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Elevating Consumer Purchase Intentions in Pakistan: The Power of Digital Marketing

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Abstract: *This study examines the moderating effect of brand equity on the relationship between digital marketing and consumer intent to purchase in Pakistan's social media commerce context. The data is collected through an online survey administered using a purposive sample strategy collecting 371 responses. The entire population was hard to triangulate as such statistics are not accurately available in a developing country like Pakistan, hence using a non-probabilistic sampling approach. Smart PLS 3 (Smart PLS 3) is utilized for statistical analysis as an SEM (Structural Equation Modeling) was applied to test the complex relationship between the variables and testing hypotheses. The results demonstrate the validity of the research model and the structural equation modeling approach. The data shows that brand equity moderates the relationship between digital marketing and purchase intent substantially. Exposure to digital marketing, specifically social media, and electronic word-of-mouth, significantly correlated with consumers' desire to purchase. Brand equity is observed to moderate this association. Brand feedback is essential, and the high-quality information digital marketing provides facilitates browsing and influences purchase decisions. In light of the increase in online commerce during the COVID-19 epidemic, the report also emphasizes the growing significance of digital marketing. This study contributes to the theoretical foundation of digital marketing and social media commerce by shedding light on the impact of digital marketing on purchase intention and the moderating effect of brand equity, particularly in the Pakistani context. It contributes to the corpus of knowledge as it makes theoretical contributions and paves the way for future research. The study findings have important implications for researchers and professionals in Pakistan's social media commerce ecosystem.*

Keywords: *Purchase intention, Digital Marketing Brand Awareness, Customer Satisfaction.*

Introduction

Effective promotional business and connectivity offer new marketing communication that delivers accessible, relevant, and present tools to facilitate efficient communication with various stakeholders, primarily customers, regarding the offerings and ad schemes. This has driven the phenomenal expansion of online merchants like Amazon and IKEA. Clients have invested money in online shopping since cell phones and current apps have made it more accessible and economical, and many consumers spend much time online going through websites and using different apps. Due to the impacts of this efficient advertising

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attitude, there is a great rivalry in the online and social commerce sectors; the top companies in this area are exploring different creative approaches to entice new online clients and retain existing ones. In tandem with the evolution of integrated marketing strategies, a brand-new "digital marketing" concept has emerged. It has supplanted conventional effective advertising communication for many firms to engage with clients more efficiently, particularly in the online economy. Marketers predict that by utilizing the Internet asan advertising medium, their promotional reach will be expanded, and consumers' familiarity with their product brands will increase. We must promote the notion that consumers' purchasing decisions are influenced by their identity (Khan, Rasheed, Rashid, Abbas, & Mahboob, 2022).

In addition, define brand awareness is the capacity of buyers to recognize and recall a brand, whereas shopping without identifying it by name. Brand awareness is the capacity of prospective buyers to understand or recollect that a trademark is associated with a particular product category. In the meantime, logo awareness is the ability of a product to be retained or kept in consumers' memory when they think about the product. According to Khan et al. (2022), several phases of marketing strategy include the following: First, the lowest rung of the brand awareness pyramid, 'aware of a product,' indicates that the customer does not know the product. The second stage of brand exposure, brand recognition, happens when consumers begin to memories or are supported in trying to remember the brand of a particular product. Thirdly, a strong brand refers to a consumer's capacity to recall a particular brand of product from memory without assistance (Zaheer, Khan, & Raees, 2023).

Moreover, front of sight refers to the direct mention of a business's brand once someone speaks of it. The corporate image of a corporation will eventually rise by continuously reviewing it through internet marketing or vice versa. Brand awareness strongly influences the purchasing decisions of consumers. It includes brand recognition, intentionality, and dominance of information. Companies are encouraged to enhance their performance by emphasizing the purchase intentions of their customers. This encourages them to embrace and utilize modern marketing approaches, such as digital advertising and a concentration on online platforms like Facebook (Agha, Rashid, Rasheed, Khan, & Khan, 2021). The majority of currently available research, including those focusing on Pakistan, examines consumer behavior in a general sense, without taking generational differences in digital marketing usage and influence into account. Marketers could benefit from more nuanced insights and effective targeting strategies if more research were conducted on how different generations in Pakistan, such as Generation Z, Millennials, Generation X, and Baby Boomers, react to digital marketing methods. Generation Z, Millennials, and Baby Boomers comprise these generations.

Despite the fact that digital marketing has been the subject of a great deal of research, very little investigation has been conducted into how various digital marketing methods influence urban and rural customers in Pakistan. Different regions have varying levels of digital literacy, varying access to technology, and varying purchasing patterns, so a study that concentrates on this divide could be informative. Numerous studies have examined the impact of digital marketing's technical components on consumer behavior. However, few of these studies have examined the cultural and social factors that may play a role. On

the other hand, there is a paucity of research on how cultural and societal factors in Pakistan influence the customer-digital marketing relationship. Investigating the effects of religious beliefs, societal forces, and cultural norms on the effectiveness of digital marketing in Pakistan would provide a more complete understanding (Khan, Rashid, Rasheed, & Amirah, 2023).

Therefore, this study would comprehensively understand the association between willingness to buy and digital ads. The survey findings also indicate whether consumer perceptions and attitudes influence future sales patterns. Due to the paucity of empirical studies on this issue, this study also seeks to examine the problem of brand equity's mediating variable on the relationship between digital marketing attributes and buying intention in Pakistan (Anwar & Jalees, 2020). The two primary research objectives are analyzing the impact of artificial intelligence (media sites branding and electronic language) on usage and investigating the moderating effect on the brand's relationship. The research intends to study the effect of Social media marketing, Brand equity, Digital Marketing, Brand awareness, and Customer satisfaction on Purchase intention. Consequently, the essential research questions are as follows: (1) To what extent does digital marketing influence customers' purchase intentions, including Facebook ads and electronic word-of-mouth? (2) How does differentiation strategy modify the effect of digital marketing on consumer purchase behavior? This phenomenon has become a significant opportunity for marketers, especially in agriculture. They do not wish to waste this opportunity. They used to sell their products conventionally by communicating directly with prospective buyers. Nevertheless, Ayamjoper.id, a startup in the husbandry business, seeks to revamp its marketing plan by utilizing digital advertising as a promotional platform. According to HertawanKertajaya, technology is the primary change agent in the evolving marketing scene. According to the above description, this study aims to determine how Ayamjoper.id Company uses digital marketing to build brand recognition.

