



Proposal

by Toni Koleva



Dissertation Proposal

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**The impact of digital marketing strategy on
consumer buying behavior in fashion industry
in the UK**



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Table Of Contents

1. Introduction	5
2. Rationale	5
3. Aims	6
4. Objectives	6
5. Questions	6
6. Literature Review	6
7. Researches	8
8. Research Methodology	8
a) Research Philosophy	9
b) Research approach	10
9. Research Strategy	10
10. Types of Investigation	10
a) Primary and secondary research	10
11. Research techniques	11
a) Choice of methodological data	11
b) Time Horizon	11
12. Data Collection and Analysis	12
a) Sampling	12
b) Data Collection method	13
c) Analysis of data	13
13. Research ethics and privacy	13
14. Research expenditure	14
15. Resource and planning	14
16. References and Bibliography	16

Topic - The impact of digital marketing strategy on consumer buying behaviour in fashion industry in the UK.

1. Introduction

Businesses plan their marketing strategy based on the consumer behaviour that they observe in the market. Marketing strategy is being widely used for long period of time by different types of business to gain competitive advantage in the market. The competitive advantage increases the scope for business to attract more customers (Minculete & Olar, 2018). This means that both consumer buying behaviour and digital marketing are linked to each other. Also, any change in consumer buying behaviour, it is necessary for business to change their marketing strategies as well. Digital marketing strategy helps business to economically use its resources and reduce its costs and thereby increase its sales. Although, with the availability of digital techniques and tools, the impact of marketing strategy has been effective in reaching targeted customers (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). Therefore, this research evaluates if UK fashion industry is effectively making use of present digital technologies that has impact on consumer behaviour.

2. Rationale

Fashion industry goes through continuous change in consumer expectation due to emergence of new trends, pricing expectation, brand image in the market. Furthermore, there exists cultural gap within generations that increases mixed response among consumers in UK fashion industry (Valaei & Nikhashemi, 2017). According to Tighe (2022), the consumer purchasing behaviour as of August 2021 gives the understanding that around 83% consumers use online source to gather information about products before shopping either offline or online. This means that digital marketing has vital role to play in consumer shopping behaviour. Therefore, it is important for carrying out research on understanding the consumer behaviour which provides direction for fashion industry to plan its digital marketing techniques effectively. Hence, the main aim of this research is to understand the impact of digital marketing strategy on consumer brand loyalty and its influence on consumer buying behaviour. This research will concentrate on availability of different digital marketing technologies and its effective usage by fashion industry. Furthermore, it will research on consumer brand loyalty which forms the basis for increased sales. Besides, the research will focus on consumer behaviour which is essential factor for fashion industry to introduce new trends to increase loyal consumers.

This research will provide opportunity to gain knowledge by referring several literature sources related to digital marketing impact on consumer buying behaviour in the fashion industry. Also, this research will help in developing logical and analytical skills while carrying out research and analysing research information. From the society perspective, this research will help the fashion industry to bring changes to digital marketing strategies based on respondents' opinion and increase positive impact on their brand loyal consumers and improve their buying behaviour.

3. Aims

To analyse the impact of digital marketing strategy on brand loyalty of consumer and its influence on buying behaviour in fashion industry in the UK.

4. Objectives

- a) To determine the current digital marketing strategies is utilized by companies in the fashion industry.
- b) To investigate the current social media marketing strategies to implemented in the fashion industry.
- c) To analyze the impact of social media on the brand loyalty of customers in the fashion industry.

5. Questions

- a) What are current digital marketing strategies is utilized by companies in fashion industry?
- b) What are the current social media marketing strategies to implemented by companies in the fashion industry.?
- c) What is the impact of social media marketing on the brand loyalty of customers in the fashion industry?

6. Literature Review

The main advantage of literature review is to understand the present situation of research topic by accessing to scholarly journals. However, the disadvantage is that even tough literature gaps are identified, they do not undergo application of suggested recommendations (Harris, 2019). Digital marketing also popularly known as online marketing is the key platform for business to advertise and promote their products and services and create brand image among online

customers (Gibson, 2018). Businesses have several platforms such as social media, email, Pay-Per-Click adverts in Search Engine Result Pages etc. to build brand awareness effectively to reach consumers. Besides, an effective digital marketing requires online consumer preference and buying behaviour assessment which will help to create attractive content, loyal consumer reviews, using appropriate key word search to increase website traffic etc. According to Chaffey & Smith (2017), there are several digital marketing theories which will help business to adopt and concentrate on improving their brand loyal consumers and their buying behaviour namely, Honeycomb model on social marketing, RACE digital marketing model etc.

