

# Role of Country of Origin on Consumer Decision Making in Digital Marketing

<sup>1</sup>MR. ABHIMANYU VERMA, <sup>2</sup>DR. GURJEET KAUR

<sup>1,2</sup>Assistant Professor, Shaheed Sukhdev College of Business Studies, University Of Delhi, New Delhi, India

**ABSTRACT:** The association between ‘place of origin’ of a product and its effect on consumer preference has been in existence and researched for long. The country-of-origin effect is created in the minds of consumer from individual’s knowledge, experience, exposure and inclination towards a particular country. It helps in reducing cognition load in consumer decision-making by becoming a proxy for quality, reliability and acceptability of products originating from a specific country. The phenomenon is identified by researchers in different contexts and levels, leading to many concepts and definitions. There are many product-specific factors that contribute to the generation of country-of-origin biases along with moderating factors influencing the effect. In modern hybrid products, with distributed locations of production, it has become more complicated with differences in brand/country of the brand, country of design, country of parts and country of assembly and so on. However, the importance of the country-of-origin effect is still a reality as the consumer uses these cues in product differentiation

**KEYWORDS:** country, origin, consumer, digital, marketing, decision

## I. INTRODUCTION

COO or Country of Origin Effect refers to the practice of marketers and consumers associating brands with countries and making buying decisions made on the country of origin of the product. For instance, as we shall discuss later, we tend to associate quality with the Japanese and precision with the Swiss. This means that products and brands from these countries are usually purchased or discarded depending upon our perceptions of the value associated with these countries.

In brief, the country of origin effect measures the impact of the country in which the product is made on the consumers. In recent years, there has been a lot of research on how the COO effect influences consumers and this has led to a renewed effort to associate and dissociate the products from the countries that they are made in. Though association for gains is obvious, what is also to be noted that there can be a negative impact of COO as is evidenced in the examples that are discussed later.

It would suffice to state here is that COO must be approached in a scientific manner by conducting market research in the target countries on how the consumers perceive the country in which the brand is made.

### Impact of Country of Origin (COO) on Marketing

It has been found that COO has a significant impact on consumer behavior and as we can see some of the taglines like crafted to perfection in Switzerland for the Rolex and the Swatch watches, the COO has a discernible impact on purchasing decisions. Moreover, COO is associated with greater brand recall, as we know that McDonald’s mean American and hence, we tend to associate the brand with the country.

Similarly, we tend to associate Coca Cola and Pepsi with the United States and Louis Vuitton and other luxury designer brands with the French.

The point here is that in terms of COO, the brand the country get associated together and this can lead to both positives as mentioned above and negatives like banning French Fries in the US after they led the invasion that was opposed by France.

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Therefore, marketers have to be careful about the kind of COO based branding that they do, as straying from the conventional niche areas can be harmful to their prospects.

Further, the fact that once the consumers form brand and country association and brand recall is made accordingly, it becomes hard to change the perceptions afterwards.

Some Real World Examples of Successes and Failures

Most of us tend to associate quality with the Japanese and Precision with Germans. This is the brand association that we form with products made from these countries. For instance, when Japanese cars and automobiles entered the global market in the 1980s, they quickly became synonymous with quality and fuel efficiency. Similarly, the German automobiles were associated with durability, strength, and precision.

In the same manner, Swiss watches are known for their perfection and French perfumes are known for their fragrance and chic effect. However, there have been failures as well in the way, COO was perceived to affect the consumers and the best example of this is the failed attempt by British companies to penetrate the automobile market. Though the British auto majors like Rolls Royce and Jaguar were known for their up-market models, they could not make the transition to mass market automobiles as the consumers still associated these companies with old world products rather than the new and emerging companies from Japan and South Korea.

It is evident from the preceding discussion that COO effect can be harnessed for benefit by the marketers. It is also the case that once the COO turns negative because of some companies rolling out defective and substandard products, it would be difficult for the other companies from that country to push their case effectively with the consumers.

