

# Impact of Digital Marketing on Consumer Buying Behaviour

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**Abstract:** *The way people shop has changed completely in the last ten years. Before buying anything today, most people go online - they search, compare, read reviews, watch videos, and check what influencers are saying. All of this is driven by digital marketing. This research was done to understand exactly how digital marketing influences what consumers decide to buy.*

*Primary data was collected from 110 respondents through a 20-question structured questionnaire. The data was analysed using Microsoft Excel through frequency, percentage, and mean score analysis. The study found that online reviews are the strongest influence on purchase decisions with a mean score of 4.44, followed by search engine research at 4.34 and social media advertising at 4.29. Overall 85.4 percent of respondents rated their digital marketing experience as positive with an overall mean score of 4.04. All three research hypotheses were accepted. The study concludes that digital marketing has a strong, direct, and positive impact on consumer buying behaviour.*

**Keywords:** Digital Marketing, Consumer Buying Behaviour, Social Media Marketing, Influencer Marketing, Online Reviews, Search Engine Marketing, Purchase Decision, Consumer Trust, E-Commerce, Indian Market

## I. INTRODUCTION

We are living in the most connected time in human history. Over five billion people use the internet globally today, and a large portion of them spend several hours online every single day. This massive shift in how people spend their time has fundamentally changed how businesses reach their customers and how customers discover, evaluate, and purchase products.

Digital marketing is the use of internet-based platforms and tools to promote products and services to potential buyers. It covers a wide range of channels and methods, including social media marketing on platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube, search engine marketing and optimisation on Google, email marketing, influencer partnerships, content marketing through blogs and videos, online display advertising, and customer review platforms on e-commerce sites like Amazon and Flipkart.

What makes digital marketing fundamentally different from traditional marketing - television, radio, newspapers, and billboards - is its ability to be two-way, personalised, measurable, and immediate. A television advertisement reaches everyone who happens to be watching at that moment. A digital advertisement can be targeted to show only to a 22-year-old woman in Mumbai who has recently searched for skincare products and follows beauty influencers on Instagram. This level of precision was completely impossible before the digital age.

Consumer buying behaviour refers to the entire process a person goes through before, during, and after making a purchase. It includes how they first become aware of a product, how they gather information about it, how they compare different options, what finally convinces them to buy, and how they feel about the purchase afterwards. Understanding this process and identifying what influences each stage of it is one of the most important questions in marketing today.

In India specifically, the digital marketing landscape has grown at an extraordinary pace. The arrival of affordable mobile internet, cheap smartphones, and platforms like WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, and Flipkart has brought



hundreds of millions of new consumers into the digital economy. Today, Indian consumers across urban, semi-urban, and even rural areas are discovering products, reading reviews, watching influencer content, and making purchases online in rapidly growing numbers.

This research was conducted to study the specific impact of digital marketing on consumer buying behaviour. It aimed to understand which digital marketing tools are most influential, at which stages of the buying process they have the strongest impact, and what role consumer trust plays in determining whether digital marketing leads to an actual purchase.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of recent research studies from 2022 to 2026 shows a clear and growing body of evidence that digital marketing has a measurable and significant impact on consumer buying behaviour across multiple dimensions.

Sharma et al. (2022) found that consumers today go through multiple digital touchpoints before making a purchase and that digital marketing has made the decision-making process more information-rich than ever before. Kapoor and Singh (2022) found that digital marketing creates significantly stronger brand recall compared to traditional advertising and that consumers exposed to digital ads are more likely to consider a brand when making purchase decisions.

Mehta and Patel (2022) found that visual content - particularly videos and reels - had a stronger influence on young adult buying decisions compared to static image advertisements on social media. Pillai and Menon (2022) established that search engine marketing is one of the most effective tools for driving direct purchases because it reaches consumers at the exact moment they are actively looking for a product.

Joshi et al. (2023) found that more than 60 percent of consumers discovered new products first through social media before searching for them on search engines, confirming that social media now functions as the primary product discovery channel. Verma and Chauhan (2023) found a direct link between time spent on Instagram and the number of impulse purchases made by consumers. Singh and Tiwari (2023) clearly established that star ratings below 3.5 are almost always rejected by consumers and that online reviews are a non-negotiable part of the purchase decision process for online shoppers.

