

Consumer Acceptance Towards Digital Marketing: A Quantitative Study Among Consumers in Kuala Lumpur

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Abstract

This research project aims to investigate the acceptance of digital marketing among consumers in Kuala Lumpur. By examining the digital marketing landscape and its impact on consumer behaviour, this study seeks to uncover the factors that influence consumers' attitudes and behaviours towards digital marketing strategies. To achieve this, the research project formulates research questions and develops three hypotheses, which are subsequently tested. The study incorporates a comprehensive review of relevant literature to provide insights into the acceptance of digital marketing and to substantiate the research inquiries and challenges. Primary data were collected through a survey questionnaire distributed to 150 respondents who are consumers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. This research is conducted by using a quantitative research method, and the primary data collected were analysed by using the Social Science Statistics Package (SPSS) software. The major findings of the study shed light on the intricate relationship between the effectiveness of electronic word of mouth, trust established through data security measures, and environmental friendliness, all of which contribute to consumer awareness and acceptance of digital marketing. This research project provides insights that can contribute to a deeper understanding of consumer behaviour in the context of digital marketing and offers implications for businesses aiming to enhance their digital marketing strategies and outcomes.

Keywords: *Digital Marketing, Consumer Behaviour, Search Engine Optimisation, Influencer Marketing, Word of Mouth*

1.0 Introduction

Marketing through digital platforms, known as digital marketing, enables companies to engage in the virtual market, complementing traditional marketing. It can be described as 'achieving marketing objectives using the application of digital technologies' (Chaffey, 2013). The use of technologies such as the Internet, Web 2.0, and the World Wide Web (WWW) facilitates the marketing communication of products and services to a large customer base, meeting their needs.

Digital platforms have revolutionized how companies engage with today's consumers. A large percentage of the world's consumers own and utilize computers or mobile devices, leading to an increase in digital advertising expenses by businesses. Marketers utilize the benefits of social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest, and LinkedIn to spread their marketing messages to targeted audiences. However, despite the growth of digital marketing in recent years, it is important to understand the level of acceptance among consumers towards marketing and promotions displayed on these platforms. Do these digital marketing activities motivate them to consume products of their choice, or otherwise?

Businesses in the developed world have recognized the importance of digital marketing. Consequently, businesses must engage with the communication network, i.e., the Internet, which plays a crucial role in transmitting information among users. Moreover, by owning websites, businesses can display a wealth of information and offerings, reaching targeted customers virtually. Therefore, online advertising serves as a powerful marketing engine for establishing brands and driving traffic, enabling businesses to flourish (Kiani, 1998)."

Digital marketing has largely replaced traditional advertising and marketing strategies. The rapid spread of smartphones used by youths has dramatically altered the consumer retail experience in various developed markets, indicating the shift towards digital marketing and online shopping. Furthermore, the growth of Internet technology reduces the cost of product and service delivery while connecting customers and sellers across geographical boundaries (Thompson, 2005). Small businesses can also leverage the Internet to access global markets and establish an online presence that gives them a competitive edge.

Since the late 2010s, there has been an explosion of research centred around the theme of digital marketing, involving the application of various theories and models. This surge is attributed to the emergence of the digitalization trend, where everything is transitioning from physical to digital, including marketing. With the increasing number of studies focusing on different concepts, applications, and mismatches, there is a risk of the field stagnating and lacking robustness. As time progresses, the utilization of digital marketing methods is also advancing. Therefore, there is a significant need for systematization and organization in this study to contribute to the advancement of this field.

1.1 Statement of Problem

Essentially, the importance of marketing has been growing over the last few decades. This can be observed through the 75% growth rate in marketing fees incurred by businesses per year (Gangeshwer, 2013). In this context, traditional marketing requires higher costs to reach the targeted audience. However, businesses can potentially reach more audiences with zero marketing costs through electronic word of mouth (E-WOM). E-WOM leverages social media platforms for messages to be transmitted and exchanged among users (Roy, 2019).

Nevertheless, despite the convenience of using E-WOM, issues arise, such as consumers' awareness of the information obtained from social media (Armitage, 2015). Unlike traditional word-of-mouth (WOM) through print and electronic media, E-WOM relays information among users online and in real-time, creating awareness through a chain of messages posted on social media platforms. Therefore, the question remains: Can E-WOM effectively communicate marketing messages through digital marketing platforms?

In addition, with the emergence of the digital network, consumers are exposed to online deception and misinformation through anonymous user-generated content. When making online purchases, consumers often leave digital footprints of their purchase history, spending patterns, credit card information, and other personal details. Consequently, privacy concerns have become more prevalent (Nath, 2013). In the absence of online security measures, issues such as identity theft and data breaches could impact consumers' trust in online transactions via digital marketing. The problem of consumer mistrust is particularly significant for the growth of online marketing, as highlighted by The Office of Fair Trading (OFT), where 30% of consumers refrain from online shopping due to a lack of confidence in online security. Additionally, 15% simply do not trust online businesses. Hence, this research aims to investigate consumers' trustworthiness of digital marketing when it involves the transmission of information between users.

