




IMPACT OF DIGITAL MARKETING ON ONLINE PURCHASE INTENTION: MEDIATION EFFECT OF CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT



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ABSTRACT

Article History

Received: 14 February 2020

Revised: 20 March 2020

Accepted: 22 April 2020

Published: 18 May 2020

Keywords

Digital marketing
Purchase intention
Customer relationship management
E-commerce
Online shopping
Social media marketing.

JEL Classification:

M31; M37; M1.

This study investigated the impact of digital marketing on the online purchase intention of e-commerce consumers in Malaysia. In addition, the mediating effect of customer relationship management (CRM) between digital marketing and online purchase intention was also accessed because previous researchers have not detailed the mediating effect. A quantitative research method was applied to collect empirical data from 202 online shoppers selected by snowball sampling technique. Data were collected through a self-administered questionnaire in the greater Klang Valley region of Malaysia. Normality and reliability of the instrument were assessed using IBM SPSS 22, followed by confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling using IBM SPSS AMOS 24. The validity of the measurement model and mediation analysis were carried out as per the research objectives. The results suggested that digital marketing had a positive significant impact on online purchase intention. However, the mediating effect of CRM was found to be insignificant. The study contributed to the literature by providing a structural model of digital marketing and purchase intention to measure the impact of digital marketing on online purchase intention in the context of Malaysian e-commerce. The paper then discussed the implications, limitations, and future research opportunities.

Contribution/ Originality: The study contributed to the existing literature by providing a structural model to measure the impact of digital marketing on online purchase intention in the context of Malaysian e-commerce. Besides, the mediating effect of CRM was also assessed as previous researchers have not detailed the same.

1. INTRODUCTION

Integrated marketing communication (IMC) is a business process that identifies an effective and appropriate means to communicate with consumers about its offerings as well as to build good relationships (Kotlar, 1995). The proliferation of Internet has changed the business landscape for multinational companies, resulting in the exponential growth of successful online businesses, such as Amazon, Grab, Lazada, Facebook, and Google, as key players in the digital economy (Kannan, 2017). According to Statista (2018) Malaysians spent approximately USD 6 million in 2018 on online shopping and consumer goods, accounting for USD 3.1 million of total e-commerce spending, which was the highest in the South East Asia region. Surprisingly, 88 per cent of Malaysian adults owned smartphones and spent about six hours a day online from any devices (Statista., 2019). This has led to tough competition in the e-commerce market, and players are looking for innovative ways to attract online consumers as well as retaining existing customers (Safie, Satar, Dastane, & Ma'arif, 2019). The IMC then evolved, and the

concept of digital marketing brought drastic changes to the marketing arena and replaced traditional marketing strategies for firms to communicate effectively with customers in the online shopping world. Companies willing to increase their online purchase intention and customer relationship management (CRM) would employ digital marketing strategies, which focuses on the use of online platforms, such as social media, search engines, and all smart products, as a data collection tool. Digital marketing is defined as an application of digital technologies integrated with traditional marketing communication to achieve marketing goals. Companies adopting digital marketing gain momentum to maintain an easy and smart trading process because the Internet has become a trading marketplace (Leeflang, Verhoef, Dahlström, & Freundt, 2014).

In the 1990s, when the launch of the search engine “Archie” had embroiled in new strategic challenges arising from intense non-conventional competition, the term “digital marketing” was coined. The introduction of digital marketing has resulted in the paradigm shift in global markets and the increased dominance of consumer purchase power, as a result of the implementation of new technology have created tougher business competition (Korkpoe & Nyarku, 2013). The boom of digital marketing is correlated with the wide expansion of digital technologies, such as smartphones, smart products, Internet of things (IoT), and artificial intelligence (AI), that has an impact on the revolution of consumer purchases and the reshaping of future marketing strategy. Mobile commerce offers additional value elements to consumers as compared to traditional or electronic commerce (Dastane, Goi, & Rabbane, 2020) which may also impact consumers online purchase intention. In view of this, consumers can be reached from anywhere and anytime by offering a rich webpage background with informative text, graphics, and audio overtaking the traditional channel because of improved user experience (Gabriel & Kolapo, 2015). Digital interaction builds a new opportunity for social media integration in marketing to reduce marketing costs relative to traditional marketing. However, marketers face new challenges in selecting the right blend of digital marketing to reach a mass of prospects to create brand awareness and successfully convert sales by effectively communicating with consumers through constant feedback (Tamrakar, Pyo, & Gruca, 2018).

Moreover, digital marketing is capable to attract a wide range of consumers, permit businesses to communicate to consumers effectively via online media from various backgrounds and to guide them the purchase process (Lodhi & Shoaib, 2017). Digital marketing also effectively strengthens the brand value by eliminating brand misunderstandings as a consumer exchange of ideas, opinions, and experience that lead to greater purchase intention (Tham et al., 2019). Investing in digital marketing industry requires a high budget but top management tends to compare it to traditional marketing channels that have a positive, mature, and proven track record of return on investment (ROI) (Teixeira, Barbosa, & Pinto, 2019). Digital marketing provides a multi-stream platform for customers to control the purchase process through product testing and reviewing (Swieczak & Łukowski, 2016). However, the conversion of sales leads to sales is complicated without proper marketing content to convince customers for prospective sales and a cycle of repeated sales (Epstein & Yuthas, 2007).

