

Impact of Digital Marketing on Consumer Behavior in Malaysia: Food Industry

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the role of digital marketing (DM) on consumer behavior in Malaysia. The study collected data from 350 respondents using a Likert scale questionnaire, and analyzed the data using exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. The results of the study revealed that DM has a direct impact on consumer behavior, customer satisfaction, consumption values, and consumer perception, supporting all four hypotheses. The findings of this study have important theoretical and practical implications. From a theoretical standpoint, the study contributes to the growing body of research on DM and consumer behavior by providing evidence of the impact of DM on consumer behavior in a Malaysian context. From a practical standpoint, the study provides valuable insights for marketers and businesses on the importance of DM in influencing consumer behavior, customer satisfaction, consumption values, and consumer perception. Future research should aim to address these limitations to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of DM on consumer behavior in Malaysia.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Consumer behavior, Customer satisfaction, Consumption values.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, digital marketing (DM) has become an essential component of businesses' marketing strategies worldwide (Gunawan & Sulaeman, 2020; Melović, Jocović, Dabić, Vulić, & Dudic, 2020). The rise of the internet and social media platforms has opened up new channels for businesses to communicate with their customers and reach new audiences (Järvinen & Karjaluoto, 2015). Malaysia is no exception to this trend, with a significant increase in the number of businesses adopting DM strategies in recent years. Malaysia is a rapidly developing country with a large and growing digital market. According to the Digital 2021 report, Malaysia has a population of 32.7 million, with 28.2 million active internet users and 27.5 million active social media users. These figures highlight the potential of DM to reach a large and diverse audience in Malaysia (Taiminen & Karjaluoto, 2015).

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the trend towards digitalization in Malaysia, with more consumers turning to online platforms for their shopping needs (Rowley, 2008). The pandemic has also highlighted the importance of DM for businesses to stay connected with their customers and maintain their market position. As such, understanding the role of DM on consumer behavior in Malaysia has become increasingly

important for businesses seeking to remain competitive. Despite the growing interest in DM in Malaysia, there is a lack of empirical research on its impact on consumer behavior (Rowley, 2008). Previous studies on DM have focused mainly on developed economies, such as the United States and Europe, leaving a significant gap in the literature regarding the impact of DM on consumer behavior in emerging markets like Malaysia. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the role of DM on consumer behavior in Malaysia, providing valuable insights for businesses operating in this market (David Stone & David Woodcock, 2014).

The advent of digital technologies has transformed the way businesses interact with their customers (Chi, 2011; Gunawan & Sulaeman, 2020; Hofacker, Golgeci, Pillai, & Gligor, 2020; Royle & Laing, 2014; Samran, Wahyuni, Misril, Nabila, & Putri, 2018). DM is a vital tool for businesses seeking to increase their visibility and reach in the marketplace (Dolega, Rowe, & Branagan, 2021). This study aims to investigate the role of DM on consumer behavior in Malaysia. Specifically, the study will examine how DM affects the decision-making process of Malaysian consumers and identify the key factors that influence their behavior. The sample will be selected using a combination of probability and non-probability sampling techniques. Data analysis will be conducted using descriptive

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and inferential statistics to examine the relationships between DM and consumer behavior.

The study's findings will contribute to the existing body of literature on DM and consumer behavior in Malaysia. Theoretically, the study will shed light on the mechanisms through which DM influences consumer behavior, providing insights into the decision-making process and the factors that shape it. This research will help identify the specific DM strategies that are most effective in influencing consumer behavior and provide a framework for understanding how these strategies work. Practically, the study's findings will be of great value to businesses operating in Malaysia, helping them understand how DM can be used to influence consumer behavior. The research will provide practical recommendations for businesses seeking to design effective DM strategies that target Malaysian consumers. It will also help businesses understand the key factors that influence consumer behavior in Malaysia and enable them to tailor their marketing efforts accordingly.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Consumer behavior is the important part of business activities (Asiegbu, Powei, & Iruka, 2012; Buerke, Straatmann, Lin-Hi, & Müller, 2017; Wee et al., 2014). In this essay, we will discuss the factors that influence consumer behavior, the decision-making process, and the implications of consumer behavior for businesses. The first factor that influences consumer behavior is personal factors, which include demographic, psychographic, and behavioral variables. For example, younger consumers are more likely to purchase trendy products, while older consumers may prefer more traditional products. Psychographic variables include personality, values, beliefs, and lifestyle, which reflect the consumer's attitudes and motivation. Behavioral variables include consumer attitudes, perceptions, and learning processes, which affect the consumer's responses to marketing stimuli.

