A Study on Impact of Digital Marketing on the Buying Behaviour of College Students in Coimbatore City

Mrs. Priyadarshini[1] and Yeswanth P[2]

Assistant Professor & Head, PG & Research Department of Social Work[1]
III BCom CMA[2]
Sri Ramakrishna College of Arts & Science (Autonomous), Coimbatore.

Abstract: *Digital marketing has become an important tool influencing consumer purchasing behavior, especially among college students who actively use digital platforms. This study examines the impact of digital marketing on the buying behavior of college students in Coimbatore city. The research focuses on students' attitudes toward digital advertisements, factors influencing online purchase decisions, and their satisfaction with digital shopping experiences. A descriptive research design was adopted, and data were collected from 50 college students through a structured questionnaire using convenience sampling. The analysis, carried out using Percentage Analysis, Chi-square test, and ANOVA, indicates that online reviews, ratings, and personalized recommendations significantly influence students' purchase decisions. While digital marketing positively affects buying behavior, excessive advertisements may lead to confusion and information overload. The study concludes that effective and transparent digital marketing strategies are essential to improve students' online shopping experience and influence purchase decisions positively.*

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Buying Behaviour, College Students, Online Shopping

I. INTRODUCTION

Digital technology has rapidly transformed the way businesses promote their products and services, with digital marketing increasingly replacing traditional marketing methods. Through platforms such as social media, websites, search engines, and mobile applications, companies can directly engage with consumers and influence their purchasing decisions. College students represent a major segment of online users, as their frequent use of smartphones and digital platforms exposes them to online advertisements, influencer promotions, and product reviews that shape their buying behaviour.

Digital marketing offers several advantages, including convenience, easy access to information, price comparison, and attractive promotional offers, allowing students to shop anytime and anywhere. However, challenges such as misleading advertisements, privacy concerns, lack of trust, and information overload may affect their online shopping experience. Students' perceptions of digital advertisements—shaped by peer influence, brand reputation, online reviews, and marketing strategies—play a crucial role in determining their purchase decisions. Understanding these attitudes is essential for developing effective and ethical digital marketing strategies targeting young consumers.

1.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To identify the factors influencing the impact of digital marketing on the buying behaviour of college students in Coimbatore city.
- To examine college students' attitudes towards digital marketing advertisements on social media and their online shopping experiences.

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DOI: 10.48175/IJARSCT-31417

ISSN
2581-9429
IJARSCT

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1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The rapid growth of digital platforms and online marketing has greatly influenced the purchasing behaviour of college students. Increased use of smartphones, social media, and e-commerce websites exposes students to digital advertisements, influencer promotions, and personalized content that affect their buying decisions. Although digital marketing offers benefits such as convenience, easy access to information, and attractive offers, challenges like misleading advertisements, privacy concerns, and lack of trust remain. Students' purchase decisions vary based on factors such as peer influence, brand image, online reviews, and promotional strategies, making it important for businesses to better understand the key digital marketing factors that impact student consumers.

1.3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on analysing the influence of digital marketing on the online purchasing behaviour of college students in Coimbatore city. It examines students' attitudes toward digital advertisements, their preferred social media platforms for online shopping, satisfaction levels with digital marketing practices, and the challenges faced while using digital platforms. The research also explores how factors such as online reviews, influencer marketing, peer opinions, and promotional offers affect students' buying decisions. The findings are expected to help researchers, policymakers, and marketers better understand students' digital consumption behaviour and develop more effective marketing strategies.

1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology refers to the systematic and scientific approach used to conduct a study. It involves the methods, techniques, and procedures adopted by the researcher to collect, analyse, and interpret data in order to achieve the research objectives while ensuring accuracy, reliability, and validity of the findings.

1.4.1 RESEARCH DESIGN:

Research design refers to the overall framework or plan used to conduct a study, guiding the process of data collection and analysis. In this research, a descriptive research design was used to examine the impact of digital marketing on the buying behaviour of college students.

1.4.2 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE AND SAMPLE SIZE:

Sampling technique refers to the method used to select respondents from the target population. In this study, a convenience sampling technique was adopted, where respondents were chosen based on their availability and ease of access.
Sample size refers to the number of respondents selected for the study. In this research, a total of 50 college students were selected as the sample for data collection.

