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Digital Marketing and Brand Engagement Behavior: A Conceptual Review

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ABSTRACT

The primary objective of this concept paper is to review the role of digital marketing on consumer engagement behavior. Understanding how digital marketing tactics affect consumer-brand interactions is given particular attention, with a focus on how technology revolutionizes engagement. Technological advancements in this era have created a hyper-connected world. Hence, research should be carried out to explore the contribution of digital platforms towards, brand loyalty and engagement. Marketers look for ways to create consumer value with the identification of numerous tools and touchpoints. Scholars have emphasized the importance of dynamic interaction among brands and consumers in the digital space with reference to brand engagement. Brand engagement identifies the degree of a customer's behavioral, emotional and cognitive investment towards a brand. It is crucial that organizations adopt a range of innovative digital strategies that are customer-centric to achieve competitive advantage in the long run with enhanced brand engagement. This paper examines how theoretical and empirical contributions address brand engagement in the digital age. The deductive approach has been utilized to synthesize insights from academic literature and publications related to industries. Key discussions are summarized and the paper concludes with future research directions for further studies.

Keywords: *Brand Engagement Behavior, Content Personalization, Digital Marketing*

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Prajapati (2020) digital marketing can be identified as the utilization of digital distribution channels in the cause of product or service promotions. Aforementioned digital distribution channels utilize online or digital advertising in the cause of consumer communication. Tiago and Veríssimo (2014) insisted that digital marketing focuses on the establishment of relationships and the maintenance of those relationships with partners and consumers that are digitally focused. Ways to achieve this include using digital technologies to create, present and deliver digital experiences and values. Digital marketing involves utilizing a range of techniques to manage the different types of online presence of a company (Chaffey and Chadwick, 2012). These include digital advertising, online partnerships, search engine marketing, social media marketing, email brands and online public relations. Various terms are associated with internet-based marketing activities, including online marketing (Jobber and Fahy, 2006), e-marketing (Strauss and Frost, 2009), internet marketing (Chaffey, 2010) digital marketing (Chaffey & Chadwick, 2012). E-marketing and digital marketing essentially engage in handling marketing activities using electronic media (Chaffey et al., 2006).

1990s mark the first year to introduce digital marketing efforts. This was under the development of Web 1.0. Web 1.0 only granted access to their users in the cause of finding information but not sharing. At this time internet was not very popular among people. Hence, marketers were skeptical about utilizing digital marketing for their promotions. However, in 1993 the first clickable banner was introduced and later adapted by the Hot Wired for their marketing efforts. When compared with the early stages and the current state, numerous technological advances including artificial intelligence can be identified. As per the technological advances, and digital marketing efforts, the modern consumer has the privilege of crucially staying updated about the products and services 24/7. Information search of the buyer decision process could begin at the comfort zone of the consumer by using the website of the company and browsing through the given information. Finally, the consumer has been granted the liberty to decide whether to purchase or not. This has resulted in increasing the overall experience of the consumer along with consumer brand engagement. When compared with traditional marketing efforts, digital marketing has more chances of getting the utmost and accurate information about the products and services without hesitation. Cloud computing, big data analytics, artificial intelligence, augmented reality, additive printing, drones, blockchain, and robots are some examples of the digital technologies used in industry 4.0 (Rassool & Dissanayake, 2019).

Customers could often be misled by the poor information provided by the salespeople in traditional marketing efforts. Hence, a vast number of companies rely on digital marketing to promote their products. Incorporating digital marketing makes it easier for consumers to run a comparison among different products or different companies as they can do it online at their own space instead of visiting physically ample of retail stores. Consumers have also been given a chance to engage with the products of the brand, sharing various information about their experiences and characteristics in digital mediums. Digital channels have been utilized in a manner that can showcase the costs related to products or services, this gives a straightforward idea about the cost incurred and makes the consumers more understandable than before. Festive discounts increase brand visibility to the customer. In traditional marketing efforts, customers initially watch the advertisements the physical visits should be made to the store in order to purchase. Yet, with digital marketing in place, the customer can instantly place the order reducing the efforts of the marketing channel.

According to Wang (2021) organizations actively utilize digital media to interact with their target group of customers as well as to convey their concise brand messages to them. In October 2024, there were 5.22 billion social media users globally, which is about 63.8% of the global population (DataReportal, 2024a). It is crucial that organizations pay close attention to managing engagement in digital environments as numerous potential consumers utilize these.

