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Examining the modern ways of digital marketing and how they are affected by different cultures.

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Thesis Abstract

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Culture undoubtedly influences digital marketing strategies, and it is important for companies to analyse various cultural factors or elements to develop effective digital marketing strategies. Culture directly impacts digital market strategies as the marketing strategy developed by digital marketers can impact people across the world. Culture can make or break a brand, but the right sensitivity and the right digital marketing approach toward the target audience can help in building and developing a strong digital marketing strategy that can transcend reaches and cultures.

This study is based on examining modern ways of digital marketing and how they are affected by different cultures. The reason behind this study is that it has become important for companies to deliver promises to customers, and it requires new ways of operating and attracting customers and facing competition in the market. The research question of this study is what different modern ways of digital marketing are and how they are affected by different cultures. The research problem was studied by using a qualitative research strategy and in this study, the researcher used both primary and secondary data collection methods.

It was found from the study that there are various ways of digital marketing such as SEO, SMM, video marketing, and so on that can be used by companies to market their products and services. Moreover, Hofstede's cultural dimension can be used to understand different types of cultures. There are different elements of culture as culture is a wide topic, and its elements include everything from language to tradition, norms, values, taboos, and so on. This study can prove effective for companies using modern ways of digital marketing and can help them in facing competition and gaining a competitive advantage by analysing the impact of digital marketing on different cultures.

Key Words: Culture, Digital Marketing, Hofstede's cultural dimensions, PDI, Marketing Strategy, Social Media, Religion, and Cultural elements.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Overview

Modern ways of digital marketing can be referred to as the ability of organizations to harness the full capabilities of businesses to provide the best experiences to customers and thereby drive growth as well. Digital marketers across the world use online and internet-based technologies such as mobile phones, desktop computers, emails, social media, and other digital platforms to promote their products and services across the world. Due to the increase in competition, it has become important for companies to deliver promises to customers, and it requires new ways of operating and attracting customers (Kingsnorth, 2022). So, in the present business scenario, marketing departments need to be rewired for speed, customer focus, and collaboration. Besides, most companies across the world understood that marketing has to be modernized, but they are less sure how to deal with cultural issues and what that means.

So, they often focus on a handful of initiatives as well as capabilities and then may become frustrated when the promised values do not appear. So, for this reason, digital marketers have to understand different types of cultures that may prevail while developing a digital marketing strategy (Vieira *et. al,* 2022). It is essential to have a clear view of what constitutes the model for modern digital marketing as shown in FIGURE1. As each of these components is familiar, digital marketers need to find the clarity of seeing them organised with different cultures so that it may give organisations a better sense of how to track all the elements of digital marketing and how they should work along with different cultures to make modern methods of digital marketing effective.
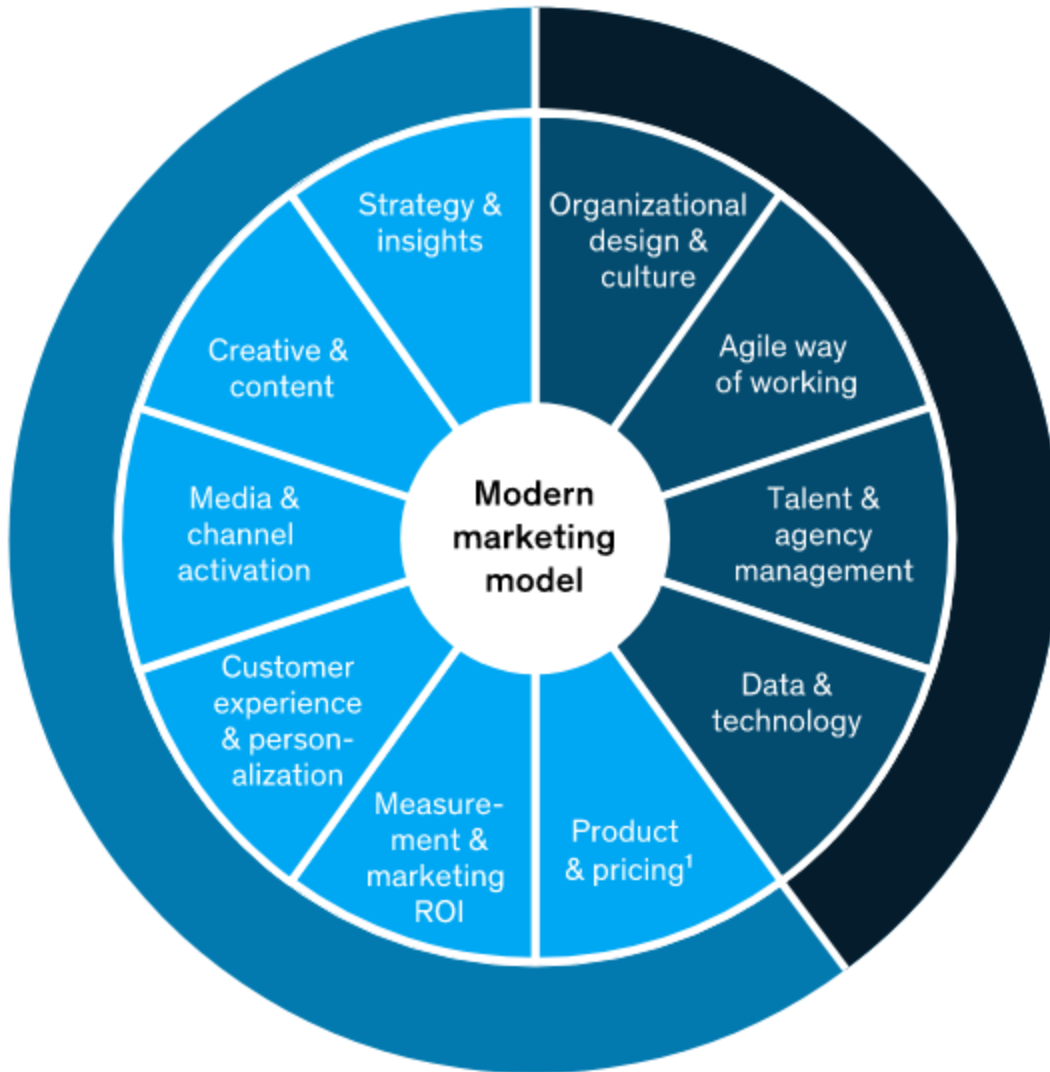
FIGURE 1 Components of modern digital marketing to deliver growth (Sarah et. al, 2020).