Lastly, environmental issues such as global warming and the greenhouse effect result from human behaviour exploiting natural resources and damaging the green environment. Consequently, the impact of major industrial disasters and the efforts of environmental activist groups have popularized eco-friendly awareness among consumers over the last decade (Alamsyah, 2020). This is also known as green awareness, which has an impact on consumer behaviour, leading them towards more environmentally friendly actions. This is exemplified by the energy-saving movement and the shift towards environmentally conscious consumption (Simge, 2019).

Traditional marketing practices utilize channels such as flyers, newspapers, books, and magazines to advertise and promote products and services. These methods often involve the use of paper, which can lead to wastage if not properly utilized. Many advertisers distribute brochures and flyers to consumers, which may end up discarded in dustbins or by the roadside. This ultimately results in wastage and environmental pollution (Purnama, 2020). However, digital marketing eliminates such wastage as it operates virtually (Yao, 2019). Therefore, does the virtual environment of digital marketing provide an eco-friendly scenario that encourages consumers to embrace it?" The following research questions were developed:

- Is there a relationship between digital marketing acceptance with its effectiveness through word of mouth?
- Is there a relationship between digital marketing acceptance with its trust through data security?
- Is there a relationship between digital marketing acceptance with its environmental friendly?

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Digital Marketing Acceptance

Digital marketing can be defined as "the practice of promoting products and services using digital distribution channels via computers, mobile phones, smartphones, or other digital devices, or the promotion of goods and services using digital technologies, primarily on the Internet. It also includes devices such as mobile phones, display advertising, and any other digital medium." The main categories of digital marketing include Content Marketing, Search Engine Optimization, Search Engine Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Website Advertisement, Video Advertisement, Influencer Marketing, and Email Marketing (Chaffey, 2013).

Acceptance can be defined as the quality or state of being accepted or acceptable, or the general agreement that something is right or satisfactory. However, over half of the studies examined do not provide a clear definition of acceptance. Therefore, in this study, the acceptance of digital marketing might be defined as the willingness of consumers to embrace the use of digital marketing in their daily lives (Hitzeroth, 2013).

2.2 Effectiveness through Electronic Word of Mouth

Effectiveness is a topic that commands special attention from all businesses as they continually seek new ways to meet client expectations (Wolsink, 2012). Consequently, the measurements employed to evaluate the efficiency of company activities should be tailored to the specific activities, products, and services provided. Within an integrated marketing communication framework, online marketing effectiveness refers to the extent to which an organization's online efforts can be measured over time. Criteria such as the number of unique visitors, the number of pages viewed per visit (bounce rate), the number of repeat visits, the duration an individual visitor spends on the website per visit, visitor behaviour, the number of comments on posts, and the volume of emails received from customers are all factors that the literature has identified as aiding organizations in gauging the success of their online marketing endeavours (Strauss & Raymond, 1999). The longevity of a visitor's stay on a website is directly proportional to the strength of the relationship that develops over time. Furthermore, the impact of an advertisement on an organization's goods or services directly influences the volume of visitors or traffic a webpage attracts. Often, determining if an advertisement's or promotion's intended purpose has been achieved necessitates observing how visitors interact with the website.

E-WOM has emerged as one of the most crucial sources of information on the Internet (Abubakar and Ilkan, 2016), enabling consumers to influence one another by providing access to and exchange information about companies, products, or brands. Litvin et al. (2008) presented a comprehensive definition of E-WOM, describing it as 'any informal communication via the Internet aimed at consumers and connected to the consumption or quality of goods or services or the sellers thereof.'

E-WOM empowers consumers to share their ideas and opinions with fellow users through the Internet. When seeking product or service information, consumers now turn to E-WOM over traditional word-of-mouth recommendations from friends and family (Nieto et al., 2014). As a result, individuals from around the world can leave comments, allowing other users to swiftly glean insights into products and services. E-WOM offers an advantage over traditional word

of mouth (WOM) by enabling businesses to understand what prompts customers to share their ideas online and gauge the impact of such feedback on others. On the other hand, consumers use this technology to express their views about products or services.

However, E-WOM encounters certain challenges. Its credibility as a source of information can impact consumer attitudes towards products or services. According to Luo et al. (2013), the anonymity of online messages through E-WOM might diminish their reliability. Nevertheless, E-WOM messages spread significantly faster than WOM statements due to their online publication (Gupta and Harris, 2010). E-WOM diverges from traditional WOM by employing online platforms for sharing information, including social media, websites, and blogs.

2.3 Trust through Data Security

Trust is discussed across a range of disciplines, including philosophy, sociology, politics, and economics. F. Fukuyama refers to trust as a moral framework in which culture permeates economic activity, and social trust is deemed critical (Fukuyama, 1995). Nevertheless, trust in digital marketing is crucial, as it forms the foundation of collaborative principles that underscore brand credibility and inspire confidence in consumer behaviour toward businesses' products and services. Generally, this encompasses privacy issues such as consumers' willingness to disclose their details, as well as consumer behaviour captured through their online activities, including click-throughs on websites' cookies and the acceptability of advertisements.