RACE digital marketing model

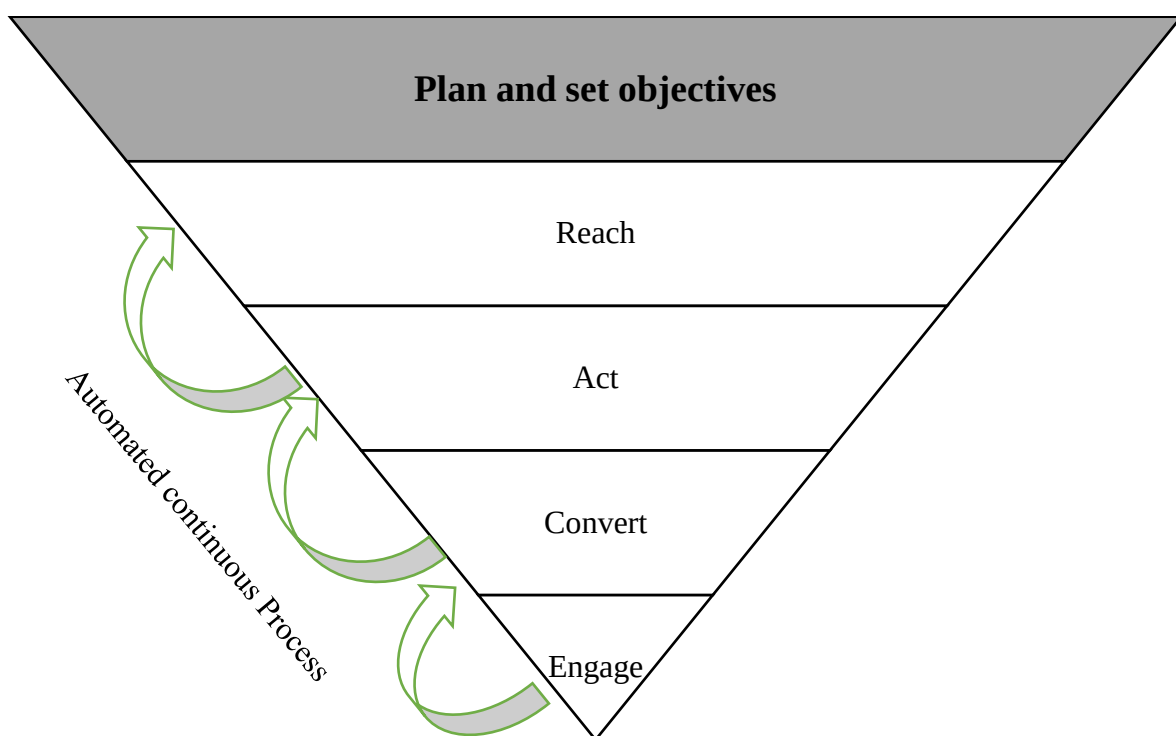


Figure 1: Source - Chaffey & Smith (2017)

Plan - The first step by the fashion industry to use the RACE digital marketing is to plan how the model will be used and set objectives to reach consumer effectively.

Reach – Get in touch with consumers through digital media platforms.

Act – Attract consumers with attractive fashion displays and content to enquire and increase interaction.

Convert – Create awareness by providing additional fashion information so as to initiate sale

Engage - Build loyal consumers by satisfying consumers with loyalty programs for repeat purchase.

Thus, RACE digital model will help to understand the digital marketing impact on brand loyal consumers in fashion industry.

Consumer behaviour is the preference and pattern adopted by different age group customers to purchase products and services during specific period of time. Business has different methods to study consumer buying behaviour (Gazzola & Pavione, 2020). It is important to understand the consumer buying pattern as it increases chances for business to make further developments and launch new products that suits customer expectation and thereby becomes consumer buying preference (Kaisa Vehmas, 2018). Similarly, there are several theories on consumer buying behaviour that explains about consumer preferences and expectation from social, psychological and economical aspects. The major theories that focus on consumer behaviour are Maslow's psychological theory, social cultural theory etc. These behavioural theories provide knowledge about consumer psychology of buying behaviour which involve aspects such as preferred clothing, availability of expected clothing in online shopping, analysis of product quality, pricing and loyalty program details of brand and finally get satisfied with shopping (Szmigin & Piacentini, 2018). Since digital marketing and consumer behaviour are interlinked, the key gap according to Parsons & Maclaran (2017), is that consumer expectancy from business does not match with the exposure level of digital marketing adopted by business. Therefore, this research will address the issue of gap between consumer expectation and business digital marketing exposure in fashion industry.