Nair and Krishnan (2023) found that consumers trust influencer recommendations more than direct brand advertisements because influencers are perceived as real and relatable people. Kulkarni and Shah (2023) found that personalised emails significantly outperform generic promotional emails in driving consumer purchases. Kumar and Reddy (2023) highlighted the unique complexity of the Indian digital marketing landscape where platform preferences, language, and digital literacy vary significantly across different regions and demographics.

Ravi et al. (2024) introduced the distinction between engaged and passive social media consumers and found that actively engaged consumers are three times more likely to purchase from a brand compared to those who only passively view content. Bansal et al. (2024) found that the stronger the parasocial emotional connection between a follower and an influencer, the higher the likelihood of purchase based on that influencer's recommendation. Gupta and Agarwal (2024) found that everyday micro-content creators drive higher purchase conversions than big celebrities because consumers find them more trustworthy and relatable. Mishra and Jain (2024) found that time-limited discount offers delivered through email significantly increase purchase conversion rates. Pandey and Srivastava (2024) concluded that trust is the single most important factor determining whether digital marketing leads to a purchase.

Desai and Bhatt (2024) found that consumers are increasingly suspicious of reviews that appear too perfect and actually trust products with a mix of positive and slightly negative reviews more than products with only five-star ratings.

Rao et al. (2025) found that user-generated content is considered far more trustworthy than brand-created content and that brands showcasing real customer photos and videos see significantly higher purchase rates. Chatterjee et al. (2025) found that growing privacy concerns are creating discomfort among consumers when personalised ads feel too intrusive, highlighting the need for brands to balance personalisation with respect for privacy. Saxena and Bose (2025) found that the combination of short video content and quick commerce platforms in India has dramatically reduced the time between a consumer seeing a product and purchasing it.



The overall literature clearly confirms that digital marketing influences consumers at every stage of their buying journey and that its impact is strong, measurable, and growing.

### III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES

**Objective 1** - To analyse the impact of different digital marketing tools, including social media advertising, search engine marketing, influencer marketing, email marketing, and online reviews, on consumer buying decisions.

**Objective 2** - To identify the key digital marketing factors that most strongly influence consumer behaviour at different stages of the buying process from product awareness to final purchase.

**Objective 3** - To examine the relationship between consumer trust in digital marketing content and actual purchasing behaviour.

**Hypothesis 1** H0 - Social media marketing does not have a significant impact on consumer buying behaviour. H1 - Social media marketing has a significant impact on consumer buying behaviour.

**Hypothesis 2:** H0 - Influencer recommendations do not significantly influence consumer purchase decisions. H1 - Influencer recommendations significantly influence consumer purchase decisions.

**Hypothesis 3:** H0 - Online reviews and ratings do not significantly affect consumer buying decisions. H1 - Online reviews and ratings significantly affect consumer buying decisions.

### IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

**Research Design:** This study follows a Descriptive Research Design. The goal was to describe and understand the current influence of digital marketing on consumer buying behaviour without manipulating any variables.

**Research Approach:** A Quantitative Research Approach was used since the data collected through the questionnaire is numerical and measurable.

**Data Source:** This research is based entirely on Primary Data collected fresh and directly from 110 respondents through a structured questionnaire.

**Sample Size:** 110 respondents.

**Sampling Method:** Convenience Sampling - respondents were selected based on easy availability and willingness to participate.

**Data Collection Tool:** A structured questionnaire with 20 questions divided into five sections. The main questions used a 5-point Likert Scale where 1 means Strongly Disagree, 2 means Disagree, 3 means Neutral, 4 means Agree, and 5 means Strongly Agree.

**Data Analysis:** Microsoft Excel was used for frequency analysis, percentage analysis, mean score calculation, and chart creation.

**Reliability:** The questionnaire was kept simple and clear to ensure consistent interpretation by all respondents.

**Validity:** Every question was directly linked to one of the three research objectives based on the literature review.

**Limitations:** The sample size of 110 is limited. Convenience sampling may introduce bias. Responses are self-reported. Analysis was done through basic Excel without advanced statistical software.