Furthermore, trust has been explored as a fundamental mediating mechanism in customers' willingness to engage with online and mobile platforms of businesses (Aiken and Boush, 2006; Bart et al., 2005; Schlosser et al., 2006). According to Bart et al. (2005), "online trust encompasses consumer impressions of how the site would deliver on expectations, how believable the site's material is, and how much confidence the site commands." Third-party authentication seals have become common techniques for e-commerce businesses to establish their trustworthiness in terms of security. These authentication seals include the Seal of Trust, WebTrust, VeriSign, and Truste. Site security is also an indicator of reliability, with authorization, authentication, and privacy statements being examples of security measures. Professionalism, architecture, navigation, ease of use, and responsiveness to inquiries are all evidence of a trustworthy website (Bart et al., 2005).

Privacy and security were crucial components that online businesses addressed to gain online customer confidence when the Internet was in its infancy, and they were often recognized as antecedents to trust. As the Internet has matured, consumers have come to expect more from online businesses, leading to heightened requirements for trust (Shankar, Urban, and Sultan, 2002). Data privacy and security have become the new benchmarks for determining whether an online shop is trustworthy. Despite security advancements, issues like viruses, identity theft, and phishing persist. Sellers' efforts on their websites are a manifestation of vigilance regarding privacy and security, and this expectation needs to be met. A company's credibility might be compromised if its website's privacy policies are not explicit and unequivocal about data usage. Transparency concerns could undermine trust. Hence, the privacy and security aspects of digital marketing tools are pivotal in determining consumers' trust in digital marketing.

2.4 Environment Friendly

Moreover, marketers could upload as much information on websites, whether business-owned websites, social media or blogs for promotion that avoids face-to-face interactions, and usage of papers and other printing material. Therefore, consumer interest in purchasing eco-friendly items is also motivated by greater environmental understanding, which also improves customer consumption patterns (Rashid, 2009) which leads to digital marketing adoption.

Environmental awareness is described by Ham et al. (2016, p. 160) as 'the attitude toward the environmental repercussions of human behaviour,' and environmental knowledge refers to a customer's understanding of their environment in relation to the things being used (Suki et al., 2016). In the context of digital marketing, consumers are not only becoming increasingly selective in choosing their products and services for consumption but they are also influenced by the desire for greener items (Rizwan et al., 2014) and more sustainable purchasing processes. Hence, digital marketing could contribute to a greener environment, as the marketing information required by consumers is available online.

Moreover, marketers can upload ample information on websites, including owned business websites, social media, and blogs for promotion. This approach avoids face-to-face interactions and reduces the usage of paper and other printing materials. Consequently, consumer interest in purchasing eco-friendly items is also driven by a heightened environmental understanding, which in turn enhances customer consumption patterns (Rashid, 2009) and leads to the adoption of digital marketing.

Digital marketing, a novel marketing approach, is also an environmentally friendly method that contrasts favourably with traditional marketing in terms of environmental protection. It diminishes the greenhouse effects associated with the display and communication of all products and services via websites, thereby eliminating wastage in paper consumption as well as the printing and publishing of magazines, newspapers, and brochures, which could contribute to the greenhouse effect. Additionally, it curtails air pollution caused by transportation activities necessary for the distribution of marketing materials to distributors.

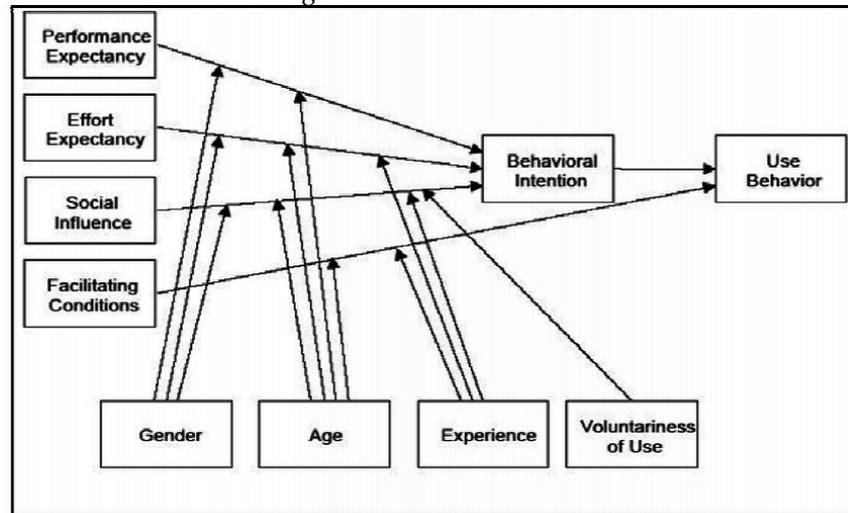
2.5 Review of relevant Theoretical Model – UTAUT

The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) model was employed in this study. Venkatesh and others developed the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT) as a technology acceptance model in "User acceptance of information technology: Toward a unified vision." The UTAUT aims to explain the differences between how users desire to use an information system and how they utilise it. Four basic characteristics (performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions) are direct predictors of behavioural intention and, ultimately, behaviour, according to Figure 1, and these constructs are modulated by gender, age, experience, and voluntariness of usage.