7. Researches

With respect to the above digital marketing and consumer behaviour theories, it is necessary for researcher to carry out research and understand the impact of digital marketing on brand loyal consumer buying behaviour in UK that undergoes continuous change.

8. Research Methodology

Research methodology details about how the research will be carried out to collect primary data such as what information to gather, decide the respondent from whom data will be gathered, how information will be collected and analysed to achieve the research objective (Dawson, 2019). Research methodology can be developed with the help of research onion. Research onion is developed for carrying out research projects which has six layers that help

researcher to make choice of method with respect to research topic. This was designed by Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis and Adrian Thornbill in 2007 such that researcher can follow the stages and make right choices that helps in gathering primary information and analyse data to have answers for research questions (Saunders, et al., 2019). Below is the diagram of research onion that shows the layer or process as how to carryout research.

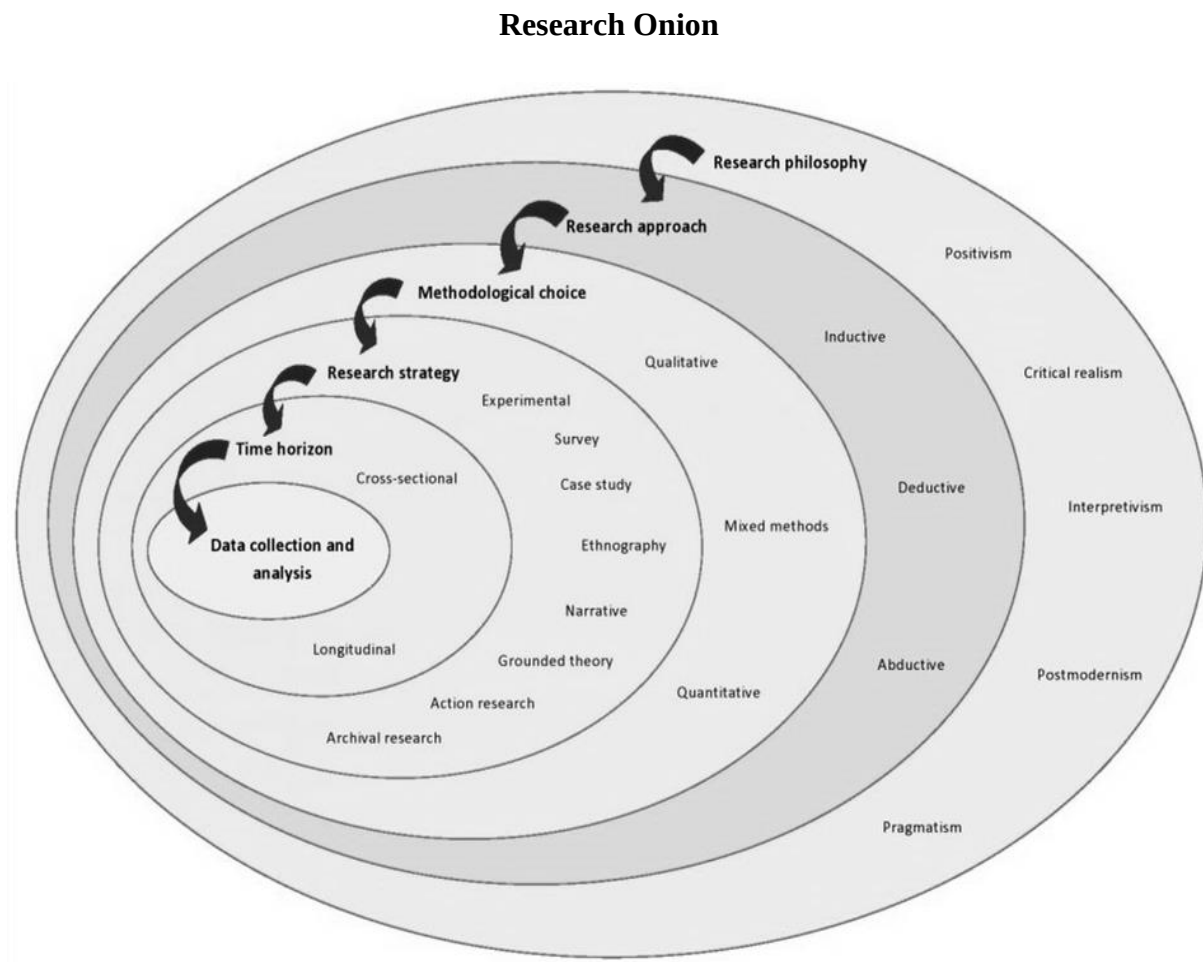


Figure 2: Source - Saunders, et al. (2019)