Many consumers have trust issues, especially revealing personal data; for instance, when Yahoo breached 500 million user account data, the customer relationship was damaged or even, endangered consumers’ lives (Whitler & Farris, 2017). Security of information and privacy are crucial; these have become a challenge in digital marketing because customer data is shared without consent between companies, and pop-ups, where customers should be granted control of their data before their information is exploited (Bostanshirin, 2014). Customers have growing doubts about digital marketing and it is therefore proposed that companies build brand trust and strong branding as solutions. Nevertheless, many companies are investing in digital marketing as an organisation’s present and future sustainability. False adoption of digital marketing by companies is costly, time-consuming, and not competitive in the business field, as Malaysia still lacks digital marketing skills (Gaur, 2019).

Purchase intention is greatly affected by the customer’s online search and time spent browsing e-commerce websites (Donni, Dastane, Haba, & Selvaraj, 2018). E-commerce companies must attract both the new consumers and existing customers on their websites; this is achieved by understanding the impact of digital marketing on

purchase intention. Innovative companies should develop a communications mix with technology advancements and tough competition, Wong, Dastane, Satar, Safie, and Ma'Arif (2019). The concept of CRM has evolved from complicated and highly competitive modern businesses that combine sophisticated customer experience with rapid technological changes in order to enhance the purchasing power of consumers (Putney & Puney, 2013). Besides, the conventional CRM method—now embodied by applying digital marketing to communications, advertising, and customer services in more advanced technologies—continues to be loyal and satisfactory (Nykamp, 2012). The CRM implementation provides more data mining in the library pool, so that consumers can understand and access strategic marketing information conveniently, and helps to reduce costs of wrong marketing strategies (Stueart & Moran, 2007).

The impact of e-media on purchase intention was tested by Rehmani and Khan (2011) and a conceptual model has been proposed for the purchase of mobile phones. A similar study for hotel bookings was investigated by De Pelsmacker, Van Tilburg, and Holthof (2018). The impact of social media on purchase intention has been tested along with the mediating effect of consumer attitudes (Lim, Radzol, Cheah, & Wong, 2017). Several have studied the history of purchase intention (Kooli, Mansour, & Utama, 2014; Verhagen & Van Dolen, 2009). Various review studies on purchase intention have also highlighted the importance of digital marketing (Ezgi & Nasir, 2015). However, the existing literature on online purchase intention has not completely revealed the impact of digital marketing on purchase intention. Further, to the best of our knowledge, the mediating effect of CRM between digital marketing and purchase intention is not specifically investigated in the context of Malaysian consumers. In light of this background, the current research bridges the literature gap with regard to digital marketing on the CRM-mediated purchase intention, which is a topic of relevance as evidenced by many researchers, including Villanueva, Yoo, and Hanssens (2008); Christodoulides, Jevons, and Bonhomme (2012) and Smith, Fischer, and Yongjian (2012).

This research offers a thorough overview of digital marketing that directly impacts purchase intention in a CRM-motivated organisation; the results of this study determines whether future business trends, which are heavily dependent on consumer collaboration, are sustainable and dynamic. Furthermore, this study examines the phenomenon in Malaysia regarding the mediating effect of CRM among digital marketing and purchase intention, as there has been limited research on this phenomenon. The key objectives include: (1) To examine the impact of digital marketing on purchase intention; (2) To examine the impact of digital marketing on CRM; (3) To examine the impact of CRM on purchase intention; and (4) To examine the mediated effect of CRM on the relationship between digital marketing and purchase intention. The corresponding research questions are: (1) What is the impact of digital marketing on purchase intention? (2) What is the impact of digital marketing on CRM? (3) What the impact of CRM on purchase intention? and (4) What is the mediated effect of CRM on the relationship between digital marketing and purchase intention?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Digital Marketing

Digital marketing is a new technique in the field of online marketing by impacting consumers through a wide range of interaction channels, such as social media, mobile apps, blogs, emails, and even search engine optimisers (SEOs), aimed at closer communication in various forms that convey advertising to consumers (García, Lizcano, Ramos, & Matos, 2019). Sawicki (2016) describes digital marketing as an exploration of the vast digital world of technologies that have created a platform for linking a vast base of potential audiences. Moreover, digital marketing involves the promotion of goods and services via the e-commerce platform with real-time response to an Internet connection.

2.2. Purchase Intention

Purchase intention has become vital for the development of digital marketing and online sales. Consumers' purchase intention is classified as a complex process usually related to their behaviour, perception, and attitude (Mirabi, Akbariyeh, & Tahmasebifard, 2015). Purchase intention changes with the influence of price comparison, perceived value, and quality (Mirabi et al., 2015). A consumer generally perceives a low-budget product with poor packing and an unfamiliar brand as a less reliable and high-risk product (Mirabi et al., 2015). Besides, consumers are affected by external motivation (the website information) and internal motivation (shopping experience) in the purchase process (Athapaththu & Kulathunga, 2018). Although a greater purchase intention is possible through an attracted website, online services, and website layout for influencing the objective and motivation of the customer to access the website for product search and purchase. Athapaththu and Kulathunga (2018) found various stages of purchase intention before finalising purchase assessment of the product based on experience, current knowledge, interest, preference, persuasiveness, and purchasing influence of the consumer. Vahdati and Mousavi Nejad (2016) also emphasised that information searching on the Internet increases the satisfaction level and joy of purchasing products and services. Nevertheless, this leads to repeated customer purchases, repeated visits to the digital platform, and positive recommendations and reviews of the advertised product (Hausman & Siekpe, 2009). In their research on digital marketing, Dehghani and Tumer (2015) revealed that branding increases purchase intention. Since the trend changes over time, consumers would refer to online product reviews before making the right purchase decisions.

