



Ignite Virality and Rule the Market: Impact of digital marketing on Customer's purchase intention in developing economy

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Abstract

Digital marketing has a long-term impact on corporate sector marketing strategy and helps to attain a competitive advantage. The present study collected data from customer purchasing experience through digital marketing. The survey method was utilized, and an adopted questionnaire was used. A random sample strategy was used to deliver a total of 300 questionnaires to personnel working in higher education. Of them, 259 questionnaires were fully completed and used for further statistical analysis. The Smart PLS 4.0 version software is used in the current work to implement the multiple regression strategies through structural equation modelling. The findings show that social media and email digital marketing significantly influenced consumers' purchase intentions. The current work extends the theory of planned behaviour and offers several theoretical and practical implications. The results of the present study provide specific recommendations for practitioners and decision-makers in marketing departments and implement digital marketing concepts in advertising strategy to enhance customer purchase intention, particularly in a developing economy.

Keywords: Digital marketing, social media, purchase intentions, attitude, Pakistan

1. Introduction

Digital marketing has become popular in existing marketing strategies (Dahiya & Gayatri, 2018). People are also spending more time online watching about goods and services and sharing feedback with others about their dealings with various companies. It is well-established that digital marketing may influence consumer habits (Gill, Ansari, et al., 2021). Most companies surveyed said social media and digital marketing were critical to their overall strategy (Putri, 2021). Digital marketing helps businesses save money while still accomplishing their marketing aims. The development of social media platforms may have far-reaching effects on the success of companies. Long-lasting connections can only be cultivated slowly over time between business-to-business (B2B) companies. Unlike business-to-consumer (B2C) transactions, however, it is still being determined which forms of digital marketing should be prioritized in B2B interactions to maximize customers' buying propensity (Hien & Nhu, 2022).

The field of digital marketing is rapidly evolving, and new trends are emerging at an unprecedented rate. However, a limited amount of research investigates the impact of these emerging trends on customers' purchase intentions in the B2B context (Hien & Nhu, 2022). Although brand recognition is a crucial factor in customers' purchase decisions, only a few studies have investigated the moderating effect of brand recognition on the relationship between digital marketing trends and purchase intentions in the B2B context. Most studies on digital marketing and purchase intentions focus on the B2C context. However, the B2B context significantly differs from the B2C context, and different factors may influence it. At the same time, individual digital marketing trends such as social media marketing, search engine optimization, and content marketing have been studied extensively.

There are profound present and future implications for B2B digital marketing in the ability to quantify the success of individual strategies in driving sales. Current research examines the effect of digital marketing on consumers' perceptions of digital marketing and their propensity to purchase from B2B companies using consumer behaviour theory is applicable to underpin the connections among digital marketing, customer attitudes about marketing, and intent to buy. Marketers must consider consumers' purchase and behavioural intentions when assessing their actions (Gill, Ali, et al., 2021).

The study's findings may help firms establish a groundwork for developing digital marketing strategies and better contact their consumers in an era where most communication occurs in the digital realm. Marketing's significance stems from the influence of consumers' perceptions of and responses to digital advertising and their propensity to make purchases via these channels. B2B transactions need extensive investigation on the buyer's part.

2. Literature review

2.1. Digital Marketing

"Digital Marketing" refers to "any marketing activities, organizations, and processes that use digital technology to better connect with, serve, and retain consumers" (Putri, 2021). However, digital marketing is a sub-branch of conventional marketing that utilizes contemporary means to put items and primarily to engage with stakeholders. Digital marketing uses the internet, electronic mail, wireless media, and digital data as management tools. However, studies have shown that digital marketing is not just digitally enhanced conventional marketing; it is a new approach with features and dynamics that must be understood to choose the most appropriate marketing

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strategies and methods. Similarly, Dara asserts that the reach of consumer perceptions and buying behaviour is significantly expanded with digital marketing (Saima & Khan, 2020).

When exposed to new notions, individuals' assessments, emotional attachments, and propensities to behave toward an item or idea change over time. For instance, a consumer's favourable or adverse reaction to a given piece of digital marketing might indicate their attitude toward that piece of digital marketing (Lindh et al., 2020). In addition, Mehta argued that consumers' attitude toward advertising is a measure of advertising efficacy, with a more favourable attitude toward advertising leading to a higher propensity to purchase. In this research, the participant's perception of digital marketing was shown to be a significant factor in determining the effectiveness of these strategies. The most important consideration is how the audience feels about the ad format, which indicates how they feel about other digital marketing strategies (Ansari et al., 2019).