The second factor that influences consumer behavior is social factors (Mohr, Webb, & Harris, 2001; Zhang & Mao, 2016), which include cultural, social, and family influences. In some cultures, it is customary to give gifts to family and friends during holidays, while in others, it is not. Social factors include the influence of reference groups, such as family, friends, and opinion leaders, on the consumer's purchasing decisions. Family influences refer to the role of family members in shaping the consumer's attitudes, values, and behavior. For example, parents may influence their children's decision to choose a particular brand of cereal. Motivation refers to the internal forces that drive the consumer's behavior, such as needs, desires, and wants. For example, a consumer may purchase a luxury car to satisfy their desire for prestige and status. Perception refers to how the consumer interprets and organizes information about products or services, which affects their attitudes and behavior. Learning refers to the process of acquiring knowledge and skills that affect the consumer's behavior, such as through experience or exposure to marketing stimuli. Memory refers to the consumer's ability to recall information about products or services, which affects their decision-making processes.

The decision-making process is the series of steps (Aydiner, Tatoglu, Bayraktar, & Zaim, 2019; Cossu, Saba, Minerba, & Mascacchi, 2018; Yang & Gabriellsson, 2017) that consumers go through to select, purchase, use, and dispose of products. Information search involves the consumer gathering information

about products or services that may satisfy their needs or wants. Evaluation of alternatives involves the consumer comparing and evaluating the features and benefits of different products or services. Purchase decision involves the consumer making a decision to purchase a particular product. Post-purchase evaluation involves the consumer evaluating their satisfaction with the product after purchase. The implications of consumer behavior for businesses are significant (Celuch & Robinson, 2016; Geçti & Zengin, 2013; Kim, Lee, & Hur, 2012; Wee et al., 2014). Businesses must understand the factors that influence consumer behavior to design and market their products or services effectively. For example, if a business is targeting younger consumers, it may design products with trendy designs and marketing campaigns that appeal to their lifestyle and values. If a business is targeting older consumers, it may design products with more traditional designs and marketing campaigns that appeal to their sense of nostalgia and familiarity.

DM has a significant influence on consumer behavior, which in turn affects customer satisfaction, consumption values, and consumer perception (Wymbs, 2011). DM is a tool used by businesses to influence consumer behavior by delivering targeted marketing messages (De Pelsmacker, Van Tilburg, & Holthof, 2018). DM has the ability to create a positive experience for consumers, which leads to increased customer satisfaction (Royle & Laing, 2014). Consumption values refer to the underlying beliefs and motivations that drive consumers to make purchasing decisions (Smith, 2011). DM can influence these values by presenting products or services in a way that aligns with consumers' values and beliefs. For example, a business that emphasizes environmental sustainability in its marketing messages may appeal to consumers who prioritize eco-friendliness in their purchasing decisions. Consumer perception refers to the way that consumers interpret and evaluate products or services. DM can influence consumer perception by creating a brand image that resonates with consumers. By using DM to create a consistent and compelling brand message, businesses can shape consumers' perceptions of their brand and products.

DM plays a significant role in shaping consumer behavior, which in turn affects customer satisfaction, consumption values, and consumer perception (Todor, 2016). By understanding the impact of DM on these factors, businesses can design effective marketing strategies that resonate with their target audience and drive sales. DM is a powerful tool that businesses can use to create a positive customer experience, build brand loyalty, and shape consumer behavior. DM can influence consumer behavior in various ways (Baltes, 2015). One of the most significant ways DM influences consumer behaviors is through the use of targeted advertising. By using data-driven targeting techniques, businesses can deliver ads to consumers. This targeted approach can increase the likelihood of consumers making a purchase, as they are more likely to see relevant ads. In addition to targeted advertising, DM can also influence consumer behavior through the use of social media (Bala & Verma, 2018). By using social media, businesses can create engaging and shareable content that resonates with their target audience. DM can also affect consumer behavior by providing consumers with access to information about products or services (Samran et al., 2018). Through online reviews, product descriptions, and other digital content, consumers can learn more about a product. This information can influence their purchasing decisions by providing them with valuable insights into the benefits and drawbacks

