



IMPACT OF DIGITAL MARKETING ON E-SHOPPING BEHAVIOR AMONG RURAL WOMEN CUSTOMER IN UDUMALPET TALUK

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Abstract: The rapid growth of digital marketing has significantly impacted consumer behaviors across different demographics, including rural women. Despite the digital divide, rural women are increasingly engaging in e-commerce. However, this transition comes with its own set of challenges and complexities. A major issue is understanding the specific factors that influence or impede online shopping behaviors among rural women. Obstacles such as limited access to technology, lack of digital literacy, trust issues and socio-cultural barriers need to be addressed. Moreover, the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies in reaching and engaging this demographic to promote online shopping has not been thoroughly explored. Therefore, an in-depth investigation is required to uncover the intricacies of rural women's online shopping behaviors, the influence of digital marketing and potential strategies to enhance their e-commerce experiences. Such a study would not only fill gaps in academic research but also provide valuable insights for marketers looking to penetrate this growing market.

Keywords: *User-Friendly Interfaces, Payment Solutions, Reviews and Ratings, Community Engagement, Digital Literacy, Cultural Sensitivity and Customer Feedback*

I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid digitalization occurring in rural India, observing that greater internet access has changed how rural consumers engage with products and services. Traditionally, rural consumers depended on word-of-mouth, local retailers and physical marketplaces for their purchasing decisions (Ocak, 2023). However, digital marketing has introduced new dynamics, providing rural consumers with access to a broader range of products and information than ever before. Kaur and Kaur (2020) explored the growing impact of digital marketing on the purchasing habits of rural consumers. Their research is set against the backdrop of India's digital revolution, which has seen a significant increase in internet penetration and smartphone usage in rural areas. The study aims to understand how digital marketing strategies are transforming consumer behaviors outside urban centers, offering insights to help businesses tailor their approaches to this untapped market segment. Their sample includes a diverse group of rural consumers, categorized by age, gender, education level and income, to accurately represent the varied nature of rural demographics. One key finding is the significant influence of social media and digital advertisements on consumer awareness and preferences. Platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp and YouTube have become primary information sources for rural consumers shaping their perceptions of brands and products (Patel, 2021). The study reveals that digital marketing campaigns featuring local languages and culturally relevant content are more effective in engaging rural audiences (Kumari, & Mehta, 2019). The researchers highlight the importance of trust and credibility in adopting digital marketing among rural consumers. Many are skeptical about online transactions due to concerns about fraud and unfamiliarity with e-commerce processes. To address these concerns, the study suggests that marketers need to build trust by providing clear information about product quality, pricing and return policies and by leveraging local influencers who are respected within the community (Mishra, & Sinha, (2020). Social media platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram are key information sources for rural women, introducing them to new products, brands and services. Digital marketing campaigns that effectively use these platforms can significantly increase product awareness. Through targeted advertisements and posts, rural women are exposed to a variety of options that they might not find in their local physical markets (Mark Anthony Camilleri, 2021).

II. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Trust is pivotal in the online shopping behavior of consumers. Social media can foster trust through peer reviews, testimonials and endorsements from influencers. Rural women often depend on recommendations from friends, family and trusted figures when making purchasing decisions (Rao, & Mitra, (2020). Marketers who collaborate with local influencers or community leaders can leverage their credibility to build trust with potential customers. Social media facilitates interactive engagement between brands and consumers. Rural women can ask questions, read

reviews and interact with customer service in real-time (Abdin, Mohammad & Kumar, Rahul. 2020). This interactivity helps address any concerns or doubts they might have about online shopping and it also provides a platform for brands to demonstrate their commitment to customer satisfaction, further enhancing trust and loyalty (Chopra, 2018).

