

THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL MARKETING AND DATA UTILIZATION ON THE
CONSUMER BUYING DECISION: A STUDY OF THE RETAIL SECTOR IN
CANADA

By

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the pillars of my life, whose unwavering support and inspiration have made this journey possible.

To my parents and my wife, who have stood by me through thick and thin, providing joy, solace, and invaluable perspective. Your camaraderie and support have been a source of strength and encouragement.

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ABSTRACT

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of the impact of digital marketing strategies and data utilization on consumer buying decisions in the Canadian retail sector. The study provides research questions which are What digital marketing and data utilization practices are commonly employed by retailers in Canada? What role does digital marketing play in the consumer purchasing decision-making in the Canadian retail market? What challenges and opportunities do retailers face in using data-driven digital marketing to influence consumer buying behaviour in Canada? What are the suggestions that can be made to retail organizations to enhance consumer purchasing behaviour using digital marketing in Canada? The current research undertakings use an exploratory research study which is backed by a quantitative research design to investigate the influence of digital marketing and data use on consumer purchases in the Canadian retail industry. Moreover, a purposive sampling approach is applied in order to obtain respondents with experience and exposure related to digital retail platforms. There are three cities namely, Toronto, Surrey and Vancouver taken for survey. Therefore, Toronto, Surrey and Vancouver are universe for current research. Sample size for the study includes 600 customers buying products from Canadian retail sectors. Total Population of customers found to be: 4,26,228. The findings of the study establishes that digital marketing, when combined with strategic data utilization, substantially influences consumer buying behaviour in the Canadian retail sector. Younger, educated, and technologically adept consumers are most responsive to personalized campaigns, social media engagement, and omnichannel retail experiences. Retailers that leverage predictive analytics, CRM systems, and ethical data practices are better positioned to enhance customer targeting, optimize promotions, and foster loyalty. Overall, this research underscores the synergistic effect of digital marketing and data-driven strategies, offering significant managerial, operational, and policy implications. The findings provide a strong foundation for future research and practical applications, highlighting the transformative potential of digital marketing in shaping consumer behaviour in an increasingly dynamic retail environment.

Keywords: consumer buying behaviour, Canadian retail sector, digital marketing, data utilization and strategies

Contents

List of Tables.....	8
List of Figures.....	9
CHAPTER-I.....	10
INTRODUCTION	10
1.2. Relevance of Digital Marketing in Today’s Era: Special Context of Canada.....	13
1.3. Relevance of Data Utilization in Today’s Fast-Changing World: Context of Canada ...	16
1.4. Understanding Consumer Buying Behaviour: Patterns, Preferences, and Influences ...	18
1.5. A Study of the Retail Sector in Canada	21
1.6. Research Problem	24
1.7. Purpose of the Research	25
1.8. Significance of the Study	26
1.9. Research Purpose and Questions	27
CHAPTER-II	29
REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	29
2.1. Digital Marketing Strategies and Data Utilization Practices Employed by Retailers in Canada 33	
2.2. The role that digital marketing plays in the consumer purchasing decision-making in the Canadian retail market	36
2.3. Use of data affect consumer preferences, attitude, and purchase intentions	41
2.4. Challenges and opportunities do retailers face in using data-driven digital marketing to influence consumer buying behaviour in Canada	45
2.6. Research Gap.....	52
CHAPTER-III.....	54
3.1. Overview of Research Problem	54
3.2. Operationalizing the theoretical constructs.....	55
3.3. Research Purpose.....	57
3.4. Research Design	59
3.5. Sampling Design	59
3.6. Participant Selection	60
3.7. Instrumentation	60
3.8. Data Collection Procedures	61
3.9. Tools and techniques of data analysis	61
3.10. Limitations of the Study.....	65
CHAPTER-IV.....	67
RESULTS.....	67
CHAPTER-V	137

5.1. Research Question 1: What digital marketing and data utilization practices are commonly employed by retailers in Canada?	137
5.2. Research Question 2: What role does digital marketing play in the consumer purchasing decision-making in the Canadian retail market?.....	139
5.3. Research Question 3: What challenges and opportunities do retailers face in using data-driven digital marketing to influence consumer buying behaviour in Canada?.....	141
5.4. Research Question 4: What are the suggestions that can be made to retail organizations to enhance consumer purchasing behaviour using digital marketing in Canada?.....	143
CHAPTER-VI.....	146
6.1. Implications of the Study	146
6.2. Conclusion	148
6.3. Recommendations of the Study	151
APPENDIX A.....	155
Survey Cover Letter	155
APPENDIX B.....	156
Interview Consent Form	156
APPENDIX C.....	159
Questionnaire	159
References.....	170

List of Tables

Table 4.1	Age Distribution	067
Table 4.2	Gender Analysis	068
Table 4.3	Marital Status	069
Table 4.4	Educational Qualification	070
Table 4.5	Monthly Income (in CAD.)	071
Table 4.6	Type of Family	072
Table 4.7	Size (No. of Persons in Your Family)	073
Table 4.8	Preferred Online Shopping Channel	074
Table 4.9	Frequency of Shopping Online	075
Table 4.10	Reliability Statistics	076
Table 4.11	Descriptive Statistics	076
Table 4.12	One-Sample Statistics	080
Table 4.13	One-Sample Test	082
Table 4.14	ANOVA	084
Table 4.15	Reliability Statistics	087
Table 4.16	Descriptive Statistics	087
Table 4.17	Correlations	091
Table 4.18	Model Summary	093
Table 4.19	ANOVA	095
Table 4.20	Coefficients	096
Table 4.21	Reliability Statistics	099
Table 4.22	Descriptive Statistics	099
Table 4.23	KMO and Bartlett's Test	104
Table 4.24	Communalities	105
Table 4.25	Total Variance Explained	106
Table 4.26	Rotated Component Matrix (Factor 1)	107
Table 4.27	Rotated Component Matrix (Factor 2)	112
Table 4.28	Reliability Statistics	115
Table 4.29	Descriptive Statistics	115
Table 4.30	KMO and Bartlett's Test	118

Table 4.31	Communalities	118
Table 4.32	Total Variance Explained	123
Table 4.33	Rotated Component Matrix	125
Table 4.34	Reliability Statistics	128
Table 4.35	Descriptive Statistics	129
Table 4.36	Chi-Square Tests	130
Table 4.37	Hypothesis Testing Results	132

List of Figures

Figure 4.1	Age Distribution	067
Figure 4.2	Gender Analysis	068
Figure 4.3	Marital Status	069
Figure 4.4	Educational Qualification	070
Figure 4.5	Monthly Income (in CAD.)	071
Figure 4.6	Type of Family	072
Figure 4.7	Size (No. of Persons in Your Family)	073
Figure 4.8	Preferred Online Shopping Channel	075
Figure 4.9	Frequency of Shopping Online	076
Figure 4.10	Scree Plot (1)	110
Figure 4.11	Scree Plot (2)	125

CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

As it is the case with most of the developed markets, the Canadian retail economy has undergone a complete transformation under the influence of the two forces that are digital marketing and informed decision-making, which relies on data. Unlike the days when a significant portion of mass media was utilized in conventional marketing method alongside case in store, the current retail strategy moves into digital platform and employs search engines, social media, email, mobile applications, along with programmatic marketing to contact consumers in a far more specific, massively and individually targeted manner(Ghazie and Dolah, 2018). With this shift has come the phenomenal increase in information as a result of customer interfaces and purchase systems, loyalty schemes, and third-party channels, not only of information but also of opportunities, which has offered retailers unprecedented opportunity to understand the consumer behaviour at a very fine level. The paper discusses digital marketing trends and strategic application of information in influencing consumer purchasing decisions within the retail sector in Canada and also challenges how the influence is procured and what conditions help and hinder the success of the impact of digital marketing.

Digital marketing does not only represent a new channel; it is a change of logic of marketing itself. Digital spaces allow two-way relationships to be long-lasting and the relationships established are dynamic to include discovery, appraisal, purchase and post-purchase. In the case of Canadian retailers, it translates to the campaigns being evaluated and optimized even in close time, content being customized to micro-segments and the customer experience being coordinated both through physical and online touchpoints. But being there in the digital channels is not enough to be an influencer. Digital marketing also requires relevance of its messages, channel appropriateness, opportune organization and perceived credibility of the source that are mediated by data. Therefore, this study predicts the use of data as the pathway connecting the digital marketing activity and actual alterations in consumer purchasing behavior(P.Ganapathi *et al.*, 2019).

The use of data within retail covers a continuum of practices including descriptive analytics used to summarise the past performance, diagnostic used to explain why a behaviour happened, predictive used to forecast future actions and prescriptive used to recommend interventions.

There is a wide range of adoption of these capabilities amongst Canadian retailers. It is possible that smaller and medium sized enterprises of businesses would use more of descriptive measures and simple customer segmentation, whereas large chains will use high-performance machine learning models to generate personalized recommendations, price dynamically, and predict demand. The strategic power of data lies in its ability to minimize uncertainty in the preferences of the consumers, as well as in the ability to determine latent buying triggers and experiment and learn constantly. In the case of the consumer, increased use of data, though, sparks a concern of privacy, trust and the fairness- which mediate the reception and action of the digital marketing messages(Alghizzawi, 2017).

The consumer buying decision in the digital age can only be comprehended in a way that the traditional consumer behaviour theories are incorporated with the modern marketing structures that are digital. Conventional problem recognition, information search, alternatives evaluation, purchase, and post purchase evaluation models are still applicable to the point that they are filled with actors and artifacts that are novel: algorithmic recommendation, user-generated reviews, referent power of influencers, targeted advertising, and real-time comparative information. Digital marketing reinvents the path to purchase, modifying the availability of information, framing by creating curated experiences and reduces the friction of purchase by such features as one-click checkout and mobile wallets. Having been mentioned, data-driven personalization can simplify decision-making too, bringing to the surface the data that is relevant, as well as, ironically, establishing new choice dynamics, by giving the consumer hints at new or more profitable products.

In this study, the Canadian retail business is particularly emphasized because of the following reasons. The retail market in Canada is a diversified group of people consisting of national stores as well as regional stores and a strong group of independent stores that make it a favorable environment on which to investigate discrepancy in digital maturity and data practices. Moreover, passive use and extensive use of mobile devices and internet penetration by the Canadian consumers further increases the effectiveness of digital marketing. Simultaneously, Canadian levels of regulatory frameworks and social traditions regarding the data privacy and consumer security present significant limitations that influence the ability of retailers to acquire, store and utilize the information about a customer(Ririn Arifah, 2014). The placement of the research in Canada will generate knowledge base that is sensitive to market structure, regulatory environment as well as consumers expectations in Canada but also

generate a set of implications that can be applied to other similar and advanced retail markets such as Canada.

Although the literature on the topic of digital marketing and big data is growing, critical gaps in it are still present, especially regarding the relationship between the process and the result. The available literature is largely describing technological potentials or survey of consumer attitudes separately; there is less of the literature that looks at the causal mechanisms by which particular, digital marketing strategies, facilitated by certain data practices, result in specific shifts in consumer purchasing behavior. Besides, not many studies strike a balance between quantitative outcomes in performance (Click-through rates, conversion rates, average order value) and qualitative consumer decision-making factors such as the sense of trust, perceived privacy problems and personalization. The latter gaps have been addressed in the study because on one hand, the research delved into the measurable effect of digital marketing on the other, subjective consumer experiences on which intermediary consumer purchase results(Sivasankaran, 2017).

The goals of the study are four-fold; (1) to map the terrain of the digital marketing strategy and use of data by the Canadian retailers; (2) to establish the causal factors by which the strategies may be used to influence the consumer decision-making processes; (3) to uncover how the consumer perceptions, trust, perceived relevance, and privacy concern mediate the effectiveness of the data-driven marketing strategies; and (4) to attract managerial and policy recommendations that would achieve a compromise between commercial performance and consumer protection. The methodology combines the quantitative and qualitative elements of the problem since analytical findings of a retailer case study, marketing performance factors, and the image of consumers are employed to stretch the limits of this research (Saleem and Siddik, 2021)

Finally, the study meaning has implications on different stakeholders. It is also a handy roadmap as a retail manager about what can be the most rewarding digital investments and data governance work in consumer influence. Relevant in terms of trade-offs between innovation and privacy applies to the policy makers and consumer advocates in terms of regulation and transparency. And to researchers, it provides empirically grounded structures through which digital marketing, analytics development and the consumer decision making gets hooked. The study will illuminate functional, ethical and sustainable planet to shape tactical and executed

plans taken in the retail sector of Canada by casting some light on the combination of digital advertising and data usage to shape the purchasing pattern between the retail market segment.

1.2. Relevance of Digital Marketing in Today's Era: Special Context of Canada

The modern world of technology-focused globalization has seen the emergence of electronic marketing as a business strategy base whereby electronic marketing has revolutionized the way organizations interact with consumers, build brands and value creation. The consumer behaviour, expectations and decision-making process have been dramatically altered due to the speedy penetration of the internet, mobile phone, social media and data analytics. Old marketing methods that were more dependent on one way communication and mass reach out are becoming inefficient in solving the demands of new consumers, who require relevance, immediacy, personalisation and transparency. The demands are addressed in the digital marketing by allowing real-time communication, exact targeting, and quantifiable results, and therefore, it is particularly applicable in the modern business world(Abraham and Joseph, 2019).

The key attribute of the digital marketing that prevails in the present times is the possibility of putting the consumer at the heart of the marketing strategy. Digital media such as search engines, social media, websites, mobile applications, and email, can also be used by firms to reach consumers at any stage of the customer journey to, among other things, create awareness and consideration as well as purchase and post-purchase interactions. These are the mediums that allow brands to approach customers in a two-way dynamic and constantly present manner and also establishes a discussion with the consumers rather than a persuasion. The global context where the consumers are increasingly more informed and empowered, a digital marketing helps the companies feel responsive to the change in preferences and behaviours in order to increase customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

The peripherality of digital marketing is also enhanced by access and usage of data. Each and every digital interaction leaves behind data points which can be examined to understand consumer interests, browsing, buying history as well as interaction levels. Data-driven marketing enables companies to create targeted messages, prescribe product suggestions, price finances better, and direct funds on marketing more effectively. Unlike in conventional marketing whereby measuring impact was usually not accurate, digital marketing offers powerful analytics which have an ability to connect marketing activities with results directly

to conversions, customer lifetime value and retention. This has led to the fact that digital marketing is now unavoidable by organizations that desire responsibility, effectiveness, and tactical accuracy(Kannan and Li, 2017).

The applicability of digital marketing is especially high in the Canadian context because the country has high digital adoption and sufficiently developed technology infrastructure. The internet penetration, smartphone availability and use, and social media in Canada are some of the strongest countries in the world. The information and product comparison, peer review and purchasing decisions are regular habits of Canadian consumers who are tirelessly using online platforms to search information. The retailers, service providers and brands in Canada are thus required to be strong in the digital platform to be visible, and competitive. Digital marketing has ceased being a supporting activity but a leading medium where consumers in Canada learn, assess and interact with brands.

The geographical distance and the multicultural character of the population is another aspect that explains the significance of digital marketing in Canada. Digital channels offer an effective way of accessing consumers throughout the country, as with large geographical spaces between urban areas and rural populations, it eliminates the limitations that could arise due to the geographic location. Digital marketing allows companies to communicate to various linguistic, cultural, and geographical groups, as the society of Canada is multicultural. By employing focused advertisements and locally specific displays, companies can cater to the peculiarities of each of the consumer segments, not to mention that inclusivity and market penetration should also improve(Yasmin, Tasneem and Fatema, 2015).

An example of digital marketing strategy, which is manifested in the strategic value of digital marketing in the current epoch, is the Canadian retail sector. This has transformed the shopping experience of the Canadians because of the advent of e-commerce, omnichannel retailing and mobile commerce. The consumers are becoming more demanding about the integration of the online and the offline to a more fluid experience, such as researching about products online, confirming their presence in the stores and the technology of online payment. Digital marketing plays a fundamental role in creating such integration of connecting the digital touchpoints with the physical retail area. Personalized promotions, location-based marketing, and loyalty programs are some of the illustrations of the influence of digital tools on consumer interaction and consumer buying behaviour in the Canadian retail industry.

The other problem that is critical in the applicability of digital marketing in Canada is linked to trust, transparency, and privacy of information. The Canadian consumers are more aware of their data protection and ethical business practices which is conditioned by the regulation and social conventions. As more companies have started using consumer data to advertise themselves, the companies have to balance between privacy and personalization. Digital marketing implemented in a manner more concerned with being transparent, consenting, and responsible with data usage is more likely to instill a sense of trust and long term relationships with Canadian consumers. Hence, Canadian online marketing is not only based on the technological ability upon the enterprises, but on the ethical coincidence with the expectation of consumers(Dahiya and Gayatri, 2018).

Moreover, SMEs in Canada have also relied on digital marketing as a source of innovation and competitiveness. The online means have cost effective and scalable advertising systems compared to other forms of traditional mass media advertising that could require a significant amount of finances. Through the application of social media marketing, search engine optimization and content marketing, SMEs can compete on terms equal to the larger company. This democratization marketing implication has numerous implications to entrepreneurship, development of the region and economic stability of the Canadian economy.

The relevance of digital marketing of Canada was further enhanced throughout the COVID-19 due to the increasing pace of digital transformation within industries. The lockdowns, social distancing, fallout on consumer mobility, and so on forced businesses and consumers to digital at a rate never seen before. Companies, which had made the investment in digital marketing, were in a better position to change, interact with customers, and remain in operations. A lot of these digital behaviours have remained even in the post-pandemic period making digital marketing a permanent strategic need and not a short-term response to crisis.

The digital marketing concept is highly applicable in the current age because of its consumer focus, the ability to work with data, and the ability to adapt to the dynamism that occurs in the market. Its significance in the special case of Canada is enhanced due to a high adoption of digital, geographic distribution, cultural diversity, and high expectations of trust and privacy. Digital marketing helps Canadian organisations to relate effectively with consumers, improve competitiveness and address the challenges which arise in the present-day markets. With the ever-advancing technology, the role of digital marketing in Canada will only become more

important in future that will not just transform the performance of businesses, but also the consumer experience in the digital world(Kiradoo, 2017).

1.3. Relevance of Data Utilization in Today's Fast-Changing World: Context of Canada

In the modern globalized world that is rapidly evolving, data has become one of the most precious strategic resources of an organization, a government, or even a society. The increase in the digital technologies, cloud computing, artificial intelligence, and Internet of Things, parallelogram of massive volume, variety, and speed of data generation has reached a new level. All online interactions, whether it is a search query on the Internet or a post on a social network, financial transactions, or sensor functions, generate information which can be converted into actionable information. It is also in this fluid landscape where the capacity to efficiently gather, evaluate and apply information is becoming the defining factor of competitiveness, endurance and creativity. The use of data ceases to be a support role of the technical aspect, but it is one of the core points of strategy decision-making in the modern world(Deekshith and Kinslin, 2016).

The reduction in the uncertainty in decision-making process is one of the main reasons why the use of data has become so topical nowadays. The evolving markets, consumer preferences that are unpredictable and global disruptions e.g. pandemics, climate and geopolitical tensions have rendered the traditional methods of forecasting to be inadequate. Data analytics empowers companies to replace their intuition-based decision-making with evidence-based approaches to achieve this by detecting real-time patterns, trends, and correlation. Predictive and prescriptive analytics allow organizations to foresee the current changes, evaluate risks, and act instead of making reactions. This has been particularly essential in a rapidly evolving world whose delays or failure to make the appropriate judgments may cost a lot in terms of money and reputation.

The usefulness of data utilization is increased in the Canadian environment due to the developed digital infrastructure and developed economy based on knowledge in the country. Canada boasts of internet penetration, the use of digital platforms, and an emerging data-centred industry, with finance, retail, healthcare, logistics, and technology being among them. Increased use of data in organizations to optimize operations, enhance customer experiences, and aid innovation is on the rise in Canadian organizations. Since the supply chain optimization and energy management are important to use data, as well as enhancing government services

and city development, data use is a key driver of economic and social growth in Canada(Mihaela, 2015).

The use of data is especially relevant in the interpretation of dynamic consumer behaviour in Canada and the reaction to this behaviour. The Canadian consumers engage in different touchpoints between the brand (online and offline) producing vast amounts of behavioral data. Through such kind of data, organizations are able to learn more about consumer preferences, habits and the level of engagement. It will then be possible to create personalized services, communicate more effectively, and offer better services. The capability to streamline the products and the services closely with the requirements of the consumers is an important source of differentiation in a competitive business environment, so the data-driven understanding becomes essential to the Canadian organizations.

The necessity of using data to manage risk and resilience in the global business environment has also increased due to the rapid change in the environment. There are economic uncertainty, supply chain, and cybersecurity risks, and regulatory risks, which demand institutions to keep an eye on the situation and quickly respond to changes. Banking, insurance, retail, and transportation industries are some of the sectors in Canada that have been applying data analytics to identify abnormalities, gauge vulnerabilities, and develop mitigation measures. Through the real-time data, organizations are able to predict signs of danger, locate resources optimally, and have continuity amidst uncertainty. This has turned out to be fundamental in ensuring that performance in organizations as well as consumer confidence is secured(Lemon and Verhoef, 2016).

Canadian governance and public policy are no exception as, in a rapidly changing Canadian socio-economic context, the use of data is equally applicable. The federal, provincial and municipal governments utilize the data to design policies, improve service delivery and also enhance accountability. Data driven governance assists evidence-based policymaking in education, transport, healthcare planning and environmental sustainability. As an illustration, data analytics will allow to predict the demand of healthcare systems more effectively, streamline the work of public transport, and track risks associated with climate changes. In the sparsely populated country such as Canada, which is multiethnic, the use of data assists policymakers in developing inclusive and region-based interventions.

Simultaneously, the fact that the utilization of data is increasingly becoming important in Canada brings with it questionable issues, which pertain to privacy, ethics and trust. The Canadian society is highly focused on responsible data practices due to regulatory frameworks and expectations on transparency and consent because of the choice of society. With more and more organizations dependent on both personal and behavioral data, the question is how to find a balance and maintain the innovative nature and at the same time the rights of individuals. It has led to a requirement of ethical data use fair, accountable and transparent to create sustainable value. Companies that do not focus on such issues run the risk to lose consumer trust and be regulated and reputed(Jaakkola, 2007).

The data use transformative role of an entrepreneurial culture that makes Canada more competitive and innovated is also present. Start-ups and SMEs apply data analytics to identify market gaps, test business models and optimally scale operations on the basis of these models. The access to information and analytics technologies lightens the entry barriers and enables the smaller companies to compete on the equal footing with the larger ones. This information-based democratization will help in creating innovation and creating employment and diversification of the Canadian economy, and consolidating its grip in the global digital economy(Ramya and Ali, 2016).

In conclusion, the use of data remains quite timely in the current dynamic world as it enables to make informed decisions, be more flexible, and enhance innovation in industries. The importance of it in the Canadian context is intensified by the fact that the nation is highly digitalized, economically diverse, and the tendency to take ethical and responsible actions regarding the data utilization is high. With technological change gaining pace and uncertainty becoming the new permanence of global setting, efficient data use will continue to be of paramount facilitator of competitiveness, robustness and sustainable growth in Canada.

1.4. Understanding Consumer Buying Behaviour: Patterns, Preferences, and Influences

Consumer buying behaviour describes what people or groups of people go through to determine their needs, information search, product alternative, purchase choice, and post-purchase satisfaction. Consumer buying behaviour is a core aspect to any business, policymakers and researchers since it offers information of why consumers decide to consume some products or services as opposed to others. Decisions, particularly the buying decision, in a growing

competitive and complex marketplace are influenced by a complex of psychological, social, cultural and economic factors. These forces are dynamically interacting creating recognizable trends and preferences that change with time. By taking these factors into account in a holistic approach, it is viable to gain a more comprehensive insight into how consumers can act in the real-life situation (Key, 2017).

Consumer consumer buying behaviour gives rise to patterns through a repetition of decisions and habits. Consumers tend to stick to the previous experiences, familiarity with the brand, and thinking short cuts to simplify buying behavior particularly when making routine or low-involvement purchases. These trends can be seen through the brand loyalty, repeat buying and preference stability. But the behaviour of the consumers is not fixed. The shifts in lifestyle, income levels, technology, and market conditions may cause the established patterns to be broken and create new ways of consumption. As an example, heightened exposure to the digital information and peer reviews has modified consumers search and evaluation pattern to products, turning buying behavior and patterns toward more educated and comparatively oriented approaches. The knowledge of these behavioural patterns assists in explaining stability as well as change in consumer markets (Jamal, Maqbool and Misra, 2011a).

Consumer preferences are the subjective judgment of the products and services in terms of perceived value, quality, price, and individual relevance. Due to the individual tastes, past experiences, cultural background, and circumstantial factors, preferences are formed. They do not just impact on what the consumers purchase but also the extent to which they are prepared to spend and frequency of repurchase. The preferences can be explicit in the sense that a person can express an interest in a specific type of brand or implicit in the sense that the purchasing behaviour demonstrates this preference. With time, preferences are subject to change because consumers experience satisfaction or dissatisfaction with new information, and their expectations change as a result. It is important to identify the way preferences are made and changed to explain the long-term consumer behaviour.

The psychological aspects have a key input in determining consumer buying behaviour. Motivation makes consumers fulfill the needs of either a basic or a higher order needs like status, self-expression and emotional needs. Perception, which can filter information, advertisement, and product characteristics, defines how consumers understand information, deal with ads, and arrange messages, in accordance with already held beliefs and expectations. Experience and exposure to different things facilitate future decision making by affirming good

decisions and discouraging bad decisions. The attitudes which are the overall judgement of a consumer about a product or brand have a potent influence on purchase intentions and loyalty. These psychological processes are combined to give an explanation as to why consumers react differently to similar marketing stimuli.

Another strong consumer buying behaviour determinant is social influence. Consumer choices are influenced by family members, peers, reference groups and social networks through the provision of information, setting norms and anticipating pressure both literal and inferred. Consumers are fond of social approval where the purchase is involved especially of visible or symbolic goods. The influence of word-of-mouth communication, recommendation and experience evaluation is huge in terms of trust and perceived credibility. Online communities and social media platforms have increased the extent of the power of social influence in the modern markets allowing spreading opinions and experiences in a short period. These social relationships are parts of the general forms of consumption but leave room to individual deviation(Dwivedi *et al.*, 2021).

The cultural and subcultural variables also determine the consumer buying behaviour through the values, beliefs, and consumption norms. Culture offers the general pattern of needs and preferences defined by consumers in a broad sense whereas subcultures like regional, age or lifestyle will bring more narrow patterns of consumption. Attitudes to quality, price sensitivity, brand symbolism and ethics are influenced by the culture. As an example, consumers in other cultural settings can attach dissimilar importance to the sustainability, convenience or status. To interpret consumer behaviour in different markets and explain the reason behind variations in preferences and purchasing behaviours then there is a need to understand the impacts of culture.

Consumer buying behaviour is also being critical on the influence of economic and situational matters. The buying power and spending behaviour are determined by income, price elasticity, credit accessibility and economic stability. With a downturn in the economy, customers can get a bit risk averse, shift to basic purchases and slow down unnecessary purchases. The situational condition can be a big influence on a decision-making process, including time strains, a purchase situation, promotional activity, and even physical or online surroundings. The buying decisions are situational since even highly involved consumers can switch when faced with constraints or opportunities.

Patterns, preferences and influences are incorporated in the series of actions taken by the consumer decision making process. This cycle is normally initiated with the problem identification which is then continued with information search, information evaluation, purchase decision and post purchase evaluation. Although this model offers a practical paradigm, consumer behaviour in practice is normally non-linear and recursive. Those consumers do not necessarily follow the steps in a sequence; they can jump forward or review the previous steps or trust their own heuristics instead of an effective system of evaluation. Learning, attitudes and loyalty all depend on the feedback of post-purchase experiences. It is crucial to comprehend this process in order to explain how personal forces can result in evident purchasing behaviour(Castillo-Abdul, Bonilla-Del-río and Núñez-Barriopedro, 2021).

Conclusively, consumer buying behaviour cannot be understood without a holistic take of patterns, preferences and forces which determines the decision made by consumers. The purchase behaviour is a complex combination of the elements of the psychological processes, the social relationships, the cultural norms, the economic situation and the circumstantial factors in particular. All these aspects are involved in explaining why consumer choices are stable and unstable at the same time. With more and more markets being developed, understanding consumer buying behaviour even better will continue to be instrumental in the creation of effective strategies, in improving consumer satisfaction and the establishment of a sustainable relationship between consumer and the organization.

1.5. A Study of the Retail Sector in Canada

Retail business in Canada is an important factor in the economy of the country, as one of the primary sources linking suppliers and customers, it is also a significant source of employment, economic development, and prosperity of consumers. In Canada, retailing has a broad format which includes large national stores, regional stores, independent outlets, specialty stores and e-commerce stores. The sector has over the years developed to meet the changing consumer preferences, technological developments, globalization and economic changes. The complexity of the Canadian retail sector, dynamics, and transformation are critical in appreciating the existence of the challenges and future of this sector(Muniesa and Giménez, 2020).

The retail industry of Canada was traditionally formed on the physical stores, which served the local and regional market. Department stores, grocery stores and shopping malls emerged as

the leading retail forms especially in the cities. Nevertheless, retail practices were redefined slowly by slowly and were altered by demographic changes, urbanization trends and increased consumer demands. The proliferation of suburban areas facilitated the creation of large scale stores and shopping malls and the achievement of transportation and logistic infrastructure allowed retailers to function at a high level even over a large geographic area. These innovations have preconditioned an environment of diversification and robustness of the retail industry of Canada.

Over the past few decades, the technological progress became one of the key factors that revolutionize the Canadian retailing industry. The common use of the internet, smart phones, and online payment systems have fostered the e-commerce and omnichannel retailing. There is a growing trend among the Canadian consumers to use online platforms to discover, compare prices, and buy products and this has made the retailers to incorporate digital and physical channel. A large number of retailers currently provide easy experiences, which involve a mix of online shopping and in-store ordering, house way delivery, and online customer support. This merging of distribution channels has restructured the traditional retailing models, and a competition has developed in the industry(Rathnayaka, 2018).

The retailing industry in Canada has undergone a radical transformation that has been brought about by consumer behaviour. The contemporary Canadian shopper is better informed, discerning and conveniently minded like never before. They require transparency in their pricing quality and sourcing, and also personal service and responsive service. Change of lifestyle, greater workforce involvement and higher exposure to international trends have also affected the buying trends in all categories. Due to these changes, retailers are compelled to continuously modify their products, shelf design, and customer interactions strategies to be in line with the consumer expectations and desires.