An organization that wants to be successful must consider buyer behavior when developing the marketing mix. Buyer behavior is the actions people take with regard to buying and using products. Marketers must understand buyer behavior, such as how raising or lowering a price will affect the buyer's perception of the product and therefore create a fluctuation in sales, or how a specific review on social media can create an entirely new direction for the marketing mix based on the comments (buyer behavior/input) of the target market.

The Consumer Decision Making Process

Once the process is started, a potential buyer can withdraw at any stage of making the actual purchase. The tendency for a person to go through all six stages is likely only in certain buying situations—a first time purchase of a product, for instance, or when buying high priced, long-lasting, infrequently purchased articles. This is referred to as complex decision making.

For many products, the purchasing behavior is a routine affair in which the aroused need is satisfied in a habitual manner by repurchasing the same brand. That is, past reinforcement in learning experiences leads directly to buying, and thus the second and third stages are bypassed. This is called simple decision making.

However, if something changes appreciably (price, product, availability, services), the buyer may re-enter the full decision process and consider alternative brands. Whether complex or simple, the first step is need identification (Assael, 1987).

Both simple (routine) and complex decision making begins with need recognition. The simple route jumps straight to select and purchase; whereas the complex process involves more thorough search and evaluation activities before a selection is made.

When Inertia Takes Over

When consumers make purchasing decisions out of habit, we call this inertia. This habitual form of purchasing involves little complex decision making once the consumer has recognized a need (i.e., "I am out of printer paper"). These types

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of purchases require little effort on the consumer's side and brands are easily substituted for others if the purchasing experience can be made to be more convenient. In contrast, brand loyalty occurs when consumers go out of their way to repeatedly purchase a brand that they favour above all others. Consumers are unlikely to substitute the brand for another one and usually form a bond or connection with the brand over time.

## **Need Recognition**

Whether we act to resolve a particular problem depends upon two factors: (1) the magnitude of the discrepancy between what we have and what we need, and (2) the importance of the problem. A consumer may desire a new Cadillac and own a five-year-old Chevrolet. The discrepancy may be fairly large but relatively unimportant compared to the other problems they face. Conversely, an individual may own a car that is two years old and running very well. Yet, for various reasons, they may consider it extremely important to purchase a car this year. People must resolve these types of conflicts before they can proceed. Otherwise, the buying process for a given product stops at this point, probably in frustration.

Once the problem is recognized it must be defined in such a way that the consumer can actually initiate the action that will bring about a relevant problem solution. Note that, in many cases, problem recognition and problem definition occur simultaneously, such as a consumer running out of toothpaste. Consider the more complicated problem involved with status and image—how we want others to see us. For example, you may know that you are not satisfied with your appearance, but you may not be able to define it any more precisely than that. Consumers will not know where to begin solving their problem until the problem is adequately defined.

Marketers can become involved in the need recognition stage in three ways. First they need to know what problems consumers are facing in order to develop a marketing mix to help solve these problems. This requires that they measure problem recognition. Second, on occasion, marketers want to activate problem recognition. Public service announcements espousing the dangers of cigarette smoking is an example. Weekend and night shop hours are a response of retailers to the consumer problem of limited weekday shopping opportunities. This problem has become particularly important to families with two working adults. Finally, marketers can also shape the definition of the need or problem. If a consumer needs a new coat, do they define the problem as a need for inexpensive covering, a way to stay warm on the coldest days, a garment that will last several years, warm cover that will not attract odd looks from their peers, or an article of clothing that will express their personal sense of style? A salesperson or an ad may shape their answers

## **Information Search**

After a need is recognized, the prospective consumer may seek information to help identify and evaluate alternative products, services, and outlets that will meet that need. Such information can come from family, friends, personal observation, or other sources, such as Consumer Reports, salespeople, or mass media. The promotional component of the marketers offering is aimed at providing information to assist the consumer in their problem solving process. In some cases, the consumer already has the needed information based on past purchasing and consumption experience. Bad experiences and lack of satisfaction can destroy repeat purchases. The consumer with a need for tires may look for information in the local newspaper or ask friends for recommendation. If they have bought tires before and was satisfied, they may go to the same dealer and buy the same brand.