a) Research Philosophy

The most appropriate research philosophy for this research is positivism philosophy where the researcher can gather information through literature knowledge and data collected from focused society group of respondents (Remler & Ryzin, 2021). Since the consumer buying behaviour changes frequently and there is availability of theoretical knowledge on consumer behaviour and digital marketing, positivism research philosophy is more appropriate for this research. In this research, positivism philosophy allows to gather answer for research questions to achieve the research objective of analysing the digital marketing strategy on brand loyalty

of consumer and its influence on buying behaviour in fashion industry with primary data from respondents related to fashion industry consumers who use digital marketing.

b) Research approach

Deductive research approach means the approach where the theories and models are available related to research topic and there is no need to create new theories for the research topic (Bell & Bryman, 2019). The research topic being related to consumer behaviour and digital marketing, there are theories and models such as RACE model, Honeycomb model etc. to gather answers for research questions and thereby achieve the research objective of analysing the digital marketing strategy on brand loyalty of consumer and its influence on buying behaviour in fashion industry. Therefore, deductive research approach is more appropriate for this research.

9. Research Strategy

Research strategy means it helps the researcher to study the actual problem with respect to research topic and decide on the strategy as how the responses for research questions can be gathered (Bell & Bryman, 2019). For this research, survey research strategy is used since deductive method adopted from research approach is interconnected with survey method. Furthermore, survey method increases the scope for researcher to decide on going forward with survey plan and gather answers to the research questions effectively (Tom & Liam, 2021). For this research there is need to gather responses from consumer with reference to fashion industry and understand impact of their buying behaviour where the researcher gets clarity on how, from whom and when to gather answers for research questions. This means that, survey research strategy is more appropriate since the primary information is received from respondents who decide the trend of products and services in the fashion industry.

10. Types of Investigation

a) Primary and secondary research

In research methodology, investigation means studying information about research topic both from secondary as well as primary sources to get answers for research questions. Primary research method is collecting information from respondents related to research topic through questionnaire survey such that the responses answer the research questions. Secondary research

method is where information is gathered from literature sources such as books, journal papers etc. in relevance to research topic (Remler & Ryzin, 2021). In this research, primary source of new information will be collected from respondents through survey questionnaire related to fashion industry to gather answer for research questions. On the other hand, secondary source for this research will be literature review related to UK fashion industry consumer behaviour in digital marketing models and theories that will answer the consumer behaviour and digital marketing research questions. The answers gathered for research questions will lead to achieving the research objective that is to analyse the impact of digital marketing strategy on brand loyalty of consumer and its influence on buying behaviour in fashion industry.

11. Research techniques

a) Choice of methodology data

Quantitative research means to gather information from primary source that helps in analysing the responses in the form of numbers that provides result in statistics and leads towards solution to the research problem. On contrary, qualitative research means to gather opinions and views which are not numerical can takes longer time to understand and analyse (Oflazoglu, 2017). For this research, quantitative research method will be used to gather responses through survey questionnaire with close ended questions that helps in achieving the research objective of analysing the digital marketing strategy on brand loyalty of consumer and its influence on buying behaviour in fashion industry. This research will use mono method which means to use only one method to gather response using survey questionnaire.

According to Oflazoglu (2017), the advantages of using quantitative method for this research is that survey can be carried out with larger respondents to have wider view of research problem and the data result can be easily interpreted using numerical information. Furthermore, same survey can be executed with another set of respondents and numerical results can be compared for better analysis. The disadvantage of using quantitative method for this research would be that respondents' views are narrowed down within specific options that they have to choose from. This means that respondents do not get scope to provide their opinion for the survey questions. Additionally, choosing an unrelated sampling technique can provide wrong results.

b) Time Horizon

This research will use cross-sectional time horizon where research is carried out only once for short period of time (Bell & Bryman, 2019). Since this research will be carried out only once

by gathering responses from fashion industry respondents through questionnaire survey for quantitative information, it will take short time to complete research and thus mono method will be used.

12. Data Collection and Analysis

a) Sampling

Sample Size

The sample size for this research on digital marketing impact on brand loyalty of fashion industry consumer buying behaviour is 50 respondents. The survey questionnaire will be uploaded online through social media and email to gather consumer responses.