### V. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

#### 5.1 Demographic Profile of 110 Respondents

Table 1 - Age Group Distribution

Age Group	Respondents	Percentage
Below 18 years	8	7.3%
18 to 25 years	52	47.3%
26 to 35 years	28	25.4%
36 to 45 years	14	12.7%
Above 45 years	8	7.3%



Total	110	100%
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The largest group of respondents - 47.3 percent - belongs to the 18 to 25 years age bracket. This is the most digitally active consumer group and their high representation makes this sample highly relevant to a study on digital marketing.

**Table 2 - Gender Distribution**

Gender	Respondents	Percentage
Male	58	52.7%
Female	48	43.6%
Prefer not to say	4	3.6%
Total	110	100%

The gender distribution is fairly balanced with males at 52.7 percent and females at 43.6 percent, ensuring the findings reflect the views of both genders.

**Table 3 - Occupation Distribution**

Occupation	Respondents	Percentage
Student	48	43.6%
Salaried Employee	32	29.1%
Business Owner	16	14.5%
Homemaker	8	7.3%
Other	6	5.5%
Total	110	100%

Students form the largest occupational group at 43.6 percent, followed by salaried employees at 29.1 percent. The mix of different occupations brings diversity to the findings.

**Table 4 - Daily Internet Usage**

Internet Usage Per Day	Respondents	Percentage
Less than 1 hour	6	5.5%
1 to 3 hours	24	21.8%
3 to 5 hours	42	38.2%
More than 5 hours	38	34.5%
Total	110	100%

72.7 percent of respondents spend more than 3 hours online every day. This high digital activity level confirms that the sample is constantly exposed to digital marketing, making this a highly appropriate group to study.

## 5.2 Main Data Analysis - Likert Scale Questions

**Table 5 - Q5: I regularly come across advertisements on social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube.**

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	2	1.8%
Disagree	4	3.6%
Neutral	8	7.3%
Agree	42	38.2%
Strongly Agree	54	49.1%
Total	110	100%
<b>Mean Score</b>		<b>4.29</b>

**Interpretation:** 87.3 percent of respondents agree or strongly agree that they regularly see social media advertisements. A mean score of 4.29 confirms that social media advertising has an extremely high reach among the sample. This establishes the foundation for digital marketing's influence on buying behaviour.



**Table 6 - Q6: Digital marketing has made me aware of new products and brands I did not know before.**

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	2	1.8%
Disagree	6	5.5%
Neutral	10	9.1%
Agree	46	41.8%
Strongly Agree	46	41.8%
Total	110	100%
<b>Mean Score</b>		<b>4.16</b>

**Interpretation:** 83.6 percent agree that digital marketing introduced them to new products and brands. A mean score of 4.16 confirms that digital marketing is successfully performing its most basic and important function of creating product awareness among consumers.

**Table 7 - Q7: Online advertisements feel more relevant and personalised compared to traditional advertisements.**

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	4	3.6%
Disagree	10	9.1%
Neutral	18	16.4%
Agree	44	40%
Strongly Agree	34	30.9%
Total	110	100%
<b>Mean Score</b>		<b>3.85</b>

**Interpretation:** 70.9 percent feel online ads are more personalised than traditional ads. The mean of 3.85 reflects positive agreement. The 16.4 percent neutral response suggests that some consumers do not consciously notice personalisation even when it is happening.

**Table 8 - Q8: I actively search for products on Google or other search engines before making a purchase.**

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	2	1.8%
Disagree	4	3.6%
Neutral	6	5.5%
Agree	40	36.4%
Strongly Agree	58	52.7%
Total	110	100%
<b>Mean Score</b>		<b>4.34</b>

**Interpretation:** 89.1 percent actively search online before buying - the second highest mean score of 4.34 in the study. This confirms that search engine research is deeply embedded in the consumer buying process and search engine marketing is a critical tool for businesses wanting to capture purchase-ready consumers.

**Table 9 - Q9: I have discovered a product through an online advertisement and later purchased it.**

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	2	1.8%
Disagree	6	5.5%
Neutral	12	10.9%
Agree	48	43.6%
Strongly Agree	42	38.2%
Total	110	100%



<b>Mean Score</b>		<b>4.11</b>
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**Interpretation:** 81.8 percent confirm they discovered and later purchased a product through an online advertisement. This is one of the most direct findings in the study - it proves a clear and concrete link between digital advertising exposure and actual purchase behaviour.

