



ONLINE MARKETING AND ITS IMPACT ON HEALTH-CONSCIOUS CONSUMERS: A STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO FITNESS SUPPLEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the impact of online marketing on the purchasing behaviour of health-conscious consumers with special reference to fitness supplements. It focuses on digital strategies such as influencer marketing, online reviews, social media advertisements, and brand transparency to understand how they shape consumer trust, brand loyalty, and buying decisions. Data were collected from 100 respondents through a structured questionnaire and analysed using percentage analysis, Chi-square test, ANOVA, and regression techniques. The findings indicate that influencer credibility, product reviews, and digital authenticity significantly affect consumer confidence, while targeted online promotions encourage trial and repeat purchases. The study concludes with practical recommendations for fitness supplement brands and marketers to adopt ethical, transparent, and innovative digital marketing practices that support informed decision-making among health-conscious consumers.

Keywords: *Online Marketing, Health-Conscious Consumers, Fitness Supplements, Influencer Marketing, Consumer Behaviour, Digital Advertising*

INTRODUCTION AND DESIGN OF THE STUDY

In the modern digital age, online marketing has become an essential tool for businesses to promote their products and influence consumer purchasing decisions. Platforms such as social media, e-commerce websites, and digital advertisements allow brands to reach customers quickly and effectively. Growing awareness of health and fitness has increased the demand for fitness supplements, including protein powders, vitamins, and energy boosters. Many health-conscious consumers prefer buying these products online due to convenience, availability of product information, and customer reviews. Online marketing strategies such as influencer endorsements, attractive advertisements, and user-generated reviews play a significant role in shaping consumer trust and brand loyalty. However, misleading information and fake reviews can create challenges, emphasizing the importance of ethical and transparent marketing practices. This study aims to examine the impact of online marketing on the purchasing behaviour of health-conscious consumers with special reference to fitness supplements.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Today, many consumers purchase fitness supplements through online platforms, relying on advertisements, social media, and influencer recommendations. However, online information is not always accurate, as some

products are promoted with false claims or fake reviews, leading to confusion among buyers. Health-conscious consumers expect honest information and trustworthy brands, but misleading marketing can result in poor purchase decisions and reduced trust in online shopping. Therefore, it is important to examine how online marketing influences the buying behaviour and trust of fitness supplement consumers.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the influence of online marketing strategies on the purchasing behaviour of health-conscious consumers.
- To identify key factors that influence and motivates customer to purchase fitness supplements
- To identify most preferred fitness supplements available on online platforms

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on how online marketing influences the purchasing decisions of health-conscious consumers in Coimbatore who buy fitness supplements through online platforms. It includes online ads, influencer promotions, reviews, ratings, and product transparency that help consumers build trust. The study is limited to online fitness supplement buyers in Coimbatore and does not include offline marketing or other health products.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

AREA OF THE STUDY

The study is conducted in Coimbatore and focuses on health-conscious consumers, such as gym-goers and fitness enthusiasts, who use online platforms to learn about and purchase fitness supplements. It examines the influence of online marketing on their buying behaviour.

SOURCES OF DATA

The study uses both primary and secondary data for better understanding and accuracy.

PRIMARY DATA

Primary data is collected directly from respondents through a structured questionnaire to understand consumer awareness, preferences, and the impact of online marketing on purchase decisions.

SECONDARY DATA

Secondary data is gathered from books, journals, research articles, websites, and previous studies related to digital marketing and consumer behaviour.

SAMPLE SIZE

The study is based on 100 respondents selected using the convenience sampling method for easy data collection.

DATA ANALYSIS

The collected data is analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods to understand consumer behaviour and the effect of online marketing.

TOOLS USED FOR ANALYSIS

- Percentage Analysis
- Chi-Square Test
- ANOVA

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The study is conducted only in Coimbatore; therefore, the findings may not represent all health-conscious consumers in other regions.

- The study focuses only on consumers who purchase fitness supplements online, and offline buyers are not included.
- The sample size is limited to 100 respondents
- The data collected is based on respondents' personal opinions and memory, so the information may not be completely accurate.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Deshmukh & Varma (2023), A study of Deshmukh and Varma reveals that gym trainers, peers, and online fitness content play a significant role in shaping supplement consumption decisions among youth. The research shows that many young people believe supplements are essential to achieve fitness goals, even without understanding the scientific basis behind them. The authors stress the importance of structured education on safe and informed supplement use.

Lopes, Sofia et al. (2024), analysed food supplements and sports food consumption patterns among gym-goers in Portugal. The study found that digital platforms and online marketing channels play a significant role in shaping supplement consumption behaviour, particularly among individuals seeking improved health and physical performance.

