

The Impact of Buying Behavior on the relationship between Digital Marketing and Business Growth "An Application on E-Commerce Companies in Egypt"

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Abstract

The main objective of this research is to determine the impact of buying behavior on the relationship between digital marketing and business growth at e-commerce companies in Egypt. After reviewing previous studies in this regard, a model for the research hypotheses was developed, and primary data was collected through designing a questionnaire with scales for digital marketing, buying behavior and business growth and by using a purposive sample of Egyptian online customer.

The model was tested using the structural equation model and path analysis was used to assess the strength of the relationships among the research variables by using (Smart PLS) program. The necessary tests were conducted to assess the validity of the research variable models. The questionnaire was distributed to the purposive sample through Google form.

The researcher concluded that the positive impact of digital marketing on e-commerce business growth in Egypt, highlighting its significant influence on customer buying behavior. A strong relationship exists between digital marketing and business growth, and customer buying behavior also mediates the relationship between digital marketing and business growth. With partial differences based on demographic factors

Keywords: digital Marketing, buying behavior, business growth.

أثر السلوك الشرائي كمتغير وسيط في العلاقة بين التسويق الرقمي ونمو الأعمال (دراسة تطبيقية)

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ملخص البحث:

الهدف الرئيسي من هذا البحث هو تحديد أثر السلوك الشرائي على العلاقة بين التسويق الرقمي ونمو الأعمال في شركات التجارة الإلكترونية في مصر. وبعد مراجعة الدراسات السابقة في هذا الشأن، تم تطوير نموذج لفرضيات البحث، وتم جمع البيانات الأولية من خلال تصميم استبيان بمقاييس للتسويق الرقمي وسلوك الشراء ونمو الأعمال وباستخدام عينة مقصودة من العملاء المصريين لشركات التجارة الإلكترونية بمصر.

تم اختبار النموذج باستخدام المعادلات الهيكلية وتم استخدام تحليل المسار لتقييم قوة العلاقات بين متغيرات البحث باستخدام برنامج (Smart PLS) وتم إجراء الاختبارات اللازمة لتقييم صحة نماذج متغيرات البحث وتم توزيع الاستبانة على العينة القصدية من خلال نموذج جوجل. وخلص الباحث إلى وجود تأثير إيجابي للتسويق الرقمي على نمو أعمال التجارة الإلكترونية في مصر، مسلطاً الضوء على تأثيره الكبير على سلوك الشراء لدى العملاء، حيث توجد علاقة قوية بين التسويق الرقمي ونمو الأعمال، كما يتوسط سلوك الشراء لدى العملاء العلاقة بين التسويق الرقمي ونمو الأعمال، مع وجود فروق جزئية بناءً على العوامل الديموغرافية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: السلوك , الشرائي, التسويق, الرقمي

1- Introduction

Digital marketing has become essential for companies of all size since the global market for digital advertising and marketing is expected to reach \$786.2 billion by 2026. The increasing concentration of spending on advertising shows how successful digital marketing is at reaching growth objectives including higher revenue, better brand awareness, customer loyalty, lead the universe, and cheaper costs for customer acquisition and maintenance by focusing on specific audiences (Veleva, S. S., & Tsvetanova, A. I. 2020, P. 2).

Understanding Egyptian online customer buying behavior is crucial for businesses and marketers as it helps identify consumer needs, preferences, and decision-making processes, leading to business growth, loyalty, and the selection of the appropriate marketing strategy. It also helps marketers understand who decides what to buy and what motivates them (Saud, Wafa Abdel Samie, 2023, p. 5).

According to the Statista Research Department report, the Egyptian e-commerce market is estimated to reach \$9.05 billion in 2024 and increase at a CAGR of 14.80% to reach \$18.04 billion by 2029. The market is likely to continue growing fast in the upcoming years. For now, it is seeing tremendous growth.

Digital marketing significantly influences customer buying behavior, and understanding consumer behavior through data analytics helps businesses optimize strategies. Also, researching consumer behavior informs product creation, boosting satisfaction and loyalty. Customized products and services give organizations a market advantage. A customer-centered approach leads to business growth (Durai, T., & King, R. 2019, P. 145, Dastane, D. O. 2020, P. 145, and Sharopova, N. 2022, P. 379).

The independent variable in this research is digital marketing, with five dimensions (attract, engage, retain, learn, and relate). On the other hand, the dependent variable is business growth with three dimensions (growth of quality service, growth of customer satisfaction and growth of customer loyalty, and the mediator variable is online customer buying behavior with five dimensions (attention, interest, search, action and share

Therefore, the main purpose of this research is to identify the impact of buying behavior on the relationship between digital marketing and business growth.

2-Literature Review

The literature review is divided into three main parts according to the nature of the study:

2.1: Literature review of digital marketing:

There are several studies that are interested in studying DM, and its corresponding dimensions and metrics have been the subject of numerous investigations. A summary of some of these well-known researchers' contributions may be found in Table 1 below.

Table (1): Literature review of digital marketing

No.	Author/year	The Study	Objectives	Results
1	(Nassar, 2022).	The impact of digital marketing on customer loyalty Applied on Egyptian telecom companies	This research aimed to study the effect of digital marketing on customer loyalty by applied on the Egyptian telecom companies (Qalyubia Governorate). Model proposed for the study shows the dimensions of digital marketing (Attract, Engage, Retain, Learn, and Relate) and customer loyalty.	The research finds the positive effect of digital marketing on customer loyalty; there were significant differences between the respondents' opinions about digital marketing and customer loyalty according to demographic variables. And The results also showed that there are differences between the opinions of the respondents, including employees and customers, about digital marketing and customer loyalty.
2	(Zrybnieva et al., 2023).	Sustainable entrepreneurship: analysis of digital marketing trends in the regional and global dimension	Evaluating digital marketing's potential in the context of online sustainable entrepreneurship by examining trends in	The results of the study showed that digital technologies accelerate innovation cycles, reducing commercialization

No.	Author/year	The Study	Objectives	Results
			digital marketing from both a regional and global perspective, drawing on the best practices of the US and the EU. This article conducts a regional and global analysis of digital marketing trends and investigates their effects on the growth of sustainable entrepreneurship.	time and accelerating operational processes. They guide top management and marketing departments in developing digital marketing strategies and influencing economic policy in digital ecosystems.
3	(Punjabi et al., 2024).	Navigating the New Wave; Unveiling the Transformation Effects of social media On Digital Marketing in The Emerging Era"	Providing a comprehensive understanding of the various effects of integrating social media, offering valuable guidance to assist businesses in managing this dynamic environment and maximizing social media's benefits for digital marketing strategies in today's digital age.	This study's findings Social media's transformative effects on digital marketing are influenced by a wide range of factors, including user engagement, platform features, reliability of content, data analytics, influencer impact, technological advancements, cultural influences, competitive dynamics, regulations, and consumer trust. A smart and flexible strategy is needed to navigate these variables and fully utilize social

No.	Author/year	The Study	Objectives	Results
				media's ability to influence digital marketing plans.
4	(Sugiharto, 2024).	The Role of E-commerce for MSMEs as a Digital Marketing Strategy in Facing Industrial Revolution 4.0.	Investigating the impact of e-commerce adoption by MSMEs in facing changes in global business dynamics	The study's findings demonstrate how MSMEs that use e-commerce become more competitive by growing their markets, becoming more efficient in their operations and interacting directly with customers. Digital marketing tactics, such as social media and internet advertising, are the main ways that MSME visibility-building is accomplished. E-commerce has proven to be a crucial tool in assisting MSMEs in adjusting to the demands of the fourth industrial revolution.