2.2. B2B Customers' Purchase Intention

A consumer's disposition toward a particular product or service may be understood in terms of their propensity to purchase it from the brands they want to have in their homes. For the sake of this investigation, "buying intention" refers to a consumer's desire to acquire a product coupled with their financial means to do so. Many studies have shown that customers' positive or negative feelings about a brand or product are proportional to their buying propensity (GILL et al., 2020).

By lowering the barrier to entry for two-way communication between salespeople and consumers, social media technologies boost customer happiness, engagement, and loyalty. As a result, B2B firms are pouring resources into social media marketing to attract new consumers via these channels, aiming to track their clients' digital footprints and foster better relationships with them (Dastane, 2020). Although customers use several channels and media in pre- and post-purchase processes, there needs to be more awareness of the social interaction between consumers, project managers, and experts regarding value facilitation and co-creation.

The marketing communications landscape is changing, which means the function of marketing communications is also evolving. To "produce, inspire, and share brand messages and discussions with and among consumers across a fluid mix of sponsored, owned, earned, and shared communication channels," as Kotler put it, content marketers must "think like publishers." In addition, the current research defines business-to-business (B2B) content marketing centred on disseminating helpful information to stimulate interest and consideration throughout the purchase decision process (Nawaz & Kaldeen, 2020).

2.3. Social Media Marketing and attitude towards digital marketing

The proliferation of social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter has altered how companies communicate with and sell to their target audiences. Social media marketing is integral to digital advertising because of the massive user base on sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram (Saima & Khan, 2020). Due to the dynamic nature of the digital marketing industry, social media tactics are more important. Social media is used by businesses to foster customer relationships, raise brand recognition, and enhance revenue. Mentioned above proposed the following hypothesis:

H1: Social media marketing significantly affects attitude toward digital marketing.

2.4. Email Marketing and Attitude towards digital marketing

Email marketing is a digital marketing strategy that sends promotional messages to a target audience via Email. The effectiveness of email marketing depends on several factors, including the quality of the email content, the timing of the message, and the message's relevance to the recipient. One crucial factor that can influence the success of an email marketing campaign is the recipient's attitude toward digital marketing (Lu & Chen, 2021).

Research has shown that email marketing can positively impact consumers' attitudes toward digital marketing. Studies found that email marketing can increase consumers' trust and confidence in a brand (Reimers et al., 2016). The use of personalized emails can improve the effectiveness of email marketing. The study showed that customized emails could increase consumers' engagement and willingness to share the message with others. Email marketing can positively impact consumers' attitudes toward digital marketing. Email marketing can increase consumers' trust and confidence in a brand, improve the perceived value of a product or service, and enhance customer relationships. However, the success of an email marketing campaign depends on several factors, including the quality of the email content, the timing of the message, and the relevance of the message to the recipient. Mentioned above proposed the following hypothesis:

H2: Email marketing has a significant effect on attitude toward digital marketing.

2.5. Attitude toward digital marketing and Customer purchase intentions

The success of digital marketing campaigns depends on the campaign's reach and the consumer's attitude toward the brand and the product or service offered. A positive attitude towards digital marketing can increase the likelihood of purchase intention, leading to higher sales and improved brand reputation (Omar & Atteya, 2020). Consumers with a positive attitude toward digital marketing are likelier to purchase products and services from the brand. The study also showed that several factors influence a positive attitude toward digital marketing, including perceived ease of use, usefulness, and value.

Attitude toward digital marketing can have a significant positive impact on consumers' purchase intention. When used effectively, digital marketing campaigns can improve consumers' attitudes toward the brand and provide

relevant information and recommendations that increase the likelihood of purchase intention (Husnain & Toor, 2017). The success of a digital marketing campaign depends on several factors, including perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness and perceived value, the quality of the movement, the relevance of the message, and the level of engagement with the audience.

H3: Attitude towards digital marketing significantly affects customer purchase intentions.

