumer behavior, Social media marketing and influencer marketing.

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in unparalleled alterations to almost every aspect of existence, with the digital domain witnessing some of the most noteworthy transformations. Digital platforms replaced conventional channels for business and forced people into isolation, making them the main source of entertainment, communication, and buying. This quick change has significantly changed the dynamics of consumer behavior as well as the approaches taken

by companies to interact with their target markets. In the post-pandemic period, digital marketing—which was already an essential part of modern company strategy—has become more.

The increasing reliance on social media as a crucial factor in consumer purchasing decisions, in addition to its use as a communication medium, has been one of the biggest changes. Social networking sites have developed into effective marketing platforms where customer's research, assess, and buy things. In order to better understand how social media is influencing customer purchase behavior in the new normal, this study will look at how sites like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok are now essential components of digital marketing plans. The research will examine how companies are using social media to craft tailored experiences that appeal to customers who are becoming more discriminating.

The epidemic has propelled e-commerce growth in parallel with the rise of social media, significantly altering the retail sector. Customers have turned to internet shopping for convenience and safety, posing substantial difficulties for traditional brick-and-mortar retailers. This study will examine how the rise of e-commerce has affected traditional retail companies and evaluate the changes these companies have made to stay relevant in a market that is increasingly controlled by digital technology. It will also look into the new hybrid models that combine offline and online experiences to satisfy changing customer needs.

Another significant trend in the post-pandemic digital marketing landscape is the effectiveness of influencer marketing. As consumers increasingly seek authentic and relatable content, influencers have become vital in shaping consumer perceptions and driving purchase decisions. This research will analyze the effectiveness of influencer marketing in the post-pandemic era, exploring how influencers have adapted their content strategies to maintain trust and engagement with their audiences.

In sum, this research will provide a comprehensive analysis of the key trends and consumer behavior shifts in digital marketing following the pandemic, offering valuable insights for businesses aiming to navigate and thrive in this transformed environment.

Literature Review

Extensive research on the changing field of digital marketing and consumer behavior has been prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic. In "Digital Marketing: Strategy, Implementation, and Practice," Chaffey (2020) claims that as companies scurried to keep customers engaged on the internet, the pandemic hastened the adoption of digital marketing tactics. In order to adapt to shifting consumer needs, Chaffey emphasizes how the crisis compelled businesses to innovate quickly. As a result, many adopted or increased their e-commerce capabilities and digital advertising initiatives.

In a similar vein, Sheth (2020), in his study titled "Impact of COVID-19 on Consumer Behavior: Will the Old Habits Return or Die?" discusses how consumer behavior has undergone a significant transformation, particularly in terms of increased online shopping and the heightened importance of digital channels. Sheth emphasizes that the pandemic has created lasting changes in consumer expectations, with a greater focus on convenience, safety, and personalized experiences. Kim et al. (2021), in their work "The Role of Digital and Social Media Marketing in Consumer Behavior," explore the critical role of social media during the pandemic. The authors argue that social media platforms became essential tools for businesses to reach consumers, especially as physical stores faced closures.

They note that social media's ability to foster real-time interaction and community-building has been crucial in maintaining brand-consumer relationships during this period of disruption. Furthering this discussion, Campbell and Farrell (2020), in "Social Media Marketing in a Crisis: Examining the Impact of COVID-19," analyze the surge in social media usage during the pandemic and its implications for digital marketing strategies. Their research finds that social media has not only facilitated consumer engagement but has also influenced purchasing decisions as users increasingly turn to these platforms for product recommendations and reviews.

Lastly, Hughes and Kozinets (2021), in "Influencer Marketing and the Pandemic: The Shift towards Authenticity," examine how influencer marketing has evolved in response to the pandemic. They argue that consumers now seek more authentic and relatable content, prompting influencers to adjust their strategies to maintain credibility and trust. This shift

towards authenticity in influencer marketing highlights the growing importance of genuine connections between brands and consumers in the post-pandemic digital landscape.

Together, these studies underscore the significant shifts in digital marketing and consumer behavior triggered by the pandemic, offering valuable insights for understanding and navigating the post-pandemic market.

