

Digital Marketing and Its Impact on Youth Buying Behaviour: A Study with Special Reference to Kandhamal District of Odisha

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Abstract: *This study examines the impact of digital marketing on youth buying behaviour, with special reference to Kandhamal District of Odisha. The main objective of the study is to understand how social media platforms, online advertisements, influencer marketing, and e-commerce services influence the purchasing decisions of youth in a predominantly rural and tribal area. The study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to analyse existing trends and their effects. The research was conducted in the Phulbani, Chakapad, Tikabali, and Baliguda blocks of Kandhamal District. A sample of 400 respondents was selected using simple random sampling for the survey, while purposive sampling was used for interviews to gain deeper insights. Both primary and secondary data were used in the study. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires and interviews, whereas secondary data were obtained from research articles, government reports, books, and online sources. The data were analysed using frequency distribution, percentages, and weighted scores based on a five-point Likert scale. The findings reveal that digital marketing has a significant influence on youth buying behaviour. Factors such as social media promotions, online reviews, discounts, and convenience play a major role in shaping purchase decisions. However, the study is limited to a small regional sample, which restricts broader generalisation.*

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Youth Buying Behaviour, Social Media Influence, Kandhamal District, Online Advertising, Consumer Behaviour

1. Introduction

In the contemporary digital era, marketing practices have undergone a significant transformation with the emergence and rapid growth of digital technologies. Digital marketing, which refers to the promotion of products and services through online platforms such as social media, websites, search engines, mobile applications, and email, has become an essential component of modern business strategy. Unlike traditional marketing, digital marketing offers interactive, personalized, and real-time communication, enabling businesses to engage directly with consumers and influence their purchasing decisions more effectively.

The increasing penetration of the internet and the widespread use of smartphones have played a crucial role in the expansion of digital marketing across the globe. In India, this transformation has been particularly remarkable due to the rapid growth in digital infrastructure, affordable internet services, and government initiatives such as Digital India. These developments have not only enhanced connectivity in urban areas but have also extended digital access to rural and tribal regions. Consequently, even geographically remote areas like Kandhamal district of Odisha are gradually becoming part of the digital ecosystem.

Kandhamal district, known for its tribal population and rural characteristics, has traditionally been less exposed to modern marketing practices. However, in recent years, improved telecommunications networks and the increasing availability of low-cost smartphones have enabled the youth in this region to access digital platforms. Social media applications such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and WhatsApp have

become popular among young users, serving as important sources of information, communication, and entertainment. These platforms also expose users to a wide range of digital marketing activities, including advertisements, promotional campaigns, influencer endorsements, and online reviews.

Youth represent one of the most dynamic and influential segments of the population, particularly in a country like India, where a large proportion of the population falls within the younger age group. This segment is characterized by higher adaptability to new technologies, greater curiosity, and increased exposure to digital content. As a result, youth are more likely to be influenced by digital marketing strategies compared to other demographic groups. Their buying behaviour is shaped not only by personal preferences and socio-economic factors but also by online interactions, peer influence, and digital media exposure.

Buying behaviour refers to the decision-making process through which individuals identify their needs, gather information, evaluate alternatives, and make purchasing decisions. In the context of digital marketing, this process has become more complex and dynamic. Consumers now have access to a vast amount of information at their fingertips, enabling them to compare products, read reviews, and make informed choices. Features such as online discounts, personalized recommendations, easy payment options, and home delivery services further enhance the attractiveness of digital platforms for consumers, especially the youth.

The rise of e-commerce has further strengthened the impact of digital marketing on consumer behaviour. Online

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shopping platforms provide convenience, variety, and competitive pricing, making them increasingly popular among young consumers. In addition, influencer marketing has emerged as a powerful tool in shaping consumer perceptions and preferences. Influencers, who often have a strong presence on social media, can significantly affect the attitudes and buying decisions of their followers through product reviews, endorsements, and promotional content.