1.2 Modern digital marketing.

Modern digital marketing has become very much a one-way conversation in that companies preach to potential customers about how great their products or services are on a website or in a brochure. Social media and the internet in particular have flipped this on its head, and it has given dominance to digital marketing strategies. What has become very important is how other people talk about the business. Now people will find out about the business through tweets, reviews, Instagram and Facebook posts, and so on. So, it is essential for companies to understand this and be able to gain control as well as

moderate it. Modern digital marketing offers a multitude of tools as well as techniques to grow and develop a brand perception in the right direction (Erkin & Muborak, 2022). Broadly speaking, the principle of modern digital marketing is to give information away with the hope that people will find it useful and then either share or comment upon it with their network of contacts. Besides, using modern technologies and developing new technologies to communicate as well as interact with their customers is another important tactic in modern digital marketing (Susilo *et. al,* 2022). Using modern ways of digital marketing has helped various businesses to thrive, and in addition to that, modern digital marketing has become increasingly important due to its accessibility and its impact on customers.

1.3 Relationship between culture and digital marketing.

There is a strong relationship between culture and digital marketing as culture has an impact on the digital marketing strategies of a product or a service. It is quite evident that culture affects the lifestyle of consumers, so companies need to focus on various cultural values of customers to make them believe that they understand their customers well. Culture has huge importance in the world of digital marketing, the world market is made up of smaller markets, and these smaller markets have their languages and cultures (Apasrawirote *et. al,* 2022). Different countries have different cultures, so companies that operate in different nations need to differ in their digital marketing strategies according to the culture of different countries. For instance, a few things that may be acceptable in one nation may not be acceptable in another nation.

So developing the insight of different cultures can surely affect the performance of the business of companies across the world. In addition to that, cultural differences may exist on the customers' side too, and consumer needs may also differ from culture to culture, even belonging to the same country. So, digital marketers need to have proper knowledge and understanding of the customers' cultures to belong and need to develop digital marketing strategies accordingly. Understanding the culture can enable digital marketers to create greater engagement, and relevance as well as can grow their business (Huang, 2022). On the other hand, failure to acknowledge the importance of culture to business

and brand-building is the same as the company deciding that it is okay with being at a competitive disadvantage.

1.4 How culture affects marketing.

Cultural factors undoubtedly influence digital marketing strategies along with content choice. The structure and budget of advertising depend on the habits as well as the consumption style of customers and the concrete availability of various interactive and digital media platforms within a given market. In addition to that, culture directly impacts digital market strategies as the marketing strategy developed by digital marketers can impact people across the world (Ali & Anwar, 2021). So digital marketers need to study the local and international cultures in-depth before offering products and services to customers. To develop effective communication with customers belonging to different cultures, marketers should send the message according to the learning process, customs, and culture of the receivers. But, it is equally important for digital markets to remove various cultural barriers to communicate with customers effectively.

