

The Role of Digital Media in Shaping Consumer Behaviour and Public Opinion in The Digital Era

Shruti Hanche¹, Prachi Bambale², Prof. Pravin Karle³

^{1,2}Student, MIT Arts, Commerce & Science College, Pune, India

³Guide, MIT Arts, Commerce & Science College, Pune, India

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Abstract—The role of digital media in people's lives has dramatically increased and transformed the way information reaches consumers, individuals' ways of communication, development of opinion, attitude and decision-making. Due to social media, websites, news from Internet, video sharing services, and digital media advertising it is possible to transfer content and information fast and constantly. This research paper is going to examine the role of digital media and its impact on shaping consumers' behaviour and forming of public opinion in the age of digital media. Research will examine the impact of social media content, online reviews, digital influencers, digital media advertising, algorithms and user generated content on people's decisions, preferences, attitude and opinions. Moreover, research will analyse the positive impact of digital media and its positive effects which are raising awareness, information availability, enabling better decisions and encouraging individuals' participation. In addition to this, challenges related to digital media are mentioned and described including mis-information, false information, biased contents, targeted advertising and manipulation. Qualitative research was conducted based on secondary sources of data such as books, research articles, reports and newspaper articles. It has been found out that digital media has significant impact both on consumers' decisions and public opinion. Therefore, proper digital communication, critical thinking and media literacy are crucial for making decisions in digital era.

Index Terms—Digital Media, Consumer Behaviour, Public Opinion, social media, Digital Advertising, Influencer Marketing, Misinformation, Media Literacy

I. INTRODUCTION

In modern times, people widely apply digital media sources such as social media platforms, websites, online news portals, video-sharing services, and many others to gather information, share their opinions and learn about products. The popularity of smartphones

and internet connectivity has greatly contributed to the widespread use of all the digital content that appears immediately. Therefore, digital media does not only influence how information is delivered but the way of thinking, communicating and decision making as well. One of the most influenced fields is consumer behaviour as before making a purchase people can research information about products, compare them, read online reviews, watch relevant videos, and see what users of other products have experienced. Social media, influencers, digital advertisements, brands and pages can affect consumers in many ways before the purchase is made. In this way, consumers' decisions are no longer influenced by regular advertisements and personal experience alone.

Digital media can influence the formation of public opinion as information regarding any type of social, political, economic, cultural or environmental issue is rapidly spreading across all online platforms. Unlike the traditional media, which is passive in nature and simply broadcasts information, digital media sources allow active communication and participation of each individual through creation, commenting, reposting and responding.

Also, the role of algorithm in all types of online platforms should be discussed. Platforms often suggest content that would be interesting for each user according to previous activity and preferences and therefore provide personalized information. In this way, online digital media can influence individual decision as consumers and opinion towards particular issue. Also, the use of digital media can influence how some products and opinions are repeatedly seen and become popular.

However, the impact of digital media can be either positive or negative as it can affect people both ways. Digital media allows people to gain a lot of additional

information before making the purchase, as well as raise people's awareness about certain topics and make the society involved in discussions of important issues. At the same time, misleading ads, reviews manipulation, misinformation and others can negatively affect decisions and attitudes of people. Thus, it has become necessary to understand the part played by digital media during the digital age. This research seeks to identify the impact of digital media on consumer behaviour and public opinion, as well as the possibilities and challenges that have arisen due to the evolving digital landscape. Media literacy becomes essential in this case for a critical evaluation of the information available online.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of the current research is to analyse the influence of digital media on the consumer behaviour and public opinion in the digital age.