Objective of the Study

- To explore the influence of e-commerce growth on traditional retail businesses.
- To examine the role of social media in shaping consumer purchasing decisions in the new normal.
- To analyze the effectiveness of influencer marketing in the post-pandemic digital landscape.

Hypothesis Development

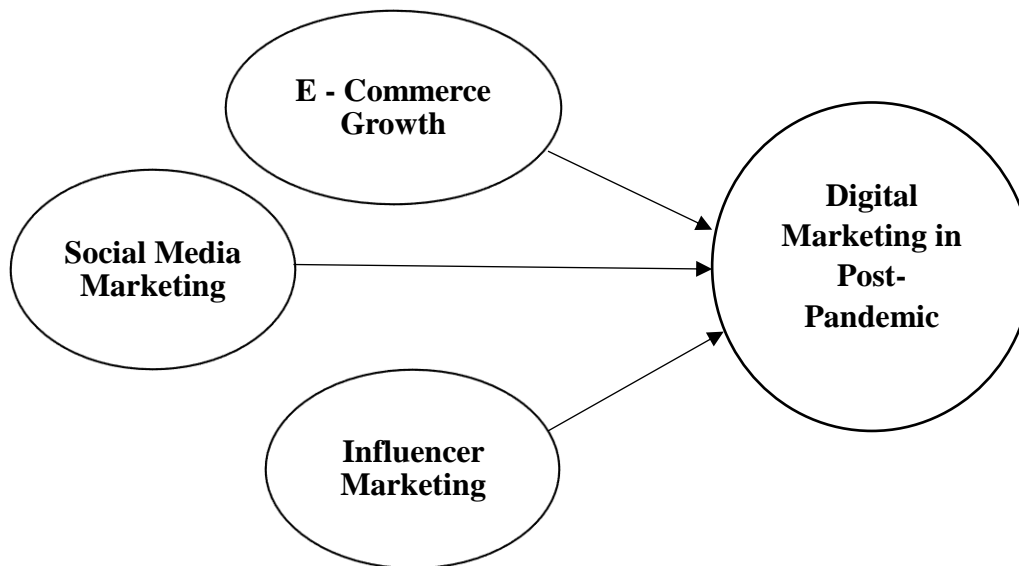
The following hypothesis are formulated to test objective.

H1: There is a significant relationship between ‘Gender’ and E-Commerce Growth.

H2: There is a significant relationship between ‘product recommendations in social media and influencers on purchase decision.

H3: There is a significant relationship between ‘Consumer Age’ and Influencer marketing strategies.

Research Model



Research Methodology

This study uses a mixed-methods approach to examine post-pandemic changes in consumer behavior and trends in digital marketing. Surveys aimed at companies and consumers in a range of industries will be used to gather quantitative data on their internet activity, buying patterns, and marketing approaches. To acquire insights into the changing scene, in-depth interviews with influencers and experts in digital marketing will be used to collect qualitative data. To put findings in context, secondary data from academic studies and industry publications will also be analyzed. A thorough grasp of the modifications in digital marketing and customer behavior in the post-pandemic period will be made possible by this all-encompassing strategy.

Sampling and Data Collection

The sample size is 213 from all different demographic people who use social media, E – commerce platforms like amazon, flipkart and ajio. This samples include the audience who follow digital media influencers regularly. Sampling method adopted here is ‘cluster sampling’. The data is collected by using google forms and it was provided to all sorts of peoples who use mobile phones regularly. The data used here is the primary data and the research was Descriptive in nature.

Tools for Analysis

Simple statistical techniques are used, including the Regression, Correlation and one-way anova analysis. These were carried out with the help of software like SPSS software.

Data Analysis and Major Findings

H0: There is no significant relationship between ‘Gender’ and E-Commerce Growth.

H1: There is a significant relationship between ‘Gender’ and E-Commerce Growth.

The hypothesis of the study is “There is a significant relationship between ‘Gender’ and E-Commerce Growth variables like Product Recommendation, Purchase decisions, Essential part of shopping, UGC content impact and Social media presence trustworthy. To test this hypothesis, data was collected from a sample of people who use digital media. The collected data was analyzed by using one way anova.