There exist distinct variations in digital literacy, technological accessibility, and consumer behavior between urban and rural regions of Pakistan. Considerable research has been conducted on the subject of digital marketing in a broad sense (Khan, Anwar, & Qabool, 2023). However, there is a notable dearth of scholarly investigation into the nuanced impacts of digital marketing within the diverse demographic landscapes of Pakistan. The objective of this study is to address the existing knowledge deficit by conducting a comprehensive examination of the cultural, sociological, and religious factors that influence the effectiveness of digital marketing, alongside its technological dimensions (Jamil, Khan, & Seraj, 2023). The importance of such recognition is significant, given that organizations such as Ayamjoper.id are departing from traditional methods in favor of digital alternatives. This transition underscores the significance of understanding the role of brand equity in facilitating the relationship between digital advertising methods and consumers' buying choices. This research endeavor illuminates the aforementioned inquiry through an examination of the reactions of 371 individuals, with the aim of ascertaining the impact of diverse digital marketing strategies on customers' inclination to engage in a purchase (Raees, Khan, & Zaheer, 2023). Examining the moderating role of brand equity within this context offers valuable academic enrichment and practical insights, particularly in light of the accelerated shift towards online buying amidst the

COVID-19 pandemic.

Literature Review

Theoretical foundation

Technological acceptance model (TAM)

This study adopts a deductive approach in line with Davis (1989)'s Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to examine the response of diverse populations in urban and rural regions of Pakistan towards digital marketing strategies, considering their perceptions of usefulness and ease of use. The Traditional Technology Acceptance Theory (TAM) has traditionally centered on the acceptance of information technologies by users. This theory offers a robust conceptual framework for understanding how cultural, social, and religious contexts in different demographic regions can impact the perceived usefulness and ease of use of digital marketing tools. The objective of this study is to utilize the principles of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) in order to infer the impact of these perceptions on customers' intentions to make a purchase, specifically via the lens of brand equity. The application of theoretical understanding to real problems is of utmost importance, particularly in light of the growing trend of organizations, such as Ayamjoper.id, transitioning their activities to online platforms. This will provide a more methodical analysis of the complexities pertaining to the efficacy of digital marketing in various demographic contexts.

Digital marketing and modern digital technologies

By using digital technology with more conventional marketing approaches, businesses may more effectively reach their target audiences and generate sales (Imtiaz, Alsoud, Ramish, Aziz, & Anwar, 2021). Companies are embracing this new kind of advertising to get substantial traction and facilitate straightforward commerce through the use of advanced smartphone apps that promote commercial activity and have grown into a community. Non-traditional business competition has heated up in recent decades, resulting in new, significant marketing challenges that have ushered in the digital marketing era and its attendant traits (Miao et al., 2022). There have been significant shifts and developments in global markets due to digital marketing, and customers are more numerous and have more disposable income than ever before. Many cutting-edge management practices have been established in reaction to shifts in the economic climate. The rise of AI and digital technology like smartphones, laptops, and e-commerce platforms are two elements that affect digital advertising. These factors also affected consumers' attitudes about spending, which has implications for advertising in the future. Customers have more reasons to consider making an online purchase than they have while shopping at brick-and-mortar stores. Websites with exciting and informative information, graphics, and music make up for the deficiencies of conventional marketing channels and improve the user experience, allowing customers to reach their markets anywhere at any time. To

keep an eye on and reduce marketing costs, businesses now have more opportunities to include advanced social media involvement options in their marketing strategies thanks to digital communication (Rashid et al., 2021).

Modern marketers need to use effective and comprehensive branding tactics to attract as many potential consumers as possible and nurture brand loyalty and awareness, which includes adequate engagement with customers through essential quotes (S. P. Ghauri, Hamid, & Zaman, 2022). With the help of digital marketing, businesses can reach a wide range of potential buyers and interact with them through various channels. Furthermore, internet marketing helps the brand's worth by eliminating misconceptions when people share their views and experiences, increasing their tendency to buy. In order to back up projected investment returns, management must first weigh the benefits of this integration against the unforeseen risk provided by conventional marketing channels (Khan, Rashid, et al., 2023). Putting money into the industry demands a sizable budget, an advanced technical infrastructure, and knowledgeable workers. Moreover, digital advertising provides customers with several avenues for directing and monitoring the buying processes, including product research and reviews.

Additionally, without good product and brand content to convince and persuade clients for a future sale and ensure recurrent purchases, the sales changeover is a complex procedure (Due to consumers' confidence in particular products, search engines can collect specific personal information to enhance customer experience and the efficacy of marketing campaigns. In addition, the assurance of the privacy and security of this information motivates customers to engage in a range of questionnaires that seek customer feedback and evaluate product quality. Information security issues have grown crucial in digital marketing due to the transmission of client information that may damage their trust outside their consent (S. Ghauri, Khan, Khan, & Afandi, 2022).

Social media marketing on a brand's recognition

Awareness is influenced by participation, information exchange, accessibility, and validity. According to this definition, social media marketing utilizes online social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to engage customers in novel ways and increase brand awareness. Social networking facilitates brand recognition and corporate marketing. According to the same-named study, social media marketing indirectly affects customer happiness via engagement and perceived value. Synchronously, socialization and perceived usefulness directly impact satisfaction, which drives ambitions to continue, actively engage, and purchase. Digital marketing and related media are believed to advertise products to consumers effectively. Despite their incredible popularity and efficacy as promotional methods, social networking websites may be both a menace and a potential for businesses due to the rapid propagation of dissatisfied customers' comments. Brand awareness is the capacity of prospective buyers to understand or identify that a trademark belongs to a particular product category. Customer loyalty is the ability of a product to be noticed or remain in the eyes of the customers when they think of the product. Online marketing tools that enlighten, confirm, and convince users about their brands, commodities, or services can enhance brand knowledge. The customer may contact the

brand through various methods, including reading advertisements when the products are advertised online, viewing YouTube videos, playing computer games, investing time in the website, or analyzing videos.

Customers' skepticism and dependability of online marketing

Customers' skepticism regarding the dependability of online marketing has increased; consequently, they encourage enterprises to employ strong branding to boost brand recognition and trust. Nevertheless, many organizations employ social site marketing as a long-term sustainability tool. Pakistan has limited digital marketing expertise and lacks the required infrastructure, industry, and skills. Therefore, failing to adopt digital marketing tactics results in high costs and moment efforts with a lesser likelihood of firm survival. Customers' electronic searching habits and the number of hours on specific e-commerce platforms substantially affect their decision-making. E-businesses could attract and retain customers more effectively if they had a greater insight into the impact of material marketing on consumer sentiment. Innovative businesses also focus on boosting communication procedures by merging a variety of material removal technologies in order to remain competitive. Numerous academic research have addressed the topic of the impact of digital technologies and media on consumers' buying behaviour, and the results of the present study corroborated and emphasized this effect. Smartphone usage is prevalent today, needing integrated marketing department techniques to comprehend this new business challenge.

Furthermore, the studies concentrated on this notion due to the development of contemporary technology, the evolution of customer preferences, and the background of purchase intent through multiple perspectives. As the significance of digital marketing increases, the existing literature that investigates buy intention has not adequately evaluated the impact of the Internet on buying intention. Several conceptual models with the mediator or moderation impacts of characteristics, such as brand equity, in the relationship connecting online marketing and buying behavior in various contextual sectors, have been developed to advance the relevant information.