Researchers and practitioners will be able to analyse a person's desire to use a system by evaluating the presence of each of these components in a "real world" setting, allowing for the identification of the factors that have the most impact on acceptance in each context. In the UTAUT paradigm, performance expectations, effort expectations, and social factors all have direct effects on behavioural intention, which has direct consequences for use behaviour. Interactions of age and gender with performance expectancy, effort expectancy, and social factors; interactions of experience with effort expectancy and social factors; and interaction of voluntariness of usage and social factors on behavioural intention are all taken into account.

Finally, use behaviour is influenced by interactions between age and facilitating factors, as well as experience and facilitating situations (Venkatesh et al. 2003)

Figure 1- UTAUT Model



2.6 Proposed Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development

Based on the previous research model of UTAUT, this study has generated a new conceptual framework that shows the relationship between the independent variables of effectiveness through electronic word of mouth, trust through data security and environment friendly with the dependent variable of digital marketing acceptance from the consumer in Kuala Lumpur. It is finding out the relationship between the three variables and the acceptance of digital marketing. In this study, the theory of performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and facilitating condition would be used in the model. The first independent variable of effectiveness through electronic word of mouth is based on the combination of performance expectancy and effort expectancy. The degree to which an individual believes that employing a system would assist him or her in improving job performance is referred to as performance expectancy while the ease with which an information system may be used is referred to as effort expectancy (Venkatesh et al., 2003). The definition of both terms is identical to the definition of effectiveness, which is using small effort(input) to transform into big results (output).

Thus, in this research model, the variable of 'effectiveness' would replace 'performance expectancy' and 'effort expectancy,' combining both terms to explain their impact on digital marketing acceptance. The study will investigate how electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) contributes to consumer effectiveness in terms of ease of use and enhancing their experience when searching for products or participating in marketing. According to Jalilvand and Samiei (2012), E-WOM consists of statements, whether negative or positive, grounded in real previous or potential customer experiences regarding a brand or company. This opinion holds significant importance for individuals or companies through social media. E-WOM has evolved into a pivotal platform for customers to share feedback and experiences, offering insights to potential customers. It is regarded as a more effective approach than the traditional word-of-mouth method for consumers to disseminate information.

The ease of information sharing via word-of-mouth aids consumers in the information-gathering process, simplifying the process of searching for information. This increased ease could potentially contribute to the acceptance of digital marketing in the consumer's mindset. Consequently, the following hypothesis has been formulated:

H1: There is a significant relationship between effectiveness through electronic word of mouth with digital marketing acceptance among consumers.

Hence, it is assumed that the condition must be trustful for them to use digital marketing securely. Data security which is a new form of security need might be an important aspect in facilitating conditions for consumers to accept digital marketing. D. S. Kennedy and M. Zagula (2012) emphasized the important role of trust in business and marketing. In this study, they examine the crucial tactics required to increase trust and confidence in an unreliable world, which would help to produce corporate profits and effectiveness of marketing. It is believed that trust is the key to the success of marketing. It plays a crucial role in a digital society, while data protection is the key element of the building of trust. Data privacy and security have become the new benchmarks for determining whether an online shop or its digital marketing is trustworthy.

Trust, with data security as its foundation, is predicated on the facilitating condition from the UTAUT model. Facilitating conditions, as a UTAUT concept, pertain to an individual's perception of the availability of organizational and technical infrastructures necessary for utilizing the planned system (Ghalandari, 2012). Facilitating conditions encompass factors in the environment that allow consumers to feel secure when engaging in digital marketing. Hence, it is assumed that the conditions must inspire trust for consumers to securely use digital marketing. Data security, emerging as a novel facet of security needs, likely constitutes a pivotal element as a facilitating condition for consumers to embrace digital marketing.

D. S. Kennedy and M. Zagula (2012) have underscored the significant role of trust in business and marketing. In their study, they explore critical tactics required to enhance trust and confidence in an unpredictable world, thereby contributing to corporate profitability and the effectiveness of marketing. Trust is believed to be the cornerstone of marketing success, playing a pivotal role in a digital society, where data protection stands as a crucial pillar in establishing trust. Data privacy and security have become the new benchmark for evaluating the trustworthiness of online shops or their digital marketing endeavours. Thus, the following hypothesis has been formulated:

