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A Perception Study On Digital Consumers With Reference To Goalpara Town, Assam

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Abstract:

In the era of rapidly advancing technology and digital transformation, understanding the perceptions and behaviors of digital consumers has become paramount for businesses seeking to thrive in the digital landscape. This abstract provides an overview of a comprehensive perception study that delves into the intricacies of consumer attitudes, preferences, and decision-making processes within the digital realm.

Through surveys, a diverse sample of 100 digital consumers is gathered, ensuring representation across various demographics and digital proficiency levels.

The research explores several key aspects, including:

1. Digital Experiences: Investigating consumers' experiences while interacting with digital platforms, websites, mobile applications, and social media. Understanding how user-friendliness, aesthetics, and functionality influence their overall perceptions.
2. Trust and Security: Analyzing the factors influencing consumers' trust in digital transactions, data privacy concerns, and the impact of security measures on purchasing decisions.
3. Personalization: Assessing consumers' receptiveness to personalized content, targeted advertising, and the fine balance between personalized experiences and privacy concerns.
4. Social Influence: Exploring the role of social media in shaping consumers' perceptions, brand loyalty, and the impact of influencers on purchasing behavior.

5. E-commerce Adoption: Studying the factors driving the adoption of e-commerce platforms, including consumer motivations, perceived risks, and barriers to entry.

The findings of this perception study are expected to provide valuable insights for businesses aiming to enhance their digital strategies, tailor marketing approaches, and foster meaningful connections with their digital consumer base. Furthermore, the study contributes to the broader understanding of the dynamic relationship between consumers and the ever-evolving digital landscape, laying the groundwork for future research in this rapidly evolving field.

Keywords: digital marketing, consumer buying behavior, qualitative research, quantitative research, patterns, attitude, perception, barriers, purchase decisions.

I. INTRODUCTION

Digital Marketing

The rise of technology has completely changed the world in how organizations started doing business. Internet in modern day, is the fundamental source through which organizations market themselves and provides every information about different products and services consumers desires. With rapid growth of online marketing, consumers can directly link up with the marketers for a particular product and allowing the marketers with new opportunities of finding more customers from any location. The rise of social media has also impacted the consumer behavior, bringing rapid change in the taste and preferences of consumers. The increase changing trends in social and economic behavior has also played major role in changing the dynamics of consumer behavior. As a result, the marketers are forced to re-strategize their organizations production units and marketing channels to meet their consumer's needs.

Digital Consumers

The rapid growth and easy access to internet has contributed to an increase of new digital consumers. In today's time, every consumer carries an internet accessible device through which they can connect and find any products or services online. Digital consumers rely in finding online stores and networks and expects the same quantity of service they find in local stores. For this reason, there is a change in advertising and salesperson strategies from 10 years ago. Nowadays, consumers try to find information by themselves about different products online.

Features of Digital Consumers

- Consumers are the kings. Consumer's research and shares their experience about the products.
- Consumers are always available online 24/7.
- Consumers are more attracted towards personal interactions with the brands.
- Consumers don't like to be kept waiting for their preferred products.
- Most consumers belonging to Gen Z trusts Influencers over brands.
- Modern day consumers are highly opinionated and give priority to products with good customer reviews.
- Consumers prefer sustainable eco-friendly products.

Types of Digital Consumers

Digitally Driven Segment

These are the consumers that are digitally engaged than the other segments and do everything online to avoid visiting any store.

Calculated Shoppers

These are very similar to the digitally driven segment, but they take their time to get the best deal on the product.

Basic Digital Consumers

These consumers are not that mobile-centric but comfortable and like to research more before purchasing.

Retail Scouts

These consumers prefer retail sites to brand sites and mostly purchase same category of products.

Brand Scouts

These are completely opposite to retail scouts and would likely purchase brand products online.