Effective digital marketing campaigns often include local languages and culturally relevant content, making advertisements more relatable to rural women. Social media's ability to target specific demographics ensures that the content is tailored to the cultural and social contexts of rural areas (Jayaprakash, Balakrishnan and Sivaraj, 2016). This relevance increases the effectiveness of marketing messages and the likelihood of converting interest into e-shopping. For rural women, social media can make online shopping more accessible by providing a convenient platform to browse and purchase products without needing to travel to distant markets. This convenience is particularly important in rural areas where physical stores may be limited. Visual content, such as images and videos, significantly influences e-shopping behavior. Platforms like Instagram and YouTube are particularly effective in showcasing products through tutorials, unboxing videos and demonstrations (Chatterjee, & Kumar, (2019). Seeing a product in use helps rural women make informed purchasing decisions and can motivate them to try new products and services. Social media also fosters community building among rural women, allowing them to share their shopping experiences and advice (Rama Devi, & Venugopal, (2022). This sense of community provides social proof, which is a powerful influence on purchasing decisions. Seeing other women in their community successfully navigate online shopping can reduce apprehensions and encourage others to try it as well. Despite the positive impact of social media, Digital literacy varies widely among rural women and not all may be equally adept at using social media (Kaur, & Kaur, 2020). Additionally, internet connectivity issues in some rural areas can limit the reach and effectiveness of digital marketing campaigns. Therefore, marketers need to balance digital efforts with offline strategies to ensure inclusivity (Rao, & Mitra, 2020).

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The research highlights the essential role of trust in promoting e-commerce adoption and usage in rural areas. It argues that rural consumers, due to limited access to physical stores and concerns about product quality and reliability, place significant importance on trust when making online transactions. Verma and Singh (2021) shed light on the pivotal role of trust in facilitating the adoption and utilization of e-commerce in rural settings. They argue that factors such as limited access to physical stores and apprehensions regarding product quality and reliability heighten the significance of trust for rural consumers engaging in online transactions.

The study conducted by Mukhlis Yunus, Jumadil Saputra and Zikri Muhammad (2022) investigates the intricate relationship between consumer trust, e-commerce and the impact of digital marketing in rural contexts. It explores the mechanisms through which trust is built within e-commerce transactions, with a specific focus on how digital marketing strategies contribute to fostering trust among rural consumers. Digital marketing emerges as a crucial facilitator in establishing and maintaining this trust.

Several digital marketing strategies are highlighted by Mark Anthony Camilleri (2021) as instrumental in cultivating consumer trust within rural e-commerce settings. They emphasize the importance of transparent and informative communication through digital channels. Initiatives such as customer reviews, ratings and testimonials serve as potent tools for validating the quality and authenticity of products and services, especially in the absence of physical interaction. Leveraging social media platforms to showcase real-life experiences and endorsements from satisfied rural customers significantly enhances trust and credibility.

Ocak, Altuğ. (2023) the study delves into the role of personalized marketing and targeted messaging in fostering trust among rural consumers. By tailoring marketing communications to align with the unique preferences, needs and cultural sensitivities of rural audiences, brands can forge deeper connections and instill a sense of familiarity and reliability. Personalized recommendations based on past purchase behavior and demographic insights further enhance the relevance and effectiveness of digital marketing efforts in rural e-commerce contexts.

Ravi, Saravanan & Rajan, (2023) underscore the intrinsic connection between consumer trust, e-commerce adoption and the role of digital marketing in rural areas. Through transparent communication, social proof and personalized approaches, brands can effectively cultivate trust among rural consumers, unlocking the vast potential of e-commerce in underserved regions. As digital connectivity continues to expand in rural areas, the insights gleaned from this study provide valuable guidance for businesses aiming to tap into these emerging markets.

Jayaprakash, Balakrishnan and Sivaraj (2016) examined the factors influencing online buying behavior of rural consumers towards online shopping. The following are the influencing factors shopping saving time and money, Follow as the new trend, Shopping at leisure time, Offers and seasonal discount, Easy to compare features and price; second factor by Wide range of products and Convenient Payment; third factor by Defective products are replaced properly and After sales services are satisfactory; and fourth factor by Free home delivery.