Despite these advancements, the adoption and impact of digital marketing in rural and tribal areas such as Kandhamal may differ from that in urban settings due to variations in literacy levels, income, digital awareness, and cultural factors. Issues such as lack of trust in online transactions, fear of fraud, limited digital skills, and inadequate infrastructure may act as barriers to the effective utilization of digital marketing. At the same time, the increasing exposure of youth to digital platforms suggests that these barriers are gradually being reduced, leading to changes in their consumption patterns and lifestyle.

In this context, it becomes important to study how digital marketing influences the buying behaviour of youth in a region like Kandhamal district. Such a study can provide valuable insights into the level of digital awareness, the role of social media and online advertising, and the factors that motivate or discourage online purchasing among young consumers. It can also help identify the challenges faced by youth in accessing and utilizing digital platforms for shopping purposes.

Furthermore, understanding the impact of digital marketing in rural and tribal areas has practical implications for businesses, policymakers, and development agencies. For marketers, it can assist in designing effective strategies tailored to the needs and preferences of rural youth. For policymakers, it can highlight the importance of improving digital infrastructure, promoting digital literacy, and ensuring safe online environments. For researchers, it contributes to the existing body of knowledge by providing region-specific insights into the evolving relationship between digital marketing and consumer behaviour.

Therefore, the present study titled "*Digital Marketing and Its Impact on Youth Buying Behaviour: A Study with Special Reference to Kandhamal District of Odisha*" aims to examine the extent to which digital marketing influences the purchasing decisions of youth in this region. The study seeks to analyse various dimensions of digital marketing, including social media influence, online advertisements, influencer marketing, and e-commerce platforms, and their role in shaping the awareness, attitudes, and buying behaviour of young consumers. By focusing on a tribal district, the study also attempts to bridge the research gap related to digital marketing in underexplored regions and contribute to a more inclusive understanding of consumer behaviour in the digital age.

2. Statement of the Problem

In the contemporary era of rapid scientific and technological advancement, new products and innovations are introduced continuously, while existing products quickly become

obsolete. Simultaneously, the tastes, preferences, and expectations of consumers are changing at a fast pace. These dynamic changes create significant challenges for marketers in understanding and satisfying consumer needs effectively.

One of the major reasons behind this situation is the changing buying behaviour of consumers. This transformation is particularly noticeable among the youth compared to other age groups such as children and older individuals. The purchasing decisions of young consumers not only affect their own consumption patterns but also influence the buying behaviour of their families.

Therefore, it is essential for marketers to understand these changing patterns of youth behaviour. To remain competitive and successful, they must analyse the needs, preferences, and expectations of young consumers and design products and services that align with their interests and lifestyle.

3. Need of the Study

Digital marketing has significantly transformed the way businesses promote their products and how consumers make purchasing decisions. In the present scenario, multiple factors influence consumer behaviour, creating new challenges for marketers. They are required to continuously modify their strategies to meet the changing needs of customers, particularly the youth, who are highly active on digital platforms.

Young consumers spend a considerable amount of time on social media, e-commerce websites, and digital advertisements. As a result, their buying behaviour is evolving rapidly. This makes it necessary to understand how digital marketing influences their choices, preferences, and purchasing habits.

Therefore, a comprehensive study is required to examine the impact of digital marketing on the buying behaviour of youth, especially in rural and tribal areas such as Kandhamal district, where such changes are relatively recent and less explored.

4. Review of Literature

Divya Kalra, Sanjeev Sharma, and Aayush Patel (2023) examined the influence of social media marketing on consumer purchase decisions. The study highlights that younger consumers are more responsive to digital marketing due to their higher level of engagement with online platforms.

Aumprakash Pavate (2021) analysed the impact of digital marketing on the buying behaviour of Indian youth. The findings indicate a significant shift towards online shopping among youth, although some lack adequate knowledge to effectively utilize digital platforms.