2.6. The mediating role of attitude toward digital marketing

Promoting goods and services through social media has become essential in recent years. Social media marketing involves interacting with potential and current customers on sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to raise brand exposure, deepen customer loyalty, and increase revenue (Omar & Atteya, 2020). Social media campaigns may or may not be successful depending on the consumer's desire to purchase. Social media may significantly influence customers' propensity to buy. Increased brand recognition and positive customer sentiment may be achieved via the strategic use of social media. The research also shows that the availability of helpful information and peer recommendations on social media may influence customers' desire to buy.

Moreover, social media can effectively reach out to niche markets. The demographics and interests of a specific consumer base can be used to refine a campaign's focus in social media marketing. Targeted social media marketing, the study found, can boost sales by increasing consumers' intent to buy (Husnain & Toor, 2017). The use of social media may have a very beneficial effect on customers' desire to buy. If done correctly, social media marketing can expand a company's reach, foster consumer relationships, and spread valuable data and suggestions (Sigar et al., 2021). The most important aspects of a successful social media marketing campaign are the depth of interaction with the intended audience and the precision with which specific demographics can be reached.

H4: Attitude toward digital marketing mediate the relationship between social media marketing and customer purchase intentions.

H5: Attitude toward digital marketing mediate the relationship between email marketing and customer purchase intentions.

2.7. Theoretical Framework

This research aims to identify the connections between various types of digital marketing, consumer perceptions of advertising, and the propensity to purchase. According to the theory of consumer behaviour, several forms of marketing impact consumers' propensity to purchase and their responses to those advertisements. Various reactions from consumers to these initiatives are to be expected. Attitudes toward the marketing that firms use to approach B2B clients were noted, with both excellent and negative attitudes toward this kind of marketing affecting the performance of this activity. Attitudes are one of the three fundamental parts that may be seen as a model of purposeful processing, offering a condensed explanation of the informational and motivating impacts on behaviour.

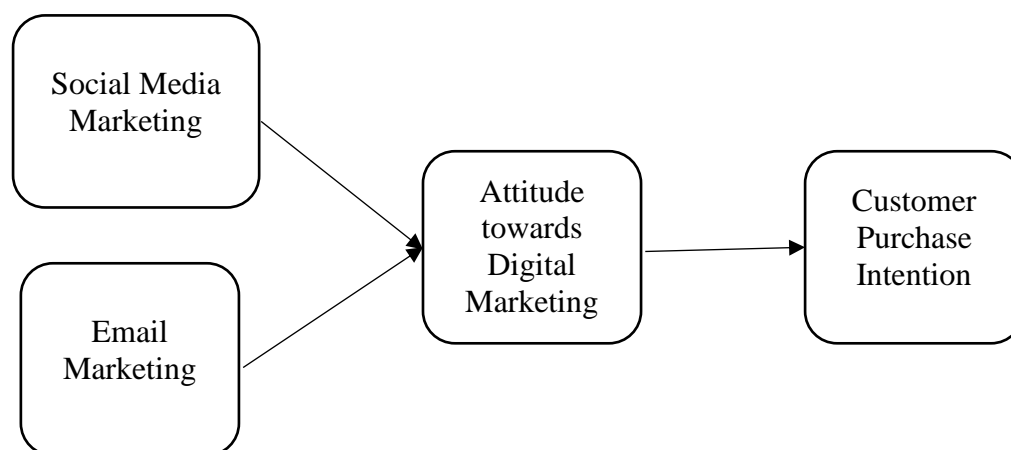


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

3. Methodology

3.1. Population and Sampling

A survey method was conducted through a close-ended questionnaire to collect data from the respondents. The unit of analysis was organization, as purchase officers from different companies across Pakistan were contacted who buy products for their organizations using online platforms and digital media. Respondents submitted 300 questionnaires; only 259 were filled and eligible for further analysis. While respondents partially filled out 41 questionnaires. The non-probability purposive sampling technique method was applied. The information about the population of current research consists of companies buying online through the chamber of commerce and business magazines. Data were collected using a quantitative research method based on a structured questionnaire.

The items used to measure the constructs of the present study were adopted from previous literature. A 5-point Likert scale was deployed to gauge all items (1 "strongly disagree" to 5 "strongly agree").

3.2. Statistical Tool for Data Analysis

The PLS-SEM technique was used to execute the data. SmartPLS 4.0 was used to analyze hypotheses, the PLS algorithm to examine reliability and validity, and Bootstrapping for internal model assessment.