**Table 10 - Q10: I trust the product recommendations made by influencers on social media.**

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	6	5.5%
Disagree	14	12.7%
Neutral	26	23.6%
Agree	40	36.4%
Strongly Agree	24	21.8%
Total	110	100%
<b>Mean Score</b>		<b>3.56</b>

**Interpretation:** 58.2 percent trust influencer recommendations while 23.6 percent remain neutral. A mean of 3.56 shows moderate agreement. This reflects growing consumer awareness about paid promotions and the fact that trust in influencers depends heavily on the influencer's perceived authenticity and credibility.

**Table 11 - Q11: Seeing a product reviewed by an influencer motivates me to buy it.**

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	4	3.6%
Disagree	12	10.9%
Neutral	22	20%
Agree	44	40%
Strongly Agree	28	25.5%
Total	110	100%
<b>Mean Score</b>		<b>3.73</b>

**Interpretation:** 65.5 percent are motivated to buy after seeing influencer content. A mean of 3.73 reflects a genuine and measurable influence of influencer marketing on purchase motivation. Brands investing in the right influencer partnerships can convert a large portion of their target audience into buyers.

**Table 12 - Q12: Which social media platform influences your buying decisions the most?**

Platform	Respondents	Percentage
Instagram	46	41.8%
YouTube	32	29.1%
Facebook	14	12.7%
WhatsApp	12	10.9%
Other	6	5.5%
Total	110	100%

**Interpretation:** Instagram leads at 41.8 percent followed by YouTube at 29.1 percent. Together they account for over 70 percent of social media purchase influence. These two platforms must be the primary focus of any brand's digital marketing strategy targeting Indian consumers.

**Table 13 - Q13: I have purchased a product after watching a reel, short video, or live session on social media.**

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	4	3.6%
Disagree	8	7.3%
Neutral	14	12.7%
Agree	46	41.8%



Strongly Agree	38	34.5%
Total	110	100%
<b>Mean Score</b>		<b>3.96</b>

**Interpretation:** 76.3 percent have made a purchase after watching a short video or reel. A mean of 3.96 confirms that short-form video content is one of the most powerful purchase drivers in today's digital environment. The growth of Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts has made this format a non-negotiable part of digital marketing strategy.

**Table 14 - Q14: I read online customer reviews and star ratings before buying any product online.**

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	2	1.8%
Disagree	2	1.8%
Neutral	6	5.5%
Agree	36	32.7%
Strongly Agree	64	58.2%
Total	110	100%
<b>Mean Score</b>		<b>4.44</b>

**Interpretation:** This question received the highest mean score in the entire study at 4.44. A massive 90.9 percent read reviews before buying online. This makes online reviews the single most influential digital marketing factor in consumer purchase decisions. No other tool in this study came close to this level of influence and agreement.

**Table 15 - Q15: Negative reviews stop me from purchasing even if I initially liked the product.**

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	2	1.8%
Disagree	8	7.3%
Neutral	16	14.5%
Agree	46	41.8%
Strongly Agree	38	34.5%
Total	110	100%
<b>Mean Score</b>		<b>4.00</b>

**Interpretation:** 76.3 percent agree that negative reviews stop them from buying even after initially liking a product. A mean of 4.00 confirms the powerful stopping effect of negative reviews. This shows that brands must actively manage their online reputation because a few negative reviews can undo an entire marketing campaign.

**Table 16 - Q16: I have made a purchase after receiving a promotional email or message with a discount.**

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	4	3.6%
Disagree	10	9.1%
Neutral	20	18.2%
Agree	44	40%
Strongly Agree	32	29.1%
Total	110	100%
<b>Mean Score</b>		<b>3.82</b>

**Interpretation:** 69.1 percent have purchased after receiving a promotional email or discount message. A mean of 3.82 confirms that email marketing with genuine value offers remains an effective and relevant digital marketing tool for driving real purchases.



**Table 17 - Q17: How often do you shop online after being influenced by a digital marketing advertisement?**

Frequency	Respondents	Percentage
Very Frequently	22	20%
Frequently	36	32.7%
Sometimes	34	30.9%
Rarely	14	12.7%
Never	4	3.6%
Total	110	100%

**Interpretation:** 83.6 percent shop online after digital marketing influence either very frequently, frequently, or sometimes. Only 16.3 percent rarely or never do so. This is one of the strongest overall findings - digital marketing is directly and regularly converting consumer attention into actual purchases for the vast majority of respondents.