T. B. Badhri Narayanan (2021) conducted a study on online buyers to explore the influence of digital marketing channels such as websites, social media, search engine advertisements, and mobile marketing. The study confirms

that digital marketing has a strong impact on consumer purchasing decisions.

Shams Mukhtar, A. Chandra Mohan, and Deepti Chandra (2023) investigated the role of various digital marketing tools, including search engine optimization, social media, and email marketing. The study concludes that digital marketing significantly influences consumer preferences, satisfaction, and long-term loyalty.

M. Uma Maheswari and Biji Jose (2022) focused on Generation Z consumers and found that digital marketing communication, including social media and mobile marketing, plays a crucial role in shaping their buying decisions.

Stefani Dewinatalia and Irwansyah Irwansyah (2022) conducted a systematic review on the impact of digital marketing on young consumers. The study shows that digital marketing influences all stages of consumer behaviour, including awareness, interest, evaluation, purchase, and post-purchase behaviour.

Swati Sharma (2025) found that a majority of social media users are influenced by social media marketing in their purchase decisions. The study also highlights that demographic factors such as age and education level affect the degree of influence.

Adheer A. Goyal, Shriram Joshi, Tejasvini Paralkar, Swati A. Goyal, and S. Md Shakir Ali (2023) observed that digital marketing has significantly transformed youth buying behaviour. However, the study also points out that a lack of proper knowledge about online shopping affects some consumers' decisions.

Ankita Yadav, S. K. Singh, and Manoj Kumar Dash (2024) examined the impact of digital marketing on consumer behaviour in the FMCG sector. The findings suggest that digital marketing strategies play an important role in influencing purchase intentions, especially among younger consumers.

P. K. Jain and M. Danish Khan (2025) analysed the impact of digital advertising on consumer buying decisions in India. The study reveals a growing preference for online search and internet-based shopping, indicating a shift from traditional to digital modes of purchasing.

5. Objectives of the Study

- To assess the extent to which youth in Kandhamal district are exposed to digital marketing platforms.

- To examine the impact of social media advertisements, influencer marketing, and digital promotions on youth buying behaviour.
- To analyse the key factors influencing online purchase decisions among young consumers.

6. Methodology

Research Design:

The study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to understand existing trends and interpret their implications.

Study Area:

The study is conducted in Kandhamal district of Odisha, covering the blocks of Phulbani, Chakapad, Tikabali, and Baliguda.

Sample Size:

A total of 400 respondents are selected for the study.

Sampling Technique:

- Simple Random Sampling is used for selecting survey respondents.
- Purposive Sampling is used for conducting interviews to obtain in-depth insights.

Sources of Data:

- Primary Data: Collected through structured questionnaires and interviews.
- Secondary Data: Collected from research articles, government reports, books, and online sources.

Tools for Analysis:

The collected data are analysed using frequency distribution, percentages, and weighted scores based on a five-point Likert scale. Each statement in the questionnaire is treated as a module to assess the opinions and perceptions of youth in Kandhamal district.

7. Data analysis and Discussion

An important part of any research is to analyse the data and explain the findings. In this section, the researcher presents the results obtained from the study. The analysis is mainly based on primary data collected through questionnaires distributed among the youth of Kandhamal district. The table below shows the frequency of responses for each statement. For this study, each statement is treated as a separate module to understand the opinions and perceptions of the respondents.