4. Analysis and Findings

4.1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demography	Description	Frequency
Gender	Male	176
	Female	83
Age Group	18-27	62
	28-37	131
	38-47	47
	48-57	13
	58 Above	6

4.2. Assessment of Measurement Model

The initial step to begin with PLS-SEM analysis is assessing the measurement model, also known as the outer model. The measurement model demonstrates the reliability and validity of items. The Internal consistency, reliability, and composite reliability measure the individual item's reliability. At the same time, convergent validity is based on assessing the average variance taken (AVE). Discriminant validity uses the Fornell-lacker method and the cross-loading method. According to Ringle et al. (2015) loadings less than 0.40 are not recommended, and loadings above 0.40 are recommended when the AVE value is 0.5 and over. A CR value of 0.70 or higher is needed.

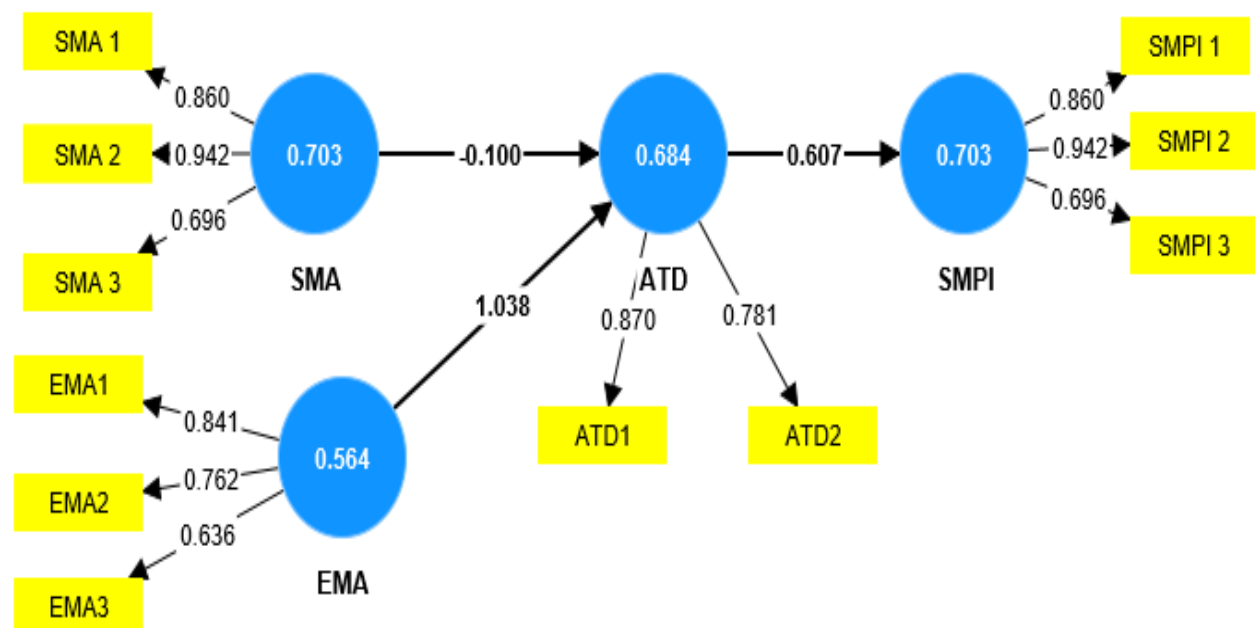


Figure 2: Measurement Model

4.2.1. Individual Items Reliability

Internal consistency reliability is what is known as the "extent to which all items on a particular sub-scale are measuring the same concept." Then, the composite reliability cutoff must be at or above 0.70, and AVE must be greater than 0.50 (Sarstedt & Cheah, 2019). In Table 4.2, every variable included in the current investigation has an AVE as well as composite reliability higher than 0.50, which suggests the reliability

4.2.2. Discriminant Validity

Table 4.3 describes that the square roots of the AVE are more significant than that of the latent variables, which indicates the acceptable validity of discrimination (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). At the beginning of this study, the

authors provided the framework's explanation. Based on the information discovered in previous research, they outlined the relationships between the variables that likely need to be revised and modified in light of the confirmatory factor analysis conducted during this research.