Source: adopted by the researcher.

2.2: Literature review of buying behavior:

There are several studies that are interested in studying buying behavior, its dimensions, and measures. Some of these researchers will be described in the following table (2).

Table (2): Literature review of buying behavior

No.	Author/year	The Study	Objectives	Results
1	(Xue et al., 2021).	Online tourist behavior of the net generation: An empirical analysis in Taiwan based on the AISAS model	Examining Taiwan's Net Generation's online behaviors using Dentsu's AISAS (Attention-Interest-Search-Action-Share) model	This study found that information search was the key action variable, especially during travel. Attention and interest had significant indirect influences on actions, which impacted sharing, learning, and growth. Learning, growth, and action increased sharing. Post-travel sharing stimulated attention and was a boost for another cycle of AISAS.
2	(Rashad, M. F. 2023)	The Relation between the Electronic Obsession of the Customers and The Effect of Influencers on them in on Hand and Their Purchase Behavior on the Other.	Recognizing the phenomenon of celebrities and other influencers influencing the way e-shoppers purchase various products and brands online and attempting to track and analyze this influence during the five stages of buying behavior (attention, interest,	The study found that respondents' attitudes in the intermediate stages of electronic purchasing behavior were high, followed by interest, purchasing action, and search. There was a direct correlation between celebrity influence and purchasing behavior, but interest and purchasing

No.	Author/year	The Study	Objectives	Results
			searching, purchasing action, and sharing).	decisions were not affected. Excessive social media use was positively correlated with all stages of electronic purchasing behavior.
3	(Huang et al., 2024).	Chinese consumers' psychology and behavior of the foods with nutrition claims based on AISAS model.	Examining how Chinese consumers' psychology and behavior were affected by nutrition claims using the AISAS (Attention-Interest-Search-Action-Share) model as a theoretical framework.	The results indicated younger adults and higher-income individuals show increased attention to nutrition claims, which can lead to food information sharing through interest, information search, and purchase.

Source: adopted by the researcher.

2.3 Literature review of business growth

There are several studies that are interested in studying business growth, its dimensions, and its measures. Some of these researchers will be described in the following table (3).

Table (3): Literature review of business growth

No.	Author/year	The Study	Objectives	Results
1	(Ulaga, W, 2018).	The journey towards customer centricity and service growth in B2C.	The purpose of the study was to assess the variables that could support service growth.	The results conclude that quality service, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty are important factors for business growth.
2	(Abbas et al., 2024).	Financial innovation and digitalization	This study aims to evaluate the impact of product market competitiveness on	The results indicate that digitalized innovation positively influences firm

No.	Author/year	The Study	Objectives	Results
		promote business growth: The interplay of green technology innovation, product market competition and firm performance	firm performance by examining digital financial innovation as a mediating factor.	performance by offering innovative products and digitalization.
3	(Sinaga, et al., 2024).	Analysis of the Effect of Social Media Usage, Search Engine Optimization, and Content Strategy on Business Growth in the E-Commerce Industry in Indonesia.	This study examines how digital marketing strategies, with a particular emphasis on social media usage, search engine optimization (SEO), and content strategy, affect business growth in Indonesia's e-commerce sector.	The results offer firms and governments useful implications for improving digital marketing strategies for sustainable growth in the dynamic Indonesian e-commerce market and suggest a significant mediating role of customer satisfaction and loyalty in the relationship between social media usage and business growth.

Source: adopted by the researcher

2.4 Summary of literature review and research gab:

According to the above-mentioned literature, we can conclude that:

- ١- Most studies focused on the importance of studying digital marketing as an independent variable.
- ٢- The study of Omar, A. M., & Atteya, N. (2020), Ali Afaf Haroun Esmail (2022), Kishore et al. (2023), and Shalabi et al. (2023) focused on studying digital marketing tools, while the study of Al-Attar, F. H., & Al Shammari, M. A. J. A. (2017), Kawa 2020, Mohamed 2020, Farouk &

Ahmed 2021, Mohamed Mohamed Salam 2021, and Nassar, Hala Fouad (2022) focused on studying digital marketing dimensions (attract, engage, retain, learn, and relate).

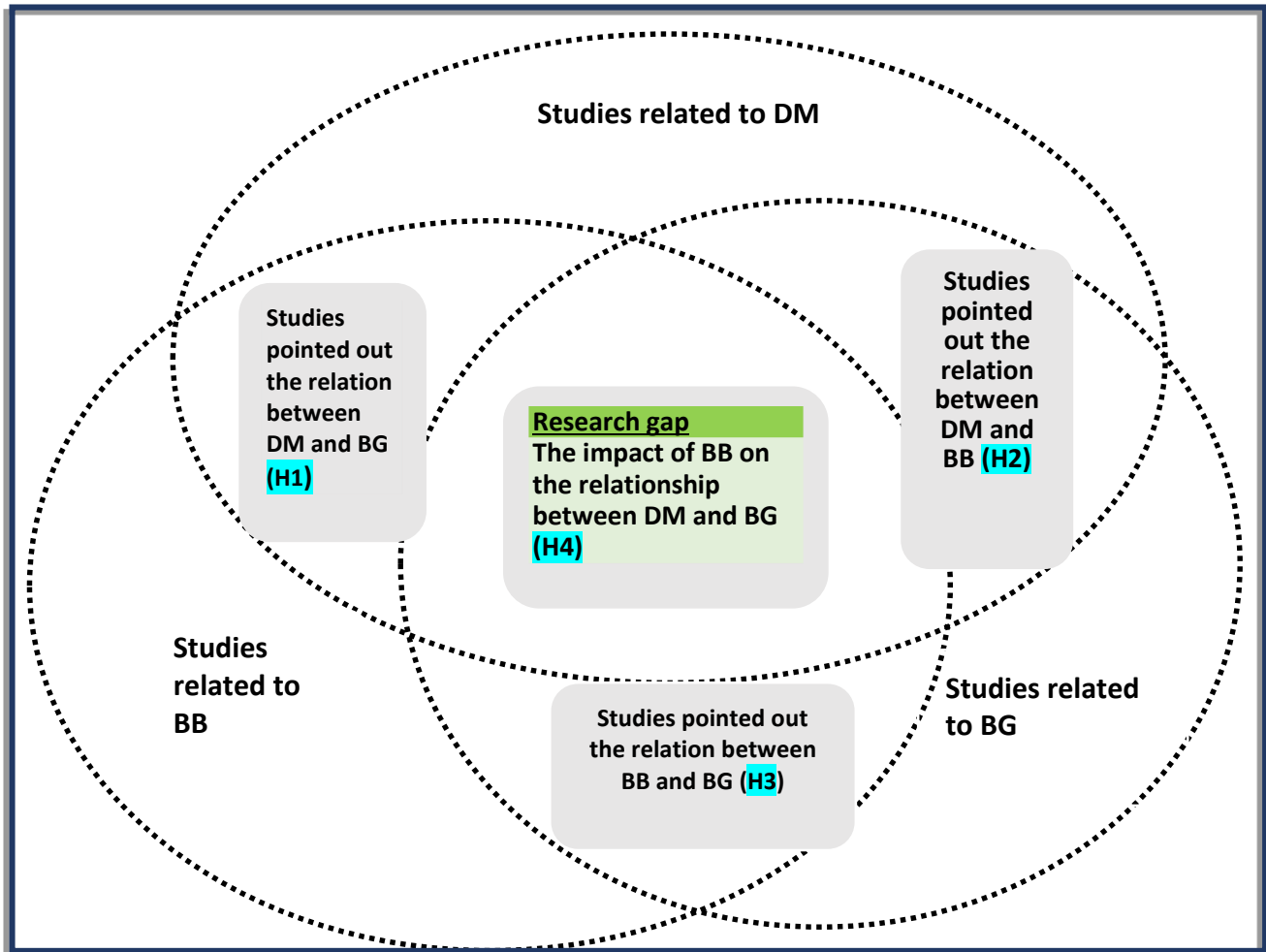
- ٣- There are many studies examining the impact of digital marketing on consumer buying behavior, but from an alternative perspective (Nizar, N. A., & Janathanan, C. (2018); Ramesh, M., & Vidhya, B. (2019); and Pal, A. K., & Shukla, B. (2020).
- ٤- In the digital age, there are several studies that focus on the online customer buying behavior model (AISAS); Hoang, T. V. B. (2023), Hendriyani, J. J., Ceng, L., Utami, N., Priscilla, R., & Anggita, S. (2013, February), Ramadhani, A. D., Triyanto, A., & Muhammad, I. F. (2019), Abdurrahim, M. S., Najib, M., & Djohar, S. (2019), Zhang, C., & Tan, T. (2020, May), Rusli, V. Y., & Pradina, Y. D. (2021), Ruswandi, P. U., Hartoyo, H., & Najib, M. (2021), Xue, L. L., Shen, C. C., Morrison, A. M., & Kuo, L. W. (2021), Qinghao, Y. (2022), Li, H., & Pan, Y. (2023), Rashad, M. F. (2023) and Yuliati, L. N., & Simanjuntak, M. (2024).
- ٥- From the previous study of business growth in e-commerce companies, the business growth dimensions are quality service, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty (Khosla, M., & Kumar, H. 2017, Ulag, W. 2018, Sinaga, H. D. E., Syamsulbahri, S., Muhajir, A., & Darmayanti, N. 2024).

