

**The Impact of Digital Marketing on Consumer
Behavior in the Hospitality Industry**

Bitá Elyse Constance Ntoh-Yuk

**Final International University
July 2022
Kyrenia, TRNC**

The Impact of Digital Marketing on Consumer Behavior in the Hospitality Industry

By

Bitá Elyse Constance Ntoh-Yuk

A thesis submitted to the Institute of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Business Administration

Final International University

July 2022

Kyrenia, TRNC



**FINAL INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

APPROVAL

Title: The Impact of Digital Marketing on Consumer Behavior in the Hospitality
Industry

We certify that we approve this thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for
the degree of Master of Business Administration.

Approval of the Examining Committee:

Asst. Prof. Dr. Steven Bayighomog (*Chair*)

Asst. Prof. Dr. Aleksandr Zabolotnov

Asst. Prof. Dr. Ridhwan Olaoke(Supervisor)

Approval of the Institute of Graduate Studies:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mehmet Kanik
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To my mother and friends for their love and support

ETHICAL DECLARATION

I, Bita Elyse Constance Ntoh-Yuk, hereby, declare that I am the sole author of this thesis and it is my original work. I declare that I have followed ethical standards in collecting and analyzing the data and accurately reported the findings in this thesis. I have also properly credited and cited all the sources included in this work.

Bita Elyse Constance Ntoh-Yuk



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ABSTRACT

Marketing is of great concern to companies globally because of the necessity to create awareness about a particular product or service. Traditional marketing tools or channels like radio, television, newspaper, flyer, and magazines seem not to be very effective today because they are being limited to some extent factors such as high costs, small coverage, inflexible etc. However, through the coming of the World Wide Web and digital marketing, the field of marketing has experience a paradigm shift removing almost all the challenges of traditional marketing. Today, digital marketing provides unlimited opportunities in the hospitality industry to better serve customers and it is equally helping customers purchase with flexibility pushing many to refer the world as a global village. At a time when COVID-19 is a thread to human life, the usefulness and importance of digital marketing keeps increasing. This thesis is titled the impact of digital marketing on consumer behavior in the hospitality industry. Its objective is to establish the relationship between digital marketing and consumer behavior (satisfaction), the case of students in the (TRNC). The researcher made use of the exploratory research design and a simple random sampling technique was used. Primary data was collected using structured questionnaire which was sampled online. The collected data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The key findings revealed that (SMMA), (MM) and (eWOM) has a significant relationship with consumer satisfaction in the hospitality industry in the TRNC. The study recommends that to make consumers feel safe with online services, transactions should always be done successfully. And when consumers trust the company, they have realized safety, are satisfied, that the firm will satisfy their needs even through the long term, they become loyal to the firm and or its brand. This experience is said to be very influential on the potential customer. Finally, the research reminds all marketing units today in all organizations not to only provide the best of quality but to provide the best of customer service as the two go together.

Keywords: Digital marketing, consumer behavior, consumer satisfaction, hospitality, TRNC.

ÖZ

Pazarlama, belirli bir ürün veya hizmet hakkında farkındalık yaratma gerekliliği nedeniyle küresel olarak şirketler için büyük bir endişe kaynağıdır. Radyo, televizyon, gazete, el ilanı, dergi gibi geleneksel pazarlama araçları veya kanalları, yüksek maliyetler, küçük kapsama alanı, esnek olmayan vb. faktörlerle bir dereceye kadar sınırlandırıldıkları için günümüzde çok etkili görünmemektedir. World Wide Web ve dijital pazarlama, pazarlama alanı, geleneksel pazarlamanın neredeyse tüm zorluklarını ortadan kaldıran bir paradigma kayması yaşadı. Günümüzde dijital pazarlama, konaklama endüstrisinde müşterilere daha iyi hizmet verebilmek için sınırsız fırsatlar sunuyor ve aynı zamanda müşterilerin satın almalarına esneklikle yardımcı oluyor ve pek çok kişiyi dünyayı küresel bir köy olarak görmeye itiyor. COVID-19'un insan hayatının bir parçası olduğu bir zamanda, dijital pazarlamanın kullanışlılığı ve önemi artmaya devam ediyor. Bu tez, dijital pazarlamanın konaklama endüstrisinde tüketici davranışları üzerindeki etkisi başlığını taşımaktadır. Amacı, dijital pazarlama ile tüketici davranışı (memnuniyet) arasındaki ilişkiyi, yani (KKTC) öğrencilerinin durumunu ortaya koymaktır. Araştırmacı keşfedici araştırma deseninden yararlanmış ve basit tesadüfi örnekleme tekniği kullanılmıştır. Birincil veriler, çevrimiçi olarak örneklenen yapılandırılmış anket kullanılarak toplanmıştır. Toplanan veriler Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) kullanılarak analiz edildi. Temel bulgular, (SMMA), (MM) ve (eWOM)'un KKTC'deki konaklama endüstrisinde tüketici memnuniyeti ile önemli bir ilişkisi olduğunu ortaya koydu. Çalışma, tüketicilerin çevrimiçi hizmetlerle kendilerini güvende hissetmelerini sağlamak için işlemlerin her zaman başarılı bir şekilde yapılması gerektiğini önermektedir. Tüketiciler de firmaya güvendiklerinde, güvenliği fark ettiklerinde, firmanın ihtiyaçlarını uzun vadede bile karşılayacağından memnun olduklarında, firmaya ve/veya markasına sadık kalırlar. Bu deneyimin potansiyel müşteri üzerinde çok etkili olduğu söyleniyor. Son olarak, araştırma bugün tüm organizasyonlardaki tüm pazarlama birimlerine, sadece en iyi kaliteyi sağlamakla kalmayıp, ikisi birlikte hareket ederken en iyi müşteri hizmetini sağlamayı hatırlatıyor.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dijital pazarlama, tüketici davranışı, tüketici memnuniyeti, misafirperverlik, KKTC.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SMMA	Social Media Marketing Activities
eWOM	Electronic Word of Mouth
MM	Mobile Marketing
DG	Digital Marketing
SMM	Social Media Marketing
CS	Consumer Satisfaction
CB	Consumer Behavior
TRNC	Turkish Republic of North Cyprus
FIU	Final International University
B2B	Business to Business
B2C	Business to Consumer
7Ps	Product, Place, Price, Promotion, Physical evidence, People and process
4Ps	Product, Place, Price and Promotion
SPSS	Statistical tool for Social Sciences
β	Beta coefficient
μ_i	Expected Error
H	Hypothesis
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
DMTs	Digital Marketing Tools
24/7	Twenty Four Hours of All Seven day

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The concern for many researchers and economic actors today is if marketers hope to create new brands, satisfy existing markets and meet up with the dynamic needs of customers, what then is the value added of digital marketing? The development of information and communication technologies alongside marketing opportunities that come with the efficient application of these technologies has been the driving force for the paradigm shift from traditional marketing and opened a new space for the development of specific types of marketing to meet the dynamic needs of consumers (Bhattacharya & Bolton, 2000). According to Jain (2014) organizations with bigger marketing budgets or resources have competitive advantage as they are very visible and seen through multi-digital marketing platforms. Today, technology is being mainstreamed in all human endeavors not just as a technical capacity but as a social phenomenon helping large and small businesses to implement successful marketing (Barnes, 2012).

According to Kotler and Keller (2012) consumers will not adequately buy a product if left alone. This implies that, online platforms are even more useful today to the hospitality sector because the services offered by this sector are very intangible and experience related and the high ability for an average traveler to contribute and share information online. This makes social media for example to be even very unique considering that it facilitates two-way communication between the producer/marketer and the final consumer. Marketing is able to develop today and grow in bounds and leaps because of the speed through which consumers relate with producers (Kotler, & Keller 2012).

The flexibility of technology and considering the safety of consumers has seen the increasing need to embrace the digital system in most cases as a channel to purchase goods and services (Jobber & Ellis-Chadwick, 2013). The global health crisis 'COVID-19' has recently come to push and remind businesses, the public and the world at large on the need to invest more towards a digital world to solve some, if not all the challenges of traditional marketing and findings have indicated globally the impact of technology on businesses (Jobber & Ellis-Chadwick, 2013).

Basically, marketing focuses on satisfying the needs and wants of the target consumer in different geographical regions in the world and marketers are now looking for ways to articulate marketing strategies (Singh, 2011). Marketing includes aspects of promotion which involves, - creating awareness of a product and to some extent increasing the brand's market share and attain growth over specified period of time (Dobbs & Hamilton, 2007). Marketing activities cover strategically advertising, promotion, selling and delivering the product and service to final consumer and how to expand geographically clients and markets.

Today, users of various online social media have moved from utilizing them not just as platforms to relate and be in contact with friends and families but to exploit them as e-commerce tools (Rai, 2018). Each day, social media is becoming crucial to the hospitality industry because its services are intangible and experienced based (Doh & Hwang, 2009). This makes potential customers and stakeholders to depend and rely on the comments, recommendations by trusted people to make their choices (Doh & Hwang, 2009). Therefore, this implies that anyone with access to internet can now easily circulate information and their opinion about goods and services online if they love.

Digital marketing today can be seen as a direct system of marketing where customers and sellers are directly connected using interactive technologies such as Websites, Instagram, Facebook, Whatsapp etc. (Srinivasan, 2016). The author also adds that digital tools continue to help customers simplify the information they get from sellers for better understanding. According to Alexandar (2020) the main objective of digital marketing is to leverage technology to retain existing customers and attract new ones by making them loyal and satisfied. From the researcher's personal observation, since the outbreak of COVID-19, the use of the internet and communication technologies for information sharing has changed the way of reaching consumers somehow and the way of marketing too. As such, there will be an effect on the behavior of consumers.

It is also very clear to note that businesses which will take the decision to invest more through large online budgets allocation will have huge opportunities, and competitive advantage enabling them to be occupying a greater percentage of the digital space, closer to consumers and easily visible through multi-digital marketing channels

globally (Mishra & Mahalik, 2017). It is therefore very realistic today to buy from every part of the world with just a click and the goods are delivered.

The society is technologically inclined and risky nowadays and all marketing operations are no more the same as they were for the past years (Taylor & Nelson, 2002). This is possible because of the adoption of online networking, which has changed how organizations carry out communication with customers and the society as a whole.

According to Partrutiu-Baltes (2016) the digitization of corporate communication today calls for more adaptive digital tools like webinars, and social media to make this communication effective. Therefore, considering that mass consumers are active on Facebook, Now, problematic here is the question that goes; if, almost every brand is appearing today in the digital landscape, what then makes the difference? Technology and internet usage time has spurred business activities even further and engaging more people than traditional media, including television (Keegan & Green, 2008).