The following are the particular objectives of the study:

1. Understanding the concept of digital media and its significance in modern-day communications.
2. Analysing the role of different digital media platforms in impacting the behaviours, preferences, and choices of consumers.
3. Studying the impact of digital advertisements, influencer marketing, online ratings, and consumer-generated content on consumers.
4. Investigating the contribution of social media and digital media platforms in forming and changing public opinion.
5. Highlighting the positive impact of digital media by offering information and promoting informed decision-making.
6. Analysing the negative impact of digital media by spreading fake news, misleading information, etc.
7. Studying how algorithms and personalized media influence information, products, and opinions of the users.
8. Emphasizing the significance of media literacy in helping individuals evaluate digital media.

III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study aims to provide answers to the following questions about digital media's influence on consumers' behaviour and public opinion:

1. What is digital media, and why has it become so relevant in current communications?
2. What impact does digital media have on consumers' preferences, opinions, and purchase decisions?
3. In what ways are consumers influenced by digital advertising, influencer marketing, online product reviews and user-generated content?
4. How do social media affect the formation and evolution of public opinion?
5. What impact do algorithms and personalized content have on what people see, think, and engage with online?
6. What are the advantages of digital media for making decisions and informing consumers?
7. What problems arise from misinformation, false information, misinforming advertisements, misleading information and manipulated content?
8. What impacts multiple exposures of consumers to the digital content have on their perception of products, brands and social issues?
9. What can media literacy and critical thinking teach us about how to evaluate digital content and make informed decisions?
10. What can be done to promote responsible consumption of digital media and minimize its negative influence on the society?

IV. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study will investigate the impact of digital media on consumer behaviour and public opinions formed in the digital era. The investigation will discuss the manner in which digital media affects the ways how people get information, make an opinion, interact with the material, etc.

This study will consider the most prominent kinds of digital media, such as social networks, online news resources, blog posts, video resources, digital advertisement, influential material, consumer reviews, and user-generated media. The impact of these media types on the consumer preference formation and purchasing decisions will be discussed as well.

Public opinions concerning various matters, including social, economic, political, cultural, and environmental ones will be considered in this study in relation to digital media influence. The influence of fast spread of information via Internet, the ability to start online discussion, personalized content, and

social network interactions will be under consideration as well.

Moreover, the positive and negative sides of digital media influence will be discussed within this study. Some positive points include increased information accessibility, consumers' awareness and participation, information concerning products, and making better decisions due to increased awareness. The negative effects may include misinforming people, spreading of the fake news, misleading advertisements, biased information, fake reviews, and influencer promotion. This research is qualitative in nature as it relies on the use of secondary data. The main source of information will be books, research papers, news articles, reports, and other reliable sources found online. No surveys, interviews, and experiments have been conducted within this research yet.

The development of digital media platforms or detailed business strategies are out of scope of this research as well. This research will give the general overview of digital media influence on individuals who use it in order to buy goods/services and participate in public life.

The results of this research will be useful for both students and researchers as they provide some information about digital media influence and may be useful for consumers of this kind of media. Moreover, media professional will be able to use these results in order to develop their own strategies.

V. LITERATURE REVIEW

Media and human behaviour association was analysed and researched by scientists from communication studies, psychology, marketing, and media studies for a considerable period of time. Early scientific researches usually involved the use of the conventional type of media including newspapers, radio, and TV broadcasting channels. Modern scientific studies in the field concentrate on investigating how digital media influence opinions, attitudes, and decisions of consumers.

Agenda-Setting Theory is one of the essential theories related to media influence that was developed in 1972 by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw. According to this theory, media may influence people what to think about, although does not directly tell consumers what to think. Thus, in the sphere of digital media such as social networking sites, websites with online news

etc., attention will be concentrated on particular topics, brands, products or social issues. Repeating the certain amount of exposure to those topics, social media can affect the audience.

Framing Theory developed by Erving Goffman and further by Robert Entman is another essential concept. Media framing refers to the information selection process and its presenting to the audience. It includes such elements as word choice, images usage, headline and the way of content presentation that influences how audiences will understand product, brand, event or social issues. Thus, the identical theme will receive different reaction due to the way of presenting.

