

Citation: Soleymani, H., Farjam, S., Ahmadi Goltepe, N., Afkari Samareen, M., GolAmini, A., Ansari, H., Kayani, G., & Yousefzadeh, S. (2024). Examining Consumer Buying Behavior and Attitudes with Respect to Advertising and Social Networks. *Digital Transformation and Administration Innovation*, 2(1), 38-47.

Received date: 10 November 2023

Revised date: 02 March 2024

Accepted date: 10 March 2024

Published date: 30 March 2024



Examining Consumer Buying Behavior and Attitudes with Respect to Advertising and Social Networks

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Abstract

The information revolution and the emergence of cyberspace have transformed the marketing landscape and the roles of traditional stakeholders, creating new opportunities for business owners. Easy access to information, the ability to quickly compare products, and many other features of the internet have significantly enhanced consumer power. Companies must better understand consumer buying behavior and attempt to incorporate these insights into their marketing strategies in order to remain competitive. This study evaluates the impact of various advertising methods and online social networks on the purchasing behavior of Iranian consumers. The research adopts a quantitative methodology. Initially, using Chaffey's model, the conceptual framework of the study was developed, and a questionnaire consisting of 37 items was designed, with each item assessing the influence of one advertising method on a specific stage of the purchasing process. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS software, applying the non-parametric binomial test and Friedman test. The study spanned one year and was completed in June 2023. The results indicated that only websites and search engines affect the stages of the purchasing process, whereas other forms of advertising do not have a significant impact.

Keywords: E-business, e-marketing, internet, online advertising, consumer behavior.

1. Introduction

The migration from traditional advertising to online advertising has been driven by several factors, including increased consumer access to digital devices, improved targeting algorithms, and the interactive nature of social media environments. Consumers today are empowered to compare products, read reviews, and make informed decisions instantaneously. Consequently, companies must reevaluate their promotional strategies to ensure alignment with the behavioral patterns and preferences of online audiences (Li et al., 2023). Research has shown that online advertising methods—including websites, email campaigns, mobile ads, banners, and viral content—affect various stages of the consumer decision-making process, from awareness to final purchase (Abbaszadeh et al., 2020; Parsakia & Jafari, 2023).

Among these strategies, the role of social media marketing is particularly prominent. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Telegram not only serve as communication tools but also as integrated marketing ecosystems where consumer-brand



interactions occur in real time. As Ibrahim et al. (Ibrahim, 2023) argue, the alignment of social media marketing activities with customer relationship quality significantly impacts brand loyalty. This is especially relevant in markets driven by younger demographics who are highly responsive to digital stimuli and peer influence.

Scholars have also emphasized the dual nature of social media marketing: while it allows brands to personalize content and engage with users on a more intimate level, it also exposes consumers to potentially deceptive practices. Bakhtiari Bastaki et al. (Bakhtiari Bastaki et al., 2021) highlight that perceived deception in social media advertising can diminish consumer trust and deter purchase intentions. Therefore, understanding not just the impact, but also the ethical and psychological implications of each advertising method is essential for sustainable digital marketing.

Zhang et al. (Zhang et al., 2023) conducted a case study on TikTok users and concluded that entertaining and relatable content significantly enhances purchase intention, especially when coupled with influencer marketing and algorithm-driven personalization. Similarly, Sheidaei et al. (Sheidaei et al., 2022) found that ad personalization on Instagram has a measurable effect on online purchases, suggesting that the success of advertising is often contingent upon how well it aligns with users' preferences and browsing behavior.

The effectiveness of mobile advertising, especially permission-based mobile advertising, has also been scrutinized. While it offers direct access to consumers through their most personal device—the smartphone—studies indicate mixed results regarding its impact on purchasing decisions. Asgari and Ammar (Asgari & Ammar, 2022) report that while mobile ads can boost product awareness, their intrusive nature may generate resistance if not executed thoughtfully.