From observation as a researcher, Individuals are increasingly exhibiting themselves in the digital space. There are numerous reasons for this, including seeking information about products, buy them and communicating with others about their experiences. They also use these platforms to channel complain about the products they buy and services they are consuming. This experience shared by consumers should matter a lot to digital marketers. This fundamental evolution has been answered by marketers by positively adjusting the presence of brands in digital marketing pathways and active customer service agents 24/7.

Jobber and Ellis-Chadwick (2013) strongly hold that the use of the internet and social communication technologies has impacted many people. Young people today, form a greater percentage of the population of many countries and being socially attached to online platforms will automatically become next generation of online consumers. This specifically explains why the researcher targets students in the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus to get insightful opinions on how technology influences their consumer behavior in the hospitality sector within COVID-19 context.

Technological impact on business activities is increasing and brands that will compete, succeed in the future with a competitive advantage and a successful going concern will need to be more active in the digital environment (Jobber & Ellis-Chadwick,

2013). This research is therefore coming to explore the impact that digital marketing will have on consumer behavior in the hospitality industry within the COVID-19 period, for students in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC).

1.2 Statement of Problem

The impact that digital technologies have on businesses is instrumental and clearly felt today; revolutionizing operation, customers behaviors in different ways and facilitating social relations and corporate communication making the world seen like a global village even in the domain of business (Alghizzawi et al., 2018; Shankar, 2011). Today, using digital communication channels has been normalized into the everyday life of individuals (Stephen, 2016). Also Ryan (2014) also confirms that the users of the web are increasing significantly because of improved and increasing access to digital gadgets. In summary, people are now becoming more social (Balathandayutham, 2020).

Tiago and Verissimo (2014) explained that human beings are experiencing changes in behavior as a result of interacting consistently via social media in this age. This phenomenon has been attributed by the authors to websites' expansion which stimulates connections and encourages the routines of cyberspace users.

Considering the constant interaction in this era using digital media, humans are significantly experiencing changes in their behaviors (Tiago et al., 2014). These scholars attribute the change to growth of social media sites, websites that enhance interaction, activities and habits of all internet users. The tastes and preferences of customers are changing and their experiences vary as well while marketers equally possess a variety of choices in the market for products branding (Ashley & Tuten, 2015). Therefore, as businesses, understanding the changing needs of the customers and producing the goods and services, marketing them has been a very big concern to marketers (Tiago et al., 2014). Some proponents hold that quality goods and services sell themselves but the question is can people buy something whose existence is not known? This therefore clearly shows that every good or service needs a marketer to create awareness about its existence.

Most entrepreneurs back then were unenthusiastic to fully adopt digital marketing as a replacement for traditional marketing because most of its effects are yet to be documented (Wang & Chang, 2013). However, researchers especially those reviewed in

this study have made valuable documentations today to better understand how digital marketing affects other behavioral factors. For example, social media marketing today via Instagram is an effective way to advertise, promote and auction a product or service today as it is said that 'a picture speaks a thousand words (Silva et al., 2013).

Recently, health concerns (COVID-19) have reversed the equation and forcefully pushed us towards a digital world. This comes along with additional questions as to; Are businesses using digital marketing approach today because the possibility of using traditional marketing were removed? Or are businesses switching towards digital marketing because of the opportunities that they get from it? Also, it is very important to note that COVID-19 has brought significant changes in every aspect of social interaction today but technologies are developed to account for their own effects. It is clear that it has pushed us further towards the need for a digital world.

Human behavior is unpredictable but then increase exposure of an item provides higher chances of being purchased (Power et al., 2012). Firms are unique in terms of what goods they produce or service rendered. The way consumers will react in a particular industry about using technology to deliver services might be certainly different in another industry. To Kotler and Keller (2012) dissatisfied customers will complain after buying a product and even return it whereas satisfied ones will purchase a product and continue to do in future. Therefore, how does digital marketing influence consumer behavior in the hospitality industry within the COVID-19 era?

The question here is the reason for the shift today towards digital marketing despite the presence of online hackers growing each day (Lantos, 2011). Most firms have paid more attention since the outbreak of the health pandemic 2019 on digital marketing to deliver their product or services to the final consumer. Many if not all consumers before 2019 had the choice of selecting which medium of using to buy (physical or online). But within the context of the global health crisis, many were forced to use just the online method in many cases. The concern to marketers should be; are consumers satisfied? There should be concerns about this because consumers globally in this pandemic period are not given the rights to determine the trajectories of buying they prefer. And if consumers are not satisfied: why?

This thus draws the attention of the researchers in asking questions like; are businesses shifting towards digital marketing since 2019 because they see other businesses shifting or because of government regulations (health concerns) or fundamentally because they are aspiring to reap more, the benefits that come with using digital marketing? This comes to justify why this research is needed to explore the impact of digital marketing on consumer behavior in the hospitality industry of North Cyprus with focus on the COVID-19 era.

1.3 Research Question

This research aims to answer the following research questions;

1. Do firm's social media marketing activities affect consumer satisfaction?
2. Do firm's mobile marketing strategy influence consumer satisfaction?
3. Does electronic word of mouth affect consumer satisfaction?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

This research seeks to achieve the following specific objectives;

- 1 To establish the relationship between social media marketing activities and consumer satisfaction.
- 2 To examine how mobile marketing affect consumer satisfaction
- 3 To determine how electronic word of mouth will influence consumer satisfaction.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is of great importance in the following ways;

Firstly, it will provide guideline for firms using digital marketing as instruments to reach their target consumers. Considering that many firms and companies are now investing more and more in digital marketing, it is very important to actually understand how consumers react or perceive digital marketing now. With this, firms will be able to strategize and target consumers in a better way and improve their performance.

Secondly, the study will be of significance as it will add to the digital marketing and consumer behavior literature specifically within the confines of the hospitality

industry. This holds more especially, considering that very few studies exist within the COVID-19 era on how digital marketing affects consumer behavior in the hospitality sector. This study therefore, focusing within the COVID-19 era, will be of great significance to show that paradigm shift brought about on the behaviors of consumers following a complete shift towards digital marketing as a strategy that does not only save time, costs and other factors but equally protects indirectly and directly the health of consumers and others in society.

1.6 Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one covers the background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, and objectives of the study, significance of the study and the organization of the study.

Chapter two focused on the literature review and hypothesis development and the conceptual relationship between the main study variables.

Chapter three will cover the research methodology; comprising the study area, the research design, sources and methods of data collection and data analysis.

Chapter four will cover the presentation, analysis of data and discussion of results. The study will end in chapter five with the summary of major findings, conclusion and recommendations and proposal for further research by other researchers.

It is very obvious that digital marketing has a role to play in the behavior of consumers. The unique aspect of digital media has revolutionized marketing practices such as advertising and promotion (Hanna et al., 2011).

This study targets mainly youths and according to Venugopal and Swamynathan (2016) the evolving inclination of contemporary youths inspires their purchasing behavior since they for the most part conform to the trends of style and taste as per the evolving time. In this manner, the current age is increasingly intrigued with the internet shopping. The advertisers are obligated to familiarize with inventive techniques of selling because of the size and dominance of the young population in most societies today.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Sociology and Technology relates today in a way that allows people and business to share information, experiences, ideas and network for the interest of related parties (Conrad, 2010). In the traditional system of marketing, goods were purchased in offline stores or shops but thing rapidly changed from early twentieth century to the late 1940s (Hardy, 2016), bringing the necessity for modern methods of marketing following increased competition. There was need for modern communication technologies and instruments and this was encouraged because companies that branded products could gain more market share; make more profits and years after, internet and technology was born and this served as a fertile environment for web-based organizations (Hardy, 2016).

The use of digital marketing is increasing on a daily base today. Digital marketing stands more as an online community to build brands and also as medium used by consumers to refer others through online communication (Smith, 2009). In line with Stokes (2011) customers the audience is known and referred as the number of persons who viewed an online advert are noticed. According to Kumar and Kailani (2011), digital marketing helps companies to target and reach customers on a global scale and customers now have more influence over their choice of media consumption. From a gender perspective, Kotler and Keller (2012) hold that couples usually have joint engagement in making decisions in the household but they might respond react differently to digital marketing. That is, digital marketing will affect consumer behavior as they go through various cycles in life; from being single to married and this is mainly because people's perception changes, changes in disposable income as they experience life cycle developments (Kotler& Keller, 2012).

Digital marketing institute (2020) defines the concept as the "application of digital medium to market goods, services and entities". Digital marketing according to this institute is said to flow with opportunities that allow organizations to target and reach high numbers of customers within a short time period. It gives customers the ability to use their internet devices like phones, computers to access goods anywhere in the world following the development of Google as a search engine.

Globalization is increasing rapidly today due to the development of the Internet which makes the ease of sharing information very fast such that consumers now have a wider range of goods and service to make choice (Jackson & Parsa, 2009). Managers have therefore seen social media as a tool to promote their brands.

Pierce, Kostova and Dirks (2003) sees the digital community as a best thing that has happened to mankind because it helps people to share information, give their opinions, critiques and gives people/businesses the opportunity to influence their relatives/clients and strangers/competitors in the world. Digital marketing covers and encompasses connectivity, interaction, openness, participation and involvement of everyone (Yadar & Rahman, 2017). Tuten and Solomon (2016) made it very clear that the goal of social media marketing is to facilitate business operations at all level. Also, Gebauer, et al., (2013) says is a game-changer and its communication is flexible for personal and at corporate levels. If social media is a good development then it is worth carrying out a study on how it affects consumer behavior in the hospitality sector with the COVID-19 era.

2.1.1 Digital Marketing and Social Media Marketing

According to Kotler and Gerald Zaltman (1971), a successful digital marketing operation necessitates more than just routinely developing daily posts. To them, even with improved social media penetration, a large percentage of marketers experience difficulty in developing successful strategies for digital marketing. According to them, firms need a more intense understanding of their customers, their desires and drive as this will help the firms to comprehend the market where it's functioning. Consequently, a firm will be able to create successful digital marketing through social media campaigns that will create an impact for itself and the customers.

There are four (4) major aspect of every marketing campaign which is also being used as techniques of social media marketing. They include: product, price, place and promotion.

However, it's not unusual for businesses to apply the 7Ps of marketing today as strategic marketing foundation. This is because; businesses should construct their marketing operations around the 7P elements. That is, for your social media campaigns to be successful, you need to tick off at least three (3) of these 7Ps:

These 7Ps according to Kotler and Gerald are; product, place, price, promotion, people, process and physical evidence.