Studies regarding the digital media effects have identified the increasing importance of digital media influence on consumer behaviour. In modern reality, the audience is able to search information about the product, make comparisons of alternatives, read online reviews, watch video demonstration of the product and its use. Digital media gives possibilities for advertisers and marketers to communicate with customers, attract their attention to the brand and promote products according to consumer interests and actions online.

Influencer marketing has become another significant aspect of digital consumer behaviour studies. Social media influencers and content creators have the possibility to present the brand to the audience through different kinds of content including reviews, recommendations and demonstrations and even sponsored posts. Being familiar or interested in the person who presents the product, consumers will have positive attitude towards brand because of such presentation.

Moreover, online reviews and the information shared by users influence the ways the latter evaluate the respective products and services as well. Thus, the opinion of another person who experienced something could also be taken into account rather than using the company-provided data solely. Positive or negative opinions on a particular product will shape the perception of the latter by the potential consumer.

Also, digital media plays a huge part in shaping public opinion. In contrast to traditional media, in this case, users not only consume content, but they create, discuss, criticize, and communicate concerning the pieces posted. Such development increased interaction in the sphere significantly while at the same time

raised the problem of fake news and biased information due to its fast spread.

In addition, the topic of algorithmic personalization in digital media has received much attention recently. Digital media algorithms use the interests and previous engagement of the user to show him/her the information that may be interesting and relevant. This way of operation makes it possible for the information sources to influence the products, opinions, issues chosen by users regularly and possibly limiting their choice.

Consequently, in order to navigate in this media environment, the media literacy became necessary. Media literacy implies accessing and evaluating the information obtained, discussing this one with others, creating new content. With the use of media literacy skills, consumers could find the advertisement among other things, critically evaluate user-created information, and take into account different views before making their opinions.

Based on the review of the existing literature, it could be stated that digital media has become an influential factor in terms of consumer behaviour and public opinion formation. While the use of this medium increase's opportunities for interaction and the availability of information, at the same time some problems associated with biased content, advertising, personalization, etc., are developing. Based on this, the current study focuses on the impact of digital media on consumer decisions and public opinion formation.

VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology refers to a systematic approach towards collecting, analysing and interpreting information for a research purpose. With the help of research methodology, a study can be organized in a systematic manner and become reliable in the sense that it will fulfil its objective. Qualitative research methodology has been used for this research in order to see the role of digital media in influencing consumer behaviour and public opinion.

6.1. Research Design

This research follows a qualitative research design. Qualitative research design has been used in this research because the research is based on qualitative aspects and does not aim at quantifiable data

collection. Therefore, with a qualitative research design, it becomes possible to see the influence of different forms of digital media platforms as well as digital contents on consumers and the public in general.

6.2. Nature of the Study

The nature of this study is descriptive and analytical in nature. In this study, digital media, its forms and its use for influencing consumer behaviour and public opinion have been described. Besides this, positive and negative impacts of digital media have been analysed on the basis of information collected from reliable sources.

6.3. Sources of Data

For the conduct of this research only secondary data sources have been used. Information has been collected from books, journals, newspapers and magazines and credible online sources in order to conduct this research.

These are:

- Books on digital media, communication, marketing and consumer behaviour
- Journal articles
- Newspaper articles
- Magazine articles
- Government or institutional reports
- Reliable online and educational sources

Sources containing information on digital media, consumer behaviour, public opinion, digital advertising, social media, disinformation and others.

6.4. Data Collection Method

Information for conducting this research has been collected through reviewing literature on digital media, consumer behaviour, digital advertising, social media and public opinion. Literature from various reliable sources including books, journals, reports and credible online sources has been reviewed, compared and analysed on the basis of objectives of the study.

6.5. Data Analysis Technique

Data collected from this research have been analysed using the technique of qualitative content analysis. Similar concepts and issues across various sources were categorized under themes like digital media influence, consumer behaviour, digital advertising,

influencer marketing, online reviews, public perception, algorithms, misinformation, and media literacy among others and were analysed to interpret how digital media affects consumer behaviour and public opinion.

