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Scrolling to Spending: A Cross-Sectional Study on How Digital Marketing Influences Purchase Decisions Among Internet Users

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<p>Hammad Muhammad Baig Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science and Technology, Islamabad Email: hamadbaig@hotmail.com</p> <p>Zia Moiz Qureshi Iqra University, Karachi</p> <p>Ayesha Manzoor Researcher, Department of Media, Management and Transformation Centre (MMTC), University - Jönköping University, Sweden</p> <p>Kiran Manzoor Assistant Professor, Department of Management Sciences, Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences, Quetta</p>	<p>Abstract</p> <p>Background: The high rate of digital marketing has changed consumer purchasing behavior, especially among highly connected internet users. Continuous exposure to social media advertisements, influencer marketing, and sponsored content may influence consumer decision-making processes. However, empirical quantification of this relationship within cross-sectional consumer populations remains limited.</p> <p>Objective: This study aimed to examine the association between digital marketing exposure and purchase decision behavior among internet users.</p> <p>Methods: A quantitative cross-sectional study was conducted among 298 adult internet users. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising sociodemographic variables, internet usage patterns, a six-item Digital Marketing Exposure scale, and a six-item Purchase Decision Behavior scale measured on a 5-point Likert scale. Composite scores were calculated by averaging item responses. The Cronbach alpha was used to determine internal consistency. Simple linear regression, Chi-square test, Pearson correlation analysis with 95% confidence interval, and descriptive statistics were done. The level of statistical significance was determined to be $p < 0.05$.</p> <p>Results: The mean digital marketing exposure score was 3.49 ± 0.79, while the mean purchase decision behavior score was 3.57 ± 0.74. Reliability analysis demonstrated good internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.84$ and $\alpha = 0.81$, respectively). A statistically significant association was observed between categorized exposure level and purchase behavior level ($\chi^2 = 48.37$, $p < 0.001$; Cramer's $V = 0.28$). Pearson correlation analysis revealed a strong positive correlation between exposure and purchase behavior ($r = 0.62$; 95% CI: 0.54–0.69; $p < 0.001$). Simple linear regression showed that digital marketing exposure significantly predicted purchase decision behavior ($\beta = 0.62$, $p < 0.001$), explaining 38.4% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.384$).</p> <p>Conclusion: There was a statistically significant and positive correlation between purchase decision behavior and exposure to digital marketing. The more individuals were exposed to digital advertisements, the greater the likelihood of being influenced to make a purchase. These results demonstrate the behavioral implications of digital marketing approaches among digitally engaged populations.</p>
<p>Keywords:</p>	<p>Online Marketing Exposure, Consumer Behavior, Purchase Decision Behavior, Digital Marketing, Social Media Advertising, And A Cross-Sectional Study</p>



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Introduction

Digital technology has grown at an incredible rate and hence changed how businesses interact with consumers ([Singh et al., 2022](#)). Social media advertising, influencer promotions, sponsored content, and targeted online advertising are all types of digital marketing that has become widespread in terms of influencing consumer behavior ([Vrontis et al., 2021](#)). As internet usage grows and people spend longer hours per day on screens, they are constantly bombarded with algorithm-promotion-driven content on a variety of internet-based platforms. Such an unremitting exposure has radically altered the conventional buying journeys, turning the decision-making operations out of the offline space into digitally mediated ecosystems ([Vilhelmson et al., 2017](#)).

Social media platforms have turned out to be strong marketing environments as they provide the possibility to personalize content and subject users to brand-related stimulus several times ([Kim & Johnson, 2016](#)). Consumers are exposed to products in contexts that are socially compelling and psychologically convincing through the use of targeted advertisements, retargeting, and influencer relationships ([De Battista, 2024](#)). The interactive feature of online sites enables users not only to see advertisements but also interact with the content, compare products, as well as read peer-reviewed material prior to making purchase decisions ([Giombi et al., 2022](#)). Consequently, digital exposure is not passive anymore, it became an active force of consumer engagement and buying behavior ([Hudders et al., 2019](#)).

Repeated marketing stimuli could lead to brand familiarity and preference, which is in line with the theoretical answers in cognitive processing theories and the mere exposure effect. Also, online customer reviews, which are a subdivision of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), are very important in helping to form perceived credibility and uncertainty avoidance in online transactions. These mechanisms imply that the greater the digital marketing exposure, the higher the purchase decision behavior ([Babić Rosario et al., 2020](#); [Li et al., 2023](#)).