However, these researchers recommend that each time a firm hopes to apply these 7Ps, a comprehensive and holistic SWOT analysis be conducted. This focuses more on what firms need to observe when undertaking a wide-ranging analysis of its social media operations across various digital channels, looking at their strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats with respects to that of competitors. The objective is to gain competitive advantage.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The following theory has been identified as the based to support the relationship between digital marketing and consumer behavior;

2.2.1 McLuhan's Media Theory

McLuhan was a Canadian philosopher and educator, and is recognized and known for his well-known assertion 'the media is the message' (McLuhan, 1995) had contended that the media itself, instead of the actual media content, will lead to the transformation of people and society. Messages being communicated won't be any different on the new media, rather the rate of interactions and regularity of novel communication patterns will lead to the evolution of our behavior forever. In order words, the author believes a good product or services advertised via a wrong media will not achieve its objectives. However, the core assumption is that the media as we consider is not just a channel were the communication takes place but they are diverse set of setting that enable the communication to happen and it may vary the meaning and sense of the information that it is been transferred (McLuhan, 1995).

According to McLuhan (1995) the media is not the messages they convey but the means through which human consciousness and society at large could be affected by the medium. Put in another way, a TV ownership is more impactful than viewership McLuhan (1995). The way communication occurs instead of the subject of the communication should be the main emphasis because media structure is more impactful than any content conveyed by the media.

McLuhan offered the illustration of the light bulb to demonstrate this theory. Employing an extensive definition, McLuhan maintained that a light bulb is a type of media but notably which is bereft of any content. A light bulb contains no message but it drastically modifies its environment and sequentially permits, encourages and makes outdated various methods of human interaction if it's not available. A light bulb is a type of media without content; it produces a new type of environment wordlessly (McLuhan, 1995). The light bulb modifies us, in what manner our time is organized the level of our security. It also alters the knowledge and skills we deem important. The theory asks a rhetorical question; which do you find easier sparking a fire or replacing a light bulb?

McLuhan redefines the media as a tool to transmit content to a setting with a significant social effect. Via this route McLuhan contends that the history of humans has mostly been influenced and motivated by vicissitudes built up by the media society. This in turn entails that history is not motivated by the activity of humans but by technological evolution McLuhan (1995). This depicts McLuhan as a technological determinist, a person that accepts as true the assertion that changes in technology are to a great extent determinants of human history and technology.

When the internet and social media are broached, McLuhan inquires as to how human history and behavior has evolved due to the internet more than how we can utilize it. His concern lies predominantly with by what means technology affects humans rather than the human's effect on it. From an occupational perspective then, the internet can be perceived as providing an assortment of uses ranging from information access, social capital expansion, allowing for novel ways of presenting our identities and many other way McLuhan (1995). McLuhan's theory would inquire about a different set of questions which are often overlooked but still important. McLuhan (1995) poses a couple of rhetorical questions; how is our lives affected by increased information speed? How does being constantly on display affect our psychology? What is the experience of residing within the age of mass information? The comprehension of the knowledge of being within the environment of the age of the cyberspace is as important for career development as the novel tools technology we obtain from the internet age McLuhan (1995). This could indicate new requirements for support because the internet modifies the world we live in and so by extension, what we are. The theory also asks us if we perceive the internet as a

novel prospect for how careers content are conveyed and how our clients are interacted with.

After a review of the theoretical literature, it's very important for the message to be emphasized by marketers by consistently guaranteeing that the message is exposed to consumers from many digital platforms. This is because people might forget a message if they receive it just once McLuhan (1995). Also, for firms to fully get the advantages of digital marketing, it is important to take notice of the deliberations of customers/consumers in any digital platform McLuhan (1995). As the digital landscape continue to evolves, increase and matures, the greater the number of individuals both professional and otherwise get familiarized with its tools McLuhan (1995). It is therefore time for corporate bodies to contemplate on how digital platforms and information and communication technologies could be synchronized into day to day business practices and processes.

There are some key rudiments of this theory and to what degree these opinions can be valuable to comprehend the information society and digital technologies of contemporary times form some good take home for researchers. The interest in McLuhan's (1995) philosophies is predicated on how he conceptualizes the media as a whole. Four (4) different aspects of the media are underscored by his conceptualization:

- 1) Media are tools that are non-neutral, they possess consequences which are considerably psychic and social, regardless of their content.
- 2) The media is an extension of the senses of both men and women.
- 3) There is a constant interplay of one medium with other media
- 4) How we perceive space and time can be manipulated by the media. Four of these principles as a whole, accounts for a comprehensive theory of mass communication

Presently, the foremost consequences of these ideologies and the motives that underscore their interest for current concepts of digital media hold the fact by the assumption in the first place that "the media is the message" (McLuhan, 1995) infers that the media can possess significant effects upon persons. In the sixties, this idea did not attain wide acceptability, when the impact of mass communications was considered minimal. It synchronizes with contemporary theories and, more importantly, offers an optimal viewpoint for how the study of novel technologies could be approached.

Consequently, it is advised that we observe the intrinsic effects of novel technologies McLuhan (1995). Additionally, it should be noted, the fact that McLuhan seems to know of the role of social factors as determinants of innovations; indeed, it asserts that media can “accelerate or amplify existing process” McLuhan (1995).

With the introduction of a new medium, the other media can be impacted upon, and, simultaneously, the new media is also affected by the existing media McLuhan (1995). McLuhan (1995) terms this effect; hybridization, which is observed progressing in new media. For instance, the claim could easily be made that “www” formats today are predisposed to the influences of traditional media such as magazines, books, as well as television, as far as web animation is concerned. One could also claim that the way people use traditional media has evolved due to the inception of novel technologies. Secondly, the assertion that the one medium’s content is another medium aids in the explanation of the nature of the computer McLuhan (1995). The computer is a type of medium with the capability of simulating the interfaces of other media McLuhan (1995).

In summary, McLuhan (1995) analyzes that people and society will be transformed by the media, and not the actual content of the media. In essence, messages will always be different for different new media and these different communication patterns will change the behaviors of consumers. Therefore, the media is greater than the content of the media. The author of the theory therefore separates the media's content into two categories; 'cool media content' and 'hot media content'. 'Cool' media somehow requires the audience to concentrate and participate in understanding its message. But hot media on the other hand does not provide this privilege and most audience will in most cases miss the message or fail to understand the messages which is a limitation of the content of the media in modern society.

This theory Ties well for this study in that we can observe the influence of media on our society in many ways since the beginning of using media in disseminating information. Initially the usage of media was very limited due to lack of knowledge and information but now, the common man can read and access to any kind of information which he desires from the wide array of media anywhere in the world. It has helped in the development, globalization as well as the democratization among people. New media enables people to access and to share information around the world and has reduced the

gap in communication. And since this theory focus both on the old and new media, it puts us in a position to consider the value added and this is very vital for development today.

Also, the McLuhan Theory (1995) is a base for this study considering that today we have thousands of media communicating unique content; hot and cool. If truly “the media is the message” then it is necessary to investigate the impact that these media has on consumer behavior. Today, we have different types of media; news, sports, entertainment, culture, music etc. and marketing is being done through all these media. Also, even traditional media today like newspaper, magazines have are being communicated technologically today. Therefore, it is important to study digital media as a whole and determine which one can best be used by marketers to better delivery and satisfy the consumer. This makes the McLuhan Theory (1995) a base for this study of the effect of digital marketing on consumer behavior.

2.3 Digital Marketing

2.3.1 Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA)

Social media has gained a lot of popularity in the digital space since its inception. Chi (2011) makes a definition of social media marketing as the existing linkage between goods brands and consumers. This is because it offers personal channels for networking with the user as well as the promotion of social interactions. The conduct of business communication has been altered by technology. Business interactions with customers have become further personalized to the extent that some pop up ads are seen as intruding privacy (Drozdenko & Drake, 2002).

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) suggest the perception of social media as a collection of internet-based software which enables the development and transmission of content within the internet. As stated by there are numerous features which are consistent with a social media platform. The possession of a clear user profile by the software as well as content creation capacity and sharing. Also, a technique that will enable inter-connection between users is also included. It is important that the site or software application allows for the interaction of users through the posting of comments and the reply to others while also being able to share their experiences from products purchased before. The site users

are usually allowed to connect with virtual groups fundamental to their field of interests such as sports, fashion, politics and business (Lenhart & Madden, 2007).

At the moment, millions of organizations are visible in the network and are also adopting professional markets to keep track of social media sites while managing them. They interact with clients, customers and provide post sales services and answering customer worries and communication a broad base.

Kaplan et al. (2010) states that social media enables the communication and interaction of stakeholders with others by creating active profiles and making requests for friendships, uploading content and thus making followers to be interested in viewing and accessing the profile. It is consequently correct to say that social media is the platform that allows social communication using digital tools and today, social media has brought in changes in the process through which consumers gather information and communicate in general. According to Shankar (2011) technological progress has influenced better social environments that are now enabling the access of marketers to their clients to be more intimate, direct, fast and efficient. This is because technology is an asset that is complementing human efforts in all domains of life today.

The unique nature of social media has revolutionized marketing practices such as advertising and promotion (Hanna et al., 2011). Likewise, Kaplan (2010) state that, there are many privileges that comes along marketing by online, it aids in the connection of businesses to consumers (B2C), business to business (B2B), develop friendly relations, and the timely management of those relationships. Social media websites gives an opportunity to the organizations to connect with potential and current consumers, which will help to build and have a stronger customer relationship, loyalty and also to build all-important meaningful relationships with consumers (Mersey et al., 2010).

Social networks are platforms meant for communication and interaction with the sole aim of contributing to boost for new products and services (Kim & Ko, 2012). In online platforms users are allowed to broadcast their opinions, views and inspire interaction and community development relations with a large number of clients (Brondie, et al., 2013). Information dissemination has been significantly transformed the method information is circulated with ease to process and transmit. It is also good to know that

the exclusive opportunities of social media and their huge popularity have an influence on marketing.

Kaplan (2010) also opines that social media has a lot of merits, as they aid in the establishment and maintenance of strong social relationships amongst companies and consumers. According to (Kim & Ko, 2012) the success of social media and its important functions stimulates the perception, attitude and the ultimate conduct of consumers.