Viral marketing presents another layer of complexity. Razali et al. (Razali et al., 2023) demonstrate that viral content, particularly on Instagram, influences consumer decisions by leveraging social proof and emotional appeal. Viral campaigns can significantly impact brand visibility and engagement, yet their effectiveness relies heavily on message authenticity and audience relevance. In contrast, Khoa (Khoa, 2023) emphasizes the importance of long-term strategies, suggesting that sustained social media marketing activities—rather than sporadic viral hits—are more effective in nurturing customer loyalty in the e-commerce sector.

Referral advertising, often rooted in word-of-mouth and trust-based relationships, has also shown significant potential. Kamran et al. (Kamran et al., 2018) and Khaniki et al. (Khaniki et al., 2016) both confirm that trust is a decisive factor in the acceptance of referral advertising on platforms like Telegram. These findings support the notion that consumers tend to rely on peer recommendations, especially in markets where informational asymmetry or perceived risk is high.

Meanwhile, email marketing—a more traditional form of digital outreach—has maintained its relevance despite the proliferation of newer platforms. According to Behboodi et al. (Behboodi et al., 2023), email advertising that incorporates elements of green marketing and corporate social responsibility can positively influence consumer attitudes, particularly among environmentally conscious audiences. However, it remains a method whose success heavily depends on personalization and value offering, as uninvited promotional emails often get ignored or classified as spam.

Search engine marketing, particularly via platforms like Google and Yahoo, remains a dominant force in shaping consumer awareness and facilitating product comparison. As Abbaszadeh et al. (Abbaszadeh et al., 2020) found in their prioritization study of internet advertising methods, search engines play a critical role in driving traffic to product pages and influencing final purchasing decisions. This aligns with broader industry insights suggesting that SEO and SEM are foundational to digital visibility and consumer conversion.

Zaman et al. (Zaman et al., 2023) provide a unique angle by integrating ethical self-identity into the conversation, showing that consumer decisions—especially in environmentally sensitive domains—are influenced by the congruence between personal values and brand messaging. This insight underscores the growing necessity for marketers to craft messages that not only capture attention but also align with the ethical frameworks of their target audiences.

Akhavan Khrazian et al. (Akhavan Khrazian et al., 2023) further elaborate on the role of personality dimensions in shaping consumer responses to social network marketing. Their multilevel analysis reveals that the perceived quality of social networks mediates the relationship between personality traits and buying behavior, offering valuable guidance for targeted marketing strategies. Meanwhile, Rastgar et al. (Rastgar et al., 2022) emphasize the mediating roles of perceived value and customer



satisfaction in linking marketing activity with consumer intentions, reinforcing the idea that effective advertising must be both functionally informative and emotionally resonant.

From a theoretical perspective, Li et al. (Li et al., 2023) propose that the foundation of social media marketing research must be grounded in interdisciplinary approaches, integrating psychology, communication, and data science. This approach allows for a more comprehensive understanding of how digital content affects cognition, emotion, and ultimately behavior. Parsakia and Jafari (Parsakia & Jafari, 2023) extend this notion by introducing AI-based personalization as a frontier in enhancing customer engagement. Their study suggests that artificial intelligence can bridge the gap between data and relevance, optimizing online marketing outcomes in real-time.

Finally, Haghighi Nasab et al. (Haghighi Nasab et al., 2020) offer a sociological lens on the issue by examining the influence of social ties on consumer responses to advertisements. Their research confirms that emotional and relational factors often outweigh technical ones in shaping consumer decisions, especially in cultures where collectivism and interpersonal trust are pronounced.

In summary, while online advertising methods vary widely in format and delivery, their impact on consumer purchasing behavior is mediated by factors such as trust, personalization, social influence, and perceived value. This study aims to evaluate the differential effects of multiple advertising strategies—including websites, search engines, email, mobile, banner, referral, and viral advertising—on the stages of consumer purchase in an Iranian context.