The peculiarities of the Canadian geographic and demographic situation also influence the Canadian domestic retailing field. The multicultural population in Canada has an impact on the product mix, marketing, and customer relationship practices. In this regard, retailers tend to make their products suitable to the requirements of various cultural and ethnic groups especially in large urban centres. On another note, the huge size of Canada makes logistics a problem mainly to cover remote rural areas. Retailers need to fight efficiency versus accessibility, which means that sometimes they might depend on the high level of supply chain management and distribution processes in order to offer the same level of services nationwide.

In Canada, the retail industry is highly dependent on economic factors, which have an overall impact on the stability and performance of the industry. Retail demand is directly influenced by changes in income levels, inflation, rate of employment and consumer confidence. Discretionary spending usually goes up during boom times and the beneficiaries of these times are fashion, electronics and home furnishing sectors. On the contrary, economic recessions tend to cause a slowdown in consumer behaviour, and more value, necessities, promotional pricing. Retailers are therefore forced to be flexible and have to change their price policies, stocking, and cost structure depending on the economic trends(Fransiska *et al.*, 2012).

The policies and the regulations set by government are significant in the retail environment in Canada. Taxation laws, competition, labor, consumer protection and trade regulate the mode of operation and competition of retailers. The availability and prices of products are influenced by the trade relationship and import policies of Canada especially to the retailers that rely on the global chain of suppliers. Adherence to these regulations brings in complexity to the operations of retailers and, it assists in maintaining a fair competition and consumer rights. Those retailers that manage to sail through regulatory environment are in a better position to be sustainable in the long term.

The COVID-19 pandemic has served as a major shift in the Canadian retail industry that has increased accelerating trends. Public health and lockdowns upset its normal course of retail, and many businesses have had to move online in a very brief period of time. E-commerce, home delivery and contactless payment became necessity and not choices. Although the pandemic made life extremely difficult, it also demonstrated how flexible and strong Canadian retailers are. A significant part of the changes made at the time has become inseparable parts of the retail world.

Canadian retail industry is an evolving and shifting business presence which is complicated by the progress in technology, consumer behaviour, economic situation and regulatory variables. It has been versatile and able to change and adapt to the dynamic requirements of the market to stay relevant in the Canadian economy. The analysis of the retail market in Canada will show not just the threats and opportunities of the retailers but the possibilities of growth, innovation, and sustainable development within a growing competitive and digitalized market(Jamal, Maqbool and Misra, 2011b).

1.6. Research Problem

The swift development of digital technologies has radically changed the retail business, especially in the adoption of the practice of digital marketing and decision-making based on data. Canadian retailers are adopting more and more the digital space of social media, search engines, mobile applications and e-commerce websites, and at the same time, they are using consumer information to provide customers with offerings that are personalized, target-promotional and enable maximum customer interaction as well. Though these processes are commonly applied, the effectiveness of use of digital marketing and stream of data in generating consumer purchase decisions in Canadian retail environment remains unclear. This lack of the complete picture brings about confusion to retailers in the quest to match the digital investment to the real consumer reaction.

The online era has complicated the consumer buying process and is affected by numerous touchpoints, immediate access to information, content tailoring, and the text-based Recommendation. Even though digital marketing implies a superior reference to consumer engagement and purchase conversion, not all consumers and retail format will experience this success. Equally, data use can assist in making informed decisions and also create concern on issues of privacy, trust and perceived manipulation. The impact of these factors on the purchasing behaviour in Canada where the buying behaviour of consumers is strongly digital and ethical in the data usage is expected to differ with other markets. However, there is still a patchy and insufficient empirical research of those dynamics within the Canadian retailing industry.

The existing literature review is inclined to discuss digital marketing tools or data analytics implementation in a disjointedly way, which makes it possible to stimulate the integrated effect on consumer purchasing patterns inadequately. Additionally, most works focus on the organizational performance rates that ignore the consumers voice especially the role of digital interaction and data-driven personalization in the attitudes, preferences, and intentions to purchase. This weakness is significant in the Canadian retail market setting, which is a rich mix of demographics of diverse consumers, robust regulatory frameworks, and actively changing omnichannel marketplace. This means that the retailers are not given actionable information regarding the digital and data-driven strategies that actually affect consumer decision-making.

Thus, the inadequacy of the study as there is no integrated and consumer-focused conceptualization of the effect of digital marketing and data usage on consumer purchasing behaviour in the Canadian retailing industry is the core issue of the proposed research. The analysis of the problem is vital toward assisting the retailers in formulating effective, ethical, as well as consumer-receptive digital strategies, as well as add into scholarly understanding through elucidating processes through which digital marketing and data use influence consumer behaviour in a large and digitally developed market such as Canada.

1.7. Purpose of the Research

The main aim of this study is to consider and evaluate the effect of online marketing and use of data on consumer purchasing actions in the retail industry in Canada. With more and more retailers relying on digital platforms and data driven decisions in reaching out to consumers, it will become imperative to learn how these activities affect consumer choices, intentions to purchase and actual purchases. This paper aims at offering a holistic and consumer centered viewpoint on the efficacy of online marketing campaigns facilitated through use of data in a digitally progressive retail industry.

In particular, the study will find out what constitute the most popular digital marketing tools and data usage activities among retailers as well as information of how they find application in various phases of consumer buying decision process, such as the awareness, information search, the evaluation of alternative, and buying. The analysis of consumer reaction to customized content, personalized promotions, online reviews and digital communication aimed to solve the problems and help to understand how data-driven marketing influences consumer preferences, attitudes, and trust in retail brands.

The other significance of the present research makes the assessment of how the perceived relevance, transparency, and privacy issues of consumer perceptions moderate the association between digital marketing and data usage and purchasing decisions. Considering the increased data privacy and ethical conscious among the Canadian consumers, the research question seeks to examine the effects of responsible data on consumer acceptance and adoption of the digital marketing activities.

Lastly, the study will provide a contribution to the academic knowledge and practice-based decision making through presenting empirical evidence and practical implications to the

retailers, marketers and policymakers. The assumption is that the discoveries can be used in developing efficient and ethical digital marketing tactics that would potentially enhance consumer satisfaction and guarantee the systematization of competitive advantage in the Canadian retail sector.

1.8. Significance of the Study

The existing study is also significant to the academic research, retailing practitioners, and policies because the study presents a comprehensive understanding of how digital marketing and data usage play out in consumer decision-making in business retailing in Canada. As the landscape of retailing changes by the digital technology, the effects of the digital technology as perceived by consumers are worth taking into account to devise an effective and sustainable strategy through the consumer lens. The study is timely and critical as it focuses on the convergence of digital marketing, use of data, and consumer behaviour in the modern retail research.

Academically, the study can be described as having added to the field of knowledge on consumer buying behaviour by incorporating the digital marketing practices with data-driven decision-making. Although these factors have been frequently analyzed independently in the previous studies, the given study provides a combined structure according to which online relationships and the use of media affect consumer decision-making processes in a mutually dependent manner. It is hoped that the findings will provide a contribution to the theoretical frameworks of consumer behaviour by applying the digital and analytical aspects, especially over the environment of a digitally advanced industry like Canada.

To the retail managers and marketing practitioners, the study avails practical understanding of which digital marketing strategies and data utilization practices have the most positive impacts on consumer buying decisions. Understanding how people perceive personalized contents, advertisements to target market and interactions based on data will enable retailers to utilize their resources in a better manner and design marketing campaigns that are customer centred. The study also presents the significance of trust, transparency, and ethical data practices to enable the retailers to achieve a balance between the expectations of personalization and consumer privacy.

The policymakers and regulatory agencies would also find the research meaningful as it sheds some light on how the consumers respond to the data-based marketing in a controlled environment. One can use these data points regarding privacy, consumer trust, and ethical data use in the policy making process and regulation action that would consider the interests of the consumers and increase innovation in the retail environment. This is especially so within Canada where the rights of consumers and data protection form the centre of debate.

Lastly, the research has advantages involving new knowledge and insight to the consumers in understanding that the application of digital marketing and data use can influence their buying behavior. The research helps to create more ethical and transparent marketing strategies by prioritizing ethical and transparent marketing practices. In general, this research can be helpful in influencing the theory, practice, and policy of more informed, ethical, and effective digital retail strategies in Canada.

1.9. Research Purpose and Questions

This study seeks to analyse how digital marketing and use of data influences consumers to make purchases in the retail markets of Canada. Since retailers are progressively adopting the adoption of digital platforms and data-driven approaches to gain access to, and keep customers, it is necessary to know how retailer practices can change consumer decision-making, their preferences, and purchasing behaviour. This paper aims to give an overview of an efficient and consumer-oriented evaluation of the effectiveness of digital marketing instruments with data as containment in the formation of purchasing decisions in a digitally advanced and controlled corporate condition.

The study will also prove to address how the consumer perception, namely, trust, perceived relevancy, and the privacy issues, mediate or moderate, the relationship between digital marketing, information use, and consumer purchasing behaviour. Through the Canadian retail environment, the study will aim at producing local consumer behaviour sensitive, regulatory frameworks and market attributes. The results will be incorporated into the scholarly outlook and provide useful tuition to retailers and policy makers in the construction of ethical and effective digital marketing strategies.

1.20. Research Questions

- What digital marketing and data utilization practices are commonly employed by retailers in Canada?
- What role does digital marketing play in the consumer purchasing decision-making in the Canadian retail market?
- What challenges and opportunities do retailers face in using data-driven digital marketing to influence consumer buying behaviour in Canada?
- What are the suggestions that can be made to retail organizations to enhance consumer purchasing behaviour using digital marketing in Canada?

CHAPTER-II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2. Introduction

Digital marketing has become one of the most revolutionary in the international retail sector and transformed how organizations interact with the consumers and affects their decisions to purchase or not. The digital marketing is common knowledge in the literature as it uses platforms like social media, mobile applications, email marketing, online advertisements, and search engine marketing to improve consumer interaction and brand awareness. According to researchers, like Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019) note, digital marketing has transformed marketing communication to not be a one-way communication structure, but rather, it is an interactive, dialogue, and real time process, and as such, consumers are given a chance to actively participate throughout their purchasing process (Alghizzawi, 2017). In Canada, where the internet penetration level plays above 90 percent and mobile sets form the routine of most daily activities, digital marketing has been highly incorporated in the lifestyles of consumers, especially in retail contexts. Retailers in Canada are adopting digital platforms, which are playing an increasing role in forming awareness, triggering interest, prescribing products, and encouraging purchases behaviours, which is supporting the strategic value of digital communication tools in shaping the purchase behaviour pattern.

The vast body of literature underlines the shifting consumer buying behaviour because of the digital space. According to Solomon (2020), the conventional five-stage model of decisions, which consists of problem recognition, information search, evaluation of the alternatives to purchase, purchase, and post-purchase evaluation are currently dominated by an internet-based component to a significant extent. Customers are becoming more and more intelligent, and more empowered, and they tend to use digital sources of information like online reviews, word-of-mouth, influencer content, and targeted advertising. A research conducted by Kotler et al. (2021) indicates that the digital media can accelerate the decision-making process through cost reduction of searches and exposures to alternative products. The retail consumers in Canada trust in the online search engines and social platforms to make quality selections particularly in the following product category; electronics, apparel and groceries as well as household items (Ririn Arifah, 2014). The move to this is in line with emergence of omnichannel retailing where both digital and physical store experiences are combined to offer a seamless way of accessing

products and data. On the whole, it is possible to state that, according to the literature, digital marketing has become one of the principal factors that predefine consumer intentions and purchase outcomes.

Simultaneously with the progress of digital marketing, the use of data has become a key to the promotion of the marketing efficiency, individualization, and competitive advantages. The researchers state that the analysis and gathering of consumer data enable retailers to make well-founded decisions and optimize segmentation, and create marketing interventions that would support the preferences of single personalities. Davenport and Harris (2017) believe that through data-driven decisions, the organizations will be able to learn how people buy, predict demand, and offer personalized services that will raise consumer satisfaction and the chance to buy the product(s) (Sivasankaran, 2017). Data analytics application gathers information based on the browsing, loyalty systems, social media interaction, and purchase history and uses it to offer recommendations that are highly targeted. Examples of businesses that use data analytics to anticipate customer demands and design personalized product recommendations include Walmart, Loblaws, and Amazon Canada in the Canadian retail environment. Research in the academic community confirms that individualized recommendations produce a large positive impact on the intention to purchase, impulse purchases, brand loyalty, and the size of the baskets.

To study the interaction between data-driven personalization and consumer psychology, a growing literature exists on this topic. Wedel and Kannan (2016) and Arora et al. (2020) show that customised marketing helps to increase the perceived relevance, convenience, and trust and, ultimately, improve the consumer experience and stimulate behavioural reactions. Nevertheless, researchers also warn that the process of personalization has to be limited to the level of consumer privacy expectations (Abraham and Joseph, 2019). According to Martin and Murphy (2017), the lack of transparency in the use of data presents consumer distrust, whereas ambiguity or improper use of personal data results in opposition, dissatisfaction, and abandonment. The results are particularly applicable in Canada, where Canadian law has stringent data protection policies on the use and misuse of personal information like the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA). The Canadian consumers are very sensitive to ethical data practices and trust becomes an important moderating variable in the acceptance of digital suggestions. Literature indicates that

consumers trust the source and thus, digital recommendations are considered helpful; a situation that is not the case when trust in the source is weak.

It is also determined in the literature that digital recommendations represent an expanding field of intersection among data analytics, artificial intelligence, and marketing. Other scholars, including Gomez-Uribe and Hunt (2016), emphasize the usefulness of the recommendation algorithms in informing the consumer exploration and purchase decisions. By focusing the attention of consumers towards the products of interest, lowering the load of choice, and maximizing the quality of decision, these systems can be applied. In retailing outlet, the personalized recommendations act as online salespeople that direct consumers towards items that conform to their tastes (Kannan and Li, 2017). Retailers in Canada progressively use AI-based recommendation systems to stand out and be able to match the expectations of customers on the increase. Research also indicates that digital recommendations are seen as helpful by the consumers since they help them in simplifying complex decision-making and lessening the time taken in considering alternative options. The consumers therefore are more confident with their choices and wish to continue with the purchase. Literature thus underpins the fact that evidence-based recommendations play a key role in the purchasing behaviour and retail performance (Yasmin, Tasneem and Fatema, 2015).

The other dominant theme in the scholarly literature is connected with the effects of social media marketing on consumer behaviour. Research articles by Mangold and Faulds (2009) depict that social networks form social influence channels that define tastes and actions. Instagram, Facebook, and Tik Tok are just among the platforms that retail consumers use to discover products, communicate with their peers, and interact with brands in Canada (Kiradoo, 2017). The endorsements of the influencers, storytelling of the brand, and the user-created content are often mentioned as a potent cause of the purchase decision. The modern studies ensure that social trust, emotional attachment, and perceived genuineness play a substantial role in consumer reactions to digital marketing communication. These results are in line with the general trend of increasing the use of interactive and visualized marketing content products because this enhances emotional appeal, and leads to purchase behaviour (Dahiya and Gayatri, 2018).

Retail experience and convenience are also becoming critical aspects in electronic retailing literature. Research indicates that customers are taken to brands that have easy navigation, provision of timely information, secure transactions, and speedy delivery. These expectations

are also heightened by the incorporation of the mobile technology. In Canada where smartphone is penetrative, mobile shopping has been a fundamental part of retail consumption. Literature also emphasizes that digital marketing platforms increase convenience as they are able to switch, customize and be able to conduct instant transactions. This has changed the expectations of the consumer and has brought about new levels of speed, customization, openness and value (Deekshith and Kinslin, 2016).

Although there is quite a significant level of evidence of the advantages of online marketing and the use of data, some studies point out that there could be certain barriers and obstacles. The topics of cybersecurity, the discrimination of algorithms, the imprecision of the data, and the consumer burnout of over targeting are mentioned as the emerging challenges. Researchers cautiously predict that continuous presence of digital advertising can cause either information overload or low participation (Mihaela, 2015). The literature also contains ethical issues that revolve around surveillance and manipulations on the Internet. These results support the assertion that balanced, transparent and responsible marketing approaches are significant and should respect consumer autonomy and privacy.

The combined literature confirms the assertion that online marketing and the use of data now constitute formidably influence the consumer purchasing behaviour in any retail setting. Digital tools make it more visible, more personalized, more convenient and more convincing, whereas data analytics make the targeting more precise and predictive. The success of these methods, however, is determined by the levels of consumer trust, ethical standards, relevance in each individual context, and compliance with personal tastes (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). The retail consumers in Canada are technologically advanced, digitally inclined, and more discerning, and the retail sphere is the perfect one to study the interactions of the digital marketing and data use and the process of buying decisions. The literature review demonstrates that there are solid theoretical and empirical grounds to study this relationship and that several critical research gaps are associated with consumer perceptions, information transparency, effectiveness of recommendations, expectations about privacy, and the findings about purchase decisions. This offers a sound scholarly formation to the current research.

2.1. Digital Marketing Strategies and Data Utilization Practices Employed by Retailers in Canada

Online marketing is now a key element of strategic development and competitive advantage in the Canadian retail market. The retail environment the retailers are currently engaged in is defined by high internet penetration and increased use of mobile, popular use of e-commerce platforms, and the increased demands of the consumers to have personalized engagement. Consequently, Canadian retailers have incorporated a combined range of online marketing techniques that affect consumer purchasing behaviour, promote brand affections and increase their market share (Jaakkola, 2007). Social media marketing is one of the most regularly used tools in which platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, YouTube, and LinkedIn can be considered the main tools of promoting the product, telling the brand story, and interacting with the consumer. Some of the Canadian retailers like Hudson, Lululemon, Canadian Tire and Shoppers Drug Mart have social media campaigns that are regularly used to communicate with the consumers, release advertising content, form emotional bonds, and receive feedback on their offerings. They are channels that give the retailer the ability to communicate directly with the consumers, to monitor behavioural feedback in real time and to modify campaign depending on engagement patterns thus making digital marketing a dynamic and data-driven operation (Ramya and Ali, 2016).

Search engine marketing (SEM) and search engine optimization (SEO) is another digital marketing strategy in Canada that has been adopted extensively. Google Ads, using key search words and optimization of the search results is the strategy used by the retailers to be visible to consumers who actively search information or products online. Strategic search engine methodology regarding the use of keywords, metadata, and link-building strategies assists businesses to improve search engine rankings, increase site traffic, and convert them into conversions (Cheng, Dale and Liu, 2008). The approach has gained particular significance in an environment where majority of the retail purchasers turn to the Internet in order to initiate their purchasing process. SEO and SEM are not just competitive but also cost-effective strategies because they enable retailers to target customers according to the intent. Along with search visibility, Canadian retailers pay more attention to email marketing, where automated and personalized newsletters became the means through which they convey their offers, purchase tips, loyalty programs updates and brand messages. Email has also been one of the most direct and measurable outreach options and allows marketers to segment their audiences and streamline outreach activities with astonishing precision (Cheng, Dale and Liu, 2008).

The Canadian retailers have also taken a keen interest in content marketing. Brands post blog articles, videos, product tutorials and lifestyle content that aims at educating, entertaining, and making the consumer make their decision. As an example, beauty and fashion retailers usually create video interaction and style guides that motivate what consumers should buy, and electronic retailers distribute product comparison information and technical training. This change in content towards value builds consumer reliability and retailers as reliable sources of information (Key, 2017). As a closely related strategy, influencer marketing is based on the effects of persuasion through influencers, creators, and social figures on the Internet. Micro-influencers, celebrity influencers and niche content creators' partner with Canadian retailers to access particular consumers as well as create / build brand authenticity. Influencers make the marketing messages more powerful and create positive buying perceptions, so this strategy is especially effective in younger age categories.

Omnichannel retailing has also come to be a characteristic strategic methodology in addition to these digital marketing channels. The retailers are moving up to the level of integrating the online and the offline, including in-store experience with providing the consumers with a smooth transition between the touchpoints. Services like online purchase and in-store-pickup, online payment, app loyalty programs, and online shopping assistant are now all taken as a normal part of the Canadian retail experience. This omnichannel model will generate more convenience and continuity and satisfy the requirements of consumers to accessibility, speed, and personalization (Jamal, Maqbool and Misra, 2011a). Mobile marketing is another heavy investment by the retailers, especially branded application and mobile optimized websites. To attract shoppers and make them visit the business more often, Push notifications, mobile coupons, geolocation marketing, and deals exclusive to a mobile phone are often employed. Mobile technology assists the retailers to stay in the right time at key points in the purchasing process, which is usually a trigger of impulse buying and discovery of self.

To supplement the digital marketing strategies, the data utilization practices have emerged as a core of the retail success in Canada. Examples of sources of consumer data used by retailers to include point-of-sale systems, loyalty cards, mobile application, cookies on websites, third-party databases and customer relationship management (CRM) applications. The information can help them to know the buying behavior of consumers, forecast the demand of a product and customize their offers and adapt their communication. Personalized recommendation systems are one of the most powerful data driven practices where algorithms are used to help

recommend products in real time based on the consumer preference(Dwivedi, Ismagilova, Hughes, *et al.*, 2021). Large retailers, in particular, e-commerce companies, apply artificial intelligence and machine learning to personalize the product display, promotional messages, and email. By building up on these systems, the digital engagement is made so much more relevant, leading to the fact that it results in better consumer engagement, purchase intent, and brand loyalty.

The other data practices that are prevalent within Canadian retail setting include segmentation and predictive analytics. The retailers divide the consumers along the lines of demographic, behavioural, geographical, and psychographic variables to provide specific marketing interventions. State-of-the-art analytics allow forecasting the future purchasing activity and engaging retailers to modify stock levels, businesses policy and promotional schedule. The role of the analysis of the loyalty program is especially significant because Canadian customers often engage themselves in the reward programs provided by the retailers like PC Optimum, Scene+, and Triangle Rewards(Castillo-Abdul, Bonilla-Del-río and Núñez-Barriopedro, 2021). Such programs create large consumer sets which retailers use to perfect the marketing decision. Information derived by use of loyalty programs assists in recognizing valuable customers, evaluating trends, better positioning of products, and enhancing the success of promotions.

There is further use of data in customer journey analysis. The retailers monitor online communication in web sites, applications and social media to learn how consumers move through decision-making processes. Browsing history, heat mapping and click analysis give behavioural insights of preferences, hesitations and motivations. These are the things that are considered during interface design, placing content, inventory display, and efficiency of the checkout(Muniesa and Giménez, 2020). The data also facilitates real-time decision making where the business will be able to change marketing messages or promotional prices depending on the current consumer behaviour. The retailers also apply dynamic pricing algorithms to match the product prices with changing demand, competitions strategies, and consumer willingness to pay. Such data sophistication level drives profitability and operational efficiency.

Another significant part of data use is customer feedback analytics. In order to assess customer satisfaction, discover what can be improved to improve the customer experience, and interpret customer feedback, retailers review product feedback, social media comments, survey findings, and chatbot messages. Sentiment analysis software is becoming prominent in deciphering the

emotional reactions and finding new issues or interests. The insights will enable the retailers to optimize marketing communication and modify product strategy to meet the expectations of the market. Fraud detection, return management, supply chain planning, risk assessment, are also supported by the data, which indirectly improves the consumer experience, as it enhances easier transactional processes(Rathnayaka, 2018).

The use of data in Canada is controlled by privacy and security effects, in which data collection, storage, and use standards are dictated by regulatory laws, including the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA). Retailers should be able to make data practices transparent and get a knowledgeable consumer approval. Such a legal setting will make a business use ethical data governance systems, anonymize sensitive data, and ensure that the identity of consumers is not abused. Consequently, Canadian retailers tend to focus on the trust-building techniques during the implementation of personalized marketing programs. Transmission of privacy protection is deemed to ensure consumer trust in the marketing activities carried out digitally and long-term loyalty(Fransiska *et al.*, 2012).

Finally, Canadian retailers use a set of various digital marketing tools such as social media marketing, search engine optimization and search marketing, email marketing, content marketing, influencer marketing, mobile marketing, and omnichannel delivery, to connect with the contemporary consumer and shape their purchasing habits. In combination with these measures, data use trends, including personalized recommendation systems, predictive analytics, segmentation modelling, loyalty analysis information and mapping customer journey are among the key factors involved in ensuring a more precise marketing target and engagement results. Data and digital communication integration will help Canadian retailers provide more applicable, efficient, and experiential interactions to consumers, allowing consumer purchase decisions and improving brand loyalty. Although issues surrounding data use suggest privacy, consent, and security concerns, data use has an important strategic potential, defining the current state of the retail industry and supporting the relevance of evidence-based and personalized marketing in the consumer economy of Canada.

2.2. The role that digital marketing plays in the consumer purchasing decision-making in the Canadian retail market

The importance of digital marketing in the consumer buying process has received a lot of academic interest as the retail industry keeps changing with the advent of technology. Digital

marketing has gained much importance in the Canadian retail market, as a part of strategic interaction with consumers, which shapes how the latter search, analyzing product features, negotiate prices, and eventually decide on buying or not buying products. Studies have always indicated that digital marketing tools give the retailers the potential of reaching the consumers in a better and efficient manner, building a stronger awareness of their brand as well as offer them with their own personalized marketing messages. Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019) note that decision-making is transformed through digital marketing, which contributes to two-way communications being interactive, less time searching information, and more consumer confidence in their purchase decisions (Jamal, Maqbool and Misra, 2011b). This is very much similar to the retail environment in Canada, where the internet penetration is so high, people use smartphones extensively, and e-commerce adoption levels are high, which resulted in the digital platforms becoming the primary starting point of brand-consumers interaction. Therefore, online marketing has evolved to become one of the main tools that the Canadian retailers can use to shape the perceptions of consumers and create the desire to buy.

One of the main themes of the literature is how to use digital marketing during the initial stages of consumer decision-making, especially the need recognition and information search phases. According to Solomon (2020), consumers have never been more informed than they are today because of the use of digital source, which helps consumers locate the needs of products, learn about them and acquire knowledge before shopping. Digital search tools, online advertisements, and branded websites are the most common ways through which consumers in Canada go online and search the available products (Dwivedi, Ismagilova, Rana, *et al.*, 2021). The ICT visibility of the Canadian retailers enables the consumer to make more informed and confident decisions, which means that the uncertainty level decreases and the perceived risk is minimised. Research indicates that search engine marketing (SEM) and search engine optimisation (SEO) have a high effect on the consumer buying decision-making process making them more visible and easy to use. When consumers are exposed to digitally optimised content, they form more credibility and trust towards the brand which enhances chances of doing a purchase. These results also emphasize the fact that in the stage of awareness and search, a digital marketing is a catalyst which activates further development in the consumer purchase process.

There is also a significant role of digital marketing in developing consumer evaluation of alternatives, which is one of the critical steps in the decision-making process. Knowing the

value proposition of various retailers through online reviews, product comparison, ratings, and expert recommendations allow them to evaluate them differently in an organized and effective way. The studies of Kotler et al. (2021) show that digital platforms help create a higher level of transparency and enable consumers to generate information related to rivalry actively. This availability is specifically applicable to Canada, where people are very analytical and do not want to be committed to buying without evidence first. Online comparison-tools, which are usually provided by the retailers in Canada, facilitate the rational evaluation behaviour by offering more details about pricing, product features, consumer ratings, warranty provisions, and delivery among others. It is also found that social proof is a well-determined factor in buying results. The positivity of online posts as well as user generated content improves the perceived value and decreases the hesitancy, whilst negative reviews can inhibit a purchase. Therefore, digital marketing is not only telling the product benefits, but also provides the customer the process of cognitive evaluation, to lower the doubt factor and solidify quality of the decision(Xu, 2020).

Studies also indicate that digital marketing will affect the final stage of purchase. Online advertisements, retargeting, and discount messages, and personalised offers have a direct influence on purchase intentions by consumers. In digital advertising, specifically, it has been demonstrated that, impulse buying behavior is aroused, notably in the retail segment of apparel, beauty, and home goods, and groceries. The mobile marketing concept has intensified this trend by serving to help retailers to deliver their promotions in real-time in the Canadian retail market through the application of the apps and the social media platform. Digital coupons, reward systems on an app, and time based deals online can affect consumer behaviour because they allow consumers to feel an emotional response of either urgency, excitement or fear of missing out. Such strategies make it more likely to be converted and usually lead to impulse buying. Research by Arora et al. (2020) claims that digital channels are particularly successful since psychological distance between desire and action can be abridged, and completion of buying purchases can be even more immediate and significant. Thus, digital marketing boosts the retailer impact of the final point of purchase directly.

The other that comes out as very dominant in literature is personalisation which is closely associated with consumer decision-making. With consumer data analytics, personalised marketing generates up-to-one recommendations, as well as personalised promotion messages. This will enhance perceived relevance, brand connection and purchase probability. According

to researchers, like Wedel and Kannan (2016), personalised content improves the process of thinking as it aligns the options with the needs and preferences of specific individuals, leading consumers to make satisfying decisions. Personalised offers are high responsiveness among consumers in the Canadian context and this can be seen in the ways loyalty programs run by large Canadian retailers Shoppers drug mart, Loblaws and Canadian tire. Data analytics are applied to these programs to produce customized suggestions and discounts that further engage consumers and make them more likely to stay. It is also an ongoing theme in the literature that customised digital marketing causes decision fatigue to lessen and purchase decisions to be more confident, demonstrating the increasing role of data-based marketing in retailing in Canada.

Digital marketing is also known to affect post-purchase behaviour with the support of long-term loyalty and the shaping of future purchasing decisions. It has been proven that digital communication that happens after the purchase, including customer satisfaction surveys, follow-ups, after-sales, and/or loyalty reward programs stimulates a repeat purchase and enhances brand loyalty. When post-purchase services are positive, the emotional satisfaction will grow and the trust will boost, and consumers can be easily plunged into the buying circle again (Úblová, 2014). This tendency in the Canadian market is also noticeable, with the customers showing a keen interest in the brands that provide them with consistent communication and additional interactions after the purchase. Digital touchpoints facilitate post-purchase validation which enhances confidence on product quality and reduces cognitive dissonance, which strengthens positive attitudes. This feedback loop proves that digital marketing is not only instrumental in persuading first-time buyers to buy the product attained, but also is a key decision-maker when it comes to the development of overall behavioural success.