2.3.2 Mobile Marketing

This is another digital marketing tool that is being used by firms today to target consumers. According to Alam (2015) mobile marketing is seen today as the most broad, most affordable, and most genuine marketing channel with the highest speed where information and features of attractive goods can easily be obtained by users with the likelihood of carrying out the procedure of buying and selling barring the necessity of going to the physical shop by the buyer.

Unambiguously, mobile marketing affects the purchasing decisions of consumers by the provision of access and the knowledge of their needs (Tiffany, 2018). Furthermore, mobile marketing is a group of practices that allow firms to communicate and interact with their audiences interactively and relevantly through any mobile devices (Mohamed, 2016).

Research has shown that people spend more time on their mobile phones and apps (Tsang, 2004) simply because branded apps provide superior features more than SMS. It is very common to see so many companies today setting up stores in cyberspace to enable customers all year round access. An attempt is being made by digital marketers to get people's attention and eventually make a purchase decision while on their phones (Yogesh & Yesha, 2014).

Anyone possessing a cell phone, a cyberspace connection and a credit card has the ability to make a brand choice online whenever they want it (Soewandi, 2015). Moreover, mobile marketing is simple, it enables firms to easily update their products, service and information and share to stakeholders (Afzal & Khan, 2015). Alternatively, as a result of various products and services offered today coupled with changing customer's desire and

demands, manufacturers require quicker and efficient ways to attain the loyalty of their customer (Aqsa & Kartini, 2015).

2.3.3 Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM)

Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) refers to all communications directed between consumers which can be through internet-based technology where people spread their ideas and opinions about their experience from using a product of service through the internet or physically in a one-on-one basis.

According to Doh et al. (2009) eWOM has an important impact on consumer's purchase intentions, because consumers trust eWOM before making any product purchases. Thus, we can draw assumption that if a product or service receives positive reviews, comments, recommendations from consumers through eWOM, it will definitely affect the purchase intention of other consumers of the product directly.

2.4 Consumer Satisfaction

Consumer satisfaction according to Mohsan, et al (2011) is the attitude of consumers towards a business with regards to what the consumers expect and what they finally get. Consumer satisfaction is seen when the benefits are more than the cost of them doing business that is their time, sacrifice, money they spent on a company. It is very necessary to make customers satisfied, retain them and continue to this innovatively (Rahmani, et al 2014). This is because, consumer satisfaction is important to improve the overall performance of a company and the success at large (Kheng, 2010).

Satisfied consumers are vital to increasing revenue for a business and reducing operating costs (Dutka, 1995). This author looks at consumer satisfaction as how organizations keep their consumers happy, delighted. Basically, consumer satisfaction looks at what is being expected and the exact satisfaction a customer actually receives. This means that a satisfaction is more of what a customer expects and how the service provider lives up to that expectation. It is noted that there is always a comparison by customers on previous satisfaction and current satisfaction to able to decide and establish the level of satisfaction (Pang, 2021).

Today, understanding consumers as simple as possible is an objective for companies (Myers, 1999). Johnson (2001) holds that satisfaction must go being center within the company to the consumer. According to Eljaam (2005) companies must continue to study satisfaction, prioritize it and see it as reason for their existence.

Oliver (1997) sees consumer satisfaction from two angles; satisfaction that is accumulative and satisfaction that post-consuming. This implies that consumers can get satisfaction from consuming quality for a period of time and can also get satisfaction after just consuming. To Oliver (1997) both matters a lot to the consumer and the firm should capitalize on that. Oliver (1997) also looks at consumer satisfaction as the judgment which is personal to anyone about the qualities of a product, characteristics and delivery services. To him either a product is over fulfilled or under fulfilled a consumer's need.

Istvanic et al., (2017) believes customer satisfaction should be central for any firm. To them, consumers will always express satisfaction because of the comparison between expectations and the actual service delivery. When the actual performance is exactly the expectation of the customer then satisfaction is confirmed (Herhausen, et al., 2020). Satisfaction will not only increase profitability but it's fundamental to repeated buying, and eventually, a successful business lead and it leads to maintaining loyal customers (Diez-Martin, 2019).

According to Laing (2014) satisfaction will lead to positive action or intention to continue consuming. However, if the consumers notice that the actual performance is lower than the expectations, this will result to negative action or withdrawal and the firm automatically loses the consumer. In summary, satisfaction looks more on the individual feelings, the disappointments that consumers will have about a product or service with regards to the performance and the expectations (Tiago, et al., 2014). Therefore, if a firm wants a consumer to buy again and continue buying, then that firm must always make sure that that performance is more than expectations of a customer.

2.5 Social Media Marketing Activities and Consumer Satisfaction

From the view of Ramsaran and Fowder (2013) relationships with consumers are vital and they can perfectly be managed by social media marketing activities to manage different types of customers This is in other words means that social media marketing

activities affect consumer satisfaction and the ability to manage various customers for future purposes Anjum (2012) holds a similar opinion as he thinks social media marketing activities will companies to attract and keep both old and new customers. Mohamed and Abdul (2012) equally found that social media marketing activities are very important to satisfaction and consumer retention and recommends that firms should sacrifice in that domain.

In years past, the actual product was influenced by the management of a company in the marketing department and to some extent the production department. In contemporary society it has turned out to be difficult for the duo of Marketers and agents in the distribution channel to observe and comprehend the influences that motivate the consumer to start consuming a particular product. This is basically because consumers are equally part of the production team of goods (Heinonen, 2011). As such, it's an area of interest today for scholars to study the dynamics between digital marketing and consumer satisfaction.

Every consumers gain preference and satisfaction between different brands and makes the final decision on which of them they intend to purchase (Stefan, 2019). Higher time spent on the internet is a signal that an individual's need of the internet is hinged on social and emotional considerations (Shwu-Ing, 2017). According to McLeod (2009) people are usually emotionally attached to brands that they constantly see on the social media and this might somehow affect their satisfaction. This means that there is high probability that they will consume what they are aware of as existing in the market.

Social media today is the heart of all business communication according to Sueghwan and Dea-Young (2020). These two authors discovered that it is very important to direct communication to tie with the unique requirement of different social groups in the online space in order to be able to make the company receive some benefits. This implies that social media marketing will have no effect on customer's satisfaction if the information is communicated in a wrong social group.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) established that the effect of social media marketing on consumer satisfaction vary for different persons and for different social groups. They equally argued that customers have different financial standing, different perceptions and therefore sees the same brand differently. The authors also acknowledge some factors like

belief and religious status which they hold responsible for affecting the buying protocol for some group of persons. A need will only and can only become a motive when a customer is emotionally aroused consume the service or buy the item and if he derives the intended satisfaction. This somehow toes with the law of effective demand which states that “effective demand is demand which is backed by the ability and willingness to pay”. This implies that some customers might be satisfied with a product or service, and influence by social media marketing to buy but will lack the ability to purchase meanwhile others might have the ability to purchase but are not satisfied with the quality or features of the product and therefore might not be influenced by social media marketing activities to buy. Therefore, one can say that the relationship between social media and consumer satisfaction is dynamic and depend on many factors.

In a wilder perspective, the use of social media as a customer interaction and communication tool enables firms to expand their communication with their customers (Avlonitis & Panagopoulos, 2010). For example, some trade associations encourage the use of social media (Wirthman, 2013) defending it that it helps business to get exposure, draw attention of others and provide clear and precise information to various classes of people (Stelzner, 2012).

Social media may have effects on customer satisfaction. In general, with continuous interactions with firms, power is balanced between the buyer and the seller (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). An increase in the collaboration between the buyer and the seller leads to co-creation of knowledge (Greenberg, 2010) has placed buyers on a more equal footing with sellers with a company as a result of a negative experience (Right Now Technologies, 2010).

To consider the effects of social media on customer satisfaction, we consider the sales relationship more holistically. The work of Agnihotri et al. (2012) provides a framework for salesperson social media use, investigating how social media helps sales people to maximize customer value. Further, the literature notes that social media encompasses an array of technology; and the use of technology often enables information communication between the buyer and seller within the sales relationship (Agnihotri et al., 2009).

It should be noted that the information that consumers receive form the basis for decision making. Most often, pressure can significantly affect shopping behaviors of customers who are usually stressed and have limited time to shop (Nicholls et al., 1997). Bagozzi et al. (1998) suggested that unprepared behavior may alter intentions to process information. Kidwell and Jewell (2003) found that when facing time pressure, convenience plays a major role in influencing purchase decision for most consumers. If a client believes that the value of a product or service is extremely high, the idea is that he or she will make a purchase (Monroe, 1990).

At first, the goal of marketing from a communication stand point was for a firm to be able to inform the customers about the existence of its brand and make people willing to buy (Kim and Ko, 2012). However, customers can seek assistance today through digital channels and the solution is provided without going to a firm's location. In a nutshell, strategic SMMA can assist a company in building good social relationships with customers which are reflected by the level of consumer satisfaction.

2.6 Mobile Marketing and Consumer Satisfaction

Mobile marketing is the most recent and most vital tool for digital marketing (Alam, 2015). Consequently, mobile marketing in contemporary times is the most affordable channel for marketing where users can communicate effortlessly with the prospect of validating the procedure of buying and selling without the necessity to access the market where goods are being sold (Alam, 2015). Communication through mobile devices is good for customer in general.

Tode (2013) says that the role played by technology in mobile marketing is vital. As soon as the marketing platform consists of mobile devices, the appliance itself is not the chief marketing component, but the structure of specific technological applications structured as unique marketing tools. Marketers have to be obligated to build capacities concerning mobile technology, principally for diverse facets of usability (Haghirian & Dickinger 2005). There is a need to place focus on the chosen promotion technique to accomplish the expectation of the target customers (Zabadi, et al., 2012).

According to Mayfield (2011) consumers are said to be satisfied about a product or consume services which are either expensive or inexpensive depending on the

comments they see and the recommendations they receive from online, friends, close relatives and acquaintances. He therefore argues that digital marketing affects satisfaction not only for consuming but for being satisfied that they bought a product or brand from the right place.

In the opinion of Bosomworth, (2015), mobile technologies should not be taken advantage of by firms without adequate comprehension of the use and their application in different aspects of business. Moreover, Mobile marketing helps small firms to reach their clients and followers at significantly affordable prices or for free, such that mobile marketing is considered to be the most cost-effective technique to access clients.

Mobile marketing has turned out to be a tool for enhancing business processes and to facilitate communications with consumers (Strom et al., 2014).

It was projected by Mobile Marketing Association (2013) that mobile marketing communications would get up to \$9.2 billion by 2015. It's an opportunity for storekeepers and the marketers to bring their products to the notice of their clientele using mobile marketing (Strom et al., 2014). The intention of the consumers to make purchase reveals their interest in the services and products (Chinomona & Sandada, 2013). Mobile marketing is perceived to be the most cost-effective method of digital marketing and has seen possible growth in the sector (Watson et al., 2013).