Information search can also identify new needs. As a tire shopper looks for information, they may decide that the tires are not the real problem, that the need is for a new car. At this point, the perceived need may change triggering a new informational search. Information search involves mental as well as the physical activities that consumers must perform in order to make decisions and accomplish desired goals in the marketplace. It takes time, energy, money, and can often involve foregoing more desirable activities. The benefits of information search, however, can outweigh the costs. For example, engaging in a thorough information search may save money, improve quality of selection, or reduce risks. The Internet is a valuable information source.

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## Evaluation of Alternatives

After information is secured and processed, alternative products, services, and outlets are identified as viable options. The consumer evaluates these alternatives, and, if financially and psychologically able, makes a choice. The criteria used in evaluation varies from consumer to consumer just as the needs and information sources vary. One consumer may consider price most important while another puts more weight (importance) upon quality or convenience.

## Using the 'Rule of Thumb'

Consumers don't have the time or desire to ponder endlessly about every purchase! Fortunately for us, heuristics, also described as shortcuts or mental "rules of thumb", help us make decisions quickly and painlessly. Heuristics are especially important to draw on when we are faced with choosing among products in a category where we don't see huge differences or if the outcome isn't 'do or die'.

Heuristics are helpful sets of rules that simplify the decision-making process by making it quick and easy for consumers.

## Common Heuristics in Consumer Decision Making

The search for alternatives and the methods used in the search are influenced by such factors as: (a) time and money costs; (b) how much information the consumer already has; (c) the amount of the perceived risk if a wrong selection is made; and (d) the consumer's predisposition toward particular choices as influenced by the attitude of the individual toward choice behaviour. That is, there are individuals who find the selection process to be difficult and disturbing. For these people there is a tendency to keep the number of alternatives to a minimum, even if they have not gone through an extensive information search to find that their alternatives appear to be the very best. On the other hand, there are individuals who feel it necessary to collect a long list of alternatives. This tendency can appreciably slow down the decision-making function.

## Consumer Evaluations Made Easier

The evaluation of alternatives often involves consumers drawing on their evoke, inept, and insert sets to help them in the decision making process.

## Evoke Set

The brands and products that consumers compare—their evoked set—represent the alternatives being considered by consumers during the problem-solving process. Sometimes known as a "consideration" set, the evoked set tends to be small relative to the total number of options available. When a consumer commits significant time to the comparative process and reviews price, warranties, terms and condition of sale and other features it is said that they are involved in extended problem solving. Unlike routine problem solving, extended or extensive problem solving comprises external research and the evaluation of alternatives. Whereas, routine problem solving is low-involvement, inexpensive, and has limited risk if purchased, extended problem solving justifies the additional effort with a high-priced or scarce product, service, or benefit (e.g., the purchase of a car). Likewise, consumers use extensive problem solving for infrequently purchased, expensive, high-risk, or new goods or services.

## Inept Set

As opposed to the evoked set, a consumer's inept set represent those brands that they would not given any consideration too. For a consumer who is shopping around for an electric vehicle, for example, they would not even remotely consider gas-guzzling vehicles like large SUVs.

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## Inert Set

The inert set represents those brands or products a consumer is aware of, but is indifferent to and doesn't consider them either desirable or relevant enough to be among the evoke set. Marketers have an opportunity here to position their brands appropriately so consumers move these items from their insert to evoke set when evaluation alternatives.

## Selection

The selection of an alternative, in many cases, will require additional evaluation. For example, a consumer may select a favorite brand and go to a convenient outlet to make a purchase. Upon arrival at the dealer, the consumer finds that the desired brand is out-of-stock. At this point, additional evaluation is needed to decide whether to wait until the product comes in, accept a substitute, or go to another outlet. The selection and evaluation phases of consumer problem solving are closely related and often run sequentially, with outlet selection influencing product evaluation, or product selection influencing outlet evaluation.