Research also emphasizes the affective and psychological impact of digital marketing to the consumer behaviour. Emotional responses are caused by visual storytelling, interactive content, influencer endorsement, and social engagement and influence decision outcomes. The use of emotional marketing has been successful in particular with younger Canadian consumers who are very active on sites like Tik Tok, Instagram, and YouTube. One of the marketing trends that have gained mass adoption is influencer marketing, with studies indicating that consumers tend to look at social people as information and idolizing role models. This type of online persuasion builds perceived trust and individual genuineness because consumers will

tend to have more trust in products recommended to them. Emotional association also enhances pleasurable, brand affinity, as well as community membership-which are crucial aspects when making purchase choices. The literature is thus able to exemplify that the digital marketing influences consumer decision-making both because of rationality of accessing information and emotional and social impact(Barnes, 2013).

The other important area that the literature has covered is the role of omnichannel digital marketing. Omnichannel strategies in Canada, where the online and in-store shopping experiences are frequently switched, combine digital marketing and classic shopping experiences. The interlinking of mobile applications and websites with offline stores makes things more convenient and pleasing. The integration of touchpoints is done by having features like "buy online, pick-up in store, digital receipts, online reservation of products and mobile loyalty points. According to the scholars, omnichannel marketing minimizes friction in the purchasing process and improves the quality of decisions due to the presence of a brand throughout the process. It has been established in the literature that those consumers who have seen the cohesive omnichannel marketing will tend to keep their purchase choices and stay with their favourite retailer through the long-term(Chaudhary, 2018).

The literature also demonstrates the possible challenge in relation to digital marketing with regard to the consumer decision process. The result of digital marketing campaigns might also be undermined by problems with information overload, the lack of privacy, digital fatigue, and misgivings toward targeted advertising. High privacy awareness tendencies are demonstrated by Canadian consumers, who might be reluctant to use the digital marketing channels because the usage of their data might seem obscure or intrusive. Trust can also be diminished by being bombarded by irrelevant visuals or the fact that the promotional aspect is too loud. Consequently, scholars highlight the value of transparency, ethical data applied, and content of significance to continue digital marketing performance.

To sum up, the literature confirms that the roles of digital marketing in the retail Canadian market are influential in consumer buying decision-making. It increases brand awareness, directs search of information, assists in evaluation, elicits the purchasing behavior, and reinforces the post purchase satisfaction. Digital platforms decrease uncertainty and instill higher confidence in a consumer with detailed information, personalised content, and social validation. The consumer experience is also influenced emotionally, through integration in omnichannel and mobile involvement and therefore digital marketing is a multidimensional

influencer of purchase behaviour. Although digital marketing has the strong potentials, the success lies based on trust, authenticity, relevance, and consumer alignment. All in all, digital marketing is not a single option of promotion, but a fundamental part of retail strategy that fundamentally influences the intellectual, emotional, and behavioural approach to the Canadian consumer and their purchase process(Ahmad, Salman and Ashiq, 2015).

2.3. Use of data affect consumer preferences, attitude, and purchase intentions

The high growth of digital technologies has changed the interactions between business and consumer and made data a key driving force of marketing strategy and consumer behaviour. There exists an extensive amount of literature that acknowledges that the utilisation of data has become even more and more vital in terms of consumer preferences, shaping attitudes, and affecting the purchase intentions still. Davenport and Harris (2017) hold that data-driven marketing helps any given company to examine their behavioural patterns, preference history, and demographic data in order to optimise marketing communication and product offerings. This understanding of the needs will result in more precise targeting, consumer involvement, and a better conversion rate. With the increase in digital interactions, organizations can collect complex data based on the online browsing traffic, purchase history, loyalty schemes, and social media. Channel convergence enables marketers to become more accurate in determining consumer needs and use them to position their message. This constitutes a vital basis of moulding preferences where consumers are likely to respond more positively to marketing that will be according to the personal utmost utilization, way of life as well as requirement of the products(Castillo-Abdul, Bonilla-Del-río and Núñez-Barriopedro, 2021).

Studies have a strong belief in the effect of data-enriched personalization because the perceived relevance of the data can enhance consumer preferences. Wedel and Kannan (2016) point out that personalization (which is achievable with the help of sophisticated data analytics) has a beneficial impact on the customer experience as it implies showing an individual content that resonates with their personal preferences and previous behaviour. The more consumers are made to understand the retailers, the more favourable their attitude towards a brand and the more affinity and loyalty. Data-driven recommendations, such as, assist consumers in finding products that are relevant in their interests which strengthens preference formation, and minimises decision uncertainty. Researchers illustrate that personalized suggestions minimize search costs, amplify product search, and form a convenient perception, which together determine more favourable intentions to purchase. This conforms to the fact that evidence

indicates more consumers will tend to favour the product and services that they will be recommended via personalized digital channels compared to the same that are provided by generic messaging(SALEEM and SIDDIK, 2021).

The other issue that is dominant in the literature is the impact of data on consumer attitudes. According to the research provided by Arora et al. (2020), data-driven marketing intensifies the process of attitude formation by enhancing the trust, perceived relevance, and informed value. When they provide customised content due to legitimate behavioural intelligence, consumers will have more chances of perceiving brands in a positive way than otherwise(Ghazie and Dolah, 2018). Likewise, data analytics assists the business to improve their mode of communication and tone so that they can target the motivation of the consumer better. Brand attitudes about a brand are positive when consumers are exposed to the messages that reflect personal interests, solve a situation or provide exclusive value. On the contrary, the literature points out that inappropriate or excessive utilisation of data could bring about negative attitudes. Indicatively, an annoyance, distrust or perception of manipulation can be caused by intrusive targeting or irrelevant material; particularly, when the consumer does not feel that openness was observed. As such, data use can either strengthen or reduce consumer attitudes, depending on its use.

Information is also essential in influencing buyer intentions by developing the persuasion cues according to the consumer behaviour. Kotler et al. (2021) explain that the purchase intentions are created when consumers hold the opinion that a product of choice suits their needs, preferences, and expectations, which are increasingly determined by data-driven marketing. This process is supported by personalization, product matching algorithms and predictive analytics which indicate the most likely desired option to the consumer. Relevant and value communications through data-driven marketing tools encourage consumers to take action instead of stay in consideration. Moreover, dynamic pricing plans, which are backed with real-time intelligence, influence purchase decisions by providing competitor prices at the right time. The intention to purchase is also enhanced in the situation where information that indicates social validation like customer review, ratings, and usage trends, which bring psychological reassurance. The consumers trust the information presented by experts who gained the data through credible methods and which appear authentic to the consumer, will cause the consumers to trust the information presented.

Research always indicates that data lessens the level of doubt and cognitive load, which will significantly inhibit purchase intention. According to Solomon (2020), customers expect visible and believable data before making a commitment to buy, and information that has been enhanced with data finishing with comparisons, visual analytics, and product performance are measures contribute to improving the quality of the decisions taken. Uniqueness of the real-time information helps consumers to engage in a better evaluation of the product attributes which enhances confidence in making a decision and results in a more deliberate buying behaviour. Emotional triggers of purchase behaviour also have data, which focuses on the personalised narratives, within which people have identity and life ambitions. Individualized ads and loyalty points are one such example, which enhances emotional appeal, supporting buy motivation even more. This way, data affects both rational and emotional factors of purchase intention(P.Ganapathi *et al.*, 2019).

An increasing body of work studies the impact of data on consumer trust, confidence, and brand perception of which are major predictors of preference shaping and purchase behaviour. According to Martin and Murphy (2017), the clear usage of data will create the perception of control and safety in consumers, which will result in greater brand trust and a positive attitude. Trust moderates between personalization of data and purchase decision; when the consumers trust a brand, they are more at ease receiving the recommendation and offer that is data-driven. On the other hand, in cases where data practices are seen as opaque or intrusive, doubt is generated and, as a result, negative attitudes and purchase intention arise. This is a critical subtlety whereby data can be used to reinforce consumer behaviour, but such data must be managed with considerable responsibility to ensure sustainability of trust and credibility.

Another issue of consumer privacy also takes centre stage in the literature. Research topics show that consumers are usually torn by data-driven marketing they like new technology but are cautious against data abuse or surveillance. Attitudes and preferences highly depend on the emotional reaction to the data use. A strong level of privacy apprehension would lead consumers to oppose customization, anonymity, or shun brands altogether. Retailers should therefore find the balance between personalization and privacy protection to achieve positive behavioural results. Scientific findings indicate that attitudes get better and privacy concerns reduce by the company clarifying to the consumer on how the data is gathered and used. Consequently, transparency is seen to become an important cause of positive purchase intention.

The other crucial point that research pointed at is the effect of predictive analytics on consumer behaviour. Predictive models enable a business to know what consumers need in advance without the preferences being clearly stated. This is proactive in that it affects preference development whereby relevant products are displayed at the right time and thus, consumer expectations and preferences are influenced. The success of the subscription-based retailing, automated replenishment, and predictive product displays proves that the power of the data-driven forecasting can be utilized in the creation of the new purchase intentions. Brands seem to be sensitive and sensitive to consumers exposed to predictive suggestions, which leads to positive attitudes and loyalty.

Consumer preferences and intentions to buy are also influenced by social evidence that is informed by data analytics. Consumer judgement is informed by the use of data obtained through reviews by the users, peer comparisons, influencer metrics, and consumption trends. According to scholars, social validation leads to less uncertainty and perceived credibility, which makes consumers more comfortable with purchasing. This is in line with the psychological concept that consumers would also take a decision in line with the community. Confidence to buy increases with the amplification of the data in enhancing the social signals.

The literature also displays the fact that data influences post purchase perception and repurchase behaviour. Follow-up communication based on the results of the data, e.g. the messages of gratitude and feedback and the rewards of loyalty, which are personalized, reinforces the emotional satisfaction and forms the intentions of buying the product further. Customer retention strategies are also supported by data, which recognizes trends in repeat purchase, usage patterns and product preference so that the brand is able to project customer requirements and create a long-term commitment.

In general, the existing literature confirms that use of data affects the consumers in terms of their preference, attitudes and purchase intentions enormously. The following features of data can help users: personalization, relevance, uncertainty reduction, and build trust, which are key factors impacting consumer decision-making. The effects, however, rely on the transparency of data, accuracy and ethical use. Data when used in a proper way boosts consumer satisfaction, builds emotional connection and leads to higher chances of purchase. The data may undermine attitudes when it is mismanaged that may cause mistrust, or discomfort. Data usage is therefore a behavioural determinant and a strategic component which would shape consumer thinking, emotion, and behaviour within the purchasing process.

2.4. Challenges and opportunities do retailers face in using data-driven digital marketing to influence consumer buying behaviour in Canada

The digital Marketing has transformed to become data-driven and now it has been at the core of retail transformation especially in developed economies like Canada where the adoption of digital marketing is one of the highest in the world. It is stated in the literature that the Canadian retail industry has progressively enhanced the use of data analytics, artificial intelligence (AI), social media analytics, and consumer tracking systems to perfect marketing campaigns and persuade purchasing behaviour (Duffett, 2017; James, 2021). The retailers currently use real-time behavioural data with high dependence to tailor product suggestions, anticipate demand and provide focused advertising. But even with the ensuing market opportunities, or improved efficiency and consumer targeting with the integration of data-driven marketing, challenges based on data privacy, technological capability, organisational readiness and consumer trust have also been brought up. In academic literature, data-oriented digital marketing is continuously emphasized as a strategic necessity and cause of operational heterogeneity in the Canadian retail setting (Martin, 2020; Singh and Hess, 2022).

Among the opportunities that have come out of the literature is the increased possibilities of personalising marketing communication on consumer shopping preferences. It has been found that customised digital content enhances the rate of click throughs, brand interactions and conversion (Khan et al., 2020). Personalised marketing experiences have become one of the competitive differentiating factors in Canada with consumers who are digitally mature and willing to interact online. Such data analytics as audience segmentation, product recommendation, and automated marketing communication is applied by many retail businesses, both large corporations and small online retailers. Research shows that online marketing that is informed by data assists in bettering pricing approaches, promotion design, product portfolio management and integration between online and offline facilities in omnichannel environments (Forouzandeh, 2020). In addition to operational advantages, data allows the retailers respond promptly to the new trends thus enhancing flexibility and decision making. According to scholars, such benefits enable retailers to build greater emotional links to the customers, which are part of increased loyalty and profitability over the long term (McCoy, 2021).

Nonetheless, the literature also notes that Canadian retailers have significant difficulties in the digital marketing implementation with data involvement. One of the key issues is connected

with the problem of privacy and security. The Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents act (PIPEDA) has stringent restrictions on the way businesses gather, store and distribute data of consumers in Canada. Research indicates the fear of violating the regulations acts as a deterrent to most businesses using advanced data analytics (Martini, 2021; Zhang, 2022). There is a growing consumer concern regarding the use of their data as well, particularly since global data scandals like Cambridge Analytica. The studies suggest that the lack of trust in online service can adversely affect the purchasing behaviour, especially in Gen X and Baby Boomers of consumer-purchasers in Canada (Chahal and Rani, 2021). Here, the transparency, security infrastructure, and consent-based data systems will be necessary in an attempt to have consumers accept it.

The next problem is connected with cost and technological constraints. Whereas big retailers (Walmart, Loblaw, and Amazon Canada) have managed to develop sophisticated data ecosystems, small and medium-sized retailers cannot afford analytics platforms and qualified labour (Jain and Adam, 2020). The talent of data science is also costly, and third parties lack the ability to analyze and process data independently, which means that retailers who do not have the analytics available internally tend to use this functionality, thus becoming more dependent on external resources and less controlling their strategy. It can also be found that research means that numerous Canadian retailers have a broken data source spread to the extent of store, online, and mobile touchpoints, which leads to inconsistent user recognition and imprecise prediction modelling (Harrington, 2021). This fragmentation undermines the results of the digital marketing process and constrains the potential of personalised experiences.

Another duo of characteristics observed by the scholars is the fact that the speed at which technology is changing is posing a continuous complexity. The volume of data is growing exponentially whilst most retailers do not have the organisational structure to handle real-time analytics. As an illustration, the supply chain data, trends on social media, and site correspondences, and mobile tracking are all systems not easily combined (Berman, 2019). The digital marketing platforms change rapidly thus necessitating continual upgrading and training of staff. It has been proposed in literature that the resistance towards change in technology within organizations, coupled with low digital skills, lowers the effectiveness of the implementation of data-driven marketing.

In spite of these, the literature does define the opportunities that data-driven digital marketing presents to retailers. One of the key opportunities is associated with omnichannel integration.

The Canadian consumers habitually window shop online and make purchases in stores or vice versa. With data analytics, the retailers are able to align the touchpoints to form a smooth shopping experience. It is written in studies that data systems in omnichannel enhance consumer satisfaction, decrease friction and heighten purchase intention (Shankar, 2021). The next opportunity is related to predictive analytics as it assists the retailers in forecasting emerging consumer needs. Predictive data models make it possible to identify the trigger of the purchasing, the seasonality in demand, and a shift in consumer sentiments on their attitudes, which enables the retailer to proactively design campaign strategies (Moro, 2020).

Moreover, the stabilisation of the targeted advertising in Canada has been revolutionised by machine learning and artificial intelligence as evidenced in the literature. AI uses machine learning on shopping platforms to provide personalised marketing messages to customers on several platforms, such as social networks, Google search, email marketing, and e-commerce sites, which increases the conversion rate and more efficient spending (Xu, 2022). The geo-targeting is also a well-known technique used by retailers to reach local shoppers to boost store footfall and inventory planning. In this respect, data-driven digital marketing does not only shape consumer behaviour but also enhances efficiency in operations throughout the supply chain.

The other opportunity is that of consumer empowerment. Research indicates that consumers become more sure about their buying behavior when digital marketing serves them with appropriate information, suggestions, and peer-reviews (Solomon, 2020). The Canadian consumers are progressively demanding brands to provide authentic and open communication. Data-driven marketing can help retailers to fulfil those expectations and minimize uncertainty and enhance perceived value. It is also found through research that data improves brand-consumer relationships by improving loyalty schemes, reward schemes, customer feedback and behavioural rewards (Rodríguez, 2021).

Nonetheless, as it is evident in the literature, balancing a lot has to be done. Although personalisation at a distance is more effective with data, there are negative effects of over-targeting. Research indicates that consumer discomfort with over-monitoring or unwanted advice makes consumers develop privacy fatigue and avoidance behaviour (Phelan, 2022). Hence, researchers emphasize on ethical data marketing procedures such as consent-based targeting, anonymisation profiling, and transparent information about how the data will be used. The ethical marketing of digital content has become the topical subject of research, as

the consumer purchasing behaviour turns strongly associated with the sense of trust, digital literacy and the perceived data safety (Greenwood, 2021).

Overall, the available literature indicates that the data-driven digital marketing has transformed the Canadian retail landscape. Data plays a central role to competitive advantage between customer acquisition and loyalty improvement. Its utilisation, however, depends on the technical infrastructure, organisational capability, the regulatory knowledge and consumer trust. Despite the privacy handling problems, price, incorporation with other systems, and advancement in technology, the market prospects are great. Through the adoption of innovation and ethics, the Canadian retailers will be able to improve customer relationship, purchase intention by enhancing accurate, customized and meaningful online conversations.

2.5. Suggestions that can be made to retail organizations to enhance consumer purchasing behaviour using digital marketing in Canada

Available literature has also indicated that digital marketing is currently a key force behind buying behaviour, especially in well-developed markets like Canada. They always state that retail businesses that need to boost consumer purchase choices should switch to customer-centric digital marketing based on personalization, transparency, convenience, and emotions (Kotler et al., 2020; Dwivedi, 2022). The younger generation consumers demand digital experiences which are not only informative but also personalized to the needs of each one of them. As such, the main suggestion that is advanced by scholars is that retailers should adopt personalization, which is backed by advanced data analytics. Most of the studies indicate that personalization dramatically enhances the intention to purchase, especially in omnichannel retail environments where customers can experience online and offline aspects (Forouzandeh, 2020; McCoy, 2021). In Canada, where retail buyers are digitally full-scale and content communicating with various web platforms, individualised propositions, including customised deals and offers, endorsement offers, and loyalty benefits, can enhance engagements and drive buys. It is indicated that literature indicates that retailers that embrace the use of machine learning, consumer segmentation, and predictive analytics have a higher likelihood of crafting stronger consumer responses than other retailers who employ standardised content (Zhang, 2022).

The second overarching suggestion that can be made on the basis of the literature is enhanced digital ecosystems of the omnichannel. Researchers emphasize that Canadian consumers would

like to have a more convenient experience in virtual and physical retail locations and use smartphones to find more information about goods and meet the prices and check availability to buy a product (Shankar, 2021). In order to have a better impact on influencing the buying behaviour, it is recommended that retailers invest in technologies that will make an inventory management process, mobile commerce, social media platforms as social media, and customer service chat systems work together as a single experience. Omnichannel connectivity brings productions of barriers to purchase and feelings more comfortable of making a decision, especially in high-involvement products (electronics and clothing) (Solomon, 2020). Research findings indicate also that live visibility of goods and availability of customize delivery models like click-and-collect or next-day delivery, which avail products greatly to consumers in motivating them to buy their products. In this respect, scholars specify that the retailers should focus on consistency in the channels, ensuring that the pricing, product messages, and promotions should be consistent and the same product should be conveyed consistently in all the touchpoints because inconsistency may diminish consumer confidence, as well as, lower the possibility of purchase (Singh & Hess, 2022).

Another major area that scholars have provided solid recommendations is to change trust and transparency. Studies have shown that the Canadian consumer is very sensitive to data use and privacy, digital tracking, and algorithmic targeting. Some authors also stress the necessity of retail organizations to approach data processing in a transparent manner, transparently report how they are gathering information on their consumers, and ensure the possibility of consent management (Martini, 2021; Chahal and Rani, 2021). This is particularly crucial within a regulatory space of the impact of federal laws on privacy like PIPEDA. Research indicates that consumer purchase commitment is much higher in consumers who view digital marketing as being fair, respectful, and non-intrusive. On the other hand, overbearing methods of targeting help in owning back or retiring. Thus, the literature suggests that retailers should develop ethical digital marketing systems that strike a compromise between personalization and privacy. Researchers also emphasize the significance of cyber-security investment with data breaches having the potential to quickly eradicate brand loyalty and consumer confidence especially with older groups which are already more digitally sceptical (Greenwood, 2021).

Another important recommendation on social media involvement that is found in the literature in enhancing purchasing behaviour is the use of the media. The social platforms affect the attitudes, emotions, and brand perceptions, in particular, among Millennials and Generation Z

- the two groups constituting a significant portion of the retail consumer audience in Canada (Duffett, 2017). The scholars claim that retailers ought to move towards relational communication as opposed to their previous transactional promotion which is based on educative, entertaining and inspirational content. Instead of using paid advertising as the ultimate solution, research recommends that companies integrate influencer relationships, user-created and user-generated content, community engagement, and the use of reviews as engagement strategies (Khan et al., 2020). These strategies make it more authentic and more connected with emotions, both of which are good predictors of buying in online settings. It is also demonstrated in the literature that social media analytics can assist retailers to gain a sense of sentiment, observe new trends, gauge brand associations, and improve products offerings in real time (Berman, 2019). As a consequence, researchers suggest using social intelligence tools to facilitate the agile marketing decision.

The other recommendation based on the literature is associated with customer loyalty system improvement. The scholars show that the loyalty program can be among the most efficient digital strategies to influence the repeat purchasing (particularly, when it is combined with personalised rewards and behavioural incentives) (Rodriguez, 2021). Canadian buyers are receptive to wars that provide them with an alternative value other than discounts including exclusive deals, tier-based deductions, customised packages, and customer recognition functionalities. In retail literature, it is emphasized that loyalty data may also be applied to enhance consumer comprehension and predicting purchasing behaviors so that retailers may have better campaigns. Besides, mobile applications that are linked to loyalty programs enhance the ease of consumers and their frequency of engagement (James, 2021). The increased convenience can also overcome the resistance to the decision making process especially in the cases of a routine shopping (groceries and home goods).

Moreover, scholars highly suggest the use of immersive digital experiences to boost the purchase intention. Augmented reality, virtual try-on, online product customization, and AI-based decision support technologies allow stirring consumer interest due to the minimization of uncertainty and increasing product knowledge (Harrington, 2021). According to scholars, these tools have been instrumental especially in the fashion, beauty, furniture and electronics industries-industries that constitute a major percentage market in the Canadian retail sector. The aspects of digital immersion enhance consumer motivation through the sensorial simulation, social evidence, and comparative analysis. A number of studies can verify that

immersive shopping technologies yield a strong positive effect on emotional satisfaction which is a key force influencing the purchase intention in the digital sphere (Moro, 2020).

Suggestions to enhance usability at the sites and mobile platforms also occur on a regular basis. Studies indicate that a lack of navigation, slow page loading times, inadequate search and fewer payment options adversely affect the result of purchase. Thus, researchers recommend retailers to design websites with emphasis on user centricity, support increased access and have mobile-first layouts (Xu, 2022). Offering several secure payment options, such as digital wallets, buy-now-pay-later services, and cryptocurrency options, has proven to raise the rate of conversion. The need to optimise the platform continuously using A/B testing and usability analytics to provide value to the customer is also emphasised in literature.

Lastly, scholars suggest the implementation of data-oriented decision making in an organisational level. Again, although much of the consumer data are being collected by retailers in Canada, not every business makes good use of the information by converting it into actionable insights. Literature promotes the application of internal analytical skill, staff instruction, and machine-learning applications, and cross-functional digital workforces to enhance the accuracy of the decisions (Jain & Adam, 2020). According to the studies, when the employees are knowledgeable of data systems and marketing technologies campaign outcomes are greatly enhanced. Another suggestion made by scholars is that continuous learning cultures are adopted by retailers in order to stay competitive in the dynamic digital market.

All in all, the literature shows that there is extensive scholarly consensus that digital marketing gives Canadian retailers immense possibilities to influence buying behaviour. Nevertheless, this is subject to strategic congruence, technology prowess, transparency, personification, and consumer credibility. It is recommended to focus on offering greater customer experience, minimizing obstacles, maximizing emotions, and utilizing intelligent analytics to provide value. Implementing these evidence-based strategies, the retail organizations, which act on the Canadian market, will be capable of enhancing the competitiveness on the market, foster the establishment of long-term consumer relationships and, consequently, raise the purchase intentions both in the online and offline stores.

2.6. Research Gap

Even though the current literature has significant information on digital marketing techniques, consumer behaviour patterns, and the increased use of data analytics in the contemporary retail sector, there are still a few crucial gaps in understanding its topics, especially in the framework of the retail field in Canada. Firstly, albeit numerous international research has resolved the relationship between digital marketing and consumer purchasing behaviour, the majority part of this research has been done in larger international context or in particular areas such as the United States, Europe, and Asia. Some empirical research has been done on the Canadian retail environment, although relatively limited in number, yet it is an environment that owes much of its anomalies and diversity in population, culture, technology, and regulatory framework to its location. Consequently, there is a lack of evidence regarding the specific reaction of the Canadian consumer to the digital advertising, personalized marketing, and targeting based on data.

Secondly, even though the literature treats the role of data utilization in the formation of the purchase preferences and decision-making as essential, the research on how the data-based personalization is reflected in the real purchase results in Canada is lacking. As is, the available literature is also inclined to discuss concepts, consumer opinion or trends of technology adoption instead of objective quantification of the effect of a particular data-driven marketing intervention on the purchasing intention or purchasing behaviour. The research involved in comparing the consumer responses in different retail subsectors, including grocery, fashion, electronics, home goods or luxury retail is also inadequate.

The third gap pertains to the ethical issues, privacy expectation and trust. Although the importance of consumer trust in digital space is common knowledge in literature, little empirical research has investigated how national privacy framework of PIPEDA influences the perceptions of Canadian consumers towards data collection and algorithmic personalization. The rate of scholarly background in linking mistrust or supposed invasion of privacy to the propensity of consumers to access digital marketing content is also sparse. This is crucial especially in light of the growing fear of data misuse and internet attacks.

Fourth, the literature is not very informative on the operational issues encountered by the Canadian retail organizations. In spite of the fact that researchers recognize barriers to digital marketing like the high cost of investment, technological fragmentation, shortage of skills and

organizational resistance, little empirical studies have investigated the nature of how the barriers constrain the efficiency of digital marketing. There are only a few works discussed on how retailers can overcome these barriers or the internal strategies that are best suited in improving digital marketing capability.

Fifth, although most of the available literature attest to the importance of personalization, omnichannel integration, and customer analytics, there is often scanty advice about how to implement them in their practical form. The existing sources are inclined towards articulating the impact of digital marketing instead of coming up with practical solutions that can be put into use by retail entities to amplify the level of purchase intention. This weakness indicates that more applied, industry inspired research, which results in practical knowledge and prescriptions is needed.

Lastly, a lot of the current studies have focused on overall consumer attitudes as opposed to the evaluation of behavioural differences among demographics. The Canadian population is culturally diverse, multilingual, age fluid, and digitally illusive and all of this can influence the consumer interpretation and reaction to digital marketing. The existing literature does not do comparative research of the generational cohorts, ethnicities, or income level despite the fact that these factors may be highly critical in determining purchasing decisions.

On the whole, the literature demonstrates the strong theoretical background and the absence of context-specific, empirical, and practical research. The opportunities to fill these gaps exist in a serious attempt to broaden the academic knowledge and inform the industry practice as well as provide strategic decision-making in the retail sector of Canada. The suggested paper will address these gaps by examining the impact that digital marketing and the use of data on consumer buying behaviour and its predominant drivers and obstacles and formulate a list of recommendations that should be evidence-based and are specific to the setting of Canadian retail. Such a donation will aid academic and effective retail innovation.

CHAPTER-III

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Overview of Research Problem

The swift development of digital technologies has radically changed the retail business, especially in the adoption of the practice of digital marketing and decision-making based on data. Canadian retailers are adopting more and more the digital space of social media, search engines, mobile applications and e-commerce websites, and at the same time, they are using consumer information to provide customers with offerings that are personalized, target-promotional and enable maximum customer interaction as well. Though these processes are commonly applied, the effectiveness of use of digital marketing and stream of data in generating consumer purchase decisions in Canadian retail environment remains unclear. This lack of the complete picture brings about confusion to retailers in the quest to match the digital investment to the real consumer reaction.

The online era has complicated the consumer buying process and is affected by numerous touchpoints, immediate access to information, content tailoring, and the text-based Recommendation. Even though digital marketing implies a superior reference to consumer engagement and purchase conversion, not all consumers and retail format will experience this success. Equally, data use can assist in making informed decisions and also create concern on issues of privacy, trust and perceived manipulation. The impact of these factors on the purchasing behaviour in Canada where the buying behaviour of consumers is strongly digital and ethical in the data usage is expected to differ with other markets. However, there is still a patchy and insufficient empirical research of those dynamics within the Canadian retailing industry.

The existing literature review is inclined to discuss digital marketing tools or data analytics implementation in a disjointedly way, which makes it possible to stimulate the integrated effect on consumer purchasing patterns inadequately. Additionally, most works focus on the organizational performance rates that ignore the consumers voice especially the role of digital interaction and data-driven personalization in the attitudes, preferences, and intentions to purchase. This weakness is significant in the Canadian retail market setting, which is a rich mix

of demographics of diverse consumers, robust regulatory frameworks, and actively changing omnichannel marketplace. This means that the retailers are not given actionable information regarding the digital and data-driven strategies that actually affect consumer decision-making.

Thus, the inadequacy of the study as there is no integrated and consumer-focused conceptualization of the effect of digital marketing and data usage on consumer purchasing behaviour in the Canadian retailing industry is the core issue of the proposed research. The analysis of the problem is vital toward assisting the retailers in formulating effective, ethical, as well as consumer-receptive digital strategies, as well as add into scholarly understanding through elucidating processes through which digital marketing and data use influence consumer behaviour in a large and digitally developed market such as Canada.

3.2. Operationalizing the theoretical constructs

The theoretical basis of the presented research is rooted in the developed theories of consumer behaviour and technology adoption explaining how people react to the digital marketing stimuli, how personalisation based on data provision builds perceptions, and how these characteristics impact buying decision-making in a retail setting. The main theories the research was based on are the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Consumer decision model of decision. A combination of these theories offers a systematic basis of comprehension to the psychological, behavioural and technological forces that influence the way in which the Canadian consumer engages in the digital marketing action and how their purchasing behaviour is eventually concluded.