2.3. Customer Relationship Management

CRM has expanded into the three-dimension structure of collaborative, operational, and analytical and as an important tool in the cost-conscious development of meaningful corporate strategies for the massive corporate assessment of customers (Buttle, 2006). In order to create an efficient life cycle of communication, CRM extends its function from modern tools to analysing customer data, retaining existing customers, and developing new customers via a successful strategy implementation process. The customer is committed to the supplier and makes a repeated purchase as they both have built a strong emotional connection towards each other. That emotion for a customer might be uncompromisingly confidential, preferable, and trusting to effectively address the complaints and problems by the company (Amofah & Ijaz, 2005). Likewise, Abu-Alhaija, Yusof, Haslinda, and Jaharuddin (2018) stated that customer loyalty is a long-term asset for the business as they want to make it competitive by managing a good CRM system for their groups. Positive experiences and values encourage the customer to spend impulsively because their relationship with the company grows consistently with an increasing level of customer satisfaction; digital technologies allow companies to implement successful communication strategies and to pay constant attention to customer satisfaction.

Moreover, based on the study by Akhmedov (2017) a strong CRM strategy offers consumers to make positive comments, respond less to marketing by competitors, and pardon the company for inaccurate information; the strategy offers high levels of loyalty and satisfaction. Richards and Jones (2008) endorsed that companies can strengthen their performance by implementing CRM through a close and ongoing relationship with its customers and a high level of trust. In previous research, purchase intention has been extensively studied to understand the impact of different factors on online purchase intention (Gan, 2017). However, few studies have studied the effect of digital marketing and CRM on purchase intention. The aim of this study is therefore to investigate the mediating effect of CRM between digital marketing and purchase intention to fill the knowledge gap.

Digital marketing is the most recent marketing tool commonly used for communication and promotion of services and products without limitation on time, location, and costs (Kim & Ko, 2012). Wibisurya (2018) revealed that digital marketing has a positive impact on purchase intention, with a major impact on attractive content, personalisation, and customisation for the consumer. Same goes for Poyurak and Softic (2019) who have shown a

positive effect of digital marketing on purchase intentions through an exchange of opinions between consumers. Nevertheless, Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019) has shown an insignificant relationship between digital marketing and purchase intention from the design layout of digital marketing. Such an effort does not support purchase intentions through the use of digital marketing tools (Liat & Wuan, 2014). This study is therefore intended to re-examine the relationship and propose the following hypothesis.

H1: Digital marketing has a significant positive impact on purchase intention.

Digital marketing is a form of inbound marketing cycle that strengthens CRM's focus on visibility, customers' education and transformation by studying customers' requirements and behaviour through personalised feedbacks and reviews (Gupta, 2019). Also, the personalisation of digital marketing and CRM offers excellent service and relevant discussions at regular intervals (Merisavo, 2003). Customer relationships are encouraged by monitoring digital marketing, learning from consumer feedback, and personalising marketing strategies (Vinerean, 2017). The following hypothesis is therefore proposed in this study.

H2: Digital marketing has a significant positive impact on CRM.

Purchase intention means to purchase in the near future and is important for companies to study customer acquisition and retention by building a strong relationship (Patel, Gadhavi, & Shukla, 2017). Ahmed and Zahid (2014) claimed that CRM has a significant impact on purchase intention from customer care. Wibisurya (2018) on the other hand, mentioned that there is no general advertising to focus on new and personalised products for customers to get their attention to purchasing the new products. Henceforth, this study proposed the following hypothesis.

H3: CRM has a significant positive impact on purchase intention.

Digital marketing has a major impact on customer's purchase intention and has proposed continuous updates of marketing strategies to build a competitive relationship with the customer. Nevertheless, there is a lack of studies conducted on this topic (Toor & Husnain, 2017). Ahmed and Zahid (2014) revealed that CRM-mediated digital marketing has a positive impact on purchase intention by overtaking the mediator, brand equity; this view is supported by Toor and Husnain (2017). Conversely, Karjaluoto and Ulkuniemi (2015) found that digital marketing has no significant impact on CRM because online companies using more digital marketing platform will result in consumers feeling underserved, and so purchase less. This mediation effect has not yet been tested for digital marketing and online purchase intention. Therefore, this study proposed the following hypothesis.

H4: CRM mediates the relationship between digital marketing and online purchase intention.

3. METHODOLOGY

This research adopted the positivist paradigm to test all hypotheses using scientific quantitative methods. For the purpose of this research, data were collected from questionnaires, then the hypotheses were analysed using statistical software. This study was aimed to identify the causal relationship between three variables: digital marketing, purchase intention, and CRM. The cross-sectional research strategy was applied to compare individual characteristics of a specific time. For this research, the main element for collecting data from a large number of participants was the quantitative method used by the survey questionnaire. The snowball sampling technique was used to collect data from a sample of 200 active online shoppers and the data was then analysed using statistical software. Demographic analysis, normality and reliability assessments were carried out using IBM SPSS 22, followed by confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling using IBM SPSS AMOS 24. The validity and mediation analyses of the measurement model were also assessed using IBM SPSS AMOS 24. The hypotheses were subsequently tested, and the results were discussed.