The young adults are a particularly topical population to research the impact of digital marketing since this group is more prone to spending more time on the internet every day and using social media than older age groups ([Buchanan et al., 2018](#)). Great digital interaction elevates chances of being exposed to promotional messages, which might reinforce behavioral impact. Nonetheless, although digital marketing strategies of marketing are common, the scarcity of empirical information on the degree of relationship between the intensity of exposure and buying behavior is also a common situation in most emerging digital markets ([Buchanan et al., 2017](#)).

In spite of the fact that past studies have investigated online consumer behavior, a smaller number of studies have investigated in detail exposure patterns, composite behavioral scoring, and predictive modeling on a single cross-sectional study ([Hueniken et al., 2021](#); [Lipscomb et al., 2017](#)). Structured empirical research is required to measure the exposure frequency as well as assess the statistical association of the exposure with the purchasing decisions on the basis of the relevant analytic tools like correlation and regression analyses ([Li et al., 2024](#)).

Thus, the current research was designed to determine the relationship between exposure to digital marketing and the decision to purchase in people who use the internet. In particular, the study aimed to (1) define the sociodemographic and digital engagement attributes, (2) measure the degree of digital marketing exposure, (3) measure the purchase decision behavior, and (4) define the strength and predictive value of exposure and buying outcomes. This study will provide empirical data in terms of the translation of digital marketing exposure to the quantifiable consumer behavioral response by the use of a cross-sectional quantitative methodology.

METHODOLOGY

Study Design

The study design was a quantitative cross-sectional study to determine the relationship between exposure to digital marketing and purchase decision behaviour among internet users. The study was descriptive analytical and sought to determine the exposures, buying behaviour, and statistical correlation between the two constructs at one time.

Study Setting and Population

The study was carried out on adult internet-users who were active users of digital platforms. Those above 18 years of age and with frequent use of the internet and exposure to online advertisements were found eligible to take part in the study. The participants were a digitally active population with different sociodemographic profiles, i.e., age, gender, education level, employment status, and monthly income.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size of participants that took part in the study was 298. The method of participant recruitment was a non-probability convenience sampling method whereby participants who fulfilled the inclusion criteria and volunteered to participate were recruited. The final analysis considered all the responses.

Data Collection Instrument

The data have been gathered by filling in a structured and self-administered questionnaire, which was constructed to capture the sociodemographic traits, internet usage habits, digital marketing exposure, and purchase decision behavior. The questionnaire had four sections. Part one had the sociodemographic data, such as age, sex, education level, employment, and monthly income. The second part evaluated internet usage and digital engagement behavior, such as hours of daily internet use, which is the most frequently used digital platform, how frequently online have made purchases in the last six months, and hours spent on social media every day. The third part was the evaluation of digital marketing exposure, comprising six Likert-scale questions. The fourth part gauged the purchase decision behavior with six Likert-scale items.

Measurement of Variables

Digital marketing exposure was measured using six items rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). These items assessed frequency of advertisement exposure, influence of influencer marketing, curiosity generated by sponsored content, advertisement clicking behavior, brand recall, and perceived relevance of online advertisements. A composite score was calculated by averaging the six items, resulting in a possible score range of 1 to 5, with higher scores indicating greater exposure.

Purchase decision behavior was measured using six Likert-scale items rated on the same five-point scale. These items assessed the influence of digital advertisements on purchase decisions, purchasing after online exposure, product comparison behavior, influence of online customer reviews, impulse purchasing due to promotions, and discount-driven purchasing tendencies. A composite score was computed by averaging the six items, with higher scores reflecting stronger influence of digital marketing on purchasing behavior.



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Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to measure the internal consistency reliability of the scales. Digital Marketing Exposure scale exhibited a high level of internal consistency having a Cronbach alpha of 0.84. The Purchase Decision Behavior scale was also found to be good, with the Cronbach's alpha being 0.81. Both values were higher than the expected recommended value of 0.70, which implies that the measurement instruments had acceptable to strong internal consistency.

Composite Score Categorization

The digital marketing exposure and purchase decision behavior composite scores were distributed in tertiles into three categories: low, moderate, and high. These coded variables were then cross tabulated, and Chi-square tested to identify the relationship between the level of exposure and purchasing behavior level.

Statistical Analysis

Statistical software was used to enter the data and analyze it. The descriptive statistics were determined to describe the features of the study population. Categorical variables were represented in frequencies and percentages, whereas means and standard deviations were determined for continuous variables. The cumulative percentages were calculated where necessary in order to make a proper allocation of responses.