Ashraf and Kamal (2010) supports the argument that firms should take authorization from consumers to receive unrequested information from adverts since the mobile phone is considered quite private for people. The mobile phone contains features that offer opportunities to marketers compared to traditional media (Leino, 2010). It is very clear the irritation that spam messages constitutes for some consumers today which could eventually lead to a undesirable reactions (Gurau & Ranchhod, 2009).

Lamberton and Stephen (2016) elucidated the advantages which mobile marketing offers for clients. For example, it allows for easy communication between company's support staff. Likewise, clients can request for questions and receive answers in seconds. Clients can make acquisitions anytime and from all locations in the globe. People now move with their phones; and do read any information or advertisement.

Iqbal and Nawaz (2019) assert that the quality of information is on the rise but adulterated information is following an exponential trend. So, there is the advent of a

social problem identified as misinformation (Iqbal et al., 2018). Companies can effectively give response to the feedbacks of the clients and make provisions for services with respect to their queries. Marketing over digital platforms and mobile devices is a contributing factor to the success of many brands today. It possesses several advantages for the customers. Most notable of which is, as a mobile device, it is easily accessible from any location at any time. Consequently, it behaves like an instantaneous media for clients to get informed about a launch or update in any product or service that they are interested in (Tadesse & Bahigwa, 2015).

Customers have the flexibility of sharing information about brands with their household and friends using mobile marketing. On the other hand, information can be polluted making it difficult for the receiver to perfectly understand (Iqbal et al., 2019). Mobile devices are accessible every time allowing customers to be part of a direct marketing process anytime, anywhere, and thus customers can directly give their feedback or reviews over a brand. Also, it enables client interaction with other users of the same product or specialists and obtains a clue about such products or services (Shankar et al., 2013).

2.7 Electronic Word of Mouth and Consumer Satisfaction

Positive e-WOM recommendations from satisfied and loyal customers have been very impactful within the hospitality industry (Bowen & Shoemaker, 2003; Oh, 2002). According to these authors, customer's expectations from consuming a product are a function of the recommendations from a trusted or trustworthy friend or colleague.

People usually want to hear the experience from a previous consumer about a certain product. This experience perhaps is said to be very influential to nay new customer in deciding whether the same product will give similar satisfaction to him or her. Therefore, the authors call on all marketing stakeholders today in organization not to only provide the best of quality but to provide the best of customer service – the two always move together (Bowen et al., 2003) to make existing and potential customers satisfied. Again, unprofessional issues like dishonesty, corruption, fake news, unhealthy competition and conflict of interest in the world today can mislead many to influencing others wrongly (Bowen et al., 2003) and when this happens, it will be a disaster and the

customer will definitely be dissatisfied and to some extent blame even the friend who referred him.

Today, the increasing issues that have to do with spam, cyber criminality, viruses, frequent hackers attacks and threads are a limitation digital marketing (Koufaris & Hampton-Sousa, 2002) putting fear in customers on how safe online stores are and leading to dissatisfied consumers. Worse even are those who have been victims of such circumstances making them dissatisfied to the level of not wanting to give a second chance. In effect, online shopping is perceived to be more of an unsafe procedure (Taylor et al., 2002) and also if building trust can be challenging for one on one business (traditional channels) what more of using the internet (Bitting & Ghorbani, 2004). Consequently, it can be asserted that the trust of consumers will rub off on the level of consumer satisfaction.

Shelt and Kim (2017) in a study reported that online engagement and shopping comprises of an emotional element for the customer. Customers seek out long-term emotional connections, which are much more than clicking to request and buy a product. A client will transmit positive feed backs via e-WOM communication with the perception that the seller meets and satisfies their needs. However, a consumer will begin to feel a little safe, secured and satisfactory with the service provider or supplier only after successful transaction experiences (Ravald, 1996). With past successful experiences, customers can be sure to refer others and keep their personal reputation. And when consumers trust the company, they realize safety, are satisfied, they are sure that their requirements and needs will be satisfied even in the long term, they develop commitments and loyalty to the firm and or its brand and they stand greater chances to share their positive emotions and experiences to others.

Baht and Bhat (2020) carried out an investigation on the importance of e-WOM in generating prospects for the customers to divulge optimistic word of mouth. According to the results positive eWOM aids other customers in developing their own decisions with regards to purchases and creating favorable attitudes in consumers towards a specific brand. Yang (2017) holds that e-WOM is linked to positive behavioral intentions of customers. If customers grow a positive outlook towards a brand, they will tend to divulge helpful e-WOM. As such, organizations should focus more on ensuring the satisfaction of

customers. This is because without a positive e-WOM it will be challenging to make profit.

2.8 Hypothesis Development

H₁: Social Media Marketing Activities has a Positive Relationship with Consumer Satisfaction

Long and Choi (2013) conducted a study on the impact of social media marketing on consumer satisfaction and loyalty using as a case study departmental stores in Tehran, Iran. They made use of the quantitative approach, sampled and analyzed the views from 300 responses through multiple regressions; the authors realized that SMMA are positively related to consumer satisfaction. They recommended quality customer service, friendly social interactions and relationship with clients to keep them satisfied. Therefore, their findings revealed that behavior is significantly related to how satisfied the customers are.

In another study, Lin Chien (2011) found the relationship between customer satisfaction and the image of a brand online for some businesses in the catering domain at Taipei city. Using the convenient sampling method the author sampled 360 views and 264 were retained at a rate of 73.3%. After data analysis, the result showed that there is a positive relationship between brand image (online) and satisfaction. Therefore, the perception that consumers have about the image of a product online, will influence their level of satisfaction for that brand.

Pitta et al., (2006) conducted a study on the strategic approach to establishing online customer satisfaction and loyalty. The objective was to outline the framework for managing effective satisfaction in the digital space. After analysis study, the researcher discovered that to maintain satisfied and loyal customers, there is need for one-on-one relationship with customers.

Agbor (2011) studied online service quality with customer satisfaction at three service sectors in Umea University and established a positive relationship between the two variables. The study had as objective to examine the extent to which service quality affects satisfaction and after convenience sampling and analysis of results, the author

realized that there exists a positive relationship between the two variables. Also, aspects like empathy, reliability were linked significantly to customer satisfaction.

Also, Chantal and Nicole (2015) studied the effect of SMMA on customer satisfaction and customer retention within the banking sector to get the opinions of clients and their managers. The main objective was to study how social SMMA affect consumer satisfaction and retention. In total, 150 responses were received from clients and 30 responses from managers of banks using questionnaires as the collection instrument. After statistical analysis of the relationship between the variables, the results showed significantly that there is a relationship between SMMA and consumer satisfaction and retention. In addition, the study revealed that there is a strong positive relationship between 'trustworthy digital content' and customer satisfaction and retention. And finally, the recommendations were that banks should make use of trustworthy social media content to communicate and relate with their clients to give the best of satisfaction and retain their clients for banks to remain successful.

Ganapathi et al., (2021) carried out a study on the "impact of digital marketing on consumer satisfaction" (behavior) in Salem District, India and found that social media marketing has a positive relationship with consumer satisfaction. The recommendation from their study were that marketing messages which are being tailored to consumers should be aligned across a variety of digital marketing channels and make them customized as much as possible. The results also showed that information on these digital sites should be up to date and accurate to give consumers all information they need in making decisions. This according to the authors will provide the best experience and satisfaction to the consumers of their brand.

Considering the relationship established by empirical literature between digital marketing and consumer satisfaction, I therefore hypothesize that, digital marketing has a significant positive effect on consumer satisfaction.

H₂: Mobile Marketing has a Positive Relationship with Consumer Satisfaction.

Kumar and Shukla (2020) also conducted a study and captured the relationship between mobile marketing and consumer satisfaction. According to the authors, most young consumers prefer buy and sell products and service through online platforms. According to them, it is easy and the cheapest mode for them now. Mobile marketing also

provides different types of opportunities to the youthful customers and beneficial allowing them make life issues easy going.

Vaghela (2014) conducted a research on gender wise consumer perception towards mobile marketing in Surat. The primary rationale of this study was to know the gender wise consumer attitude while shopping online. The study made use of the opinions of 150 respondents from various regions of Surat. After an analysis of data collected using chi-square frequency distribution the result showed that there was a very significant difference between male and female behavior/attitudes (satisfaction differences) towards mobile marketing. Going into details and segregation, the study furthermore revealed that female are more inclined than the fellow counterparts (male) towards online shopping and majority of the female purchase cloths, groceries, fashion accessories whereas male on the other hand are more likely to purchase home appliances, electronics.

Kalpana and Arti (2014) made a comprehensive study on habits of online consumers in India using mobile devices. The objective of the study was to analyze habits of online shopping consumers with respect to India and identify the key factors that direct their shopping patterns or habits. The study was conducted with a sample size of 100 respondents of different social backgrounds such as business people, working professionals and students etc. By analyzing the data the researchers concluded that access to market, availability of internet, low prices, 24/7 service operation, free delivery, payment upon delivery were few of the key factors that had influenced customers habits to buy. Therefore, the more persons could access services via mobiles in all the 24 hours a day keeps them satisfied to keep using the services especially when one has to make rationale use of time to handle many daily operations.

Therefore, considering the empirical evidence between mobile marketing and consumer behavior, it is obvious to draw the hypothesis that mobile marketing has a significant relationship with consumer satisfaction.

H₃: Electronic Word of Mouth has a Positive Relationship with Consumer Satisfaction

Ayoola and Ibrahim (2019) investigated the effect of eWOM on customer satisfaction in Nigeria within the airline domain. Survey design and structured questionnaires were used for data collection from 100 respondents in the sector. Descriptive statistics, inferential statistics and regression analyzes were conducted with

results revealing that SMMA, eWOM and email marketing having significant positive relationships with customer satisfaction. The conclusion was that positive eWOM has a significantly affect access to some specific airlines in Nigeria as many people trust friends in making key decisions.

Ugonna (2017) equally examined the impact of digital marketing on consumer satisfaction still within Nigeria setting. The study was done in the context of companies already providing services online in Owerri, Nigeria. The study clearly identified the impact of positive referrals, efficient communication as well as timely delivery of products. The study made use of six (6) research questions and six (6) hypotheses. Questionnaires were used as the main instrument to collect data by sampling the views from 300 respondents and the data was analyzed by performing mean analysis meanwhile the hypothesis of the study was analyzed by employing Z-test. After a detailed analysis of the collected information using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) software, the results revealed that effective channels of digital marketing, reliable and trusted word of mouth and successive previous delivery had influences over the frequency of online store visits by customers. Also worth noting about the study was the fact that many respondents indicated 'trustworthiness' and 'time conscious' are valuable factors to keep customers satisfied and to continue using a digital channel to make purchases from a particular brand or firm.