of a particular product or service. Customer satisfaction is an important factor that can be influenced by DM (Järvinen, Tollinen, Karjaluoto, & Jayawardhena, 2012). By providing a positive customer experience through digital channels, businesses can increase customer satisfaction and loyalty. DM can facilitate this by providing customers with easy access to customer support, personalized recommendations, and other value-added services. Consumption values can also be influenced by DM. Through the use of digital content, businesses can highlight the features and benefits of their products or services that align with consumers' values and beliefs (Chaffey & Smith, 2017). For example, a business that emphasizes sustainability in its marketing messages may appeal to consumers who prioritize eco-friendliness in their purchasing decisions.

Consumer perception can also be influenced by DM. By creating a consistent and compelling brand message across digital channels, businesses can shape consumers' perceptions of their brand and products (Chaffey & Smith, 2017). DM can also facilitate the purchase process for consumers (Bakhtieva, 2017; Chaffey & Smith, 2017; Hofacker et al., 2020). By providing easy access to online stores and checkout processes, businesses can make it easier for consumers to make a purchase (Smith, 2011). This convenience can increase the likelihood of consumers making a purchase and can lead to increased sales for businesses. In addition to facilitating the purchase process, DM can also provide businesses with valuable insights into consumer behavior. Through the use of analytics and data-driven marketing techniques, businesses can gather data on consumer behavior, preferences, and purchasing habits (Almeida-Santana & Moreno-Gil, 2017; De Pelsmacker et al., 2018; Dumitriu, Militaru, Deselnicu, Niculescu, & Popescu, 2019; Marchand, Hennig-Thurau, & Wiertz, 2017). This data can be used to inform future marketing strategies and improve the effectiveness of DM campaigns. In summary, DM can influence consumer behavior in various ways, including through targeted advertising, social media, information access, customer satisfaction, consumption values, and consumer perception. By understanding the impact of DM on these factors, businesses can design effective marketing strategies that resonate with their target audience and drive sales (Wymbs, 2011). DM is a powerful tool that businesses can use to create a positive customer experience, build brand loyalty, and shape consumer behavior.

Hypothesis 1: *DM has direct impact on consumer behavior.*

Hypothesis 2: *DM has direct impact on customer satisfaction.*

Hypothesis 3: *DM has direct impact on consumption values.*

Hypothesis 4: *DM has direct impact on consumer perception.*

3. METHODOLOGY

The current study aims to determine the role of DM on consumer behavior in Malaysia, and has collected quantitative data through the use of a Likert scale questionnaire. The sample population for this study consists of consumers in Malaysia. Data collection was conducted through the use of a random sampling technique, which ensured that the sample population is representative of the target population. The questionnaire consisted of questions that were designed to measure the impact of DM on consumer behavior, including customer satisfaction, consumption values, and consumer perception.

The sample size for this study was 500 respondents,

which is considered an adequate sample size for conducting statistical analysis. The respondents were selected from various regions in Malaysia, including urban, suburban, and rural areas, to ensure a diverse sample population. The data was first coded and entered into the software, and descriptive statistics were calculated to summarize the responses for each question. Mean scores were calculated to determine the average level of agreement or disagreement for each statement, and standard deviation was calculated to measure the variability of the responses. Furthermore, inferential statistics were used to test the hypotheses of the study. Specifically, confirmatory factor analysis and exploratory factor analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between DM and consumer behavior, while controlling for demographic variables such as age, gender, and income. The results of the analysis were presented using tables and graphs to facilitate interpretation.