Associations and predictive relationships were analyzed by inferential statistical tests. The relationship between purchase decision behavior levels and levels of the Chi-square test was performed using Pearson. V , calculated by Cramer, was used to identify the strength of association. The relationship among the continuous composite scores of exposure and purchase behavior were calculated with the Pearson correlation coefficient (r), and the correlation coefficient had a 95% confidence interval. Further, a simple linear regression analysis was conducted in order to establish the prediction of purchase decision behavior by exposure to digital marketing. The regression equation indicated R , R^2 , adjusted R^2 , F-statistic, regression coefficients, standard errors, standardized 95% confidence intervals, and p-values. The statistical significance was determined as $p < 0.05$.

Ethical Considerations

The involvement in the study was voluntary. All participants were informed before data collection and gave their consent. The respondents were given the comfort of confidentiality and anonymity, and no identifiable data was gathered. The information was only utilized in the research.

RESULTS

Detailed Sociodemographic Characteristics of Participants (N = 298)

The average age was 29.4 ± 8.7 years of age, which means that it was a group of young adults. Almost three-quarters (72.5%) were aged between 18 -35. The sample was made up of 55.7% male participants. The digital consumer population was quite educated (more than half with a bachelor's degree, 53.0%). (49.7%) of them were employed, and 32.2% were students. As per income distribution, the highest (32.2%) was earned between 30,000-60,000 PKR every month.

Table 1. Detailed Sociodemographic Characteristics of Participants (N = 298)

Variable	Category	n	%	Cumulative %
Age (years)	18–25	112	37.6	37.6
	26–35	104	34.9	72.5
	36–45	54	18.1	90.6
	>45	28	9.4	100.0
Mean Age (SD)	29.4 (8.7)	—	—	—
Gender	Male	166	55.7	55.7
	Female	132	44.3	100.0
Education Level	Intermediate	36	12.1	12.1
	Bachelor's	158	53.0	65.1
	Master's	82	27.5	92.6
	Other	22	7.4	100.0
Employment Status	Student	96	32.2	32.2
	Employed	148	49.7	81.9
	Self-employed	34	11.4	93.3
	Unemployed	20	6.7	100.0
Monthly Income (PKR)	<30,000	82	27.5	27.5
	30,000–60,000	96	32.2	59.7
	60,001–100,000	74	24.8	84.5
	>100,000	46	15.4	100.0

Detailed Internet Usage and Digital Engagement Characteristics (N = 298)

Mean internet use was 5.18 ± 2.14 hours, which showed that the respondents were highly exposed to digital use. A high percentage (58.3%) indicated that they spent more than 5 hours on the internet in a day. The most high frequency platform was social media (56.4%), implying that the participants are often subjected to algorithm-based advertising environments. In terms of purchasing behavior, 81.9% of the respondents indicated that they have made one or more online purchases in the past six months. The average number of purchases made was 3.42 ± 2.11 purchases, which indicated medium consumer behavior. Almost 45% of the participants used over 4 hours per day on social media, supporting the applicability of digital marketing exposure among this population



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Table 2. Detailed Internet Usage and Digital Engagement Characteristics (N = 298)

Variable	Category	n	%	Cumulative %
Daily Internet Usage (Hours)	<2 hours	28	9.4	9.4
	2–4 hours	96	32.2	41.6
	5–7 hours	108	36.2	77.8
	>7 hours	66	22.1	100.0
Mean Daily Usage (SD)	5.18 (2.14) hours	—	—	—
Primary Digital Platform Used	Social Media	168	56.4	56.4
	E-commerce Websites	62	20.8	77.2
	Search Engines	40	13.4	90.6
	Streaming / Other	28	9.4	100.0
Frequency of Online Purchases (Past 6 Months)	None	54	18.1	18.1
	1–2 times	82	27.5	45.6
	3–5 times	104	34.9	80.5
	>5 times	58	19.5	100.0
Average Purchase Frequency (SD)	3.42 (2.11)	—	—	—
Time Spent on Social Media per Day	<1 hour	44	14.8	14.8
	1–3 hours	118	39.6	54.4
	4–6 hours	92	30.9	85.3
	>6 hours	44	14.8	100.0

Detailed Distribution of Responses to Digital Marketing Exposure Items (N = 298)

A significant percentage of the respondents responded that they were often exposed to digital advertisements (71.8%), which is shown by the maximum mean value (3.82 ± 1.08). It was also found that brand recall had high levels of agreement (65.1%), meaning effective digital visibility. Compared to other types of behavior, click behavior was less strong (42.3% agreement), and this indicates that exposure does not necessarily convert to an active behavior. On the whole, the mean scores were 3.10-3.82, which means that the exposure to digital marketing stimuli among the participants was moderate to high. None of the items exhibited skewness of extreme distribution spread, implying equal variability of response.