According to the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) by Ajzen, attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control are all those factors that influence the way a human being will behave. Under the digital retailing, TPB reveals that consumer attitude towards online marketing content, peer influence or influence through community and perception of ability to control utilization of technology are the determinants of intention to purchase. To illustrate, when the digital marketing messages are perceived as useful, reliable, and in harmony with the personal values of the consumers, they will tend to develop positive attitudes and purchase intentions. TPB can be applied in Canada where the impact of social media usage and peer recommendation systems is very high to explain the way in which the subjective norms including reviews, influencer recommendations, internet forums, etc initiate the decision-making process. Therefore, the theory is useful in explaining the relationship that exists

between the exposure to digital marketing and purchase intention as it associates psychological reactions with behavioural consequences.

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) also adds more to the theoretical foundation as it reveals the impact of the consumer acceptance of digital platforms on the shopping behaviour. Perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use are the two predictors of technology uptake that are dominant as described in TAM. In terms of this research, TAM can be used to understand why people would accept the experience of using digital platforms to shop in retailers, artificial intelligence recommendations, and mobile shopping apps, as well as data-driven advertising tools. When consumers consider the digital channel convenient, efficient, and reliable, they should probably positively react to marketing campaign and further utilize the platform in order to make purchases. Equally, usability, information simplicity and functionality of the platform are also associated with minimal decision-making energy and enhanced purchasing confidence. This is of special concern to the retail business in Canada where internet literacy and mobile users are high thus, boosting the use of digital shopping habits.

In support of these views, the Consumer Decision-Making Process Model gives a behavioural basis on mapping the movement of consumers towards purchase completion since they are aware of it. This model contains five steps, including problem recognition, search, alternatives evaluation, purchase decision and after purchase behaviour. Digital marketing contributes on each of these steps, through providing information that is highly targeted, emotional appeal, social proof, and the personalised product recommendations. The use of data, particularly, the use of personalized recommendations, impacts the evaluation phase by limiting the selection of products and offered options to be viable according to the given tastes and preferences of the consumers. The retailing market of Canada is a competitive market, where consumers are presented with a huge amount of products and are becoming more and more price-sensitive, and purchase efficiency and cognitive overburden can be decreased through data-supported assistance. The post-purchase satisfaction and retention, which is supported by loyalty programs, reviews, and follow-up messages—areas that are largely influenced by digital communication are also emphasized by the model.

Collectively, these theories have created a combined model that bridges digital marketing responses, consumer behaviour and psychological reactions. TPB is a model of influence on intention that uses attitude and social influence; TAM is usability of its platform on engagement and acceptance; and Consumer Decision-Making Process is a model that uses marketing and

information to influence buying steps. On this synthesized theoretical framework, the research hypothesizes that digital marketing and the use of data modify the purchasing decisions by the mediating variables trust, personalization, perceived relevance, and consumer attitude. These variables allow to understand why this or that digital strategy performs and succeed and why others fail.

This theoretical approach can be applied particularly to the Canadian retail industry, where the digital revolution, data control, shifting societal values, and transforming consumer standards are driving new business model development. Through the combination of these theories, the research obtains better insight into the way the elements of digital marketing can be converted into consumer behaviour. It also gives academic rationale to the reasoning of studying data personalization, trust formation, and behavioural intention as key constructs to predict retail purchase decisions. Finally, the framework helps the main point that digital marketing success is not limited to technology functionality, but also to how good humans can perceive, be motivated and experience it - which is best comprehended in terms of the verified behavioural theory.

3.3. Research Purpose

The main aim of this study is to consider and evaluate the effect of online marketing and use of data on consumer purchasing actions in the retail industry in Canada. With more and more retailers relying on digital platforms and data driven decisions in reaching out to consumers, it will become imperative to learn how these activities affect consumer choices, intentions to purchase and actual purchases. This paper aims at offering a holistic and consumer centered viewpoint on the efficacy of online marketing campaigns facilitated through use of data in a digitally progressive retail industry.

In particular, the study will find out what constitute the most popular digital marketing tools and data usage activities among retailers as well as information of how they find application in various phases of consumer buying decision process, such as the awareness, information search, the evaluation of alternative, and buying. The analysis of consumer reaction to customized content, personalized promotions, online reviews and digital communication aimed to solve the problems and help to understand how data-driven marketing influences consumer preferences, attitudes, and trust in retail brands.

The other significance of the present research makes the assessment of how the perceived relevance, transparency, and privacy issues of consumer perceptions moderate the association between digital marketing and data usage and purchasing decisions. Considering the increased data privacy and ethical conscious among the Canadian consumers, the research question seeks to examine the effects of responsible data on consumer acceptance and adoption of the digital marketing activities.

Lastly, the study will provide a contribution to the academic knowledge and practice-based decision making through presenting empirical evidence and practical implications to the retailers, marketers and policymakers. The assumption is that the discoveries can be used in developing efficient and ethical digital marketing tactics that would potentially enhance consumer satisfaction and guarantee the systematization of competitive advantage in the Canadian retail sector.

3.3.1. Research Questions

- What digital marketing and data utilization practices are commonly employed by retailers in Canada?
- What role does digital marketing play in the consumer purchasing decision-making in the Canadian retail market?
- What challenges and opportunities do retailers face in using data-driven digital marketing to influence consumer buying behaviour in Canada?
- What are the suggestions that can be made to retail organizations to enhance consumer purchasing behaviour using digital marketing in Canada?

3.3.2. Hypothesis of the study

- **H01:** There are no significant digital marketing strategies and data utilization practices are commonly employed by retailers in Canada.
- **Ha1:** There are significant digital marketing strategies and data utilization practices are commonly employed by retailers in Canada.
- **H02:** There are no significant role that digital marketing play in the consumer purchasing decision-making in the Canadian retail market.
- **Ha2:** There are significant role that digital marketing play in the consumer purchasing decision-making in the Canadian retail market.

- **H03:** There are no significant data affect consumer preferences, attitude, and purchase intentions.
- **Ha3:** There are significant data affect consumer preferences, attitude, and purchase intentions.
- **H04:** There are no significant challenges and opportunities retailers face in using data-driven digital marketing to influence consumer buying behaviour in Canada.
- **Ha4:** There are significant challenges and opportunities retailers face in using data-driven digital marketing to influence consumer buying behaviour in Canada.
- **H05:** There are no significant suggestions that can be made to retail organizations to enhance consumer purchasing behaviour using digital marketing in Canada.
- **Ha5:** There are significant suggestions that can be made to retail organizations to enhance consumer purchasing behaviour using digital marketing in Canada.

3.4. Research Design

The current research undertakings use an exploratory research study which is backed by a quantitative research design to investigate the influence of digital marketing and data use on consumer purchases in the Canadian retail industry. Moreover, a purposive sampling approach is applied in order to obtain respondents with experience and exposure related to digital retail platforms.

3.5. Sampling Design

- (i) **Respondents' Type:** - There are three cities namely, Toronto, Surrey and Vancouver taken for survey. Therefore, Toronto, Surrey and Vancouver are universe for current research.
- (ii) **Sampling technique:** - In this study respondents are randomly selected using purposive sampling techniques.
- (iii) **Sample size:** - Sample size for the study includes 600 customers buying products from Canadian retail sectors. Total Population of customers found to be: 4,26,228.
- (iv) **Determination of Sample Size:**

Determining the sample size using **Cochran's formula:**

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \cdot p \cdot (1 - p)}{e^2 + \left(\frac{Z^2 \cdot p \cdot (1-p)}{N} \right)}$$

Where:

- $Z = 1.96$ (Z-score for a 95% confidence level)
- $p = 0.5$ (assumed proportion)
- $e = 0.05$ (margin of error)
- $N = 4,23,458$

The sample size is approximately **384**. For existing study, the sample size is decided **600** as more the sample size more will be conclusive and accurate results.

S.No.	Name of City	Total population of customers in retail sector	Number of respondents selected for data collection
1.	Bangalore	2,25,564	200
2.	Delhi	1,54,040	200
3.	Hyderabad	46,624	200
Total		4,26,228	600

3.6. Participant Selection

The participant for current study is customers from retail platforms from Canada. The cities selected for survey from Canada are Toronto, Surrey and Vancouver.

3.7. Instrumentation

For quantitative analysis Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 23.0 used.

3.8. Data Collection Procedures

3.8.1. Questionnaire design: Based on 5-point Likert scale, responses from strongly agree to strongly disagree applied in the study. Self-structured questionnaire adopted in the current study.

3.8.2. Sources of data

- (i) **Primary data:** The existing study adopts exploratory approach. Therefore, survey is conducted and responses collected from self-structured questionnaire filled by customers from retail platforms in Canada.
- (ii) **Secondary data:** Secondary data collected for the purpose of doing extensive literature survey based on prior research work from published research articles, working papers, published thesis, conference papers, books, authentic reports, websites.

3.9. Tools and techniques of data analysis

SPSS 26.0 version is used to obtain results from the coding sheet after addressing the missing values. Various statistical tools of SPSS applied to provide quantitative information for concepts clarity.

Details of Tools applied in data analysis

1. **Frequency and percentage Method:** Frequency and percentage distribution used to determine the percentage usually for data on profile (age, occupation, gender, marital status tec.)

Formula:

$$\% = \frac{f}{N} \times 100$$

Where: % = Percent
f = Frequency
N = Number of cases

2. **Mean:**

The *mean* is the average or the most common value in a collection of numbers. The mean (average) of a data set is found by adding all numbers in the data set and then dividing by the number of values in the set.

$$\text{Mean} = \frac{\text{Sum of All Data Points}}{\text{Number of Data Points}}$$
$$\text{Mean} = \text{Assumed Mean} + \frac{\text{Sum of All Deviations}}{\text{Number of Data Points}}$$

3. Standard Deviation

The *standard deviation* is a *statistic* that measures the dispersion of a dataset relative to its mean and is calculated as the square root of the variance.

$$\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{\sum [x - \bar{x}]^2}{n}}$$

σ = standard deviation
 \sum = sum of
 x = each value in the data set
 \bar{x} = mean of all values in the data set
 n = number of value in the data set

4. T test

A t-test is a statistical test that is used to compare the means of two groups. It is often used in hypothesis testing to determine whether a process or treatment actually has an effect on the population of interest, or whether two groups are different from one another.

Type	T-statistic	Degrees of freedom
One-sample t-test	$t = \frac{\bar{x} - \mu_0}{s/\sqrt{n}}$	df = n - 1
Paired t-test	$t = \frac{\bar{X}_D - \mu_0}{s_D/\sqrt{n}}$	df = n - 1

5. Chi-square Test

The Chi-Square analysis is most frequently used to estimate condition of Independence test while applying a crosstabulation also referred as a bivariate table. Crosstabulation helps in assessing the dispersals of two categorical variables at once, with the connections of the groups of the variables appearing in the cells assembled in the bivariate table. The Independence test measures whether a relationship among the two variables by relating the responses from observed pattern in the cells to the responses from expected pattern if the variables were truly independent of each other. Assessing the Chi-Square statistic and then comparing it in contrast to a critical value from the distribution of Chi-square permits the scholars to measure whether the observed cell totals are significantly unlike from the expected cell totals.

An assessment of the Chi-Square analysis is quite straight-forward and also based on intuition. The formula of Chi-square is as follows:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

χ^2 = The test static

Σ = The sum of

O= Observed frequency

E= Expected frequency

As represented in the above formula, the Chi-Square analysis based on the difference between what is the actual observed frequency in the data and what would be expected frequency if there was no association exist among the variables.

6. Correlation Analysis

Correlation test is used to evaluate the association between two or more variables. Correlation coefficients are used to measure how strong a relationship is between two variables.

$$r = \frac{n(\sum xy) - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[n\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2][n\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

7. Regression Analysis

In statistical modeling, regression analysis is a set of statistical processes for estimating the relationships between a dependent variable and one or more independent variables.

$$Y = a + bX$$

$$b = \frac{N\sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{N\sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2} \quad a = \frac{\sum Y - b\sum X}{N}$$

Where,

N = number of observations, or years

X = a year index (decade)

Y = population size for given census years

ANOVA

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) is a collection of statistical models and their associated estimation procedures (such as the "variation" among and between groups) used to analyse the differences among group means in a sample.

8. Exploratory Factor Analysis:

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM) are techniques commonly used in the field of language assessment. EFA is a data-driven approach which is generally used as an investigative technique to identify relationships among variables.

3.10. Limitations of the Study

- Three cities, namely, Toronto, Surrey and Vancouver were only possible for survey.
- 600 customers only from retail platforms in Canada taken for study.
- Only retail industry is explored in the current research.

Conclusion

To sum up, the study presents valuable information on overarching themes identified in the title and emphasize on the complicated, but important relationships that characterize the research field. The results reveal that the core variables have an overall impact on the outcomes and their value in the development of theories, empirical knowledge, and practical value. In filling the gaps that are observed in the available literature, the study is not only enhancing clarifying concepts but also providing value to the field of knowledge by coming up with evidence-based findings that may be used later on to inform future decision-making, policy

formulation, and scholarly research. Overall, the study confirms the significance of the issue in question, the growing topicality of the discipline, and establishes a concise outline of how the intellectual topic should be further researched and applied in practice.

CHAPTER-IV

RESULTS

Table 4.1: Age Distribution

Age Distribution	Frequency	Percentage
Below 25 years	215	35.83%
25 to 35 years	226	37.67%
36 to 45 years	92	15.33%
Above 45 years	67	11.16%

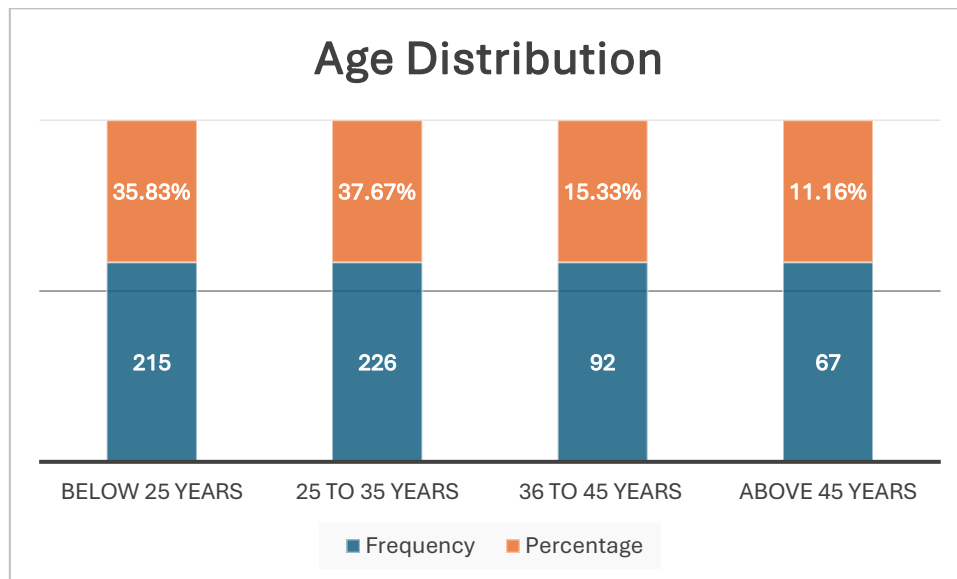


Figure 4.1: Age Distribution

The age distribution of respondents indicates that the sample is predominantly composed of younger consumers, reflecting the demographic most actively engaged with digital platforms in the Canadian retail market. The largest proportion of respondents falls within the **25 to 35 years** age group, accounting for **37.67% (226 respondents)**, followed closely by those **below 25 years**, who represent **35.83% (215 respondents)**. Together, these two categories constitute

more than **73% of the total sample**, suggesting that the findings largely capture the perceptions and buying behaviours of digitally savvy consumers who are more exposed to and influenced by digital marketing and data-driven retail practices. The **36 to 45 years** age group comprises **15.33% (92 respondents)**, indicating moderate representation, while respondents **above 45 years** form the smallest segment at **11.16% (67 respondents)**. This distribution implies that although middle-aged and older consumers are included, their perspectives are comparatively less dominant. Overall, the age profile is appropriate for the study, as younger age groups are typically more responsive to digital marketing initiatives, thereby providing relevant insights into consumer buying decisions in the Canadian retail sector.

Table 4.2: Gender Analysis

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	229	38.16%
Female	371	61.83%

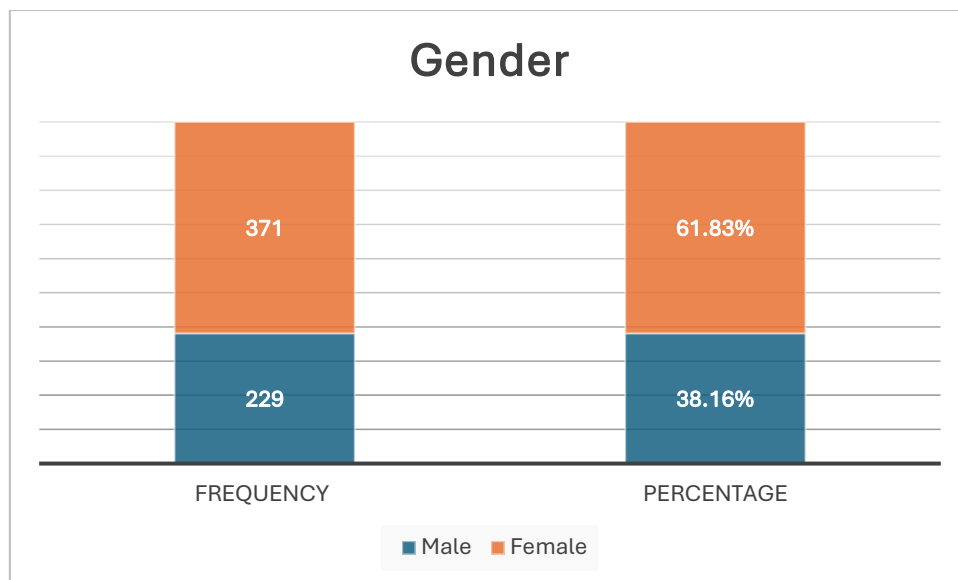


Figure 4.2: Gender Analysis

The gender-wise distribution of respondents shows a higher participation of female consumers in the study. **Female respondents constitute 61.83% (371 respondents)** of the total sample,

while **male respondents account for 38.16% (229 respondents)**. This indicates that the findings of the study are more strongly influenced by the perceptions and purchasing behaviours of female consumers in the Canadian retail sector. The higher representation of females may reflect their relatively greater involvement in retail purchasing decisions and higher engagement with digital marketing channels such as social media, online shopping platforms, and promotional content. Nevertheless, the substantial proportion of male respondents ensures that gender-based perspectives are reasonably balanced, allowing for meaningful insights into how digital marketing and data utilization influence consumer buying decisions across genders in Canada.

Table 4.3: Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	226	37.67%
Married	201	33.50%
Others	173	28.83%

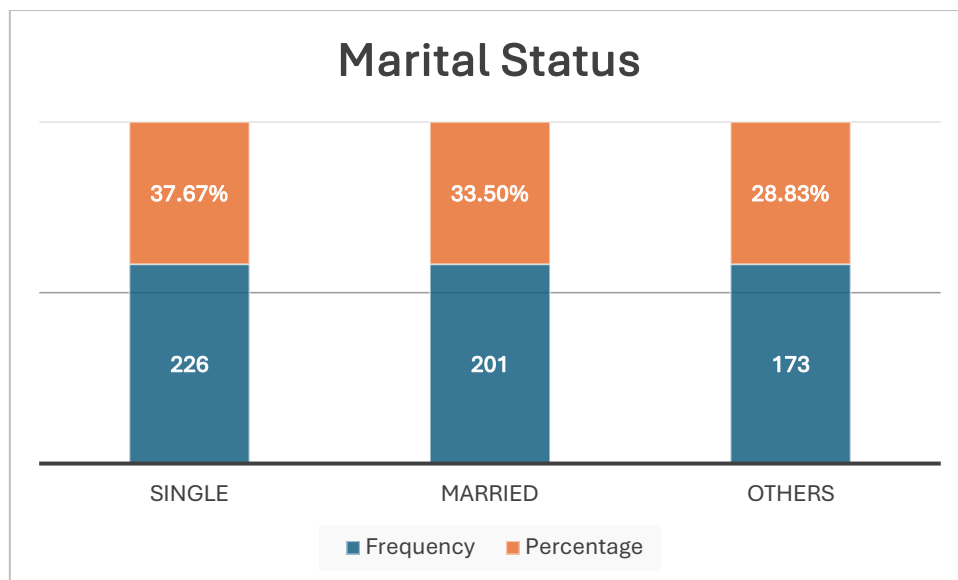


Figure 4.3: Marital Status

The marital status distribution of respondents indicates a fairly balanced representation across different marital categories. **Single respondents constitute the largest group at 37.67% (226 respondents)**, followed closely by **married respondents at 33.50% (201 respondents)**. This

suggests that the study captures the perspectives of both independent consumers and those with family-oriented purchasing responsibilities in the Canadian retail market. Additionally, respondents categorized under “**Others**” account for **28.83% (173 respondents)**, which may include individuals who are divorced, separated, widowed, or in other living arrangements. The relatively even distribution across marital status groups enhances the diversity of the sample and allows for a more comprehensive understanding of how digital marketing and data utilization influence consumer buying decisions across different life stages and household structures in Canada.

Table 4.4: Educational Qualification

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Below Graduate	105	17.50%
Graduate	229	38%
Post Graduate	145	24.16%
Above Post Graduate	121	20.16%

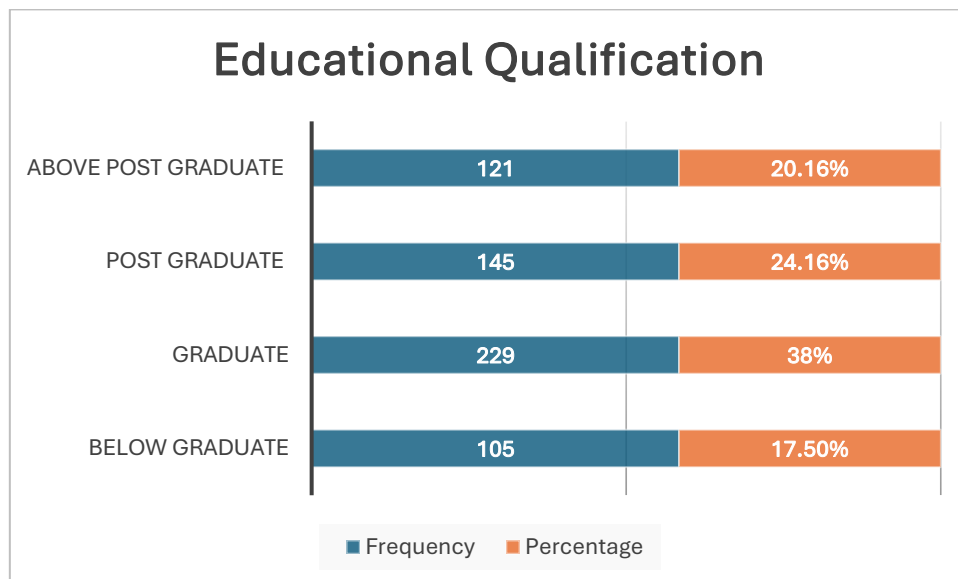


Figure 4.4: Educational Qualification

The distribution of respondents by educational qualification shows that the sample is relatively well educated, which is appropriate for a study focused on digital marketing and data utilization. The largest proportion of respondents are **graduates**, accounting for **38% (229 respondents)**, indicating a strong representation of individuals likely to be familiar with digital

platforms and online retail environments. This is followed by **postgraduate respondents**, who make up **24.16% (145 respondents)**, and those with **above postgraduate qualifications**, representing **20.16% (121 respondents)**. Together, these groups constitute over **82% of the sample**, suggesting a high level of educational attainment among participants. In contrast, respondents with **below graduate qualifications account for 17.50% (105 respondents)**, providing additional diversity in perspectives. Overall, this educational profile supports the reliability of the responses, as higher education levels are often associated with greater awareness and understanding of digital marketing practices and data-driven decision-making in the Canadian retail context.

Table 4.5: Monthly Income (in CAD)

Monthly Income (in CAD)	Frequency	Percentage
Below 45,000	211	35.16%
45,001 to 55000	157	26.16%
55001 to 65000	119	19.83%
Above 65000	113	18.83%

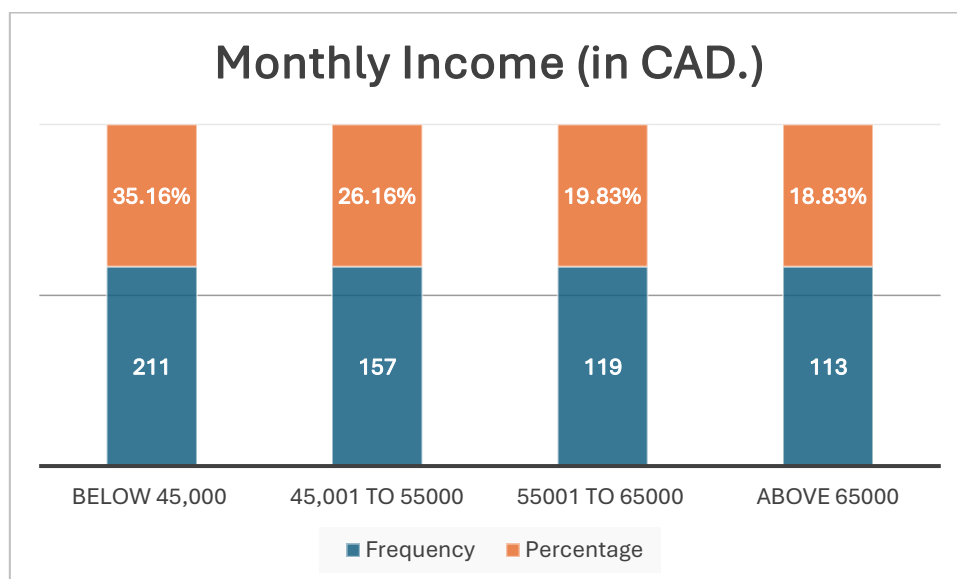


Figure 4.5: Monthly Income (in CAD.)

The monthly income distribution of respondents reflects a diverse economic background within the sample. The largest segment falls under the **below \$45,000 income category, representing 35.16% (211 respondents)**, indicating that a substantial portion of consumers belongs to the lower-income group. This is followed by respondents earning **\$45,001 to \$55,000**, who account for **26.16% (157 respondents)**, suggesting moderate income representation. Those earning **\$55,001 to \$65,000 comprise 19.83% (119 respondents)**, while respondents with a **monthly income above \$65,000 represent 18.83% (113 respondents)**. The relatively balanced distribution across income levels allows the study to capture varied purchasing power and consumption patterns, providing comprehensive insights into how digital marketing and data utilization influence consumer buying decisions across different income groups in the retail sector.

Table 4.6: Type of Family

Type of Family	Frequency	Percentage
Nuclear Family	334	55.67%
Joint Family	266	44.33%

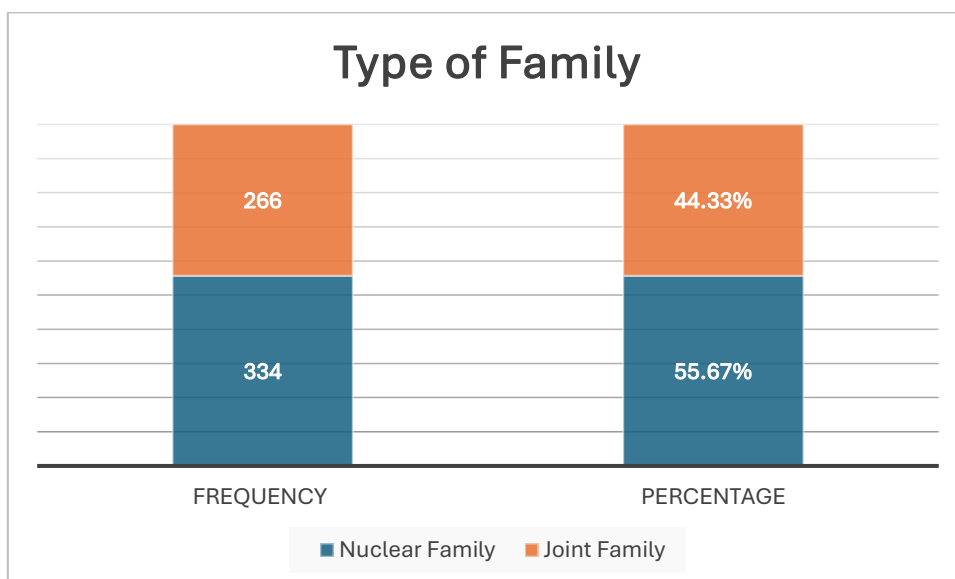


Figure 4.6: Type of Family

The distribution based on type of family indicates that a majority of respondents belong to **nuclear families, comprising 55.67% (334 respondents)** of the total sample. This suggests that individual or small household decision-making structures are more prevalent among the respondents, which may influence purchasing behaviour and responsiveness to personalized digital marketing strategies. On the other hand, **joint family respondents account for 44.33% (266 respondents)**, representing a significant proportion of the sample and highlighting the relevance of collective decision-making in certain households. The inclusion of both family types ensures a balanced perspective and enhances the study’s ability to analyze how digital marketing and data utilization affect consumer buying decisions across different household structures in the Canadian retail context.