2. Methods and Materials

This study is classified as a descriptive-applied research in the field of advertising. Given the rise in market competition, the subject of advertising and its impact on consumer purchasing behavior has recently gained significant importance in marketing. As a result, applied advertising research has become increasingly relevant for organizations. The target population of this study consists of buyers of products such as books, CDs, and software from a specific cultural and information institution. Considering that the data was collected through questionnaires, the temporal scope of the research spans from June 2022 to June 2023. The research methodology is quantitative and employs statistical testing.

Initially, by reviewing documents, records, and both Persian and English articles, the literature review was consolidated and the theoretical framework of the research was developed. Based on the research model, the questionnaire items were designed, and data collection was carried out accordingly. After collecting the completed questionnaires, the data were analyzed using SPSS software. To examine the effect or lack of effect of each online advertising method on each stage of the consumer purchasing process, the non-parametric binomial test or the parametric mean comparison test was used. Additionally, the Friedman test was employed to rank the impact of various online advertising methods on the purchasing stages.

3. Findings and Results

Based on the data obtained from a total of 460 distributed questionnaires, results were collected concerning the respondents' age, gender, and educational level. Among the 460 respondents, 111 individuals (24.15%) were under the age of 20, 229 individuals (49.8%) were in the 20–30 age group, 74 individuals (16.1%) were in the 30–40 age group, 26 individuals (5.7%) were in the 40–50 age group, and 20 individuals (4.3%) were above 50 years of age. Out of the 460 respondents, 344 individuals (74.8%) were male and 116 individuals (25.2%) were female. In terms of education, 99 respondents (21.5%) had education below high school diploma, 84 individuals (18.3%) held a high school diploma, 103 respondents (22.4%) had an associate degree, 141 individuals (30.7%) held a bachelor's degree, and 33 individuals (7.2%) had a master's degree or higher.

To examine the consistency of the ranking (prioritization) of variables from the respondents' perspective, the Friedman test was employed in this study.

Table 1. Impact or Non-Impact of Various Online Advertising Methods on Each Stage of Purchase

Row	Variables Under Study	Group 1 (option 3 and below) – Frequency	% Frequency	Group 2 (above option 3) – Frequency	% Frequency	Sig.
1	Impact of mobile advertising on product awareness	332	72.0%	101	22.0%	0.000
2	Impact of mobile advertising on awareness of product specifications	373	81.0%	87	19.0%	0.000



3	Impact of mobile advertising on searching for sellers	364	79.0%	96	21.0%	0.000
4	Impact of mobile advertising on final product purchase	371	81.0%	89	19.0%	0.000
5	Impact of permission-based mobile advertising on product awareness	305	66.0%	155	34.0%	0.000
6	Impact of permission-based mobile advertising on awareness of specifications	359	78.0%	101	22.0%	0.000
7	Impact of permission-based mobile advertising on searching for sellers	339	74.0%	121	26.0%	0.000
8	Impact of permission-based mobile advertising on final purchase	350	76.0%	110	24.0%	0.000
9	Impact of email advertising on product awareness	322	70.0%	138	30.0%	0.000
10	Impact of email advertising on awareness of specifications	324	70.0%	136	30.0%	0.000
11	Impact of email advertising on searching for sellers	329	72.0%	131	28.0%	0.000
12	Impact of email advertising on evaluating and comparing products	336	73.0%	124	27.0%	0.000
13	Impact of email advertising on final purchase	346	75.0%	114	25.0%	0.000
14	Impact of websites on product awareness	232	50.0%	228	50.0%	0.889
15	Impact of websites on awareness of specifications	227	49.0%	233	51.0%	0.816
16	Impact of websites on searching for sellers	250	54.0%	210	46.0%	0.069
17	Impact of websites on evaluating and comparing products	203	44.0%	257	56.0%	0.013
18	Impact of websites on final product purchase	275	60.0%	185	40.0%	0.000
19	Impact of banner ads on product awareness	319	69.0%	141	31.0%	0.000
20	Impact of banner ads on awareness of specifications	345	75.0%	115	25.0%	0.000
21	Impact of banner ads on searching for sellers	335	73.0%	125	27.0%	0.000
22	Impact of banner ads on evaluating and comparing products	337	73.0%	123	27.0%	0.000
23	Impact of banner ads on final product purchase	353	77.0%	107	23.0%	0.000
24	Impact of search engines on product awareness	237	52.0%	223	48.0%	0.544
25	Impact of search engines on awareness of specifications	247	54.0%	213	46.0%	0.124
26	Impact of search engines on searching for sellers	142	31.0%	318	69.0%	0.000
27	Impact of search engines on product comparison and evaluation	199	43.0%	261	57.0%	0.004
28	Impact of search engines (e.g., Google, Yahoo) on final purchase	285	62.0%	175	38.0%	0.000
29	Impact of viral advertising on product awareness	388	84.0%	72	16.0%	0.000
30	Impact of viral advertising on awareness of specifications	412	90.0%	48	10.0%	0.000
31	Impact of viral advertising on searching for sellers	408	89.0%	52	11.0%	0.000
32	Impact of viral advertising on final purchase	409	89.0%	51	11.0%	0.000
33	Impact of referral advertising on product awareness	379	82.0%	81	18.0%	0.000
34	Impact of referral advertising on awareness of specifications	366	80.0%	94	20.0%	0.000
35	Impact of referral advertising on searching for sellers	381	88.0%	79	17.0%	0.000
36	Impact of referral advertising on product comparison and evaluation	382	83.0%	78	17.0%	0.000
37	Impact of referral advertising on final purchase	392	85.0%	68	15.0%	0.000