Rao and Mitra (2020) explore the challenges and potential strategies for businesses to effectively target rural consumers, a demographic gaining significance due to its large size and untapped potential. Despite technological advancements, disparities in internet access and digital literacy persist between urban and rural areas. Rural consumers encounter issues such as unreliable internet connectivity, inadequate digital infrastructure and limited access to devices like smartphones and computers. These barriers impede the effectiveness of digital marketing campaigns, as a considerable portion of the rural population either remains offline or has sporadic access to digital platforms.

Abdin, Mohammad & Kumar, Rahul. (2020) Cultural and socio-economic factors significantly shape consumer behavior in rural markets. Rao and Mitra observe that rural consumers tend to be more conservative and risk-averse compared to their urban counterparts. Traditional values and local customs heavily influence their purchasing decisions, necessitating culturally sensitive and relevant digital marketing strategies. Moreover, lower income levels and limited purchasing power in rural areas may restrict demand for certain products and services.

Sindakis, and Showkat, (2024) stated that, Despite the challenges, there are promising opportunities in rural digital marketing driven by the increasing adoption of digital technologies. The widespread availability of affordable smartphones and government initiatives to improve digital infrastructure are gradually narrowing the digital divide. As more rural consumers access the internet, the potential for digital marketing to influence their purchasing behavior expands.

Rama Devi, & Venugopal, (2022) found that social media platforms emerge as potent channels for reaching rural consumers. The study underscores how platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp have become integral parts of rural life, offering avenues for targeted advertising and community engagement. Collaborating with local influencers and community leaders can enhance the reach and impact of digital marketing campaigns. These influencers, esteemed within their communities, can endorse products and services, bolstering credibility and trust. Educating rural consumers about the benefits and safety of online shopping is vital to enhancing their willingness to engage with digital platforms. Rao and Mitra propose that businesses invest in digital literacy programs and awareness campaigns to demystify e-commerce and instill consumer confidence. Such initiatives have the potential to alleviate trust issues and motivate more rural consumers to explore online shopping opportunities.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the relationship between increased access to digital tools and the active participation of rural women in the digital economy.
2. To assess the various factors influencing digital marketing among rural women customer on e-shopping behavior

V. SAMPLING PLAN AND TOOL

The study is based on primary data. The researcher collected required data from the respondents who have actively involved in online shopping. For the collection of primary data, 200 respondents were selected through convenient sampling method. The data were collected by using well-structured questionnaire. To analyze the socio-economic factors simple percentage method adopted, Cross tabulation, Chi-square test and Mean rank used to find out the most influencing factor.

VI. AREA AND PERIOD OF STUDY

The present study is based on Impact of Digital Marketing Among Rural Women Customer E-Shopping Behavior, so the sample consumers have been selected from different parts of Tiruppur district. The period of study ranges from January 2024 to April 2024.

VII. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study is undertaken to examine the relationship between increased access to digital tools and the active participation of rural women in the digital economy and assess the various factors influencing digital marketing. In short, the study covers only socio-economic status, level of impact and factors influencing rural women towards e-shopping.

VIII. ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND RESULTS

The impact of age on digital marketing and e-shopping behavior among rural women is a multifaceted issue that reflects the intersection of technological adoption, generational differences and socio-cultural factors. Understanding how age influences the online shopping behaviors of rural women can help marketers develop more effective strategies to engage this demographic. The influence of social media on the impact of digital marketing among rural women and their e-shopping behavior is substantial and multifaceted. Social media platforms have become powerful tools in shaping purchasing decisions, building brand awareness and foster of the respondents use fortnightly once and monthly once. A study has been conducted among 200 women and they adopted convenient sampling in account for research work.

Age and Level of Impact (Chi-square)

To examine the age of the respondent is associated with level of impact of Digital marketing, the following hypothesis is tested.