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Do you believe that the growth of e-commerce has negatively impacted traditional retail businesses in your area?	Between Groups	11.284	1	11.284	9.541	.002
	Within Groups	250.739	212	1.183		
	Total	262.023	213			
Do you think that traditional retail stores have effectively adapted to the rise of e-commerce?	Between Groups	18.009	1	18.009	21.946	.000
	Within Groups	173.972	212	.821		
	Total	191.981	213			
Do you prefer shopping online over visiting traditional retail stores post-pandemic?	Between Groups	5.750	1	5.750	10.375	.001
	Within Groups	117.502	212	.554		
	Total	123.252	213			
	Between Groups	12.168	1	12.168	10.781	.001

Do you think that traditional retailers should focus more on building an online presence to remain competitive?	Within Groups	239.276	212	1.129		
	Total	251.444	213			
Do you believe that the convenience of e-commerce will continue to dominate consumer behavior in the future?	Between Groups	9.719	1	9.719	8.524	.004
	Within Groups	241.720	212	1.140		
	Total	251.439	213			

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) is used in the experiment to compare ‘Gender’ and E-Commerce growth. Let the P value be 0.05. Since the significance value in all 5 variables like Product Recommendation, Purchase decisions, and Essential part of shopping, UGC content impact and Social media presence trustworthy is lesser than the P Value 0.05.

Hence Null hypothesis was rejected and Alternative hypothesis was accepted. We infer that there will be a significant relationship between Gender and Health programs offered by the organization.

H0: There is no significant relationship between ‘product recommendation in social media and influencer on purchase decisions’.

H1: There is a significant relationship between ‘product recommendation in social media and influencer on purchase decisions’.

Significance of the correlation

Assess whether the correlation between product recommendation in social media and influencer on purchase decisions is statistically significant. For significant correlations, Sig. (2-tailed) will be less than .05 and the Pearson Correlation will be flagged with asterisks.

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Do you find yourself relying on social media platforms for product recommendations before making a purchase?	4.10	.860	213
Do you follow influencers on social media whose opinions influence your purchasing decisions?	3.81	.797	214

Correlations

	Do you find yourself relying on social media platforms for product recommendations before making a purchase?	Do you follow influencers on social media whose opinions influence your purchasing decisions?
Do you find yourself relying on social media platforms for product recommendations before making a purchase?	Pearson Correlation1 Sig. (2-tailed) N213	.035 .615 213
Do you follow influencers on social media whose opinions influence your purchasing decisions?	Pearson Correlation.035 Sig. (2-tailed).615 N213	1 214

The correlation analysis between the variables ‘Role of Social Media’ and ‘Influencer The correlation analysis between ‘product recommendation in social media’ and ‘influencer on purchase decisions’ reveals a Pearson Correlation coefficient of 0.35 for both variables, indicating a moderate positive relationship. However, the significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) for both is 0.615, which exceeds the standard threshold of 0.05, suggesting that the correlation is not statistically significant. With sample sizes of 213 and 213, these results imply that while there is some degree of association between product recommendations on social media and the influence of influencers on purchase decisions, this relationship is not strong enough to be considered significant. Consequently, this finding indicates that, within this dataset, the impact of social media product recommendations and influencer endorsements on purchase decisions might not be as directly connected as initially hypothesized, warranting further investigation or a larger sample to draw more definitive conclusions.

H0: There is no significant relationship between ‘Consumer Age’ and Influencer marketing strategies.

H1: There is a significant relationship between ‘Consumer Age’ and Influencer marketing strategies.

In the current study, we looked into the connection between ‘Consumer Age’ and Influencer marketing strategies. The study's premise proposed a substantial correlation between industry type and educational programs.

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.346	5	.069	.224	.952 ^b
	Residual	64.252	208	.309		
	Total	64.598	213			

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Age

b. Predictors: (Constant), Constants: Influence on purchase decision, influencer marketing more effective than traditional, influencers providing authentic contents, trusted product recommendations and influencer will grow after pandemic.