Leading social media platforms including Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and WhatsApp each consist at least 2 billion active users (Statista, 2024). If digital strategies are not developed with clear definitions along with the appropriate business development goals and without identifying the challenges concisely, will result in failure (Budden and Murray, 2022; Bughin et al., 2018). Discussion of engagement has been led in vague scopes identified by various authors. According to Mollen and Wilson (2010), online consumer engagement, digital engagement (Eigenraam et al., 2018) and consumer-brand engagement (Tong and Chan, 2023; Hollebeek et al., 2014). However, in marketing the concept of engagement is related to relationship marketing (Barger et al., 2016; Vander Shee et al., 2020). As per Hollebeek (2011) customer brand engagement can be identified as an individual consumer's brand-related motivational state of mind that is dependent on the various specific levels of cognitive, emotional and behavioral activities in the cause of interactions with the brands. According to Ángeles Oviedo-García et al. (2014) theoretical understanding of engagement has been criticized based on lack of consensus. As businesses and brands are highly invested in finding ways to increase engagement academics also tend to explore this empirically (Kang et al., 2021). Algharabat et al. (2018) believe that customer engagement is an assuring concept that is related to brand loyalty and overall business performance. Consumers now possess an active role rather than a conservative passive role. Therefore, consumers want to lean forward and engage with the brand model. Customer engagement and brand evaluation may lead to brand loyalty, which would have long-term advantages for a company (Siriwardana & Dissanayake, 2018; Dissanayake et al., 2019). Researchers have highlighted how crucial it is to build appropriate engagement platforms for consumers (Obilo et al., 2021). Engagement as per the researchers on advertising, is a multi-dimensional and multi-level construct that changes with emotions (Calder et al., 2016).

1.1. Purpose of the Study

This study aims to review the ways in which different digital marketing initiatives have influenced brand engagement behavior. It is important to build knowledge about digital marketing dynamics as modern-day consumers engage with brands online and focusing on the relationship between the consumer and brand is essential. This paper also focuses on the particular digital tools and strategies in promoting brand engagement. The rise of social media sites (SNSs) and artificial intelligence has completely changed the way brands communicate with their audiences by enabling targeted advertising (Brodie et al., 2013). This revolution includes chatbots, tailored advertising and real-time feedback. Finding patterns and strategies that have effectively increased brand engagement across a range of industries is given particular focus, offering academics and practitioners useful information.

1.2. Methodology

This research paper adopts a deductive research approach (Trochim, 2006). According to Trochim (2006) reasoning in research can be classified into two primary approaches: inductive and deductive. Theoretical and empirical arguments from previous research on the role of digital marketing on brand engagement have been reviewed utilizing the deductive approach. According to Creswell and Clark (2007) deductive approach includes the utilization of theories, models and principles to build the foundation for research arguments. This approach contrasts with inductive techniques, which rely on observations, experiments, and experiential insights for deriving conclusions.

The study consists of an exploration of the components in digital marketing including personalized content, social media campaigns and other interactive campaigns that contribute towards enhancing consumer engagement. The primary research tool for this paper is a comprehensive literature review, which examines both theoretical and empirical contributions to the field. Relevant journal articles, industry reports, secondary data, and book chapters have been reviewed to provide a robust understanding of the role of digital marketing in driving brand engagement. Additionally, global statistics and case study-related discussions have been included to derive valuable insights. This methodology gives a structured framework for analyzing the role of digital marketing efforts on brand engagement behavior.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Digital Marketing

Chaffey et al. (2009) identified internet marketing as the application of digital technologies in order to attain set marketing objectives. Chaffey (2013) states digital marketing is utilizing technologies in the cause of improvising the knowledge of the customer by matching their needs. As this is beneficial for the marketing efforts, most of the modern companies in the developed world emphasize on the importance of digital marketing. It is evident that using a combination of digital marketing efforts along with traditional marketing activities to better reach potential consumers (Parsons, Zeisser, Waitman 1996). Song (2001) states online brand building and traffic acquisition can be achieved with online advertising. As per Pepelnjak (2008) when analyzing the results produced or the success of the marketing campaigns, cost-efficient measuring based on the return on investment could be easily calculated for digital marketing. Volatile market dynamics and the rapid advancement of technologies have contributed to the growth of digital marketing (Mort, Sullivan, Drennan, Judy, 2002).

Kanttila (2004) defines key characteristics in digital marketing for it to produce successful results for business and these include accessibility of digital content, speed and navigation. Trusov (2009) states that in order to become successful in digital marketing, businesses should utilize word-of-mouth WOM on social media. 92% of consumers worldwide place more trust in word-of-mouth referrals from a tribe than in brand promotion (Cooray & Dissanayake, 2022). This will impact on the popularity of the sites. Further, e-WOM will increase the engaging members creating traffic that will contribute towards the visibility.