Kinka and Shukla (2016) conducted a research on consumer satisfaction with respect to online purchase of electronic devices on the city of Bhopal and Jabalpur and the results showed clearly that there is a relation between digital marketing (eWOM) and consumer satisfaction. In this regard, the research had as objective to critically examine and gain insight as to how consumer satisfaction relates to purchase of electronic devices online. The research was also interested to know consumer's actual expectations in digital stores, the complementary services they expect, and also to find out other key influential features for users who go online specifically to purchase. The sample size of their research was forty (40) respondents from Bhopal and Jabalpur city. Looking at the results and findings of their research, key indicators like time saving, product quality, product price, ease of accessibility for consumers, convenience were among some of the most significant factors that affect consumer attitude, satisfaction towards digital purchasing. Also, there a

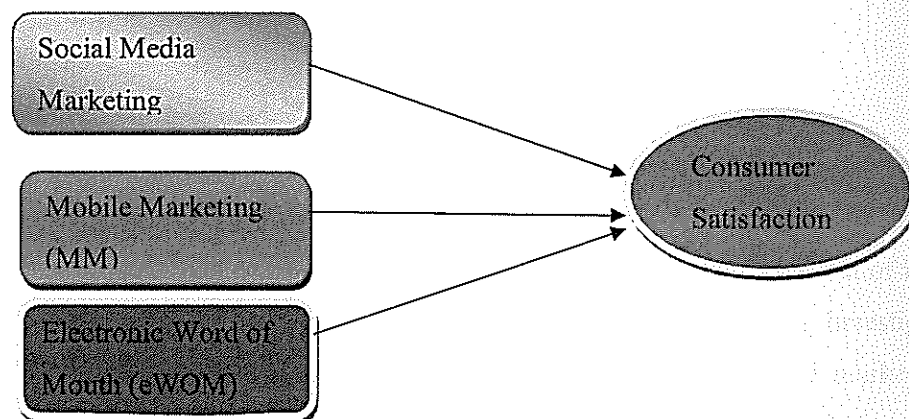
host of other small factors that was notice to have affected consumer satisfaction and attitudes towards digital electronics purchases. These included: technological features, guaranteed quality, delivery fee and online promotions and discounts which customers will benefit. Therefore, considering the results from this comprehensive study by the authors, it is clearly seen that digital marketing affects consumer satisfaction.

Also, looking at the above empirical relationship between eWOM and consumer satisfaction, one can draw the hypothesis that eWOM has a positive relationship with consumer satisfaction.

Considering these empirical literature about the two variables, it's obvious to draw the model for this study as seen below;

Figure 1

Research Model: Digital Marketing and Consumer Behavior



Source: Researcher, 2022.

This model illustrates that each digital marketing variable (independent variables) will have an effect on consumer satisfaction (dependent). However, in actual business scenario, it's possible that a firm makes use of more than one digital marketing tool for consumers to make a choice. And satisfy specific consumers. But then, whatever tool is being use, the overall goal is to attract, gain, satisfy and retain a loyal customer for its brand.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Scope and Area of the Study

This study is mainly to determine the impact of digital marketing on consumer behavior within the hospitality sector (hotels, restaurants and airlines) in the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus. It's important to note that the researcher choose the hospitality sector because of its contribution to the DGP of Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Considering the importance of this sector to the economy, it is very necessary to conduct insightful research to inform business owners, the government, students, researchers, academics, policy makers and other stakeholders about the digital marketing and consumer behavior association in the hospitality industry and how to maintain this relationship.

3.2 Research Design

According to Cooper (2005) areas where there is already available descriptive information about variables, exploratory research design should be used. Therefore, the researcher applied exploratory design because it enhances the searching out of key facts about a subject matter. The exploratory design also helps in conducting investigation in areas or sectors which are not clearly defined as the case of digital marketing and consumer behavior which are new concepts to many organizations. This design also puts the researcher in a position to identify strategic problems in a subject area and not produce convincing inferences thus opening the space for others to explore scientifically and this contributes to value added.

This research design equally saves cost, since it involves little scientific experiments. During studies with this design, the researcher is in a position he or she cannot influence with his or her personal views. Subsequently, findings from the study are solely reliant on the respondent's view and not from the empirical review (Cooper & Schindler, 2003).

3.3 Target Population, Sample and Sampling Technique

3.3.1 Target Population

This study targeted North Cyprus and specifically the student population who are noted for accessing hotel, restaurant and airline services on a daily basis especially within the context of COVID-19.

3.3.2 Sample Composition

This study sampled 300 students of different gender to capture their opinions about the subject matter. This group of persons was chosen because students are amongst the most frequent users of restaurants, airlines and other hospitality services in the Turkish Republic Northern Cyprus. Therefore, they were available to express insightful opinions that were quite instrumental to the achievement of the research objectives.

3.3.3 Sampling Technique

With the purpose of achieving the objectives of the present thesis, students were selected by means of the simple random probability sampling. This allowed the researcher to focus and choose on specific characteristics of the target population interested, willing and able to assist in answering the research questions.

The researcher employed simple random probability sampling in order to choose an appropriate quantity of samples in each school for unbiased representation. This method of sampling provides equal opportunity of being selected to the entire target population and considering the access of the researchers to the general student population, the likelihood of selecting each student/member of the population is well known (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). This technique was suited for the study because the study targeted the entire student population of different nationality studying in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus; different gender, and varying age groups. Also, with this technique, the target is very precise.

3.4 Nature, Sources of Data and Instrument for Data Collection

3.4.1 Nature of Data and Source of Data

This study made use of two main sources of data; primary and secondary data. However, primary data was the main source and this is because digital marketing is a constantly growing and changing phenomenon and more organizations are getting engaged; previous year's data may not reflect the actual relationship today between digital marketing and consumer behavior. Considering that this research is focusing more on how COVID-19 has brought a paradigm shift in the digital landmark, only primary source of data will give accurate, reliable, current information on how digital marketing influences consumer behavior within the COVID-19 era. The relative advantage for using this type of data is that primary data are original and relevant to and it has a very high degree of accuracy. The nature of data for this study was both quantitative and qualitative.

3.4.2 Instrument of Data Collection

Questionnaires were employed as the main tool for data collection. Structured questionnaires were administered by the research to students of higher institutions in North Cyprus. To ensure convenience on the part of respondents and accountability, questionnaires will be administered online using Google form. According to Gorodovich (2020) the Google form for example as a Web-based survey helps in reaching a large target population at various locations coupled costs effectiveness. Soon after the online surveys and sampling are filled, there is input of the data in a spreadsheet that makes it easy run analysis of dataset (Vasanth & Harinarayana, 2016). The researcher limited responses to one person each for the survey and the reason was to circumvent multiple responses which could deviate or mislead results. It should also be noted that because of COVID-19, the researcher values human health and cannot put human health at risk. Therefore, online administration of questionnaires was the best method which was used rather than the traditional method.

The questions were closed ended on a 5likert scale ranging from (1-5 where 1-strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4-Agree and 5-strongly Agree) were applied to measure the degree of responses of the survey to maintain consistency and avoid ambiguity. Questionnaires were therefore an important data collection instrument as they

helped in collecting reliable information important to the study and therefore provided the researcher first-hand data for analysis. Online sampling of questionnaires was also uncomplicated and time efficient in that, several respondents were able to respond simultaneously.

Table 1

Table 1, shows the questions in the questionnaire distributed to the respondent to gather information, Using a five-Point Likert Scale: (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3= Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = strongly agree)

Questionnaire Items

Indicators	References
Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA)	
Interacting with this brand’s social media is fun	Kim & Ko, 2012
Content of this brand on social media is interesting	Kim & Ko, 2012
It’s easy to deliver my opinion through this brand’s social media	Kim & Ko, 2012
The content shared on the social media of this brand is the newest Information	Kim & Ko, 2012
Interacting with this brand’s social media is trendy	Kim & Ko, 2012
This brand’s social media provides the information that I needed	Bilgin, 2018
I can easily obtain information that I need thanks to the directions on this brand’s social media	Bilgin, 2018
I like the ads that this brand has published on social media	Bilgin, 2018
Social media ads of this brand positively affect my attention for the brand	Bilgin, 2018

Table 1 (Continued)

Electronic Word of Mouth Marketing (eWOM)	
I spoke of this brand much more frequently online than about any other brand	Goyette et al., 2010
I spoke of this brand to many individuals.	Goyette et al., 2010
I recommended this brand	Goyette et al., 2010
I am proud to say to others that I am this brand's customer.	Goyette et al., 2010
I mostly say positive things to others about this brand	Goyette et al., 2010
I mostly say negative things to others about this brand	Goyette et al., 2010
I have spoken unflatteringly of this brand to others	Goyette et al., 2010
Consumer Satisfaction	
I am very satisfied with the service provided by this brand	David A. Aaker, 1996
This brand does a good job of satisfying my needs	David A. Aaker, 1996
The service provided by this brand is very satisfactory	David A. Aaker, 2001
I believe that using this service is usually a very satisfying Experience	David A. Aaker, 2001
I made the right decision when I decided to use this service	David A. Aaker, 2001

3.5 Operationalization and Measurement of Variables

The main variables for this study is digital marketing (independent variable); consumer behavior (dependent variable). The impact that digital marketing will have on consumer behavior will be captured using three (3) different questions dimensions under; Social Media Marketing Activities, Email Marketing and Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM).

Table 2

Operationalization of Variables

	Variables	Variables
Independent Variables (X)	Digital Marketing	Digital Marketing Tools Social Media Marketing Activities Mobile Marketing Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM)
Dependent Variables (Y)	Consumer Behavior	Variables of Consumer Behavior Consumer Satisfaction

Source: Composed by Researcher (2022).

Table 3

Definition of Variables

Variables	Definition	Operationalization
Digital Marketing	Digital Marketing is the utilization of the cyberspace and other associated digital technologies in combination with contemporary communication to meet the objectives of marketing (Chaffey, 2012).	Social Media Marketing Activities Mobile Marketing Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM)
Consumer Behavior	Consumer behavior refers to “how organizations, people and groups choose what to buy, consume and their choice of product usage, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy their wants and needs (Madni, 2014)”	Consumer Satisfaction

Source: Researcher (2022).