Table 3. Detailed Distribution of Responses to Digital Marketing Exposure Items (N = 298)

Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD), 2 = Disagree (D), 3 = Neutral (N), 4 = Agree (A), 5 = Strongly Agree (SA)

Statement	SD n (%)	D n (%)	N n (%)	A n (%)	SA n (%)	Mean \pm SD
I frequently see digital advertisements while browsing	18 (6.0)	24 (8.1)	42 (14.1)	124 (41.6)	90 (30.2)	3.82 ± 1.08
Influencer marketing attracts my attention	28 (9.4)	44 (14.8)	66 (22.1)	102 (34.2)	58 (19.5)	3.39 ± 1.18
Sponsored advertisements increase my curiosity about products	22 (7.4)	36 (12.1)	78 (26.2)	112 (37.6)	50 (16.8)	3.44 ± 1.07
I often click on digital advertisements	36 (12.1)	64 (21.5)	72 (24.2)	86 (28.9)	40 (13.4)	3.10 ± 1.20
I can easily recall brands I see advertised online	16 (5.4)	30 (10.1)	58 (19.5)	126 (42.3)	68 (22.8)	3.67 ± 1.02
Online advertisements are relevant to my interests	20 (6.7)	38 (12.8)	74 (24.8)	110 (36.9)	56 (18.8)	3.49 ± 1.09

Detailed Distribution of Responses to Purchase Decision Behavior Items (N = 298)

Most of the respondents said that they used digital ads to make their purchase choices (58.4%). On the same note, 62.4% of respondents stated that they had bought a product after exposure to it online. The most effective influence was online customer reviews (Mean = 3.83 ± 1.02), which indicated that peer validation is a key factor in the purchase behavior. There was relatively lower agreement on impulse buying (40.3%), thus showing that, as much as exposure influences the decision making process, not every consumer is involved in impulsive transactions. The purchase driven by the discount also demonstrated a high level of agreement (63.8%), which testifies to price sensitivity among the members of the sample. All in all, the mean scores were between 3.04 to 3.83, which indicates that digital marketing had a moderate to strong influence on the decision-making process of consumers in this cross-sectional sample.

Table 4. Detailed Distribution of Responses to Purchase Decision Behavior Items (N = 298)

Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD), 2 = Disagree (D), 3 = Neutral (N), 4 = Agree (A), 5 = Strongly Agree (SA)

Statement	SD n (%)	D n (%)	N n (%)	A n (%)	SA n (%)	Mean \pm SD
Digital advertisements influence my purchase decisions	20 (6.7)	40 (13.4)	64 (21.5)	112 (37.6)	62 (20.8)	3.52 ± 1.12
I have purchased a product after seeing it advertised online	18 (6.0)	36 (12.1)	58 (19.5)	118 (39.6)	68 (22.8)	3.61 ± 1.09
I compare products after viewing digital advertisements	14 (4.7)	28 (9.4)	60 (20.1)	126 (42.3)	70 (23.5)	3.74 ± 1.01
Online customer reviews influence my buying decisions	14 (4.7)	24 (8.1)	46 (15.4)	128 (43.0)	86 (28.9)	3.83 ± 1.02
I make impulse purchases due to online promotions	42 (14.1)	62 (20.8)	74 (24.8)	82 (27.5)	38 (12.8)	3.04 ± 1.23
Discounts and flash sales increase my likelihood of purchasing	16 (5.4)	30 (10.1)	62 (20.8)	132 (44.3)	58 (19.5)	3.69 ± 1.06



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Composite Scores and Reliability of Study Constructs (N = 298)

The average composite score of Digital Marketing Exposure was 3.49 ± 0.79 with a moderate level of exposure reported by the respondents. Around 28.2% of the respondents were categorized as being highly exposed. The average of the Purchase Decision Behavior score was marginally better (3.57 ± 0.74), indicating that the respondents tended to indicate moderate to high levels of digital marketing on their purchasing behaviour. The internal consistency of both constructs ($\alpha = 0.84$ and 0.81 , respectively) in reliability analysis was good (0.70 is the suggested level) and greater than the recommended level of 0.70. The majority of the respondents were also moderate for both exposure (47.7%) and purchase behavior (52.3%), with equal distribution throughout the sample.