These studies filled an existing research gap in the Pakistani context regarding digital marketing and brand choice, a topic that has become increasingly important in the marketing sector, as demonstrated by recent research. The findings were comparable to and valued by the existing literature and future researchers. Digital marketing, one of the most cutting-edge advertising strategies, is regularly used to engage with customers and advertise goods and services regardless of location, availability, or price. The most significant influence of digital communications on the intention to buy was its engaging content and capacity to customize to specific customers. In a related manner, Poturak and Softic (2019) supported this result by demonstrating that online marketing positively affects purchase intent when a significant number of customers share their views and opinions. This technique is frequently connected with social networking sites, enabling everyone to participate in various marketing campaigns. Specific marketing operations traditionally used to enhance brand awareness and understanding include social media marketing. People use this technology across social webs, such as networking sites and

content saving.

Electronic Word Of Mouth and digital marketing

EWOM, or more commonly Electronic word of mouth, a critical aspect of digital marketing, is a positive or negative message produced by genuine previous or prospective customers about a product. This viewpoint is relevant to individuals or corporations via social sites. Customers increasingly share their ideas and experiences online and suggest them to others, which is viewed as a more practical kind of word-of-mouth promotion than the traditional way. Digital marketing, such as social networking sites and electronic word-of-mouth, significantly influences purchase intent. According to the current literature, a company is compared to the added benefits of a company or service in addition to consumer perceptions and experiences with that brand (Jalees, Zaman, Mubashir, & Anwar, 2023).

This comprises price, distribution, artistry, commodity revenue and market share. Aaker (1992) asserts that consumer purchase equity can demonstrate an established brand, which encompasses essential elements such as perceived quality, marketing efforts, and loyalty. For example, brand awareness evaluates how customers recall or remember a specific brand in various circumstances. Moreover, marketing strategy is a decisive aspect of how customers make judgments. They tend to acquire well-known things, give numerous benefits, and meet their needs. Brand association, defined as the memorized signs connected with a brand and can encompass experiences, images, feeling, and attitudes in addition to everything that represents the brand attributes, contributes to the development of corporate reputation. The more favorable associations your brand has, the more valuable it will be in your customers' eyes. The purpose of the empirical research on this concept was to give evidence that leads people to believe that brand consciousness consists of two mechanisms, brand strategy and mindfulness, which create a single dimension. The researcher proposed the following research hypotheses based on this evidence. The association between digital marketing and purchase intent is mitigated by brand equity, according to Hypothesis 2.

Hypotheses Development

Social media marketing

Marketing via social media is a growing trend since it facilitates easy and efficient communication with specific target audiences. In addition, social media marketing uses online communities to spread the word about a business and its wares. You might think of this as a subset of online marketing efforts that complements well-established forms of Internet promotion and advertising like email newsletters. As a result of this shift in distribution and promotion, businesses are developing and refining new platforms. Social media marketing offers a variety of feedback, helps tremendously, and aids in product selection. Social networking sites provide high-quality information about a company or brand. Social media platforms also offer comprehensive instructions for online branding

and advertising tools. Due to its profound impact on consumer behavior and purchasing decisions, social media has emerged as an indispensable channel for brands to communicate with their target demographics. Social media has played a game-changing role in marketing by providing consumers with simple access to a wealth of product-related information and by promoting conversations among consumers and between consumers and brands.

Social media marketing allows customers to learn more about a product, see what others are saying about it, and receive recommendations from their social networks. With this information readily available, consumers can now make more informed purchases than ever before. Chaffey, Ellis-Chadwick, Mayer, and Johnston (2009) found that consumers place a great deal of stock in the opinions of their social media peers and followers, which may have a significant impact on their final purchasing decisions. In addition, due to the two-way communication established by social media, businesses are able to personalize their advertising to each user, offer superior customer service, and influence the purchasing decisions of consumers. For example, businesses can use customer information to create targeted advertisements, interact with consumers in real-time, and address any problems that may arise, thereby strengthening relationships and increasing brand loyalty. Additionally, marketing messages can go viral due to the dissemination of content on social media. Viral marketing messages have a higher conversion rate, illustrating the positive influence of word-of-mouth on consumers' propensity to make purchases. In conclusion, social media marketing influences the purchase decisions of customers positively by providing a venue for the promulgation of information, encouraging consumers to develop meaningful relationships with businesses, and facilitating the extensive dissemination of engaging content. Given these advantages, it is evident that social media marketing has great potential in the modern digital era, and that businesses must utilize these platforms effectively to reach and influence customers. The following hypothesis was hence derived:

H_1: Social media marketing significantly and favorably influences consumers' purchasing decisions.

Client contentment

Refers to customer satisfaction with the ease (or lack thereof) of obtaining relevant information about a service or product via online means, such as browsing a company's website or reading promotional content. Distinct from overall satisfaction, which measures a customer's opinion of a firm after all encounters with that business, this metric focuses on specific aspects of that business. According to information systems literature, user satisfaction may be affected by the clarity and accuracy of the interface's presentation of data. The online shop's data must support the quality of its service and wares. The information provided should help judge the quality and suitability of the service or product. Information about goods and services must be up-to-date, have enough detail to help them make educated purchases, be presented visually and grammatically, and be as easily digestible as feasible. The level of consumer satisfaction has a significant impact

on purchasing patterns. consumer satisfaction is fundamentally a measurement of how well a company's products or services meet or exceed consumer expectations. A content consumer is more likely to repeat a purchase and demonstrate brand loyalty, thereby establishing a habitual purchasing pattern.

Fornell et al. (1996) contend that customer satisfaction has a significant impact on repurchase intentions, a critical indicator of purchasing behavior. A satisfied consumer is more likely to remain loyal to a product or service, stabilizing their purchasing patterns. This is primarily because they are more likely to view the product's value as outweighing the risk and effort required to attempt something new. Additionally, customer satisfaction facilitates word-of-mouth referrals. According to Anderson (1998), satisfied consumers are more likely to recommend a product or service to others, thereby indirectly influencing their purchasing behaviors. This positive word-of-mouth bolsters the trust associated with a brand or product, ultimately influencing prospective consumers' purchasing decisions. The influence of customer satisfaction on purchasing behavior is also evident in the domain of online commerce. Online consumer gratification influences future purchasing behavior. They discovered that a high level of consumer satisfaction with their online purchasing experience increased their likelihood to continue shopping online.

Last but not least, customer satisfaction can contribute to a price premium, indicating that consumers are frequently willing to pay more for products or services from satisfied companies (Homburg et al., 2005). Due to their contentment with the brand, consumers may choose more expensive products or services as a result of this phenomenon. In conclusion, consumer gratification exerts a substantial impact on purchasing patterns. It influences repeat purchases and brand loyalty directly, encourages positive word-of-mouth recommendations, influences online purchasing behavior, and can lead to a propensity to pay a premium price.As a result, we can infer that all will affect consumers' purchasing decisions.