3.6 Techniques of Data Analysis and Presentation

Data analysis entails the inspection, sorting and data modeling. The transformation and presentation of the data through a technique that users will be able to obtain informative perceptions that will enable knowledgeable decision making (Cooper and Schindler, 2011). As a result of this, the questionnaires underwent inspection and editing to confirm that it captured the accurate feedback, views from the responders about the variables that were measured. The respondents' feedback was coded. It was also sorted by the grouping of the replies into designated categories. To do this, responses were assigned to numerical values. Subsequently, an analysis of the responses was done with the SPSS software. The presentation of the final information involved tables and other demonstrative forms of presentations which were used to communicate the final results from the analysis.

3.6.1 Data Entry

With data entry, the researcher keyed in the data into a spreadsheet and all variables were named, defined entered into the analytical tool; the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

3.6.2 Data Cleaning

Considering that the values that were entered into the SPSS data file needed to be transcribed, the data was cleaned in order to ensure that the values were within the boundaries of what was reasonably expected. Following recommendations of Meyer (2013) consistency checks should be made to verify the reliability of data collected and make sure that the right data was entered. Erroneous data was verified and corrected using the raw scores from the responses.

3.6.3 Model Specifications

All the questionnaires were sampled in the online, compiled and checked for completeness. Data of the study was analyzed using descriptive statistics. A multiple regression model was employed to illustrate the relationship amongst the variables (SMMA, Mobile Marketing and Electronic Word of Mouth). The analytical model of the study was directed by the researcher's regression model as shown;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \mu_i$$

Where;

Y = Consumer Satisfaction

X₁ = Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA)

X₂ = Mobile Marketing (MM)

X₃ = Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM)

β = Beta coefficient of variable. That is, the measure of the change in Y associated with the change in X

μ_i = the expected error that is assumed to be associated with the variables

The coefficient of determination (R-Square) was obtained and gave the explanatory power of the model while the correlation coefficient (Beta factor) for each

of the three independent variables gave the nature and extent of association with the dependent variable. The results were interpreted at 5% level of significance.

3.7 Validation Techniques

3.7.1 Validation and Reliability of Instruments

The validity of the questionnaire was checked through the extensive coverage of required demographic variables along with the relevant items of three (3) study variables of Social Media Marketing Activities, Mobile Marketing and Electronic Word of Mouth.

Finally, the results from the analysis were discussed in chapter four while key recommendations were subject of chapter five.

3.8 Limitations of Data and Tools

Although the researcher intended to achieve research objectives, there were some limitations of the study; the researcher was confined to sample the views of 300 students but assumingly, North Cyprus has over 50,000 student populations. Also, there were other users of digital services who are not students. Therefore, the number of students could be increased and or other youthful population could have been added to have a higher coverage and a more generalized opinion. Also, the opinions of respondents filled the online questionnaire without any provision for their internet charges. This might have been a disincentive for some not to respond and reduce the actual valid responses to 202.

Also, respondents were not 100% true about the responses, there were variations in understanding and interpreting questions and some questions were left unanswered. All this will limit the research to some extent.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The researcher sought the consent of the participants before getting them involved in the research. During the study confidentiality and privacy was well respected by letting the respondents fill the online questionnaire on a voluntary basis. The participants of this study were informed about the purpose, methods, risks, benefits and intended possible uses of the results and their right to quit participation at any point. They also had the right to ask questions at any point before, during or after the research is completed. This

research was intended purely for academic purpose; and therefore, participants were assured that the feedback is not to be used for any other divergent reason except to add value in academics.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.1 Descriptive Results

4.1.1 Characteristics of Sample

Table 4

Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	116	57.4	57.4	57.4
Female	83	41.1	41.1	98.5
Others	3	1.5	1.5	100.0
Total	202	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

From table 4 above, it was discovered that majority (57.4%) of the respondents were males while minority (41.1%) were female.

Table 5

Age

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 18-25 years	46	22.8	22.8	22.8
26-33 years	104	51.5	51.5	74.3
34-41 years	51	25.2	25.2	99.5
41 +	1	.5	.5	100.0
Total	202	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

From table 5 above, the respondents from 18-25 years rated 22.8% response rate, those from 26-33 years rated 51.5% response rate and were the majority, those from 34-

41 years rated 25.2% response rate and the least response were those from 41 years and above rating 0.5% response rate.

Table 6

Do you use social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube etc.?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	202	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

From table 6, it was discovered that all (100%) of the respondents uses social media platform like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube and others.

Table 7

Which is your most preferred social media marketing platform?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Facebook	106	52.5	52.5	52.5
	Instagram	47	23.3	23.3	75.7
	Linkedin	9	4.5	4.5	80.2
	Twitter	28	13.9	13.9	94.1
	YouTube	12	5.9	5.9	100.0
Total		202	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

From table 7 above, it was discovered that majority (52.5%) of the respondents uses Facebook, followed by the usage of Instagram (23.3%), followed by the usage of Twitter (13.9%), followed by the usage of YouTube (5.9%) and lastly the usage of LinkedIn (4.5%).

Table 8*Table For how long have you been using social media platforms?*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than 1 year	4	2.0	2.0	2.0
2-5 years	65	32.2	32.2	34.2
Valid 6-9 years	66	32.7	32.7	66.8
10 years +	67	33.2	33.2	100.0
Total	202	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

From table 8 above, it was discovered that majority (33.2%) of the respondents have been using social media from 10 years and above, followed by those who have used it from 6 to 9 years (32.7%), then those who have used it from 2 to 5 years (32.2%) and very few respondents (2%) have used social media for less than 1 year.

Table 9*How often do you use hotels, airlines and restaurants services physically within the COVID-19 period?*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Once in a while	99	49.0	49.0	49.0
Very often	22	10.9	10.9	59.9
Valid Often	80	39.6	39.6	99.5
All the time	1	.5	.5	100.0
Total	202	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

From table 9 above, it was discovered that majority (49%) of the respondent used hotels, airlines and restaurants services physically within the COVID-19 period once in a

while, followed by those who used them often (39.6%), then those who used them very often (10.9%) while very few (0.5%) used them all the time.

Table 10

In the last 6 months, within the hotel, restaurants and airline sectors, mention one brand you have interacted with on social media (e.g. view, like, share or comment on posts; follow brand page on social media)?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Hotel	84	41.6	41.6	41.6
Valid Restaurant	101	50.0	50.0	91.6
Airline	17	8.4	8.4	100.0
Total	202	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

From table 10 above, it was discovered that half (50%) of the respondents interacted more with restaurants on social media within the last 6 months, followed by those who interacted with hotels (41.6%), and lastly those who interacted with airline (8.4%).

Table 11

Reliability statistics

Items	Valid cases	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
Social media marketing activity	202	.823	9
Ewom	202	.657	7
MM	202	.457	2
CS	202	.856	5
Total		0.7	

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

From table 11 above, the Alpha Cronbach's test shows that there is high measure of internal consistency of social media marketing activities due to its high value (.823) followed by consumer satisfaction (.856), then electronic word of mouth marketing (.657) while mobile marketing is insignificant because of the low value of (.457). Therefore, since the total value of Alpha Cronbach test is 0.7, it means all the variables are highly consistent in the study except mobile marketing and it also makes the findings to be reliable.

4.2 Regression Result

This subsection examines the effect of the components of the explanatory variables which are social media marketing activities (SMMA), mobile marketing (MM) and electronic word of mouth (EWOM) on the dependent variable which is consumer satisfaction (CS). The variables are regressed as seen in tables below;

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.		Variance	Skewness		Kurtosis	
					Std.	Error		Statistic	Error	Statistic	Error
SMM_Mean	202	3.00	5.00	3.9252	.02820	.40073	.161	.301	.171	1.021	.341
eWOM_Mean	202	1.86	4.43	3.4887	.02752	.39120	.153	-.934	.171	1.837	.341
CS_Mean	202	2.20	5.00	3.9673	.03270	.46480	.216	-.540	.171	1.389	.341
Valid N (listwise)	202										

Table 12. This model explained the mean, the Std. Deviation, the skewness and the kurtosis of the variable entered and the number of respondent.

Table 13*Normality Test*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.		Variance	Skewness		Kurtosis	
					Std.	Error		Statistic	Error	Statistic	Error
SMM_Mean	202	3.00	5.00	3.9252	.02820	.40073	.161	.301	.171	1.021	.341
eWOM_Mean	202	1.86	4.43	3.4887	.02752	.39120	.153	-.934	.171	1.837	.341
CS_Mean	202	2.20	5.00	3.9673	.03270	.46480	.216	-.540	.171	1.389	.341
Valid N (listwise)	202										

Table 13 shows the normality test of the variables. Skewness and Kurtosis were both used for the normality testing. These two techniques are mostly used for normality testing. The former is the degree to which the average score of a construct is not centrally situated in distribution while the latter is the degree to which the average score of a construct is either flat or peak in a distribution. All the variables as shown in Table 4.4, are all normal data.

Three variable in the analysis were tested for normality. The test results indicated that social media marketing activities (SMMA) with a skewness of 0.301 with Std. Error of 0.171, and a kurtosis of 1.021 with Std. Error of 0.341, for the electronic word of mouth (EWOM) with a Skewness of -0.934 with Std. Error of 0.171, and a kurtosis of 1.837 with Std. Error of 0.341 and for the consumer satisfaction (CS) which have a skewness of -0.540 with Std. Error of 0.171 and a kurtosis of 1.389 with a Std. Error of 0.341. The skewness numbers for the variables fall between -1 and +1 while the kurtosis numbers for the variables fall between -3 and +3 which means that there were no deviation and the data has normality which means the result is significant.

Table 14*Model Summary^b*

Model	R	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change ^c Statistic				
					F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	Durbin-Watson
1	.530a	.281	.39608	.281	38.901	2	199	.000	1.804

a. Predictors: (Constant), eWOM_Mean, SMM_Mean

b. Dependent Variable: CS_Mean.

R: multiple correlation coefficient = .530

R²: coefficient of determination = .281

Table 14. The table shows the model summary. The coefficient of determination, or R square, tells us how much the dependent variable varies when the independent variable changes, the model explains 28.1% of the variation in the dependent variable, which means 28.1% of the variation in consumer satisfaction is explained by the two independent variables.

Table 15*ANOVA^a*

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	12.205	2	6.103	38.901	.000b
	Residual	31.219	199	.157		
	Total	43.424	201			

a. Dependent Variable: CS_Mean

b. Predictors: (Constant), eWOM_Mean, SMM_Mean

Table 15. This model explain how significant the regression result can be.