**Table 18 - Q18: Digital marketing helps me compare products and make a more informed buying decision.**

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	2	1.8%
Disagree	4	3.6%
Neutral	12	10.9%
Agree	50	45.5%
Strongly Agree	42	38.2%
Total	110	100%
<b>Mean Score</b>		<b>4.14</b>

**Interpretation:** 83.7 percent agree digital marketing helps them make better and more informed decisions. A mean of 4.14 confirms that digital marketing empowers consumers not just to buy but to buy wisely. This is the constructive and genuinely helpful side of digital marketing that consumers clearly value and appreciate.

**Table 19 - Q19: Digital marketing sometimes pushes me to buy products I do not actually need.**

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	4	3.6%
Disagree	10	9.1%
Neutral	18	16.4%
Agree	44	40%
Strongly Agree	34	30.9%
Total	110	100%
<b>Mean Score</b>		<b>3.85</b>

**Interpretation:** 70.9 percent acknowledge that digital marketing sometimes drives them to buy things they do not need. A mean of 3.85 reflects clear agreement. This confirms that digital marketing does create impulse buying behaviour and raises questions about the ethical responsibility of brands in designing their marketing tactics.

**Table 20 - Q20: Overall, digital marketing has had a positive influence on my buying experience.**

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	2	1.8%
Disagree	4	3.6%
Neutral	10	9.1%
Agree	48	43.6%
Strongly Agree	46	41.8%
Total	110	100%
<b>Mean Score</b>		<b>4.20</b>



**Interpretation:** 85.4 percent rate digital marketing's overall impact on their buying experience as positive. A mean of 4.20 is a strong positive response. Despite acknowledging the impulse buying tendency, consumers still clearly value the awareness, information, convenience, and personalisation that digital marketing brings to their overall buying experience.

### 5.3 Master Summary Table - All Likert Scale Questions

**Table 21 - Complete Mean Score Summary**

Q.No	Question Summary	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean Score
Q5	Exposure to social media ads	1.8%	3.6%	7.3%	38.2%	49.1%	4.29
Q6	Awareness of new products	1.8%	5.5%	9.1%	41.8%	41.8%	4.16
Q7	Online ads feel personalised	3.6%	9.1%	16.4%	40%	30.9%	3.85
Q8	Search on Google before buying	1.8%	3.6%	5.5%	36.4%	52.7%	4.34
Q9	Discovered and purchased via ad	1.8%	5.5%	10.9%	43.6%	38.2%	4.11
Q10	Trust in influencer recommendations	5.5%	12.7%	23.6%	36.4%	21.8%	3.56
Q11	Motivated to buy by influencer	3.6%	10.9%	20%	40%	25.5%	3.73
Q13	Purchased after watching reel	3.6%	7.3%	12.7%	41.8%	34.5%	3.96
Q14	Read reviews before buying	1.8%	1.8%	5.5%	32.7%	58.2%	4.44
Q15	Negative reviews stop purchase	1.8%	7.3%	14.5%	41.8%	34.5%	4.00
Q16	Purchased after promotional email	3.6%	9.1%	18.2%	40%	29.1%	3.82
Q18	Helps make informed decisions	1.8%	3.6%	10.9%	45.5%	38.2%	4.14
Q19	Pushes unnecessary purchases	3.6%	9.1%	16.4%	40%	30.9%	3.85
Q20	Overall positive impact	1.8%	3.6%	9.1%	43.6%	41.8%	4.20
	<b>Overall Average Mean</b>						<b>4.04</b>

**Overall Interpretation:** The overall average mean score of 4.04 across all 14 Likert scale questions places the collective consumer sentiment firmly in the agree to strongly agree range. This confirms that digital marketing has a consistent, measurable, and significant positive influence on consumer buying behaviour across all major dimensions studied.

## VI. KEY FINDINGS

The following are the fifteen most important findings of this research based on the data collected from 110 respondents. The majority of respondents at 47.3 percent belong to the 18 to 25 age group, confirming that young adults are the most digitally influenced consumer segment.