The following hypothesis was hence derived:

H_2: Consumer purchasing habits are influenced by customer satisfaction.

Online advertising

Social media platforms are a potent new instrument available to businesses for influencing consumer decisions. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn are just a few of the numerous social media platforms that have altered how businesses interact with their target audiences by providing a more dynamic, interactive, and customer-centric platform (Pew Research Center, 2021). The ability of social media to provide a plethora of information to customers is crucial to this effect. Reviews, evaluations, and customer feedback provide consumers with valuable information that can assist them in making informed purchasing decisions. In addition, the incorporation of e-commerce features into social networking platforms makes consumers more likely to make impulsive purchases. UGC is an integral component of social media marketing. Consumers view peer-generated content as more credible than branded content. Customers can discuss a company's products or services on social media, potentially influencing the purchasing decisions of their

peers and followers. In addition, social media marketing's brand-consumer connections increase customer loyalty and influence consumer spending patterns. Customized content that addresses a customer's concerns and satisfies his or her requirements can help a company earn the customer's trust.

The success of viral marketing campaigns is additional evidence of social media's effect on consumer behavior. Similar to a domino effect, sharing content across multiple platforms significantly expands the reach of promotional messages. Additionally, it is essential to emphasize the persuasive power of social media influencers. Djafarova and Rushworth (2017) discovered that an influencer's credibility and authority have a significant impact on the purchasing decisions of their followers. However, there are still challenges associated with the use of social media in digital marketing. (Dwivedi et al., 2020) state that issues such as data privacy and the proliferation of false news can impede trust in social media marketing. When leveraging the influence of social media to influence purchase decisions, it is imperative for businesses to resolve these issues in a transparent and trustworthy manner. Social media is extremely beneficial for digital marketing because it influences consumers to make better purchasing decisions. Utilizing social media in a variety of ways, including providing information, fostering connections, promoting viral marketing, and capitalizing on the influence of trusted peers, businesses can influence consumers' purchase decisions. However, issues must be resolved to ensure the continued success of this marketing strategy. The following hypothesis was hence derived:

H_3: Social media in digital marketing influences customer purchasing decisions favorably.

Brand Recognition

The effectiveness and prosperity of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are directly proportional to the level of brand awareness (the extent to which consumers are familiar with a brand's distinguishing characteristics or image). This is because familiarity with a brand influences consumers' propensity to purchase, the robustness of customer relationships, and the company's market standing (Aaker, 1991). According to studies, consumers are more likely to choose a well-known brand than a new one. This suggests that, for SMEs in particular, a strong brand name is essential for increasing market share and profits. High levels of consumer trust in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with recognizable brands result in increased sales and word-of-mouth marketing. Pappu and Quester (2006) found that consumers' perceptions of a product's quality and the sentiments they associate with the brand are two of the most influential determinants of whether or not they make a purchase. Successful small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) are aware that increasing the visibility of their brands encourages consumers to form favorable impressions and purchase more of their products. If consumers are familiar with a company's brand, SMBs may gain even more from successful product launches. Muzellec, Ronteau, and Lambkin (2015) discovered that when consumers are familiar with a brand, they are more confident in the brand's products and more likely to attempt them. Therefore, it may be simpler for SMBs with strong brand recognition to

introduce new products and enter new markets.

In conclusion, brand recognition supports price premium methods. According to research conducted by Ailawadi et al. (2003), consumers are willing to pay a premium for a well-known brand because they perceive its products and services to be of superior quality. Consequently, small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) with strong brand recognition may increase their profits by increasing their prices. However, It is essential to remember that generating positive brand attitudes and cultivating brand loyalty require more than just increasing brand awareness (Kotler et al., 2018). In conclusion, consumer familiarity with a brand significantly impacts the success of a small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) through its influence on purchasing decisions, brand loyalty, convenience of introducing new products, and ability to charge a premium for those products. Consequently, in order to increase their competitiveness and foster long-term growth, SMEs should invest deliberately in brand awareness. The following hypothesis was hence derived:

H_4: The effectiveness of SMEs is affected by brand awareness.

H_5: The association between digital advertising and purchase decision is moderated by brand equity.

Intention to buy

Consumers reach "buying intention" after deciding to make a purchase. Modern consumers make brand preferences, evaluate items and services, and plot purchases in advance. Marketers still have an opportunity to sway customers even if they've already entered the buying phase, despite purchasing intent being influenced by events that occurred before this phase. The next step for marketers is to get their products in front of customers and make it as easy as possible for them to make a purchase. The ordering, acquiring, and payment of merchandise can be made simpler using digital technology, saving customers' time and money. Digital marketing channels like content marketing, social media, digital marketing, and phone networks can all help improve personal consumption knowledge at the purchase level. Finally, remember that even if customers have followed all the stages attentively, their buying decision will frequently be influenced by how accessible the store management is. Purchase intent to start shopping online is passionate and optimistic. I am capable of making a variety of purchases online. My goal is to replace the conventional purchasing pattern with online shopping completely. I intend to make the buy when looking at a good online. The following hypothesis was hence derived:

H_6: Social media marketing has a considerable and advantageous impact on the intention to purchase.

Research Method

The study uses a positivist-supported quantitative research design to address the research questions and hypotheses. With a particular emphasis on online marketing and electronic word-of-mouth, the main goal of this research was to examine the connections between three constructs: purchase intention, brand equity, and digital marketing. This study used a cross-sectional design to examine how the population changed over time. Survey methodology was used to obtain the empirical data, which allowed for a large sample size.

Sampling

The consumers and shoppers who participated in this sample were chosen using purposive sampling (Palinkas et al., 2015). This strategy was favored since it would guarantee that the research's participants were pertinent to the study's goals and would boost the reliability of the results (Etikan, Musa, Alkassim, et al., 2016). After the sample was selected, informed consent was obtained, and a digital survey was sent out to all participants.

Data Collection

In this investigation, a web-based survey served as the data collector, allowing the researchers to tap into the expansive potential of the internet. Google Forms were used to distribute the survey, which provided immediate feedback to participants. Two parts make up the bulk of the questionnaire. To better understand and generalize the sample to a larger population, the first component asked for demographic information, including gender, age, and level of education (Sue & Ritter, 2012). In the second portion, respondents were asked to rate how much they agreed or disagreed with statements about the controlled impact of brand equity, the influence of content marketing components, and the participants' intent to purchase.

Research Model and Hypotheses

Three key goals drove the course of this research. The primary purpose of the research was to assess the impact of social media marketing campaigns on brand equity, purchase intent, and name recognition. The second part of the study analyzed the relevance of brand awareness to brand equity. Finally, the study analyzed how brand equity and awareness influenced consumers' purchase intentions. Figure 1 depicts the interrelationships between the research variables and the overall design for hypothesis testing.