6.6. Limitations of the Study

All research studies have some limitations associated with them. This particular study has been conducted through the use of secondary data only and has not involved the conduct of any surveys, questionnaires, field observations or interviews. Thus, the outcomes are based on information available in the published sources and do not necessarily reflect experiences and opinions of all individuals and communities. As digital media continues to change rapidly in line with technology and emerging trends, it is possible that there could be developments which were not considered in this research.

6.7. Ethics in Research

This research study adheres to the standards of ethical academic research. Information has been acquired from reliable and accessible sources. Appropriate recognition and referencing will be provided wherever necessary when used within the research study. It is not copied information from a published source without referencing and proper citation. It has been prepared in original language to avoid plagiarism.

VII. MAIN DISCUSSION

7.1. Understanding Digital Media

Digital media includes all sorts of content and communications created, shared, accessed or experienced via digital technology, which may include social networks, websites, digital news, blogs, podcasts, video sharing websites, digital ads, and any other type of internet-based service. Contrary to traditional media that only allows its audiences to receive information, digital media lets the audiences both receive and distribute the information, engage in interaction and creation.

In the modern digital age, consumers have access to huge amounts of information with the help of mobile phones, computers, and other kinds of devices that allow connection to the Internet. In this regard, digital media becomes an inseparable component of people's daily decision-making processes.

Not only is the impact of digital media reduced to the distribution of information but rather the content seen by the user influences his/her interests, preferences, attitudes and choice as well. From the perspective of the consumer this may mean changes in his or her discovery and evaluation of the product. As for the audience, the influence of the digital content means understanding of the events, opinions and social issues.

7.2. Digital Media and Consumer Behaviour

The term "consumer behaviour" describes actions performed by the individual during choosing, evaluating, purchasing, using, responding to the products and services available. Digital media changed many aspects of this procedure through providing the consumers with the quick and convenient access to information.

Prior to the process of purchasing the consumer is able to research the product on the website, to compare prices and qualities, read reviews, see the demonstration and recommendations left by the users. Therefore, in this case, the user is able to get information from different sources instead of depending solely on the information provided by the brand.

Another place where users find information about various products is social media as it can come as content posted by the brand, influencers, recommendations and user reviews. The frequent contact with the mentioned type of content may result in higher level of product's awareness and possible interest in it among users.

It should be noted, however, that the influence of the digital content is not the same on every consumer and is affected by personal preferences, prior experience, trust in the source of information, price, product quality and individual needs of the user.

7.3. Impact of Digital Advertising

One of the key mechanisms used by brands to interact with the consumer is digital advertising. This type of advertisement can take place via social media, search engines, websites, video platforms, and mobile applications.

As opposed to traditional advertising, digital advertising can be more customized and interactive. Advertisers have the opportunity to tailor their content based on the knowledge about consumer's interests

and behaviour online, allowing consumers to find interesting products for them. At the same time, the use of targeted advertising can make the users less aware of how exactly their activities are being used by advertisers. In addition, repeated exposure to advertisements affects product awareness and brand preference.

Thus, digital advertising is a great tool for both parties but transparency and responsible communication can prevent manipulative practices.

7.4. Impact of social media and Influencer Marketing
Today social media changed the relationships between brands, influencers, and consumers. Social media such as Instagram, YouTube, Facebook and others make it possible for brands and content creators to interact with the audience directly.

Content creators and influencers can impact consumer behaviour through their opinions, reviews, product demos and sponsored ads.

Followers of a certain creator tend to value those opinions, as they regularly watch content created by the influencer.

However, effectiveness of influencer marketing can depend on trust, familiar, perceived authenticity of influencer and product's relevance to the audience. In addition, sponsored ads may confuse viewers whether the content they see is genuine or not. Thus, disclosure of such content is needed.