While many consumers would agree that choice is a good thing, there is such a thing as "too much choice" that inhibits the consumer decision making process. Consumer hyperchoice is a term used to describe purchasing situations that involve an excess of choice thus making selection for difficult for consumers. Dr. Sheena Iyengar studies consumer choice and collects data that supports the concept of consumer hyperchoice. In one of her studies, she put out jars of jam in a grocery store for shoppers to sample, with the intention to influence purchases. Dr. Iyengar discovered that when a fewer number of jam samples were provided to shoppers, more purchases were made. But when a large number of jam samples were set out, fewer purchases were made (Green, 2010). As it turns out, "more is less" when it comes to the selection process.

## II.DISCUSSION

### The Purchase Decision

After much searching and evaluating, or perhaps very little, consumers at some point have to decide whether they are going to buy.

Anything marketers can do to simplify purchasing will be attractive to buyers. This may include minimal clicks to online checkout; short wait times in line; and simplified payment options. When it comes to advertising marketers could also suggest the best size for a particular use, or the right wine to drink with a particular food. Sometimes several decision situations can be combined and marketed as one package. For example, travel agents often package travel tours with flight and hotel reservations.

To do a better marketing job at this stage of the buying process, a seller needs to know answers to many questions about consumers' shopping behaviour. For instance, how much effort is the consumer willing to spend in shopping for the product? What factors influence when the consumer will actually purchase? Are there any conditions that would prohibit or delay purchase? Providing basic product, price, and location information through labels, advertising, personal selling, and public relations is an obvious starting point. Product sampling, coupons, and rebates may also provide an extra incentive to buy.

Actually determining how a consumer goes through the decision-making process is a difficult research task.

### Post-Purchase Behaviour

All the behaviour determinants and the steps of the buying process up to this point are operative before or during the time a purchase is made. However, a consumer's feelings and evaluations after the sale are also significant to a

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marketer, because they can influence repeat sales and also influence what the customer tells others about the product or brand.

Keeping the customer happy is what marketing is all about. Nevertheless, consumers typically experience some post-purchase anxiety after all but the most routine and inexpensive purchases. This anxiety reflects a phenomenon called cognitive dissonance. According to this theory, people strive for consistency among their cognitions (knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, values). When there are inconsistencies, dissonance exists, which people will try to eliminate. In some cases, the consumer makes the decision to buy a particular brand already aware of dissonant elements. In other instances, dissonance is aroused by disturbing information that is received after the purchase. The marketer may take specific steps to reduce post-purchase dissonance. Advertising that stresses the many positive attributes or confirms the popularity of the product can be helpful. Providing personal reinforcement has proven effective with big-ticket items such as automobiles and major appliances. Salespeople in these areas may send cards or may even make personal calls in order to reassure customers about their purchase.

## III.RESULTS

Digital marketing used for selling and buying digital goods like service, products and information using different digital channels like social media, search engines and websites. As we know more and more companies have started using digital marketing as their primary marketing channel in this tech revolutionized the world. The essential reason behind it is the changing behavior of their customer. They are more devoted to a 6-inch mobile screen rather in the actual world. Survey finds out a normal people spent 86 hrs a month on their smartphone. Companies like Amazon have grown as the second biggest company to reach 1\$ trillion milestones and it all started with selling books online. For marketers, it became another path to reach their audience. Using data gathering and data analysis the process become more efficient in targeting their niche audience.

In the process of data gathering and data analysis, they study the different verticals of customer's buying patterns. The questions like, "Why they buy; When they buy; Where they buy; What they buy?" helps companies and governments to manipulate people's future decisions. Which recently seen in the last US election. Over the time everything changed but one thing remains same which is the human mind. A customer back in the 20th century and present both are buying books the only difference is the change of source. With the changing of the source, the customer got the freedom of time, rapid comparison of price and features, access to a bigger network of Online Shops and they don't have to move an inch. Thus, the journey of making a purchase decision also revolved. While electronic screens became the digital world, people started exploring the different channel of it. According to the survey, the highest amount of internet traffic was on social media channels like Facebook and Twitter. Eventually, social media channels became the home source for many of the eCommerce site. Following that most of the, cooperates and governments started using digital mail as their source of communication. And Multi-Media channels like YouTube, Netflix and Amazon Prime became their source of entertainment. By studying each consumer's online footprints, companies can get their interests, beliefs, opinions and private data which can help the digital marketer to produce such a content with very loud context. Triggering that multiple times where you spent most of your time can increase the probability of you ended up buying that.