The R and R2 values are shown in this table. The "R" Column's R value, which denotes the simple correlation, is 0.499, indicating a high degree of correlation. The R2 value, also referred to as the "R Square" column, shows the percentage that the independent variable (Influence on purchase decision, influencer marketing more effective than traditional, influencers providing authentic contents, trusted product recommendations and influencer will grow after pandemic.) accounts for in explaining the overall variation in the dependent variable (Consumer age). In this instance, a very significant 49% may be explained.

The regression analysis was conducted to explore the relationship between 'Consumer Age' and various aspects of influencer marketing strategies. The significance levels for five key influencer marketing variables were examined: The variables values for Influence on purchase decision (Sig. = 0.608), Influencer marketing is more effective than traditional marketing (Sig. = 0.484), Influencers providing authentic content (Sig. = 0.581), Trusted product recommendations (Sig. = 0.421) and Influencer growth post-pandemic (Sig. = 0.947).

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.703	.218		7.827	.000
Do you follow influencers on social media whose opinions influence your purchasing decisions?	.026	.051	.038	.514	.608

Do you think that influencer marketing is more effective than traditional advertising in the post-pandemic era?	.074	.105	.146	.701	.484
Do you feel that influencers provide more authentic and relatable content than traditional advertisements?	.063	.114	.123	.552	.581
Do you trust product recommendations made by influencers over those made by celebrities?	-.122	.151	-.239	-.805	.421
Do you think that the role of influencers in digital marketing will continue to grow in the post-pandemic future?	-.003	.045	-.005	-.067	.947

a. Dependent Variable: Age

Since all significance values are greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected for any of these variables. This indicates that there is no statistically significant relationship between ‘Consumer Age’ and the evaluated influencer marketing strategies. In other words, within this dataset, consumer age does not appear to have a meaningful impact on how effective or influential these aspects of influencer marketing are. The findings suggest that these influencer marketing strategies may be universally perceived across different age groups, rather than being influenced by consumer age.

Findings and Suggestions

Findings

The research findings reveal several key insights. The ANOVA analysis demonstrated a significant relationship between gender and e-commerce growth, with all five variables (product recommendation, purchase decisions, shopping habits, UGC content impact, and social media trustworthiness) showing significance below the P-value of 0.05, leading to the

acceptance of the alternative hypothesis. The correlation analysis showed a moderate positive relationship between social media product recommendations and influencer impact on purchase decisions; however, this relationship was not statistically significant, suggesting the need for further investigation. Lastly, the regression analysis indicated no significant relationship between consumer age and various influencer marketing strategies, implying that these strategies may be perceived similarly across different age groups.

Suggestions

Based on the negative relationships observed in the data analysis, several suggestions and improvements are recommended for future research and practice. The insignificant correlation between social media product recommendations and influencer impact on purchase decisions indicates that businesses should reconsider their reliance on these strategies in isolation, possibly integrating them with other marketing tactics for greater effectiveness. Furthermore, the lack of a significant relationship between consumer age and influencer marketing strategies suggests that more targeted and age-specific approaches may be necessary to enhance the relevance and impact of influencer campaigns. Additionally, the ANOVA results highlight the need to explore how gender influences e-commerce growth and tailor marketing strategies accordingly to better address gender-specific preferences and behaviors. To gain more conclusive insights, future research should consider larger sample sizes and more diverse datasets.

Conclusion

In summary, our study has shed important light on how digital marketing is changing in the post-pandemic environment. The results emphasize how gender and e-commerce growth are significantly correlated, underscoring the significance of developing marketing tactics that are gender-specific. These tactics might not be as successful as previously believed, though, given the moderate but statistically negligible association between social media product recommendations and influencer impact on purchase decisions.

A more age-specific targeting strategy could improve campaign efficacy, as there appears to be no significant correlation between customer age and influencer marketing tactics, suggesting that a one-size-fits-all approach may not be the best one. These results suggest that companies

should think twice before relying solely on influencer marketing and social media, and instead look into more integrated tactics. Customizing marketing initiatives is obviously necessary to better match consumer preferences linked to age and gender.

To further evaluate these findings and improve marketing techniques in a way that optimizes their impact in a digital context that is changing quickly, future study should concentrate on larger and more diverse samples. By doing this, companies may stay competitive in the post-pandemic market and more adept at navigating the nuances of consumer behavior.

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