7.5. Online Reviews and User-Generated Content

Reviews and user-generated content became sources of information in the modern world. It is possible to share one's experience with various products, services, food places, applications, businesses, etc., through ratings, comments, videos, and reviews.

These opinions may be used in the process of making comparative analysis of alternative offers and influence one's decision regarding whether to make a purchase or not.

Positive review makes one feel more secure when it comes to purchasing a product. The opposite reaction occurs when it comes to the negative review.

Sometimes online reviews are unreliable because of fake reviews, rating manipulations, or lack of experience. Therefore, consumers should take into account different sources of information and not just stick to one opinion only.

7.6. Digital Media and Public Opinion

Also, the way public opinion is formed and expressed has changed due to the influence of digital media. Information concerning social, political, economic, cultural, and environmental issues can be received via online networks.

With social media, one can give his opinion concerning any event, participate in discussions, share information and express personal position. Thus, a certain topic that becomes popular online may become part of the public discussion.

Rapidness of digital communications increases interest to the issue but popularity is not always connected with correctness of information. Opinions can be biased due to incomplete data, emotions, repeated hearing of the same opinion and misleading information.

7.7. Algorithms and Personalized Content

Many digital platforms use algorithms to decide what a person sees while using this platform. These algorithms use information like past searches, viewing history, number of likes and followers etc.

In order to increase their usefulness personalized algorithms could show users content according to their interests. In case of consumption this could mean seeing the products, advertisements or reviews based on user's previous searches. In case of the issue in public space it could mean that user would encounter the information, which corresponds with his interests and opinions.

This process limits user to the circle of similar content, where he will not have much chance to find other ideas. As a result, algorithms can influence not only consumers' decision-making process but also public opinion formation.

7.8. Positive and Negative Influence of Digital Media

Digital media provides certain benefits for consumers and public sphere in general. Firstly, it allows fast information about products, reviews, educational material, news and public discussions. Secondly, it enables consumers to compare different variants and make a decision based on information gathered from various resources. Finally, it allows people to get aware of some social problems and participate in them actively.

But there are some negative consequences of digital media too. False information, fake news, deceiving

advertisements, false reviews, bias and advertising content could influence person's decision and opinion. Thus, the influence of digital media is determined not only by provided content but also by reaction of the person to it.

7.9. Misinformation, bias, and digital manipulation

A speedy dissemination of information becomes one of the advantages of digital media, though, sometimes, it is possible to disseminate misinformation very quickly. Users are likely to share information (posts, videos, messages, etc.) without verifying it at all.

Misinformation can impact people's perception of particular problems as it might create false perceptions of certain social problems or current events. The same can be said about advertisements and product reviews; the latter can affect the customers' perception of a product.

In a similar manner, the biases might also shape people's perception of particular information. As a result of seeing information from just one side, users may obtain just a narrow understanding of a problem.

7.10. Conclusion

As it was shown throughout the previous paragraphs, digital media has become a significant impact on consumer behaviour and the formation of public opinion. Moreover, digital media has affected the ways in which consumers find out about products, receive information, interact with brands and purchase things and, on the other hand, has opened up additional ways to access the needed information, participate in the discussion and express their opinion.

The factors that can affect consumer choices include digital advertising, the activities of social media influencers, online reviews and customer-generated content, and personalized recommendation system.

Similarly, such components of digital media as discussions on social media platforms, dissemination of the news content, algorithms and the repeated exposure of the same information also become influencing factors in forming public opinion.

Nevertheless, the digital media does not predetermine either people's behaviour or thinking. There are still various individual characteristics that play their role, including experience, preferences, education, social surroundings and perception of information.

VIII. FINDINGS

In the process of research based on the existing literature and qualitative data obtained in this paper, several findings have emerged concerning the impact of digital media on consumer behaviour and public opinion.