Kumar et al. (2016) reviewed about customer behavior with regard to firm-generated content. As per Persaud and Azhar (2012) with the launch of smartphones, researchers explored what sort of factors act as motivators for customers to interact with mobile marketing. Certain motivators for consumers to engage in mobile marketing were identified as the shopping style of the consumer, brand value and brand trust. Numerous parameters determine consumer buying decisions. According to Zhang et al. (2013) attributes of the products, reviews posted online, ratings, and updates on online reviews determine future sales significantly.

Computer-based digital marketing is also another crucial aspect. Researchers have been carried out research in order to investigate about the computer-mediated environment (CME). The computer-mediated environment was studied with reference to for variety of interactions; consumer-firm, firm-consumer, firm-firm and consumer-consumer (Yadav and Pavlou, 2014). With rapid digitalization, these interactions are highly visible. According to Bart et al. (2014) research was conducted to better understand what products and services can be marketed digitally. In order to become successful in e-selling digital platforms should provide a better user experience with human immersion (Parvinen et al., 2015). Reviews posted by consumers have a greater impact on the buying decisions of other consumers. Two crucial effects with regard to consumer reviews can be identified (Wang et al., 2015). As per Wang et al. (2015) consumer breadth effect arises when there is a high variance in user reviews.

The customer depth effect will arise when uniqueness is placed in the minds of the consumers with simultaneous criticisms and user reviews. This will also result in the consumer's purchase intention. With digital marketing comes digital communication. Outcomes of digital communication can be identified by Batra and Keller (2016) as, brand image and personality creation, spread of information, awareness, connecting people, instilling loyalty, trust building, and inspiring actions. As digital marketing operates in a new environment consumers are skeptical as there is some sort of risk associated with it. As per Change et al. (2016) perceived risk as discussed above has a mediating effect among utilitarian value, hedonic value, privacy, security, purchase intention, and perceived satisfaction. As per Choi et al. (2016) it is crucial that marketers pay attention and emphasize on the emotional and experiential aspects of the consumer because whether it is traditional marketing or digital marketing the main focus is on enhancing the consumer experience by relationship building.

As per Kumar et al (2016) mere advertising in the online era has not shifted to rich content marketing, it is crucial for companies to post the appropriate content on digital platforms including social media. Content marketing will result in more consumer touchpoints. As per Lamberton and Stephen (2016) in all sorts of marketing efforts, in the new era, some sort of digital element will be attached. Therefore, the differences emphasized between traditional marketing and digital marketing will come to an end, and digital marketing is just "marketing".

Firms engage in unique firm-generated content (FGC) in order to increase consumer engagement. FGC generally results in a significant and positive impact on the behavior of the consumers. However, more effect is exerted on someone who is social media-prone, experienced and tech-savvy. Therefore, the present era is the era of digital, social media and mobile marketing (DSMM). Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) is another essential part of digital marketing. As per Rossmann et al. (2016) in eWOM the sender's wide list of contacts and expertise acts as a crucial factor. Customers' intrinsic and extrinsic motivating factors act as motivators to engage in eWOM. Traditional advertising has also faced certain changes due to digitalization. Individually targeted advertising resulted in a positive impact on purchase intention (Summers et al., 2016).

2.2. Brand Engagement

Customer engagement in the modern era does not contain the same mere dyadic exchange among buyers or consumers and sellers. It has got an "ecosystem" perspective which involves the value creation through consumer networks (Vargo and Lusch, 2008; Chandler and Lusch, 2015; Anderson et al., 2013; Jaakkola and Alexander, 2014). Consumer engagement can be defined as the positive interaction of the brand-related content on the cognitive, emotional and behavioral aspect (Hollebeek et al., 2014, p.154). This will reflect to what extent the consumer is invested in what the service organizations have to offer (Brodie et al., 2011; Hollebeek and Chen, 2014). As per Hollebeek et al. (2016) this has been linked to employee loyalty, retention and profitability. According to Goh et al. (2013) when a message is delivered by a consumer in the form of a recommendation, the impact will be 20 times more effective than doing it by a marketer. As per the referred literature, the nature of consumer engagement is addressed in a manner to establish the fact that it is multi-dimensional (Naumann et al., 2020).