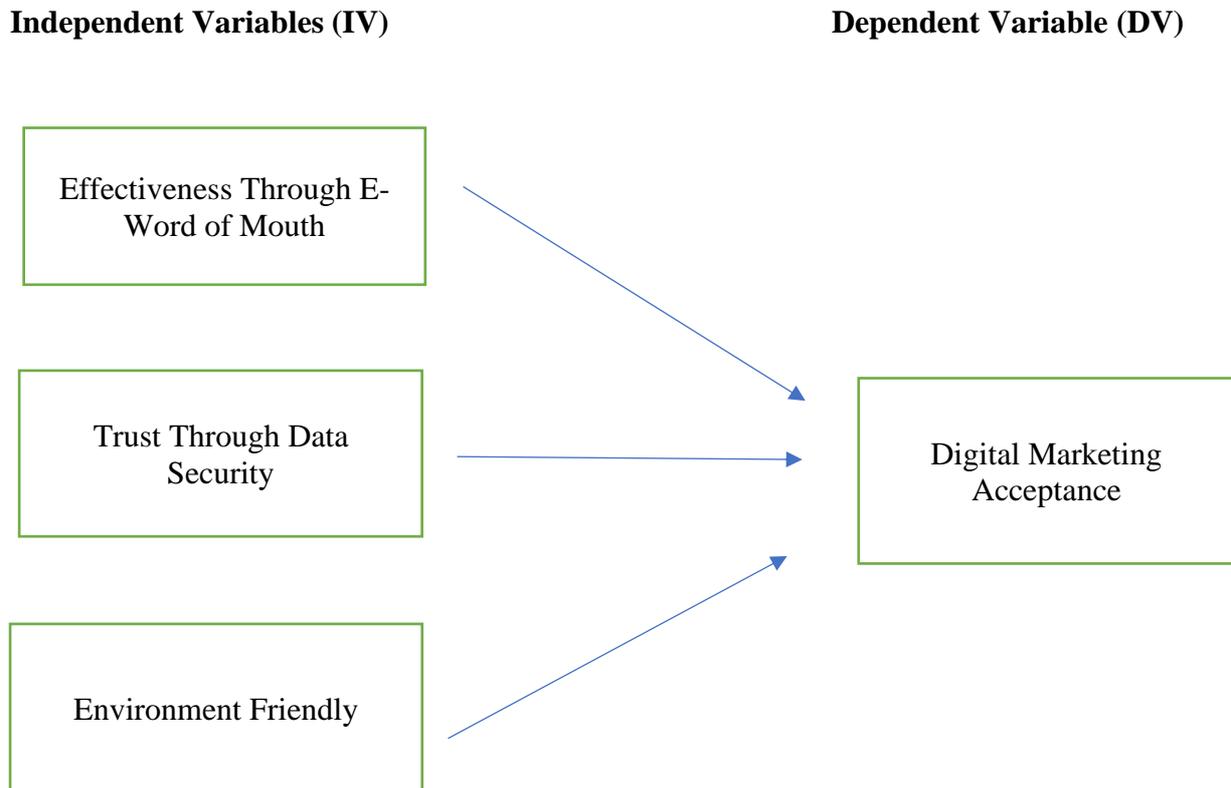
H2: There is a significant relationship between trust through data security with digital marketing acceptance among consumers.

Environment-friendly is based on the social influence of the UTAUT model. The process by which the presence or conduct of others influences a Consumer Acceptance Towards Digital Marketing. Factors namely individual's attitudes, beliefs and behaviour are known as social influence. As mentioned, green awareness is one of the most popular concepts nowadays. It might largely influence the behaviour of individuals, including individuals to adopt technology such as digital marketing. Environment-friendly awareness might be a type of social influence for consumers to choose a greener choice of marketing method, which is digital marketing. To be accepted by a social system which emphasizes environment friendly, the consumer might be influenced to accept digital marketing, which might be a type of marketing method that is more environment friendly where less greenhouse emissions and healthier to communicate

virtually. Hence, this study will investigate the consumer perspective of green awareness that might influence them to adopt digital marketing. The following hypothesis has been developed:

H3: There is a significant relationship between environment friendly with digital marketing acceptance among consumers.

Figure 2- Proposed Conceptual Framework



3.0 Research Methodology

This project's research methodology is quantitative research. It is generally applied in data collection techniques that include numerical measurement and quantum. The goal of this study is to collect and analyse all numerical data collected from a survey through a set of questionnaires (Burns and Bush, 2006), and to observe the acceptability of digital marketing in Kuala Lumpur. Upon the completion of data collection, three hypotheses would be tested in fulfilling research objectives. It could thus be used to determine the results of the relationships between independent and dependent variables as identified in this research.

4.0 Demographic Analysis

In this research, demographic analysis consists of research data namely respondents' profiles such as gender, age, educational background, occupation, monthly income, and social media usage. The number of respondents to this survey was 120.

4.1. Gender

Table 1 shows that there are 120 respondents participated in the study. The demographic breakdown shows that 61 males (50.8%) and 59 females (49.2%) made up the sample. It can be determined that a sizable number of the survey respondents who took part in this study were male, and the gender proportion is well-balanced.

Table 1: Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	61	50.8
Female	59	49.2
Total	120	100

4.2 Age

Table 2 shows the age distribution of the respondents. There are 5 groups of respondents, and they are “0-14 years (children)”, “15-24 years (early working age)”, “25-54 years (prime working age)”, “55-64 years (mature working age)” and “65 years and over (elderly)”. Over half of the respondents are from the early working age group while 30.8% are from prime working age.

Table 2: Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
14 years old and below	14	11.7
15 to 24 years old	61	50.8
25 to 54 years old	37	30.8
55 to 64 years old	7	5.8
65 years old and above	1	0.9
Total	120	100

4.3 Highest Level of Education

Table 3 shows the respondents’ education level. There are five categories of education levels identified in this research, where the vast majority (50.8%) of respondents are in the group of bachelor’s degree holders, 25 respondents (20.8%) with diploma, 18 respondents (15 %) are certificate and equivalent, 12 respondents (10 %) are from Master’s Degree, and 4 respondents (3.4 %) with PHD.