1.4.3 DATA COLLECTION:

Primary Data: Primary data refers to first-hand information collected directly from respondents for the study. In this research, it was gathered through a structured questionnaire administered to college students.
Secondary Data: Secondary data refers to information already collected and published by others. It was obtained from books, journals, research articles, websites, and other online sources related to digital marketing and consumer behaviour.

1.4.4 TOOLS USED FOR ANALYSIS

- Percentage analysis
- Chi square test
- ANOVA analysis

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1.5 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Anandhan, P., Selvam, T., et al. (2025)[1] examined the online shopping behaviour of college students in Arial District, focusing on the influence of e-commerce growth on purchasing decisions. The study identified factors such as convenience, pricing, discounts, ease of use, and social media marketing as key motivators, while challenges like product authenticity, payment security, and return policies affected students' trust in online shopping. The findings highlight the significant role of digital platforms in shaping the buying behaviour of tech-savvy students.

Darshini, M., Muthumani, S., et al. (2025)[2] studied the impact of digital marketing on consumer purchase behaviour by analysing digital channels such as social media marketing, search engine optimization, email marketing, and online advertisements. The study highlighted that factors like online engagement, personalized content, digital trust, and brand visibility significantly influence consumer awareness and purchase intention. Using both surveys and interviews, the findings revealed that effective digital marketing strategies positively influence buying decisions and help businesses strengthen customer relationships and improve sales performance.

Kothandapani, G. and Raju, S. (2025)[3] studied consumer behavior towards online purchasing of home appliances in Thanjavur town. The study found that convenience, competitive pricing, product variety, and easy accessibility encouraged online purchases, especially among young consumers. However, concerns regarding product quality, delivery reliability, authenticity, and after-sales service influenced consumer trust. Factors such as income level, brand reputation, internet access, and digital literacy were also found to significantly affect buying behavior.

Sabitha, R. (2025)[4] has examined consumer awareness and purchase behavior towards green marketing in Coimbatore city. The study revealed that consumers show growing interest in eco-friendly products, but high prices, limited availability, and lack of awareness act as major barriers. The findings highlighted the importance of awareness programs, reasonable pricing, and transparent marketing practices to promote sustainable purchasing behavior.

1.6 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS
PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

Table No :1 Gender

Gender	No. Of respondents	Percentage %
Male	18	36%
Female	32	64%
Total	**50**	**100%**

Source Data: Questionnaire

INTERPRETATION: The above table shows that majority 64% are female and 36% are male. It is clearly observed that the majority of the respondents are female students.

Majority of the respondent represented by female participants.

Table No:2 Age of Respondents

Age	No. of respondents	Percentage %
Below 18 years	5	10%
18 – 20 years	34	68%
21 -23 years	8	16%
Above 23	3	6%
Total	**50**	100%

Source Data: Questionnaire

INTERPRETATION: The table reveals that 68% of the respondents belong to the age group 18–20 years, which forms the majority. Further, 10% are below 18 years, 16% are between 21–23 years and 6% are under 23 years.

Majority of the respondents fall under the 18–20 years category.

Table No:3 LEVEL OF STUDY

Level of education	No. of respondents	Percentage %
Undergraduate	46	92%
Postgraduate	4	8%
Total	**50**	**100%**

Source Data: Questionnaire

INTERPRETATION: The above table shows that the majority of respondents 92% are Undergraduate students. Only 8% of the respondents are Postgraduate students.

Majority of the respondents 92% are Undergraduate students.

Table No:4 COURSE OF STUDY

Types of Institutions	No. of respondents	Percentage %
Arts	10	20%
Science	7	14%
Commerce / Management	19	38%
Engineering / Technology	14	28%
Total	**50**	**100%**

Source Data: Questionnaire

INTERPRETATION:

The above table shows that 38% of the respondents studying Commerce/Management. 28% of the respondents are from Engineering/technology. 20% of the respondents belong to Arts category, and 14% are from science.

Majority of the respondents 38% belong to Commerce/Management.