Sample type

The questionnaire survey will be collected from both male and female respondents as the research topic is related to consumer buying behaviour in fashion industry. Furthermore, the research will concentrate to collect responses from respondents between age group of 18 years and 60 years as this age group comprises of people pursuing higher education, business professionals and salaried people. Besides, the questionnaire survey will consider the responses from higher social class of respondents who frequently follow and shop for new trends and high price clothing in the fashion industry to achieve the research objective of analysing the digital marketing strategy on brand loyalty of consumer and its influence on buying behaviour in fashion industry.

Sampling method

Sampling in research is used to analyse the result using statistical methods. Sampling can be carried out either using probability method (choosing randomly from larger population) or non-probability method (targeting only specific set of population to be part of survey). In this research non-probability sampling will be used where the researcher can concentrate on responses only from upper social class respondents who agree to take up the survey. Further bifurcating the non-probability sampling, convenience sampling method will be used as the responses samples requirement is presence of specific respondents (upper class fashion industry consumers between the age group of 18 years to 60 years) and also their willingness to take up the survey.

b) Data Collection method

Data collection is the method of gathering responses from different individuals to analyse the information for research (Bell & Bryman, 2019). In this research, survey being the research strategy, questionnaire will be used to collect data from respondents who use digital marketing to shop clothing in fashion industry consumers using digital marketing. Since the research objective is to analyse the impact of digital marketing strategy on brand loyalty of consumer and its influence on buying behaviour in fashion industry, online questionnaire survey will be carried out. Also, to create the questions for survey questionnaire, survey monkey tool will be used. The questionnaire will contain 8-10 close ended questions. The questionnaire will contain 2 demographic questions and rest of the questions based on research question to achieve the research objective. Since this research will follow quantitative method for analysis, the questions will be in the form of multiple choice, rating scale, Likert's scale and matrix Likert's scale. Since the respondents will be surveyed online, they will have to answer and submit the questionnaire survey within the time limit of 15 minutes.

c) Analysis of data

The analysis of quantitative data is another key aspect in research that provides information in the form of statistical result that becomes basis for researcher to draw solutions. Furthermore, quantitative data will be analysed from responses gathered through questionnaire survey (Dawson, 2019). Furthermore, in this research, Microsoft excel will be used to analyse and calculate the survey responses which will be quantitative and are presented in the form of table. Additionally, Microsoft Excel will be used to present the findings in the form of graphs and charts.

13. Research ethics and privacy

Research ethics means the awareness that a researcher must gain before carrying out research. Research ethics will help researcher to understand what has to be practiced while executing research which involves people interaction to gather responses. These practices safeguard the interest of public who will involve in survey as well as protect researcher from unnecessary issues (Woodfield, 2017). Since the researcher have to gather information through online source for this research it becomes necessary to carry out survey only with prior consent from people interested to provide responses.

According to Woodfield (2017), data privacy is important in online research as the responses are individual's personal opinion based on their experience. This research will follow the UK Data Protection Act 2018 to protect survey responses submitted by respondents.

14. Research expenditure

According to Remler & Ryzin (2021), budgeting for any research helps researcher to have an idea as approximately how much will be the expenses while carrying out the research. Furthermore, allocating expenses for each research activity will give idea as where the researcher will require to spend more.

Budgeted cost for Digital marketing strategy and consumer behaviour research

Research Activities	Budgeted costs (in £)
Online data usage to identify research area of interest.	10
Gather literature information for research - Purchase books and use online resource (data usage cost).	50
Research process - online survey - upload questionnaire and collect responses (data usage cost).	20
Budgeted total research cost	80

Table 1: Source – Made by Toni Koleva (2022)

The budgeted expenditure for this research is at approximately £80 which majorly comprise of literature references and internet data usage for online survey. Also, researcher does not have to travel to collect responses from customers.

15. Resource and planning

According to Harris (2019), resource and planning are an important part of research that allows researcher to plan the research schedule based on availability of time, identify access to literature materials, preparing online questionnaire and generate survey distribution and gathering ideas etc.

Research resource plan

Research Activities	Weeks									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Introduction (background, rationale of the study, aim, research objectives, research questions)										
Literature review										
Research methodology										
Creating the questionnaire/interview questions										
Collection of data										
Analysis of data										
Discussion/Interpretation of data										
Conclusion and recommendations										

Table 2: Source – Made by Toni Koleva (2022)

The above research resource and planning reveals that this research will require approximately 10 weeks to complete.

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