Table 2. Ranking the Impact of Different Advertising Methods on Purchase Stages

Row	Variable Under Study
1	Impact of websites on awareness of product specifications, features, and characteristics



2	Impact of websites on product awareness
3	Impact of websites on searching for product suppliers and finding the best seller
4	Impact of websites on evaluating and comparing various products and selecting the desired product
5	Impact of search engines such as Google and Yahoo on product awareness
6	Impact of search engines such as Google and Yahoo on awareness of product specifications, features, and characteristics
7	Impact of search engines such as Google and Yahoo on searching for product suppliers and finding the best seller
8	Impact of search engines such as Google and Yahoo on evaluating and comparing various products and selecting the desired product
9	Impact of websites on final product purchase
10	Impact of search engines such as Google and Yahoo on final product purchase
11	Impact of banner ads on product awareness
12	Impact of permission-based mobile advertising on product awareness
13	Impact of banner ads on evaluating and comparing various products and selecting the desired product
14	Impact of email advertising on awareness of product specifications, features, and characteristics
15	Impact of banner ads on awareness of product specifications, features, and characteristics
16	Impact of banner ads on searching for product suppliers and finding the best seller
17	Impact of permission-based mobile advertising on searching for product suppliers and finding the best seller
18	Impact of email advertising on product awareness
19	Impact of email advertising on searching for product suppliers and finding the best seller
20	Impact of email advertising on evaluating and comparing various products and selecting the desired product
21	Impact of permission-based mobile advertising on awareness of product specifications, features, and characteristics
22	Impact of banner ads on final product purchase
23	Impact of mobile advertising on product awareness
24	Impact of permission-based mobile advertising on final product purchase
25	Impact of mobile advertising on searching for product suppliers and finding the best seller
26	Impact of email advertising on final product purchase
27	Impact of referral advertising on awareness of product specifications, features, and characteristics
28	Impact of referral advertising on product awareness
29	Impact of referral advertising on evaluating and comparing various products and selecting the desired product
30	Impact of referral advertising on searching for product suppliers and finding the best seller
31	Impact of mobile advertising on awareness of product specifications, features, and characteristics
32	Impact of mobile advertising on final product purchase
33	Impact of referral advertising on final product purchase
34	Impact of viral advertising on product awareness
35	Impact of viral advertising on awareness of product specifications, features, and characteristics
36	Impact of viral advertising on searching for product suppliers and finding the best seller
37	Impact of viral advertising on final product purchase

