JETIR.ORG ISSN: 2349-5162 | ESTD Year : 2014 | Monthly Issue
JOURNAL OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND INNOVATIVE RESEARCH (JETIR)
An International Scholarly Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

DIGITAL MARKETING, CONSUMER TRUST AND BUYING BEHAVIOUR IN KERALA

Surya Das R, Nisari K B, Sajitha T, Suvija S, Divyalekshmi G
Assistant Professor, Assistant Professor, Assistant Professor, Assistant Professor, Assistant Professor
Department Of Commerce
College of Applied Science, Vadakkencherry, Palakkad, Kerala, India

Abstract: *Kerala is often held up as a place where nearly everyone is online mostly, that makes it an interesting test of a familiar marketing assumption. Consumers are connected, skilled and willing does digital marketing, it automatically works? This paper mainly explores the question without collecting the primary data. Draws together the regular statistics, a national education survey, official programme data, police fraud records and published academic studies carried out in Kerala. Kerala had 99 internet connections per 100 people at the end of march 2025, compared with 68 for India. The state was declared fully digitally literate in August 2025, After training at 21 lakh and more people. A Palakkad survey of 120 online shoppers found convenience to be the strongest predictor of buying and perceived risk to be significant one. This paper concludes that in Kerala, reaching consumers is the easy part, earning their confidence is where business win or lose.*

Keywords: *Digital marketing, consumer buying behaviour, consumer trust, online shopping, digital literacy, cyber fraud.*

1. Introduction:

Think about how shoppers in Kerla might purchase a pair of headphones today. Then sees a short video on Instagram, searches the model, compare market prices, scroll customer reviews and ask cousins or relatives on WhatsApp before paying through UPI. Every step take place on the screen and almost everyone brand to be present that.

Digital marketing refers to promoting products a service through internet-based channels such as search, social media, email, online information's, influences and also mobile apps. click, orders are counted. The counting activity not the same understanding why people buy. Research on digital marketing has suggested that social influences, attitudes, behaviour and trust sits between purchase and exposure.

Kerla is the revealing place to look at the links, internet access is close to universal, a state led campaign has taught basic digital skills to people at all ages and young people report heavy social media use. At the same time, state has seen that internet fraud or online fraud also. Opportunity and risk have grown together. That the two side of same coin. A business that wants to market in Kerala has also deals both of that.

This paper asks the 3 questions:

1. How connected and digitally capable are Kerala consumers?
2. What do publish Kerala studies, how they buy online?
3. What do fraud and security data suggest about the trust that digital marketing depends on?

Those are mainly answering in this paper. It answers them from existing evidence. The evidence is thin and close with practical implications also.

2. Objectives of the study:

- To describe Kerala's digital connectivity and compare it with the national picture.
- To present and interpret the reported results of recent Kerala studies of online buying.
- To describe the scale and pattern of cyber fraud in Kerala as an indicator of the trust environment.

3. Research Methodology:

- Data collection: Data is collected from secondary sources like newspaper, internet, research paper, articles, websites etc.
- Research design: Descriptive research design is used for the study.

4. Review of literature:

A literature review is a description of the literature relevant to a particular topic/field. A review of the earlier studies, relevant to the present investigation carried out in the same area as well as elsewhere are included here. The related review was collected from textbooks, journals, magazines publications, newspapers and a project report. Review of literature helps to have a clear understanding of variables which are selected by the researchers who made an extensive study of literature that was available from libraries, academicians and experts in this field.

4.1 Foundations: social media, word-of-mouth and integrated marketing, Mangold and Faulds (2009): argued that social media the line between company messaging and customer conversations, brands are now share the stage with the people they hope to persuade. Firms should care about digital channels, pointing to visibility, engagement and close customer relationship. Electronic word-of-mouth shapes brand image and purchase intention, the interactive social media content influenced the attitudes of young consumers. Those suggest that social media content influenced the attitudes of young consumers. Digital marketing should be seen as integrated business process built on customer data and technology, not as a collection of advertising tricks. Highlighted the convenience, personalization, social proof and online engagements in their discussion of buying behaviour.

4.2 Trust and the decision to buy online, Gefen, Karahanna and Straub (2003): A second strand of research deals with the doubts that buyers carry. They integrated trust with technology acceptance model and showed that trust matters alongside perceived usefulness and ease of use when people shop online always. Identified convenience, product variety and price comparison among the main drivers of online shopping and they treated attitude as a key predictor of purchase intention. The message that runs through the online buyers cannot touch the product they signal on the reliability.

4.3 Evidence from Kerala, Ajithkumar (2017) and Seena and Keerthi (2020): Kerala has produced a steady flow of small, local studies surveyed 60 residents of one panchayat in Kannur district and found 47 of them shopped online. Examined that the online marketing and purchase decision influencing highly. Analysed the perception, buying factors, risk impulse that online buying demographic factors influencing highly. Also describes that how gender, age, income, education and religious factors relate to online shopping attitude in Kerala.

4.4 Online shopping behaviour, Saji, Thomas and Francina (2025): studied 60 spouses from seven wards of Poonthura in Thiruvananthapuram and found that men were more likely to own smartphones, while women were lower familiarity with basic smartphone functions and online financial services.

4.5 Analysis of digital marketing and its impact on buying behaviour of customers, Sneha Prajapathi and Swapna Acharya (2026): study analyses the effect of internet marketing on consumer buying behaviour by

examining how different digital tools shape customer decisions. Information obtained first-hand from 120 respondents reveals that digital marketing exerts a strong and significant influence on consumer actions, which is confirmed through statistical analysis, including a high positive correlation between digital marketing and buying behaviour. The outcome highlights that customers across different gender and income groups respond similarly to digital marketing efforts, as supported by ANOVA results showing no significant group differences. However, female participants exhibited a modestly greater levels of engagement and purchasing influence. The study reinforces the necessity for companies to adopt strong digital strategies and suggests future research in areas such as AI-driven marketing, customer analytics, and personalised digital engagement.