Table 4.7: Size (no. of persons in your family)

Size (no. of persons in your family)	Frequency	Percentage
2	305	50.83%
3 to 6	122	20.33%
6 to 9	117	19.50%
More than 9	56	9.33%

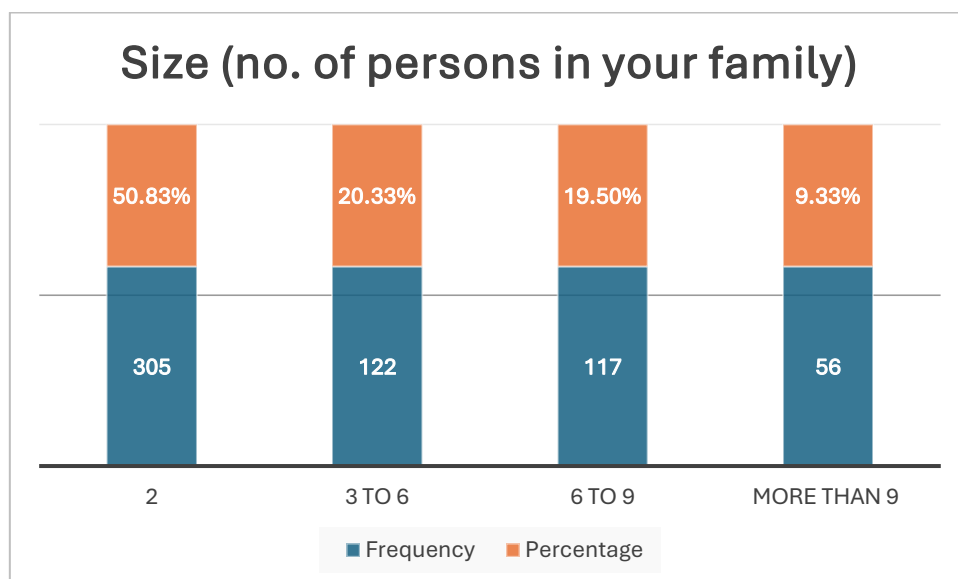


Figure 4.7: Size (no. of persons in your family)

The family size distribution reveals that a significant proportion of respondents come from smaller households. **Half of the respondents (50.83%, 305 respondents)** belong to families with **two members**, indicating a strong presence of nuclear or small household structures within the sample. This suggests that many respondents may have relatively independent purchasing decisions and potentially higher per-capita spending power. Families with **3 to 6 members account for 20.33% (122 respondents)**, representing moderately sized households where purchasing decisions may be influenced by multiple family members. Additionally, **19.50% (117 respondents)** belong to families with **6 to 9 members**, while a smaller segment of **9.33% (56 respondents)** comes from **large families with more than nine members**. Overall, the dominance of smaller family sizes implies that the study largely reflects the buying behaviour of consumers from compact households, who are often more digitally engaged and responsive to personalized digital marketing strategies in the retail sector.

Table 4.8: Preferred online shopping channel

Preferred online shopping channel	Frequency	Percentage
Online only	103	17.16%
Physical store only	185	30.83%
Both equally	312	52.00%

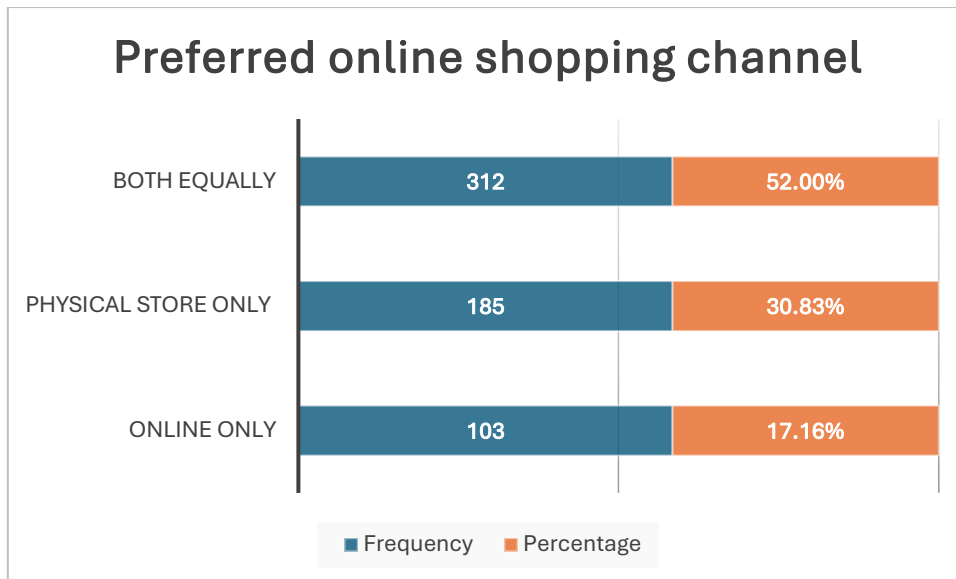


Figure 4.8: Preferred online shopping channel

The distribution of respondents based on their **preferred shopping channel** reveals a strong inclination toward a blended shopping approach in the Canadian retail sector. A majority of respondents, **52.00% (312 respondents)**, indicated that they prefer **both online and physical stores equally**, highlighting the growing importance of an omnichannel retail experience. This suggests that consumers value the convenience and accessibility of online shopping alongside the tactile experience and immediate product access offered by physical stores. Meanwhile, **30.83% (185 respondents)** prefer **physical stores only**, indicating that traditional retail formats continue to play a significant role, particularly for consumers who prioritize in-person evaluation and service. In contrast, **17.16% (103 respondents)** reported a preference for **online-only shopping**, reflecting a smaller yet notable segment that relies primarily on digital platforms. Overall, this distribution underscores the need for Canadian retailers to integrate digital and physical retail strategies to effectively influence consumer buying decisions.

Table 4.9: Frequency of Shopping online

Frequency of Shopping online	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	149	24.83%
Weekly	105	17.50%
Fortnightly	119	19.83%

Monthly

227

37.83%

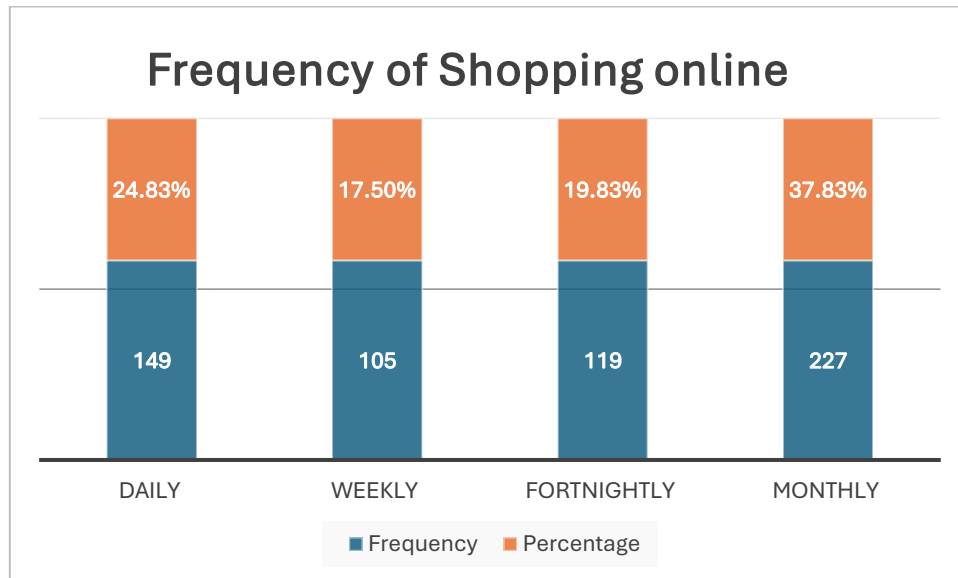


Figure 4.9: Frequency of Shopping online

The distribution of respondents based on the **frequency of shopping online** reveals varied patterns of online purchasing behaviour among consumers in the Canadian retail context. The largest proportion of respondents shop online on a **monthly basis**, accounting for **37.83% (227 respondents)**, indicating that online shopping is a regular but not necessarily frequent activity for a significant segment of consumers. This is followed by **daily online shoppers**, who represent **24.83% (149 respondents)**, suggesting a substantial group of highly digitally engaged consumers who frequently rely on online platforms for retail purchases. **Fortnightly shoppers** make up **19.83% (119 respondents)**, while **weekly shoppers account for 17.50% (105 respondents)**, reflecting moderate levels of online shopping engagement. Overall, the table indicates that while a core group of consumers engages in frequent online shopping, a larger segment prefers periodic online purchases, highlighting the importance for retailers to design digital marketing strategies that cater to both habitual and occasional online shoppers in Canada.

Research Question 1: What digital marketing strategies and data utilization practices are commonly employed by retailers in Canada?

Table 4.10: Reliability Statistics

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.847	15

The reliability statistics indicate that the measurement scale used in the study demonstrates **high internal consistency**. The **Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.847** exceeds the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70, suggesting that the **15 items** included in the scale are reliably measuring the underlying construct related to digital marketing and data utilization influences on consumer buying decisions. This strong alpha value confirms that the questionnaire items are well-correlated and consistent, thereby ensuring the reliability of the data collected. Consequently, the scale is considered suitable for further statistical analyses such as factor analysis, regression, or structural equation modelling in the context of the Canadian retail sector.

4.11: Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Social media marketing (Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, YouTube etc.)	600	1	5	3.80	.974
Google Ads, SEO, search engine marketing, search engine optimization	600	1	5	3.18	1.151
E-marketing and online newsletters	600	1	5	4.51	.724
Mobile marketing (SMS notifications, push, notifications)	600	1	5	3.78	1.013

Individualized product rules campaigning on the basis of browsing or purchase history	600	1	5	4.62	.619
Loyalty programmes based on the analytics of customer data	600	1	5	4.50	.693
Evidence-based promotional coupons and discounts	600	1	5	4.04	.965
The influencer and content-based marketing	600	1	5	4.12	.807
Retargeting and behavioural advertising	600	1	5	4.09	.894
Custodial review and rating management over the Internet	600	1	5	4.12	.856
Artificial intelligence or chatbot use to interact with customers	600	1	5	4.18	.743
Omnichannel integration (data integration online and in-store)	600	1	5	4.34	.632
Application of customer relationship management (CRM)	600	1	5	4.38	.655
Forecasting consumer demand through prediction analytics	600	1	5	4.35	.720
Geo-targeted or place-based marketing	600	1	5	4.42	.644
Valid N (listwise)	600				

The descriptive statistics table presents respondents' perceptions of various **digital marketing and data utilization practices** adopted by retailers, measured on a five-point Likert scale across **600 valid responses**. Overall, the results indicate a **high level of adoption and acceptance** of data-driven digital marketing practices in the retail sector.

Practices related to **personalization and data analytics** show the highest mean scores, suggesting their strong relevance in influencing consumer buying decisions. In particular, *individualized product recommendation campaigns based on browsing or purchase history* record the highest mean (**Mean = 4.62, SD = 0.619**), indicating that consumers strongly recognize and experience personalized marketing efforts. Similarly, *loyalty programmes based on customer data analytics* (**Mean = 4.50, SD = 0.693**), *e-marketing and online newsletters* (**Mean = 4.51, SD = 0.724**), and *geo-targeted or place-based marketing* (**Mean = 4.42, SD = 0.644**) also demonstrate strong agreement among respondents, highlighting the effectiveness of targeted and data-driven approaches.

Advanced digital practices such as *CRM applications* (**Mean = 4.38, SD = 0.655**), *predictive analytics for forecasting consumer demand* (**Mean = 4.35, SD = 0.720**), and *omnichannel data integration* (**Mean = 4.34, SD = 0.632**) further reflect the growing sophistication of retail digital marketing strategies and their perceived importance in shaping consumer behaviour. Likewise, *artificial intelligence and chatbot usage* (**Mean = 4.18, SD = 0.743**), *influencer and content-based marketing* (**Mean = 4.12, SD = 0.807**), *online review and rating management* (**Mean = 4.12, SD = 0.856**), and *retargeting and behavioural advertising* (**Mean = 4.09, SD = 0.894**) are also positively evaluated, suggesting widespread exposure and acceptance.

Traditional digital channels such as *social media marketing* (**Mean = 3.80, SD = 0.974**) and *mobile marketing* (**Mean = 3.78, SD = 1.013**) show moderately high mean values, indicating consistent but comparatively varied consumer experiences, as reflected by higher standard deviations. In contrast, *Google Ads, SEO, and search engine marketing* record the lowest mean (**Mean = 3.18, SD = 1.151**), suggesting relatively lower perceived influence or variability in consumer engagement with these practices.

Overall, the low to moderate standard deviations across most variables indicate a reasonable level of consensus among respondents. The findings collectively suggest that **data-driven, personalized, and analytics-based digital marketing practices are widely employed and perceived as influential** in the retail sector, reinforcing their critical role in shaping consumer buying decisions.

Table 4.12: One-Sample Statistics

One-Sample Statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Social media marketing (Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, YouTube etc.)	600	3.80	.974	.040
Google Ads, SEO, search engine marketing, search engine optimization	600	3.18	1.151	.047
E-marketing and online newsletters	600	4.51	.724	.030
Mobile marketing (SMS notifications, push, notifications)	600	3.79	1.013	.041
Individualized product rules campaigning on the basis of browsing or purchase history	600	4.62	.619	.025
Loyalty programmes based on the analytics of customer data	600	4.50	.693	.028
Evidence-based promotional coupons and discounts	600	4.04	.965	.039
The influencer and content-based marketing	600	4.12	.807	.033
Retargeting and behavioural advertising	600	4.09	.894	.036
Custodial review and rating management over the Internet	600	4.12	.856	.035
Artificial intelligence or chatbot use to interact with customers	600	4.18	.743	.030

Omnichannel integration (data integration online and in-store)	600	4.34	.632	.026
Application of customer relationship management (CRM)	600	4.38	.655	.027
Forecasting consumer demand through prediction analytics	600	4.35	.720	.029
Geo-targeted or place-based marketing	600	4.42	.644	.026

The one-sample statistics table presents respondents' perceptions of various digital marketing and data utilization practices in the Canadian retail sector based on responses from **600 participants**. Overall, the mean values indicate a generally **high level of agreement** with the use and importance of most digital marketing practices. Practices such as **individualized product recommendations based on browsing or purchase history (Mean = 4.62)**, **e-marketing and online newsletters (Mean = 4.51)**, and **loyalty programmes supported by customer data analytics (Mean = 4.50)** record the highest mean scores, suggesting that consumers strongly recognize and experience these data-driven strategies in retail decision-making. Similarly, **geo-targeted marketing (Mean = 4.42)**, **CRM application (Mean = 4.38)**, **predictive analytics for demand forecasting (Mean = 4.35)**, and **omnichannel integration (Mean = 4.34)** also show strong agreement, highlighting the growing role of advanced analytics and integrated digital systems in influencing consumer behaviour.

In contrast, relatively lower but still positive mean scores are observed for **social media marketing (Mean = 3.80)**, **mobile marketing (Mean = 3.79)**, and particularly **Google Ads and SEO practices (Mean = 3.18)**, indicating moderate agreement and comparatively higher variation in consumer experiences with these tools. The standard deviations across items range from **0.619 to 1.151**, reflecting acceptable variability in responses, while the low **standard error means** suggest reliable estimates of population means. Overall, the findings indicate that Canadian consumers largely acknowledge the influence of data-driven digital marketing practices—especially personalization, loyalty programs, and predictive analytics—on their purchasing decisions, reinforcing the strategic importance of data utilization in the retail sector.

Table 4.13: One-Sample Test

One-Sample Test						
	Test Value = 0					
	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Social media marketing (Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, YouTube etc.)	95.479	599	.000	3.795	3.72	3.87
Google Ads, SEO, search engine marketing, search engine optimization	67.734	599	.000	3.183	3.09	3.28
E-marketing and online newsletters	152.596	599	.000	4.510	4.45	4.57
Mobile marketing (gleamour, SMS notifications, push, notifications)	91.480	599	.000	3.785	3.70	3.87
Individualized product rules campaigning on the basis of browsing or purchase history	182.562	599	.000	4.617	4.57	4.67
Loyalty programmes based on the analytics of customer data	159.026	599	.000	4.502	4.45	4.56
Evidence-based promotional coupons and discounts	102.477	599	.000	4.038	3.96	4.12
The influencer and content-based marketing	124.996	599	.000	4.117	4.05	4.18

Retargeting and behavioural advertising	112.067	599	.000	4.088	4.02	4.16
Custodial review and rating management over the Internet	117.890	599	.000	4.118	4.05	4.19
Artificial intelligence or chatbot use to interact with customers	137.829	599	.000	4.180	4.12	4.24
Omnichannel integration (data integration online and in-store)	168.378	599	.000	4.342	4.29	4.39
Application of customer relationship management (CRM)	163.693	599	.000	4.378	4.33	4.43
Forecasting consumer demand through prediction analytics	147.981	599	.000	4.352	4.29	4.41
Geo-targeted or place-based marketing	168.217	599	.000	4.422	4.37	4.47

The **one-sample t-test results** demonstrate that all the selected **digital marketing and data utilization practices** have a statistically significant presence and perceived importance among consumers in the Canadian retail sector. For each variable, the **t-values are very high** and the **significance level (Sig. = .000)** is well below the conventional threshold of 0.05, indicating that the mean scores of all practices are significantly different from the test value (0). This confirms that respondents meaningfully acknowledge and experience these digital marketing practices rather than perceiving them as negligible.

The **mean differences** further reveal strong positive evaluations across practices. Elements such as **individualized product recommendations based on browsing or purchase history (Mean Difference = 4.617)**, **loyalty programmes supported by customer data analytics (4.502)**, **geo-targeted marketing (4.422)**, **CRM application (4.378)**, and **omnichannel integration (4.342)** exhibit particularly high values, highlighting their dominant role in

influencing consumer buying decisions. Similarly, **AI/chatbot usage**, **predictive analytics**, **influencer marketing**, and **retargeting strategies** also show substantial mean differences, indicating widespread acceptance and effectiveness.

The **95% confidence intervals** for all variables are narrow and entirely positive, suggesting high precision and consistency in respondents' perceptions. For instance, the confidence interval for **e-marketing and online newsletters** ranges from **4.45 to 4.57**, while **personalized campaigning** lies between **4.57 and 4.67**, reinforcing the reliability of the estimated means. Overall, these findings provide strong empirical evidence that data-driven digital marketing practices are not only prevalent but also play a significant and influential role in shaping consumer buying behaviour in the Canadian retail market.

Table 4.14: ANOVA

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Social media marketing (Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, YouTube etc.)	Between Groups	31.004	4	7.751	8.592	.000
	Within Groups	536.781	595	.902		
	Total	567.785	599			
Google Ads, SEO, search engine marketing, search engine optimization	Between Groups	40.458	4	10.114	7.988	.000
	Within Groups	753.376	595	1.266		
	Total	793.833	599			
E-marketing and online newsletters	Between Groups	17.177	4	4.294	8.610	.000
	Within Groups	296.763	595	.499		
	Total	313.940	599			
Mobile marketing (gleamour, SMS notifications, push, notifications)	Between Groups	34.699	4	8.675	8.890	.000
	Within Groups	580.566	595	.976		
	Total	615.265	599			
Individualized product rules campaigning on the basis of browsing or purchase history	Between Groups	10.482	4	2.621	7.108	.000
	Within Groups	219.351	595	.369		
	Total	229.833	599			
Loyalty programmes based on the analytics of customer data	Between Groups	13.886	4	3.471	7.535	.000
	Within Groups	274.113	595	.461		
	Total	287.998	599			
	Between Groups	41.673	4	10.418	12.003	.000
	Within Groups	516.445	595	.868		

Evidence-based promotional coupons and discounts	Total	558.118	599			
The influencer and content-based marketing	Between Groups	52.478	4	13.120	23.139	.000
	Within Groups	337.355	595	.567		
	Total	389.833	599			
Retargeting and behavioural advertising	Between Groups	73.491	4	18.373	27.004	.000
	Within Groups	404.827	595	.680		
	Total	478.318	599			
Custodial review and rating management over the Internet	Between Groups	61.752	4	15.438	24.375	.000
	Within Groups	376.846	595	.633		
	Total	438.598	599			
Artificial intelligence or chatbot use to interact with customers	Between Groups	42.835	4	10.709	22.145	.000
	Within Groups	287.725	595	.484		
	Total	330.560	599			
Omnichannel integration (data integration online and in-store)	Between Groups	46.933	4	11.733	36.356	.000
	Within Groups	192.026	595	.323		
	Total	238.958	599			
Application of customer relationship management (CRM)	Between Groups	79.355	4	19.839	66.403	.000
	Within Groups	177.764	595	.299		
	Total	257.118	599			
Forecasting consumer demand through prediction analytics	Between Groups	87.496	4	21.874	58.285	.000
	Within Groups	223.302	595	.375		
	Total	310.798	599			
Geo-targeted or place-based marketing	Between Groups	56.272	4	14.068	43.586	.000
	Within Groups	192.046	595	.323		
	Total	248.318	599			

The ANOVA results indicate that there are **statistically significant differences among the groups** for all the examined digital marketing and data utilization practices in the Canadian retail sector. For each variable, the **F-values are relatively high and the significance values (Sig.) are .000**, which is below the conventional threshold of 0.05. This confirms that the mean perceptions of respondents differ significantly across the comparison groups (such as age groups, income levels, or other demographic categories used in the analysis).

Specifically, significant between-group variations are observed for **social media marketing, Google Ads and SEO, e-marketing and newsletters, and mobile marketing**, suggesting that different consumer groups perceive and respond to these digital channels differently. Similarly,

advanced data-driven practices such as **individualized product recommendations, loyalty programs based on analytics, evidence-based promotional discounts, influencer marketing, retargeting, and online review management** also show meaningful differences across groups, indicating that consumer receptiveness to personalized and content-driven strategies varies significantly.

Furthermore, the ANOVA results reveal particularly strong group differences for **AI/chatbot interactions, omnichannel integration, CRM application, predictive analytics, and geo-targeted marketing**, as reflected by high F-values. This suggests that perceptions of sophisticated data utilization practices are not uniform across consumers and are influenced by demographic or behavioural characteristics. Overall, the findings imply that retailers in Canada cannot adopt a one-size-fits-all approach to digital marketing and data utilization. Instead, they need to **segment consumers carefully and tailor digital marketing strategies** to different consumer groups to effectively influence buying behaviour.

Research Question 2: What role does digital marketing play in the consumer purchasing decision-making in the Canadian retail market?

Table 4.15: Reliability Statistics

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.748	9

The reliability statistics indicate that the scale used in the study demonstrates an **acceptable level of internal consistency**. The **Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.748** for the **9 items** suggests that the items included in this construct are reasonably consistent in measuring the same underlying concept. In social science and behavioural research, a Cronbach's Alpha value above **0.70** is generally considered satisfactory, indicating that the scale is reliable for further statistical analysis. Therefore, the reliability result confirms that the questionnaire items are dependable and suitable for assessing the intended variables related to digital marketing and data utilization, allowing the study to proceed confidently with hypothesis testing and inferential analysis.

Table 4.16: Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Digital marketing allows me to be aware of my need of the products at the retail level	600	1	5	4.36	.783
The advertisements I see on the Internet make me more aware of the existing brands on the retail	600	1	5	4.16	.814
Digital marketing offers convenient facts that one may use in comparing products	600	1	5	3.80	.974

My purchase decisions depend on online promotions and discounts	600	1	5	3.18	1.151
Digital marketing saves me on time in searching products	600	1	5	4.51	.724
The social media marketing influences my perception towards retail brands	600	1	5	3.78	1.013
Online marketing makes me more assured, prior to purchasing a product	600	1	5	4.62	.619
Tailored online marketing communications are able to affect my purchasing behaviour	600	1	5	4.50	.693
Online marketing stimulates me to experiment with new retail products or brands	600	1	5	4.04	.965
Valid N (listwise)	600				

The descriptive statistics presented in the table highlight respondents' perceptions of the role of digital marketing in influencing their buying decisions in the Canadian retail sector. Overall, the mean values for all statements are above the midpoint of the scale, indicating a generally positive perception of digital marketing among consumers. The highest mean score is observed for the statement "*Online marketing makes me more assured, prior to purchasing a product*" (Mean = 4.62, SD = 0.619), suggesting that digital marketing significantly enhances consumer confidence before making purchase decisions. Similarly, "*Tailored online marketing communications are able to affect my purchasing behaviour*" (Mean = 4.50, SD = 0.693) and "*Digital marketing saves me time in searching products*" (Mean = 4.51, SD = 0.724) demonstrate strong agreement, emphasizing the importance of personalization and convenience in shaping consumer behaviour.

Statements related to awareness and information also show high mean values, such as “*Digital marketing allows me to be aware of my need of the products at the retail level*” (Mean = 4.36, SD = 0.783) and “*The advertisements I see on the Internet make me more aware of the existing brands*” (Mean = 4.16, SD = 0.814), indicating that digital platforms play a critical role in need recognition and brand awareness. Moderate agreement is observed for “*Digital marketing offers convenient facts that one may use in comparing products*” (Mean = 3.80, SD = 0.974) and “*The social media marketing influences my perception towards retail brands*” (Mean = 3.78, SD = 1.013), suggesting variability in how consumers perceive informational and social media influences.

In contrast, “*My purchase decisions depend on online promotions and discounts*” records the lowest mean score (Mean = 3.18, SD = 1.151), indicating that while promotions are relevant, they are not the sole determinant of purchasing decisions for many consumers. Overall, the relatively low standard deviations across most items reflect consistency in respondents’ opinions. The findings suggest that digital marketing in the Canadian retail sector strongly supports awareness, confidence, personalization, and efficiency in consumer purchasing behaviour, while price-based promotions play a comparatively moderate role.

Table 4.17: Correlations

Correlations										
		Digit al mark eting allo ws me to be aware of my need of the prod ucts at the retail level	The adverti sment s I see on the Interne t make me more aware of the existin g brands on the retail	Digit al mark eting offer s conven ient facts that one may use in comp aring prod ucts	My purch ase decisi ons depen d on onlin e prom otion s and disco unts	Digit al mark eting save s me on time in searc hing prod ucts	The socia l medi a mark eting influ ence s my perc eptio n towa rds retail bran ds	Onli ne mark eting make s me more assur ed, prior to purch asin g a prod uct	Tailored online marketi ng commu nication s are able to affect my purchasi ng behavio ur	Onlin e mark eting stimu lates me to exper iment with new retail prod ucts or brand s

Digital marketing allows me to be aware of my need of the products at the retail level	Pears on Correlation	1	.398**	.201*	.109*	.273**	.132*	.353*	.239**	.167*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.007	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	600	600	600	600	599	600	600	600	600
The advertisements I see on the Internet make me more aware of the existing brands on the retail	Pears on Correlation	.398**	1	.297*	.242*	.343**	.286*	.222*	.316**	.298*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	600	600	600	600	599	600	600	600	600
Digital marketing offers convenient facts that one may use in compari	Pears on Correlation	.201**	.297**	1	.308*	.229**	.277*	.188*	.197**	.307*

ng product										
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	600	600	600	600	599	600	600	600	600
My purchase decisions depend on online promotions and discounts	Pearson Correlation	.109**	.242**	.308*	1	.131**	.293*	.101*	.146**	.246*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.007	0.000	0.000		0.001	0.000	0.013	0.000	0.000
	N	600	600	600	600	599	600	600	600	600
Digital marketing saves me on time in searching products	Pearson Correlation	.273**	.343**	.229*	.131*	1	.285*	.384*	.390**	.206*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.001		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	599	599	599	599	599	599	599	599	599

The social media marketing influences my perception towards retail brands	Pearson Correlation	.132**	.286**	.277*	.293*	.285**	1	.246*	.353**	.351*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	600	600	600	600	599	600	600	600	600
Online marketing makes me more assured, prior to purchasing a product	Pearson Correlation	.353**	.222**	.188*	.101*	.384**	.246*	1	.402**	.195*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.013	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000
	N	600	600	600	600	599	600	600	600	600
Tailored online marketing communications are able to affect my purchasing behaviour	Pearson Correlation	.239**	.316**	.197*	.146*	.390**	.353*	.402*	1	.353*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000

	tailed)									
	N	600	600	600	600	599	600	600	600	600
Online marketing stimulates me to experiment with new retail products or brands	Pearson Correlation	.167**	.298**	.307*	.246*	.206**	.351*	.195*	.353**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
	N	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600
**.	Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).									
*.	Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).									

The correlation analysis reveals a **positive and statistically significant relationship among all digital marketing–related variables influencing consumer buying behaviour in the Canadian retail sector**. The results indicate that **digital marketing awareness of product needs** is moderately and positively correlated with **brand awareness created through online advertisements** ($r = 0.398$, $p < 0.01$) and **purchase assurance prior to buying** ($r = 0.353$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that exposure to digital marketing not only triggers need recognition but also enhances consumer confidence. Similarly, **online advertisements increasing brand awareness** show significant positive correlations with **time-saving in product search** ($r =$

0.343, $p < 0.01$), **tailored marketing communications** ($r = 0.316$, $p < 0.01$), and **experimentation with new products or brands** ($r = 0.298$, $p < 0.01$), highlighting the strong informational and persuasive role of digital advertising.

Further, the findings demonstrate that **digital marketing providing convenient information for product comparison** is positively associated with **purchase decisions based on promotions and discounts** ($r = 0.308$, $p < 0.01$) and **brand experimentation** ($r = 0.307$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that informative digital content supports rational decision-making and exploratory buying behaviour. The variable **digital marketing saving time in searching products** exhibits strong correlations with **purchase assurance** ($r = 0.384$, $p < 0.01$) and **tailored marketing communications** ($r = 0.390$, $p < 0.01$), emphasizing efficiency as a key driver of positive consumer response.

Moreover, **social media marketing influence on brand perception** is significantly correlated with **tailored marketing communications** ($r = 0.353$, $p < 0.01$) and **new product experimentation** ($r = 0.351$, $p < 0.01$), underscoring the role of social platforms in shaping attitudes and encouraging trial behaviour. The strongest relationship is observed between **purchase assurance** and **tailored online marketing communications** ($r = 0.402$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that personalization substantially enhances consumer confidence and buying intention. Overall, the correlation matrix confirms that digital marketing dimensions are interrelated and collectively contribute to influencing consumer purchasing behaviour, supporting the relevance of integrated and personalized digital marketing strategies in the Canadian retail market.

Table 4.18: Model Summary

Model Summary									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
					R Square Change				
1	.607 ^a	0.368	0.358	0.647	0.368	38.082	9	589	0.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Online marketing stimulates me to experiment with new retail products or brands, Digital marketing allows me to be aware of my need of the products at the retail level, My purchase decisions depend on online promotions and discounts, Digital marketing saves me on time in searching products, Digital marketing offers convenient facts that one may use in comparing products, The social media marketing influences my perception towards retail brands, Online marketing makes me more assured, prior to purchasing a product, The advertisements I see on the Internet make me more aware of the existing brands on the retail, Tailored online marketing communications are able to affect my purchasing behaviour

The **model summary** indicates that the multiple regression model examining the impact of digital marketing factors on consumer buying behaviour in the Canadian retail sector demonstrates a good level of explanatory power. The value of **R = 0.607** suggests a moderately strong positive relationship between the set of digital marketing variables and consumer purchasing behaviour. The **R Square value of 0.368** indicates that approximately **36.8% of the variance** in consumer buying behaviour is explained by the nine digital marketing predictors included in the model, such as brand awareness through online advertisements, personalized communications, social media influence, and online promotions. The **Adjusted R Square of 0.358** further confirms the robustness of the model after adjusting for the number of predictors, showing minimal shrinkage and thus good model stability. The **standard error of the estimate (0.647)** reflects an acceptable level of prediction accuracy. Additionally, the **F-change value of 38.082**, which is statistically significant at **p < 0.001**, indicates that the overall regression model is highly significant and that the included digital marketing variables collectively make a meaningful contribution to explaining variations in consumer buying behaviour. Overall, the findings confirm that digital marketing plays a substantial and statistically significant role in influencing consumer purchasing decisions in the Canadian retail market.