The Research Gap:

Consequently, the following point represent this research gap:

- ١- To the best of the researcher's knowledge, there are no studies that tested the impact of buying behavior on the relationship between digital marketing and business growth in e-commerce companies in the Egyptian environment (Figure 1).
- ٢- Digital marketing will be measured depending on five dimensions: attract, engage, retain, learn, and relate, as proposed by Kierzkowski, McQuade, S., Waitman, R., & Zeisser, M. (1996)
- ٣- The five dimensions to measure online customer buying behavior are the AISAS model: attention, interest, search, action, and search, according to Dentsu Advertising Agency in 2005.
- ٤- Business growth will be measured through three dimensions: quality service, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty (Khosla, M., & Kumar, H. 2017, Ulag, W. 2018, Sinaga, H. D. E., Syamsulbahri, S., Muhajir, A., & Darmayanti, N. 2024).

Figure (1) research gap



Source: Prepared by the researcher

3- Research Problem

The essential purpose of this research is to propose a model for the impact of buying behavior on the relationship between digital marketing and business growth for e-commerce companies in Egypt. The design of this research is aimed at answering the following questions:

Research Problem Statement:

How can DM help e-commerce companies in Egypt achieve business growth through understanding Egyptian customer buying behavior? In order to answer this question, the following question has been subdivided into the following questions:

- a) What is the impact of digital marketing on achieving business growth for e-commerce companies in Egypt?
- b) What is the impact of digital marketing on stimulating Egyptian customer buying behavior?
- c) What is the impact of understanding Egyptian customer buying behavior on achieving business growth for e-commerce companies in Egypt?
- d) To what extent does understanding Egyptian online customer buying behavior impact the relationship between digital marketing and business growth for e-commerce companies in Egypt?

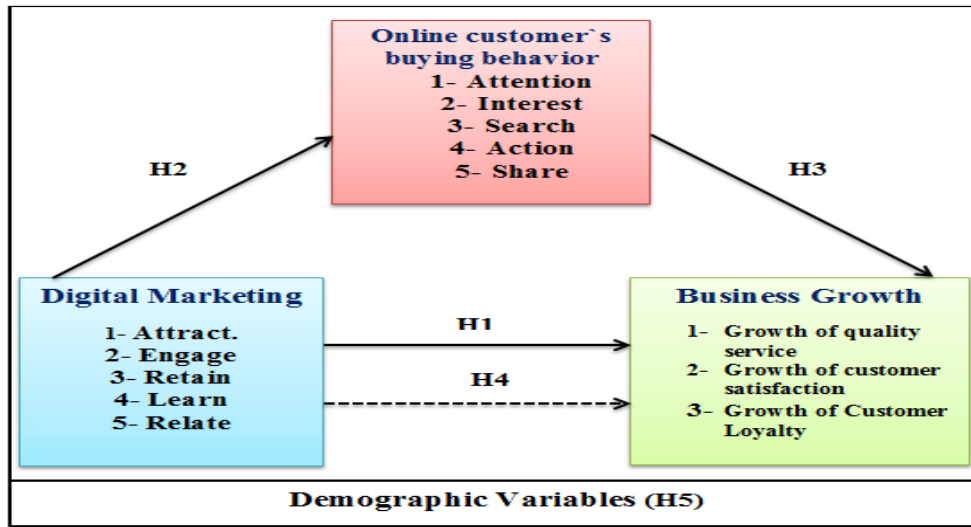
4- Research Objectives

Based on the study problem, a set of objectives have been formulated that the study seeks to achieve:

- a) Determining and measuring the impact of digital marketing on achieving business growth for e-commerce companies in Egypt.
- b) Determining and measuring the impact of digital marketing on motivating Egyptian customer buying behavior.
- c) Assessing and measuring the impact of Egyptian customer buying behavior that helps e-commerce companies achieve business growth.
- d) Determining and measuring the impact of customer buying behavior on the relationship between digital marketing and business growth.
- e) To develop and test a systematic model of the impact of Egyptian customer buying behavior on the relationship between digital marketing and the business growth of e-commerce companies in Egypt.
- f) Introducing recommendations that support e-commerce companies in Egypt.

○- Research Model and hypothesis:

Figure (2): Conceptual Research Model



Source: Prepared by researcher

Considering the following conceptual model (figure2), the research *hypotheses* are set as follows:

H1: There is a statistically significant positive impact of digital marketing on achieving business growth for e-commerce companies in Egypt.

H2: There is a statistically significant positive impact of digital marketing on Egyptian customer buying behavior.

H3: There is a statistically significant positive impact of Egyptian customer buying behavior on achieving business growth for E-commerce companies in Egypt.

H4: Customer buying behavior mediates the relationship between digital marketing in Egypt and achieving business growth for e-commerce companies in Egypt.

H5: There is a significant difference between the opinions of the sample members about their perception of the research variables (digital marketing, buying behavior, and business growth) according to the following demographic variables: gender, age, level of education, The e-commerce company the customer deals with, the number of years spent dealing with the e-commerce company, the number of times you purchase from the company website, and the overall impression for the company.