For this research, the questionnaire was developed as the leading mechanism to implement the research strategy. The questionnaire was prepared and distributed in two major methods: the electronic Internet and the photostat hard copy. The electronic questionnaire was distributed through Google Forms, which allowed

participants to access the questionnaire online with ease and the results were available in real-time. Printed hard copy questionnaires were distributed to participants, who do not have emails nor were comfortable doing an online survey, especially elders and women. The questionnaire was prepared in dual-language—English and Malay—to resolve the uncertainty of the questions and the participants were aware of the research objective as the data collected was for research purposes and their identities were classified. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Part one was based on demographics in which information on participants, such as age, education, relationship status, profession, and gender, was recorded to reflect this research study. Demographic questions were vital for two specific reasons: to determine the individual behaviour of a certain group and to generalise the accuracy of the sample to a broad target group. However, this part of the questionnaire is considered to be sensitive and will frustrate a few participants from not answering (Hughes, Camden, & Yangchen, 2016). Part two of the questionnaire was the opinion of the respondents about the impact of digital marketing (six items) on the CRM (five items) and purchase intention (five items). Table 1 shows the items and their sources of the questionnaire.

Table-1. Instrument items and sources.

Items	Source(s)
Digital Marketing	
1 The digital marketing helps me in searching right product while shopping online	Sivasankaran (2013)
2 Digital marketing provides me quality information	
3 Detail information is available in E-media while online shopping	
4 It's easy to do comparison with other product on website while shopping online	
5 Opinion exchange with others is possible through brand social networking site	De Pelsmacker et al. (2018)
6 Digital marketing facilitates to 24/7 shopping	Yuvaraj and Indumati (2018)
Purchase Intention	
1 I would intend to become an online shopper	Laksamana (2018)
2 My willingness to become online shopper is great	
3 I am willing to become an online shopper	
4 I have a high intention to become an online shopper	
5 The new time I am web browsing for a product, I planned to purchase online	
Customer Relationship Management	
1 Company attends my complaints promptly	Roy, Padmavathy, Balaji, and Sivakumar (2012)
2 Company pays constant attention to maintain highly appealing products	
3 Company periodically send email updates about new services and products	Mukami (2017)
4 Company periodically contacts for personalized services	Liz, David, and Robin (2003)
5 Company place important on developing on going relations	

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Demographic Analysis

Table 2 displays demographic analysis of the data collected. As part of the sample study, demographic information from 202 respondents was collected using Google Forms, and the information included the following: gender, age, profession, education level, and marital status. Out of a total of 202 respondents, 90 male and 112 female respondents contributed 44.5% male and 55.5% female overall. The gender-based selection of participants to stimulate Malaysia's actual scenario was based on the fact that women conduct higher e-commerce activities compared to men (53.9% vs. 48.8%). From the survey, the dominant age group was 31-40 years (42.6%), followed by the age group of 30 years and below (27.2%), 41-50 years (20.8%), and 50 years and above (9.4%).

Table-2. Demographic analysis.

	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Gender			
Male	90	44.5	44.5
Female	112	55.5	100
Age			
Below 30	55	27.2	27.2
31-40	86	42.6	69.8
41-50	42	20.8	90.6
51 and above	19	9.4	100
Education Level			
Diploma	75	37.1	37.1
Bachelor Degree	90	44.6	81.7
Master	35	17.3	99.0
Doctoral	2	1.0	100
Profession			
Student	27	13.4	13.4
Business Owner	29	14.4	27.7
Employee	121	59.9	87.6
Housewife	21	10.4	98.0
Others	4	2.0	100
Marital Status			
Married	115	56.9	56.9
Single	77	38.1	95.0
Divorced	6	3.0	98.0
Separated	1	0.5	98.5
Widowed	3	1.5	100

The distribution of the questionnaire to various age groups was based on age-related statistics of Internet users in Malaysia. Among the overall respondents, the majority were bachelor degree holders (44.6%), followed by SPM/Diploma holders (37.1%), master degree holders (17.3%), and doctorate holders (1%). Based on occupation, employee-category contributed majorly with 59.9%, followed by business owners (14.4%), students (13.4%), housewives (10.4%) and lastly, retirees and unemployed (2%). Selection of respondents was based on the statistics provided by MCMC (2018), which is accurate with this research in Malaysia context. Major e-commerce consumers were employees (66.1%), followed by self-employed (17.7%), students (9.2%) and others (7%). Based on marital status, majority of respondents were married (56.9%; 115 respondents), followed by unmarried respondents (38.1%), divorced (3%), separated (0.5%), and widowed (1.5%).

Table-3. Normality assessment.

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
				Stat	Std. Error	Stat	Std. Error
DM1	202	5.411	1.1566	-0.385	0.171	-0.079	0.341
DM2	202	5.490	1.3649	-0.69	0.171	-0.363	0.341
DM3	202	5.356	1.2781	-0.535	0.171	-0.238	0.341
DM4	202	5.446	1.2655	-0.68	0.171	0.031	0.341
DM5	202	5.198	1.2178	-0.369	0.171	-0.322	0.341
DM6	202	5.767	1.1719	-0.736	0.171	-0.042	0.341
PI1	202	5.233	1.2218	-0.388	0.171	-0.267	0.341
PI2	202	5.178	1.2086	-0.399	0.171	-0.115	0.341
PI3	202	5.257	1.19	-0.403	0.171	-0.378	0.341
PI4	202	5.050	1.3632	-0.364	0.171	-0.431	0.341
PI5	202	5.099	1.2852	-0.272	0.171	-0.476	0.341
CRM1	202	5.490	1.1643	-0.501	0.171	-0.543	0.341
CRM2	202	5.208	1.2524	-0.569	0.171	0.019	0.341
CRM3	202	5.386	1.1458	-0.639	0.171	0.276	0.341
CRM4	202	5.129	1.2865	-0.625	0.171	0.18	0.341
CRM5	202	5.361	1.3652	-0.653	0.171	-0.203	0.341

4.2. Normality Assessment

Normality test was tested in SPSS software to determine the target population; the data collected was shown as normal distribution considering the probability of independent and dependent variables (Driscoll, Lecky, & Crosby, 2000). The D'Agostino (1970) test for 202 respondents was conducted as the sample size is higher than 50.