Table 4.19: ANOVA

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	143.394	9	15.933	38.082	.000 ^b
	Residual	246.425	589	.418		
	Total	389.820	598			

a. Dependent Variable: Role that digital marketing play in the consumer purchasing decision-making in the Canadian retail market

b. Predictors: (Constant), Online marketing stimulates me to experiment with new retail products or brands, Digital marketing allows me to be aware of my need of the products at the retail level, My purchase decisions depend on online promotions and discounts, Digital marketing saves me on time in searching products, Digital marketing offers convenient facts that one may use in comparing products, The social media marketing influences my perception towards retail brands, Online marketing makes me more assured, prior to purchasing a product, The advertisements I see on the Internet make me more aware of the existing brands on the retail, Tailored online marketing communications are able to affect my purchasing behaviour

The ANOVA results further validate the overall significance of the regression model. The model shows a **regression sum of squares of 143.394**, compared to a **residual sum of squares of 246.425**, indicating that a substantial proportion of the total variance is explained by the predictors. The **F-statistic value of 38.082** with **9 and 589 degrees of freedom** is statistically significant at the **0.001 level (p = 0.000)**. This confirms that the regression model is a good fit and that the set of independent variables collectively has a significant impact on the role digital marketing plays in consumer purchasing decision-making. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that digital marketing variables have no influence on consumer purchasing decisions is rejected. Overall, the findings highlight that various dimensions of digital marketing—such as brand awareness, information availability, personalization, social media influence, and promotional strategies—play a statistically significant role in shaping consumer purchasing decisions in the Canadian retail market.

Table 4.20: Coefficients'

Coefficients'						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.030	.249		4.137	.000
	Digital marketing allows me to be aware of my need of the products at the retail level	-.062	.039	-.060	-1.606	.109

The advertisements I see on the Internet make me more aware of the existing brands on the retail	.151	.039	.153	3.899	.000
Digital marketing offers convenient facts that one may use in comparing products	.034	.030	.041	1.103	.271
My purchase decisions depend on online promotions and discounts	.017	.025	.025	.688	.492
Digital marketing saves me on time in searching products	-.007	.043	-.006	-.156	.876
The social media marketing influences my perception towards retail brands	.113	.030	.142	3.725	.000
Online marketing makes me more assured, prior to purchasing a product	.042	.050	.032	.840	.401
Tailored online marketing communications are able to affect my purchasing behaviour	.153	.046	.131	3.314	.001
Online marketing stimulates me to experiment with new retail products or brands	.313	.031	.375	9.976	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Role that digital marketing play in the consumer purchasing decision-making in the Canadian retail market					

The coefficients table explains the individual contribution and significance of each digital marketing factor in influencing the role of digital marketing in consumer purchasing decision-making in the Canadian retail market.

The regression model shows that the **constant value (B = 1.030, p < 0.001)** is statistically significant, indicating a baseline positive influence of digital marketing on consumer purchasing decisions even when all predictors are held constant. Among the independent variables, **online marketing stimulating consumers to experiment with new retail products or brands** emerges as the **strongest predictor** ($\beta = 0.375$, $t = 9.976$, $p < 0.001$). This suggests that digital marketing significantly encourages trial behaviour and plays a critical role in shaping purchasing decisions. Similarly, **tailored online marketing communications** have a **positive and significant effect** ($\beta = 0.131$, $t = 3.314$, $p = 0.001$), indicating that personalized digital messages strongly influence consumer buying behaviour. The variable **advertisements seen on the Internet increasing brand awareness** is also statistically significant ($\beta = 0.153$, $t = 3.899$, $p < 0.001$), highlighting the importance of online advertising in enhancing brand recognition and influencing purchase decisions. In addition, **social media marketing influencing consumer perception towards retail brands** shows a significant positive impact ($\beta = 0.142$, $t = 3.725$, $p < 0.001$), emphasizing the role of social media platforms in shaping consumer attitudes.

On the other hand, several variables do not show a statistically significant influence at the 5% level. These include **digital marketing creating awareness of product needs, providing convenient information for product comparison, dependence on online promotions and discounts, saving time in product search, and increasing assurance prior to purchase**, as their p-values exceed 0.05. This indicates that while these factors contribute to the digital marketing ecosystem, they do not independently exert a strong influence on the overall purchasing decision when other variables are considered simultaneously.

Overall, the results suggest that **experiential stimulation, personalization, online advertising, and social media influence** are the most critical drivers through which digital marketing impacts consumer purchasing decisions in the Canadian retail sector. These findings imply that retailers should prioritize **engaging, personalized, and discovery-oriented digital marketing strategies** to effectively influence consumer buying behaviour.

Research Question 3: What challenges and opportunities do retailers face in using data-driven digital marketing to influence consumer buying behaviour in Canada?

Table 4.21: Reliability Statistics

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.906	20

The reliability analysis indicates a **high level of internal consistency** for the measurement scale used in the study. The **Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.906** for the **20 items** suggests that the items are highly correlated and consistently measure the same underlying construct. In social science research, a Cronbach's Alpha value above **0.70** is considered acceptable, above **0.80** is regarded as good, and values exceeding **0.90** indicate excellent reliability. Therefore, the obtained alpha value demonstrates that the questionnaire items are reliable and suitable for further statistical analyses such as regression, factor analysis, and structural equation modelling. This high reliability also enhances the credibility and robustness of the study's findings related to the impact of digital marketing and data utilization on consumer buying decisions in the Canadian retail sector.

Table 4.22: Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The regular shifts in the legality of data privacy bring uncertainty in the implementation of the marketing strategy	600	1	5	4.04	.965

Targeted advertising tends to be intrusive among consumers	600	1	5	4.12	.807
Retailers have a challenge of receiving consent to collecting data with the consumer	600	1	5	4.09	.894
The improper data governance models hinder the sound use of the data	600	1	5	4.12	.856
Lack of interoperability of various digital marketing platforms influences data integration	600	1	5	4.18	.743
Small and medium-sized retailers are not able to afford the resources to implement the best data-driven marketing tools	600	1	5	4.34	.632
The personalization needs a data-driven approach since Canada is a culturally and demographically diversified country	600	1	5	4.38	.655
Excessive dependence on algorithms can be the source of prejudiced or incorrect consumer targeting	600	1	5	4.35	.720
The absence of openness in the use of the data lowers the level of trust of the consumer towards the digital marketing practice	600	1	5	4.42	.644

Evidence-based initiatives need constant feedback, which grows the complexity of the operations	600	1	5	4.18	.814
The inability to digest large amounts of consumer data to gain actionable insights obscures the problem	600	1	5	4.39	.619
Organizational stubbornness to change to digital obstacle to adoption of data-driven marketing	600	1	5	4.19	.765
The lack of consistency between channel behaviours diminishes the power of the data-driven marketing	600	1	5	4.26	.710
Unethical issues surrounding the use of the data restrain the aggressive act of digital marketing	600	1	5	4.39	.644
Hacking or misappropriating of data may tremendously hurt the reputation and loyalty of the brands	600	1	5	4.36	.678
The consumer digital changes are fast which restricts the data-driven marketing strategies to quickly become outdated	600	1	5	4.23	.748
There is a lack of access to real-time consumer information which minimises the efficiency of personalised marketing	600	1	5	4.23	.698

The problem of non-uniformity of data between platforms results in fragmented consumer insights	600	1	5	4.19	.825
Inability to correlate data-based marketing efforts to the general business strategy constrains their ability	600	1	5	3.97	.942
The lack of trust of consumers into the applications of personal information by retailers diminishes the impact of data-driven digital marketing activities	600	1	5	3.75	1.065
Valid N (listwise)	600				

The descriptive statistics presented in the table highlight respondents' strong agreement regarding the **challenges faced by retailers in using data-driven digital marketing in Canada**. Overall, the **mean values range from 3.75 to 4.42**, indicating that most respondents perceive these issues as significant barriers, while the relatively low to moderate **standard deviations** suggest consistency in opinions across the sample.

Regulatory and trust-related challenges are perceived as particularly critical. Respondents strongly agree that **frequent changes in data privacy laws create uncertainty in marketing strategy implementation** (Mean = 4.04), and that **lack of transparency in data usage lowers consumer trust** (Mean = 4.42). Similarly, concerns about **data misuse, hacking, or misappropriation** are prominent (Mean = 4.36), highlighting the reputational and loyalty risks associated with poor data security. Issues related to **consumer consent for data collection** (Mean = 4.09) and perceptions of **targeted advertising being intrusive** (Mean = 4.12) further emphasize the sensitivity of Canadian consumers toward ethical and privacy-oriented data practices.

Technological and operational challenges also receive strong agreement. Respondents acknowledge that **lack of interoperability across digital platforms** (Mean = 4.18) and **non-uniform data standards leading to fragmented consumer insights** (Mean = 4.19) hinder

effective data integration. The difficulty of **processing large volumes of consumer data to generate actionable insights** is viewed as a major concern (Mean = 4.39), while the **absence of real-time consumer data** limits the effectiveness of personalized marketing (Mean = 4.23). Additionally, the need for **constant feedback in data-driven initiatives**, which increases operational complexity, is widely recognized (Mean = 4.18).

From an organizational perspective, respondents agree that **small and medium-sized retailers face resource constraints** in adopting advanced data-driven marketing tools (Mean = 4.34). Resistance to digital transformation within organizations is also seen as a barrier (Mean = 4.19). Furthermore, the challenge of **aligning data-driven marketing initiatives with overall business strategy** (Mean = 3.97) suggests strategic integration remains an area of concern. The dynamic nature of consumer digital behaviour, which causes data-driven strategies to become quickly outdated, is also acknowledged (Mean = 4.23).

In summary, the findings indicate that retailers in Canada face **multidimensional challenges**—regulatory, ethical, technological, operational, and organizational—in implementing data-driven digital marketing. The consistently high mean scores demonstrate that these barriers are widely recognized by respondents and underscore the need for robust data governance frameworks, advanced analytics capabilities, organizational readiness, and transparent, ethical data practices to effectively leverage digital marketing for influencing consumer buying behaviour.

Table 4.23: KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.924
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	4792.483
	Df	190
	Sig.	.000

The results of the **KMO and Bartlett's Test** indicate that the data are highly suitable for factor analysis. The **Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy is 0.924**, which is well close the recommended threshold of 1. This value is considered **excellent**, suggesting that the correlations among the variables are sufficiently strong and that the sample size is adequate for extracting reliable underlying factors. Furthermore, **Bartlett's Test of Sphericity**

is statistically significant (Approx. Chi-square = 4792.483, df = 190, $p = 0.000$), indicating that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix and that meaningful relationships exist among the variables. Together, these results confirm that the dataset is appropriate for **exploratory factor analysis**, supporting the identification of latent constructs related to challenges in data-driven digital marketing within the Canadian retail sector.

Table 4.24: Communalities

Communalities		
	Initial	Extraction
The regular shifts in the legality of data privacy bring uncertainty in the implementation of the marketing strategy	1.000	.648
Targeted advertising tends to be intrusive among consumers	1.000	.661
Retailers have a challenge of receiving consent to collecting data with the consumer	1.000	.623
The improper data governance models hinder the sound use of the data	1.000	.563
Lack of interoperability of various digital marketing platforms influences data integration	1.000	.413
Small and medium-sized retailers are not able to afford the resources to implement the best data-driven marketing tools	1.000	.505

The personalization needs a data-driven approach since Canada is a culturally and demographically diversified country	1.000	.659
Excessive dependence on algorithms can be the source of prejudiced or incorrect consumer targeting	1.000	.581
The absence of openness in the use of the data lowers the level of trust of the consumer towards the digital marketing practice	1.000	.510
Evidence-based initiatives need constant feedback, which grows the complexity of the operations	1.000	.535
The inability to digest large amounts of consumer data to gain actionable insights obscures the problem	1.000	.509
Organizational stubbornness to change to digital obstacle to adoption of data-driven marketing	1.000	.530
The lack of consistency between channel behaviours diminishes the power of the data-driven marketing	1.000	.627
Unethical issues surrounding the use of the data restrain the aggressive act of digital marketing	1.000	.619

Hacking or misappropriating of data may tremendously hurt the reputation and loyalty of the brands	1.000	.613
The consumer digital changes are fast which restricts the data-driven marketing strategies to quickly become outdated	1.000	.620
There is a lack of access to real-time consumer information which minimises the efficiency of personalised marketing	1.000	.556
The problem of non-uniformity of data between platforms results in fragmented consumer insights	1.000	.523
Inability to correlate data-based marketing efforts to the general business strategy constrains their ability	1.000	.722
The lack of trust of consumers into the applications of personal information by retailers diminishes the impact of data-driven digital marketing activities	1.000	.593
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.		

The **Communalities table** presents the proportion of variance in each observed variable that is explained by the extracted components using **Principal Component Analysis (PCA)**. Initially, all variables show a communality value of **1.000**, indicating that before extraction, each variable explains its total variance independently. After extraction, the communalities

range from **0.413 to 0.722**, suggesting that a substantial proportion of variance in each item is accounted for by the retained factors.

Most variables exhibit **extraction values above the recommended threshold of 0.50**, indicating that they are well represented in the factor solution and contribute meaningfully to the underlying constructs related to challenges in data-driven digital marketing. Notably, items such as *“Inability to correlate data-based marketing efforts to the general business strategy”* (.722), *“Targeted advertising tends to be intrusive among consumers”* (.661), and *“The personalization needs a data-driven approach in a culturally diverse country like Canada”* (.659) show high communalities, demonstrating their strong explanatory power within the factor structure.

Although a few variables—such as *“Lack of interoperability of various digital marketing platforms influences data integration”* (.413)—display relatively lower communalities, they still remain within acceptable limits and reflect practical challenges relevant to the Canadian retail context. Overall, the communalities indicate that the extracted components adequately capture the shared variance among the variables, validating the suitability of the items for factor analysis and supporting the robustness of the measurement model for assessing challenges associated with data-driven digital marketing in the Canadian retail sector.

Table 4.25: Total Variance Explained

Total Variance Explained											
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %								
1	7.536	37.678	37.678	7.536	37.678	37.678	3.609	18.045	18.045		
2	1.558	7.788	45.466	1.558	7.788	45.466	3.573	17.865	35.910		
3	1.373	6.867	52.334	1.373	6.867	52.334	2.466	12.329	58.239		
4	1.143	5.715	58.049	1.143	5.715	58.049	1.962	9.810	68.049		

5	0.833	4.167	62.216						
6	0.767	3.837	66.052						
7	0.709	3.547	69.599						
8	0.669	3.343	72.942						
9	0.646	3.232	76.174						
10	0.554	2.771	78.945						
11	0.534	2.671	81.616						
12	0.501	2.507	84.123						
13	0.489	2.444	86.567						
14	0.455	2.274	88.842						
15	0.424	2.118	90.959						
16	0.418	2.090	93.049						
17	0.383	1.917	94.966						
18	0.361	1.804	96.770						
19	0.348	1.738	98.507						
20	0.299	1.493	100.000						
Extracti on Method : Principa l Compo nent Analysi s.									

The **Total Variance Explained** table presents the results of the **Principal Component Analysis (PCA)** conducted to identify the underlying factor structure of the challenges associated with data-driven digital marketing. The analysis reveals that **four components** have eigenvalues greater than 1, which is the commonly accepted criterion (Kaiser's criterion) for

factor retention. **Component 1** has the highest eigenvalue of **7.536** and alone explains **37.678%** of the total variance, indicating that it represents the most dominant underlying dimension influencing the construct. **Component 2**, with an eigenvalue of **1.558**, contributes an additional **7.788%** of variance, increasing the cumulative variance explained to **45.466%**. **Component 3** explains **6.867%** of the variance, bringing the cumulative variance to **52.334%**, while **Component 4** contributes **5.715%**, resulting in a cumulative variance of **58.049%**.

After extraction, these four components together account for **58.049% of the total variance**, which is considered satisfactory for social science research, indicating that the extracted factors adequately represent the original variables. Following rotation, the variance is more evenly distributed across the four components, with the rotated factors explaining **18.045%**, **17.865%**, **12.329%**, and **9.810%** of the variance respectively, while still maintaining the same cumulative explanatory power of **68.049%**. The rotation enhances interpretability by clarifying the contribution of each factor and reducing overlap among variables. Overall, the results confirm that the data can be meaningfully reduced into **four distinct underlying dimensions**, supporting the construct validity of the measurement scale related to challenges in data-driven digital marketing within the Canadian retail context.

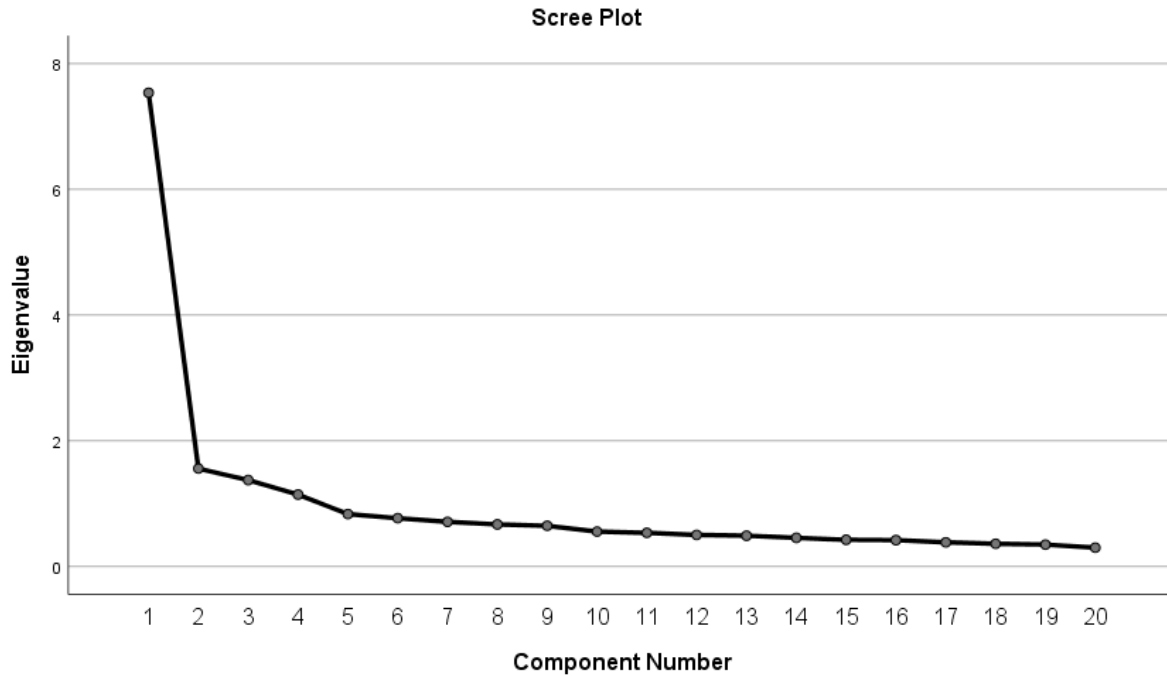


Figure 4.10: Scree Plot (1)

The scree plot illustrates the distribution of eigenvalues across the extracted components and is used to determine the optimal number of factors to retain in the factor analysis. The figure shows a **sharp decline in eigenvalues from the first to the second component**, followed by a **gradual flattening of the curve** from the fourth component onward. This clear point of inflection, commonly referred to as the “**elbow,**” **appears around the fourth component**, indicating that components beyond this point contribute relatively little additional explanatory power. The first component has a substantially higher eigenvalue, suggesting that it explains a large proportion of the variance in the data, while the next three components also have eigenvalues greater than one and contribute meaningfully to explaining variance. After the fourth component, the eigenvalues fall below one and level off, implying diminishing returns in variance explained. Therefore, the scree plot supports the retention of **four components**, which is consistent with the Kaiser criterion and confirms that the underlying structure of challenges related to data-driven digital marketing can be effectively represented by four latent factors.

Table 4.26: Rotated Component Matrix^a

Rotated Component Matrix ^a				
	Component			
	1	2	3	4

The regular shifts in the legality of data privacy bring uncertainty in the implementation of the marketing strategy			.787	
Targeted advertising tends to be intrusive among consumers			.729	
Retailers have a challenge of receiving consent to collecting data with the consumer			.687	
The improper data governance models hinder the sound use of the data			.601	
Lack of interoperability of various digital marketing platforms influences data integration		.461		
Small and medium-sized retailers are not able to afford the resources to implement the best data-driven marketing tools		.631		
The personalization needs a data-driven approach since Canada is a culturally and demographically diversified country		.773		
Excessive dependence on algorithms can be the source of prejudiced or incorrect consumer targeting		.725		

The absence of openness in the use of the data lowers the level of trust of the consumer towards the digital marketing practice		.610		
Evidence-based initiatives need constant feedback, which grows the complexity of the operations		.663		
The inability to digest large amounts of consumer data to gain actionable insights obscures the problem		.611		
Organizational stubbornness to change to digital obstacle to adoption of data-driven marketing	.648			
The lack of consistency between channel behaviours diminishes the power of the data-driven marketing	.712			
Unethical issues surrounding the use of the data restrain the aggressive act of digital marketing	.716			
Hacking or misappropriating of data may tremendously hurt the reputation and loyalty of the brands	.730			
The consumer digital changes are fast which restricts the data-driven marketing strategies to quickly become outdated	.733			

There is a lack of access to real-time consumer information which minimises the efficiency of personalised marketing	.648			
The problem of non-uniformity of data between platforms results in fragmented consumer insights				.614
Inability to correlate data-based marketing efforts to the general business strategy constrains their ability				.812
The lack of trust of consumers into the applications of personal information by retailers diminishes the impact of data-driven digital marketing activities				.735
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.				
a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.				

The **Rotated Component Matrix** presents the results of the **Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation**, revealing how the 20 observed variables related to challenges in data-driven digital marketing load onto **four distinct underlying components**. The clear factor loadings (all above the acceptable threshold of 0.60 in most cases) indicate a well-defined and interpretable factor structure.

Component 1 primarily captures **organizational and strategic challenges** faced by retailers. High loadings on items such as organizational resistance to digital change, inconsistency across channels, unethical data practices, cybersecurity threats, rapid digital changes, and lack of real-time consumer data suggest that this factor reflects **internal organizational readiness and**

operational risks. These issues highlight how internal constraints and security concerns limit the effective adoption of data-driven digital marketing strategies.

Component 2 represents **technological and analytical capability challenges.** Variables loading strongly on this component include lack of platform interoperability, affordability constraints for small and medium retailers, complexity of personalization in a culturally diverse country like Canada, algorithmic bias, lack of transparency, need for continuous feedback, and difficulty in extracting actionable insights from large datasets. This component underscores the **technical complexity and resource intensity** associated with implementing advanced data-driven marketing systems.

Component 3 is largely associated with **regulatory and consumer privacy concerns.** Strong loadings on frequent changes in data privacy laws, perceived intrusiveness of targeted advertising, challenges in obtaining consumer consent, and weak data governance frameworks indicate that this factor reflects the **legal, ethical, and privacy-related constraints** shaping digital marketing practices in the Canadian retail sector.

Component 4 focuses on **data integration and strategic alignment issues.** Items such as non-uniform data across platforms, inability to align data-driven marketing with overall business strategy, and lack of consumer trust in personal data usage load highly on this component. This highlights the importance of **strategic coherence and trust-building** for maximizing the impact of data-driven digital marketing.

Overall, the rotated component matrix demonstrates that challenges in data-driven digital marketing among Canadian retailers are **multidimensional**, encompassing organizational, technological, regulatory, and strategic–trust-related factors. The clear separation of items across four components confirms the **construct validity** of the measurement scale and provides a strong empirical foundation for further analysis and managerial recommendations.

Table 4.27: Reliability Statistics

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.901	20

The reliability statistics indicate that the measurement scale used in the study demonstrates **excellent internal consistency**. The **Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.901** for **20 items** exceeds the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70, confirming that the items are highly reliable and consistently measure the underlying construct related to **opportunities of data-driven digital marketing in the Canadian retail sector**. This high alpha value suggests strong inter-item correlations and indicates that the scale is both stable and dependable for further statistical analyses. Overall, the results confirm that the instrument is suitable for accurately capturing respondents' perceptions and supports the robustness of the study's empirical findings.

Table 4.28: Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Retailers are in a better position to learn more about consumer needs and likes because of data-driven digital marketing	600	1	5	4.42	.644
Customized market communication increases customer interaction and reaction	600	1	5	4.18	.814
The consumer data is used in providing the relevant products to the retailers	600	1	5	4.39	.619

With data analytics, retailers can be able to find and reach high value groups of clients	600	1	5	4.19	.765
Promotional campaigns are more effective with the support of digital marketing that is backed with data	600	1	5	4.26	.710
Real-time information helps the retailers to act promptly on the fluctuating consumer behaviour	600	1	5	4.39	.644
Evidence based information assists the retailers in enhancing customer satisfaction and shopping experience	600	1	5	4.36	.678
Digital marketing analytics aids in the making of informed marketing decisions at the right point of time	600	1	5	4.23	.748
Leveraging of data increases customer retention and loyalty programs	600	1	5	4.23	.698
Closed loop strategies would allow retailers to maximize pricing and discounts	600	1	5	4.19	.825
Online and offline consumer data integration enhances consumer requirements in omnichannel retailing	600	1	5	3.97	.942
Predictive analytics is used to help retailers determine future consumer demand	600	1	5	3.75	1.065

Evidence-based online marketing enhances the metrics of the brand to the consumers	600	1	5	4.19	.818
Information about customers assists retailers to save on the cost of marketing by advertising to specific groups	600	1	5	3.89	.907
The use of data will allow the manufacturing of marketing strategies	600	1	5	4.05	.871
Sophisticated analytics tools and artificial intelligence tools will make consumer targeting more relevant	600	1	5	4.00	.905
Digital marketing that is driven by data assists in developing the long-term relationship with the consumers	600	1	5	3.53	1.114
Data information will enable retailers to create innovative products and services	600	1	5	4.39	.728
Digital channels offer a possibility to quantify and assess the responses of consumers	600	1	5	4.25	.782
Open and moral use of data can help generate confidence in retail brands amongst the consumers	600	1	5	3.90	.943
Valid N (listwise)	600				

The descriptive statistics presented in the table indicate a generally **high level of agreement among respondents** regarding the opportunities created by **data-driven digital marketing**

for retailers in Canada. All items have mean values close to or above the midpoint of the scale, suggesting that respondents largely perceive data utilization as a valuable strategic tool in influencing consumer buying behaviour.

The highest mean scores are observed for statements such as **“Retailers are in a better position to learn more about consumer needs and likes because of data-driven digital marketing” (Mean = 4.42)**, **“The consumer data is used in providing the relevant products to the retailers” (Mean = 4.39)**, **“Real-time information helps the retailers to act promptly on the fluctuating consumer behaviour” (Mean = 4.39)**, and **“Data information will enable retailers to create innovative products and services” (Mean = 4.39)**. These results highlight that respondents strongly recognize the role of data analytics in enhancing customer understanding, responsiveness, and innovation in the retail sector.

Other statements also report relatively high mean values, such as the effectiveness of **customized marketing communication (Mean = 4.18)**, **targeting high-value customer segments using analytics (Mean = 4.19)**, **improving customer satisfaction and shopping experience through evidence-based information (Mean = 4.36)**, and **supporting informed and timely marketing decisions (Mean = 4.23)**. This suggests that data-driven digital marketing is perceived as instrumental in improving both operational efficiency and customer-centric decision-making.

Moderately high mean scores are seen for aspects such as **omnichannel data integration (Mean = 3.97)**, **predictive analytics for future demand forecasting (Mean = 3.75)**, and **long-term relationship building with consumers (Mean = 3.53)**. Although these aspects are still positively perceived, the relatively lower means indicate that retailers may not be fully leveraging these opportunities or that consumers experience these benefits to a lesser extent.

The standard deviation values, which mostly range between **0.6 and 1.1**, indicate a reasonable level of consistency in responses, though slightly higher variability is observed for items related to predictive analytics and long-term relationship development. Overall, the findings suggest that respondents strongly acknowledge the **strategic opportunities of data-driven digital marketing** in enhancing consumer engagement, targeting efficiency, innovation, and competitive advantage in the Canadian retail sector, while also highlighting areas where further optimization is possible.

Table 4.29: KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.912
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	4649.798
	df	190
	Sig.	.000

The results of the **Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity** indicate that the data are highly suitable for factor analysis. The **KMO value of 0.912** close to recommended threshold of 1, demonstrating **excellent sampling adequacy** and suggesting that the variables share sufficient common variance to justify factor extraction. This high KMO score confirms that the correlation patterns among the variables are compact and reliable, which is ideal for conducting exploratory factor analysis.

Further, **Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity is statistically significant** ($\chi^2 = 4649.798$, $df = 190$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix. This confirms the presence of meaningful relationships among the variables and validates that factor analysis is appropriate. Overall, these results strongly support proceeding with factor analysis to identify the underlying dimensions related to **opportunities of data-driven digital marketing in influencing consumer buying behaviour in the Canadian retail sector.**

Table 4.30: Communalities

Communalities		
	Initial	Extraction
Retailers are in a better position to learn more about consumer needs and likes because of data-driven digital marketing	1.000	.538

Customized market communication increases customer interaction and reaction	1.000	.531
The consumer data is used in providing the relevant products to the retailers	1.000	.555
With data analytics, retailers can be able to find and reach high value groups of clients	1.000	.533
Promotional campaigns are more effective with the support of digital marketing that is backed with data	1.000	.599
Real-time information helps the retailers to act promptly on the fluctuating consumer behaviour	1.000	.604
Evidence based information assists the retailers in enhancing customer satisfaction and shopping experience	1.000	.616
Digital marketing analytics aids in the making of informed marketing decisions at the right point of time	1.000	.603
Leveraging of data increases customer retention and loyalty programs	1.000	.553
Closed loop strategies would allow retailers to maximize pricing and discounts	1.000	.442

Online and offline consumer data integration enhances consumer requirements in omnichannel retailing	1.000	.488
Predictive analytics is used to help retailers determine future consumer demand	1.000	.587
Evidence-based online marketing enhances the metrics of the brand to the consumers	1.000	.449
Information about customers assists retailers to save on the cost of marketing by advertising to specific groups	1.000	.555
The use of data will allow the manufacturing of marketing strategies	1.000	.651
Sophisticated analytics tools and artificial intelligence tools will make consumer targeting more relevant	1.000	.656
Digital marketing that is driven by data assists in developing the long-term relationship with the consumers	1.000	.475
Data information will enable retailers to create innovative products and services	1.000	.602
Digital channels offer a possibility to quantify and assess the responses of consumers	1.000	.728

Open and moral use of data can help generate confidence in retail brands amongst the consumers	1.000	.611
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.		