On the other hand, cultural differences can also affect advertising efforts, product design, placement, and so on. Some cultures may have unique customs or may have different ways of doing things. So, digital marketers should also consider these customs while determining what and how to introduce a particular product or service to such customers, and how to promote them (Buccieri *et. al,* 2021). So, digital marketers need to take numerous culture-related factors into consideration as they can affect the business as well as their digital marketing strategies developed by the company to communicate as well as generate awareness. So, culture can make or break a brand, but the right sensitivity and the right digital marketing approach toward the target audience can help in building and developing a strong digital marketing strategy that can transcend reaches and cultures.

1.5 Aim, Objectives, and Research Questions

Aim

To examine the modern ways of digital marketing and how they are affected by different cultures. A case study on Unilever, Tesco, Amazon, Toyota, and Lenovo.

Objectives

- To analyse the importance of digital marketing in the current business scenario.
- To evaluate different modern methods of digital marketing.
- To analyse theories based on culture.
- To illustrate how individualistic, collectivistic, high power distance, and low power distance cultures can impact digital marketing strategies.

Research Questions

- What is the importance of digital marketing in the current business scenario?
- What are the different modern methods of digital marketing?
- What are the different theories based on culture?
- How individualistic, collectivistic, high power distance, and low power distance cultures can impact digital marketing strategies?

Chapter 2 – Literature Review.

2.1 Introduction.

This section accounts for what has been already published related to the topic by various scholars and researchers. A literature review is simply the overview of various previously published works related to the selected topic. The purpose of this section is to develop a proper understanding of the existing research and debates that are relevant to the specific areas of the study and to present that knowledge in the form of a report (Dolgui *et. al,* 2022). Thus, this section includes the information of various previously published information related to the selected topic and the study as well as information is gathered in a well-organized form and is a combination of synthesis and summary. In addition to that, the literature review of this study is divided into different themes that are linked to the aim and objectives of this study. Also, different viewpoints of accredited authors are critically evaluated to develop proper knowledge and examine modern ways of the digital market and how they are affected by different cultures.

2.2 Conceptual framework.

Digital marketing importance in the existing business scenario.	→	Modern ways of digital marketing.	→	Different elements of culture and how they affect digital marketing

Theoretical framework – Hofstede's cultural Framework	→	Linking 7Cs of digital marketing with culture	→	Secondary Research Methodology Thematic Data Analysis

Improved digital marketing strategy with respect to culture

2.3 Digital marketing importance in the existing business scenario.

As per the views of Kundu, (2021) in the current business scenario, the focus of every business is to get as many customers and clients in through the door as possible, and digital marketing holds the key to attracting such customers and clients and generating leads. In the coming years, various businesses will continue to opt for traditional means of marketing, but most savvy businesses will start relying exclusively on digital marketing. The reason is straightforward: businesses worldwide have entered the modern digital era firmly, and Covid-19 most importantly forced it in 2020. Thus, this has made the business transition to the modern digital model to survive in the race. In addition to that, digital

marketing has become important for marketers across the world as it has helped them to connect their businesses with their customers when they are online, and this has proved to be effective across all industries. Moreover, digital marketing has also helped businesses to get connected with customers when they are on social media with social media marketing, on Google through PPC (pay-per-click) and SEO (search engine optimization), and through email with email marketing. Thus, every current business is in the need of digital marketing to compete and survive.

On the other hand, it has been argued by Ekmeil *et. al,* (2021) that digital marketing has also helped in leveling the playing fields for small businesses. Startups and SMEs face constant competition. When those competitors are corporations, like Toyota, Lenovo, Amazon, Unilever, and Tesco, it may feel impossible to try to compete with them. As they are financially sound and have more resources available. But, digital marketing has leveled the field for SMEs as it allows startups and SMEs to compete with large corporations and other small organisations even if they have a modest budget. In addition to that, digital marketing can also help companies to earn an impressive return on investment (ROI) for their marketing efforts. When compared to traditional marketing, digital marketing is extremely cost-effective and also offers an impressive ROI. Besides, companies do digital marketing in-house, which costs only time instead of money. For example, companies can run content marketing campaigns and social media marketing campaigns on their own. But, on the other hand, it can give a company lots of time to build, measure, launch, and manage an effective campaign.

Figure 2 Benefits of Digital Marketing (Membrillo, 2021).