It is crucial to closely pay attention to all the dimensions of engagement in order to assess customer engagement accurately (Dessart et al., 2019). All the dimensions include positively valanced cognitive, emotional and behavioral activities that are related to the brand, focusing on customer-brand interactions (Hollebeek et al., 2014). Engagement is context-specific and multi-dimensional as per Hollebeek et al (2014) and Dessart et al. (2019). The combination of one's interests, experiences and attention to the focus object can be described as a cognitive dimension (Hollebeek et al., 2014). Active and purposeful actions toward an engagement objective can be identified as the negative engagement of the behavioural dimension (Naumann et al., 2020). How consumers' brand-related engagement affects brand interaction can be identified under the affective dimension (Hollebeek et al, 2014).

As per Vivek et al. (2012) social connections that are nurtured through interactivity along with relationships that are reciprocal can be commonly identified as social engagement. Vivek et al. (2012) suggested social engagement social engagement is an addition to the earlier stated tripartite model. However, according to Pansari and Kumar (2017) voluntary contribution of the consumers which goes further into the transaction adds up to the brand experience. This can also be viewed as another way to identify consumer engagement behavior. As per Dessert et al. (2019) it is crucial to comprehend how certain aspects of engagement affect significant outcomes such as loyalty. Based on the particular set of situational contingencies under which the community engagement is noticed, the relative significance of the cognitive, emotional and behavioral community engagement will vary. Hence, this will allow various levels of community engagement-related intensities and complexities to arise (Brodie et al., 2011, p.260).

Schivinski and Dabrowski (2016) stated that as per serval studies, certain aspects of brand engagement are crucial for brand loyalty and building relationships. As per Hollebeek et al. (2014) when assessing use intent, the effect and activation are more crucial than cognitive engagement. Dessert et al. (2019) stated that within online brand communities, effective engagement along with behavioral engagement played a significant role while being the strongest predictors of brand loyalty, whereas cognitive engagement was less effective. Different dimensions of engagement do not have a uniform impact on customer loyalty, and are heavily context-dependent (Hollebeek et al., 2014).

In the consumer engagement literature variety of antecedents to engagement has been examines including consumer involvement and satisfaction (Hollebeek et al., 2014, De Vries and Carlson, 2014; Dwivedi, 2015; Hollebeek et al., 2014; Vivek et al., 2012). According to Kirmani and Dretsch (2014) another significant factor that has been found to influence engagement is self-brand connections (SBC). As per Escalas (2014) few studies have looked at how SBC determines consumer engagement and dimensions self-brand connections (SBC) can be identified as the linkages the consumer build with the brand and the own self-identity of theirs.

Brand engagement is related to certain theories. Co-creation is a concept valued by customers as well as organizations. As per Grönrooos (2008) co-creation of customer value leads business towards success by creating competitive advantage. As per the co-creation theory, the value creation process involves collaboration between the organization, suppliers and customers (Gunarathne & Dissanayake, 2022). A tailored well customized service is delivered to the customers with consistent communication and interaction in this co-creation process. According to Schau et al. (2009). Certain academics have resulted in developing a novel perspective focusing on the customer viewpoint. This suggests customer value generation relies on the dynamic interaction and relationship among customers and businesses. As per literature, certain scholars identify hedonic and functional values as two types of value co-creation. A significant number of studies have been conducted in this area and encompassed social media into the studies. As per research two main things that draw the attention of customers to s-commerce are enjoyment (Zhang et al., 2017; Wu and Li., 2018). And information (Haiji et al., 2014; Hajli and Lin, 2014).

Functional value which is among the two aspects of value co-creation identified as the advantages that may be used to address issues or meet the needs of clients during interactions. The value that is related to updating information and obtaining while emphasizing on the advantages of social media can be identified under functional value. In order to address the value expectation of customers such as gaining product knowledge, customers utilize s-commerce sites to browse prices as well as connect with other customers in order to find the required product information. It is evident that this is directly linked to consumer brand engagement behavior. The customer's perception of value will fluctuate based on whether the customer received the desired information or not. As per Van Der Heijden (2004) hedonic value emphasizes on the non-functional emotional benefits that can be fulfilled or gained by engaging and utilizing the e-commerce websites.

Consumer engagement in recent attempts to compile different ways consumers behave outside transactions and how these impact the consumer (Brodie et al., 2011; Van Doorn et al., 2010). As per Van Doorn et al. (2010) various studies focus on the customer behavior that is futher of a user or buyer. Customer engagement behavior is powered by the drivers including customer goals, resources, and value perceptions in addition to attitudinal factors such as satisfaction, brand commitment and trust. As per Fuller (2010) empirical studies depict that consumers get motivated to engage in nontransactional behaviors due to the fact that anticipating social, economic, and financial benefits, improved knowledge and reputation. By offering efficient channels and platforms for communication (Baron and Warnaby 2011; Dholakia et al. 2009) and by rewarding the contributions of consumers (Fuller 2010; Kumar et al. 2010) businesses can facilitate consumer brand engagement behavior. In order to foster successful value co-creation businesses need to pay attention to building strong relationships along with excellent interactions through communication (Auh et al. 2007).