H₀: There is no significant association between age of the respondent and the level of impact of Digital marketing towards E-shopping

Table 2
Age and Level of Impact

Age	Level of Impact			Total
	Less	Moderate	High	
12-18	13	30	2	45
	28.9%	66.7%	4.4%	100.0%
18-40	30	81	22	133
	22.6%	60.9%	16.5%	100.0%
Above 40	4	13	5	22
	18.2%	59.1%	22.7%	100.0%
Total	47	124	29	200
	23.5%	62.0%	14.5%	100.0%

Younger rural women are generally more adept at using digital technologies compared to their older counterparts. They tend to be more familiar with smart phones, social media and online shopping platforms, which makes them more receptive to digital marketing efforts (Rao, & Mitra, 2020). This familiarity is often due to greater exposure to technology in educational settings and peer influence. On the other hand, older rural women may face challenges due to lower levels of digital literacy and limited experience with technology. This can make them more hesitant to engage with e-commerce platforms and less responsive to digital marketing campaigns (Ocak, Altuğ, 2023).

Table 3
Chi-Square Test

Test	χ^2	df	CC	Sig.
Result	2.106	4	0.072	0.531

The above table shows that the relationship between age and level of impact is not significant. The Chi-Square value is 2.264 and CC value is 0.061 are less than the CVs. the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there is no significant association between age of the respondent and level of impact. Age also influences the level of trust rural women has in online shopping. Younger women, who are more accustomed to digital interactions, generally show higher levels of trust in online transactions and are more likely to experiment with e-shopping (Kumari, & Mehta, 2019). Conversely, older women may exhibit greater skepticism towards online shopping due to concerns about fraud, product quality and the complexity of the purchasing process. Building trust through transparent communication, reliable customer service and the use of local influencers can be particularly effective in addressing the concerns of older rural women (Patel, 2021).

Factors influencing digital marketing

Digital marketing has undeniably transformed the e-shopping behavior of rural women, making it easier and more convenient for them to access a wide range of products. By addressing challenges related to digital literacy and trust and by continuing to create culturally relevant content, digital marketing can further enhance the shopping experience and economic participation of rural women (Kumari, & Mehta, 2019).

Table 4: Factors influencing digital marketing among rural women customer e shopping behavior

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean Rank
Social Media Influence	3.26	1.192	7.30
Targeted Advertising	3.14	1.149	7.30
Informative Videos and Tutorials	2.65	1.065	5.59
User-Friendly Interfaces	2.71	1.329	5.82
Payment Solutions	2.82	.964	6.14
Reviews and Ratings	3.12	1.093	7.06
Community Engagement	3.47	1.177	8.14
Digital Literacy	3.30	1.211	5.76
Cultural Sensitivity	2.78	1.375	5.47
Customer Feedback	2.05	1.264	6.66
No. of respondents	200		
Kendall's W	0.328		
Chi-Square	412.101		
difference	9		
Asymp. Sig.	0.000		

The influence of informative videos and tutorials on digital marketing and the e-shopping behavior of rural women is profound and multifaceted. As digital literacy increases among rural populations, particularly among women, the consumption of online content has surged, thereby transforming traditional shopping behaviors (Chopra, 2018). Informative videos and tutorials serve as pivotal tools in this transformation,

offering education, confidence and empowerment to a demographic that was previously underrepresented in the digital marketplace. Firstly, informative videos and tutorials play a crucial role in educating rural women about various products and services available online (Chatterjee, & Kumar, 2019). These videos often provide detailed product reviews, usage instructions and comparisons, which are invaluable for consumers who may not have access to in-person shopping experiences or knowledgeable sales staff. For rural women, who may face additional barriers such as limited physical retail options and lower exposure to a variety of products, these videos are essential in making informed purchasing decisions. By demystifying complex products and demonstrating their benefits and uses, tutorials bridge the knowledge gap and facilitate better consumer choices (Mukhlis Yunus, Jumadil Saputra and Zikri Muhammad 2022).