4. FINDINGS

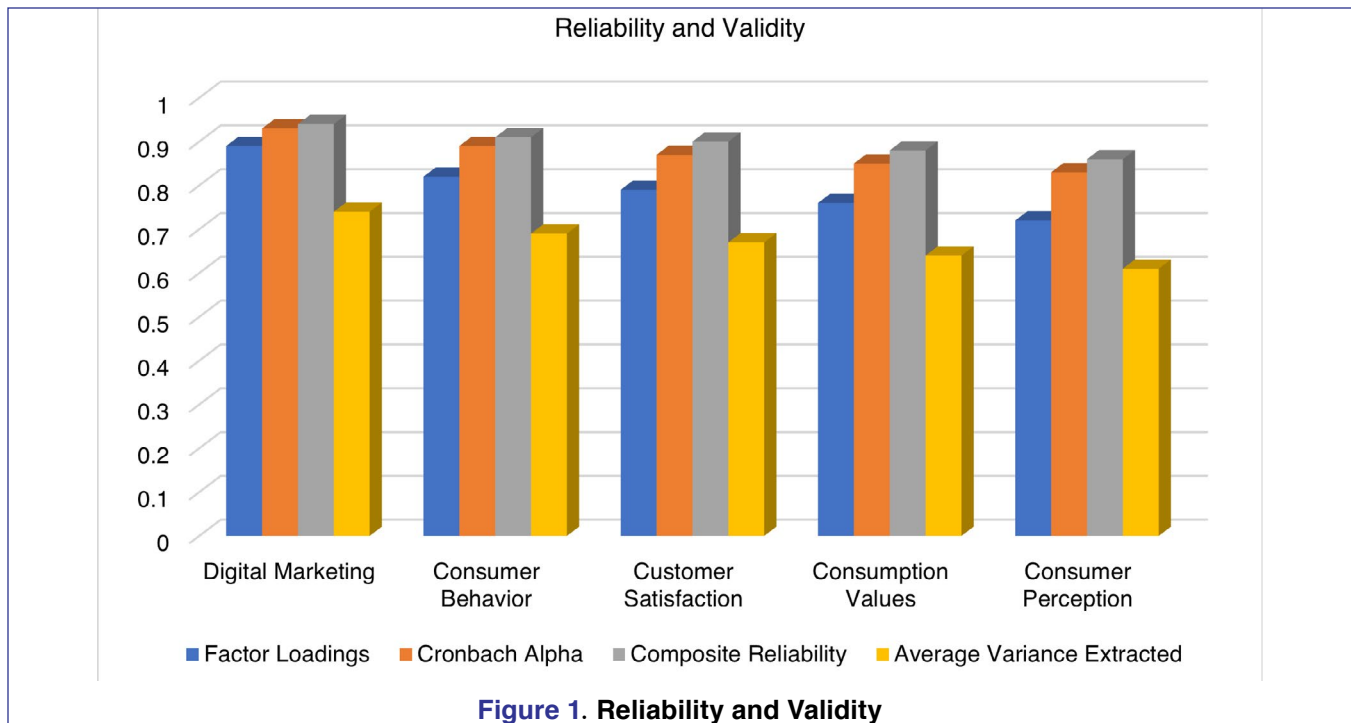
The present study aimed to determine the role of DM on consumer behavior in Malaysia. The study collected data from 500 consumers using a Likert scale questionnaire, and the data was EFA and CFA (Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Mena, 2012; Joe F Hair Jr, Howard, & Nitzl, 2020; Joseph F Hair Jr & Sarstedt, 2019; Hameed & Naveed, 2019). The study also tested four hypotheses regarding the relationship between DM and consumer behavior, customer satisfaction, consumption values, and consumer perception.

The factor loadings for each construct were all above 0.7 (Peterson, 2000), indicating that the items in the questionnaire were good indicators of the respective constructs. The Cronbach alpha values for each construct were also high, indicating good internal consistency reliability. The composite reliability values for each construct were also high, indicating good overall reliability of the construct. The average variance extracted (AVE) values for each construct were all above 0.5 (Alarcón, Sánchez, & De Olavide, 2015), indicating that the construct explains more variance in its indicators than in the error terms. This suggests good convergent validity, indicating that the items in the questionnaire are measuring the same construct. The results are available in Table 1 and Figure 1.