6-Research Importance

6.1 The scientific importance:

- a) Examine the impact of digital marketing on business growth for e-Commerce companies in Egypt.
- b) Explore the importance of understanding Egyptian customer buying behavior for achieving business growth.
- c) Examine the mediator role of Egyptian customer buying behavior in the relationship between digital marketing and buying behavior.
- d) The results and recommendations of the dissertation may help future researchers in digital marketing and business growth in e-commerce companies in Egypt.

6.2 The practical importance:

- a) Determining the role of digital marketing in achieving high business growth in e-commerce companies in Egypt.
- b) Understanding Egyptian customer buying behavior.
- c) Providing a scientific framework for e-commerce companies in Egypt regarding the variables that affect the high rate of business growth.
- d) The results and recommendations of the research may help e-commerce companies in Egypt.

7- Research Methodology

The researcher will focus on two types of data to determine and test the research hypothesis.

7.1 Secondary data

Secondary data refers to the data that have been previously gathered and have used to illustrate and describe the research variables and their dimensions. Hence, research relies on books, journals, reports, and thesis that related to the research variables (digital marketing, buying behavior and business growth) to collect these data, to determine the research problem, and develop the hypotheses.

7.2 Primary data

Represent the data that will be collected for the first time by the researcher through a survey by using a questionnaire directed to online customer who deals with e-commerce companies in Egypt, and analyzing data to test the hypothesis of the research.

7.2.1 The questionnaire design

To collect data, the researcher adopted on a five-point-Likert scale to develop the questionnaire designed for this purpose and consists of ٥٦ questions that fit the Egyptian environment, and divided to three parts to measure the research variables. The major three variables are digital marketing, online customer buying behavior and business growth. The following table (4) shows the dimensions of each variable and the sentences range that is used to measure each dimension.

Table (4) dimensions variable and the sentences range for each dimension.

No.	Dimensions	Sentences	Measure
Digital Marketing	Attract	1-4	Al-Attar, F. H., & Al Shammari, M. A. J. A. (2017), Kawa (2020), Mohamed (2020), Mohamed Mohamed Salam (2021), Nassar, Hala Fouad (2022),
	Engage	5-9	
	Retain	10-14	
	Learn	15-18	
	Relate	19-23	
Online Customer Buying Behavior	Attention	24-27	Hendriyani, J. et al (2013, February), Abdurrahim, M. S et al (2019), Hoang, T. V. B. (2023), Li, H., & Pan, Y. (2023), Rashad, M. F. (2023) and Huang, Z., Li, H., & Huang, J. (2024)
	Interest	28-31	
	Search	32-35	
	Action	36-39	
	Share	40-43	
Business Growth	Growth of Quality Service	44-47	Shah, D., Rust, R. T., Parasuraman, A., Staelin, R., & Day, G. S. (2006), Reinartz, W., & Ulaga, W. (2008), Ulaga, W. (2018), Wirtz, B. W., & Daiser, P. (2018), Lal, B., & Chavan, C. R. (2019) and Sinaga, H. D. E., et al. (2024).
	Growth of Customer Satisfaction	48-51	
	Growth of Customer Loyalty	52-56	
Demographic variables	Gender ,Age, level of education and Information about the e-commerce company being dealt with		

Source: Prepared by the researcher

٧,٢,٢ Research population.

The target population is the online customers of e-commerce companies in Egypt. According to the GO-Globe report, e-commerce consumers in Egypt are a

substantial and continually expanding population. With an estimated 41.36 million consumers in the nation making purchases online as of 2024, the consumer goods e-commerce industry is expected to have a strong market presence and grow at a rate of 63.5% annually (Fahad. 2024, June 13).

7.2.3 The research sample

According to the selected participants based on specific characteristics relevant to the research objectives, the researcher employed a purposive sample from online customers of e-commerce companies in Egypt (Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. 2016, P. 3). The sample size then equals 384 Egyptian online customers.

7.2.4 Statistical analysis techniques

The data was analyzed using SPSS V.25 and SmartPLS 4 after coding the responses into Excel spreadsheets. The following techniques were used to analyze the collected data:

- Measure the reliability and validity of the measurements using:
 - ✓ Cronbach's alpha coefficient.
 - ✓ Composite Reliability (CR).
 - ✓ Average Variance Extracted (AVE).
 - ✓ Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).
- Modeling Structural Equations through Path Analysis.
- Descriptive statistics of data by calculating some measures such as the mean, and standard deviation as well as tabulating the characteristics of the sample in frequency and percentage distributions tables.
- T-test to assess the significance of the path coefficients.
- Pearson correlation matrix to measure the strength and direction of the relationship between the study variables.
- Mann-Whitney and Kruskal Wallis tests to study the differences between the groups of demographic and organizational variables

8- Theoretical Framework

In this part, the researcher will deal with the theoretical framework of the research variables in terms of concept and dimensions.

8.1 The definition of digital marketing and its dimensions:

Digital marketing is a crucial aspect of digital business transformation, incorporating new techniques based on information and communication technologies to adapt to the current market situation (Veleva, S. S., & Tsvetanova, A. I. 2020, P. 2). The goal of digital marketing is to generate customer acquisition, preferences, brand promotion, and brand awareness through a variety of technology infrastructures, such as email marketing, content marketing, social media marketing, and search engine optimization (Durmaz, Y., & Akan, R. E. 2023, P. 26).

The researcher proposes a definition of digital marketing as follows:
"Digital marketing is the marketing of goods and services by utilizing non-Internet channels that provide digital media, such as television, mobile phones (SMS and MMS) and radio, and internet techniques (SEO, social media, email marketing, online PR, inbound marketing, PPC, marketing automation, affiliate marketing, and native advertising), to achieve customer satisfaction and loyalty and a high rate of business growth for the companies".

There are five dimensions of digital marketing according to Kierzkowski (1996, P.8) that are used in this research :

- ١) **Attract:** This dimension focuses on attractive tactics through various digital channels, such as search engines, social media, and websites. They are excellent at increasing consumer awareness of a brand, and businesses use this as motivation to incorporate the features that websites need to increase sales. It is the basis of consumer interaction. (Simmons, G. J. 2007, P. 551 and Omar, N. B.; Norzaidi, M. D.; & Mohamed, I. S. 2012, P. 1596–1597). Chan, N. L., & Guillet, B. D. (2011, P. 350) added that companies turn to attracting customers through the company's association with a group of charitable organizations, customer loyalty programs, or the production of environmentally friendly products. Jalang'o, B. O. (2015, P. 17) states the attraction dimension is related to improving the ranking of the website or web page in the natural or unpaid search results of the search engine.
- ٢) **Engage:** This dimension is a key factor in creating demand and includes generating interest and participation, programming creatively, preparing interactive content, and using it correctly because it works to involve and engage customers in determining the content and achieving interaction. (Parsons, A., Zeisser, M., & Waitman, R. 1998, P. 37) As Omar, N. B., Norzaidi, M. D., & Mohamed, I. S. (2012, P. 1597) confirmed, the engage dimension involves keeping customers engaged on a company's website by regularly updating information about their products, introducing web forums for sharing opinions, and updating testimonials from previous customers. These dimensions require companies to have a strong online presence to effectively engage customers and encourage purchase decisions.
- ٣) **Retain:** This dimension focuses on retaining customers for repeat purchases, as it is more cost-effective to retain existing ones. Companies use email addresses for online transactions, product updates, and promotional events, leveraging their database for continued sales and loyalty programs. (Omar, N. B., Norzaidi, M. D., & Mohamed, I. S. 2012,

P. 1597). As Mohammed (2020, P. 7) explained, customers' engagement within the company's website and their interaction to provide content work to create valuable interaction, which leads to retaining these customers and includes returning again. Companies are interested in building a relationship with them and being in constant communication with them.