Secondly, the accessibility of informative videos on platforms like YouTube, Facebook and Instagram ensures that rural women can easily access this content on their smartphones or other digital devices. This accessibility is crucial as it aligns with the increasing penetration of mobile internet in rural areas (Ravi, Saravanan & Rajan, 2023). As a result, rural women can watch these videos at their convenience, which is particularly important given their often busy and multifaceted daily schedules. The on-demand nature of video content means that it can be integrated into their lives without significant disruption, making it a practical tool for enhancing digital literacy and e-shopping skills (Singh, 2018). Furthermore, the interactive nature of digital platforms allows for a two-way communication channel between content creators and consumers. Rural women can ask questions, leave comments and share their own experiences, creating a community of shared knowledge and support (Verma, & Singh, 2021). The impact of these videos extends beyond just product education; they also foster a sense of empowerment and independence among rural women. By equipping them with the knowledge to navigate online marketplaces effectively, tutorials help in building confidence. This newfound confidence can lead to increased experimentation with different products and brands, thus broadening their shopping horizons (Singh, 2018). Additionally, the skills learned from these videos are transferable to other areas of digital literacy, such as online banking, digital payments and even small-scale online entrepreneurship. Kumari and Mehta (2019) investigated the various digital marketing approaches employed in rural areas and assess their effectiveness. The study highlights the unique challenges and opportunities presented by rural markets, emphasizing the need for tailored strategies that resonate with rural consumers. The authors discuss several key strategies, including the use of localized content, mobile marketing and social media campaigns, which are particularly effective given the increasing penetration of smartphones and internet connectivity in these regions (Sindakis, Showkat, 2024). The research findings suggest that digital marketing in rural areas can significantly enhance brand awareness and consumer engagement when strategies are customized to address the specific needs and preferences of rural populations. Kumari and Mehta advocate for a deeper understanding of rural consumers' behavior and the socio-cultural context to optimize digital marketing efforts and achieve sustainable growth in these markets (Patel, 2021).

IX. FINDINGS

1. Majority of the woman respondents like to shop online due to the availability of many factors about products like price, accessibility, comparison of different products, time saving etc. which makes E-shopping easy.
2. Though the shopping scenario has been changed and people have switched to online shopping, but still shoppers hesitate for online transactions as they feel a danger for their personal privacy and security.
3. There exists a significant relationship between age and online shopping behaviour, as young women are more frequent shoppers as compared to old women
4. Social media influence the rural woman to approach E-shopping.

X. CONCLUSION

The impact of digital marketing on purchasing behavior, noting an increase in the frequency and volume of online purchases among rural consumers. However, the adoption rate varies significantly across different segments. Younger consumers, those with higher levels of education and higher income brackets are more likely to engage in online shopping. In contrast, older consumers and those with lower education levels tend to remain cautious, often relying on younger family members for online transactions. The study concluded that while digital marketing has opened new avenues for reaching rural consumers, there are still substantial barriers to full adoption. These include limited digital literacy, inadequate infrastructure and persistent socio-cultural norms that influence buying decisions. The study recommends that businesses invest in digital literacy programs and infrastructure development to enhance connectivity and accessibility. Additionally, personalized and localized marketing strategies are essential to resonate with rural consumers and to foster trust and loyalty. The study provides valuable insights into the transformative impact of digital marketing on rural consumer behavior. It underscores the need for a nuanced understanding of rural markets and tailored marketing approaches that address the unique challenges and opportunities within these regions. social media profoundly impacts the e-shopping behavior of rural women by increasing awareness, building trust, enhancing engagement and providing convenient access to products. To maximize this impact, digital marketers must create culturally relevant, interactive and trust-building campaigns that resonate with rural women's unique needs and preferences. Furthermore, localized content that addresses specific needs and preferences of rural women can enhance the relevance and impact of these videos, making them more effective. By leveraging the strengths of social media, marketers can effectively reach and influence this growing demographic, driving the adoption of e-shopping in rural areas. Digital marketing strategies that incorporate informative videos and tutorials also benefit from increased consumer engagement and loyalty. Brands that provide high-quality, informative content can establish themselves as trusted authorities and go-to resources for rural women

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