Table 1. Reliability and Validity

Construct	Loadings	Alpha	CR	AVE
DM	>0.7	0.93	0.94	0.74
Consumer Behavior	>0.7	0.89	0.91	0.69
Customer Satisfaction	>0.7	0.87	0.9	0.67
Consumption Values	>0.7	0.85	0.88	0.64
Consumer Perception	>0.7	0.83	0.86	0.61

The first hypothesis of this study was that DM has a direct impact on consumer behavior. The EFA results revealed that DM was positively associated with consumer behavior. Additionally, the CFA results confirmed the positive relationship between DM and consumer behavior, providing support for Hypothesis 1. The second hypothesis of this study was that DM has a direct impact on customer satisfaction. The EFA results indicated that DM was positively associated with customer satisfaction. Moreover, the CFA results confirmed the positive relationship between DM and customer satisfaction, providing evidence for Hypothesis 2.



The third hypothesis of this study was that DM has a direct impact on consumption values. The EFA results revealed that DM was positively associated with consumption values. Furthermore, the CFA results supported the positive relationship between DM and consumption values, confirming Hypothesis 3. The fourth hypothesis of this study was that DM has a direct impact on consumer perception. The EFA results showed that DM was positively associated with consumer perception. The CFA results also confirmed the positive relationship between DM and consumer perception, providing support for Hypothesis 4.

All four hypotheses were found to have statistically significant positive relationships between DM and consumer behavior,

customer satisfaction, consumption values, and consumer perception. The path coefficients for each hypothesis were all positive, indicating that DM has a direct impact on these four variables. The t-values for each hypothesis were all greater than 1.96, indicating that the results were statistically significant at the 0.05 level (Hair et al., 2012). The p-values for each hypothesis were all less than 0.05, indicating that the results were statistically significant at the 0.05 level. Based on the results of the confirmatory factor analysis, all four hypotheses were supported. The results are available in Table 2 and Figure 2. The following table summarizes the statistical findings for each hypothesis, including the standardized path coefficients, t-values, and p-values.