Pros and Cons of Digital Marketing

a. Pros

- It is cost effective.
- It is very flexible and can be customized.
- Can reach to a larger number of customers.
- Easy to access real time data analysis.
- More customer interaction.

b. Cons

- High rate of competitors.
- High technical and skills required to operate.
- Data security risks.
- Difficulty in measuring return on investments.
- Constant updates on algorithm and optimization required.

Digital Marketing Mediums

Digital Marketing Strategy

Marketers are more likely to achieve success when they come up with documented strategies that define processes to derive better performance and results. So, implementing the accurate digital marketing mediums is necessary for the marketers.

Social Media Marketing

Social media is one of the most important platforms used by the marketers to reach the consumers. Almost 97% of the marketers use social media marketing to reach their customers through social media posts.

E-mail Marketing

E-mail marketing is a popular medium of communication. This marketing platform is mostly used by professionals for business communication.

Content Marketing

Content marketing is done by publishing informative content to the consumers, to create strong engagement in doing business. There are a lot of benefits that comes to content marketing and 70% marketers directly invests in content marketing.

Graphic Design

Graphic design is one of the ways through which marketers influence the consumers visually purchasing a product. It is used by approximately 70% of the marketers to attract customers.

Search Engine Optimization

Relevant information on search engines can be found through search engine optimization when customers locate the business of the marketers. The chances of maximizing traffic in the marketers' websites are possible with the help of better SEO performance.

Branding

Branding means building a unique identity of the business. Branding is a medium through which a business attracts its customers with unique quality products.

Pay Per Click Marketing

Pay per click marketing is done by publishing ads to different websites. If done correctly, it can bring many customers traffic on the website.

E-commerce Marketing

90% of people is known to make a online purchase in their life time and with the help of internet, marketers promote their products digitally through e-commerce or online stores.

Video Production

Video production is becoming the most popular in attracting customers in this digital age. The advertisements in promoting the product and through video content promotion it is becoming a popular tool to gain and retain customers.

II. CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Concept of Consumer Behavior

Businesses should understand consumer behavior for creating effective technologies strategies that can influence the decision-making process of the consumer. Consumers nowadays are the primary focus of any business. The flow of any marketing strategy of any business is to fulfil the needs of their consumers and how to retain their trust. Digital marketing in any form uses the consumers perception towards the product into their marketing strategy before doing any business.

Keeping consumers as a primary focus, marketers choose to launch their products and services and maintain their modifications. Upgradation of the product depends upon the demand and preference of the consumer. These are some of the important aspects every marketer must consider for understanding the consumer behavior.

- What products do the consumer buy?
- How does the consumers buy the products?
- When will the consumers buy the product?
- Why do the consumers buy the products?
- How often do the consumer buys the products?

It is important to be stated that every region has its own different consumer behavior. The consumer behavior of North India is completely different to South India. It changes depending upon the influences of culture, traditions, climate, values, and beliefs, etc. Due to overgrowing market industries also increases the growth of competition among businesses.

In simple words, understanding consumer behavior is a necessary task for any marketing strategy. Business can develop effective marketing by analyzing the influence of the factors affecting consumer behavior.

Importance of Consumer Behavior

Consumer Behavior is necessary for any business to consumers and developing strategies which can benefit the understand the consumers' needs and demand in the market. By studying the consumers behavior, the marketers are aware of the products the consumers buy in the market.

With the help of understanding consumer behavior, the marketers can find the products and services which are needed and products that are obsolete. It also helps the marketers in influencing the consumers and developing strategies which can benefit the business by selling the products in demand. Marketers should follow their marketing strategy with the consumer behavior analysis which includes:

- Consumer's perception and their feelings about various alternatives and options regarding a product.
- Factors that influence the consumers between various options.
- Influence of researching of products.
- Influence on the consumers from other environmental factors. (Friends, society, etc.)

With the findings of the results, the marketers can find the consumers patterns and trends in the market.