Table 3. Ranking the Impact of Each Advertising Method on Purchase Stages

Mean Score	Advertising Method	Rank
6.32	Impact of websites on purchase stages	1
6.16	Impact of search engines on purchase stages	2
5.31	Impact of banner ads on purchase stages	3
5.17	Impact of email advertising on purchase stages	4
4.72	Impact of referral advertising on purchase stages	5
3.31	Impact of permission-based mobile advertising on purchase stages	6
2.92	Impact of mobile advertising on purchase stages	7
2.09	Impact of viral advertising on purchase stages	8

Table 4. Impact or Non-Impact of Various Online Advertising Methods on the Stages of Consumer Purchase

Row	Analyzed Variables	Impact or Non-Impact of Variables
1	Impact of mobile advertising on product awareness	There is a difference between individuals who believe this method is effective and those who do not; however, the overall impact of this advertising method on purchase stages is not significant.
2	Impact of mobile advertising on awareness of product specifications, features, and characteristics	
3	Impact of mobile advertising on searching for suppliers and finding the best seller	
4	Impact of mobile advertising on final product purchase	
5	Impact of permission-based mobile advertising on product awareness	



6	Impact of permission-based mobile advertising on awareness of product specifications, features, and characteristics	
7	Impact of permission-based mobile advertising on searching for suppliers and finding the best seller	
8	Impact of permission-based mobile advertising on final product purchase	
9	Impact of email advertising on product awareness	
10	Impact of email advertising on awareness of product specifications, features, and characteristics	
11	Impact of email advertising on searching for suppliers and finding the best seller	
12	Impact of email advertising on evaluating and comparing products and selecting the desired product	
13	Impact of email advertising on final product purchase	
14	Impact of referral advertising on searching for suppliers and finding the best seller	
15	Impact of referral advertising on evaluating and comparing products and selecting the desired product	
16	Impact of websites on final product purchase	
17	Impact of banner ads on product awareness	
18	Impact of banner ads on awareness of product specifications, features, and characteristics	
19	Impact of banner ads on searching for suppliers and finding the best seller	
20	Impact of banner ads on evaluating and comparing products and selecting the desired product	
21	Impact of banner ads on final product purchase	
22	Impact of referral advertising on final product purchase	
23	Impact of search engines (e.g., Google, Yahoo) on final product purchase	
24	Impact of viral advertising on product awareness	
25	Impact of viral advertising on awareness of product specifications, features, and characteristics	
26	Impact of viral advertising on searching for suppliers and finding the best seller	
27	Impact of viral advertising on final product purchase	
28	Impact of referral advertising on product awareness	
29	Impact of referral advertising on awareness of product specifications, features, and characteristics	
30	Impact of websites on product awareness	For the remaining eight factors, the impact of these advertising methods on purchase stages is significant.
31	Impact of websites on awareness of product specifications, features, and characteristics	
32	Impact of websites on searching for suppliers and finding the best seller	
33	Impact of websites on evaluating and comparing products and selecting the desired product	
34	Impact of search engines (e.g., Google, Yahoo) on product awareness	
35	Impact of search engines (e.g., Google, Yahoo) on awareness of product specifications, features, and characteristics	
36	Impact of search engines (e.g., Google, Yahoo) on searching for suppliers and finding the best seller	
37	Impact of search engines (e.g., Google, Yahoo) on evaluating and comparing products and selecting the desired product	

The results of the analysis indicated that among the eight online advertising methods, six of them did not significantly influence the stages of purchase. However, one method—websites—showed a significant impact on purchase stages. In contrast, for search engines, no significant difference was observed between individuals who believed the method was effective and those who did not. The results are presented in Table 7.