This study was later supported by Lee *et. al,* (2021) in which the researchers suggested that digital marketing in the modern business scenario makes it easy for marketers to monitor the effectiveness of their marketing campaigns and customers' interests. This was not possible with traditional marketing methods as it was difficult to know if a company's efforts persuaded the audience or not. But with digital marketing, digital marketers can monitor their campaigns in real-time to see if they work or not. They can track numerous metrics depending on the type of marketing campaign they launched. Some metrics may include clicks, traffic, conversions, and dwell time. Thus, it can be said that digital marketing in the current business scenario plays an effective role in the success, competition, customer attraction, and survival of a business.

On the other hand, it has been argued by Matosas-López, (2021) that one of the major importance of digital marketing in the present business scenario is that it can be very effective for SMEs and large companies when it comes to taking business internationally. With the help of digital marketing services, companies get opportunities to connect with customers internationally and can work with them to enhance and expand their business across the world. This study also revealed that the scope of digital marketing is growing

constantly with the help of incredible competitive technologies and flexibility. Thus, the importance of digital marketing is also growing and can bring huge benefits to the business in terms of business expansion.

Al-azzam & Al-Mizeed, (2021) also revealed that digital marketing acts as an effective tool for developing better customer relationships which can lead to business success. Companies across the world used numerous strategies in digital marketing, for example, webinars, conducting podcasts, and content creation are used for addressing the pain points of customers and also help in building a strong relationship with customers. With the help of digital marketing strategies, companies can make their sites user-friendly and easy to navigate for customers. So, it can further help companies to reach out to customers who visit the company's website but leave the website without making any purchases. But, this can help in building a better relationship with customers and can communicate with customers on regular basis. Thus, it can be said that digital marketing strategies play an effective role in the success of companies in the current business scenario and its importance cannot be ignored at one cost.

2.4 Modern ways of digital marketing.

It has been elucidated by Sinha *et. al,* (2022) that when it comes to the modern methods of digital marketing, a business can create a lengthy scroll of every available technology or technique available today. To compete in the overly competitive digital landscape of 2022, a company can use a combination of modern methods of digital marketing. One of the major modern methods of digital marketing is search engine optimization (SEO). Researchers suggest that there isn't anything more important to digital marketing than search engine optimization. It is something that can still mystify companies in its opening complexity. On the other hand, it is quite true that Google's algorithms can still be confusing, and one can better grasp how it works when marketers work more with concepts. But it is always better to have an expert to manage SEO for the company to succeed. One of the major advantages of SEO is that it can increase the visibility of the business or a brand and is cost-efficient.

FIGURE 3 Modern Digital Marketing Tools (Websols, 2022).

As illustrated by Hamed & Elsayed, (2022) another modern and important method of digital marketing is social media marketing. Various social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube are used as digital marketing channels to promote products and services across the world. Ads are bought to reach out to new and existing customers and even a company can create a profile of its business on any social media platform and then can create posts to market its products and services, sales, and freshly published content. Besides, most people across the world are active on one or other form of social media platform, and this digital marketing method has helped businesses across the world to reach a huge target audience at the same time. Another modern method of digital marketing is video marketing which has proved to be the most effective in the current business scenario. Quick and short videos are quicker than texts to attract customers. Be it entertaining or educational, pre-recorded or live video content has become a reliable digital marketing option. More than two billion people across the world look for something or the other every month on YouTube. So, it can be said that video marketing is a promising opportunity for companies to reach out to new and existing

customers, and in addition to that, a video marketing strategy can drive results throughout the marketing funnel.