From Table 3, the normality test for all variables in this study showed normal distribution with excellent skewness, and kurtosis ranging between -1.0 and +1.0, with proven symmetric data distribution. According to Hair et al. (2009) and George and Mallery (2010) all variables were acceptable if the skewness and kurtosis values were between -1.0 and +1.0, which is an excellent rule-of-thumb.

4.3. Reliability Assessment

Cronbach's alpha is used to measure internal consistency with the coefficient reliability from questionnaires consisting of multiple questions emphasised on the Likert scale (Santos, 1999). The reliability of Cronbach's alpha test was therefore chosen as the best way to assess the suitability and consistency of the collected data (Trochim & Donnelly, 2010). The alpha value increases as the test variable correlations improved, and the reliable alpha value is above 0.70 (Kline, 2000) whereas the increase in sample size falsely increases the alpha value and the lower range devalues the alpha value (Cortina, 1993). Based on Hinton et al. (2004) the alpha score below 0.7 is subject to moderate and low reliability from the data consistency overview. However, a score ranging from 0.7 to 0.9 is extremely reliability, and an alpha score above 0.9 is of excellent reliability. The alpha reliability test result produced an overall score of 0.924 in the reliability test, which indicated excellent reliability as the value was greater than 0.9. The alpha value was of excellent reliability for purchase intention to achieve 0.934, which is above 0.9. The alpha values of digital marketing and CRM were highly reliability, and consistent in relation to the acceptable alpha value between 0.9 and 0.7.

4.4. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (Measurement Model)

Table 4 displays fitness values of the measurement model. The fitness of this measurement model was evaluated in parameters of absolute fit, incremental fit, and parsimonious fit. In order to achieve an acceptable absolute fit, the RMSEA value should be lower than 0.080, and the GFI value should be greater than 0.90 (Hair et al., 2009). The current measurement model had an acceptable RMSEA value of 0.080, and an unacceptable GFI value of 0.876. In terms of incremental fit, all the values of AGFI, CFI, TLI, and NFI should be greater than 0.90 (Hair et al., 2009). The current measurement model obtained acceptable values of CFI (0.936) and TLI (0.924), but the AGFI (0.833) and NFI (0.892) were lower than the acceptable threshold values.

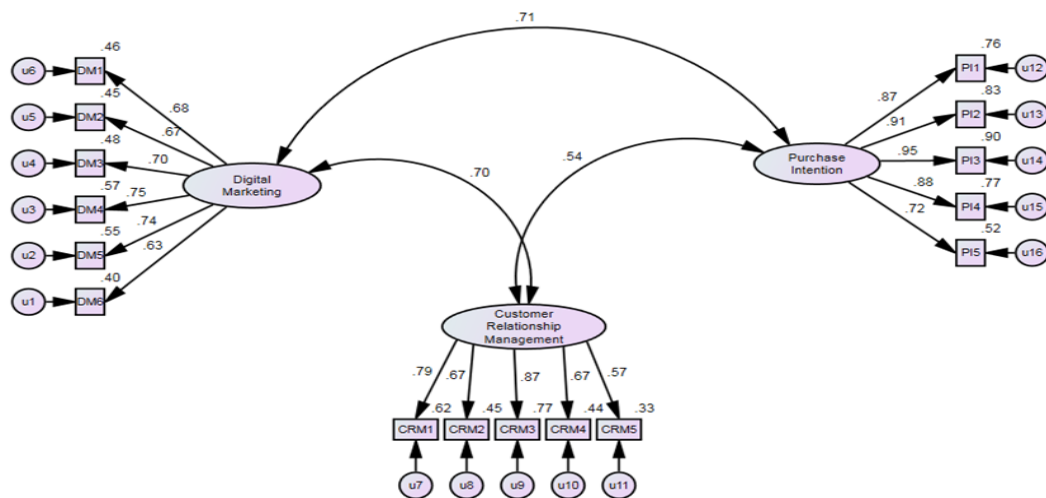


Figure-1. CFA.

Table-4. Evaluation of fitness of a measurement model.

Category	Index	Level of Acceptance	Index Value	Comments
Absolute Fit	Chi-Square	P-Values > 0.05	0.000	Supported
	RMSEA	< 0.08	0.080	Acceptable
	GFI	> 0.90	0.876	The required level is not achieved
Incremental Fit	AGFI	> 0.90	0.833	The required level is not achieved
	CFI	> 0.90	0.936	Acceptable
	TLI	> 0.90	0.924	Acceptable
	NFI	> 0.90	0.892	The required level is not achieved
Parsimonious Fit	Chisq / df	< 3.0	2.301	Acceptable

Lastly, the evaluation of a parsimonious fit was based on the value of Chisq/df, which must be less than 3.0, as recommended by Hair et al. (2009). Current measurement model satisfied the parsimonious fit assessment as Chisq/df (2.301) was below the required threshold value.