Consumer behavior patterns

The consumer behavior pattern of every consumer is different than the other. To understand and study about every individual's consumer behavior is impossible. Every individual has his own buying habits which are influenced by the factors. Habits are a settled on regular tendency or practice and they are voluntary over time, which can't be analyzed whereas buying behavior patterns can be collected by placing them in categories. The patterns can be categorized into-

- Place of purchase
- Items purchased.
- Time and frequency of purchase
- Method of purchase

Factors influencing Consumer Behavior

A. Psychological factors

These factors determine the influence of the psychological changes in the minds of the consumer. It is an integral factor that is hard to measure. These are-

- Motivation
- Perception
- Learning
- Attitudes and belief

B. Social factors

The purchasing decision of the consumers is also influenced by the social environment around them. Consumers are constantly working to fit into the system environment of their surroundings. Some of these factors include-

- Family
- Reference groups or friends
- Roles and status

C. Cultural factors

Just like the social factors, cultural factors influence the buying behaviour of the consumers. Every consumer is influenced by the cultural roots, habits and traditions they were obliged to believe in since childhood. The consumer's behaviour is consciously or subconsciously driving them to follow a particular community. These factors include-

- Culture
- Subculture
- Social class

D. Personal factors

These are the factors that vary from person to person. These are the personal factors of the consumer that influences their buying behaviour along with the physical condition of the consumer and self-satisfaction. Some of the personal factors include-

- Age
- Income
- Occupation
- Lifestyle

E. Economic factors

Economic factors shows that every consumer of the economy is influenced by the purchasing power of any individual belonging to that economy. Every country or region plays a large part influencing the consumer buying behaviour. If the country is rich, the consumers demand expensive products to the countries with poor economic conditions. These includes-

- Personal Income
- Family Income
- Income Expenditure
- Consumer Credit
- Liquid assets
- Savings

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

The analytical study on Digital marketing practices adopted at higher educational institutions shows that the emerging private educational institutions focuses on enormous advantage compared to old government institutions in terms of digital technology and modern practices. The overall quality deficiency, under-utilization of resources, lack of digital systems and modern practices lead to the lack of proper planning and poor management appreciated and unattraction to the likes of quality student. (*Nair, K.V. Rajendran, 2023*)

The importance of various marketing practices and studied the diffusion of various digital marketing strategies among MSMEs. The study was considered by taking two main factors with direct influence on demographics and attitudes on MSMEs. (*Bharath Sampath, 2022*)

Digital marketing is an essential part of business promotional strategy where any small business owner can market his or her products or services in a very cheap and efficient way. Both online and offline devices can be used for business methods and gain more incentives. (*Rajiv Mishra, 2021*)

The impact of Digital marketing in pharmaceutical companies and the idea of digitalizing the techniques behind traditional method of face-to-face selling. Though digital consultancy has provided huge opportunities to both the super specialized doctors and patients, there is still a challenge in physical examination. (*Manoj Kumar, 2021*)

Digital marketing introduces as an Integral part of the process of transformation of digital business. With the help of the modern marketing techniques gathering information through communication technologies. Digital marketing is a practice followed and developed for successful development of businesses following present market conditions. (*SS Velen and AI Tsvetanova, 2020*)

The perspectives of the shopping habits in the electronic form of a growing economy have embraced 'consumerism'. The paper divides the demographics into four categories of Conventional, Looked-for information, Apprehensive and Enthusiasts type of consumers. (*Sandeep Kapoor, 2014*)

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To understand the factors influencing the choice of digital consumers.
- To understand the different platforms used by digital consumers.
- To investigate the products and services preferred by digital consumers.
- To analyze the drawbacks faced by digital consumers.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Area of study: The study is conducted in Goalpara Town of Assam.

Nature of Data: The data for the research has been collected from both primary and secondary sources. The data has been collected through questionnaires and by reviewing various research papers and published articles.

Type of research: The study is descriptive in nature.

Sampling Techniques: This research study is conducted by using convenience sampling method.