- ٤) **Learn**: This dimension involves all learning tactics to gain knowledge about the purchasing preferences and online browsing habits of clients and visitors. These tactics require effective customer database management. By using the data that their customers provide, these programs allow businesses to analyze the characteristics of their customers. Similar to this, it's important to consistently respond to client feedback in order to raise customer satisfaction and lower complaint rates. These tactics are fundamentally essential to effective customer relationship management (CRM), a certain aspect of "pure e-business. (Omar, N. B., Norzaidi, M. D., & Mohamed, I. S. 2012, P. 1597). Chan & Guillet (2011, P. 352) state that marketers are using questionnaires and surveys to collect information related to customer trends and learn about customer preferences. Companies also support the chat system to solicit interactions and discussions for the same purpose, which leads to building a brand and achieving business growth.
- ٥) **Relate**: This dimension is regarded as one of the most significant chances to provide value since it uses digital marketing tools like social media and email marketing to divide the interaction between the service performed, time, and marketing effort among multiple customers simultaneously. (Parsons, A., Zeisser, M., & Waitman, R. 1998, P. 40 and Ghiselli, R., & Ma, J. 2015, P. 262).

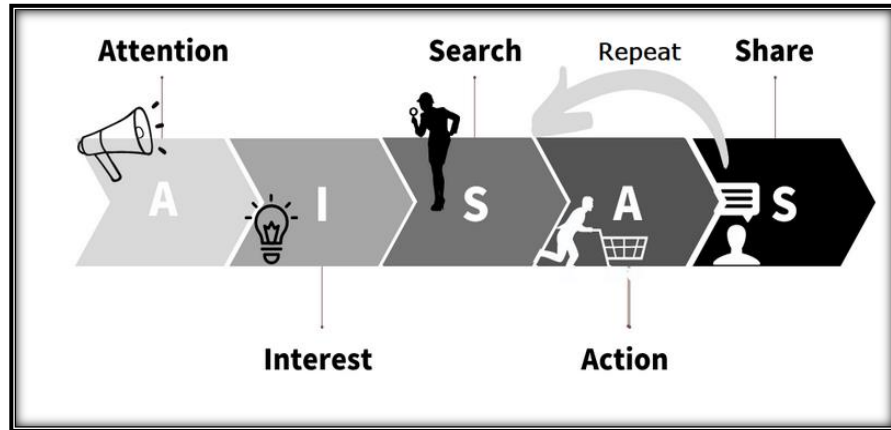
8.2 The definition and dimensions of customer buying behavior.

Buying behavior could be defined as: "the process by people choosing how to allocate the time, money, and effort that they have to consume various goods and services. What they purchase, why they purchase it, when they purchase it, where they purchase it, how frequently they purchase it, and how often they use it are all included and have five stages attention, interest, share, action and share. The buying behavior has five dimensions which are:

- ١) **Attention**: Is the act of a consumer observing and focusing on goods or services promoted on social media platforms (Ramadhani, A. D., Triyanto, A., & Muhammad, I. F. 2019, P. 49). Sasmita, A. S., & Achmadi, N. S. (2022, P.65) explained that this stage aims to get more attention to a product from consumers. The target market must be introduced to a product. The availability of the internet has made it possible to introduce items using a variety of low-cost channels, including online media, mailing lists, and email.

- ٢) **Interest:** A consumer's interest in goods or services that they see advertised online or on social media can be measured by their behavior (Jun, W., Li, S., et al 2021, P. 202). The process of interest begins when prospective buyers start showing an interest in our offerings. The appropriate consumer communication can lead to this interest. In the digital age of the internet, this level of interest may also arise if users find the content presented on the utilized online media to be attractive (Sasmita, A. S., & Achmadi, N. S. 2022, P.65)
- ٣) **Search:** Is the act of a customer looking for additional details on goods or services that have been promoted online or on social media (Pelawi, Y. N., & Aprilia, M. P. 2019, February, P. 606). Sasmita, A. S., & Achmadi, N. S. 2022, P. 65 illustrated that in order to get as much information as they can before making a decision, people will search using a search engine. On the internet, product reviews are easily accessible in a variety of formats, including blogs, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.
- ٤) **Action:** Qinghao, Y. (2022, P. 18) stated that an action occurs when a customer buys a product or service, creates an actual experience, and feels the product or service already. Direct communication between buyers and sellers takes place in this part as well. Giving customers the chance to buy the product is the aim of this stage. Also, Hoang, T. V. B. (2023, P. 86), clarified that after receiving enough information, consumers will behave in accordance with the platform's promotional potential, the affordability of the goods and services it offers, and the convenience of making payments. Thus, "product price" and "payment ease" are considered significant determinants in the process of action.
- ٥) **Share:** It is described as the practice of customers utilizing social media or the internet to share information about their experiences with goods or services with others through comments. They share their experiences on the platform, creating sharing interactivity in the consumption process. Consequently, "sharing interaction" may have a significant impact on how individuals choose to share. (Sasmita, A. S., & Achmadi, N. S. 2022, P. 65; Qinghao, Y. 2022, P. 18).

Figure (3) dimensions of online customer buying behavior



Source: Xue, L. L., Shen, C. C., Morrison, A. M., & Kuo, L. W (2021, P.8)

8.3 The definition and dimensions of business growth:

Business growth refers to "The process of matching business operations with consumer demands and preferences in order to increase a company's size, revenue, market share, and profitability over time. Delivering value to clients and continuously enhancing the manner in which that value is given are the main objectives of this strategy." This research depends on three dimensions of (business growth) which are:

- ١) **Growth of Quality Service:** Chang, S. F., et al. (2016, P. 435) clarified that the quality of service is essential for e-commerce companies to achieve business growth. To achieve high-quality service, businesses must understand customer needs and expectations develop policies and procedures to meet those needs, and continuously measure and improve their service delivery Lal, B., & Chavan, C. R. (2019, P.39).
- ٢) **Growth of Customer Satisfaction:** is a critical dimension for achieving business growth (Simon, M., Van Den Dries, F., & Wilms, T. O. M. 2016, P. 160). Sheth, J. N., Jain, V., & Ambika, A. (2023, P. 164) stated that customer satisfaction, measured through surveys, focus groups, and interviews, is a critical indicator of business growth. It reflects how well a company is meeting its customers' needs and expectations.
- ٣) **Growth of Customer Loyalty:** Are a measure of business growth and an indicator of a customer's likelihood to continue doing business with a company or brand. It is the result of customer satisfaction, positive experiences, and the overall value of the goods or services provided by the business (Ulaga, W. 2018, P.82).

9- Field Study

9.1 The survey groups

The total sample size can be determined by the following formula (Steven K. Thompson, 2012):

$$n = \frac{Np(1 - p)}{(N - 1)(d^2/z^2) + p(1 - p)}$$

Where:

p	Probability of estimate (obtained from previous studies) $p = 0.50$
$Z_{\alpha/2}$	The standard score corresponds to a certain confidence level (95%) = 1.96
d	The error proportion = 0.05
N	The study population size
n	Sample size = 384

Source: Prepared by the researcher.

The researcher has checked all responses of survey to ensure their validity and excluded the items not sufficiently answered. Then entered the data and analyzed it by using SPSS V.25 and SmartPLS 4.