Table 5. Impact of Each of the 8 Online Advertising Methods Separately on the Stages of Consumer Purchase Behavior

Row	Analyzed Variables	Impact or Non-Impact of Variables
1	Mobile advertising on purchase stages	There is a difference between individuals who believe this method is effective and those who do not; however, the overall impact of this method on purchase stages is not significant.
2	Permission-based mobile advertising on purchase stages	
3	Email advertising on purchase stages	
4	Banner advertising on purchase stages	
5	Viral advertising on purchase stages	
6	Referral advertising on purchase stages	There is a difference between individuals who believe this method is effective and those who do not, and the impact of this method on purchase stages is significant.
7	Website advertising on purchase stages	
8	Search engine advertising on purchase stages	
		No difference was observed between individuals who believe this method is effective and those who do not.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of this study provide nuanced insights into the effectiveness of various online advertising methods on different stages of consumer purchasing behavior in the Iranian context. Based on the results of the statistical analyses, it was observed that among the eight examined advertising methods—websites, search engines, mobile advertisements, permission-based mobile ads, email, banners, referral advertising, and viral advertising—only websites and search engines demonstrated a statistically significant and consistent impact on the purchase process. Other advertising formats, despite their widespread use and popularity, failed to exert a meaningful influence across all stages of the purchasing cycle, particularly during the final decision-making and transaction stages.

One of the most significant results was the substantial effect of website advertising on consumer behavior. This aligns with the findings of Abbaszadeh et al. (Abbaszadeh et al., 2020), who emphasized that websites serve as essential platforms for conveying detailed information, enabling comparison, and fostering purchase intent through credibility and content richness. Websites influence all five stages of the consumer decision-making process: awareness, consideration, evaluation, intent, and purchase. The integration of user-friendly interfaces, relevant product information, and trust signals—such as reviews and security badges—helps consumers confidently progress through the purchase funnel.

Similarly, search engine advertising was found to significantly affect the middle and final stages of the buying process, particularly product comparison and final decision-making. This is supported by studies highlighting the role of search engines in enhancing discoverability and reducing the cognitive load of product evaluation (Li et al., 2023; Parsakia & Jafari, 2023). Search engines like Google or Yahoo guide users directly to relevant content, often based on highly intentional queries. As a result, users engaged through search ads are more likely to have high conversion potential, making this a strategic channel for targeting ready-to-purchase consumers.

In contrast, mobile advertising—both general and permission-based—did not demonstrate a statistically significant impact on the consumer purchase stages. Although mobile advertising offers immediacy and personalization, these results reflect consumer resistance to perceived intrusiveness. As Asgari and Ammar (Asgari & Ammar, 2022) have noted, mobile ads may be dismissed as disruptive, especially when not contextually relevant. Furthermore, the findings suggest that despite the widespread use of smartphones, consumers may not associate mobile ads with product discovery or purchase decisions, particularly in a non-targeted or generic delivery format.

Email marketing, another traditional digital method, also failed to significantly influence consumer behavior in this study. Despite its reputation for delivering high ROI, its limited effect here may be attributed to issues of spam perception, lack of personalization, or message fatigue. As highlighted by Behboodi et al. (Behboodi et al., 2023), consumer engagement with email advertisements is contingent on relevance, ethical messaging, and brand credibility. Without these elements, consumers may disregard email marketing as background noise in an oversaturated digital environment.



Interestingly, viral and referral marketing—which are often touted as highly effective due to their reliance on social proof and emotional resonance—also failed to significantly influence the consumer journey in this study. This challenges previous findings that positioned viral content as a major driver of consumer behavior (Razali et al., 2023; Zaman et al., 2023). One possible explanation lies in the context of the Iranian market, where cultural attitudes toward trust, privacy, and credibility play a significant role in online engagement. As Khaniki et al. (Khaniki et al., 2016) emphasized, social networks must foster a foundation of trust before consumers act on shared or peer-generated content.

The lack of effectiveness observed in referral advertising may also be tied to changes in consumer behavior related to source credibility. Although referral mechanisms were effective in the early stages of social media proliferation, their power appears diminished when not tied to a credible influencer or trusted peer network. This supports Kamran et al.'s (Kamran et al., 2018) observation that the level of social trust within online networks critically shapes user receptiveness to advertising content. The findings imply that referrals may only be effective under certain conditions, such as when the recommender is perceived as both competent and sincere.