Table 3: Income Level

Income	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than RM4,850	83	69.2
RM4,895 to RM10,959	29	24.2
Above RM10,959	8	6.6
Total	120	100

4.4 Monthly Income

Table 4 shows the monthly income level of the respondents. They are categorised into 3 groups, which are less than “RM4,850 (B40)”, “RM4,895 to RM10,959 (M40)” and “above RM10,959 (T20)”. Based on the above statistic, it could be seen that the majority (69%) of respondents are from the B40 group, 24% are from the M40 group and only 6.6% are from the T20 group.

Table 4: Income Level

Income	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than RM4,850	83	69.2
RM4,895 to RM10,959	29	24.2
Above RM10,959	8	6.6
Total	120	100

4.5 Types of Digital Marketing Activities

Table 5 shows various digital marketing activities in which respondents have been involved, engaged, and participated. It can be seen that 85% of respondents had experienced social media advertisement, which is the highest of all digital marketing activities. It is followed by website advertisement (76.7%) and video advertisement (75%). Among the 8 activities, blog (43.3%), Wikipedia (45%) and email (47.5%) are the three lowest involvement activities.

Table 5: Digital Marketing Activities

Activities	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Search Engine Optimisation	70	58.3
Wikipedia	54	45
Blog	52	43.3
Influencer Marketing	87	72.5
Social Media Advertisement	102	85
Website Advertisement	92	76.7
Video Advertisement	90	75
Email Marketing	57	47.5

4.6 Involvement in Digital Marketing Activities

Table 6 shows the degree of involvement in digital marketing. Thus, it can be seen that over 90% of respondents have realized their involvement in digital marketing activities, while 48.3% think they have always been involved in it. Only 10 respondents think that they rarely get involved in digital marketing activities in their daily lives.

Table 6: Level of Involvement in Digital Marketing Activities

Involvement	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Always	58	48.3
Sometimes	52	43.3
Rarely	10	8.4
Total	120	100

4.7 Partially Influence on Digital Marketing

Table 7 shows the respondents who are partially influenced by digital marketing. 85% (or 102) of the respondents have realized that they were partially influenced by digital marketing in their daily lives in relation to online purchases. Only 15% (or 18) of them were never partially influenced by digital marketing.

Table 7: Partially Influence on Digital Marketing

Influence	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	102	85
No	18	15
Total	120	100

4.8 Fully Influence on Digital Marketing

Table 8 shows that 70% (or 84) of the respondents have realized that they have been fully influenced by digital marketing in their daily lives to make online purchases. There are 30% (or 36) of them who realized they are not fully influenced by digital marketing.

Table 8: Fully Influence on Digital Marketing

Influence	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	84	70
No	36	30
Total	120	100

4.9 Descriptive Statistics on Variables

Table 9 shows a statistical analysis of independent variables, including mean and standard deviation testing. The mean is a metric that assesses where a random variable's distribution is centred. It is a significant statistic that is frequently mentioned in scientific literature. The higher the mean, the higher the level of agreement from the respondents towards the variable asked. In this study, effectiveness through E-WOM has been ranked the highest in terms of the mean (4.214), followed by environment-friendly (4.005). Trust through data security ranked third as its mean is the lowest (3.568). Standard deviation demonstrates how different things are from the standard (mean). A high standard deviation shows that the data are dispersed throughout a wide range of values, while a low standard deviation suggests that the data points tend to be near the mean. In this case, trust through data security has the highest standard deviation of 0.7696, followed by environment-friendly with 0.5983 and effectiveness through E-WOM with 0.4010.

Table 9: Descriptive Statistic of Variables

Variables	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Ranking
Effectiveness Through E-WOM	120	4.214	0.4010	1
Trust Through Data Security	120	3.568	0.7696	3
Environment Friendly	120	4.005	0.5983	2

4.10 Pearson Correlation Analysis

A statistical method called Pearson correlation analysis is used to ascertain the significance and relationship between independent and dependent variables that are statistically analysed and constant. This type of analysis is used to look at potential links between variables. When one variable has a systematic shift at the same time as another throughout a specific timeframe, the significance of the correlation between the two variables may be assessed. Additionally, the quantitative values reported, which may be both positively and negatively correlated, may affect the significance of the association (Hauke & Kosowski,2012).

Table 10: Pearson Correlation Analysis

		Effectiveness through WOM (IV1)	Trust through Data Security (IV2)	Environment Friendly (IV3)	Digital Marketing Acceptance (DV)
Effectiveness through E-WOM (IV1)	Pearson Correlation	1	0.283673947	0.307879158	0.447061888
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	120	120	120	120
Trust through Data Security (IV2)	Pearson Correlation	0.283673947	1	0.572746272	0.394403805
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	120	120	120	120
Environment Friendly (IV3)	Pearson Correlation	0.307879158	0.572746272	1	0.574546317
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	120	120	120	120
Digital Marketing Acceptance (DV)	Pearson Correlation	0.447061888	0.394403805	0.574546317	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	120	120	120	120

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 10 shows the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Digital marketing acceptance (DV) is the dependent variable and effectiveness through E-WOM(IV1), trust through data security (IV2), and environment friendly (IV3) are the independent variables. The correlation analysis of the investigation must have evaluated Pearson correlation, significance, and N values for each of the variables. The correlation of each independent variable is significant at 0.01 levels, two-tailed toward the dependent variable. The result also shows that there is a positive relationship between all independent variables and dependant. The value between IV1 and DV is 0.447, while IV2 is 0.394 and perceived IV3 is 0.575. As a result, the variable of environment friendly has shown the strongest positive relationship with digital marketing acceptance, followed by the effectiveness through E-WOM and trust through data security.