Data Analysis using Smart PLS (SEM)

The acquired data were processed and analyzed with the help of Smart PLS3, a popular statistical program. Data normality, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), and scale reliability were only some of the statistical analyses that could be performed with the help of

this program. Using a correlation matrix and linear regression, additional analyses were performed. Smart PLS3 was also used to test for validity and model fit. Researchers then talked about their findings and how they fit into the larger framework of accepted hypotheses. Since Smart PLS 3 is capable of handling complex interactions among several variables, it was deemed appropriate to employ SEM for this study. In the context of social media commerce in Pakistan, this study aims to investigate how brand equity influences the relationship between digital marketing and customer purchase intention. There are many moving parts and interdependencies to consider in this scenario. SEM is ideal for this study because it enables for assessment of complete theoretical models, including direct and indirect effects, as well as the interaction or moderation effects among variables. With SEM, you can measure the effects of various digital marketing tactics on consumers' intent to purchase, with brand equity as a moderator.

Due to the challenges of census taking in a developing country like Pakistan, non-probabilistic sampling was used, adding another layer of complexity that SEM can easily handle. Working with latent variables, SEM enables the use of constructs that are not immediately observable but are estimated in the model from a number of measured variables. To prove that brand equity considerably moderates the relationship between digital marketing and purchase intent, this study used a SEM technique, which the research model confirmed. Given the necessity to evaluate direct and moderating effects in the model and the complicated interplay of variables, SEM via Smart PLS 3 was the best option.

Table 1
Onion Table

Layers of Methodology	Description
Research Philosophy	Positivist Paradigm
Research Approach	Quantitative Methodology
Research Design	Cross-sectional Research Design
Data Collection Method	Electronic Questionnaire
Sampling Method	Purposive Sampling
Data Analysis Method	Smart PLS3 Software

The study's research methodology is summarized in an easy-to-understand onion table. The Positivist Paradigm, the guiding research philosophy, is the foundation of this methodology. This thinking is typically connected with quantitative research approaches because of its emphasis on objectivity and empirical investigation. The Research Strategy is guided by the Quantitative Methodology, the onion's middle layer. A methodology grounded on statistics was selected to investigate the ties that bind various concepts like purchase intent, brand equity, and digital marketing. Because of its compatibility with positivist philosophical underpinnings, the desire for a quantitative methodology lies in its capacity to statistically define the strength and direction of correlations between variables. In this situation, the Research Design, or the third layer of the methodology onion, was Cross-sectional. This design studies a sample or a subset of the population at a single time point. The features of the participants were analyzed over the course of the research using this method.

The fourth layer is how the data was gathered. An Electronic Questionnaire was used

to collect data for the study, allowing many participants and a quick response turnaround. Respondents' demographic information and opinions on the research variables were collected in separate questionnaire sections. The fifth layer represents the Sampling Technique. In this study, the research employed a sampling approach known as "purposeful sampling" a sample of online shoppers and consumers who would be most helpful in answering our research questions. The Data Analysis Method, performed using the Smart PLS3 program, is shown as the outer layer of the onion table. This program enabled a wide variety of statistical analyses, allowing for a more complete understanding of the data. It helped the study's goals by confirming hypothesized connections between its variables.

Figure 1
Conceptual Framework

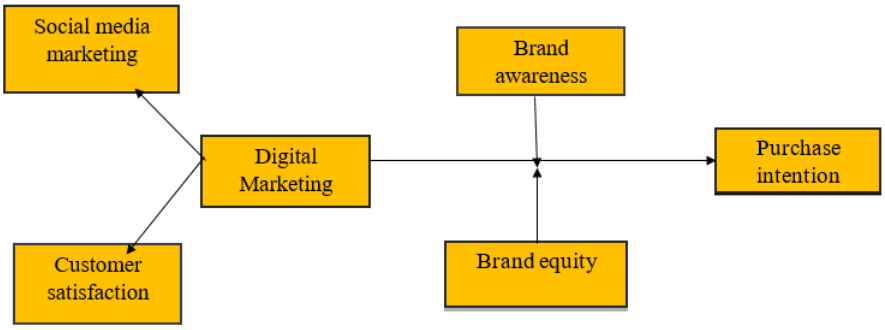


Table 2
Demographic table

Characteristics	Items	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	107	28.80%
	Female	263	70.90%
Age	Less than 20	130	35%
	20-30	182	49.10%
	30-40	53	14.30%
	41-50	0	0%
Education level	Matriculation	95	25.60%
	Intermediate	133	35.80%
	Under-graduate	97	26.10%
	Post-graduate	46	

Table 3
Measurement Scale

Variable	Citation	Number of Questions
BE (Brand equity)	Keller (1993)	3
BL (Brand loyalty)	Oliver (1999)	3
CS (Customer satisfaction)	Anderson and Sullivan (1993)	3
DGM (Digital Marketing)	Homburg and Wielgos (2022)	3
BA (Brand awareness)	Godovykh et al. (2023)	3
PI (Purchase intention)	Qalati et al. (2021)	3

Data Analysis

Demographic Analysis

The sample demographics are shown here, illustrating how the sample socioeconomic traits were distributed throughout the data analysis process. The demographic data from 371 participants were gathered as a part of the study's sample study after creating a digital system using Google Forms. The research instrument asked about gender, age, and educational attainment. According to the findings, there were 371 participants, with 107 men and 264 women making up roughly 28.8% of the men and 70.9% of the women. Gender-based criteria were used in the selection procedure to support the notion that women utilize online shopping more frequently than males (28.8% vs. 70.9%). According to the questionnaire analysis, the most common age group was between 20 and 30 (49.1%), followed by those under 20 (35%). The majority of the participants in the study had an intermediate degree (35.8%), followed by an undergrad degree (26.1%) and a secondary school degree (25.6%), according to the data of their educational backgrounds.

1. *Gender Distribution:* As shown in the pie chart, females constitute a significant majority at 70.9% compared to males at 28.8%.

2. *Age Distribution:* The majority of the respondents fall into the 20-30 age group at 49.1%, followed by those less than 20 years old at 35%. The 30-40 age group comprises 14.3% of the respondents, and there are no respondents in the 41-50 age group.