A wide range of theories including relationship marketing (Rather, 2018; Vivek et al., 2014) and service-dominant logic SDL; Brodie et al., 2013; Hollebeek, 2011a; Hollebeek et al., 2016a) have tried to analyze consumers' positive behavior attitudes along with the brand engagement behavior. As per Brodie et al (2011) theoretical alignment in both relationship marketing and service-dominant logic was depicted in the interactive nature of brand engagement, where the consumer as the crucial element for brand interactions Vargo and Lusch (2017). Lee and Jeong (2014) stated that congruity theory is focused on unraveling the fact that when the phenomenon aligns with the belief's of a person's theirs more likely to have favorable sentiments towards it. This occurs due to the fact that there's less dissonance between their own beliefs and the object.

Providing authentic experiences to the consumers is a crucial part of enhancing positive brand relationships which foster brand engagement and various literature has explored how repsonsive consumers are to the online engagement initiatives of a brand while authenticity acting as a determinant Gilmore and Pine 2007; Beverland & Farrelly, 2010; Leigh, Peters, & Shelton, 2006). As per Brown, Kozinets, & Sherry (2003) in modern marketing brand authenticity was referred to as the cornerstone and it has a significant impact on how consumers react to brands, including brand choice, word-of-mouth and emotional brand attachment (Morhart, Malär, Guèvremont, Girardin, & Grohmann, 2013; Spiggle, Nguyen, & Caravella, 2012). Brand's efforts to promote customer interaction are known as customer engagement initiatives (Beckers et al., 2018; Gill et al., 2017; Meire et al., 2019). As per Eigenraam et al (2018) with the wide availability of technological advancements, brands can implement a variety of customer engagement strategies. The content can be either entertaining in nature or informative to get the consumers to interact (Noort & van Reijmersdal, 2019).

Consumers who engage with the brand positively, also engage in promoting the brand through their networks, which will result in building credibility and awareness. Consumer behavior is significantly influenced by brand engagement which in turn has a direct impact on brand advocacy. As mentioned above, brand engagement is multi-dimensional which includes emotional, behavioral and cognitive elements and this will result in gaining customers to directly and actively engage in activities related to the brand (Brodie et al., 2013). Loyalty and attachment are fostered with this active participation and in the long-term it will result in advocacy behaviors such as dessemination of user-generated content and word-of-mouth referrals.

In the cause of maintaining and building long-term brand equity, brand engagement plays a major role. As per Aaker (1991) equity can be identified as the value addition to its products and services and this shape the depth of customers' relationship. Crucial components of brand equity including brand quality, trust and loyalty were perceived at a higher level by the engaged consumers (Hollebeek and Macky, 2019).

2.3. Relationship Between Digital Marketing And Brand Engagement Behavior

As per the marketing literature, engagement consists of three dimensions: cognitive, behavioral and affective (Brodie et al., 2011; Hollebeek et al., 2014). However, engagement is frequently analyzed primarily from a behavioral perspective (Calder et al., 2009; van Doorn et al., 2010; Halaszovich and Nel, 2017). As per Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) SNSs are interactive sites and the users are given the chance to communicate in numerous ways. Utilization of further relevant measurements of brand engagement has been common with the popularity of social media usage including social networking sites (SNSs). Customers can express their happiness or acceptance of content on social media platforms using Facebook "like" which is an easy one-click social plugin (Swani et al., 2013; Gavilanes et al., 2018). As engagement is viewed in the behavioral aspect, customer interactions are measured through their actions on SNSs. According to De Vries et al., (2012) reach for posted content can be increased with the utilization of further engagement metrics including shares and comments.

According to Müller and Christandl (2019) user-generated content (UGC) and firm-generated content (FGC) are produced and shared as part of social media marketing.