9.2 Evaluation of Internal consistency reliability:

The reliability is an indicator that can be evaluated by Cronbach's alpha, which defines as a criterion for internal consistency reliability that provides an estimation of the reliability for each sub-dimension of the questionnaire based on the intercorrelations of the sub-dimensions of the study variables. The statistically acceptable limit for Cronbach's alpha should not be less than 0.60. Table (5) shows the results of the reliability as follow:

Table (5): The results of the internal consistency reliability.

Variables		No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE
Independent variable: Digital Marketing		23	0.909	0.737
Dimension one (X1)	Attract	4	0.812	0.617
Dimension two (X2)	Engage	5	0.896	0.707
Dimension three (X3)	Retain	5	0.900	0.713

Variables		No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE
Dimension Four (X4)	Learn	5	0.886	0.687
Dimension Five (X5)	Relate	4	0.888	0.748
Dependent variable: Business Growth		13	0.905	0.841
Dimension one (Y1)	Growth of Service Quality	4	.881	0.688
Dimension two (Y2)	Growth in customer satisfaction	4	.911	0.742
Dimension three (Y3)	Growth in customer loyalty	5	.844	0.693
Mediator variable: Online Customer buying behavior		20	0.952	0.838
Dimension one (M1)	Attention	4	0.902	0.770
Dimension two (M2)	Interest	4	0.910	0.787
Dimension three (M3)	Search	4	0.842	0.680
Dimension four (M4)	Action	4	0.891	0.754
Dimension five (M5)	Share	4	0.915	0.797

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the results of the statistical analysis

The previous table shows that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for digital marketing was 0.909, for customer buying behavior it was 0.952, and for business growth it was 0.905, signifying a high level of internal consistency. The AVE value for digital marketing was 0.737, for customer buying behavior it was 0.838, and for business growth it was 0.841. **This confirms that** the questionnaire measures what it was built for and that all items of the study are clear to the respondents (Egyptian online customers) and there is no ambiguity, and if the researcher applies the questionnaire a second time to the same sample will give almost the same results.

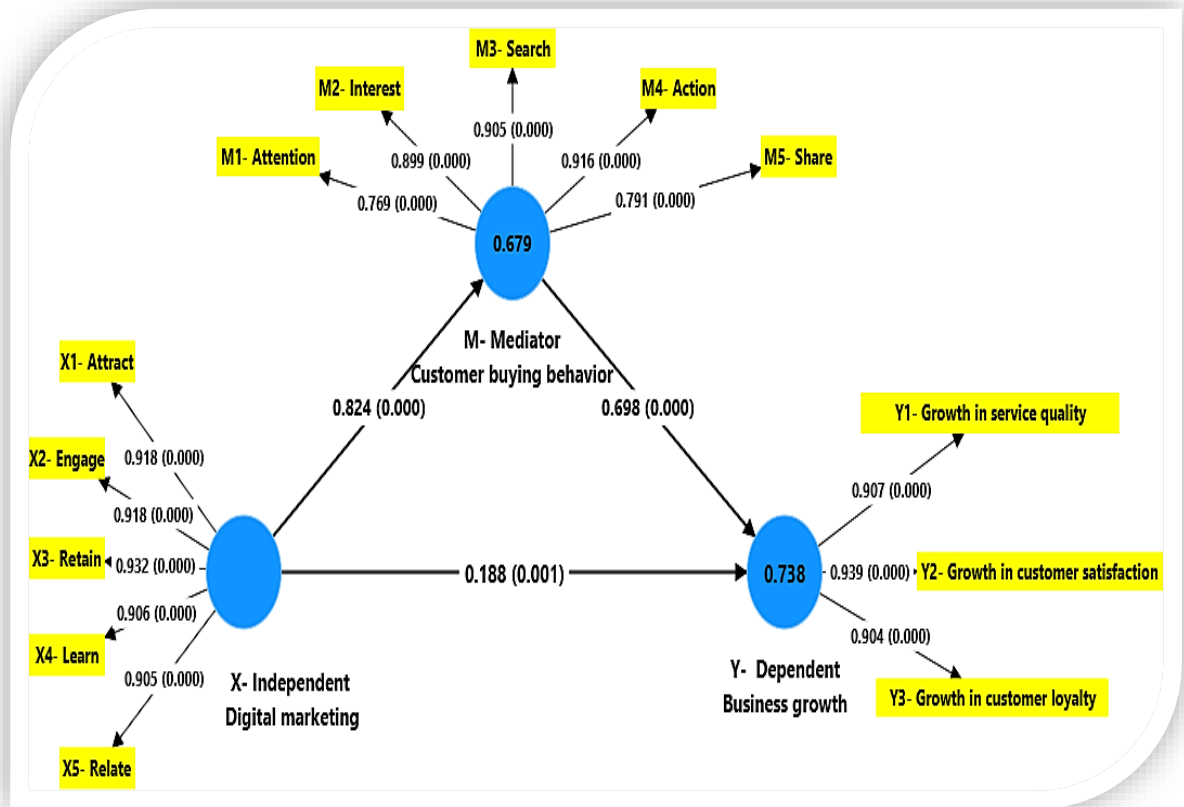
٩,٣ Tests of hypotheses

Structural equation modeling through path analysis is used for analyzing the causal relationships between the study variables (independent, mediator, and dependent). The path coefficients are to be significant if the p-value is less than the level of significance 0.05 and this indicates that there is a significant relationship.

The calculated T-test value can be used to evaluate the significance of path coefficients by comparing it to the tabulated T value at the same significance level, which is 1.96. If the absolute value of the calculated T exceeds the tabulated T, this signifies a significant relationship, and vice versa (Hair et al., 2014).

Figure (4) and Table (6) present the results from the path analysis, demonstrating the impact of digital marketing on business growth, with customer buying behavior as a mediator. This model allows for testing the hypotheses from the first to the fourth.

Figure (4) Path analysis of the structural model



Source: Prepared based on statistical analysis results

Table (6) Path analysis results of the structural model

Hypotheses	Relationship	Path Coefficient	R ²	P-Value	T Statistics	Confidence intervals			
						Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	2.5%	97.5%
H1	Direct Effect	Digital Marketing on	0.188	0.001	3.317	0.188	0.189	0.082	0.306

		Business Growth (X → Y)							
H2		Digital Marketing on Customer Buying Behavior (X → M)	0.824	0.000	38.394	0.824	0.823	0.779	0.862
H3		Customer Buying Behavior on Business Growth (M → Y)	0.698	0.000	11.79	0.698	0.695	0.573	0.804
H4	Indirect effect	Digital Marketing on Business Growth through Customer Buying Behavior (X → M → Y)	0.575	0.000	11.433	0.575	0.572	0.471	0.668
	Total Effect	Digital Marketing on Business Growth (Direct + Indirect)	0.763	Derived					

Source: Prepared based on statistical analysis results

Based on Figure (4) and Table (6), the results can be interpreted based on the four study hypotheses (H1-H4) as follows:

1) Results of the first hypothesis test

H1: There is a positive and statistically significant effect of digital marketing in Egypt on business growth for e-commerce companies in Egypt.

Figure (6) Table (9) illustrates the following:

- Path Coefficient: The direct effect of digital marketing on business growth ($X \rightarrow Y$) has a path coefficient of 0.188, with a P-value of 0.001.
- T-Statistics: The T-statistic is 3.317, which is significant, indicating that digital marketing directly contributes to business growth, though the effect size is relatively small.
- Confidence Intervals: The 97.5% confidence interval ranges from 0.306 to 0.082, further confirming the reliability of this positive relationship.