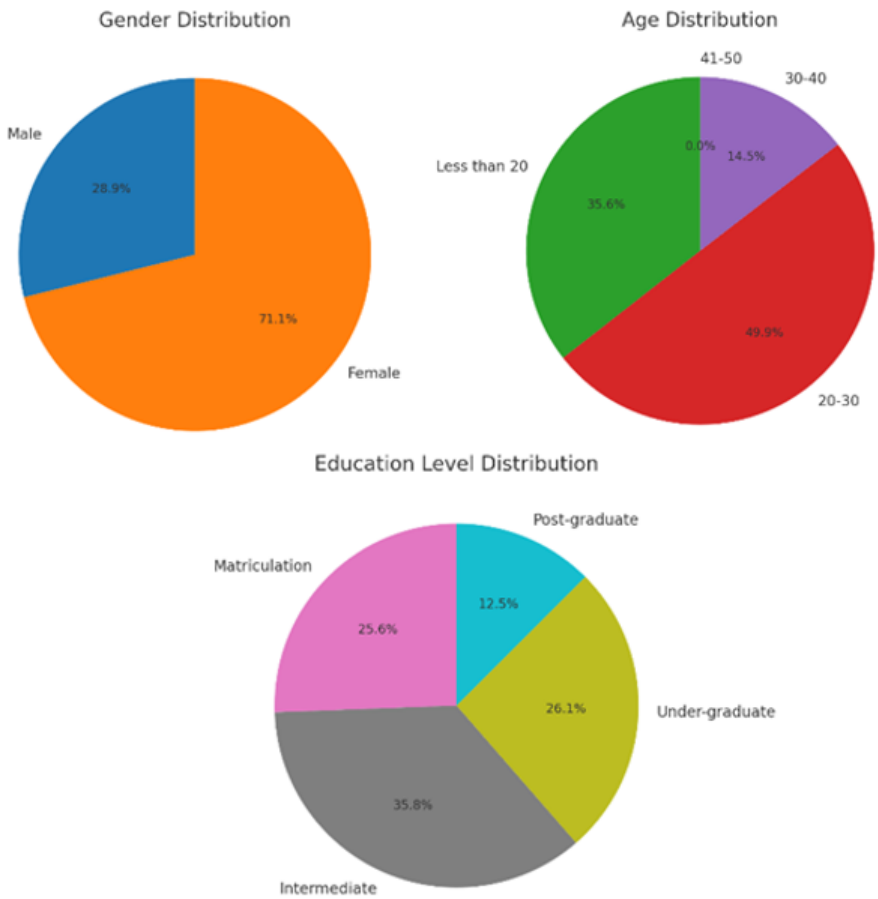
3. *Education Level Distribution:* The highest proportion of respondents have completed an Intermediate level of education at 35.8%, closely followed by those with Matriculation at 25.6% and Under-graduate at 26.1%. The Post-graduate group makes up 12.5% of the total.

1. *Gender x Age:* This bar chart showcases the distribution of ages across both genders. For instance, the majority of females in the dataset are in the '20-30' age group, while a significant number of males fall into the '20-30' and 'Less than 20' categories.

2. *Gender x Education Level:* This chart demonstrates the educational background across genders. A notable observation is that a large number of females have reached the 'Intermediate' and 'Under-graduate' levels.

3. *Age x Education Level:* This bar chart provides insights into the education level across different age groups. For instance, the '20-30' age group has a diverse distribution across all education levels, while the 'Less than 20' age group is concentrated mainly in 'Matriculation' and 'Intermediate' levels.

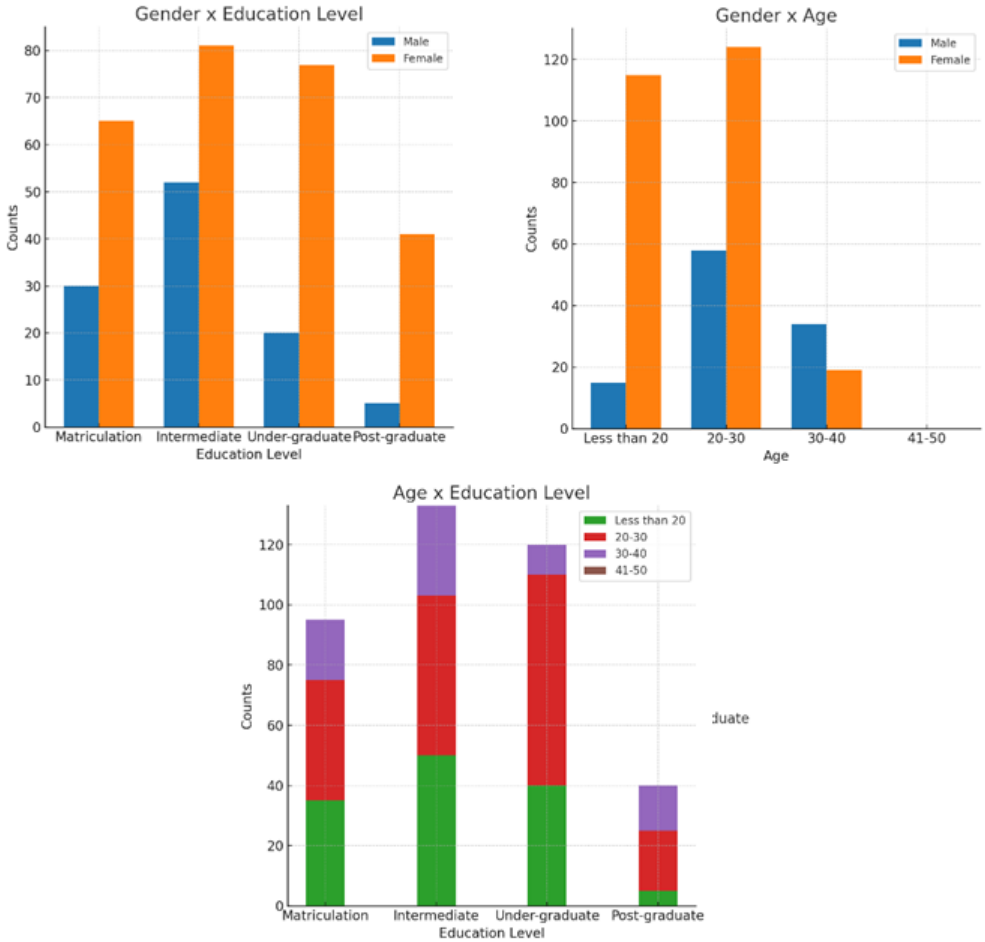
Figure 2
Demographics



Normality & Reliability Analyses

Other significant and necessary descriptive statistics analyses demonstrate to what extent a dataset is normally distributed, showing normal distribution and the reliability of the items used. The test's results are shown in Table 2, which also gives a normality assessment utilizing two of the most popular tests—skewness and kurtosis—that are common in the Statistical Package of Social Sciences software which helps study the type of distribution of the collected data. According to George and Mallery (2010), a decent general rule of thumb is that all variables will be fantastic and suitable if the values of kurtosis and skewness fall between -1.0 and +1.0, for the distribution. Table 3 shows that all research variables used in this study passed the normality test, and all reliability and validity criteria were met.