As per Naeem and Ozuem (2021) UGC that are related to the brand, and created by its users without the intention of gaining commercial benefits act as crucial trusted sources to promote the brand. According to Wang (2017), a significant number of social media users are actively involved in user-generated content (UGC). Approximately 61% of Gen Zers claim they often check their social media accounts to see if their friends like their postings and if their friends are saying unfavorable things about them. Approximately 61% of Gen Zers claim they often visit their social media accounts to check their friends' or followers' reactions to the content posted and whether those reactions are negative or positive. Colicev et al. (2019) mentioned that FGC can be identified as the content generated by the companies about the brand and promoted via their social media. As per Dwivedi et al. (2021) businesses must actively communicate with customers about the evolution of their brands and products whether consumers make the decision to interact with the brand or not. According to Kozinets (2014) Social Brand Engagement (SBE) is an unrestricted social act that enables people to interact socially with companies and other consumers. Customer engagement interpretation varies in distinguished contexts, such as brand community engagement, customer brand engagement, social brand engagement and social media engagement. Therefore, consumer engagement can be identified as context-specific (Brodie et al., 2011; Dolan et al., 2016).

Dynamic connection between a person and a brand goes beyond that and, engagement comprises a network of interactions with other individuals, all of which might influence engagement with the brand (Bal et al., 2015). According to the Social Identity theory (SIT) people surpass their sense of identity to form a communal identity with the group and due to this fact individuals' behaviors are often up to the expectations of the group (Tajfel et al., 1979). When consumers engage with brand communities, they tend to reinforce their self-identity. With the reinforcement of their self-identity, consumers connect with companies that reflect them the most (Fong et al., 2021). An et al. (2019) stated members of brand communities communicate in a collective manner in order to promote the benefits of their favorite brands. Young generation frequently relate them to the tech-savvy and digital native culture.

Members of social media and online communities are encouraged to participate in pertinent online groups on social media via the development and expression of their social identities.

Hollebeek and Macky (2019) conceptualized DCM as a powerful instrument for building connections, trust, and brand engagement. Digital content marketing (DCM) is a pull marketing strategy that is cost-effective rapidly (Holliman and Rowley, 2014*)*. Due to this fact, businesses could reach out to a larger consumer base than other traditional efforts. Strong consumer-brand connections in this have contrubuted vastly to the rapid growth of digital content marketing (Hollebeek and Macky, 2019; Taiminen and Ranaweera, 2019). As per earlier research, DCM was utilized and viewed as a model for bit-based products (He et al., 2021). Additional research examined how firm-triggered DCM might influence brand attitude (Koiso-Kanttila, 2004), consumer engagement (Malthouse et al., 2013), and social media consumer–brand interactions (Ashley and Tuten, 2015). However, the behavioural and attitudinal effects of DCM have not yet been fully identified. TAM and U&G theory conceptual frameworks have been used more and more in research on Social Media Site (SMS) usage (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram), especially in relation to brand engagement by younger cohorts *(*Baek et al., 2011; Celebi, 2015; Hunt et al., 2012).

Due to technological advancements and consumer behavior changes, a dramatic change in digital marketing has been visible over the past ten years of time. Artificial intelligence has become a crucial advancement in altering how companies communicate with their customers. Due to AI, marketers can automate complex tasks and also make decisions driven by data. Among other things, AI includes natural language processing (NLP), predictive analytics and machine learning. Mass marketing campaigns have resulted in failure due to the difficulty in holding consumer attention and personalization has become one of the most effective marketing strategies (Kumar et al., 2024). Customer experience is indeed enhanced with personalization which provides unique recommendations to the consumer, personalized content and communication. In order to cater to highly targetted marketing strategies, AI utilizes hyper-personalization through real-time data. This allows us to predict consumer behavior. In addition to enhancing consumer satisfaction, personalization boosts important business indicators including client loyalty, engagement rates, and return on investment (Babatunde et al., 2024). Customers today seek seamless customer experience.

Artificial intelligence involves machines that can replicate human cognitive capacities to carry out tasks like learning, problem-solving, reasoning and decision-making. These usually require human abilities. AI-driven personalization is based on machine learning algorithms that can forecast consumer trends, preferences, and behaviours by analyzing past data. Deep Learning which is a branch of machine learning that processes massive datasets using artificial neural networks, is another crucial subfield (Singh & Ahmed 2024). Images, videos, and text can be identified as unstructured data. In order to find complex patterns in these data, AI utilized deep learning algorithms. This is particularly helpful for digital marketing applications like sentiment analysis, image identification and content optimization. Natural language processing (NLP) enables AI systems to interact and comprehend human language. This is utilized for virtual assistants, chatbots, analysis of social media interactions and consumer reviews.

Omni-channel, IMC, and multi-channel marketing all have comparable characteristics, especially when it comes to message coherence across customer touchpoints. Omni channel marketing is a holistic shopping experience that is customer focused. the most important engagement in an omni-channel setting is with the brand rather than the channel (Piotrowicz and Cuthbertson, 2014). According to Bell et al. (2014), these concepts collectively operationalize omnichannel marketing by focusing on two crucial areas: how clients obtain information and how transactions are completed.