This article breakdown in three part: Consumer behavior, Ubiquitous Digital Marketing and Identifying the potential of data in consumer behavior. It concludes with the debatable question on the ethical use of consumer data in digital marketing and why it needs more research on it?

## 2. Consumer Behaviour

The section is dedicated to reviewing different evidence on change in consumer behavior and affecting factors of it. Moreover, it discusses the liner, retail-focused model to today's iterative, digital-centric model of consumer behavior. To construct the review, this also studies the Need Hierarchy Theory by Abraham Maslow (1943), Zero moments of truth by Jim Lecinski (2011) and summarizing McKinsey's new consumer journey theory by David Edleman and Marc Singer (2015).



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## 2.1. Paradigms of Shifts in Consumer Decision

Just 10 years ago, the majority of the consumer was still purchasing from retail store despite having online stores. Which drastically changed in the last few years. Advancements in industries like technology, logistics, finance and easy accessibility of internet and mobile in customer's hand convinced businesses to change their marketing model from traditional shop-centric to customer-centric model (International, 2017). For retail shopping, "Moment of Truth" model proposed by Yanliu et al., 2012. The framework was capturing the customer's purchase decision process when they are buying (First Moment of Truth), experiencing a product (Second Moment of Truth) and start engaging with the brand. That journey is a conceptual framework to understand the point-of-purchase behavior of a customer. The key data like shopper's in-store travel distance, how many time they touched a product, how many products were displayed on the shelf and likewise (Silverthorne, 2012) helps to analyze their behavior. The results help businesses to encourage customer's unplanned purchases (Silverthorne, 2012). This implies that having a customer's data can help business to do more personalized marketing, leading more influence in customer's purchase decision.

The shift in the consumer decision paradigms started changing when consumer's key activities like communication, entertainment, finance and academics became more internet centric (Jerry and Vijan, 2002). Sharing more personalised information on digital channels help business to instantaneously customize the shopping experience (David and Marc, 2015). In particular, management consultancy firm McKinsey proposed a consumer decision funnel (Court et al., 2009). The McKinsey's journey discusses the consumer taking advantage of technology to more actively evaluate the product and services (David and Marc, 2015). McKinsey's Consumer funnel theory is showing the paradigm shifts from classic five-steps consumer decision model which is first introduced by John dewey (Dewey, 1910).

## 2.2. Understandings of Consumer Decision Making Models

In addition to understand the paradigm shifts of consumer decision, this article reviews some of the key theories and models which have been selected from relevant marketing studies and research article. Notably, people who do not always works as a consumer can be seen as capable of behaving in purposive, goal-directed and self-regulating ways (Lawson, 1997). Which gives the clear idea of consumer decision making, which defined as liner model (Dewey, 1910) changed with the customer-centric circular model (David and Marc, 2015). Though, it should be noted that conventional decision making models are the key to learn the new models.

### Earliest Decision Making Model

A Century ago, the majority of researchers believes in two hypotheses of consumer behavior (Lee, 2005). Primary is that consumer behavior can be influenced and formed by multiple factors, which can be generalized as:

1. Environmental Influences (Cultural, society, personal influence, family & circumstances)
2. Individual differences and influences (Consumer resources, motivation and involvements, knowledge, attitude and personality, values and lifestyle)
3. Phycological Process (Adaption of information, handling of it and the change in behaviour)

(Engel et al, 1993 cited in Lee, 2005).