Figure 3
Demographics/ Cross Tabulation



The most popular test in this research, Cronbach's alpha, which was employed to quantify the logical reliability of the correlation reliability for survey questionnaires, was also utilized to assess reliability. As the reliability test results are debatable, alpha value increases would typically improve the variables' correlation. According to Kline (2000), a value of the reliability scale that is more than 0.50 is acceptable, and if the value is over 0.70, it indicates a good and reliable scale. The dependability score, however, ranged from 0.71 to 0.85, suggesting good reliability, according to the results.

Table 4
Cross Loadings

	BA	BA mods PI and DM	BE	BE mods PI and DM	CS	DM	PI	SMM
BE1	0.318	0.094	0.721	-0.067	0.335	0.323	0.350	0.180
BE2	0.455	0.088	0.806	-0.058	0.388	0.386	0.409	0.401
BL1	0.699	0.076	0.252	0.220	0.510	0.487	0.457	0.495
BL2	0.610	0.028	0.465	0.004	0.322	0.358	0.435	0.283
BL3	0.754	-0.028	0.349	0.041	0.386	0.446	0.499	0.347
CS1	0.316	0.110	0.225	0.140	0.598	0.402	0.354	0.293
CS2	0.326	0.064	0.231	0.135	0.621	0.439	0.315	0.252
CS3	0.429	0.141	0.408	0.042	0.445	0.346	0.410	0.409
CS4	0.416	0.133	0.343	0.169	0.787	0.541	0.461	0.547
DGM1	0.443	0.128	0.278	0.128	0.418	0.700	0.431	0.434
DGM2	0.453	0.037	0.306	0.136	0.526	0.681	0.468	0.422
DGM3	0.388	0.041	0.352	-0.056	0.354	0.455	0.335	0.229
DGM4	0.336	0.148	0.287	0.136	0.480	0.692	0.476	0.558
DM * BA	0.034	1.000	0.119	0.693	0.177	0.144	0.150	0.167
DM * BE	0.128	0.693	-0.082	1.000	0.202	0.154	0.155	0.240
PI1	0.481	0.163	0.301	0.171	0.433	0.481	0.717	0.457
PI2	0.544	0.125	0.411	0.134	0.520	0.563	0.797	0.513
PI3	0.424	0.026	0.365	0.018	0.364	0.404	0.642	0.365
SMM1	0.46	0.132	0.361	0.207	0.551	0.558	0.573	0.841
SMM2	0.421	0.139	0.245	0.179	0.483	0.467	0.446	0.757
SMM3	0.409	0.128	0.311	0.182	0.412	0.545	0.452	0.773

Measurement & Structural Model Analysis

The current study used the PLS-SEM method, which necessitates examining two types of models: first is the model known as the measurement model used to evaluate the data's reliability through examining the AVE and CR (average variance extracted and the Composite reliability, respectively). Table 3 shows the results of the reliability tests, which shows that values were greater than 0.50 in all tests, showing reliability. Wong, (2013) suggests that the measurement scales with something like a valuation of 0.70 and more are deemed valid, as well as shows that low loadings (below 0.4) have been recommended to be skipped from any further investigation to ensure more significant outcomes and did not impact the reliability of the study constructs. Cronbach's Alpha, average variance explained, and coefficient reliability values (as displayed in Table 4) for all study variables, including digital advertising measurements branding, purchase intention, and brand equity, were above the threshold values suggested by expertise (0.70, 0.50, and 0.60, respectively). Following this, we analyzed the structural model to calculate the R-square value, which reflected the proportion of the total variation in the dependent variable that could be attributed to the particular independent variable. The results demonstrated that digital marketing has a considerable impact on consumers' propensity to make a purchase. The R-squared value was 0.650, suggesting that predictor variables (digital marketing) affect the dependent factor (purchase intention) by 65%. This leads us to believe that the predictor variables account for around 65% of the variation in the dependent variable.

The following evaluation looks at the structural model and its R-square value, representing the percentage of variance in the dependent variable that can be attributed to each independent variable. With an R-squared of 0.492, digital marketing was found to have a considerable impact on consumers' propensity to make a purchase. It is clear from

this that there is a 65% correlation between digital marketing and the final buying decision. The independent one may account for about 65% of the variation in the dependent variable.

Table 5
R square

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
CS	0.492	0.491
PI	0.576	0.571
SMM	0.441	0.439

Table 6
Reliability and validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
BA	0.546	0.553	0.731	0.577
BA mods PI and DM	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
BE	0.591	0.595	0.737	0.585
BE mods PI and DM	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
CS	0.557	0.596	0.711	0.590
DM	0.513	0.534	0.730	0.510
PI	0.537	0.552	0.764	0.520
SMM	0.701	0.707	0.834	0.626

The average variance extracted (AVE) & composite reliability is two well-known measures used to assess the dependability of the constructs in the measurement model (CR). Table 4 shows that AVE & CR values for each factor were higher than 0.50, indicating statistical significance (Wong, 2013). This indicated that factors with a value of 0.70 or above were considered legitimate, showing that low axial loads (below 0.4) may be safely ignored without affecting the study's reliability (Hair et al., 2021). Table 4 displays the results of the reliability tests, which revealed that all study variables (purchase intent, brand equity, & content marketing aspects branding; social media individual attempt and electronic word-of-mouth; EWOM) met the expert-recommended threshold values of 0.70, 0.50, and 0.60, respectively (Ramayah et al., 2018).

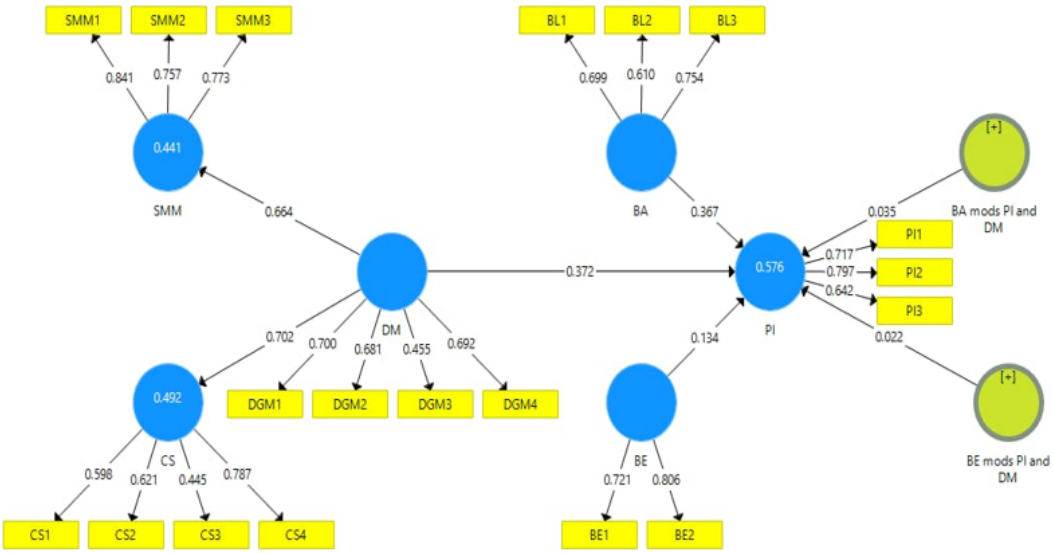
Table 7
Model Fitness

	Beta	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (—O/STDEV—)	P Values
BA ->PI	0.371	0.046	7.978	0.000
BA mods PI and DM ->PI	0.029	0.046	0.767	0.443
BE ->PI	0.138	0.054	2.504	0.013
BE mods PI and DM ->PI	0.03	0.057	0.397	0.691
DM ->CS	0.704	0.031	22.308	0.000
DM ->PI	0.366	0.054	6.914	0.000
DM ->SMM	0.666	0.033	19.985	0.000