It has historically been challenging to achieve consumer engagement for digital video advertising (Barger et al., 2016). With features like YouTube's "Skip" button and paid membership services like YouTube Premium for instance, customers can now choose to skip advertisements and manage their exposure to digital advertising. In order to address the difficulties of drawing viewers in and encouraging digital interaction with video advertising, storytelling is emerging as a substitute for other ad forms. Digital storytelling allows interactions between customers, marketers and net celebrities (Wang 2021). The employment of game characteristics in a situation unrelated to games is known as gamification (Gatautis et al., 2021; Hsu and Chen, 2018). The gamification technique is one of the most widely used tactics in online retailing to draw in and keep consumers (Souiden et al., 2019; Poncin et al., 2017; Jipa and Marin, 2014). As per Högberg et al., (2019) gamification was employed by businesses to improve consumer engagement, retention, and purchase intention.

According to (Poncin et al., 2017) One of the unique design strategies to create smart technologies is gamification. By using game aspects to create gamified digital experiences, gamification offers a fresh and engaging approach to improving brand-customer connections (Eppmann et al., 2018). To accomplish objectives like consumer engagement, customer loyalty and purchase encouragement, businesses apply game components in contexts unrelated to the game (Eppmann et al., 2018; Gatautis et al., 2021). Online marketing is one sector that has recently made significant investments in the gamification strategy.

3. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Digital marketing plays a vital role in fostering brand engagement ensuring the brands connect well in real-time while tailoring strategies to their preferences. As of January 2024, Facebook leads the social networking platforms with approximately 3.05 billion active users, followed by YouTube which consists of approximately 2.49 billion, WhatsApp, and Instagram 2 billion each (DataReportal, 2024b). Digital marketing's effects on consumer engagement behavior are complex and include both advantages and disadvantages.

In digital marketing, AI-powered personalization has become an important breakthrough, enabling companies to provide customers with hyper-targeted, pertinent, and engaging interactions. In 2024, 64% of marketers worldwide reported using AI and automation with an additional 38% planning to adopt these technologies (HubSpot, 2024). Targeted communication and personalization are made possible by digital marketing, which uses customer information like demographics, browsing history, and purchase trends to create highly tailored messages (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). E-commerce sites such as Amazon employ recommendation algorithms to interact with customers by offering appropriate recommendations related to products, increasing user loyalty and happiness. By combining modern artificial intelligence like machine learning, deep learning, and natural language processing, businesses can instantly analyze massive numbers of data, forecast customer preferences, and develop customized strategies that boost customer satisfaction and engagement.

The significant influence of digital marketing on essential marketing functions such as product suggestions, content personalization, and customer engagement, targeted advertising is demonstrated by industry leaders like Amazon, Coca-Cola, Netflix, and Spotify. These highlight the quantifiable results of implementing technologically advanced digital marketing efforts. Utilization of these will result in higher engagement rates, better sales, better client retention, and a better return on investment. Technological advancement including AI and AR/VR will play a bigger part in digital marketing as it develops further with advanced personalization tools. Adopting novel digital solutions can give businesses a competitive edge by satisfying customer requests for more relevant and personalized experiences, in addition to improving marketing efforts.

Brands and customers may communicate in both directions with the use of tools such as social networking sites, interactive advertisements and live chat. In order to generate engaging and immersive consumer experiences various industries utilize social stories, surveys and influencer relationships. This is common in fashion industries including Nike and Adidas (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Individualized support, product suggestions and answers for typical issues can be provided by chatbots as these can communicate with users all the time. These chatbots are used by businesses on their websites and social networking sites including social media to assist customers during the purchasing process, answer questions and offer support after the sale is completed. Virtual assistants are also utilized by many companies to provide tailored suggestions, popular virtual assistants include Google Assistant and Apple's Siri.

By offering timely and pertinent assistance, these solutions improve customer satisfaction, accelerate client contacts, and shorten response times. Companies save money on manual customer service while reaping the benefit of increased consumer involvement. Digital marketing eases the measurable issues and cost-related issues in traditional marketing. Digital marketing, as opposed to traditional marketing, offers more affordable options with quantifiable results due to analytics tools. Businesses can monitor click-through rates, conversions, and return on investment (ROI) with regard to marketing campaigns. This tracking could be done for Google Ads and Facebook Ads enabling quick changes to their strategy (Tiago & Veríssimo, 2014). Further, global reach with localized strategies is also visible in digital marketing. Netflix uses data-driven analytics to offer localized content that increases engagement across a range of customer bases (Lobschat et al., 2021).