5. Brief Overview of Digital marketing and Buying behaviour:

Digital marketing is the major source of revenue increment. changing consumers purchase decision to finding out consumers aware all are performed activities through digital marketing. It is considered a channel through which companies reach desired target market. Social media largely implemented as an effective mechanism. Which promotes the marketing goals, strategies and techniques of firms especially in aspects related to customer participation, customer relationship management and communication. Internet is considered as the disruptive technology but consumers everywhere are waking up to the idea of shopping online. (P, Sunanth, & Chandran, 2022) The impact on retailing have been profound and as a result many businesses are changing the channels. Hence, digital marketing plays a significant role in shaping consumer attitudes and behaviour towards a product or service.

The main thing that helps and to assist a business to grow in fruitful business and consumer loyalty. Both remain closely connected and the real-life amazing cutthroat market only quality of the product is not enough to accumulate smart customers. The progress of the relies on the market methodologies. It was because of this most business relies on digital marketing nowadays.

Digital marketing has a significant impact on consumer buying behaviour by shaping their awareness, attitudes, and preferences regarding a product or service. Its evolution has profoundly transformed the marketing landscape. Digital marketing can boost consumer awareness of a product or service through various digital platforms, including social media, search engines, and email marketing (Kannan, 2017). By delivering pertinent and valuable information, digital marketing can assist consumers in understanding the advantages of a product or service, motivating them to consider making a purchase. Before the advent of digital marketing, customers tended to remain loyal to familiar brands due to limited exposure; however, today's consumers are knowledgeable about a variety of products and their enhanced value.

6.Findings and Descriptive Analysis:

6.1 Internet connectivity: Kerala against India

TRAI data show 98 internet connections per 100 people in Kerala on 31st March 2025. That split almost evenly between rural and urban.

Table 1: Internet connectivity: Kerala and India

Indicator	Kerala	India
Connection per 100 people	099	68
Total connections	3.6 crore	96.9
Rural connections	1.8 crore	_

Urban connections	1.7 crore	_
Trend Per 100 People	89-94-99	_

Source: TRAI based on the official reported data

The ratio shows how intensely the state uses the internet and not the share of people online. And the near even rural-urban split means a Kerala marketing plan cannot assure a mainly urban audience.

6.2 Digital skills

Having a connection and knowing how to use it are different things, this is why Kerala Digital Keralam campaign is relevant. It taught smartphone use, messaging, digital payment, and access to government jobs or services. The state declared itself India's first fully digitally literate state on 21st august 2025.

Table 3: Digi Keralam campaign reported figures

Indicator	**Reported figure**
People trained	Above 21 lakhs
volunteers	2,57,000
Local bodies covered	1034
Declared	21st August 2025

Source: TRAI based on the official reported data

These are government reported outcome, they suggest broad basic skills, including older people, adults but they do not measure how often and how confidently people shop online.

6.3 Gaps within the market

Not every household gain from connectivity in the same way. Taken with the demographic differences found in every reported data. Kerala impulse buying and online shopping studies the evidence suggest that a single digital message is unlikely to reach every group equally.

6.4 The trust environment: cyber fraud in Kerala

Trust is the condition that online buying depends on fraud data. the report based on the Kerala police records;

Table 3: cyber fraud in Kerala

Year	Reported losses (in crore)	Change on previous year
2022	48	-
2023	210	About 4 times
2024	764	About 3 times
2025	815	About 6+ %

Source: official reported data

The online trader scam victims and job fraud had affected more than 3000 women across the state. Police also warned of scams that use fake advertisements and AI generated videos of business. This matters for marketers because scammers operate in the same places like social media adverts, messaging group and professional looking websites also.

7 Limitation and direction for future research

This study relies on secondary data, and many Kerala figures were retrieved through news reports of official statistics, so they need to be verified against the originals. The academic evidence consists of small, local, mostly convenience-based studies whose results are indicative and not representative. Kerala's digitalising spends and online retail sales were not found. Future researchers could survey a representative sample of Kerala consumers across districts, ages and genders, compare urban vs rural buyers, test the roles of trust, security and website quality with regression or structural equation modelling, and study how the personal experience of fraud affects willingness to buy online.

8 Conclusion:

Kerala combines almost universal internet connectivity that widely shared basic digital skills and a young, social-media-active population. The conditions favour digital marketing, but the same evidence shows that shoppers face real risks. Reported fraud losses have grown and local studies find that convenience attracts buyers while perceived risk holds them back. In businesses, the lesson is simple and demanding. In Kerala, being seen is easy and being believed in hard. Brands that pair digital reach with transparency, secure payment, dependable delivery and careful treatment of customer data are best placed to turn attention into purchases. Firmer conclusions will need primary research designed for Kerala.

References:

- Ajithkumar, S. (2017). A micro level study on the influence of online shopping on consumer behaviour in Kerala. Shanlax International Journal of Arts, Science and Humanities.
- Kerala Kaumudi. (2025). Kerala ranks number one in digital literacy; CM to announce on August 21.
- Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology. (2025). Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025. Government of India.
- Online shopping behaviour: A study on exploring the dependence of demographics of the people in Kerala on their behaviour in online shopping. (2021). Turkish Journal of Computer and Mathematics Education, 12(10), 4153–4161.
- UNI. (2025, July 11). Online fraud: 286 arrested, 61,361 bank accounts freezed.
- Analysis of Digital Marketing & its impact on buying behaviour of customers, International Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research (www.jetir.org), ISSN:2349-5162, Vol.13, Issue 1, page no.310-316, January-2026.