

A Study on Digital Marketing Influence on Consumer Preference Towards FMCG Products

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Abstract: The rise of digital marketing has changed consumer behaviour towards Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) brands. Offline promotion is being augmented or replaced by online marketing mediums including social media, search engine, influencers, email marketing and e-commerce. This conceptual paper explores the impact of digital marketing on consumer preference for FMCG products in terms of creating awareness, providing information, engaging, building trust, personalising and convenience. Consumers now shop for the best deals, reviews, demonstrations and to purchase products online. In the FMCG industry where products are consumed regularly and competition is high, digital marketing helps build brand awareness. The research builds on existing literature by identifying key factors affecting preference, including online advertising, social proof, offers, brand communication and digital experience. The study offers a conceptual model that connects digital marketing aspects to preference and intention. The study suggests that successful digital marketing practices have a positive impact on brand recall, satisfaction, loyalty and repurchases. But factors like information overload, privacy issues and counterfeit reviews may reduce the trust. The research provides guidance for researchers and marketers to comprehend changing consumer dynamics in the digital world.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Consumer Preference, FMCG Products, Social Media Marketing, Purchase Behaviour

1. Background and Introduction

Digital marketing uses online platforms and technologies to market products, services and brands. It encompasses social media marketing, search engine optimization, internet advertising, online content marketing, influencer marketing, and communication strategies for e-commerce. The increase in smartphone penetration and internet usage has shifted purchasing patterns across various sectors, particularly in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) industry. Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) include soaps, shampoo, snacks, beverages, detergents and packaged foods, which are consumed on a regular basis and require regular brand selection. Hence, online presence is crucial in shaping consumer behaviour. Online consumer reviews, product ratings, discounts, and recommendations from others are now crucial for consumers when buying even low-involvement products. Digital media enable FMCG companies to communicate, gather feedback, personalise marketing, and build brand communities. This has moved marketing from a transactional to an interactive stage (Basu & Naskar, 2023). Recent research also reveals that digital campaigns have a substantial influence on purchase intent of Gen Z and working professionals (Yadav et al., 2025). The topic has gained salience with the advent of e-commerce and quick-commerce platforms where FMCG products are influenced. Therefore, it is vital for companies to understand the influence of digital marketing on consumer preference to develop effective marketing strategies, increase customer satisfaction, and develop long-term loyalty in a highly competitive environment.

2. Review of Literature

Basu and Naskar (2023) conducted a literature review on the effect of digital marketing on consumer behavior and reported that online communication significantly affects purchase intention, trust, and loyalty. They highlighted that online engagement enhances consumer knowledge and minimises consumer uncertainty. Kalra, Sharma, and Patel (2023) explored the impact of digital marketing on buying behavior and found that millennial consumers are very sensitive to social media marketing, influencer marketing, and convenience of online transactions. They found that personalised marketing enhances purchase interest. Kumari and Singh (2025) examined the role of digital marketing in the FMCG industry and reported that online promotions like advertising, reviews, discounts, social media presence, and sharing, and impulsive buying and repeat purchases. The research indicated the significance of real-time promotions in FMCG. Yadav, Singh, and Dash (2025) examined the role of Generations X and Y in the FMCG market. They concluded that Generation Y is more digitally influenced than Generation X. Online presence, convenience, and trust were key factors influencing purchase decisions. Rahul (2025) concluded that digital marketing enhances the brand-consumer relationship through search engine optimisation (SEO), content marketing and influencer marketing. Faster brand responses and tailored promotions are increasingly important to consumers, affecting satisfaction and loyalty. Research suggests that digital marketing has a positive influence on consumer preference, but most research has been on purchase behavior rather than preference in FMCG products. There is a lack of synthesis of variables like awareness, trust, convenience, engagement and loyalty in one framework. Hence, there is a need for more conceptual research.

3. Objective of the Study

To examine the influence of digital marketing factors on consumer preference towards FMCG products.