The overall model is significantly useful in explaining consumer satisfaction. $p < .05$

Table 16*Coefficients^a*

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized			Correlations			Collinearity	
	Coefficients		Coefficients			Zero			Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	sig.	order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	1.233	.315		3.915	.000					
SMM_Mean	.320	.076	.276	4.211	.000	.417	.286	.253	.844	1.185
eWOM_Mean	.424	.078	.357	5.456	.000	.466	.361	.328	.844	1.185

a. Dependent Variable: CS_Mean

Table 16. The coefficient explain the degree to which change to the value in the independent variable which will also lead to change in the value of the dependent variable. The result shows that with 1 unit increase in social media marketing activity, consumer satisfaction increases by 0.32, which was found to be a significant change, $p < .05$. With 1 unit increase in electronic word of mouth marketing, consumer satisfaction increases by 0.42, which found to be a significant change, $p < .05$. From the analysis its shows that there is a significant positive relationship between social media marketing and electronic word of mouth marketing on consumer satisfaction. $P < 0.05$.

Table 17

Results of the proposed hypotheses.

Hypotheses	Results
H ₁ : Social Media Marketing Activities has a Positive Relationship With Consumer Satisfaction.	Supported
H ₂ : Mobile Marketing has a Positive Relationship with Consumer Satisfaction.	Not Supported
H ₃ : Electronic Word of Mouth has a Positive Relationship with Consumer Satisfaction.	Supported

Table 17, shows the result of the proposed hypotheses tested.

CHAPTER FIVE

MAJOR FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Major Findings

A multiple linear regression analysis was used to explain consumer satisfaction based on social media marketing activity and electronic word of mouth marketing. All of the assumptions were met. The coefficient of determination, or R square, tells us how much the dependent variable varies when the independent variable changes. From the findings in the above table the value of R square is 28.1% and this shows that 28.1% of the variation in consumer satisfaction is explained by the independent variable.

Objective 1: To establish the relationship between social media marketing activities and consumer satisfaction

The regression result showed that Social Media Marketing Activities have a positive effect on consumer satisfaction due to its positive regressed coefficient (.320). This effect is statistically significant at the 5 percent level of significance. The result precisely indicates that an increase in social media marketing activities scale by 1 unit will lead to an increase in consumer satisfaction by 0.32 based on its coefficient.

This was in line with the view of Kaplan et al., (2010) that social media enables interaction between users, friends and followers by creating profiles and making requests to friends and followers for them to view and access their profiles (Kaplan et al., 2010). It is therefore correct to assert that social media is the platform which enables social communication via digital tools. Slowly, social media has modified the procedure through which consumers obtain information. Also, technological advancement has resulted to better social environments that are now enabling marketers to have a more intimate, fast and efficient access to their clients (Shankar, 2011): this is because; technology is on an increase.

It was also in view of Hanna et al (2011), who held that the unique nature of social media has revolutionized marketing practices such as advertising and promotion (Hanna et al., 2011). Likewise, Kaplan (2012) states that, there are many privileges that come along with using online marketing, it helps to connect business to consumers (B2C), business to business (B2B), develop friendly relationships, and manage those relationships in a timely manner. Social media websites give an opportunity to the organizations to

whenever they want it (Soewandi, 2015). Moreover, mobile marketing is simple and makes it easy for firms to update their products, service and information and share to stakeholders (Afzal & Khan, 2015). On the other hand due to the variety of products and services offered today coupled with changing consumer's desire and demands, manufacturers need faster and effective ways to achieve customer's loyalty (Aqsa & Kartini, 2015).

To determine how electronic word of mouth will influence consumer satisfaction

The results held that an increase in electronic word of mouth scale by 1 unit will leads to increase in consumer satisfaction by 0.942 based on it coefficient.

This was in line with the study of Bowen & Shoemaker, (2003) who held that Positive e-WOM communication or recommendations by loyal customers have been very instrument within the hospitality industry (Bowen & Shoemaker, 2003; Oh, 2002). According to these two authors, customer decisions to purchase, perception and behaviors of today's customers are a function of the recommendations from a trusted or trustworthy friend or colleague. People are very interested to hear the experience from a previous consumer about a certain product. This experience is said to be very influential on the new customer. Therefore, the authors call on all marketing units today in all organization not to only provide the best of quality but to provide the best of customer service – the two go together (Bowen et al., 2003). Again, dishonesty, corruption, unhealthy competition and conflict of interest in the world today can mislead many to influencing others wrongly (Bowen et al., 2003). With such scenario, brand acceptance not to talk of purchase intention even becomes more complicated for any potential customer and can even lead to a product going out of the market. This is where referrals becomes questionable, misleads, and brings unnecessary consumer behavior about a particular product or service.

5.2 Recommendations

It is recommended that for consumers to feel safe with the service provider or supplier in social media, transactions should always be done successful. And when consumers trust the company, they have realized safety, are satisfied, that this organization can satisfy their requirements and needs even in the long run, they become committed, loyal to the company and or its brand.

It is also recommended that previous customers should testify for their services obtained from the media since people are very interested to hear the experience from a previous consumer about a certain product. This experience is said to be very influential on the new customer. Therefore, the authors call on all marketing units today in all organization not to only provide the best of quality but to provide the best of customer service the two go together. Again, dishonesty, corruption, unhealthy competition and conflict of interest in the world today can mislead many to influencing others wrongly. With such scenario, brand acceptance not to talk of purchase intention even becomes more complicated from any potential customer and can even lead to a product going out of the market. This is where referrals becomes questionable, misleads, and brings unnecessary consumer behavior about a particular product or service.

5.3 Conclusion

Online platforms are even more useful today to the hospitality sector because the services offered by this sector are very intangible and experience related and the high ability for an average traveler to contribute and share information online. This makes social media for example to be even very unique considering that it facilitates two-way communication between the producer/marketer and the final consumer. Marketing is able to develop today and grow in bounds and leaps because of the speed through which consumers relate with producers. The flexibility of technology and considering the safety of consumers has seen the increasing need to embrace the digital system in most cases as a channel to purchase goods and services. The global health crisis 'COVID-19' has recently come to push and remind businesses, the public and the world at large on the need to invest more towards a digital world to solve some, if not all the challenges of traditional marketing and findings have indicated globally the impact of technology on businesses. Marketing focuses on satisfying the needs and wants of the target consumer in different geographical regions in the world and marketers are now looking for ways to articulate marketing strategies. Marketing includes aspects of promotion which involves, creating awareness of a product and to some extent increasing the brand's market share and attain growth over specified period of time. Marketing activities cover strategically advertising,

promotion, selling and delivering the product and service to final consumer and how to expand geographically clients and markets.

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APPENDICES

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Participant, This research project is being conducted by Bitu Elyse Constance of Final International University. This research project aims to investigate The Impact of Digital Marketing on Consumer Behavior. This survey is for people who are 18 years old or older. The proposed study is entitled "The Impact of Digital Marketing on Consumer Behavior in the Hospitality Industry." You will be a participant in the project if you read and approve this informed consent form. The survey link will be active between 20/06/2022 and 20/07/2022. You are expected to participate in this survey study only once. The survey will be online. This survey is anonymous. Other than being anonymous, no information is required to identify you and you cannot be identified by the answers you supply. Information to be obtained within the scope of this study will only be shared in scientific publications, presentations and online environments for educational purposes by the researcher. The data collected is anonymous and will be kept safely in an encrypted file on a computer. Participation in this study is voluntary. Your participation in this project can contribute to your knowledge about consumer behavior in the hospitality industry and can support you in future studies. None of the steps in the survey can cause personal discomfort. However, if you feel uncomfortable for any reason, you are free to quit the survey and leave the research without explaining the reason. In such a case, the information you provide will only be used by the researcher with your consent. Thank you in advance for participating in this study. If you need any further information about the study or if you have any questions you would like to ask you can contact me (the researcher) at (email: constance.elyse@final.edu.tr, phone: 05338369694).

Please kindly answer the following questions by placing a tick (✓) in the appropriate space provided

SECTION A: Characteristics of respondents

1. Gender? a) Male b) Female c) Others

2. Age range?
 - a) 18 - 25 years
 - b) 26 - 33 years
 - c) 34 - 41 years
 - d) 41 years +

3. Do you use social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube etc.?
 - a) Yes b) No

4. Which is your most preferred social media marketing platform?
.....

5. For how long have you been using social media platforms?
 - a) Less than 1 year
 - b) 2-5 years
 - c) 6-9 years
 - d) 10 years +

6. How often do you use hotels, airlines and restaurants services physically within the COVID-19 period?
 - a) Once in a while b) Very often c) Often d) All the time

7. In the last 6 months, within the hotel, restaurants and airline sectors, mention one brand you have interacted with on social media (e.g. view, like, share or comment on posts; follow brand page on social media)?
.....

SECTION B: Digital Marketing

For this section, use the brand you mentioned to answer the following questions.

Please kindly indicate your opinion or degree of acceptance with regards to the following; 1=strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree

Social Media Marketing Activities

N ^o	Item	1	2	3	4	5
SM1	Interacting with this brand's social media is fun					
SM2	Content of this brand on social media is interesting					
SM3	It's easy to deliver my opinion through this brand's social media					
SM4	The content shared on the social media of this brand is the newest Information					
SM5	Interacting with this brand's social media is trendy					
SM6	This brand's social media provides the information that I needed					
SM7	I can easily obtain information that I need thanks to the directions on this brand's social media					
SM8	I like the ads that this brand has published on social media					
SM9	Social media ads of this brand positively affect my attention for the Brand					

Electronic Word of Mouth Marketing (eWOM)

N ^o	Item	1	2	3	4	5
EWOM1	I spoke of this brand much more frequently online than about any other brand					
EWOM2	I spoke of this brand to many individuals.					
EWOM3	I recommended this brand					
EWOM4	I am proud to say to others that I am this brand's customer.					
EWOM5	I mostly say positive things to others about this brand					
EWOM5	I mostly say negative things to others about this brand					
EWOM6	I have spoken unflatteringly of this brand to others					

SECTION C: Consumer Behaviour

Consumer Satisfaction					
CS1	I am very satisfied with the service provided by this brand				
CS2	This brand does a good job of satisfying my needs				
CS3	The service provided by this brand is very satisfactory				
CS4	I believe that using this service is usually a very satisfying experience				
CS5	I made the right decision when I decided to use this service				

The End. Thank you