The second believe is that consumers are intellectual decision maker who have the ability or skills to go through a sequential decision making process to reach the optimal choice among alternatives (Lee, 2005). In the 1950s, Herbert Simon suggested in his research on decision- making that because of the uncertainty about the future and the costs of getting information in now days, people's rational decisions are limited to the extent that their decisions can only be "limited intellectuality" (Lee, 2005). Around all these assumptions, five decision process stages remains similar.

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(Mitchell and Boustani, 1993 cited in Lee 2005). This five stages are Need Recognitions, Information search, Alternative evaluations, Purchase and Post purchase decisions (John Dewey, 1910 cited in Lee 2005).

The first stage of the process is Need/Problem recognition which is very crucial stage for consumer decision because if the need not recognised then the purchase will not happen (Lee, 2005). Consumer decision making is the attempt to solve Need. In more studies, change in consumer's actual state and desired state trigger the need recognition (Burner, 1988 cited in Lee, 2005). Actual state is the consumer's status quo and the Desired state is what consumer want. According to Maslow's need theory a complete individual has five level of need hierarchy which is outlined as phycological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization (A. H. Maslow, 1943). Lately, it got renovated by Kenrick et al., 2010. According to renovated theory, the biological framework of life-history affects various aspects of Need (Kenrick et al., 2010). After recognition of need, research shows the consumer leads to the pre-purchase process such as Information search (Lee, 2005).

Information Search Process is the second stage of the decision process. It can be categorized as an internal or external search. Internal search refers to the consumer search through recalled information about products from memory and it is determined by the existing product knowledge and the ability of the consumer to obtain relevant product information (Engel, Blackwell and Miniard, 1993, cited in Lee 2005). External searching is referred when the internal search is not sufficient to meet the needs of consumers and involves largely personal interaction by word of mouth (WOM) or mass communication( e.g. Television Ad) (Holbrook and Hirschman 1982, Ray 1973 as cited in Lee, 2005). Source of the information also shapes the decision process. In general, the information of search opens the path to alternative evaluations which is a competitive analysis of information given by companies to the consumer.

The third effect of consumer decision-making model is an alternative evaluation. It is the process by which an alternative is assessed and chosen to satisfy the needs of the consumer (Lee, 2005). Generally speaking, prices, brand name and country of origin are the most commonly cited criteria used by consumers for the alternative assessment. These three criteria often differ in their influence on the product selection of consumers and some dimensions will have a greater impact than others (Engel, Blackwell and Miniard, 1991 as cited in Lee, 2005).

The fourth and the last stages of the process is purchase and the outcome of the purchase. Studies identified three purchase decisions and it categorise as: fully-planned purchase (consumer made the decision, well aware of the need and then make the purchase), partially-planned purchase (need is already considered but the purchase decision deferred until shopping) and impulsive purchase decision (both product and purchase decision made in store) ( Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard, 1991 as cited in Lee, 2005). In spite of all, purchase type may change due to situational factors like product promotion, store atmosphere, product design, etc (Lee, 2005). Ultimately conventional consumer decision making model ends with the post purchase which is actual outcome of the purchase. The feedback of the purchase will make the concurrent effects to the similar purchase especially at the stages of need recognition and information search(Lee, 2005).

Engel et al posed a complete consumer behaviour model, in which environmental and individual differences are variables that influences the consumer decision process in all five stages (Engel, Blackwall and Miniard, 1993). Following these theories many brands made their fortune in late 90s, conversely it failed in the digital era. Though it has such a potential, making it the essential source for many researchers to understand the digital consumer decision making process.

## **Modern Consumer Decision Journey**

The need of modern decision theory stands when consumer's buying behaviour change because of digitization . In present time digital plays a critical role in every aspects of consumer journey (Salo, Alajoutsijärvi and Koivumäki, 2005). As discussed earlier in this article, on the reasons of increasing use of online platform by consumer makes it more easy for researchers to closely observes consumer journey and changing factors of it. As stated in KPMG's global online consumer report (2017), the digital revolution hasn't altered the fact that consumers still experience the same stages of awareness, consideration, conversion and evaluation, the journey itself has changed (KPMG, 2017). Instead of a path to purchase that is conventional linear model, it has become more of a circular or even a web. Consumers move



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through and back and forth between the stages, influenced by a myriad of both offline and online factors at every stage (KPMG, 2017). Hence the marketing is now more focused on open touch points where consumers left their digital footprints and marketers use it to make communication more personalised way (Boudet et al., 2017).