It has been noted by Elina, (2022) that another form of modern digital marketing is responsive web design. Reaching customers through mobile devices has become more or less the standard now, and that will go on into the coming decade as well. Making the company's website conform to mobile screens has become one of the most essential parts of digital marketing. But, the company can only make it successful through responsive web design. With the help of responsive programming, a company can make its website automatically conform to all mobile screens. This will mean more than one format including mobile phones, tablets, and increasing use of Smartwatches.
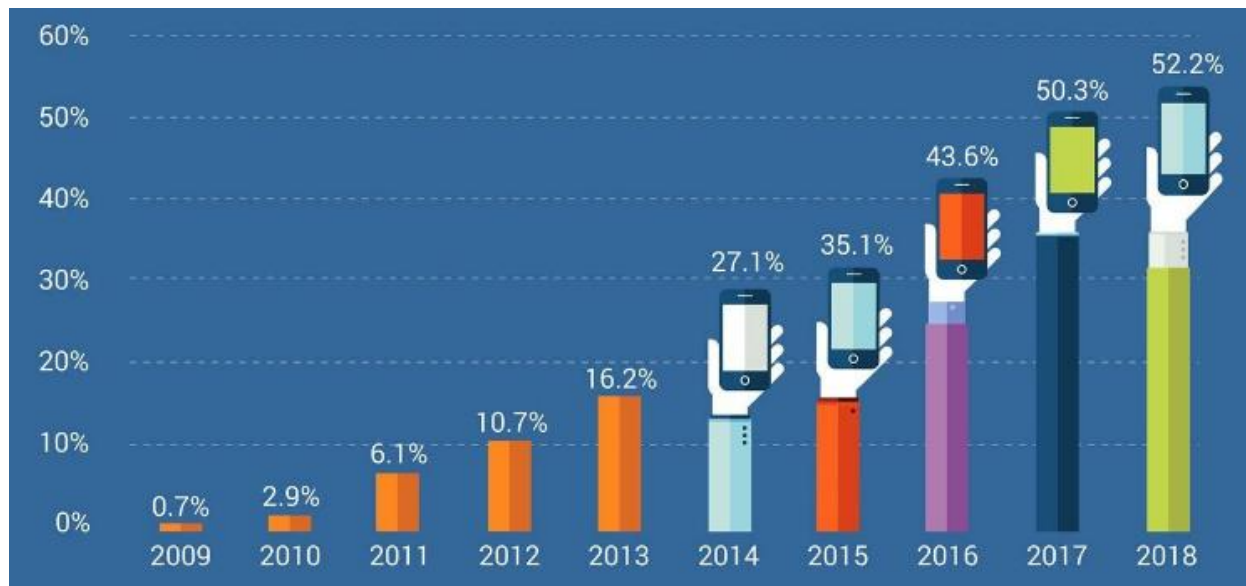
FIGURE 4 The Rise of Mobile Traffic and Current Mobile Traffic Share (Khorev, 2021).

It has been illustrated by Rosario *et. al,* (2022) that marketing automation is considered an important element when considering digital marketing techniques. It has become a standard for businesses across the world. This report also suggested that more than 91% of successful businesses across the world say that automation is the key element for business success. With the help of marketing automation companies can get a vision of what present and future marketing is. For a business to become successful, companies should try to look for a CRM platform with marketing automation built-in. So, they work

together as the company's CRM already has saved contact information. Thus, it can be said that automating marketing content directly to the company's contact list can help in integrating the company's marketing all in one place instead of using different sources. As opined by Franco, (2022a) another modern way of digital marketing is influencer marketing. In the past companies used to hire celebrities to promote their brands online, now companies use an influential person on social media and it does not always have to be a celebrity. It can simply be anyone with a lot of followers and a good track record of promoting products and services. But for this, companies must identify top influencers first and this may involve some research. Companies now also do this by doing hashtag searches on different digital platforms such as Twitter to know and understand what people are saying about the topic related to the company or industry. But, companies need to be sure to track their result to ensure their ROI.

So, it can be said that there are various modern methods of digital marketing that can be used by businesses across the world to market their products and services. Besides, these methods have proved to be effective for most businesses to generate awareness and attract customers around the world. But, due to technological advancements, these modern methods are not limited, and there will be various methods introduced in the digital marketing era to enhance the process of digital marketing.

2.5 Different elements of culture and how they affect digital marketing.

As per the views of Mehralian & Khazaee (2022), there are different elements of culture as culture is a wide topic, and its elements include everything of a nation day to day living. One of the major elements of culture is language (written/spoken language). It is quite evident that the same language can provide different meanings in different cultures. Moreover, a particular language can have various regional formats. For example, the USA and the UK speak the same language, English, but it has a clear distinction. Not only that, inside the UK the people speak English but in a different tone and with different special words. So, in this case, digital marketers should know the local language as well as the tone of people to make digital marketing a successful practice. Otherwise, they will fail to communicate the message related to the products and services to local communities.

Also, digital marketers can use translators to communicate the message, but it can prove costly and may not be as effective as it is.

On the other hand, it has been argued by Bekimbetova *et. al,* (2021) that another element of culture is non-verbal communication. The researchers suggested that not only verbally, but sometimes people use non-verbal body language and other forms of communication like postures, orientations, proxemics, olfaction, and oculesics' chronemics' haptics' kinesics' paralinguistic appearances. So, a single body sign can carry various opposite meanings to people with different languages. For example, in some cultures, showing a thumb is treated as an appreciation, but in some cultures, showing a thumb is a negative sign. So, in this case, digital marketers should know the local meaning of body language or gestures, or postures that are used by the general people in that community where a company decided to digitally market its products or services.