Table 5. Composite Scores and Reliability of Study Constructs (N = 298)

Construct	No. of Items	Possible Score Range	Observed Mean \pm SD	Minimum–Maximum Observed	Cronbach's α
Digital Marketing Exposure	6	1–5	3.49 ± 0.79	1.67 – 4.83	0.84
Purchase Decision Behavior	6	1–5	3.57 ± 0.74	1.83 – 4.92	0.81

Categorization of Composite Scores

(Scores categorized using tertiles)

Construct	Low n (%)	Moderate n (%)	High n (%)
Digital Marketing Exposure	72 (24.2)	142 (47.7)	84 (28.2)
Purchase Decision Behavior	64 (21.5)	156 (52.3)	78 (26.2)

Association Between Digital Marketing Exposure Level and Purchase Decision Level (N = 298)

The level of Digital Marketing Exposure and Purchase Decision level were statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 48.37$, $p < 0.001$). The proportion of high purchase behavior was significantly higher among the high exposure participants (42.9%) than the low exposure participants (11.1%). On the other hand, low exposure respondents (47.2% of the people who were not highly exposed) indicated low purchase decision behavior. The strength of the association of exposure to digital marketing is moderate according to the value of Cramer V (0.28), and therefore, exposure to digital marketing has a significant impact on the purchasing tendencies of consumers in this cross-sectional sample. These results are good descriptive data that favors the correlation between digital marketing exposure and buying action.

Table 6. Association Between Digital Marketing Exposure Level and Purchase Decision Level (N = 298)

Digital Marketing Exposure	Low Purchase n (%)	Moderate Purchase n (%)	High Purchase n (%)	Row Total
Low Exposure (n=72)	34 (47.2)	30 (41.7)	8 (11.1)	72
Moderate Exposure (n=142)	24 (16.9)	84 (59.2)	34 (23.9)	142
High Exposure (n=84)	6 (7.1)	42 (50.0)	36 (42.9)	84
Column Total	64	156	78	298

Chi-Square Test

Statistic	Value
Pearson Chi-Square (df = 4)	48.37
p-value	<0.001
Cramer's V	0.28

Pearson Correlation Between Digital Marketing Exposure and Purchase Decision Behavior (N = 298)

Digital Marketing Exposure and Purchase Decision Behavior had a strong positive relationship ($r = 0.62$, $p < 0.001$). The 95% confidence interval (0.54–0.69) does not cross zero, confirming statistical significance. It means that the increased exposure to digital marketing is closely correlated with the increased probability of purchase behavior. This is a large effect size according to the classification described by Cohen, and this indicates that behavioral relevance in this cross-sectional population is meaningful. The predictive analysis is further justified by the strength of correlation and does not contradict the descriptive cross-sectional methodology.

Table 7. Pearson Correlation Between Digital Marketing Exposure and Purchase Decision Behavior (N = 298)

Variable	Mean \pm SD	1	2
1. Digital Marketing Exposure	3.49 ± 0.79	1	
2. Purchase Decision Behavior	3.57 ± 0.74	0.62***	1

Correlation Statistics

Statistic	Value
Pearson's r	0.62
95% Confidence Interval	0.54 – 0.69
p-value	<0.001
Effect Size Interpretation	Large



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Simple Linear Regression Analysis Predicting Purchase Decision Behavior from Digital Marketing Exposure (N = 298)

The regression model had a significant statistical value, $F(1, 296) = 184.42, p < 0.001$. The results in Digital Marketing Exposure accounted **38.4%** of the variance in Purchase Decision Behavior ($R^2 = 0.384$), which means that individual predictor has a very high explanatory ability in cross-sectional study. These included Digital Marketing Exposure, which was a strong positive predictor ($\beta = 0.62, p < 0.001$). One unit further increase in exposure score was linked to a 0.61-unit further increase in purchase decision score. The 95% confidence interval for the regression coefficient (0.52–0.70) did not include zero, confirming statistical significance. The results of this research prove that exposure to digital marketing significantly and effectively impacts consumer buying behavior in this sample.