8.1. Digital Media Shapes Consumer Behaviour

The study revealed that digital media has become one of the major sources of information about products available in the market. People can search for products, compare alternative options, read reviews, see video demonstration, etc., before making a purchase decision.

8.2. Digital Advertising Promotes Product Awareness and Preference

It was discovered that the process of product promotion through the digital channels of distribution is one of the key functions of digital advertising. Personalized ads and continuous exposure to the advertising messages help increase the awareness of particular products and can influence preferences of consumers. Still, the impact will depend on consumers' needs, interests, experiences and attitude towards the advertised material.

8.3. Influencer Contents, Recommendations and User-Generated Content Impact Consumers' Perceptions and Choices

According to the obtained results, the contents produced by the influencers, recommendations made by different people, reviews, ratings and even user-generated content are capable of influencing the perception of products and services. Some consumers use the experience and perceptions of others to decide whether a particular product is worth buying. Sponsored contents and untrustworthy reviews complicate the assessment of credibility.

8.4. Digital Media Has Accelerated the Process of Public Communication

Using digital means allows for fast spreading of information and opinions of people. The social media users are capable not only to produce the content but also to comment, rate and answer to the published materials. Thus, the process of public communication has become more dynamic.

8.5. Digital Media Impacts People's Viewpoints

The results suggest that digital media has the ability to influence public understanding and discussion of social, political, economic, cultural and environmental issues. Repetitive exposure to some topics, perspectives or ways of presentation may impact which issues people consider important.

8.6. Algorithms and Recommendations Influence Users' Exposure

Algorithms used by digital platforms allow personalization of recommendation of products, advertisements, issues and other contents. The information becomes highly relevant for user but at the same time it can impact on the issues people will see, the products they are interested in, the advertisements shown and viewpoints discussed.

8.7. Disinformation and Misleading Information Are the Main Challenges

There were identified as one of the main challenges that are associated with digital environment – disinformation, fakes, misleading advertisement, false or biased review of products and other forms of information that may distort consumers' viewpoint.

8.8. Media Literacy Helps with Making Decisions

As another main finding is the increasing role of media literacy in digital era since people have to analyse advertisements, reviews, recommendations, product information and other content. Also, individuals have to consider various viewpoints when analysing and sharing issues in the discussion.

8.9. Digital Media Poses Both Negative and Positive Impacts

According to the evidence provided in this research, it would not be correct to perceive digital media as purely positive or negative. On the one hand, it allows consumers to receive more information and join the public discussion. On the other hand, such elements as misleading contents, advertising, recommendation algorithms, and misinformation may have unwanted impacts on the people.

8.10. The People's Behaviour and Opinions May Be Affected by Different Factors

In addition to the impact of digital media on the people's behaviour and opinions, the research implies

that there are many other factors that affect this aspect and include personal experience, individual preferences, education, social environment, cultural influence, and trust in information. Yet, due to the widespread nature of digital media and its constant use, it still plays a vital role in the digital era.

Summary of the findings

Overall, the current research has shown that the role of digital media in shaping consumer behaviour and people's opinions is considerable. In addition, it has altered people's practices of discovering new goods, evaluating the information, interacting with brands, and participating in public discussion. This aspect becomes possible thanks to the following elements: digital marketing, influencers, online reviews, user-generated content, recommendation algorithms, and social media. The problem of misinformation, misleading information, bias, and questionable reliability of information online remains relevant.

IX. SUGGESTIONS

Taking into account the results of this study, the following suggestions are put forward in order to encourage responsible digital media usage in order to limit its detrimental effect on consumer behaviour and public opinion.

9.1. Provide Clear Information about Digital Advertisement

Companies and brands should provide customers with clear information regarding their goods and services. They cannot mislead people in their advertisements or conceal any important data. Furthermore, paid ads and sponsored materials need to be clearly marked to distinguish them from ordinary posts.