Thus, **H1** is supported, indicating that digital marketing positively influences business growth.

٧) Results of the second hypothesis test

H2: There is a positive and statistically significant effect of digital marketing in Egypt on the customer buying behavior of Egyptian customers.

Figure (6) Table (9) illustrates the following:

- Path Coefficient: The effect of digital marketing on customer buying behavior ($X \rightarrow M$) has a very strong path coefficient of 0.824, with a P-value of 0.000.
- T-Statistics: The high T-statistic of 38.394 highlights a robust and highly significant effect.
- Confidence Intervals: The confidence interval (97.5%) ranges from 0.779 to 0.862, indicating consistency and reliability in this strong positive relationship.

Therefore, **H2** is clearly supported, showing that digital marketing has a powerful influence on the buying behavior of Egyptian customers.

٨) Results of the third hypothesis test

H3: There is a positive and statistically significant effect between the Customer Buying Behavior of Egyptian customers and business growth for e-commerce companies in Egypt.

Figure (6) and Table (9) illustrate the following:

- Path Coefficient: The customer buying behavior's impact on business growth ($M \rightarrow Y$) shows a significant path coefficient of 0.698, with a P-value of 0.000.
- T-Statistics: With a T-statistic of 11.79, this relationship is highly significant.
- Confidence Intervals: The 97.5% confidence interval ranges between 0.573 and 0.804, confirming the robustness of this relationship.

Therefore, **H3** is validated, indicating that customer buying behavior significantly contributes to business growth.

٤) Results of the fourth hypothesis test

H4: The Customer Buying Behavior of Egyptian customers mediate the relationship between digital marketing in Egypt and business growth for e-commerce companies in Egypt.

Figure (6) and Table (13) illustrates the following:

- ٥) The Indirect Effect ($X \rightarrow M \rightarrow Y$): The indirect effect of digital marketing on business growth through customer buying behavior ($X \rightarrow M \rightarrow Y$) has a path coefficient of 0.575 with a P-value of 0.000.
- ٦) T-Statistics: The T-statistic is 11.433, confirming a significant indirect effect.
- ٧) Confidence Intervals: The 97.5% confidence interval for the indirect effect ranges from 0.471 to 0.668, showing that this mediated relationship is reliable and significant.

H4 is also supported, confirming that customer buying behavior mediates the relationship between digital marketing and business growth, emphasizing the indirect pathway's strong influence.

٨) Results of the fifth hypothesis test

The fifth hypothesis states: "There are statistically significant differences between the opinions of the respondents regarding the study variables (digital marketing, Customer buying behavior, business growth) according to the demographic variables (gender, age, educational qualification, name of the company they deal with, number of times they purchase from the website) in the e-commerce companies under study".

1- Gender:

The differences between respondents' perceptions according to gender were tested by Mann-Whitney Test.

Table (7) Differences according to gender categories

Variable	Categories	N	Mean Rank	Sig.
Digital marketing"	Male	167	22.500	0.040
	Female	216	14.440	
Customer buying behavior"	Male	167	16.833	0.801
	Female	216	15.800	
Business growth "	Male	167	18.500	0.442
	Female	216	15.400	

Source: Prepared based on statistical analysis results

The results are interpreted as follows based on the previous table:

a. According to digital marketing:

- The statistical significance level (Sig) is less than 0.05 (0.040), indicating that there is a significant difference between male and female perceptions regarding **digital marketing**.
- The higher mean for males (22.50) compared to females (14.44) indicates that males have a greater awareness or more influential experience with digital marketing compared to females.
- This result can be interpreted as males being more engaged or familiar with the digital tools and technologies used in digital marketing, given their greater interest in technology or a digital-focused work environment.

b. According to customer buying behavior:

- The statistical significance level (0.801) is greater than 0.05, indicating that there is no significant difference between males and females in their perceptions of **customer buying behavior**.
- The statistical significance level (0.801) is greater than 0.05, indicating that there is no significant difference between males and females in their perceptions of **customer buying behavior**.
- This result can be interpreted as the fact that purchasing behavior is not affected by gender, as both men and women have similar understandings or experiences towards customer behavior, reflecting that this area may be more inclusive and not heavily dependent on gender differences.

c. According to business growth:

- The statistical significance level (0.442) is greater than 0.05, indicating that there is no significant difference between male and female perceptions of business growth.
- The higher mean for males (18.50) compared to females (15.40) may indicate that males may have a higher perception or experience regarding business growth, but the difference is not statistically significant, meaning that both genders have a common understanding on the subject.

2- Age

The differences between respondents' perceptions according to age were tested by Kruskal-Wallis Test

Table (8) Differences according to age categories

Variable	Categories	N	Mean	Sig.
Digital Marketing	Under 29 years old	112	15.00	0.872
	From 29 to less than 39 years	173	16.86	
	From 39 to less than 50 years old	58	15.33	
	Over 50 years old	40	19.75	
Customer Buying Behavior	Under 29 years old	112	13.23	0.314
	From 29 to less than 39 years	173	17.68	
	From 39 to less than 50 years old	58	18.33	
	Over 50 years old	40	24.00	
Business Growth	Under 29 years old	112	11.20	0.026
	From 29 to less than 39 years	173	19.59	
	From 39 to less than 50 years old	58	20.50	
	Over 50 years old	40	25.50	

Source: Prepared based on statistical analysis results

- The previous table illustrates that:
 - a) The statistical significance level (Sig) is 0.872, which is greater than 0.05, meaning that there are no significant differences between the perceptions of the respondents in different age groups regarding **digital marketing**.
 - b) The statistical significance level (0.314) is also greater than 0.05, meaning that there are no significant differences between age groups in their perceptions of **customer buying behavior**.
 - c) The statistical significance level (0.026) is less than 0.05, indicating that there are significant differences between age groups in their perceptions of business growth.
 - d) While the results of digital marketing and buying behavior did not show significant differences between age groups, the results of business growth did show significant differences, with older age groups (especially those over 50) being more aware of this aspect. This suggests that work experience plays a greater role in understanding business growth as one age.

These results support rejecting the fifth hypothesis partially.

3- Level of education

The differences between respondents' perceptions according to Level of education were tested by Kruskal-Wallis Test.

Table (9) Differences according to years of experience categories

Variable	Categories	N	Mean Rank	Sig.
Digital marketing"	Intermediate Certification	84	9.500	0.154
	College student	45	5.750	
	Undergraduate degree	151	16.964	
	Postgraduate degree (Master/ PhD)	103	11.300	
Customer buying behavior"	Intermediate Certification	84	24.500	0.184
	College student	45	6.000	
	Undergraduate degree	151	16.411	
	Postgraduate degree (Master/ PhD)	103	11.100	
Business growth "	Intermediate Certification	84	22.000	0.244
	College student	45	6.500	
	Undergraduate degree	151	16.464	
	Postgraduate degree (Master/ PhD)	103	11.110	

Source: Prepared based on statistical analysis results

The previous table illustrates that: The statistical significance level is greater than 0.05, which means there are no significant differences between respondents according to the level of education regarding study variables (digital marketing, customer buying behavior, and business growth). However, some insignificant differences appear which may indicate that personal factors and practical experiences have a greater impact on these perceptions than academic education.