The communalities table presents the proportion of variance in each observed variable that is explained by the extracted factors using **Principal Component Analysis (PCA)**. As shown in the table, all items have an **initial communality value of 1.000**, which is standard in PCA and indicates that the total variance of each variable is considered before extraction. The **extraction communalities**, which range from **0.442 to 0.728**, demonstrate that a substantial portion of variance in each item is accounted for by the retained factor structure.

Specifically, variables such as *“Digital channels offer a possibility to quantify and assess the responses of consumers”* (0.728), *“Sophisticated analytics tools and artificial intelligence tools will make consumer targeting more relevant”* (0.656), and *“The use of data will allow the manufacturing of marketing strategies”* (0.651) exhibit high communalities, indicating that these items are strongly represented by the extracted components. This suggests that data analytics, AI-enabled targeting, and strategic use of data are central dimensions within the construct of data-driven digital marketing opportunities.

Most of the remaining variables also show communalities above the commonly accepted threshold of **0.50**, signifying that the factors adequately explain their variance. Even items with relatively lower communalities, such as *“Closed loop strategies would allow retailers to maximize pricing and discounts”* (0.442) and *“Evidence-based online marketing enhances the metrics of the brand to the consumers”* (0.449), still meet acceptable levels for inclusion, indicating meaningful contribution to the overall factor solution.

Overall, the communalities results confirm that the selected items are well explained by the extracted factors and that the measurement scale demonstrates **good construct representation and suitability for factor analysis**. This supports the validity of the factor structure used to examine opportunities associated with data-driven digital marketing in the Canadian retail sector.

Table 4.31: Total Variance Explained

Total Variance Explained										
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings			
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %							
1	7.188	35.939	35.939	7.188	35.939	35.939	3.679	18.396	18.396	
2	1.903	9.517	45.456	1.903	9.517	45.456	3.670	18.349	36.745	
3	1.272	6.358	51.814	1.272	6.358	51.814	2.024	10.118	56.863	
4	1.012	5.062	56.876	1.012	5.062	56.876	2.003	10.014	66.876	
5	0.953	4.765	61.641							
6	0.793	3.967	65.609							
7	0.746	3.729	69.338							
8	0.669	3.343	72.681							
9	0.645	3.224	75.905							
10	0.618	3.091	78.996							
11	0.551	2.755	81.751							
12	0.524	2.619	84.370							
13	0.487	2.436	86.806							
14	0.455	2.276	89.082							
15	0.440	2.202	91.285							
16	0.423	2.116	93.400							
17	0.404	2.020	95.420							
18	0.332	1.662	97.082							

19	0.304	1.522	98.604						
20	0.279	1.396	100.000						
Extraction Method : Principal Component Analysis.									

The **Total Variance Explained** table presents the results of the **Principal Component Analysis (PCA)** conducted on the 20 items measuring **opportunities of data-driven digital marketing in the Canadian retail sector**. The findings indicate that **four components** were extracted, each having an eigenvalue greater than 1, which satisfies Kaiser’s criterion for factor retention. The **first component** has an eigenvalue of **7.188** and explains **35.94% of the total variance**, indicating that it represents the most dominant underlying dimension influencing retailers’ opportunities through data-driven digital marketing. The **second component** explains an additional **9.52% of the variance**, raising the cumulative variance explained to **45.46%**, while the **third and fourth components** contribute **6.36%** and **5.06%**, respectively. Collectively, the four extracted components account for **56.88% of the total variance**, which is considered satisfactory in social science research and indicates that a substantial proportion of information contained in the original variables is retained.

After Varimax rotation, the variance is more evenly distributed across the four components, with the first two rotated factors explaining approximately **18.40%** and **18.35%** of the variance, respectively, followed by the third (**10.12%**) and fourth (**10.01%**) components. This redistribution enhances interpretability by reducing factor dominance and clarifying the underlying structure of the data. Overall, the results confirm that the extracted components provide a meaningful and statistically sound representation of the key opportunity dimensions associated with data-driven digital marketing in the Canadian retail context, making the factor solution suitable for further analysis and interpretation.

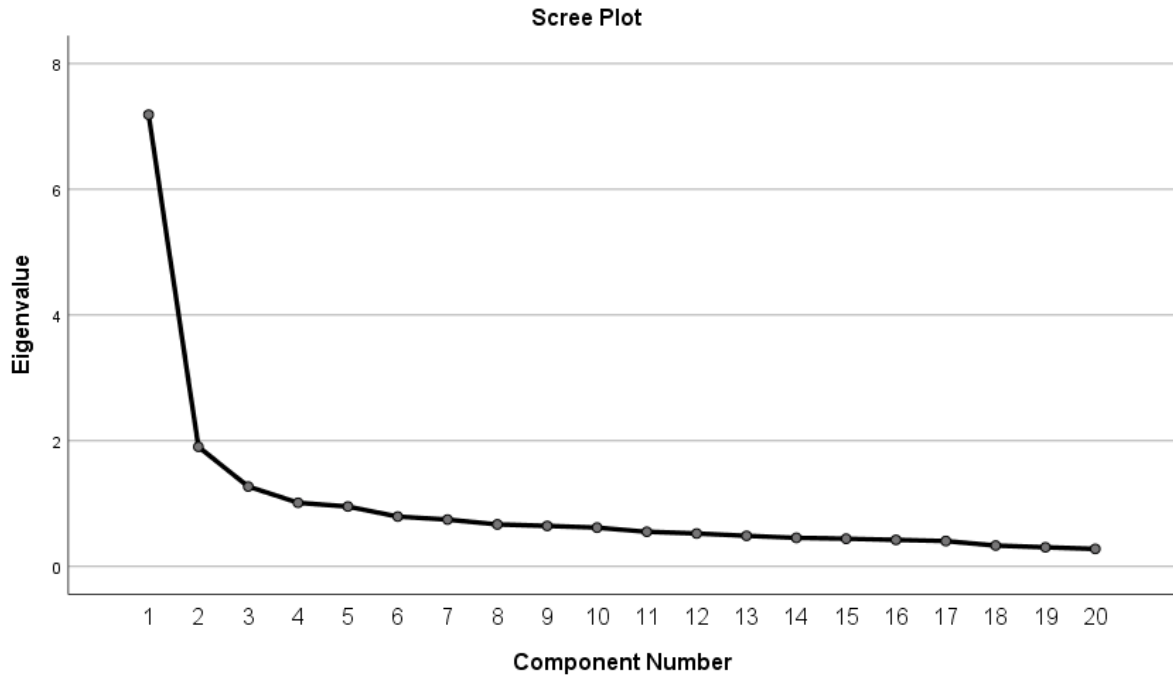


Figure 4.11: Scree Plot (2)

The Scree Plot shows the eigenvalues of 20 principal components, with a sharp decline after the first component and a gradual tapering, thereafter, forming an "elbow" at the second component. This indicates that the first two components capture most of the meaningful variance in the data, while subsequent components contribute relatively little. Following the elbow method or Kaiser criterion (eigenvalues > 1), retaining the first two components is appropriate, as they explain the majority of the variance and provide a meaningful dimensionality reduction for further analysis.

Table 4.32: Rotated Component Matrix^a

Rotated Component Matrix ^a				
	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Retailers are in a better position to learn more about consumer needs and likes because of data-driven digital marketing				.602
Customized market communication increases customer interaction and reaction				.629

The consumer data is used in providing the relevant products to the retailers				.615
With data analytics, retailers can be able to find and reach high value groups of clients	.656			
Promotional campaigns are more effective with the support of digital marketing that is backed with data	.691			
Real-time information helps the retailers to act promptly on the fluctuating consumer behaviour	.650			
Evidence based information assists the retailers in enhancing customer satisfaction and shopping experience	.727			
Digital marketing analytics aids in the making of informed marketing decisions at the right point of time	.726			
Leveraging of data increases customer retention and loyalty programs	.660			
Closed loop strategies would allow retailers to maximize pricing and discounts		.523		
Online and offline consumer data integration enhances consumer requirements in omnichannel retailing		.633		

Predictive analytics is used to help retailers determine future consumer demand		.654		
Evidence-based online marketing enhances the metrics of the brand to the consumers		.513		
Information about customers assists retailers to save on the cost of marketing by advertising to specific groups		.683		
The use of data will allow the manufacturing of marketing strategies		.743		
Sophisticated analytics tools and artificial intelligence tools will make consumer targeting more relevant		.729		
Digital marketing that is driven by data assists in developing the long-term relationship with the consumers		.578		
Data information will enable retailers to create innovative products and services			.694	
Digital channels offer a possibility to quantify and assess the responses of consumers			.793	
Open and moral use of data can help generate confidence in retail brands amongst the consumers			.708	
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.				

a. Rotation converged in 8 iterations.

The Rotated Component Matrix revealed four distinct dimensions of data-driven digital marketing in retail. **Component 1** reflects the role of data in enhancing decision-making, marketing effectiveness, and customer experience, highlighting benefits such as targeted campaigns, real-time responsiveness, and increased customer retention. **Component 2** captures strategic targeting and cost efficiency, emphasizing predictive analytics, omnichannel integration, AI-driven personalization, and evidence-based marketing strategies that reduce costs and build long-term consumer relationships. **Component 3** represents innovation and product development, showing that consumer data enables the creation of new products and services. **Component 4** underscores consumer trust and measurement, indicating that transparent and ethical data use, along with digital channels, helps quantify consumer responses and strengthens brand confidence. Together, these components illustrate how data-driven digital marketing integrates operational effectiveness, strategic planning, innovation, and trust-building to optimize retail performance.

Research Question 4: What are the suggestions that can be made to retail organizations to enhance consumer purchasing behaviour using digital marketing in Canada?

Table 4.33: Reliability Statistics

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.839	15

The reliability analysis indicates that the 15-item scale demonstrates good internal consistency, with a **Cronbach's alpha of 0.839**. Since values above 0.7 are generally considered acceptable,

this suggests that the items reliably measure the underlying construct of data-driven digital marketing practices, ensuring consistency in responses across the scale.

Table 4.34: Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Make an investment in digital marketing that is being tailored according to the consumer data and preferences	600	1	5	4.36	.783
Make data collection and use transparent to create consumer confidence	600	1	5	4.16	.814
Enhance information privacy and cybersecurity	600	1	5	3.80	.974
Analytics help you to determine the changing consumer behaviour and preferences	600	1	5	3.18	1.151
Bring together the online and offline customer information through omnichannel	600	1	5	4.51	.724
Enhance interaction and social media posts	600	1	5	3.78	1.013
Greater customer targeting can be done with AI and predictive analytics	600	1	5	4.62	.619

Provide evidence-based deals and tailored promotions	600	1	5	4.50	.693
Increase mobile promotional programs, such as apps and push notifications	600	1	5	4.04	.965
Periodically analyse the performance of online promotional activities	600	1	5	4.12	.807
Educate staff about data analytics and computer marketing	600	1	5	4.09	.894
Based on customer base reviews and feedback, they can be used to improve marketing strategies	600	1	5	4.12	.856
Embrace ethical practices related to the use of data in accordance with the Canadian regulations	600	1	5	4.18	.743
Maximize online and application ease of purchasing	600	1	5	4.34	.632
Look at the long-term relationships with the customers and not short-term sales	600	1	5	4.38	.655
Valid N (listwise)	600				

The descriptive statistics for the 15 items measuring data-driven digital marketing practices indicate generally high levels of agreement among respondents. The **means range from 3.18 to 4.62**, suggesting that participants perceive most practices as important, with the highest

agreement for **greater customer targeting using AI and predictive analytics (M = 4.62, SD = 0.619)** and omnichannel integration of customer information (M = 4.51, SD = 0.724). The lowest mean is for **analytics helping to determine changing consumer behaviour and preferences (M = 3.18, SD = 1.151)**, indicating relatively less agreement or greater variability in responses. Standard deviations range from 0.619 to 1.151, showing moderate variability across items, with items related to technological sophistication and predictive analytics exhibiting more consensus, while items on analytical capabilities and social media interaction show greater diversity in perceptions. Overall, the data suggest that respondents prioritize personalized, AI-driven, and ethically transparent digital marketing strategies, with attention to long-term customer relationships and omnichannel integration.

Table 4.35: Chi-Square Tests

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	98.129 ^a	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	71.677	16	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	14.948	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	600		
a. 14 cells (56.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .02.			

The Chi-Square test results indicate a **statistically significant association** among the variables examined, as evidenced by the **Pearson Chi-Square value of 98.129 (df = 16, p < 0.001)** and the **Likelihood Ratio of 71.677 (df = 16, p < 0.001)**. Additionally, the **Linear-by-Linear Association (14.948, p < 0.001)** suggests a significant trend in the ordinal data. However, caution is warranted because **14 cells (56%) have expected counts less than 5**, with the minimum expected count of 0.02, which violates the assumption of adequate expected frequencies for the Chi-Square test. This indicates that while the association is statistically

significant, the result should be interpreted carefully, and alternative methods such as **Fisher’s Exact Test** or combining categories may be considered to ensure validity.

4.1. Hypothesis Testing Results

Table 4.36: Hypothesis Testing Results

S.No.	Hypothesis Statements	Decision
H01	There are no significant digital marketing strategies and data utilization practices are commonly employed by retailers in Canada	Rejected
Ha1	There are significant digital marketing strategies and data utilization practices are commonly employed by retailers in Canada	Accepted
H02	There are no significant role that digital marketing play in the consumer purchasing decision-making in the Canadian retail market	Rejected
Ha2	There are significant role that digital marketing play in the consumer purchasing decision-making in the Canadian retail market	Accepted
H03	There are no significant data affect consumer preferences, attitude, and purchase intentions	Rejected
Ha3	There are significant data affect consumer preferences, attitude, and purchase intentions	Accepted
H04	There are no significant challenges and opportunities retailers face in using data-driven digital marketing to influence consumer buying behaviour in Canada	Rejected
Ha4	There are significant challenges and opportunities retailers face in using data-driven digital marketing to influence consumer buying behaviour in Canada	Accepted
H05	There are no significant suggestions that can be made to retail organizations to enhance	Rejected

	consumer purchasing behaviour using digital marketing in Canada	
Ha5	There are significant suggestions that can be made to retail organizations to enhance consumer purchasing behaviour using digital marketing in Canada	Accepted

Conclusion and Summary

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of the impact of digital marketing strategies and data utilization on consumer buying decisions in the Canadian retail sector. The findings reveal how demographic factors, online engagement preferences, and targeted marketing techniques interact to influence consumer behaviour, and they underscore the critical importance of integrating data-driven insights into retail marketing strategies.

The demographic distribution of respondents highlights a predominant engagement from younger adults, with 73.5% of participants aged below 35 years. The age profile suggests that digital marketing campaigns are particularly effective among younger, technologically proficient, and information-oriented consumers. These individuals are more likely to navigate multiple online platforms, compare products, and respond to personalized marketing messages. Additionally, the higher participation of females (61.83%) indicates a significant gendered pattern in retail engagement, with women showing stronger interaction with digital marketing platforms and online retail channels. Marital status and family size further contextualize consumer behaviour; single and nuclear-family respondents demonstrated greater responsiveness to online marketing, potentially due to higher individual autonomy in purchasing decisions.

Educational qualifications also emerged as a determinant of consumer behaviour, with over 62% of respondents holding a graduate or postgraduate degree. This indicates that educated consumers are more discerning, relying on accurate product information, reviews, and online comparisons prior to making purchases. Income levels, while diverse, showed that the majority of respondents fell into mid-range income brackets, suggesting that digital marketing initiatives must balance affordability and value propositions to appeal to the largest consumer segments.

Collectively, these demographic insights provide retailers with a clear understanding of their core target audience, enabling more strategic and targeted marketing initiatives.

The study explored consumer shopping behaviour, highlighting the prevalence of omnichannel engagement. More than half of the respondents (52%) indicated equal preference for online and physical stores, demonstrating that while digital engagement is critical, physical retail presence remains important for consumer confidence and experiential shopping. Monthly purchasing (37.83%) was the most common, followed by daily, weekly, and fortnightly online shopping, reflecting varied consumption patterns. These findings suggest that digital marketing strategies should adopt a mix of consistent engagement initiatives, including retargeting campaigns, personalized notifications, and loyalty programs, to capture attention across different purchase frequencies.

The analysis of descriptive statistics, one-sample tests, and ANOVA results provided detailed insights into the efficacy of various digital marketing tools. Personalized campaigns based on browsing and purchase history emerged as the most influential, with a mean score of 4.62, indicating that tailored recommendations significantly impact purchase decisions. E-marketing newsletters, loyalty programs, and omnichannel integration also demonstrated high effectiveness, emphasizing the importance of relevant, consistent, and consumer-centric communication. Social media marketing, while slightly lower in mean score (3.80), remains a vital platform for brand awareness, consumer engagement, and experimentation with new products.

Regression analysis further corroborated these findings, revealing a significant positive relationship between digital marketing variables and consumer purchase decisions, with an R^2 of 0.368. This indicates that approximately 36.8% of the variation in buying behaviour can be explained by digital marketing strategies. Individual predictors, such as online marketing that stimulates product experimentation and tailored communications, were found to exert the strongest influence on consumer decisions. Correlation analysis reinforced these insights, showing significant positive associations between various digital marketing methods and consumer awareness, purchase intentions, and brand perception.

Data-driven marketing plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer engagement and facilitating informed decision-making. The study's findings emphasize that retailers leveraging consumer data through predictive analytics, CRM systems, and integration of online and offline datasets

can identify high-value customer segments, optimize promotions, and enhance satisfaction and loyalty. Descriptive and factor analyses revealed critical components influencing data-driven marketing, including the personalization of communications, real-time responsiveness, predictive analytics, and ethical use of consumer data. The high KMO values (0.912–0.924) and significant Bartlett's tests confirm the adequacy of the data for factor analysis, ensuring the robustness of the study's findings.

Ethical and transparent utilization of consumer data emerged as an essential factor in gaining trust. The study indicates that overreliance on algorithms or poorly governed data collection practices can undermine consumer confidence and reduce the effectiveness of marketing strategies. Retailers that prioritize ethical practices, protect consumer privacy, and ensure consistent, accurate, and relevant messaging are more likely to foster loyalty and long-term engagement.

The findings provide actionable insights for retail marketers and policymakers. Retailers are encouraged to adopt omnichannel marketing approaches, integrating physical and digital touchpoints to cater to consumer preferences. Investment in personalized campaigns, predictive analytics, and loyalty programs is crucial to enhance engagement and conversion. Additionally, marketers should monitor emerging consumer trends, respond quickly to changes in demand, and continuously evaluate the impact of data-driven strategies to optimize marketing performance.

From a policy perspective, the study highlights the importance of regulatory frameworks governing data privacy, ethical data collection, and algorithmic transparency. Policymakers can play a role in ensuring that digital marketing practices adhere to consumer protection standards, fostering trust and preventing misuse of personal information. Retailers operating in culturally diverse markets, such as Canada, should also consider demographic sensitivity and inclusivity in their marketing and data utilization strategies.

While this study offers comprehensive insights, it has certain limitations. The cross-sectional design restricts the ability to infer causal relationships over time, and the study focuses solely on the Canadian retail sector, limiting generalizability to other markets. The self-reported nature of survey responses may also introduce biases in consumer behaviour assessment.

Future research can address these limitations through longitudinal studies that track consumer behaviour over time, comparative studies across different countries or regions, and experimental designs evaluating the efficacy of specific digital marketing interventions. Additionally, examining the role of emerging technologies, such as generative AI, augmented reality, and advanced analytics, could provide deeper insights into the evolving landscape of retail marketing. Investigating consumer trust, ethical concerns, and the psychological impact of data-driven personalization also offers promising avenues for research.

In conclusion, the study establishes that digital marketing, when combined with strategic data utilization, substantially influences consumer buying behaviour in the Canadian retail sector. Younger, educated, and technologically adept consumers are most responsive to personalized campaigns, social media engagement, and omnichannel retail experiences. Retailers that leverage predictive analytics, CRM systems, and ethical data practices are better positioned to enhance customer targeting, optimize promotions, and foster loyalty. Overall, this research underscores the synergistic effect of digital marketing and data-driven strategies, offering significant managerial, operational, and policy implications. The findings provide a strong foundation for future research and practical applications, highlighting the transformative potential of digital marketing in shaping consumer behaviour in an increasingly dynamic retail environment.

CHAPTER-V

DISSCUSION

5.1. Research Question 1: What digital marketing and data utilization practices are commonly employed by retailers in Canada?

The results of the study have substantial information on the effect of digital-based marketing strategies and use of data on consumer purchasing behaviour in the Canadian retail sector. The study shows that digital marketing is more than an ancillary promotional means and has transformed and is now being integrated as a mechanism to shape awareness, preference, and purchase entities. The high involvement of younger customers (under 35 years old) is in-line with the previous research that revealed that digital natives are more open to the online marketing channels because they are more technology-savvy, and more likely to use social media. This age group also shows better propensity to try new products and interact with adverts targeting them, which implies that marketers have to focus on the individual and interactive campaigns to attract the attention of said groups in the most effective way.

The discussion of gender in the study shows that women consumers were more active in online interaction during retail transfers than men as shown in earlier consumer behaviour literature that the role of women in making a retail decision was mostly active. Marital status and a family structure also had an impact on the pattern of engagement, as the respondents of the single and nuclear family exhibited greater responsiveness to the online promotion. This is a realization that autonomy and the capacity to make personal decisions moderates the success of digital marketing campaigns. Segmentation of marketing strategy can therefore help retailers to make the marketing process more relevant to the objectives of each segment to maximize the payoff.

The paper also indicates that data use is vital in improving the effectiveness of marketing. One-on-one recommendations, which are based on the purchase and browse history, and loyalty programs which are driven by CRM, were recognised as the most effective in the formation of purchase intentions. This highlights why it is important to use consumer data to provide differentiated experiences that cut across personal preferences. Additionally, the online and offline channels of data integration or omnichannel practices make the customer experience more fruitful because of the uniform and transparent interaction through the touchpoints. These

strategies contribute to the informed purchase made as well as to the long-term brand loyalty due to the development of the trust and reliability in the interactions with retailing organizations.

These findings have strong evidence in the statistical analyses that have been carried out. The findings of the regression showed that digital marketing variables related to consumer purchase behavior were significantly predicted, tailored communications and online engagement to experiment with a product have the strongest effect. Correlation tests also verified that digital marketing communications such as social media, email newsletters and predictive analytics have a positive correlation with consumer awareness, satisfaction and purchase intent. The results confirm previous studies, which indicate that data-driven marketing will be more successful when personalized, timely, and informative on consumer-preferred items in the framework of mass-targeted campaigns instead of commodity-based approaches.

Nonetheless, the paper also points to some difficulties of applying data-driven digital marketing. Ethical aspects, including the privacy of data, transparency, and informed consent were identified as crucial factors and may affect the trust of consumers. The retail situation in Canada, that is diversified and culturally, increases the necessity of ethically oriented cultural sensitive marketing. Retailers need to be technologically innovative and yet comply to regulatory requirements, as this will be the only way that data gathering, analytics, and target marketing are being planned and executed in a responsible manner. Not doing so can result in a lack of consumer confidence and the unproductiveness of otherwise very well-organized campaigns.

Moreover, the study also shows practical consequences of managerial decision-making. By making a strategic investment into predictive analytics, CRM integration, and individual communication, retailers can gain the chance to win over high-value customer groups and be responsive to changing consumer preferences. The use of real-time analytics and evidence-based promotional strategies can be used to implement adaptive decision making to achieve the goal of maximizing campaigns, improving customer satisfaction, and optimizing the overall sales performance of the retailers. Moreover, organizational agility that changes with technological changes should be encouraged to enable retailers not to fall behind in the ever-changing digital market.

Generally, the research is the contribution to the broader knowledge of the synergistic impact of digital marketing and the use of data to value consumer behavior. It shows that demographic factors, shopping habits, and personalization based on the data have a substantial impact on the decision to purchase. These lessons are a basis of scholarly research and the broad practice, indicating that efficient digital marketing is under the principle of integration of the consumer insights, composition data ethics governance, and strategic targeting. Those retailers which effectively operationalize these aspects would have a high probability of achieving greater engagement, brand loyalty, and viable business performance in the competitive retail industry of Canada.

5.2. Research Question 2: What role does digital marketing play in the consumer purchasing decision-making in the Canadian retail market?

According to the current research, it is important to note that digital marketing is critical in influencing the consumer decision making process in the Canadian retail market. The demographic analysis shows that the younger consumer segment, especially the consumer who is not above the age group of 35 years old is more receptive to digital marketing processes, thus age is an important factor to consider when determining the effectiveness of online advertising and social media use. This follows the international tendencies of digital consumerism when younger generations most prone to using technology are more likely to engage with any brand, discover new products and shop online. The retailers aiming at these age groups are advised to focus on social media campaigns, personalized advertisement and information engaging these age groups.

The study also indicated gender differences among participants in digital shopping as more female consumers were identified to be more active than their male counterparts in terms of digital shopping. This development validates the need to concentrate marketing communication efforts on various gender groups since female consumers are more active in product awareness, brand comparison and promotion reaction. On the same note, those individuals and nuclear families were more likely to be online shoppers, which reveals the influence of lifestyle and freedom on purchasing and shopping online activities. These lessons imply that to develop effective digital marketing campaign, demographic segmentation will be necessary because they will enable retailers to present relevant messages that will appeal to different consumer groups.

The descriptive and inferential statistics show that the multiple digital marketing channels play a great role in consumer perception, purchase, and awareness. It was found that social media marketing, e-newsletters, mobile marketing and targeted promotions were effective in raising consumer interaction, guiding to make informed decision, as well as entertain product experimentation. One that was also found to be effective in influencing purchase decisions was in the form of personalized marketing communications like recommendations on the buying behavior based on the browsing history or loyalty program analytics. Such results suggest that consumers will tend to react positively better as marketing is based on individual preferences and behavior, which makes data-driven and digital marketing strategies important.

These findings are reinforced by the regression and correlation findings of the study. The digital marketing variables such as online promotions, social media participation, and personalized communications had positive significant relationships with consumer purchase intentions. Interestingly, online marketing which stimulated trying new products proved to be the most influential, which implies that online marketing can have a direct impact on consumer behavior by influencing brand exploration and interest. The research results reveal the importance of digital marketing in contributing to the awareness and preference, as well as in the active process of realizing the decision making process of the consumer, from searching information to buying a product.

Although the study confirms the success of digital marketing, it also presents possible problems facing the retailers. The transmission of ethical issues revolving around data privacy, consent, and transparency was found to be an obstacle that would affect consumer engagement and trust. The retailing industry in Canada which has a tradition of cultural diversity and stringent privacy laws stipulates that the marketing practices of a retailer must be ethically sound and practiced within the confines of the law. The lack of attention to these issues can decrease the efficiency of digital campaigns because customers are much more concerned with openness and responsible utilization of their personal data.

Regarding an aspect of the management, the study lays stress on the fact that retailers should invest in the area of data analytics, CRM systems, and omnichannel integration in order to promote the efficacy of the digital marketing campaign. Using the real-time consumer insights, retailers can offer personalized promotions, price and promotions optimization, and enhance consumer satisfaction. Evidence-based marketing can be used to make changes based on the adaptive decision-making process, which can help the retailers to cope with the disruptions in

consumer preferences and competitive forces. Moreover, the combination of online and offline will provide a core shopping experience, building brand loyalty and improving the full consumer experience.

To conclude, the digital marketing is a critical element in the decision making process of consumers purchasing in the retail industry in Canada. It serves as a means of both brand awareness and product promotion in addition to being a means of personalizing the consumer experience, helping to make informed choices in addition to improving engagement and loyalty. The research also raises the notion that the success of online marketing is intertwined with the demographic features, personal communication, and ethical use of data. The retailers who closely make strategic use of digital marketing and consumer intelligence will be in better positions to make sales and create lasting relationships and competitive advantage in the fast-changing retail market.

5.3. Research Question 3: What challenges and opportunities do retailers face in using data-driven digital marketing to influence consumer buying behaviour in Canada?

The results of this research illuminated the picture of compound landscape of issues and opportunities that retailers in Canada face as they engage in data-driven digital marketing techniques to affect consumer purchasing practices. Digital marketing is a concept that is increasingly accepted as the powerful means whereby retailers are able to learn the preferences of their customers, provide personalized communications, and maximize the benefits of a marketing campaign. Nevertheless, its potential is enormous, although the adoption of such strategies cannot be conducted without challenges. The other major problem identified in this research is one that has to do with the regulatory and ethical environment regarding data privacy. The Canadian consumers are very aware of the process of collecting, storing, and using their personal information. One of the problems that retailers have to deal with is the persistent need to meet privacy regulations and seek practical insights based on the data about consumers. This involves taking informed consent, data security and preventive intrusive practices that may weaken consumer confidence.

Although effective, targeted advertising is also seen as a form of intrusion to some consumers. The analysis showed that too personalized marketing, particularly, when grounded on excessive monitoring of consumer behavior, can lead towards opposition or adverse attitudes. The retailers should hence maintain a balance between privacy and personalization where

marketing strategies employed by the retailers should be transparent, ethical and consistent with the expectation of consumers. Moreover, smaller and medium-sized retailers do not have financial and technological advantages to fully utilize the use of advanced data analytics software, which leads to differences in the capabilities of organizing advanced digital marketing campaigns. All these obstacles help highlight that the benefits of data-driven strategies become the most valuable when the organization is ready to implement them, invest in technology, and train its staff.