9.2. Promote Responsible Influence Marketing

Influencers and content creators need to provide reliable promotion of goods and services. They need to make it clear that posts are paid or sponsored. Also, recommendations for customers must be based on real information, not the misleading one.

9.3. Improve Quality of Reviews

One needs to consider several sources while analysing reviews before making a decision to purchase something. Digital platforms and companies

themselves also need to do everything possible to prevent manipulation and identification of fake reviews that can lead to customers making wrong purchasing decisions.

9.4. Fact Check Before Sharing Information

It is advisable to verify news, images, videos, and claims posted in the digital media before they are further shared. This will limit spreading of the misinformation in the networks and can help in limiting misdirection of people's opinions.

9.5. Improve the Media Literacy

Educational institutions should promote media literacy among students as well as among users of digital media in general. Everyone needs to know how to identify ads, sponsored materials, unreliable sources, manipulated information and misleading headlines.

9.6. Fostering Responsible Usage of Digital Media

Before liking, sharing, commenting, and forwarding digital media, users need to think critically. Users should not spread any unreliable information, and they need to take various angles into account before taking a strong stance on certain issues.

9.7. Increasing User's Knowledge of Algorithms and Personalization

It is necessary to raise awareness about the role of personalization and algorithms in influencing the feed of information. The realization that one's online feeds are customized may encourage users to consume information from multiple resources rather than rely only on recommended content.

9.8. Fostering Ethical Digital Communication

Companies, media, influencers, and content creators need to use responsible communication methods. Digital content needs to serve informative purposes rather than mislead or manipulate its audience. Accuracy, transparency, objectivity, and respect are ethical norms that are important for digital communication.

9.9. Encouraging Consumers to Compare Information

Consumers should not base their decision to buy a product on the basis of one source of information like advertisement, influencer, review, or recommendation. By comparing information regarding the same product

from several resources, consumers would make better judgments regarding purchases.

9.10. Supporting Further Research

Further researches can conduct surveys, interviews, or case studies to analyse how different age groups and communities perceive digital media. Further research will also be able to evaluate how differently different media influence people including social media, digital advertising, influencer marketing, online reviews, and algorithmic recommendations.

X. CONCLUSION

Digital media plays an increasing role in the daily lives of people. It changed the way people receive information, communicate, make choices and interact with each other. New forms of media through which consumers get information are social media platforms, websites, online advertising campaigns, influencers' accounts, online reviews, and user-generated content. The research explored the effect of digital media on both consumers' behaviour and their opinions. People have access to a large number of information prior to making their decisions to purchase something. Product reviews, recommendations, advertising campaigns, influencers' content, as well as customized suggestions influence the way people learn about goods, form their preferences and make choices.

Also, it has been revealed that digital media has an important effect on the formation of the opinions of the public. Through various social media platforms and online sources of information people may get acquainted with different issues. Digital media enables quick spread of information and makes communication process more interactive. However, this information is not always true or objective. Moreover, misinformation, fake news, misleading advertisements, manipulated reviews, biased content, as well as repeated information may influence people's decision and perception.

Besides, algorithms and customized suggestions may play a certain role too. However, at the same time it has been revealed that digital media is not the only reason of forming people's opinions or decisions. Experiences, education, personal preferences, social environment, as well as cultural background also has important contribution. However, the wide scope of

information offered by digital media makes it an important influential factor in the digital age.

At the same time, the importance of media literacy and critical thinking should be emphasized. Consumers need to analyse information about products, advertisement campaigns, reviews, and recommendations carefully before making their decisions about purchasing some goods. In a similar way, individuals need to check the information before accepting and sharing it.

As we see, the importance of digital media in determining the consumer behaviour and public opinion is bound to increase along with technological advancements. Being aware in the digital environment requires appropriate communication, ethical advertisement, reliable information, critical thinking and improved media literacy. The responsible usage of digital media may be one of the tools for an educated and active citizenry in today's digital world.

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