4- The e-commerce company I deal with:

The differences between respondents' perceptions according to the e-commerce company I deal with were tested by Kruskal-Wallis Test.

Table (10) Differences according to the e-commerce company I deal with categories

Variable	Categories	N	Mean Rank	Sig.
Digital marketing	amazon.eg	105	16.53	0.875
	carrefouregypt.com	45	9.50	
	btech.com	44	9.50	
	chefaa.com	63	16.30	
	elarabygroup.com.	119	16.50	
	One more, mention it	7	5.2	
Customer buying behavior	amazon.eg	105	16.74	0.704
	carrefouregypt.com	45	6.50	
	btech.com	44	14.50	
	chefaa.com	63	14.75	
	elarabygroup.com.	119	21.50	
	One more, mention it	7	7.6	
Business growth	amazon.eg	105	17.50	0.840
	carrefouregypt.com	45	10.50	
	btech.com	44	16.00	
	chefaa.com	63	14.75	
	elarabygroup.com.	119	12.25	
	One more, mention it	7	4.21	

Source: Prepared based on statistical analysis results

The previous table illustrates that: the significant level of the Kruskal-Wallis Test is greater than 0.05 for all variables. Hence, there are no significant differences between respondents according to the e-commerce company they deal with in their perceptions of digital marketing, buying behavior, and business growth. The results suggest that understanding and experience in these areas may be similar regardless of the type of e-commerce Company, which may be because all large companies have similar marketing and service strategies.

5- Years spent dealing with the e-commerce company:

The differences between respondents' perceptions according Years spent dealing with the e-commerce company with were tested by Kruskal-Wallis Test.

Table (11) Differences according to years spent dealing with the e-commerce company categories

Variable	Categories	N	Mean Rank	Sig.
Digital marketing"	One time	29	6.67	0.091
	From 2 to 5 times	210	18.03	
	From 6 to 10 times	112	18.64	
	Over 10 times	32	11.40	
Customer buying behavior"	One time	29	4.67	0.067
	From 2 to 5 times	210	17.09	
	From 6 to 10 times	112	20.43	
	Over 10 times	32	13.10	
Business growth "	One time	29	7.33	0.080
	From 2 to 5 times	210	17.69	
	From 6 to 10 times	112	19.86	
	Over 10 times	32	10.40	

Source: Prepared based on statistical analysis results

The previous table illustrates that: there are approximately significant differences in digital marketing, purchasing behavior, and business growth, with more positive perceptions associated with increased frequency of interaction with the company. This underscores the importance of experience and repeated engagement with companies in shaping consumer opinions and perceptions.

٦- What is your overall impression of the company:

The differences between respondents' perceptions according What is your overall impression of the company with were tested by Kruskal-Wallis Test.

Table (12) Differences according to what is your overall impression of the company categories

Variable	Categories	N	Mean Rank	Sig.
Digital marketing"	Excellent	281	17.13	0.058
	Very good	59	18.41	
	Good	33	9.21	
	Bad	10	3.2	
Customer buying behavior"	Excellent	281	12.06	0.043
	Very good	59	19.94	
	Good	33	11.50	
	Bad	10	4.1	
Business growth "	Excellent	281	12.63	0.104
	Very good	59	19.28	
	Good	33	12.36	
	Bad	10	6.2	

The previous table illustrates that the respondents with a more favorable overall impression of the company showed more positive perceptions of digital marketing and customer buying behavior, though there were no significant differences for business growth.

Table (13) Results of the research hypotheses test

No.	Hypothesis	Result
H1	There is a positive and statistically significant effect of digital marketing in Egypt on business growth for e-commerce companies in Egypt.	Accepted
H2	There is a positive and statistically significant effect of digital marketing in Egypt on the buying behavior of Egyptian customers.	Accepted
H3	There is a positive and statistically significant effect between the buying behavior of Egyptian customers and business growth for e-commerce companies in Egypt.	Accepted
H4	Customer buying behavior mediates the relationship between digital marketing in Egypt and business growth for e-commerce companies in Egypt.	Accepted
H5	There are statistically significant differences in respondents' opinions regarding the study variables (digital marketing, buying behavior, business growth) based on demographic variables (gender, age, educational qualification, name of the company they deal with, frequency of purchases from the website) among the e-commerce companies studied.	Partially rejected

Source: prepared by the researcher

10- Research Recommendations

Based on the research problem, research hypotheses, and results, the researcher can provide several recommendations, an action plan for implementing these recommendations, and identify who is responsible for their implementation.

Table (14): Research recommendation

No.	Recommendation	Authority responsible to implement	How to Implement
1	Enhance Digital Marketing Strategies	Marketing Department	Through develop data-driven marketing strategies using analytics tools.
2	Invest in Customer Relationship Management (CRM)	IT and HR Department	By conducting research and selecting suitable CRM software, train staff on its use.
3	Conduct Continuous Research	Marketing and Research Departments	Through allocating budget for ongoing market research and surveys.
4	Activation Tailor Marketing Campaigns	Marketing Department	Create targeted marketing campaigns based on demographic insights.
5	Enhancing Leverage Customer Feedback	Customer Service Department	Through implementing regular feedback mechanisms, such as surveys and reviews.
6	Building Trust and Authority	Marketing Department	By providing valuable, informative content, businesses can build trust with their audience. This trust is essential for converting potential customers into loyal buyers, as many consumers research products online before making a purchase.
7	Adaptation to Market Trends	Marketing Department	By making rapid adjustments based on data collected in real time, businesses are able to efficiently respond to shifting market conditions and the preferences of their customers.
8	Creating a customer persona	IT Department and Marketing Department	Through market research for personas involves both qualitative and quantitative methods, using techniques like empathy mapping and survey design to gather data. Data analysis helps identify patterns and commonalities, allowing for the creation of representative personas based on demographic information, online behavior, and feedback.

11. Directions for Future Research

١- **The Role Of Emerging Technologies:**

- **AI Integration:** Future studies ought to examine how AI affects customer purchasing decisions. Examining how AI affects customer trust and decision-making processes are crucial, as it may automate jobs and offer personalized recommendations.
- **Chatbots and Engagement:** Investigating the effectiveness of advanced AI chatbots in enhancing customer interactions could provide insights into their role in shaping buying behavior and improving customer satisfaction.
- **Augmented Reality (AR):** Researching how AR affects customer purchasing decisions might shed light on how useful it is as a promotional tool. Since augmented reality (AR) improves product perception, it could be important for firms to know how it affects consumer choice when making purchases.
- **Voice Search Optimization:** As voice search becomes more common, studies should look into how this changes how consumers make purchases and what adjustments need to be made to digital marketing tactics.
- Future research should investigate the impact of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and machine learning, on digital marketing effectiveness and customer engagement.

٢- **Investigate Additional Demographic Factors:** Researchers may consider examining additional demographic factors beyond those included in this study, such as socioeconomic status, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior.

٣- **Examine Other Industries:** Future studies could expand the scope beyond e-commerce to explore how digital marketing impacts various industries. This can help generalize the findings and provide broader insights.

٤- **Utilize Mixed Methods:** Combining quantitative and qualitative research methods could yield deeper insights into customer behaviors and attitudes toward digital marketing, allowing researchers to capture the nuances of consumer experiences.

By implementing these recommendations, e-commerce companies in Egypt can enhance their growth and effectiveness in digital marketing, while future researchers can build on this study to further investigate the dynamics of digital marketing and consumer behavior.

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