4. Statement of the Problem

The FMCG industry is very crowded with many brands competing. A plethora of digital ads, reviews, influencer content, and promotional messages are present in the market. Though brands dedicate significant resources to digital marketing, it is not clear which digital factors impact consumer preference the most. Knowing this is crucial to resource allocation and retaining customers.

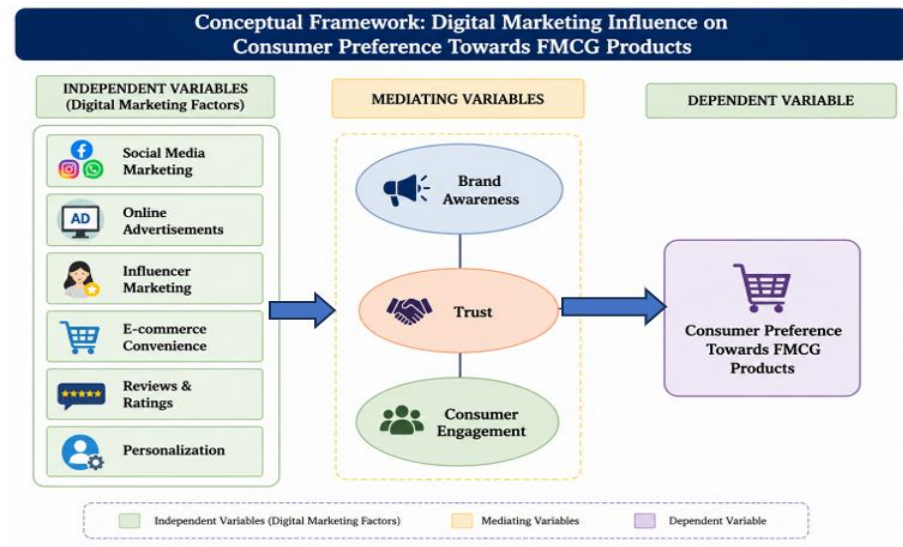
5. Research Gap

Previous research has primarily considered purchase intention, impulsive purchase, or online consumer behaviour. There are few conceptual studies that consider how digital marketing affects consumer preference in FMCG products along with multi-dimensional factors of awareness, trust, engagement, convenience and personalisation. This study fills this research gap.

6. Research Methodology

The research design for this study is conceptual using secondary data. Data has been gathered from journals, books, conference proceedings, industry reports, and reliable online data sources pertaining to digital marketing, consumer behaviour and FMCG products. The sources were identified using keywords such as digital marketing, consumer behavior of FMCG products, social media impact, online preference and purchase intention. The literature was analysed, categorised, and synthesised to extract key themes and key factors of consumer preference. A conceptual model was constructed based on the literature to associate digital marketing factors with consumer preference. Primary data was not collected because the study aims to develop theoretical knowledge. The approach aids in synthesising disparate information and offers a basis for future empirical studies through surveys, structural equation modelling, or comparative studies across regions.

7. Conceptual Framework



Explanation

Independent Variables (Digital Marketing Factors):

- Social Media Marketing
- Online Advertisements
- Influencer Marketing
- E-commerce Convenience
- Reviews & Ratings
- Personalization

Mediating Variables:

- Brand Awareness
- Trust
- Consumer Engagement

Dependent Variable:

- Consumer Preference Towards FMCG Products

Outcome:

- Purchase Intention
- Loyalty
- Repeat Purchase

Online marketing factors play an important role in shaping consumer preference for FMCG brands through key intermediary variables of brand awareness, trust and consumer engagement, which ultimately translates to