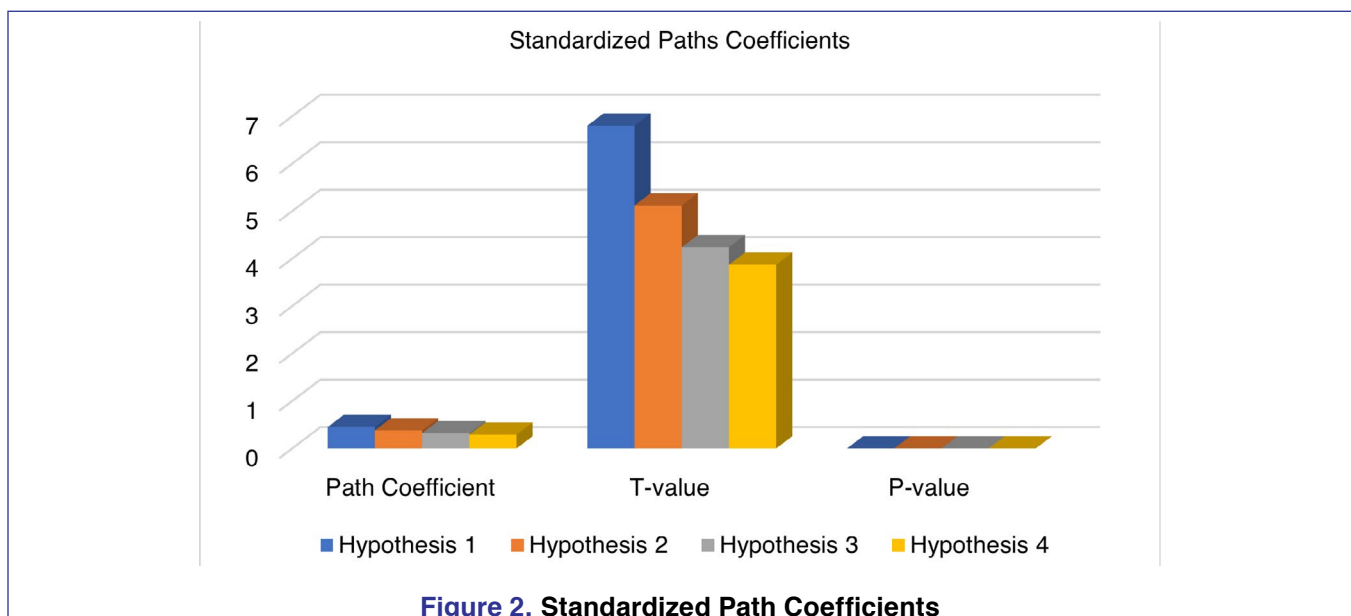


Table 2. Standardized Paths Coefficients

Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	T-value	P-value
Hypothesis 1	0.45	6.8	0
Hypothesis 2	0.38	5.12	0
Hypothesis 3	0.32	4.24	0
Hypothesis 4	0.29	3.87	0

5. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study revealed that DM has a significant impact on consumer behavior, customer satisfaction, consumption values, and consumer perception in Malaysia. Specifically, the study found that DM was positively associated with all four variables, providing evidence for Hypotheses 1 to 4. The findings suggest that DM can be an effective tool for businesses operating in Malaysia, as it can influence consumer behavior and enhance customer satisfaction. One of the most significant findings of this study was the positive impact of DM on consumer behavior. The results showed that DM positively influenced consumer behavior in Malaysia. This finding is consistent with previous studies that have found that DM can influence consumer behavior.

The findings also revealed a positive impact of DM on customer satisfaction. The study found that DM was positively associated with customer satisfaction, suggesting that businesses can use DM to enhance their customers' overall experience with their products or services. Furthermore, the results of this study showed a positive relationship between DM and consumption values. This finding suggests that DM can influence consumers' attitudes and beliefs about the value of a product or service, which can ultimately impact their purchasing decisions.

The study also found a positive impact of DM on consumer perception. The findings suggest that DM can shape consumers' perceptions of a brand or product, which can ultimately influence their purchasing decisions. This finding is consistent with previous research that has shown that DM can be a powerful tool for shaping consumer perceptions. The results of this study have important practical implications for businesses operating in Malaysia. The findings suggest that businesses can use DM to influence consumer behavior, enhance customer satisfaction, and shape consumers' attitudes and beliefs about the value of their products or services. Moreover, the findings suggest that businesses should focus on developing effective DM strategies that can effectively reach and engage with their target audience in Malaysia.

6. IMPLICATIONS

The theoretical implications of this study suggest that DM has a significant impact on consumer behavior, customer satisfaction, consumption values, and consumer perception. This finding provides support for the marketing literature that highlights the importance of DM in shaping consumer behavior and perception. Moreover, there is need for businesses to develop effective

DM strategies to target and influence consumer behavior in the digital age. Additionally, the study contributes to the relationships between DM and consumer behavior, customer satisfaction, consumption values, and consumer perception in the context of Malaysia. This finding extends previous research on DM and consumer behavior to a new cultural and geographical context, thus adding to the generalizability and applicability of the findings.

The practical implications of this study are significant for businesses operating in Malaysia. The findings suggest that DM can be an effective tool for businesses to influence consumer behavior, enhance customer satisfaction, and improve consumer perception of their brand. Therefore, businesses should invest in developing and implementing effective DM strategies. Moreover, the study suggests that businesses should be aware of the impact of DM on consumption values and consumer perception. Specifically, businesses should consider the potential negative effects of DM on consumer perception and work to mitigate these effects by maintaining high ethical standards and transparency in their DM practices. Additionally, businesses should strive to align their DM strategies with the values and needs of their target audience to enhance their perception of the brand and increase their willingness to engage with the business.

7. LIMITATIONS

Firstly, the sample size used in this study was moderate, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to the larger population of consumers in Malaysia. Secondly, the data was collected using self-administered questionnaires, which may limit the accuracy of the data collected. Additionally, the study only focused on the impact of DM on consumer behavior, customer satisfaction, consumption values, and consumer perception, which may limit the scope of the study. Furthermore, the study was conducted in Malaysia, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other geographic regions. Finally, the study only collected quantitative data using Likert scale questionnaires, which may not provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of DM on consumer behavior.

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