OVERVIEW OF ONLINE MARKETING ON FITNESS SUPPLEMENTS

The study examines how online marketing influences the buying behaviour and trust of health-conscious consumers toward fitness supplements. With the rapid growth of digital technology and widespread internet usage, businesses increasingly rely on online platforms to promote their products and connect with a larger audience. At the same time, rising awareness about health, wellness, and physical fitness has led to greater demand for supplements such as protein powders, vitamins, and energy boosters. Online platforms provide consumers with easy access to product information, advertisements, influencer promotions, customer reviews, and ratings, enabling them to compare brands and make informed purchase decisions. However, the availability of numerous options has also made consumers more cautious, encouraging them to prioritize transparency, authenticity, and reliable information before buying. This study highlights the role of digital trust, ethical promotion, and innovative marketing strategies in shaping modern consumer decisions. Overall, it aims to understand the extent to which online marketing impacts consumer perception and purchasing patterns in the growing fitness supplement industry.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table No. 1 Describes the Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Particulars		No of the Respondents	Percentages
Age	Below 18	18	18
	18-25	56	56
	26-35	18	18
	Above 35	8	8
	Total	100	100
Gender	Male	79	79

	Female	19	19
	Prefer not to say	2	2
	Total	100	100
Occupation	Student	64	64
	Employed	28	28
	Self-employed	6	6
	Unemployed	2	2
	Total	100	100
Monthly Income	Below ₹10,000	55	55
	₹10,000 – ₹30,000	20	20
	₹30,000 – ₹60,000	16	16
	Above ₹60,000	9	9
	Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data

Most respondents (56%) fall within the 18–25 years age group. A majority (79%) are male, while 19% are female and 2% preferred not to disclose their gender. In terms of occupation, students constitute the largest group (64%), followed by employed respondents (28%), self-employed (6%), and unemployed (2%). The predominant income category is below ₹10,000 (55%), with smaller proportions earning ₹10,000–₹30,000 (20%), ₹30,000–₹60,000 (16%), and above ₹60,000 (9%).

CHISQUARE TEST

Hypotheses

Null Hypothesis (H₀):

There is no significant association between monthly income and the amount spent on fitness supplements.

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁):

There is a significant association between monthly income and the amount spent on fitness supplements.

Table No.2**Association between Monthly Income and Amount Spent on Fitness Supplements**

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	42.965 ^a	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	50.142	9	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	36.757	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	100		

Source: Primary Data**Interpretation**

Since the significance value (0.000) is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there is a significant association between monthly income and the amount spent on fitness supplements. This indicates that consumers' income level plays an important role in determining their spending behaviour on fitness supplements.

ANOVA**HYPOTHESIS****Null Hypothesis (H₀):**

There is no significant difference between age groups and the impact of influencer promotions on consumers' interest in fitness supplements.

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁):

There is a significant difference between age groups and the impact of influencer promotions on consumers' interest in fitness supplements.

Table No. 3**Describes the differences between Age and Influencer interest**

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	9.897	3	3.299	2.752	.047
Within Groups	115.093	96	1.199		
Total	124.990	99			

Source: Primary Data**Interpretation**

Since the significance value (0.047) is less than 0.05, it is concluded that there is a significant difference between different age groups regarding the impact of influencer promotions on their interest in fitness supplements. This indicates that age plays an important role in determining how consumers respond to influencer marketing.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- Majority (56%) of the respondents belong to the age group of 18–25 years, indicating strong interest in fitness supplements among young consumers.
- Most (79%) of the respondents are male, showing higher participation of men in fitness supplement consumption.
- A significant proportion (64%) of the respondents are students, suggesting that supplements are widely used by young and active individuals.
- Majority (55%) of the respondents earn below ₹10,000 per month, indicating that even lower-income groups are investing in fitness products.
- A significant association exists between monthly income and the amount spent on fitness supplements, indicating that income level affects spending behaviour.
- There is a significant difference between age groups regarding the impact of influencer promotions, showing that age influences responsiveness to digital marketing strategies.

SUGGESTIONS OF THE STUDY

- Marketing strategies should target students and young adults, as they represent the largest consumer group.
- Companies should offer affordable pricing and discounts to attract lower-income consumers.
- Brands should focus on social media marketing to effectively reach younger audiences.
- Collaborating with credible influencers can improve engagement among age groups highly responsive to digital promotions.
- Providing budget-friendly products can help expand market reach across different income levels.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that online marketing has a significant influence on health-conscious consumers in their purchase of fitness supplements. Factors such as influencer credibility, online reviews, and product authenticity strongly shape consumer perception and buying behaviour. The results also indicate that demographic variables like income and occupation affect spending patterns and quality preferences. Overall, effective and transparent digital marketing strategies are essential for attracting consumers, building trust, and ensuring long-term success in the competitive fitness supplement industry.

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