In the discussion of digital marketing on brand engagement, does not only possess benefits, but numerous issues are also demonstrated. A rival's digital marketing plan is simple to imitate with digital marketing even though high engagement can be achieved. There is a high possibility for customers to be tricked by the use of brand names or logos, as there could be various brands, especially for small-medium enterprises (SME). Customer transactions may face delays as they pass through the company, the internet service provider, and the payment processing system. A vast number of privacy issues are associated with the digital environment. There are serious privacy issues with the gathering and use of customer data for targeted advertising. Consumer trust has been damaged by the misuse of customers' sensitive data in various industries and major industries that fall under this category include the financial services industry and healthcare (Martin & Murphy, 2017).

Issues like data protection and the requirement for ongoing AI model adaptation still exist. According to upcoming trends, hyper-personalization at volume is expected to be the main emphasis of the next stage of AI in marketing, as AI tools get more sophisticated and effective at forecasting customer behaviour. In contrast to traditional marketing, e-commerce does not allow shoppers to physically touch the products for verification. The vast number of false claims regarding virtual developments is the reason why clients lack trust. Cash-on-delivery orders are frequently placed by customers who have no intention of making a purchase.

Manipulation and misinformation occasionally spread with misleading information. Misleading advertising and inflated discounts are frequent on big shopping occasions including Black Friday. This will over time damage consumer trust (Scholz & Smith, 2019). There could be various errors as digital marketing associates technology and the internet. Not many SMEs have a firm understanding of digital marketing yet. It has not been widely used, particularly in situations where people want to employ conventional methods and do not believe in a computerized environment (Kishan Prajapati, 2020). Certain marketing campaigns could result in overexposure and ad fatigue. Consumer dissatisfaction and disengagement can result from excessive digital advertising such as obtrusive or forced pop-ups and retargeting that is repetitive.

Therefore, the use of ad-blockers has increased. This suggests an increasing avoidance to excessively aggressive marketing strategies. Clients now have access to information about a variety of goods and services that were previously unavailable to them due to the usage of traditional media. Customers can use this information to make wise choices. However, as per Pandey and Shinde (2019) companies should establish a trustworthy online presence utilizing widely available SNSs, websites and online brand communities. Accessibility and participation gaps in terms of age are visible in digital marketing efforts. Although digital marketing has a wide audience, it leaves out some groups, such as the elderly or people living in areas with poor internet connectivity, which results in a gap in participation (Hargittai, 2020).

4. CONCLUSION

The main objective of this conceptual analysis of the literature review is to explore the role of digital marketing on consumer engagement behavior while analyzing the positive and negative effects in a critical manner as digital marketing continuously updates with technological advancements. Building a robust understanding of its complications and variations is beneficial to practitioners as well as academics. Digital marketing utilizes various techniques including social media marketing, email marketing, digital advertising and search engine optimization (Chaffey and Chadwick, 2012). Utilization of these numerous techniques has resulted in transforming traditional engagement. The roots of this go towards relationship marketing. Consumer brand engagement consists of cognitive, emotional and behavioral activities in the cause of interactions with the brands. Numerous personalization with the utilization of data can be identified as one of the greatest benefits of digital marketing. Hyper-targeted, pertinent, and engaging interactions have been made possible with AI-powered personalization (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). Despite the range of benefits, digital marketing has its negative implications and these include ethical concerns related to data, privacy concerns and the use of misinformation.

Companies in various industries should engage in grasping data related to consumer interests and preferences to offer personalized and interactive experiences. Further, utilizing proper platforms with appropriate tools can enhance consumer attention and brand engagement. Consumer trust and loyalty can be gained with high-quality and creative content along with interactive activities (Wan, 2023). Future research areas include exploring the machine learning and AI-driven tools' effectiveness in generating consumer trust and loyalty, in the long run. Various sectors could be utilized for these studies. As technological advancements break the walls among geographic regions, there is a lack of research on the impact of cultural differences in consumer engagement, in the modern era. Diverse theoretical dimensions along with cross-cultural perspectives could be conducted related to the omnichannel marketing

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framework. The relevance of co-creation to consumer engagement had been explored earlier by researchers (Groeger et al., 2016; Hsieh and Chang, 2016; de Villiers, 2015). Yet, dimensions of co-creation, digital marketing and engagement behavior as an outcome could be further explored utilizing empirical research. How effective purpose-driven campaigns are in fostering loyalty and engagement (Pulizzi, 2012) could be further researched by incorporating a variety of digital marketing strategies.

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