- 72.7 percent of respondents spend more than 3 hours online daily, establishing high and continuous digital marketing exposure across the sample.
- 87.3 percent regularly see social media advertisements with a mean score of 4.29, confirming the extraordinary reach of social media advertising among active internet users.
- 83.6 percent became aware of new products through digital marketing with a mean of 4.16, confirming that



digital marketing is effectively creating brand and product awareness.

- 89.1 percent actively search on Google before buying with a mean of 4.34, making search engine marketing the second most critical digital tool for influencing purchase decisions.
- 81.8 percent discovered and purchased a product through an online advertisement with a mean of 4.11, proving a direct and concrete connection between digital ad exposure and actual purchase behaviour.
- Instagram is the most influential platform for purchase decisions at 41.8 percent followed by YouTube at 29.1 percent, together accounting for over 70 percent of social media purchase influence.
- 76.3 percent made a purchase after watching a reel or short video with a mean of 3.96, confirming that short-form video is one of the most powerful purchase-driving content formats today.
- 58.2 percent trust influencer recommendations and 65.5 percent are motivated to buy by influencer content, showing real but moderate influencer marketing effectiveness that is closely tied to perceived authenticity.
- 90.9 percent read customer reviews before buying with the highest mean score of 4.44, making online reviews the single most powerful digital marketing influence on consumer purchase decisions in this study.
- 76.3 percent say negative reviews stop them from buying even if they liked a product initially with a mean of 4.00, confirming the powerful stopping force of negative reviews on purchase decisions.
- 69.1 percent made a purchase after receiving a discount-based promotional email with a mean of 3.82, confirming email marketing remains a relevant and effective purchase-driving tool.
- 83.6 percent shop online after digital marketing influence either very frequently, frequently, or sometimes, showing that digital marketing regularly and directly converts consumer attention into real purchases.
- 83.7 percent agree digital marketing helps them make more informed buying decisions with a mean of 4.14, showing the constructive and empowering side of digital marketing.
- 70.9 percent acknowledge that digital marketing sometimes pushes them into unnecessary purchases with a mean of 3.85, highlighting the impulse buying tendency created by aggressive digital marketing tactics.
- 85.4 percent rate digital marketing's overall impact on their buying experience as positive with a mean of 4.20 and an overall study mean of 4.04, confirming the strong, consistent, and largely positive influence of digital marketing on consumer buying behaviour.

## VII. HYPOTHESIS OUTCOMES

**Hypothesis 1 - Social media marketing has a significant impact on consumer buying behaviour.** Result: Accepted. Data from Q5, Q9, Q12, and Q13 consistently showed high mean scores between 3.96 and 4.29 and agreement percentages above 75 percent, confirming significant social media marketing influence on purchase behaviour.

**Hypothesis 2 - Influencer recommendations significantly influence consumer purchase decisions.** Result: Accepted. Data from Q10 and Q11 showed mean scores of 3.56 and 3.73 with 58 to 65 percent agreement, confirming that influencer marketing does significantly influence purchase decisions with the important condition that authenticity and credibility are the key drivers of this influence.

**Hypothesis 3 - Online reviews and ratings significantly affect consumer buying decisions.** Result: Accepted with the strongest evidence in the study. Q14 showed a mean of 4.44 and 90.9 percent agreement while Q15 showed a mean of 4.00 and 76.3 percent agreement, making this the most conclusively proven hypothesis of the research.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

This research set out to answer one fundamental question - how much does digital marketing actually influence what consumers buy and how they decide to buy it? After collecting and analysing data from 110 real consumers and reviewing 20 recent research studies, the answer is very clear.

Digital marketing has a strong, direct, significant, and largely positive impact on consumer buying behaviour. It influences consumers at every stage of their buying journey. At the awareness stage, social media advertisements and short video content introduce consumers to new products they did not know existed. At the consideration stage, search



engine research, online reviews, and influencer content help consumers gather information and evaluate their options. At the decision stage, star ratings, promotional emails, discount offers, and retargeted advertisements push consumers towards the final purchase.

The most important single finding of this research is that online reviews with a mean score of 4.44 are the most trusted and influential form of digital marketing content among consumers today. Brands that build strong, honest, and authentic review profiles on their products will have a greater competitive advantage than those that rely only on paid advertising.