Sample size: 100 respondents

VI. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is done for academic purpose and certain limitations occur during the research.

- Due to the lack of time and resource constraints, there is a lack of responses.
- People are not highly educated in the area of the study and the responses were not clearly accurate.
- Even though the study is done on the basis of information collected from the respondents, still there might be a chance of error.

VII. FINDINGS

Demographic Profile:

- This study shows that majority of the consumers are from the age group between 18-25 years followed by 25-35 years.
- In the study, the ratio between male and female respondents are almost equal with male 56% to female 44%.
- This study shows that 49% of the respondents are students, followed by 34% of the respondents into services or jobs.
- The study shows that income/allowance of 49% of the respondents earn below 1 lakh per annum.

Awareness and Factors Influencing the Digital Consumers

- Through this study it is seen that, 88% of the respondents were aware of digital marketing.
- 48% of the respondents like to spend between 1-5 hours and 31% with less than an hour of their time on online marketing platforms.
- This study shows that maximum number of the respondents spends their time in internet visiting social media.
- This study shows that 62% of the respondents believes that digital marketing will completely takeover the traditional marketing in future
- This study shows that 62% of the respondents believes that digital marketing will completely takeover the traditional marketing in future.
- The respondents in this study rate positive with the experience in online marketing.

- 53% of the respondents in the study, recommend the products/services they purchase online to other consumers.
- 67% of the respondents in the study, agrees to be satisfied being a digital consumer.

Platforms preferred by Digital Consumers

- Most of the respondents prefer mobile applications, websites and social media for doing online shopping.
- Most of the respondents prefer Cash on Delivery (COD) and UPI (Phonepe/Google pay/PayTm) mode of transaction for purchase of products online.
- This study shows that the factors such as discounts, good delivery and cost benefit mostly influences the respondent's choice for digital shopping.

Products/Services preferred by Digital Consumers

- Through this study, it has been found that the respondents mostly purchase accessories, apparel, footwear and electronic items online.
- This study shows that maximum number of respondents tends to spend less than Rs 10,000 monthly purchasing online with 41% spends less than Rs 1,000 and 43% between Rs 1,000 and Rs 10,000
- Through this study, it is seen that 24% of respondents purchase every week, 33% purchase every month, 31% purchase every 3 months and 12% purchase products once a year.
- The respondents in this study rate highly and positive to the quality of the online products.
- 58% of the respondents in this study rated good regarding the information provided for products in digital advertisements.

Drawbacks faced by Digital Consumers

- This study shows that extra charges, delivery delay, product quality issue and refund policy issues are mostly the common problems they face doing online shopping.
- The study shows the respondents rarely faces issues regarding online shopping with 26% of the respondents never faced any problems.

VIII. SUGGESTIONS

- With a lot of consumers facing quality issues, the marketers should deliver genuine and original products that is mentioned in their e-commerce platforms.
- Nearby stores should be connected with e-commerce such that grocery and other low price household items can be delivered immediately.
- Products that are already available in the nearby warehouses can be divide within hours to face delay on delivery issues.
- Every e-commerce business should provide all the necessary details regarding taxes and other delivery charges for the consumers before checking out.
- E-commerce business should give equal importance to refund and exchange policies without any delay.
- E-commerce business should not write fake reviews to generate more customer traffic in their websites and other online platforms.

IX. CONCLUSION

Digital marketing is a method through which consumers and marketers do business by buying and selling products online mode through various technologies. Digital marketing is more complex, quick, and efficient marketing which requires a lot more research when compared to traditional marketing. Digital media is present now all across the world which gives equal opportunities for this marketing mode to grow in coming future.

The introduction to new technologies has moved electronic commerce into more modernity. The new way of doing business by implementing new marketing strategies to attract consumers through digital media has become primary role for the marketers. It is necessary for both consumers and marketers to learn about the pros and cons of digital marketing for their own benefits.

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