Both were represented pictorially in Fig. 3. First, we hypothesize that digital PR and social media advertising substantially impact consumer buying propensity. T-statistic values of 48.968 and P-statistic values of 75.674, more than the tabulated type T-value of 1.96 and less than the 0.05 significance threshold, were found for the income resulting from

this hypothesis. These findings demonstrated a high degree of association, and the coefficient values of 0.873 & 0.897, respectively, demonstrated a significant connection between buy intent and the social media and electronic word-of-mouth dimensions of digital marketing. This led to the presentation of the first study's definitive findings. The second hypothesis in the study proposes that brand equity moderated the relationship between purchase intent and digital marketing. This hypothesis' results were calculated to have a T-statistic of 5.901, which is larger than the tabulated T-statistic of 1.96, and a P-value of 0.000, which is smaller than the 0.05 threshold for statistical significance. The results of this study indicated that brand shareholder mediates the relationship between the two factors. A coefficient value of 0.267 also confirmed these results. The second justifies the study's hypothesized results.

Figure 4
Path Coefficient



Discussion

The results of this study align with a burgeoning body of research, indicating that digital marketing possesses the capacity to impact consumers' purchasing intentions. The research conducted by Zanjabila and Hidayat (2017) demonstrates the correlation between social advertising and the purchase decisions of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). This correlation is further reinforced by the noticeable impact of social media marketing and electronic word of mouth. Furthermore, the study conducted by Garg and Kumar (2020) provides evidence supporting the notion that brand equity serves as a mediator in the relationship between digital marketing methods and consumers' inclination to engage in purchase behavior, particularly in the context of online shopping. Erlangga (2021) ac-

knowledges the substantial impact of media marketing on customer decision-making and agrees with the notion that digital marketing offers a plethora of product information and facilitates the purchasing process. The relevance of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) as a valuable tool for enterprises to obtain customer feedback and experiences with brands has been emphasized in studies such as Ahmed and Rahman (2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly amplified the influence of digital channels in shaping and facilitating consumers' spending behaviors. The authors Shah, Patel, and Bhuptani (2020) contend that the current epidemic has not only led to an increase in online purchasing, but has also brought about a shift in marketing strategies, with a greater focus on digital interactions due to the reduced opportunities for face-to-face contacts.

Conclusion and Implications

The primary objective of modern organizations is to retain existing clients while recruiting new ones. Therefore, it has gotten harder for this new global scenario. Digital marketing techniques give consumers various options, empowering them to choose wisely based on their predetermined criteria, such as price or quality. As a result, luring new clients by applying marketing shopping and methods can result in profitable purchase trends, motivating clients to participate more in recent marketing activities. It would give two explanations for the observed outcomes. First, the created marketing campaigns allowed it to draw a clear connection between purchase intent and digital marketing methods, demonstrating that all these approaches had been enhanced by reflecting the value of brands and increasing brand recognition.

Furthermore, brand equity levels impact client mindsets and aspirations for successful marketing strategies, such as social media, to meet these needs and expectations, resulting in more customer satisfaction than brand loyalty. This result has, not surprisingly, demonstrated the importance for planning and marketers to pay greater attention to and engage more in the modern tech electricity network to enhance the quality of product lines while maintaining consumer preference and uniqueness to extend customer relationships. Other research (such as Nurhandayani et al., 2019) found that leveraging influencers on social media to influence customers' purchasing intentions did not have a meaningful effect. Nonetheless, this discovery might assist the brand equity strategy in establishing and developing a solid perceived impression in customers' minds to boost the company's image and promote their consideration of potential repeat purchases. In addition, this paradox will expand the scope of comparative research to explore all elements that may influence customers' purchasing decisions in order to discover compelling marketing methods and realistic other shopping options that would inspire shoppers to make acceptable purchases based on accessible facts and options, such as products/ services.

In addition, the advancement of technology has significantly benefited firms in implementing cutting-edge marketing tactics to satisfy the requirements and expectations of a client base that is becoming increasingly varied. In order to stay relevant in a challenging corporate climate, these clients have increased expectations for their regular buying activities.

Literature and quantitative studies have demonstrated, with some support from relevant findings of past research, that digital marketing was an essential component and significantly influenced customers' purchase intentions. The current study discovered that electronic word-of-mouth and social media marketing parts of digital marketing significantly and positively affected purchase intent. This concept has gained significance as modern technological devices such as computers, telephones, and tablets have become widespread among consumers. The research proposes that shop management could use advanced components of practical brand value to promote brand awareness via digital marketing tactics, such as social media platforms, to raise product purchasing intent. The results of this study imply that brand awareness should be controlled for this business to adapt to the significant changes occurring effectively. This would need more contemporary marketing methods that emphasize current purchase patterns. In addition, marketing managers are urged to utilize the most efficient digital marketing channels, such as social media, due to the substantial benefits and impact that might ensue. In addition, effective marketing techniques should increase brand equity and influence consumers' lucrative purchasing decisions.

Theoretical contribution

The study contributes to the theory by revealing a connection between purchase intention & digital marketing aspects (digital marketing & electronic word-of-mouth). At the same time, brand equity has a limited effect in the changing environment. The research findings provide digital marketers with practical insights and information on brand awareness that may serve as an attraction for potential customers. The essential outcome of the study was that clients prefer straightforward and complex marketing approaches with several phases for effective marketing. In photographs, brighter or natural backdrop colors are preferred over darker ones. There are several limitations to this study. In this study, offline clients were not included since a quantitative research strategy based on a survey was employed to create an online research instrument to reflect the opinions of the internet population. Due to resource constraints, the sample size for the current study's demographic was limited to 371 persons, which may diminish the possibility of generalization. Third, because this study only evaluated the IKEA scenario, the conclusions cannot be applied to other scenarios. In order to gain a deeper understanding and exploration of fundamental phenomena related to customers' perceptions of marketing preferences, research directions and avenues include examining the effectiveness of social media sources on purchasing patterns across various industries, contexts, and cultural backgrounds using small samples.

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