Table No:5 MONTHLY PERSONAL SPENDING

Year of study	No. Of respondents	Percentage %
Below ₹2,000	30	60%
₹2,001 – ₹5,000	15	30%
₹5,001 – ₹8,000	2	4%
Above ₹8,000	3	6%
Total	**50**	**100%**

Source Data: Questionnaire

INTERPRETATION:

The above table signifies 60% respondents are using Below ₹2,000, 30% of the students are using ₹2,001 – ₹5,000, 4% using ₹5,001 – ₹8,000 and 6% are using Above ₹8,000.

Majority 60% respondents are using Below ₹2,000

CHI SQUARE ANALYSIS

Table No:6 GENDER AND PLATFORM ONLINE SHOPPING

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	do	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.539[a]	3	0.468
Likelihood Ratio	2.875	3	0.411
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.303	1	0.129
N of Valid Cases	50		

Source: Calculated Data

INTERPRETATION:

Since the p-value (0.468) exceeds the significance level of 0.05, there is not statistically significant association between Gender and platform preferred most for online shopping.

Therefore, (H_0) platform preference does not significantly differ between male and female students.

Table No:7 LEVEL OF STUDY AND DIGITAL MARKETING INFLUENCE ON PURCHASE DECISION

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	do	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.804[a]	3	0.283
Likelihood Ratio	2.998	3	0.392
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.242	1	0.134
N of Valid Cases	50		

Source: Calculated Data

INTERPRETATION:

Since the p-value (0.283) exceeds the significance level of 0.05, there is not statistically significant, therefore null hypothesis is accepted and alternated hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded that there is no association between level of study and the digital marketing influence on purchase decision of college students.

ANOVA ANALYSIS

Table No:8 DIGITAL SHOPPING EXPERIENCE AND AGE GROUPS

ANOVA					
Overall rating of digital shopping experience					
	Sum of Squares	do	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.098	4	0.366	0.663	0.579
Within Groups	25.402	46	0.552		
Total	26.500	49			

Source: Calculated Data

INTERPRETATION:

Since the p-value (0.579) exceeds the significance level of 0.05, there is not statistically significant difference in digital shopping experience across different Age groups. This indicates that students belonging to different age categories have similar perceptions regarding their digital shopping experience.

(H_o) There is no statistically significant difference in Overall, how would you rate your digital shopping experience across different Age groups.

Table No:9 LEVEL OF SATISFACTION IN DIGITAL MARKETING AND LEVEL OF STUDY

ANOVA					
Level of satisfaction with the information provided through digital marketing					
	Sum of Squares	do	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.130	2	2.130	3.019	0.089
Within Groups	33.870	48	0.706		
Total	36.000	49			

Source: Calculated Data

INTERPRETATION:

Since the p-value (0.089) exceeds the significance level of 0.05, there is not statistically significant difference in information provided in digital advertisements before purchase across different levels of study. This indicates that

students from different levels of study have similar satisfaction levels regarding information provided in digital advertisements.

FINDINGS:

Majority (64%) of the respondents are female undergraduate students belonging to the 18–21 years age group, mainly from the Commerce/Management stream.

Majority (60%) respondents spend below ₹2,000 per month as personal expenditure.

Online reviews and ratings are the most (38%) influential digital marketing factor affecting students' purchase decisions.

A large number of respondents stated that digital advertisements sometimes influence their buying behaviour.

Personalized recommendations are the most effective digital marketing messages influencing college students.

There is no significant association between gender and preferred online shopping platform.

A significant association exists between age and the type of digital content that influences students the most.

There is no significant difference in overall digital shopping experience among different age groups.

A significant difference exists between gender and the level of confusion caused by excessive online advertisements.

SUGGESTIONS

Digital marketers should provide clear and accurate information to avoid confusion among students. Excessive advertisements should be reduced to improve user experience. Content should be more engaging and relevant to college students. Personalized marketing strategies can be used to increase effectiveness. Brands should focus on trust-building and transparency.

II. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that digital marketing has a significant influence on college students' purchasing behaviour and perceptions. Although digital advertisements affect buying decisions, excessive exposure to online promotions may lead to confusion among students. Statistical tools such as Percentage Analysis, Chi-square test, and ANOVA were used to analyse relationships and differences among variables, revealing that some factors showed significant associations while others did not. Overall, digital marketing plays a vital role in shaping students' shopping behaviour, but it should be applied strategically to minimize issues such as confusion and information overload.

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