4.11 Linear Regression Analysis

4.11.1 Effectiveness Through Electronic Word of Mouth

Table 11 shows that R Square is 0.1999 for regression of effectiveness through WOM of 0.4471. Meanwhile, 19.9% of variation in the digital marketing acceptance was influenced by the effectiveness variable. The other 80.1% remain uninfluenced.

Table 11: Model Summary IV1

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.4471	0.1999	0.1931	0.3602

Table 12 shows ANOVA value for IV1 in which $F= 29.475$; $p= 0.000 < 0.001$. Hence, fitness for the model is confirmed. The overall regression model with one predictor of effectiveness through E-WOM has worked well in explaining the variation in digital marketing acceptance.

Table 12- ANOVA Table IV1

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	3.824	1	3.824	29.475	.000
1 Residual	15.309	118	0.130		
Total	19.133	119			

Based on the table above, the following linear equation is formed: Digital marketing acceptance = 0.309 (Effectiveness Through E-WOM) + 2.945. Based on the equation formed, the regression coefficient of effectiveness through E-WOM is 0.523 and this indicates that the level of digital marketing acceptance will increase by 0.309 units when effectiveness through E-WOM increases one unit while others remain.

Table 13: Coefficient IV1

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error		
Intercept	2.945	0.237	12.448	
Effectiveness through Electronic Word of Mouth	0.309	0.057	5.429	

4.11.2 Trust Through Data Security

Table 14 shows that R Square is 0.1556 for regression of trust through data security of 0.3944. Meanwhile, 15.6% of variation in the digital marketing acceptance was influenced by the trust variable. The other 84.4% remain uninfluenced.

Table 14: Model Summary IV2

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.3944	0.1556	0.1484	0.7102

Table 15 shows ANOVA value for IV2 in which $F = 21.737$; $p = 0.000 < 0.001$. Hence, fitness for the model is confirmed. The overall regression model with one predictor of trust through data security has worked well in explaining the variation in digital marketing acceptance.

Table 15: ANOVA IV2

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10.9633	1	10.963	21.737	.000
	Residual	59.515	118	0.5044		
	Total	70.479	119			

Based on the table above, the following linear equation is formed: Digital marketing acceptance = 0.523 (Trust through Data Security) + 1.409. Based on the equation formed, the regression coefficient of trust through data security is 0.523 and this indicates that the level of digital marketing acceptance will increase by 0.523 units when trust through data security increases one unit while others remain.

Table 16: Coefficient IV2

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error		
Intercept	1.409	0.467	3.021	
Trust Through Data Security	0.523	0.112	4.662	

4.11.3 Environment Friendly

Table 17 shows that R Square is 0.3301 for regression of environment friendly of 0.5745. Meanwhile, 33% of variation in the digital marketing acceptance was influenced by the environment friendly variable. The other 67% remain uninfluenced.

Table 17: Model Summary IV3

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.5745	0.3301	0.3244	0.4918

Table 18 shows ANOVA value for IV3 in which $F = 58.147$; $p = 0.000 < 0.00$. Hence, fitness for the model is confirmed. The overall regression model with one predictor of environment friendly has worked well in explaining the variation in digital marketing acceptance.

Table 18: ANOVA IV3

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	14.0614	1	14.061	58.147	.000
1 Residual	28.5356	118	0.242		
Total	42.597	119			

Based on the table above, the following linear equation is formed: Digital marketing acceptance = 0.593 (Environment Friendly) + 1.566. Based on the equation formed, the regression coefficient of environment-friendly is 0.593 and this indicates that the level of digital marketing acceptance will increase 0.593 units when environment friendly increases one unit while others remain.

Table 19: Coefficient IV3

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error		
Intercept	1.566	0.323	4.847	
Environment Friendly	0.593	0.078	7.625	

5.0 Discussion of the Research Findings

5.1 Is there a relationship between digital marketing acceptance with its effectiveness through electronic word of mouth?

As per the analysis, Hypothesis 1 has been accepted which states that the effectiveness through EWOM has a positive relationship with digital marketing acceptance. Based on these findings, it is observed that digital marketing would facilitate consumers in their shopping activities through EWOM. EWOM is a means of digital marketing that would help in improving the effectiveness of information search and other daily activities of consumers (Venkatesh et al., 2003). Consumers are increasingly applying EWOM through social media platforms in providing comments and experiences to other prospective consumers. EWOM provides a platform for consumers to acquire information and share it with others. or searching for anything. The EWOM in digital marketing has become a reference for them to make decisions and reduce their purchasing risk when shopping. It shapes a big impact on consumer's buying patterns and decisions.

5.2 Is there a relationship between digital marketing acceptance with its trust through data security?

Based on the analysis, Hypothesis 2 has been accepted, indicating that trust through data security has a positive relationship with digital marketing acceptance. Trust measures consumers' understanding, perception, and acceptance of products marketed virtually through online platforms, especially when it involves data transactions between consumers and online businesses. Thus, online data security is a crucial factor as it influences consumers' considerations before initiating online transactions with retailers (D. Kennedy, S., and M. Zagula, 2012).