Table 8. Simple Linear Regression Analysis Predicting Purchase Decision Behavior from Digital Marketing Exposure (N = 298)

Model Summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of Estimate	F (df)	p-value
Model 1	0.62	0.384	0.381	0.58	184.42 (1, 296)	<0.001

Regression Coefficients

Predictor	B	SE	β	t	95% CI for B	p-value
(Constant)	1.45	0.21	—	6.90	1.04 – 1.86	<0.001
Digital Marketing Exposure	0.61	0.05	0.62	13.58	0.52 – 0.70	<0.001

DISCUSSION

This is a cross-sectional research that investigated how the exposure of digital marketing affects buying decisions behavior among internet users. The results prove that consumer purchasing behavior is closely correlated with the digital exposure of marketing. There was a significant positive relationship between exposure and purchase decision scores ($r = 0.62, p < 0.001$), and simple linear regression analysis indicated that digital marketing exposure was able to explain 38.4 percent of the variance in the purchase behavior. These results suggest that exposure to online advertisements is not only a passive process, but the process that significantly affects the choice of consumers ([Ghose & Todri-Adamopoulos, 2016](#); [Tang et al., 2015](#)).

The descriptive results found that most of the respondents reported being exposed to a lot of online advertisements, especially on social media outlets. That is aligned with the modern trends in consumer behavior, in which the social media algorithms tailor and re-present the promotional content. The brand recall mean is high, and therefore, it is possible to infer that cognitive familiarity of products is reinforced through repeated exposure to the digital form. This is consistent with the known marketing principles like the mere exposure effect that postulates that repeated exposure to stimuli would enhance preference and probability of purchase ([Montoya et al., 2017](#); [Van de Cruys et al., 2022](#)).

The most powerful engine in the behavior of purchase decisions was the online customer review. This is in line with previous studies that have shown that electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) is an important aspect in online shopping contexts. In contrast to conventional advertising, peer-generated reviews increase the credibility perceived and lessen uncertainty in transactions over the internet. Thus, the interest may start with exposure, but the final decision on the purchase seems to be entrenched with social validation ([Ngo et al., 2024](#); [Yoo et al., 2015](#)).

The cross-tabulation test also established a statistically significant relationship between the levels of exposure (categorized) and the level of purchase behavior ($\chi^2 = 48.37, p < 0.001$). Highly exposed participants had a significantly higher likelihood of indicating high purchase decision behavior than lowly exposed participants. This implies that it would be a dose-response kind of relationship, with the higher the exposure, the more the behavioral influence ([Romo-Muñoz et al., 2018](#); [Somervuori & Ravaja, 2013](#)).

The results of the regression test affirmed that digital marketing exposure was a good predictor of the purchase behavior ($\beta = 0.62$). The size of this effect is informative of practical rather than statistical significance. Excessive exposure to advertisements in digital consumer spaces can affect conscious and unconscious judgments and buying intentions. The contribution to this kind of behavioral reinforcement is likely to be repeated targeting, retargeting, and algorithm-based recommendations ([Sofi et al., 2018](#); [Yoo, 2008](#)).

Demographic composition of the sample, mostly being young adults between the ages of 18 and 35 years, may be a partial cause of the close relationship. In the younger age groups, consumers are more likely to be more digital and more responsive to online marketing stimuli. Also, the average time spent on the internet (mean = 5.18 hours) is high, which implies constant exposure to promotional materials, providing more marketing potential ([Heinonen & Strandvik, 2002](#)).

In a real sense, such findings demonstrate how digital marketing strategies are effective in determining consumer buying behavior. Companies that are oriented towards digitally active audiences might enjoy long-term social media and influencer partnerships and review management schemes. Nonetheless, ethical issues of excessive exposure and buying on impulse must also be considered ([Vrontis et al., 2021](#)).

Conclusion

This study demonstrated a significant positive association between digital marketing exposure and purchase decision behavior among internet users. Higher levels of exposure to online advertisements, influencer promotions, and sponsored content were strongly correlated with increased purchasing tendencies. Digital marketing exposure also emerged as a significant predictor of purchase behavior, explaining a substantial proportion of behavioral variance. These findings highlight the influential role of digital marketing strategies in shaping modern consumer decision-making processes. Overall, the results emphasize the growing behavioral impact of digital advertising within highly connected online populations.

Study limitations

Although it has these strengths, this research has shortcomings. The cross-sectional design does not allow the researcher to make causal conclusions; hence, although exposure is related to the purchase behavior, we cannot say with certainty that it causes it. Response bias can also be created through self-reported measures. Long-term longitudinal research would be able to better identify the time dependence between marketing exposure and buying behaviour. Convenience sampling may limit the generalizability of findings



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