FIGURE 5 Different Elements of Culture (BeauteHealthy, 2020).

As illustrated by Ali & Anwar (2021) another element of culture that can impact digital marketing practices is religion. Religion is considered one of the most powerful elements of culture, it has the most powerful impact on consumer behavior. In some cultures, the

power of religion is so high that it can directly control the buying process as well as product choices which can have a major impact on digital marketing practices. For example, beef is a protein provider, but some consumers do not consider the same only due to their religious beliefs. Hindus do not eat beef, and this item on the menu remains unsold on the menu.

So, digital marketers need to think about the religious beliefs of the people belonging to a specific community or nation. For example, McDonald's does not include beef in their food items in India and markets their burgers and pizzas accordingly, and this has brought a positive response from the people in the country. Another cultural element viewed by researchers that can impact digital marketing strategies is cultural norms. Norms are derived from values, and these norms can also be defined as rules that can dictate what is right and what is wrong, what is acceptable and what is non-acceptable. But these cultural norms can vary from person to person, and it is very difficult for digital marketers to get a proper idea related to the cultural norms. But, if digital marketers can understand these cultural norms, it can prove to be very effective for digital markets to attract customers to their products or services and persuade them easily. Thus, there are various cultural elements that digital marketers need to consider while developing digital marketing strategies, but it is equally difficult to understand all of the cultural elements.

On the other hand, it has been argued by Mrak & Matan (2022) that one of the major cultural elements that can significantly affect the digital marketing strategies of a company is the thought process which can vary among cultures. Varying thought processes among different cultures can affect marketing strategies directly. People that belong to a part of one culture can take in the entire picture in ads and would be able to report specific details of what they see even in the background in comparison to people of a different culture who may identify and see only central figures and ignore background details altogether. So, it directly affects the way marketers present their messages based on a cultural thought process. It has been illustrated by Bai, (2022) that different cultures have different norms even if they share different types of beliefs and practices. But, it is also true that norms may change over time in a given culture. The two best examples of change in

norms are clothing styles and hairstyles. Over time even some cultural beliefs change as some people across the world have changed their views about something important to them in the past, for example, gender and racial issues. Thus, it can be said that with time the norms and beliefs of people change and this has also forced companies to change their digital marketing strategies and make them comfortable with the change. So, companies need to consider these elements of culture and need to develop or adjust their digital marketing strategies to attract customers of different cultures but they also need to be cautious while doing so.

2.6 Theoretical framework – Hofstede's cultural Framework.

It has been elucidated by Falamarzi *et. al,* (2021) that Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory is a framework that can be used by various businesses to understand the differences in cultures across different countries in which a company operates and to discern the ways of doing business across different cultures. Moreover, this framework can also be used to distinguish and understand different national cultures to develop effective digital marketing strategies and assess their impacts on digital marketing strategies. One of the major cultural variabilities is power distance. Power distance is the distance between two people during their mutual interaction. A low power distance index indicated that a culture encourages flat organisational structures that can feature a participative management style, emphasis on power distribution, and decentralized decision-making responsibility. On the other hand, the high-power distance index features that a culture accepts power differences and inequity encourages bureaucracy, and also shows respect for authority and rank. So, it is easy for a company to develop digital marketing strategy and influence people in the country with low PDI as they are less rigid and are willing to interact in comparison to high PDI.

On the other hand, it has been argued by Gerlach & Eriksson (2021) that another cultural variability such as uncertainty avoidance can also impact the modern ways of digital marketing. Uncertainty avoidance considers the extent to which ambiguity and uncertainties are tolerated. So, this cultural dimension features how unexpected events and unknown situations are dealt with. A high uncertainty avoidance index means that

there is low tolerance for uncertainty. So, in this case, digital marketers have to be cautious to introduce any unexpected changes in their products but should introduce changes slowly and steadily. The reason behind this is that the unknown can be rejected by people through strict rules and regulations. On the other hand, low uncertainty avoidance features high tolerance for risk-taking, ambiguity, and uncertainty. Thus, in this case, digital marketers can introduce changes unexpectedly and are even accepted by people.