After checking the factor loadings of each factor corresponding to each variable, the factor loading for CRM5 was found to be 0.57, which is less than the stated rule-of-thumb (0.6 and above). The item was therefore deleted from the research (Chin, Gopal, & Salisbury, 1997). Even with a good fit in the model, there could be no precision and the modification index (MI) is high because the structure was highly correlated, and the lack of discrimination validity on the first run of the model was reduced by freeing up any specific path that was not estimated (Shadfar & Malekmohammadi, 2013). Apart from the above, the MI values for u3 and u2 are greater than 15, were redundant. Similar cases occurred for u8 and u9 at the same time. Following the suggestion by Ahmad, Zulkurnain, and Khairushalimi (2016) the redundancy was then removed by connecting the redundancies of both items.

To ensure the incremental fit, factor loadings of each factor were assessed, and items with a factor loading of less than 0.6 were deleted individually as recommended by Hair et al. (2009). In addition, MI was assessed, and any two items with MI value greater than 15 were connected to remove redundancy. One item from CRM (CRM5) was deleted and two pairs of errors (u2 and u3; u8 and u9) were connected with this re-iterative process to remove redundancy. The adjusted measurement (second run CFA) is presented in Figure 1.

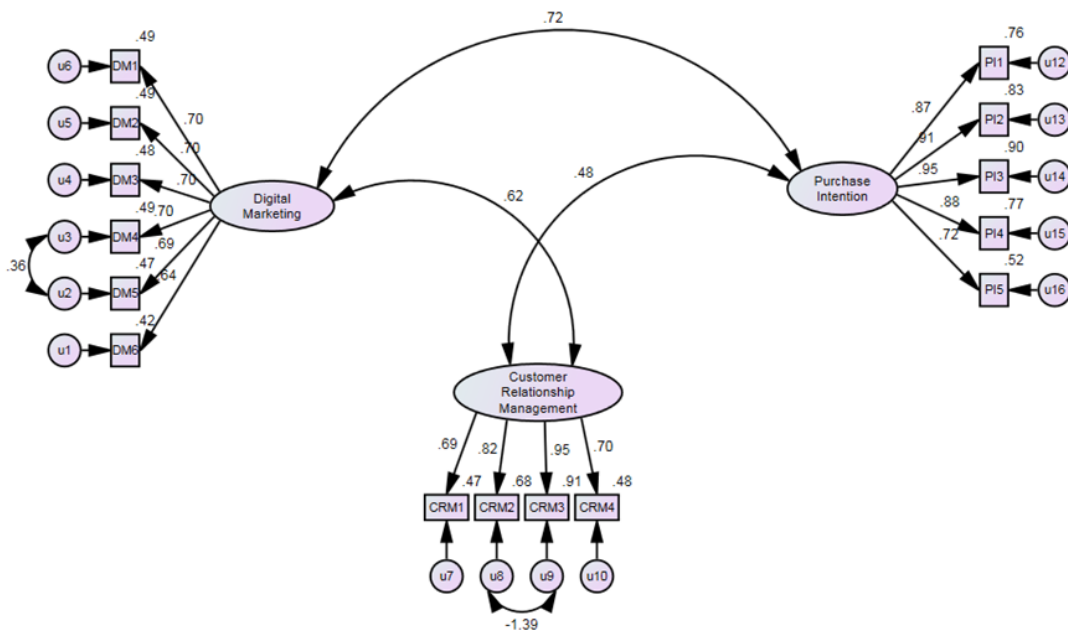


Figure-2. Modified CFA.

Table-5. Evaluation of fitness of a measurement model.

Category	Index	Level of Acceptance	Index Value	Comments
Absolute Fit	Chi-Square	P-Values > 0.05	0.000	Supported
	RMSEA	< 0.08	0.066	Good Fit
	GFI	> 0.90	0.907	Acceptable
Incremental Fit	AGFI	> 0.90	0.868	The required level is not achieved
	CFI	> 0.90	0.962	Acceptable
	TLI	> 0.90	0.953	Acceptable
	NFI	> 0.90	0.923	Acceptable
Parsimonious Fit	Chisq / df	< 3.0	1.873	Acceptable

Figure 2 portrays modified CFA model. The corresponding fitness values are listed in Table 5. The adjusted model achieved a good absolute fit with RMSEA value of 0.066. The parsimonious fit was also achieved along with Chisq/df value of 1.873. The model achieved incremental fit with CFI of 0.962, TLI of 0.953, NFI of 0.923. The AGFI value was 0.868, which is close to 0.9, will be accepted if the model achieved a parsimonious fit (Hair et al., 2009).

4.5. Divergent Validity of Measurement Model

Table-6. Divergent validity.

Items	DM	CRM	PI
DM 1	0.699		
DM 2	0.703		
DM 3	0.696		
DM 4	0.701		
DM 5	0.687		
DM 6	0.645		
CRM 1		0.686	
CRM 2		0.823	
CRM 3		0.955	
CRM 4		0.696	
PI 1			0.718
PI 2			0.878
PI 3			0.947
PI 4			0.908
PI 5			0.872

Table 6 shows factor loadings of each item for the purpose of assessing divergent validity. As the total factor loadings were more than 0.6, and all cross-loadings were less than 0.5, the dataset satisfied the discriminant validity of the sample.