Table 2: Measurement Model Results (Convergent Validity)

Constructs	Items	Loadings	Alpha	CR	AVE
Attitude toward digital marketing	ATD1	0.870	0.542	0.812	0.684
	ATD2	0.781			
Email Marketing	EMA1	0.841	0.626	0.793	0.564
	EMA2	0.762			
	EMA3	0.636			
Social media marketing	SMA 1	0.860	0.792	0.875	0.703
	SMA 2	0.942			
	SMA 3	0.696			
Purchase intention	SMPI 1	0.860	0.792	0.875	0.703
	SMPI 2	0.942			
	SMPI 3	0.696			

Table 3: Discriminant Validity Matrix using Fornell and Lacker Criterion

	ATD	EMA	SMA	SMPI
ATD	0.827			
EMA	0.970	0.751		
SMA	0.607	0.681	0.839	
SMPI	0.607	0.681	1.000	0.839

4.3. Structural Model

4.3.1. Assessment of the Structural Model

The principal goal of this research is to analyze hypotheses using structural model assessment and the analysis of direct relationships. The other purpose is investigating the indirect relationships hypothesized connections through mediating paths. In the current research, five hypotheses were tested, and all hypotheses were supported.

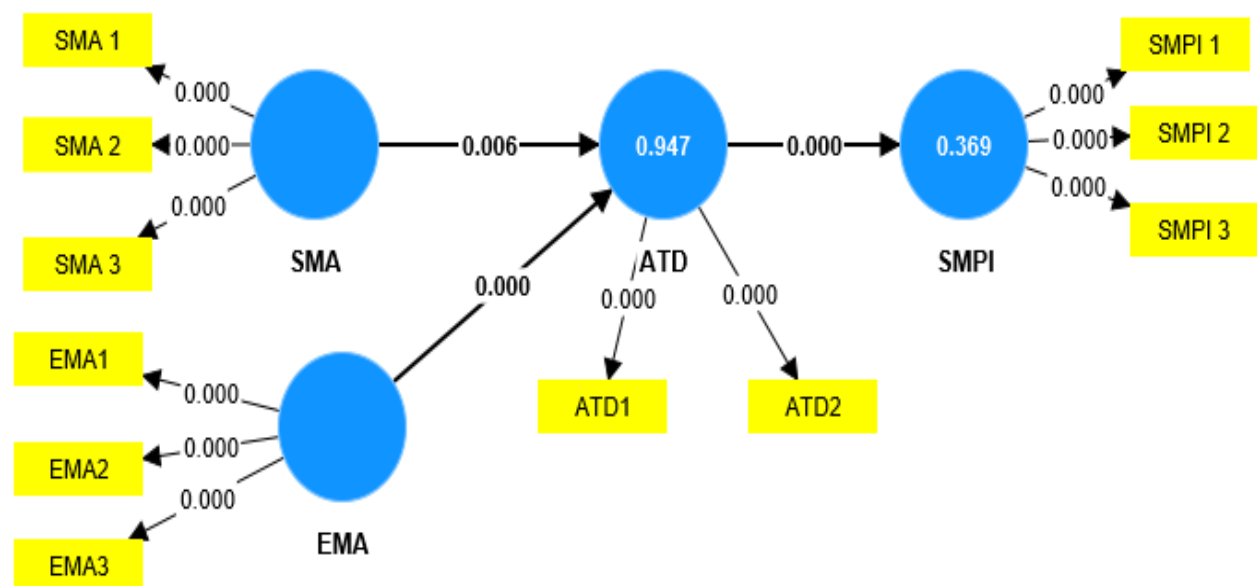


Figure 3: Structural Model

Table 4: Results of hypothesis testing (Direct effects)

Hypotheses	Relationships	Std. Beta	Std. Error	T-Value	P-Value	2.50 %	97.50 %	Decision
H3	ATD -> SMPI	0.607	0.061	10.006	0.000	0.494	0.733	Supported
H2	EMA -> ATD	1.038	0.026	39.968	0.000	0.987	1.092	Supported
H1	SMA -> ATD	-0.100	0.036	2.756	0.006	-0.170	-0.026	Supported

Table 4 shows that the H1, H2, and H3 hypotheses supported by this research are also supported by a p-value lower than 0.05.