Another Hofstede cultural theory is masculinity versus femininity. This dimension is also known as "tough vs. tender." Culture defines the priorities of decisions in society, family, and in the country. In some societies, women lead society, the owner of the wealth is the female owner, and the earning member is the female in the family. So, they are the women that decide what to do and what ought to be. Some societies are male-dominated societies, and a male is the owner of wealth and the earning member of the family. So, the male's decision is the final one. Thus, femininity and masculinity have a huge impact in the case of brand choice or product selection and final buying decisions. So, as a digital marketer, one must know what type of society they operate in and offer the product or service. And should also know who has to be highlighted in their digital marketing promotional advertisements and campaign.
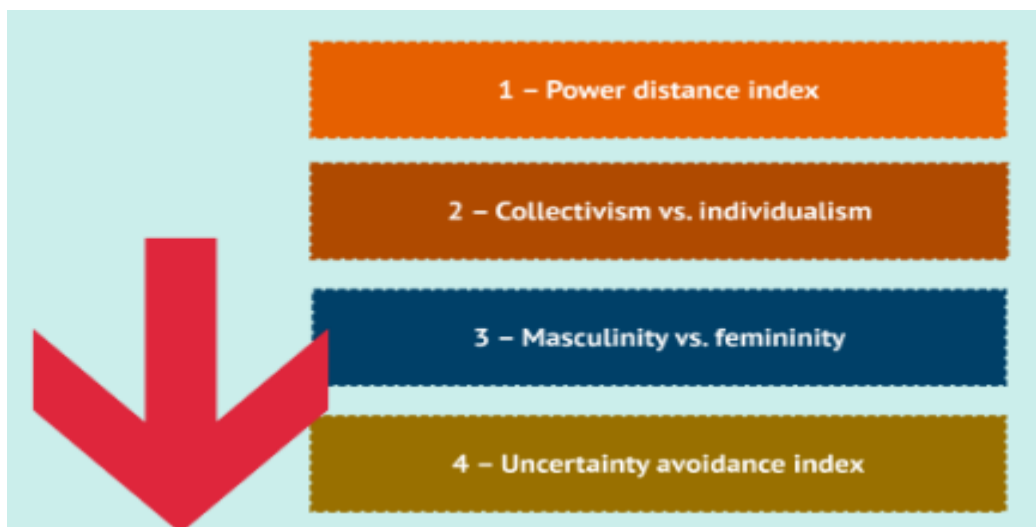

FIGURE 6 Hofstede's Cultural Dimension Theory (Cuofano, 2022).

As opined by Yie *et. al,* (2022) another cultural dimension is individualism vs. collectivism. Individualistic cultures indicate that huge importance is placed on the attainment of personal goals. So, researchers suggested that digital marketing strategies can prove to be effective in individualistic cultures as it is believed that in individualistic cultures people can look after themselves and not get affected by others so can make purchase decisions on their own. But it has also been argued by researchers that digital marketing strategy can prove effective in collectivistic cultures due to a collective group of values. Besides, it has become easy for digital marketers to target such audiences. People in collectivistic cultures are integrated into cohesive and strong groups that may often involve extended family. Besides, people get influenced by each other's purchase decisions. So, it is easy to develop digital marketing strategies in such cultures.

Later this study was argued by Escandon-Barbosa *et. al,* (2022) in which researchers revealed that indulgence is another cultural dimension that impacts modern digital marketing strategies. But, this indulgence dimension is a comparatively new dimension to Hofstede's framework. This cultural dimension can be defined as the extent to which people try to manage or control their impulses or desires, based on how they were raised. So, this can surely affect digital marketing strategies as relatively strong control is called restraint and relatively weak control is called an indulgence. Thus, in this case, the culture of people can be described as retrained or indulgent. Restrain simply stands for a society that suppresses gratification of needs and can regulate it through the means of strict social norms such people get less influenced by digital marketing strategies. On the other hand, indulgence stands for a society that may allow relatively free gratification of natural and basic human drives about having fun and enjoying life. So, such people may get influenced by digital marketing strategies and may get motivated to make purchases.

2.7 Linking 7Cs of digital marketing with culture.
It has been noted by Cannel *et. al,* (2022) that the 7Cs of digital marketing can provide a scalable and replicable modern framework that is designed to help digital marketers achieve their digital marketing goals in different cultures. In addition to that, 7Cs also enable them to assess the digital marketing landscape from both external and internal

points of view so that they can understand their business requirements and objective in different cultures. In addition to that, 7Cs can be used to review websites and the brand's overall online presence to make sure that their marketing communications are well-managed and coherent in different cultures. One of the 7Cs of digital marketing is a customer. Whatever a company's business model is or whatever it markets, it needs to focus on the culture of the customer. As digital marketing offers an opportunity to target every communication, campaign, and service to match the audience's needs and expectations, but it needs to focus on the culture of customers and their norms and their cultural dimensions as well. Another C is content. Creating unique, high-quality, and expert content is the main aim of digital marketing. But, digital marketers need to consider different cultures and need to develop high-quality content to attract people from different cultures.