4.6. Convergent Validity

The convergent validity for the measurement model was achieved when all AVE values exceeded 0.50, whereas the composite reliability was achieved when all CR values exceeded 0.60. Table 7 shows convergent validity assessment.

4.7. Structural Equation Modelling

4.7.1. Mediation Analysis

To estimate the parameters, a structural model of digital marketing and its impact on CRM-mediated online purchase intentions was developed in the context of Malaysian e-commerce consumers. The objective was to investigate the impact of digital marketing on purchase intention as well as the mediating effect of CRM between digital marketing and purchase intention.

Table-7. Convergent validity.

Construct	Item	Factor Loading	CR	AVE
DM	DM 1	0.699	0.844	0.574
	DM 2	0.703		
	DM 3	0.696		
	DM 4	0.701		
	DM 5	0.687		
	DM 6	0.645		
CRM	CRM 1	0.686	0.873	0.636
	CRM 2	0.823		
	CRM 3	0.955		
	CRM 4	0.696		
	CRM 5	deleted		
PI	PI 1	0.718	0.938	0.753
	PI 2	0.878		
	PI 3	0.947		
	PI 4	0.908		
	PI 5	0.872		

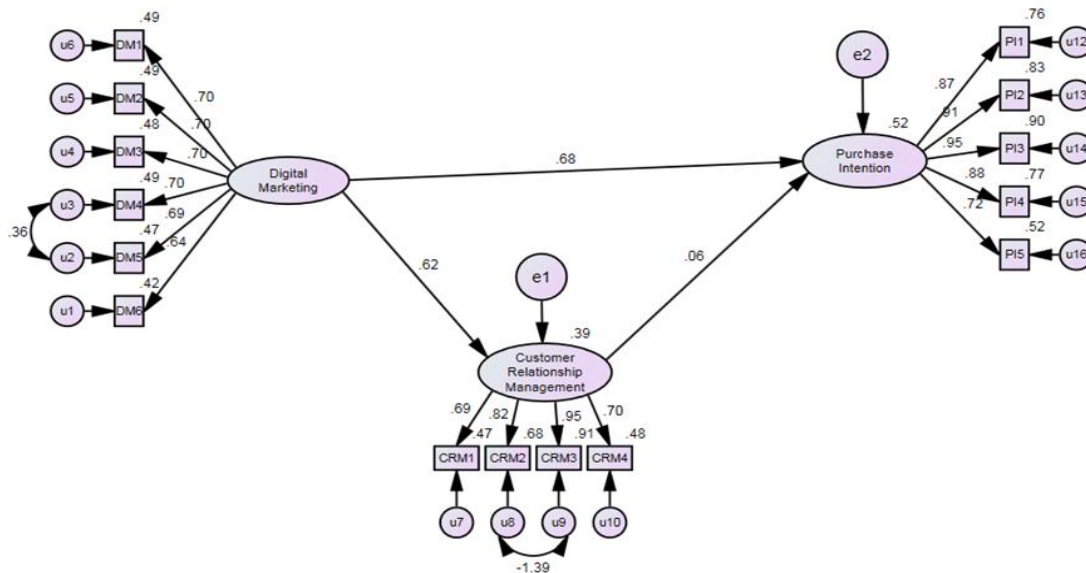


Figure-3. SEM.

Table-8. Evaluation of fitness of a structural model.

Category	Index	Level of Acceptance	Index Value	Comments
Absolute Fit	Chi-Square	P-Values > 0.05	0.000	Supported
	RMSEA	< 0.08	0.066	Good Fit
Incremental Fit	GFI	> 0.90	0.907	Acceptable
	AGFI	> 0.90	0.868	The required level is not achieved
	CFI	> 0.90	0.962	Acceptable
	TLI	> 0.90	0.953	Acceptable
Parsimonious Fit	NFI	> 0.90	0.923	Acceptable
	Chisq / df	< 3.0	1.873	Acceptable

Figure 3 displays SEM path diagram followed by table 8 which lists index values of the SEM. There are several ways to assess the validity of the structural model. One way is to assess the indices, such as chi-square, normed chi-square, CFI, and RMSEA (Hair et al., 2009). For the above structural model, Chisq was significant (P < 0.05); RMSEA (0.066) indicated good fit; and values of GFI (0.907), CFI (0.962), TLI (0.953), and NFI (0.923), which are greater than 0.90, indicated the acceptable level of incremental fit.

4.7.2. Direct Impact Analysis

The direct impact of digital marketing on purchase intention was assessed through the structural model omitting CRM. The model was considered to be a good fit; it achieved an absolute fit (RMEA = 0.060, GFI = 0.942) and incremental fit (CFI = 0.980, TLI = 0.973, NFI = 0.953). Figure 4 shows SEM model for measuring such direct impact.

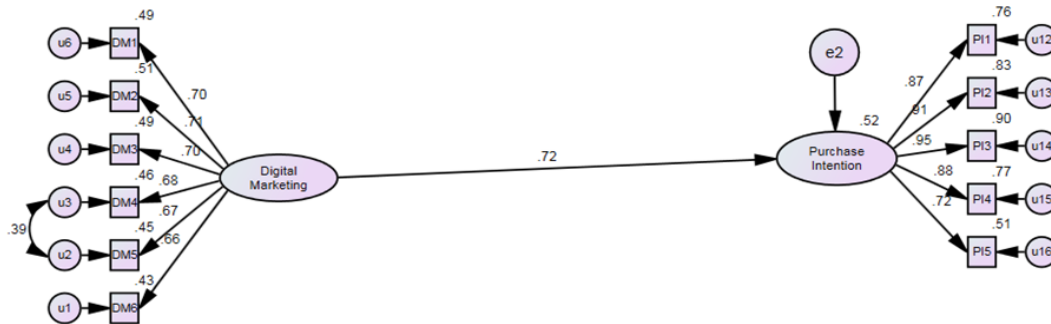


Figure-4. SEM Direct Impact.