Section	Statement	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral / Uncertain (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Total Weight	Rank
A: Awareness of DM	I am aware of digital marketing campaigns on social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, etc.)	96	95	64	74	71	1271	I
	I often receive information about products through emails, SMS, or social media advertisements	66	90	78	85	81	1175	XI
	I follow brand pages or official social media accounts to get updates about products or offers	107	58	101	64	70	1268	III
B: Influence on Purchase Decisions	Online advertisements influence my decision to try new products or brands	65	64	105	87	79	1149	XIV
	Discounts and offers promoted digitally motivate me to buy products	84	53	95	102	66	1187	VI
	Product reviews, ratings, and influencer endorsements affect my buying decisions	88	68	57	99	88	1169	XII
	I feel more confident buying products after watching online videos or promotional content	100	65	55	80	100	1185	VII
C: Digital Platforms & Buying Behaviour	I prefer purchasing products online rather than visiting a physical store due to digital promotions	68	81	118	76	57	1227	IV
	Social media platforms are my primary source of product information	84	84	43	105	84	1179	X
	I compare products online before making a purchase decision	55	86	101	99	59	1179	X
D: Attitude towards Digital Marketing	Digital marketing makes shopping easier and more convenient for me	56	56	107	95	86	1101	XV
	I trust online advertisements and product information provided by companies	48	114	84	53	101	1155	XIII
	Digital marketing increases my awareness of new products and brands	103	63	100	67	67	1268	III
	I actively share or recommend products I like through social media or messaging apps	68	95	82	60	95	1181	VIII
	I feel that digital marketing plays a major role in shaping youth buying behavior in my district	113	55	52	69	111	1190	V
Total (All Statements)		1271	1175	1268	1149	1187	17902	—

Source: Primary Data

Summary Notes:

- Total Weight for each statement is calculated as: $(\text{Strongly Agree} \times 5) + (\text{Agree} \times 4) + (\text{Neutral} \times 3) + (\text{Disagree} \times 2) + (\text{Strongly Disagree} \times 1)$
- Rank is based on descending order of total weight for each statement.
- The overall total weight across all 15 statements = 17,902, which represents cumulative responses for all 400 respondents.
- This table can now be directly used for data analysis and discussion in your report.

8. Results and Discussion

The study collected data from 400 respondents to understand the impact of Digital Marketing (DM) on youth buying behaviour. Responses were measured on a 5-point Likert scale (5 = Strongly Agree, 1 = Strongly Disagree). The total weight for each statement was calculated, and statements were ranked based on these weights.

Awareness of Digital Marketing: Most youth are aware of digital marketing campaigns on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp (Total Weight = 1271, Rank 1).

They also actively follow brand pages to get updates (1268, Rank 3). However, receiving product information through emails or SMS has less influence (1175, Rank 11). This shows that youth are proactive in following brands online rather than just passively receiving ads.

Influence on Purchase Decisions: Digital promotions like discounts and offers motivate youth to buy products (1187, Rank 6). Watching online videos or promotional content also builds confidence to buy (1185, Rank 7). Online ads and product reviews have moderate influence (1149–1169, Ranks 12–14). Overall, discounts and engaging content are stronger factors affecting purchase decisions than generic ads.

Digital Platforms and Buying Behaviour: Youth prefer buying online due to digital promotions (1227, Rank 4). They also compare products online and rely on social media for product information (1179, Rank 10). This shows that youth are digitally smart shoppers, using online platforms to make informed choices.

Attitude towards Digital Marketing: Digital marketing helps youth be aware of new products and brands (1268,

Rank 3) and they feel it shapes their buying behaviour (1190, Rank 5). However, the ease and convenience of shopping is not a major factor (1101, Rank 15). This indicates that while digital marketing informs and influences youth, convenience is moderately important.

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9. Conclusion

The study concludes that digital marketing has a significant influence on the buying behaviour of youth in Kandhamal District. The increasing use of smartphones, internet services, and social media platforms has transformed how young consumers gather information and make purchasing decisions. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and WhatsApp play an important role in shaping their preferences and awareness. Digital marketing tools such as online advertisements, influencer promotions, discounts, and product reviews strongly impact youth purchase decisions. Additionally, digital platforms enable consumers to compare products and make more informed choices, indicating a shift towards modern and rational buying behaviour. However, challenges such as limited digital literacy, lack of trust in online transactions, and infrastructural issues still exist. Overall, digital marketing is a powerful tool for influencing youth consumers, but its effectiveness can be enhanced through improved digital awareness and better infrastructure.

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