purchase intention, loyalty and repurchase. Social media promotions on channels such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube, amplify brand awareness by consistently exposing the consumer to information about the product, discounts or other promotions, and entertainment through videos and stories. This builds brand recognition and reminds consumers of the brand when they make a purchase. Digital ads like Google, banner and video ads also enhance recall and grab attention via targeted media. Influencer marketing is also crucial in establishing trust, as consumers tend to follow product recommendations from popular creators and reviewers who are seen as authentic and relatable. Consumers are more likely to purchase brands of FMCG (fast-moving consumer goods) products, such as beauty products, snacks, and personal care products, when these are recommended by influencers. The ease of e-commerce shopping also influences preference, as products are readily available through online channels that offer fast delivery services, quick commerce and low prices. Easy access and convenience are factors that consumers prefer in brands. Star ratings and reviews provide social endorsement, which relieves uncertainty and risk perception; positive reviews build trust and confidence, while negative reviews might deter consumers from purchasing. Customization via product offers, recommendations and reminders boosts engagement and provides a personal touch. With increased brand awareness, trust and engagement, this leads to preference for particular FMCG brands. Over time, preference leads to purchase intention, when consumers intend to purchase the product. This also leads to consumer satisfaction and brand loyalty, resulting in repeat purchase. Thus, digital marketing does not merely impact preference directly but it generates awareness, engagement and trust that lead to long-term impacts in this competitive FMCG market.

8. Research Discussion

The literature review shows that digital marketing has a significant influence on preference in the FMCG market. FMCG products are low-cost, high-frequency items and often habitual purchases. Digital marketing breaks consumer habits by keeping products and brands on the radar through digital advertising and promotions. Social media marketing enhances awareness and builds emotional bonds through stories, contests, reels and user content. This enhances brand recognition when purchasing. Ratings and reviews alleviate consumer risk, particularly for new products. Favourable online reviews can accelerate market acceptance, but negative reviews can harm the brand. Influencer marketing is a key driver of preference. Users tend to prefer content from relatable creators to regular ads. Product trials by influencers are seen as genuine, particularly in beauty, food and personal care. Convenience is another major factor. Online and instant grocery shopping apps provide easy access to FMCG with discounts, subscriptions and home delivery. Brands need to have a digital presence and competitive prices. Tailored offers based on browsing and purchase data also influence preference. When recommendations are relevant, offers provide cashback and reminders occur, consumers are positive. But over-personalisation could raise privacy issues. Demographic differences are signaled in the discussion. Younger consumers are more responsive to digital, whereas older consumers may continue to depend on traditional modes and store familiarity. City consumers are more susceptible to digital marketing than rural consumers, but smartphone uptake is levelling this difference. In all, digital marketing affects preference through a combination of rational factors (price, convenience, information) and emotional factors (trust, belonging, social acceptance). FMCG companies that offer consistent messages across online and offline platforms are likely to establish preference and loyalty.

9. Limitations of the Study

This is a conceptual study based only on secondary data; no primary consumer survey was conducted.

1. Findings may not fully capture regional, cultural, or demographic differences in FMCG buying behavior.
2. Digital marketing trends change rapidly; therefore, some observations may evolve with new technologies, platforms, and consumer habits.

10. Future Scope of the Study

- Empirical studies using consumer surveys in rural and urban markets.
- Comparative studies across age groups and income categories.
- Analysis of AI-based personalization and consumer trust.
- Impact of quick-commerce platforms on FMCG preference.
- Structural equation modelling of digital variables and loyalty.

11. Conclusion

Digital marketing has significantly reshaped consumer preference towards FMCG products by improving awareness, accessibility, engagement, and trust. Consumers increasingly rely on social media content, online reviews, influencer recommendations, and digital promotions when choosing among competing brands. In the FMCG market, where switching costs are low and alternatives are abundant, digital presence can strongly influence preference and repeat purchase behavior. The conceptual analysis reveals that awareness, trust, convenience, and personalization are the key pathways through which digital marketing affects consumer choices. However, firms must also address issues such as misinformation, ad fatigue, and privacy concerns to maintain credibility. For marketers, success lies in creating customer-centric, transparent, and integrated digital strategies rather than only increasing advertisement volume. For researchers, the study offers a framework for future empirical testing. Overall, digital marketing is no longer optional but a strategic necessity for sustaining consumer preference in the modern FMCG marketplace.

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