During the early stages of the Internet, privacy and security were critical issues that online businesses had to address to gain consumers' trust. They were commonly seen as prerequisites for trust. As the Internet has evolved, consumers have raised their expectations for online businesses, leading to increased standards for trust (Shankar, Urban, and Sultan 2002). The primary criteria for assessing the reliability of an online store now revolve around data privacy and security. Therefore, digital marketing, as a new form of marketing built on internet-based platforms, is predicted to require a strong level of trust from consumers for its acceptance.

Consumers may authorize their data for use by retailers if they believe that their data is well-protected and not shared with third parties.

5.3 Is there a relationship between digital marketing acceptance with its environment friendly?

Based on the analysis, Hypothesis 3 has been accepted, indicating that being environment-friendly is the strongest variable with the most direct impact on digital marketing acceptance. It is the primary influencing factor for respondents who accept digital marketing. "Environment-friendly" refers to customers who understand and are aware of environmental concerns and solutions, demonstrating environmental knowledge (Safari et al., 2018). Due to their commitment to leading lifestyles in harmony with the environment, consumers concerned about environmental issues are more likely to prioritize life sustainability (Nicol, 2015).

In today's context, "green awareness" is one of the most popular concepts. It may significantly influence people's behaviour, including their choices regarding technologies like digital marketing for shopping purposes. Consumers may be inclined to adopt digital marketing, which can be perceived as a more environmentally friendly marketing strategy, especially if it has already been accepted by social groups with a "green awareness" impact. Based on this research, respondents believe that digital marketing is more environmentally friendly than traditional marketing. They exhibit a high level of environmental consciousness through digital platforms, which is likely influenced by the people around them.

5.4 Theoretical Implication

This study may be important for researchers who are interested in related investigative issues and how the findings of the factors have affected digital marketing acceptance among consumers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Even though this research builds upon earlier studies, it examines the effects of three distinct factors: effectiveness through word of mouth, trust through data security and environmental friendliness. By providing a comprehensive understanding of these three variables in relation to digital marketing acceptance, this study would be valuable for future commercial research. Applying UTAUT as the underpinning theory enables researchers to gain a deeper understanding of human behaviour towards digital marketing acceptance.

5.5 Practical Implication

Based on this research, environmental friendliness had the greatest impact on digital marketing acceptance. Consequently, this may encourage businesses to establish a stronger online presence due to consumers' increasing awareness of the importance of a "green environment." Product promotion through digital marketing could also lead to a reduction in overall advertising costs, thus helping to lower operational expenses for businesses. Additionally, the effectiveness of communication through EWOM (Electronic Word of Mouth) indicates that consumers value EWOM for information searching and making purchasing decisions. Online reviews play a crucial role in helping marketers meet consumer expectations. Consumers trust online reviews from other users, making EWOM an essential platform for consumers when selecting a brand or product. Finally, trust in online security highlights the importance for marketers to ensure the security of their websites, protecting them from hacking and malware threats.

5.6 Limitations and Recommendations

There were some limitations encountered during the progress of this research study. Firstly, the research was constrained by a specific time frame and sample size. Consequently, only 500 questionnaires were distributed to the selected respondents. As a result, this study only represents a small portion of consumers in Malaysia, and there may be slight variations in the perceptions and views of consumers from Kuala Lumpur compared to those from other areas. Furthermore, the distribution of questionnaires was exclusively conducted online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This online distribution method posed another challenge, as some respondents may not have fully understood the survey since it was conducted in English. Not all respondents have the same level of proficiency in the English language.

5.7 Recommendations for Future Research

The primary recommendation for future research is to enhance the sample size. Given that only 120 questionnaires were gathered for this survey in the current study, acquiring a larger sample would enhance the accuracy of the findings. A greater number of respondents in the sample can assist researchers in obtaining more precise responses and drawing more comprehensive conclusions from their study, allowing for broader generalizations about the consumer population in Kuala Lumpur.

While the examination was thorough, some gaps warrant further investigation. For instance, conducting a comparative study between two or three regions with different consumer profiles may yield better findings regarding this research topic. It might involve studying consumers in Johor, Penang, or other areas in Malaysia to generalize digital marketing behaviour in Malaysia. Additionally, this study could be recreated using a longitudinal strategy. Currently, it employs a cross-sectional study design that allows for the simultaneous evaluation of associations between variables. A longitudinal approach would enable the establishment of more accurate cause-and-effect relationships.

5.8 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of the factors influencing digital marketing acceptance among consumers in Kuala Lumpur. This was achieved by assessing the impact of three key factors: effectiveness through electronic word of mouth, trust through data security and environmental friendliness. This research project successfully met its objectives by examining the relationships between these three variables and digital marketing acceptance.

The results of the analysis, including Pearson Correlation Analysis, Linear Regression Analysis, and Internal Reliability Analysis Test, consistently demonstrated that all three variables have a positive and significant relationship with digital marketing acceptance. In conclusion, the environmental friendliness variable had the most substantial impact on digital marketing acceptance, while trust through data security had the least impact on digital marketing acceptance.

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