In the year 2016, KPMG conducted a survey on global online consumer behaviour (International, 2017). The survey was focused on the drivers, motivators and inhibitors affecting digital consumer decision journey. Considering the traditional method as a base they asked consumer to describe their behaviour during their most recent online purchase at each of four stages as — Awareness, Consideration, Conversion and Evaluation (International, ibid:16). They call these stages as, “Simplified path to purchase stages of the online purchase journey”. More illustrated in image.

In this journey, the stage starts with the Awareness: Triggers and Influencers. When comparing the impact of online versus offline touchpoints in creating the first trigger moment, it is interesting to observe that consumer cited more online channels comparing offline channels as a source of their initial awareness (International, ibid:15). In addition the report suggested when offline and online channels used together, becomes more effective in creating consumer demand and awareness (International, 2017). Stage two is quite similar to Information search stage in five-stage theory (Dewey, 1910). This stage focuses on Product consideration and company research. During the consideration stage customers are more likely to use online channels as their purchase research compare to offline channels (International, ibid:16). Overall research suggests that price and promotions presumably influenced consumer’s decision regarding which product or service to buy online. In last, decision of a product varied by category (International, ibid:18). For instance, while buying electronic products online consumers were most focused on product features, for luxury items brand reputation is highly in consideration (International, idbi: 18).

Stages three and four are trigger to the purchase and post-purchase consumer behaviour. Stage three is focusing on conversion and exercising two consumer decisions: when and where to buy a product (International, ibid:20). After convincing the consumer during first two stages gives far from guarantees to success in the third stage(International, 2017). When and Where are the priorities of consumer and understanding them can gives businesses the advantage to win the final sale. A purchase decision of Where to buy a product considers, two preferences website and the best price. In which, millennials are more likely to than the older generations to make purchase decision based price than website(International, ibid:20). Which draws attention to that trusted website will always be important but the competitive pricing is expected to continue to rise in importance during purchase decision. The final is inextricably connected with the awareness and consideration stages (International, ibid:22). Hence the purchase model is follows circular or web path to make purchase decision. In the era of social media voice of the consumer experience are critical in generating credibility and influence repeat purchase along with generating both positive and negative buying decision (International, ibid: 22). The unlike results shown in the percentage of positive and negative reviews given by online consumers. A significant amount of reviews were positive which leads to a serious discussion(International, ibid:22). How digital media is manipulating consumer behavior?

### **3. Ubiquitous Digital Marketing**

The technology is revolutionizing, in order to satisfy the needs of generations. By reviewing the recent scenario the generation is entering the Web 4.0. It is widely defined as “Internet of things”. In one definition web 4.0 will brings together all aspects of the web 2.0 and 3.0 to become truly ubiquitous (Davis 2010, as cited in Almeida, 2017). Along with the adaption of revolutionising technology marketing becomes more depth and customer oriented. Previously advertisers focused customer purchase journey which is now transfers to customer’s journey (Court et al., 2009). The study behind why customer’s journey becomes more valuable is Google’s Zero Moment of Truth (Lecinski, 2011). As stated by Jim (2011) when a consumer respond to the real world problem by searching solution on virtual world, that is the little decision making moment where marketing rule book change. It is the moment where marketing happens, where consumer makes choices and affects the every brand in the world (Lecinski, 2011). However to apply Zero Moment of Truth companies need large data sets of consumer’s online and offline activity (Provost and Fawcett, 2013). For instance, an athlete ran his first 10 mile marathon. A week later he got a mail from nike congratulating on race. This happen using a common digital marketing term called “Retargeting” (Julien et al., 2017). In the core of this strategy, data industry plays significant role.