4.8. Factor Loading Comparison

A comparison of factor loadings obtained from the CFA and SEM models was another way to measure the validity of the SEM model, only if the factor loadings for both models were very close (Hair et al., 2009). Table 9 indicates that both models had the same factor loading and that the models were validated as a good fit.

Table-9. Factor loading comparison.

Construct	Indicator	Measurement Model	Structural Model
DM	DM 1	0.699	0.699
	DM 2	0.703	0.703
	DM 3	0.696	0.696
	DM 4	0.701	0.701
	DM 5	0.687	0.687
	DM 6	0.645	0.645
CRM	CRM 1	0.686	0.686
	CRM 2	0.823	0.823
	CRM 3	0.955	0.955
	CRM 4	0.696	0.696
PI	PI 1	0.718	0.718
	PI 2	0.878	0.878
	PI 3	0.947	0.947
	PI 4	0.908	0.908
	PI 5	0.872	0.872

The overall model fitness and validity assessment showed that digital marketing had a positive and significant relationship between online purchase intention and CRM, which internally confirmed the acceptability and utility of the instrument to measure the impact of digital marketing on CRM and online purchase intention.

4.9. Hypotheses Testing

Table 10 reveals that the hypothesis was supported and validated because digital marketing had a positive impact on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.68, p < 0.001$). The beta (β) coefficient was positive and thus statistically significant. This explained why digital marketing increased by 0.68% when purchase intention increased by 1%.

The P-value for this variable was below the significance level ($P < 0.001$), and the sample evidenced to reject the null hypothesis; this demonstrated that the variable was statically significant and worth added to the regression model.

Table-10. Hypothesis testing.

	Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	SE	P-Value	Remarks
Direct Impact					
H 1	PI	DM	0.719	0.000	Accepted
Mediating effect					
H 2	CRM	DM	0.624	0.000	Accepted
H 3	PI	CRM	0.058	0.434	Not Significant
H 4	PI	DM	0.684	0.000	Accepted

According to similar studies by Lodhi and Shoaib (2017) digital marketing has a positive impact on online purchase intention because the researchers perceive the mandatory promotion via e-marketing for most products to be sold online. Rehmani and Khan (2011) also revealed that digital marketing with well-created content and the use of E-WOM have developed a positive purchase intention. As indicated earlier, digital marketing had a significant positive impact on purchase intention in this study; therefore, H1 is supported by digital marketing, which had a significant positive impact on CRM ($\beta = 0.624$, $P < 0.001$). Karami, Far, Abdollahian, and Khan (2013) found that website-based digital marketing is positively significant on e-CRM, which also supports this research. The CRM as such was greatly supported by positive digital marketing; thus, H2 was supported in this study. From Table 3, H3 was not supported because CRM did not produce a significant impact on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.058$, $P > 0.05$).

Moreover, this research tested the mediation effect on CRM between digital marketing and purchase intention using the Baron and Kenny (1986) method, including the final hypothesis, as well as testing the direct impact. This explained the path between the independent and dependent variables should be significant. Next, the path between the independent and mediator factors must also be significant, and finally, the path between the mediator and dependent variables must be significant too. The path between independent and dependent variables to the test mediator must be reduced considerably too. As H1 is proved, digital marketing had a significant impact on purchase intention, and from H2, digital marketing had a significant positive impact on CRM in order to satisfy the condition. However, from H3, CRM had a significant positive impact on purchase intention, so digital marketing mediation effect of CRM on purchase intention was invalid in this research. With H4, digital marketing had no significant impact on purchase intention (0.68) as well as digital marketing had a little impact on CRM-mediated purchase intention (0.038); H4 was therefore not supported.

5. CONCLUSION

Literature and empirical review have shown that digital marketing is a key factor that has a positive significant impact on purchase intention, with much support from previous research findings. In this study, digital marketing has a direct and positive significant impact on purchase intention. Digital marketing is therefore important to generate purchase intentions because consumers from all walks of life are technologically advanced and educated to use modern devices, such as smartphones, computers, tablets, and digital devices, which have become a part of their lives. The daily use of these devices offers consumers a good level of trust and adventure to try new approaches to online shopping, especially there are many ways to bridge them to products and services using a successful digital marketing method. Besides, innovation platforms are ready to offer consumers an effective communication with online communities, friends or unknown persons, to share the joy of using the product or to have an unsatisfactory emotional impact on purchase intention. Digital marketing helps businesses to satisfy their customers and increase revenues through personalisation, and ultimately results in customer retention. From this research, we conclude that an effective layout, quality content information, and an exchange of opinions will promote purchase intentions. However, the mediating effect of CRM does not promote a positive impact on purchase intention, nor does digital marketing has a positive impact on CRM in this study. This study also analysed the fact that e-consumers are receptive to content generation, such as review, quality information, and layout of digital marketing, serve better

response than CRM by providing quality service to build long-term relationships and updating customers consistently on various services to promote high-purchase intention.

Funding: This study received no specific financial support.

Competing Interests: The author declares that there are no conflicts of interests regarding the publication of this paper.

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