4.3.2. Mediation Analysis

Mediating hypotheses were tested in Table 5:

Table 5: Test of mediation analysis

Hypothesis	Relationships	Std. Beta	Std. Error	T-Value	P-Value	2.50 %	97.50 %	Decision
H5	EMA -> ATD -> SMPI	0.630	0.064	9.876	0.000	0.512	0.760	Supported
H4	SMA -> ATD -> SMPI	-0.060	0.022	2.704	0.007	0.107	-0.017	Supported

The results show that hypotheses H4 and H5 were supported due to T-value higher than 1.645 and P-Value lower than 0.05

5. Discussion and Conclusion

5.1. Discussion

This section highlights the insights into the overall study findings in line with the research objectives. The consumer behaviour (CBT) theory was utilized to underpin the theoretical framework. Realizing that modern technology is simple to use and has greater value will help you accept it. The current study, therefore, provides a theoretical framework to measure the effect of digital marketing transformation trends on consumers' purchase intention in B2B businesses by combining the based on CB theory and incorporating the mediating impact of, Email marketing and purchase intention. Data have been collected from consumers who purchase goods through digital marketing. A structured questionnaire-based quantitative research approach will be used to gather data. Five hypotheses were formulated under the quantitative strand to achieve the study's objectives and tested accordingly. Three were direct hypotheses, and two was mediating hypothesis.

H1 postulated that social media negatively influences Attitudes toward digital marketing. The statistical analysis supported the H1 hypothesis by confirming that social media negatively affects Attitudes toward digital marketing ($\beta = -0.100$, $T = 2.756$, $p\text{-value} > 0.05$). H2 postulated that Email marketing influences the attitude toward digital marketing. The results show a significant impact of Email marketing on the attitude toward digital marketing ($\beta = 1.038$, $T = 29.968$, $p\text{-value} < 0.05$). H3 postulated that the purchase intention influences attitude toward digital marketing. The result shows a significant impact of the purchase intention on attitude toward digital marketing ($\beta = 0.607$, $T = 10.006$, $p\text{-value} < 0.05$).

H4 and H5 are two mediators H4 posited that attitude toward digital marketing mediates the relationship between social media and purchase intention, and H5 set that attitude toward digital marketing also mediates the relationship between Email marketing and purchase intention. While the results of the current study also depicted that attitude toward digital marketing significantly mediates the relationship between social media and purchase intention ($\beta = -0.060$, $T = 2.704$, $p\text{-value} > 0.05$) but substantially mediates the relationship between and purchase intention ($\beta = 0.630$, $T = 9.876$, $p\text{-value} < 0.05$). Therefore, H5 and H6 have been supported statistically.

5.2. Theoretical and Practical Implications of the Study

The results of this study provide concrete recommendations for practitioners and decision-makers in marketing departments and implement digital marketing concepts in advertising strategy to enhance customer purchase intention. Furthermore, the current study employed a quantitative approach to measure the impact of digital marketing transformation trends on consumers' purchase intention in B2B businesses. Thus, the outcomes of the current study provide several theoretical and practical implications, which are discussed in the following sections.

Several practical recommendations can be drawn logically from the statistical findings to measure the effect of digital marketing transformation trends on consumers' purchase intention in B2B businesses by combining the based on CB theory and incorporating the mediating marketing on the relationship between social media, Email marketing, and purchase intention. The present study's findings provide concrete recommendations for practitioners and decision-makers in marketing departments and implement digital marketing concepts in advertising strategy to enhance customer purchase intention.

5.3. Limitations and Future Research Predictions

The first limitation of the current study is that it only utilized quantitative research, while in the future mixed method can be employed by using a qualitative approach, and interviews can be with consumers. While another limitation is that the current study only examined the consumer behaviour theory to measure the effect of digital marketing transformation trends on consumers' purchase intention in B2B businesses by combining the based on CB theory and other theories also can use. Another limitation is that the current study only examined the consumers in Pakistan. In contrast, in the future, a cross-country study can explore the determinants of consumer purchase intention retail sector of different countries.

5.4. Conclusion

Digital marketing has a long-term impact on corporate sector marketing strategy and helps to attain a competitive advantage. The present study collected data from consumers purchasing experience through digital marketing. The survey method was utilized, and an adopted questionnaire was used. A random sample strategy was used to deliver a total of 300 questionnaires to personnel working in higher education. Of them, 259 questionnaires were fully completed and used for further statistical analysis. The Smart PLS 4.0 version software is used in the current work to implement the multiple regression strategies through structural equation modelling (SEM). The findings show that social media and email marketing significantly influenced consumers' purchase intentions. Provide concrete recommendations for practitioners and decision-makers in marketing departments and implement digital marketing concepts in advertising strategy to enhance customer purchase intention.

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