Nevertheless, regardless of such obstacles, the paper identifies some interesting opportunities that retailers have in the Canadian market. The leverage of consumer information makes it possible to conduct a highly targeted marketing, which is that retailers are able to target particular segments with personalized offers, promotion, and suggestions. Individualized messages and predictive analysis increase the chances of making a purchase due to the alignment of marketing actions with consumer tastes and behavior. This opportunity is also enhanced by the introduction of online and offline data in the component of the omnichannel strategies where the retailers can establish consistent and seamless experiences that can boost engagement, satisfaction, and loyalty. The research results indicate that personalized messages, loyalty programs, and real-time promotions are positively received by the consumers, which means that data-driven strategies may have a remarkable effect on the purchase process provided they are applied properly.

In addition, there is the fact that, data-driven marketing gives retailers actionable information that can be used in setting strategic decisions not limited to immediate sales. As an example, consumer behaviour analysis enables retailers to predict demand, manage inventory and also make improvements on product graphics to suit the needs of the market. The effectiveness of campaigns can also be measured by retailers in real time which allows making necessary adjustments and improving the process constantly. Artificially intelligent and other sophisticated methods of analytics can provide the opportunities to improve accuracy, minimise costs, and overall make marketing activities more productive. With the help of these technologies, retailers can develop more interesting, more attractive and more personal experiences that build on the consumer-retailer relationship.

Canadian retail business setting with its cultural diversity and the differences in consumer expectations also put pressure on the significance of data-driven marketing. Retailers who are aware of and address the lexes of the consumer preferences stand a higher chance of gaining

competitive advantage. Trust and brand loyalty can be developed through customization in combination with ethically sound and open processes resulting in retention of customers in the long term. Also, the research notes that retailers facing the changing opportunities of digital marketing are in a better position to capitalize on them by integrating innovation, investing in digital infrastructure, and developing analytical capabilities.

In sum, the Canadian retailers have major challenges related to the application of data-driven digital marketing, such as the issue of privacy, the lack of resources, and ethical concerns, but they are offset by considerable opportunities. Using consumer data strategically, applying predictive analytics, and incorporating omnichannel approaches, retailers are able to engage consumers and impact purchase decisions and brand loyalty. The paper highlights the binary nature of its challenges and opportunities by indicating that effective deployment of data based digital marketing application is best done with a discerning balance between technological potential, ethical accountability, and consumerism and customer-centric approaches. Retailers who manoeuvre through such an environment are probably to enjoy a large competitive advantage in the vibrant Canadian retail industry.

5.4. Research Question 4: What are the suggestions that can be made to retail organizations to enhance consumer purchasing behaviour using digital marketing in Canada?

The results of this research are informative and helpful concerning the strategic measures that can be implemented by retail organizations in Canada to increase purchase behavior in the consumers due to digital marketing. Within the modern retail landscape where fragmentation of consumer focus and rivalry are high due to multiple competitors, digital marketing has come out as a key accelerator of consumer interest and purchases. Among the main recommendations that retailers have been offered is to exploit the individualized marketing tactics. The research found that marketing messages that are individualized to the taste of the consumers, based on Web-browsing behaviours, and previous purchases have a positive reaction. Custom relationship management (CRM) systems, predictive analytics, and data-driven segmentation are all applicable to help retailers develop highly tailored campaigns which are appealing to each individual consumer. Tailored promotions, loyalty programs and product suggestions are known to raise the odds of buying the product, enhance customer retention and brand loyalty.

The other important recommendation is to maximize on the omnichannel marketing. It was also noted in the paper that Canadian consumers tend to use both offline and online platforms,

and the smooth integration of these two platforms helps to make the shopping experience better. Retailers need to aim at aligning their online and offline channels and have a uniform message, the promotions, and the products available in all the touchpoints. Data integration in real time enables retailers to react to consumer behaviour in time, make changes to promotional activities and better management of stocks. This does not only help individuals make informed buying choices but increases the consumer satisfaction through offering a flow-igniting and hustle free shopping experience.

Another point that the research makes is the necessity of investing in new digital tools and technologies, including artificial intelligence, machine learning, and analytics platforms. These tools enable retailers to process large amounts of consumer data, predict demand and forecast the trends in purchasing. Through the potential of such technology, retailers are in a position to offer a very target and relevant content, maximize prices and find high-value customer segments. In addition, the use of AI-based chatbots and automatic customer support gives consumers better interaction through immediate response, product suggestions, and advice during the buying experience.

Another important area that was pointed out as critical towards improving consumer buying behaviour was ethical and transparent data usage. Privacy issues and the safety of data are extremely high among the Canadian consumers. Retailers must focus on getting informed consent, customer information and being transparent about the use of the information. Being open and ethical in how consumer data are managed establishes a sense of trust, which is a core motivator of the purchase intention and long performance. The retailers can also build more confidence with the consumers through open feedback, displaying responsible marketing and regulatory standards.

Besides, the paper proposes retailers pay emphasis on interactive and participatory contents in the social media and online mediums. Social media marketing, influencer collaboration, video content, and interactive advertisements were identified to play a major role in the way consumers perceive them and develop an interest in experimenting with new products. At a retailer level, these channels can be used to develop immersive and engaging experiences that will gain attention, result in interaction and finally purchase decision-making. This also means that on-going improvement of marketing strategies can be achieved since a consumer is able to provide direct feedback to the marketing strategies.

Finally, marketing effectiveness must also be monitored and evaluated continuously. Based on the data-driven results, retailers should trace the reaction of consumers regularly, analyse the campaign results, and make changes to their approach. Since these are measurements including click-through rates, conversion rates, level of engagement, and customer lifetime value, they give actionable insights that can be used to streamline marketing efforts. Through the constant learning of the consumer behaviour, retailers can remain relevant, enhance, and increase the overall effectiveness of digital marketing on the purchasing behaviour.

Finally, Canadian retail companies have an opportunity to improve the consumer purchasing patterns through the utilization of a multi-pronged strategy that encompasses personalization, the integration of the omnichannel, sophisticated analytics, ethical data management, enticing content, and constant monitoring. The above recommendations will also help the retailers to comprehend consumer needs more, provide consumers with the right experiences, build trust, and eventually impact buying behaviour. The paper highlights that consumer-focused, data-driven, and ethically responsible stance on digital marketing is the primary tool to the development of sustainable competitive advantage in the Canadian dynamic retail industry.

CHAPTER-VI

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

6.1. Implications of the Study

The outcomes of this study have profound implications on both practitioners in the retail sector and policy makers as it shows the increasing relevance of digital based marketing and data-driven decision in determining consumer buying behaviour in Canada.

1. Managerial Implications:

In the case of retail managers, one of the main insights of the study is that it is extremely important to incorporate digital marketing strategy in the overall business processes. The findings show that consumers are becoming more sensitive to personal marketing, social media marketing, integrating the omnichannel and promotions based on the data. Based on these insights, the managers can create marketing campaigns, which are more focused and compelling, and, therefore, increase the purchase intention and customer retention. As an example, predictive analytics can be utilized through customer-focused promotions and rewarding repeat purchases to create a lasting consumer relationship. Also, AI-based applications, chatbots, and enhanced analytics can assist managers in making confident assumptions about inventory management, price, and their promotion policy.

The study also highlights the necessity of organizational investment in the digital infrastructure and human capital. Retailers that empower their marketing departments with data analytics knowledge and the digital applications will have the ability to understand the consumer insights and respond in real time. This would be a proactive strategy that would make retailers lead in an effective competitive market, enhance consumer satisfaction appetite, and increase the ROI of marketing.

2. Strategic Implications:

Strategically, the research highlights the need to be consumer focused. The retailers should focus on learning the various preferences, behaviours and expectations of the Canadian consumers. The seamless shopping experience facilitated by the omnichannel strategies that combine both online and offline touch points, are essential in ensuring consumer engagement

and loyalty. The results lead to assume that those retailers using a strategic concentration on personalization, predictive marketing, and content-driven engagement have higher chances to gain sustained competitive advantage.

In addition, the study proposes the importance of ethical data practices and adherence to data privacy standards. By creating a clear data governance framework, obtaining informed consent, and protecting consumer information, the retailers will have higher chances of achieving consumer trust and building brand confidence. Digital marketing philosophies that are ethical do not only assert legal benefits but enhance the emotional attachment of customers to the retail brands.

3. Policy Implications:

Regulatory policy implications of the study include regulation about digital marketing and data privacy at the policy level. These findings can be used by the policy makers to work out some guidelines that would lead to the reconciliation of the interests of both consumers and businesses. Rules must facilitate openness in data gathering, ethical application of consumer data, and direct against invasive advertisement. Subsidising retailers to incorporating any data-driven marketing technologies can also help motivate the smaller businesses to compete on an equal footing to improve in market efficiency and consumer choice.

4. Academic and Research Implications:

The paper makes contribution to the available literature since it presents empirical data on how digital marketing and data-based approaches influence purchasing behaviour by consumers in Canada. Further scholars can build on these findings to consider cross-cultural comparison, longitudinal impact of digital marketing, and how new technologies like augmented reality and virtual reality are being used in marketing of retail. Besides, the research forms the basis of testing causal relationships among digital marketing practices and consumer behaviour to business performance, thus increasing the theory in this field.

5. Practical Consumer Implications:

Lastly, the research has been informative that has an indirectly positive effect on the consumer by enhancing more appropriate, more personalized and convenient shopping experiences. As digital marketing efforts become more efficient and ethical and data-driven methods are

implemented by retailers, consumers are likely to see improved product suggestions, targeted-offers and interactions that run smoothly through various channels. This increases the rate of consumer satisfaction, purchase decision efficiency and interaction with retail brands.

To sum up, the implications of the study are multifaceted: it helps the retail managers to formulate the strategies, updates the policymakers on the necessity of ethical and regulatory considerations, enriches the academic level of knowledge, and indirectly the study helps consumers to experience better. Through applying the informational insights revealed in the study, online retailing organizations in Canada can utilize all the digital marketing potential in reaching the business objectives of consumer engagement, consumer purchasing behaviour, and sustainable business growth.

6.2. Conclusion

This study gives an in-depth examination of how the digital marketing approaches and use of data affect customer purchases within the Canadian retail market. The results demonstrate the interaction between demographic characteristics and online activities as well as targeted marketing methods when they affect consumer behaviour, and they highlight the paramount significance of incorporating data-driven knowledge into retail marketing tactics.

The demographic distribution of respondents highlights a predominant engagement from younger adults, with 73.5% of participants aged below 35 years. The age profile suggests that digital marketing campaigns are particularly effective among younger, technologically proficient, and information-oriented consumers. These individuals are more likely to navigate multiple online platforms, compare products, and respond to personalized marketing messages. Additionally, the higher participation of females (61.83%) indicates a significant gendered pattern in retail engagement, with women showing stronger interaction with digital marketing platforms and online retail channels. Marital status and family size further contextualize consumer behaviour; single and nuclear-family respondents demonstrated greater responsiveness to online marketing, potentially due to higher individual autonomy in purchasing decisions.

Educational qualifications also emerged as a determinant of consumer behaviour, with over 62% of respondents holding a graduate or postgraduate degree. This indicates that educated consumers are more discerning, relying on accurate product information, reviews, and online

comparisons prior to making purchases. Income levels, while diverse, showed that the majority of respondents fell into mid-range income brackets, suggesting that digital marketing initiatives must balance affordability and value propositions to appeal to the largest consumer segments. Collectively, these demographic insights provide retailers with a clear understanding of their core target audience, enabling more strategic and targeted marketing initiatives.

The study explored consumer shopping behaviour, highlighting the prevalence of omnichannel engagement. More than half of the respondents (52%) indicated equal preference for online and physical stores, demonstrating that while digital engagement is critical, physical retail presence remains important for consumer confidence and experiential shopping. Monthly purchasing (37.83%) was the most common, followed by daily, weekly, and fortnightly online shopping, reflecting varied consumption patterns. These findings suggest that digital marketing strategies should adopt a mix of consistent engagement initiatives, including retargeting campaigns, personalized notifications, and loyalty programs, to capture attention across different purchase frequencies.

The analysis of descriptive statistics, one-sample tests, and ANOVA results provided detailed insights into the efficacy of various digital marketing tools. Personalized campaigns based on browsing and purchase history emerged as the most influential, with a mean score of 4.62, indicating that tailored recommendations significantly impact purchase decisions. E-marketing newsletters, loyalty programs, and omnichannel integration also demonstrated high effectiveness, emphasizing the importance of relevant, consistent, and consumer-centric communication. Social media marketing, while slightly lower in mean score (3.80), remains a vital platform for brand awareness, consumer engagement, and experimentation with new products.

Regression analysis further corroborated these findings, revealing a significant positive relationship between digital marketing variables and consumer purchase decisions, with an R^2 of 0.368. This indicates that approximately 36.8% of the variation in buying behaviour can be explained by digital marketing strategies. Individual predictors, such as online marketing that stimulates product experimentation and tailored communications, were found to exert the strongest influence on consumer decisions. Correlation analysis reinforced these insights, showing significant positive associations between various digital marketing methods and consumer awareness, purchase intentions, and brand perception.

Data-driven marketing plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer engagement and facilitating informed decision-making. The study's findings emphasize that retailers leveraging consumer data through predictive analytics, CRM systems, and integration of online and offline datasets can identify high-value customer segments, optimize promotions, and enhance satisfaction and loyalty. Descriptive and factor analyses revealed critical components influencing data-driven marketing, including the personalization of communications, real-time responsiveness, predictive analytics, and ethical use of consumer data. The high KMO values (0.912–0.924) and significant Bartlett's tests confirm the adequacy of the data for factor analysis, ensuring the robustness of the study's findings.

Ethical and transparent utilization of consumer data emerged as an essential factor in gaining trust. The study indicates that overreliance on algorithms or poorly governed data collection practices can undermine consumer confidence and reduce the effectiveness of marketing strategies. Retailers that prioritize ethical practices, protect consumer privacy, and ensure consistent, accurate, and relevant messaging are more likely to foster loyalty and long-term engagement.

The findings provide actionable insights for retail marketers and policymakers. Retailers are encouraged to adopt omnichannel marketing approaches, integrating physical and digital touchpoints to cater to consumer preferences. Investment in personalized campaigns, predictive analytics, and loyalty programs is crucial to enhance engagement and conversion. Additionally, marketers should monitor emerging consumer trends, respond quickly to changes in demand, and continuously evaluate the impact of data-driven strategies to optimize marketing performance.

From a policy perspective, the study highlights the importance of regulatory frameworks governing data privacy, ethical data collection, and algorithmic transparency. Policymakers can play a role in ensuring that digital marketing practices adhere to consumer protection standards, fostering trust and preventing misuse of personal information. Retailers operating in culturally diverse markets, such as Canada, should also consider demographic sensitivity and inclusivity in their marketing and data utilization strategies.

While this study offers comprehensive insights, it has certain limitations. The cross-sectional design restricts the ability to infer causal relationships over time, and the study focuses solely

on the Canadian retail sector, limiting generalizability to other markets. The self-reported nature of survey responses may also introduce biases in consumer behaviour assessment.

Future research can address these limitations through longitudinal studies that track consumer behaviour over time, comparative studies across different countries or regions, and experimental designs evaluating the efficacy of specific digital marketing interventions. Additionally, examining the role of emerging technologies, such as generative AI, augmented reality, and advanced analytics, could provide deeper insights into the evolving landscape of retail marketing. Investigating consumer trust, ethical concerns, and the psychological impact of data-driven personalization also offers promising avenues for research.

In conclusion, the study establishes that digital marketing, when combined with strategic data utilization, substantially influences consumer buying behaviour in the Canadian retail sector. Younger, educated, and technologically adept consumers are most responsive to personalized campaigns, social media engagement, and omnichannel retail experiences. Retailers that leverage predictive analytics, CRM systems, and ethical data practices are better positioned to enhance customer targeting, optimize promotions, and foster loyalty. Overall, this research underscores the synergistic effect of digital marketing and data-driven strategies, offering significant managerial, operational, and policy implications. The findings provide a strong foundation for future research and practical applications, highlighting the transformative potential of digital marketing in shaping consumer behaviour in an increasingly dynamic retail environment.

6.3. Recommendations of the Study

According to the results contained in this study, it is possible to offer several recommendations that retail companies in Canada can use to enrich consumer buying behaviour via digital marketing:

1. Leverage Personalized Marketing Strategies:

Retailers ought to adopt personalized marketing program based on the information on customer like previous purchases, thing s/he has viewed and likes. Promotion offers, product recommendations, and loyalty programs with the help of which retailers tailor their offer to specific consumers will stimulate interactions, stimulate re-buying process, and create brand

loyalty. The predictive analytics and CRM systems are to be combined to provide the real-time insights on effective targeting.

2. Enhance Omnichannel Integration:

The Canadians have access to online and offline retailing outlets, thus compelling retailers to provide customers with smooth shopping experiences. Retail organizations ought to align the online platforms with the physical units in order to provide a consistent message, price and promotion. This will enable consumers to change channels easily making the whole process convenient and more likely to buy. The ability to incorporate data in real-time will also help the retailer to adapt fast to changes in consumer behaviour.

3. Invest in Advanced Analytics and AI Tools:

More elaborate analytics tools, machine-learning algorithms, and AI-based solutions should be invested in by retailers to make sense of massive amounts of consumer information. Among others, these technologies can assist in predicting demand, recognizing customer segments with high value, optimal pricing strategy, and instant customer service by use of chatbots. Adequate use of these instruments will result in data-driven marketing campaigns, relevancy, and effectiveness.

4. Prioritize Ethical Data Practices:

Reliance plays a very significant role in consumer buying behaviour. Retailers must integrate open and righteous practices in data gathering and use. Informed consent must be taken, data privacy policy must be observed closely, and a consumer should be made aware in terms of how their data is utilized. Ethical marketing also leads to a better consumer confidence which subsequently has a positive impact on the purchase intention and long-term loyalty.

5. Focus on Engaging and Interactive Content:

The digital marketing campaigns must be interesting, interactive and content-based. Social media promotions, working with influencers, video ads, and gamified content will be able to draw the users attention and encourage them to test the new products. Retailers need to consider making experiences highly attentive to not only selling products, but also to establish interaction and feedback.

6. Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation:

The retailers are also supposed to compare and evaluate the performance of digital marketing strategies at all times. The most significant ones are to be tracked regularly such as the rate of click-through, the rate of conversion, the rates of consumer engagement, and the lifetime value of customer. The analysis of this data will guide the retailers to streamline the marketing strategies, identify the lapse and implement the relevant amendments that will most appropriately influence the consumer purchasing trend.

7. Support for Small and Medium-Sized Retailers:

Considering the barriers to the use of advanced data-driven tool among small and medium retailers, transactional support can be offered as training, resources, and financial incentives by policymakers and industry associations. This support will help small retailers to adopt effective digital marketing strategies and compete with bigger organizations, which are likely to enhance the general level of the market competitiveness.

8. Encourage Innovation in Digital Marketing:

New marketing strategies, including augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), and the location-based marketing should be constantly pursued by the retailers to improve consumer experience. Trying the novelties of new technologies will enable retailers to protrude in the competitive market, offer a special value proposal, and impact buying behaviour more efficiently.

9. Promote Consumer Education:

The retailers can enjoy the advantages of informing the consumers regarding the personal marketing and data-driven campaigns and airing loyalty programs. When the consumers realize what digital marketing and data use has to offer them, they are likely to respond positively, present accurate information, and react to the targeted campaigns, and thus promote the overall marketing performance.

10. Strategic Alignment of Marketing and Business Goals:

Lastly, the retailers ought to consider having strategy in digital marketing that is closely related to the overall business strategies. Organizational goals, including revenue increase, market expansion, and customer satisfaction should be supported through marketing campaigns. The alignment is the key to having meaningful data-based marketing decisions that will add to the long-term success of the retailer.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY COVER LETTER

Title of the Study: The Impact of Digital Marketing and Data Utilization on the Consumer Buying Decision: A Study of the Retail Sector in Canada

This survey is conducted as part of a dissertation undergoing my Doctorate in Business Administration (D.B.A) at the Swiss School of Business and Management. The long-term goal of the research is to develop a formalized road map or a system model to follow to provide a smooth transition and integration of digital marketing in pharmaceutical companies. following a process of identifying, classifying, modeling, and resolving constraints to create a sustainable competitive edge.

Thank you for participating in our study which will remain anonymous, taking 10-15 minutes of your time, and will represent a value-added outcome to our study. Your input is valuable in understanding the digital landscape within the pharmaceutical industry in Lebanon.

By proceeding with this questionnaire, you consent to participate in the study. Your responses will remain strictly confidential and will be used for research purposes only.

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

Research project title: The Impact of Digital Marketing and Data Utilization on the Consumer Buying Decision: A Study of the Retail Sector in Canada

Research investigator: Kazi Nowrid Amin

Research Participants name

The interview will take (15 -20 MN.) either face-to-face or via Zoom. We don't anticipate that there are any risks associated with your participation, but you have the right to stop the interview or withdraw from the research at any time.

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of the above research project. Ethical procedures for academic research require that interviewees explicitly agree to be interviewed and how the information contained in their interview will be used. This consent form is necessary for us to ensure that you understand the purpose of your involvement and that you agree to the conditions of your participation. Would you therefore read the accompanying information sheet and then sign this form or give us your verbal consent before beginning to ensure that you approve the following:

- the interview will be recorded, or notes will be taken, and a transcript will be produced
- you will be sent the transcript and allowed to correct any factual errors
- the transcript of the interview will be analysed by myself (Kazi Nowrid Amin) as a research investigator
- access to the interview transcript will be limited to (Kazi Nowrid Amin) and academic colleagues and researchers with whom he might collaborate as part of the research process
- any summary interview content, or direct quotations from the interview, that are made available through academic publications or other academic outlets will be anonymized so that you cannot be identified, and care will be taken to ensure that other information in the interview that could identify yourself is not revealed
- the actual recording or notes will be destroyed once the thesis is submitted
- any variation of the conditions above will only occur with your further explicit approval

Quotation Agreement

I agree to be quoted directly if my name is not published and a made-up name (pseudonym) is used.

All or part of the content of your interview may be used.

- In academic papers, policy papers or news articles

- On our website and in other media that we may produce such as spoken presentations
- On other feedback events
- In an archive of the project

1. I am voluntarily taking part in this project. I understand that I don't have to take part, and I can stop the interview at any time.

2. The transcribed interview or extracts from it may be used as described above.

3. I have read the Information sheet.

4. I don't expect to receive any benefit or payment for my participation.

5. I can request a copy of the transcript of my interview and may make edits I feel necessary to ensure the effectiveness of any agreement made about confidentiality.

6. I have been able to ask any questions I might have, and I understand that I am free to contact the researcher with any questions I may have in the future.

Printed Name

Participants Signature Date

Researchers Signature Date

Contact Information

If you have any further questions or concerns about this study, please contact:

Name of researcher Full address: Kazi Nowrid Amin

Telephone: +1437-244-8655

E-mail: iamnowrid@gmail.com

You can also contact (Researcher name) supervisor: Dr Amrinder Singh

- e-mail researcher: amrinder@ssbm.ch

What if I have concerns about this research?

If you are worried about this research, or if you are concerned about how, it is being conducted, you can contact SSBM by email at contact@ssbm.ch.

APPENDIX C

Questionnaire

THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL MARKETING AND DATA UTILIZATION ON THE CONSUMER BUYING DECISION: A STUDY OF THE RETAIL SECTOR IN CANADA

Please fill this questionnaire and provide your valuable inputs for the successful completion of my research work!

Part-I

Demographic profile

Name of Respondent: _____

Name of City: _____

Q 1. Age

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| A) Below 25 years | B) 25 to 35 years |
| C) 36 to 45 years | D) Above 45 years |

Q2. Gender

- | | |
|---------|-----------|
| A) Male | B) Female |
|---------|-----------|

Q3. Marital Status

- | | |
|-----------|------------|
| A) Single | B) Married |
| C) Others | |

Q 4. Educational Qualification

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| A) Below Graduate | B) Graduate |
| C) Post Graduate | D) Above Post Graduate |

Q 5. Monthly Income (in \$)

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| A) Below 1000 | B) 1,001 to 2000 |
| C) 2001 to 3000 | D) Above 3000 |

Q 6. Type of Family

A) Nuclear Family

B) Joint Family

Q7. Size (no. of persons in your family)

A) 2

C) 6 to 9

B) 3 to 6

D) More than 9

PART-II

Q8: What is your preferred online shopping channel?

Online only

Physical store only

Both equally

Q9: How often do you shop online?

Daily

Weekly

Fortnightly

Monthly

Q10: What digital marketing and data utilization practices are commonly employed by retailers in Canada? (Mark ✓)

Social media marketing (Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, YouTube etc.).

Google Ads, SEO, search engine marketing, search engine optimization.

E-marketing and online newsletters.

Mobile marketing (gleamour, SMS notifications, push, notifications)

Individualized product rules campaigning on the basis of browsing or purchase history.

Loyalty programmes based on the analytics of customer data.

Evidence-based promotional coupons and discounts.

The influencer and content-based marketing.

- Retargeting and behavioural advertising.
- Custodial review and rating management over the Internet.
- Artificial intelligence or chatbot use to interact with customers.
- Omnichannel integration (data integration online and in-store).
- Application of customer relationship management (CRM).
- Forecasting consumer demand through prediction analytics.
- Geo-targeted or place-based marketing.

Q11 :What role does digital marketing play in the consumer purchasing decision-making in the Canadian retail market? (Mark ✓)

- Digital marketing allows me to be aware of my need of the products at the retail level.
- The advertisements I see on the Internet make me more aware of the existing brands on the retail.
- Digital marketing offers convenient facts that one may use in comparing products.
- My purchase decisions depend on online promotions and discounts.
- Digital marketing saves me on time in searching products.
- The social media marketing influences my perception towards retail brands.
- Online marketing makes me more assured, prior to purchasing a product.
- Tailored online marketing communications are able to affect my purchasing behavior.
- Online marketing stimulates me to experiment with new retail products or brands.

Q12: Which are the significant challenges faced by retailers in using data-driven digital marketing in Canada?

S.NO.	Statements	Strong Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strong Agree
1.	The regular shifts in the legality of data privacy bring					

	uncertainty in the implementation of the marketing strategy.					
2.	Targeted advertising tends to be intrusive among consumers.					
3.	Retailers have a challenge of receiving consent to collecting data with the consumer.					
4.	The improper data governance models hinder the sound use of the data.					
5.	Lack of interoperability of various digital marketing platforms influences data integration.					
6.	Small and medium-sized retailers are not able to afford the resources to implement the best data-driven marketing tools.					
7.	The personalization needs a data-driven approach since Canada is a culturally and demographically diversified country.					
8.	Excessive dependence on algorithms can be the source of					

	prejudiced or incorrect consumer targeting.					
9.	The absence of openness in the use of the data lowers the level of trust of the consumer towards the digital marketing practice.					
10.	Evidence-based initiatives need constant feedback, which grows the complexity of the operations.					
11.	The inability to digest large amounts of consumer data to gain actionable insights obscures the problem.					
12.	Organizational stubbornness to change to digital obstacle to adoption of data-driven marketing.					
13.	The lack of consistency between channel behaviours diminishes the power of the data-driven marketing.					
14.	Unethical issues surrounding the use of the data restrain the aggressive act of digital marketing.					

15.	Hacking or misappropriating of data may tremendously hurt the reputation and loyalty of the brands.					
16.	The consumer digital changes are fast which restricts the data-driven marketing strategies to quickly become outdated.					
17.	There is a lack of access to real-time consumer information which minimises the efficiency of personalised marketing.					
18.	The problem of non-uniformity of data between platforms results in fragmented consumer insights.					
19.	Inability to correlate data-based marketing efforts to the general business strategy constrains their ability.					
20.	The lack of trust of consumers into the applications of personal information by retailers diminishes the impact of data-driven digital					

	marketing activities.					
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Q13: Which are the significant opportunities available to retailers in using data-driven digital marketing in Canada?

S.NO.	Statements	Strong Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strong Agree
1.	Retailers are in a better position to learn more about consumer needs and likes because of data-driven digital marketing.					
2.	Customized market communication increases customer interaction and reaction.					
3.	The consumer data is used in providing the relevant products to the retailers.					
4.	With data analytics, retailers can be able to find and reach high value groups of clients.					
5.	Promotional campaigns are more effective with the support of digital marketing that is backed with data.					
6.	Real-time information helps the retailers to act					

	promptly on the fluctuating consumer behaviour.					
7.	Evidence based information assists the retailers in enhancing customer satisfaction and shopping experience.					
8.	Digital marketing analytics aids in the making of informed marketing decisions at the right point of time.					
9.	Leveraging of data increases customer retention and loyalty programs.					
10.	Closed loop strategies would allow retailers to maximize pricing and discounts.					
11.	Online and offline consumer data integration enhances consumer requirements in omnichannel retailing.					
12.	Predictive analytics is used to help retailers determine future					

	consumer demand.					
13.	Evidence-based online marketing enhances the metrics of the brand to the consumers.					
14.	Information about customers assists retailers to save on the cost of marketing by advertising to specific groups.					
15.	The use of data will allow the manufacturing of marketing strategies.					
16.	Sophisticated analytics tools and artificial intelligence tools will make consumer targeting more relevant.					
17.	Digital marketing that is driven by data assists in developing the long-term relationship with the consumers.					
18.	Data information will enable retailers to create innovative products and services.					
19.	Digital channels offer a					

	possibility to quantify and assess the responses of consumers.					
20.	Open and moral use of data can help generate confidence in retail brands amongst the consumers.					

Q14: What are the suggestions that can be made to retail organizations to enhance consumer purchasing behaviour using digital marketing in Canada? (Mark ✓)

- Make an investment in digital marketing that is being tailored according to the consumer data and preferences.
- Make data collection and use transparent to create consumer confidence.
- Enhance information privacy and cybersecurity.
- Analytics help you to determine the changing consumer behaviour and preferences.
- Bring together the online and offline customer information through omnichannel.
- Enhance interaction and social media posts.
- Greater customer targeting can be done with AI and predictive analytics.
- Provide evidence-based deals and tailored promotions.
- Increase mobile promotional programs, such as apps and push notifications.
- Periodically analyse the performance of online promotional activities.
- Educate staff about data analytics and computer marketing.
- Based on customer base reviews and feedback, they can be used to improve marketing strategies.
- Embrace ethical practices related to the use of data in accordance with the Canadian regulations.

Maximize online and application ease of purchasing.

Look at the long-term relationships with the customers and not short-term sales.

Thanks for your cooperation!

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