The study also found that digital marketing, while largely positive in its impact, creates impulse buying behaviour in a significant portion of consumers. This finding carries an important responsibility for brands - to use their digital marketing power ethically and transparently rather than exploiting psychological triggers to push consumers into unnecessary purchases.

Overall this research contributes a clear, evidence-based, and practical understanding of how digital marketing shapes modern consumer buying behaviour and provides actionable insights for businesses, marketers, and consumers operating in today's digital world.

### **IX. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Businesses must prioritise Instagram and YouTube as their primary digital marketing platforms since together they drive over 70 percent of social media purchase influence among consumers.

Brands should invest heavily in short-form video content creation since 76.3 percent of consumers have made purchases after watching reels and short videos on social media.

Online review management must be treated as a core business priority since 90.9 percent of consumers read reviews before buying and negative reviews have a strong stopping effect on purchase decisions.

Influencer partnerships should focus on authenticity and audience alignment rather than celebrity size. Micro-influencers with niche and highly engaged audiences often deliver better purchase conversion than large celebrities.

Email marketing should be personalised and value-driven with genuine discount offers and relevant product recommendations based on consumer behaviour data to achieve maximum purchase conversion.

Digital marketing practices should be ethical and transparent. Brands should avoid manipulative urgency tactics and clearly disclose paid influencer partnerships to maintain long-term consumer trust.

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### Questionnaire

This questionnaire is prepared purely for academic research purposes. All information shared will be kept strictly confidential. Please answer all questions honestly.

#### Section A - Demographic Information

##### Q1. What is your age group?

- a) Below 18 years
- b) 18 to 25 years
- c) 26 to 35 years
- d) 36 to 45 years
- e) Above 45 years

##### Q2. What is your gender?

- a) Male
- b) Female
- c) Prefer not to say



**Q3. What is your current occupation?**

- a) Student
- b) Salaried Employee
- c) Business Owner / Self-employed
- d) Homemaker
- e) Other

**Q4. How many hours do you spend on the internet on an average day?**

- a) Less than 1 hour
- b) 1 to 3 hours
- c) 3 to 5 hours
- d) More than 5 hours

**Section B - Digital Marketing Exposure and Awareness**

*(1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree)*

**Q5.** I regularly come across advertisements on social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube.

1  2  3  4  5

**Q6.** Digital marketing has made me aware of new products and brands that I did not know about before.

1  2  3  4  5

**Q7.** Online advertisements feel more relevant and personalised to my interests compared to traditional advertisements like TV or newspaper ads.

1  2  3  4  5

**Q8.** I actively search for products on Google or other search engines before making a purchase.

1  2  3  4  5

**Q9.** I have discovered a product through an online advertisement and later purchased it.

1  2  3  4  5

**Section C - Social Media and Influencer Marketing**

**Q10.** I trust the product recommendations made by influencers or content creators on social media.

1  2  3  4  5

**Q11.** Seeing a product being used or reviewed by a social media influencer motivates me to buy it.

1  2  3  4  5

**Q12. Which social media platform influences your buying decisions the most?**

- a) Instagram
- b) YouTube
- c) Facebook
- d) WhatsApp
- e) Other

**Q13.** I have purchased a product after watching a reel, short video, or live session on social media.

1  2  3  4  5

**Section D - Online Reviews, Ratings and Email Marketing**

**Q14.** I read online customer reviews and star ratings before buying any product online.

1  2  3  4  5



**Q15.** Negative reviews about a product stop me from purchasing it even if I liked the product initially.

1  2  3  4  5

**Q16.** I have made a purchase after receiving a promotional email or message offering a discount or special deal.

1  2  3  4  5

**Section E - Trust, Decision Making and Overall Impact**

**Q17.** How often do you shop online after being influenced by a digital marketing advertisement?

- a) Very Frequently
- b) Frequently
- c) Sometimes
- d) Rarely
- e) Never

**Q18.** Digital marketing helps me compare products and make a better and more informed buying decision.

1  2  3  4  5

**Q19.** I feel that digital marketing sometimes pushes me into buying products that I do not actually need.

1  2  3  4  5

**Q20.** Overall, digital marketing has had a positive influence on my buying experience and purchasing decisions.

1  2  3  4  5