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## **3.1. Shaping the Consumer's Journey**

As stated by David and Marc (2015), that today brands can not only reacts to customer in their purchasing decision but also actively shapes those decision journeys (David and Marc, 2015). In addition, they come up with the four interconnected capabilities for marketers which can make customer journey more stickier to grab the attention and permanently capture customers (David and Marc, 2015). And although the capabilities are highly cooperated with sophisticated technology and equally on creative thinking and novel managerial approaches (David and Marc, 2015).

### **Automation**

It involves the digitization and streamlining of steps in the customer journey which were formerly done manually (Edelman and Singer, 2015). Automation Streamlining involves condition based activities on the top of Artificial intelligence and Natural Level Processing. By studying the formal complex consumer journey, automation makes it more easy, effective and creates the essential foundation for sticky journey (Edelman and Singer, 2015). The process of turning highly complex back-end algorithms into simple, engaging, and user friendly front-end called "Superior Automation". Consider how amazon changes your life From selling online electronics (e.g. amazon.com) to offline groceries (e.g. Amazon Go). By collecting your digital and real world footprints amazon gives you more personalised purchasing triggers.

### **Proactive Personalization**

In a simplified way, understanding of consumer's past interactions and give them a better customize shopping experience. Such as Google Ads, which show you only those advertisements which is relevant to your past activities on internet. Many companies are now using proactive personalization to study the consumer behavioural pattern by tracking them across multiple channels & blending data from multiple sources (Edelman and Singer, 2015). The process helps companies to create single view of what customers are doing and what they will do next (Edelman and Singer, 2015).

### **Contextual Interactions**

Another key capability which is actually plays a big role in shaping customer journey. Marketer use this method to enables series of interaction that further shape and influence the consumer journey experience(David and Marc, 2015).

### **Journey Innovation**

The idea of circular customer-centric journey starts with the where traditional theories left. The ongoing innovation in technology gives an opportunity to extend the relationship between a customer and brand (Edelman and Singer, 2015).

## **4. Identifying the potential of Data in Digital Marketing**

As Clive Humby (2006) puts it, "Data is the new oil." Which states directly to the power. According to study conducted by Erik Brynjolfsson and his colleagues from MIT and Penn's Wharton School on how Data Driven Decision Model changes the company's performance. The results shows companies got 4-6% increase in work efficiency. DDD is also helps companies to gain higher return on investment, asset utilisation and the relationship between two entities seems casual (Provost and Fawcett, 2013). The similar view is held by Lisa Gevelber, "Data beats opinions. The key rule of digital marketing campaigns. Try something unique, track results of each activity; then crank up what works and delete what does not. That is what makes online marketing remarkable. Marketer can control the campaign and it can be change and fix in moments"(Lecinski, 2011). Hence, Data Driven Marketing model is ongoing process, it is not one-way path.

Earlier in 2017, Facebook and Data-Driven Marketing company called Cambridge Analytica comes with the classic example of misusing the power of data analysis (Chang, 2017). It drives our focus to the ethical use of consumer data.

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Despite many countries started changing online data protection law, it needs more research on the understanding behaviour of consumer manipulation due to online marketing.

## IV.CONCLUSION

In this research article, a literature review in the field of digital marketing and how it affects the consumer behavior presented. The article discussed the understanding of different consumer decision journey, marketing approaches and pointing the question on the ethical use of consumer's data in digital marketing.

Many academic research has been provided to understand the change in consumer decision journey. However, the results after changing behavior make a significant impact on the societies. And because of global digital reach, it becomes a very critical time to secure data and use it only as tool to make the consumer's journey better rather spreading false news or manipulating countries election. Agreeing to the fact that data analysis and data processing has substantial power to understand any individual, helping them, suggesting them and in a bigger picture letting them use "Data-Driven Decision Model" as the tool.

Marketing in this digital age gives a responsibility, to use the power of data and utilize it to join those disconnected dots between consumer and brand. Moreover, consumer behavior is still in constant changing state. A recent example of Amazon buying Whole Foods and opening human-free, tech-supported store in America gives a new glance to the digital marketing.

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Volume 5, Issue 3, March 2018

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