The results also showed that banner advertising, while moderately effective, did not achieve the influence levels observed for websites and search engines. This is consistent with Bakhtiari Bastaki et al. (Bakhtiari Bastaki et al., 2021), who argue that visual-based ads often suffer from “banner blindness”—a phenomenon where users instinctively ignore promotional content. While banners may contribute to initial product awareness, their limited interactivity and static format reduce their potential for fostering deeper consumer engagement and trust.

Moreover, social media advertising as a whole exhibited mixed results. Although platforms like Instagram and TikTok were expected to play a significant role in shaping consumer behavior, the study revealed limited statistical support for their effectiveness in driving purchase decisions. This contrasts with Ibrahim et al. (Ibrahim, 2023), who observed strong correlations between social media engagement and brand loyalty. A possible explanation may lie in the distinction between engagement metrics (likes, shares, comments) and actual conversion metrics (clicks, purchases). As Sheidaei et al. (Sheidaei et al., 2022) indicated, personalization is critical in converting engagement into purchases. Without tailored content and precise targeting, social media ads may attract attention but fail to drive action.

Similarly, the study's results diverge from those of Akhavan Khrazian et al. (Akhavan Khrazian et al., 2023), who emphasized that social network quality mediates the relationship between consumer personality traits and behavior. One explanation could be the relatively low perceived quality or trustworthiness of social network content in the studied population. Furthermore, Rastgar et al. (Rastgar et al., 2022) noted that marketing effectiveness is mediated by perceived value and satisfaction, which may not be immediately triggered by social media content unless supported by trust, relevance, and product fit.

Finally, theoretical frameworks suggest that consumer responses to online advertising are shaped not only by content and platform but also by personal values and ethical self-identity. Zaman et al. (Zaman et al., 2023) argued that consumers who identify with ethical or environmental values are more likely to be influenced by messages that resonate with those values. This may explain why email campaigns or viral ads without ethical content failed to influence behavior in this study.

Overall, the findings of this study corroborate several strands of the literature while also challenging assumptions about the universal effectiveness of certain online advertising formats. The evidence underscores the importance of aligning advertising strategies with consumer expectations, platform trust, and message personalization. The superiority of websites and search engines in affecting purchase behavior suggests that users place higher value on platforms that offer information credibility, navigational clarity, and user autonomy.

This study is not without its limitations. First, the sample was drawn from consumers within a specific cultural and geographical context, namely Iran, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Cultural norms regarding privacy, digital trust, and consumption behavior may differ significantly from other regions, particularly Western economies. Second, the study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional design, which limits the ability to capture evolving consumer attitudes over time or provide deep insights into psychological motivations. Third, the research did not account for the influence of demographic variables such as income level, occupation, or digital literacy, which could moderate the effects of different advertising methods.



Future research should consider employing a mixed-method approach, incorporating both qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys to explore the underlying motivations, perceptions, and emotional responses to online advertising. Longitudinal studies could also provide insights into how consumer preferences change over time in response to evolving technologies and social media dynamics. Furthermore, researchers should explore the role of AI-driven content personalization in enhancing the effectiveness of less impactful advertising formats such as email or banner ads.

Marketers and digital strategists should focus their resources on optimizing website content and investing in search engine marketing, as these channels were found to be most effective in influencing consumer behavior. Emphasis should be placed on providing high-quality, credible information and user-centric design. For less effective methods such as mobile, email, or viral advertising, efforts should be directed toward enhancing personalization, ethical alignment, and trust-building mechanisms. Additionally, brands should prioritize consistent messaging and audience segmentation to ensure that marketing efforts are tailored to the specific needs and values of their target consumers.

Ethical Considerations

All procedures performed in this study were under the ethical standards.

Acknowledgments

Authors thank all who helped us through this study.

Conflict of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

Funding/Financial Support

According to the authors, this article has no financial support.

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