On the other hand, it has been noted by Karmarkar (2022) that context can be a key to the company's message's effectiveness across different cultures. In the current business scenario, if a company wants to get its brand message across different cultures effectively, it needs to be aware of the wider cultural context of its target audience to make its digital marketing strategy successful and effective. Another C is community. Customers have more buying power than ever before and getting deeply connected with them has become the fundamental success of every business. But companies need to understand community norms and cultures before going for community digital marketing. If a company fails to understand cultural differences and priorities in a community, it can result in a huge loss for the company and digital marketing failure as well. Another C is convenience, which is a road toward customer loyalty. Convenience is considered the fundamental characteristic of a product's customer experience as well as the core customer service principle of any business. So, taking culture into consideration, convenience in digital marketing should mean delivering the right information to the right person, at the right time, and on the right platform. So, this can help customers belonging to different cultural backgrounds to find the information needed to make better purchase decisions, and this can help in enhancing the experience of customers.

FIGURE 7 7Cs of Digital Marketing (DevriX, 2021).

As noted by Ramirez-Asis *et. al,* (2022), another C is cohesion an answer to omnichannel marketing. If any marketer wants to market its products or services in different cultures in a successful manner, so, they need to create a cohesive digital marketing strategy. This may involve delivering the same quality of content, services, as well as brand values, regardless of the channel used. It also involves bringing every platform that can help in promoting brands under one main omnichannel digital marketing strategy but without ignoring the different cultures of its target audience. The final C is conversion which can prove to be the main indicator of digital marketing success across different cultures. When a company has leveraged all of its valuable resources to create a strong digital marketing strategy across different cultures, now it needs to measure the success of its efforts. So, in this case, the best KPI (key performance indicator) to use is conversion rate. So, depending on the digital marketing campaign across different cultures, a conversion can be any desired reaction of customers that can help the company to achieve its go*al,*

2.8 Summary

It can be summarized that modern digital marketing has huge importance in the current business scenario. It is hard for any business to compete and survive in the market without using modern methods of digital marketing. Digital marketing is the key to attracting existing and potential customers and also plays a critical role in generating leads for companies. Besides, more and more businesses across the world are adopting new ways of digital marketing to promote their product and services. Some of the modern ways of digital marketing adopted by current businesses to attract and communicate with customers are search engine optimization, video marketing, social media marketing, and responsive web design. These modern ways have been suggested by various researchers and have proved to be effective for digital marketers. Moreover, there are different cultural elements that have been suggested by authors that have affected digital marketing strategies.

Some of these cultural elements are language, non-verbal communication, religion, and cultural norms. So, it is important for digital marketers to consider all of these cultural elements before developing a digital marketing strategy, and these elements can have a significant impact on people's choices and purchase decisions. It can also be summarized that there are several of Hofstede's cultural dimensions theories such as PDI, collectivism vs. individualism, masculinity vs. femininity, and uncertainty avoidance index can be adopted by digital marketers to develop marketing strategies. In addition to that, to develop effective digital marketing strategies, companies need to link the 7Cs of digital marketing with different cultures prevailing in communities, societies, and across nations.

2.9 Literature gap

There are some gaps in this literature, and one of the major gaps in this literature is that there is limited information given about how cultural values can affect modern digital marketing. Also, this literature ignored the cultural change factor and its impact on digital marketing strategies as this can help marketers to identify the symbolic elements that could be important to the market segment and can use them effectively to create marketing mix elements.

Chapter 3 – Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Research methodology is a philosophical framework according to which research is conducted; on the other hand, it is the foundation upon which particular research is based. This chapter of research illustrated various research methods, designs, and approaches in detail and also highlighted them throughout the study by justifying the choice by describing the disadvantages and advantages of approaches. It is the systematic method for resolving a particular research problem through data gathering by using various techniques, providing an interpretation of gathered data, and drawing conclusions from the researched data at the end. In simple words, research methodology is the blueprint of the study (Hafidz & Elihami, 2021). It is also a way of explaining how a particular researcher intends to carry out their research as it involves a systematic and logical plan to resolve a research problem. The methodology of the research details the approach of a researcher towards the research to ensure valid, reliable, and proper results to address the set aims and objectives of the study. In this chapter, the methods that have been adopted are illustrated, and the justification behind the use of methodology is also outlined. Moreover, this section also describes how data has been collected to conduct the research examining the modern ways of digital marketing and how they are affected by different cultures.
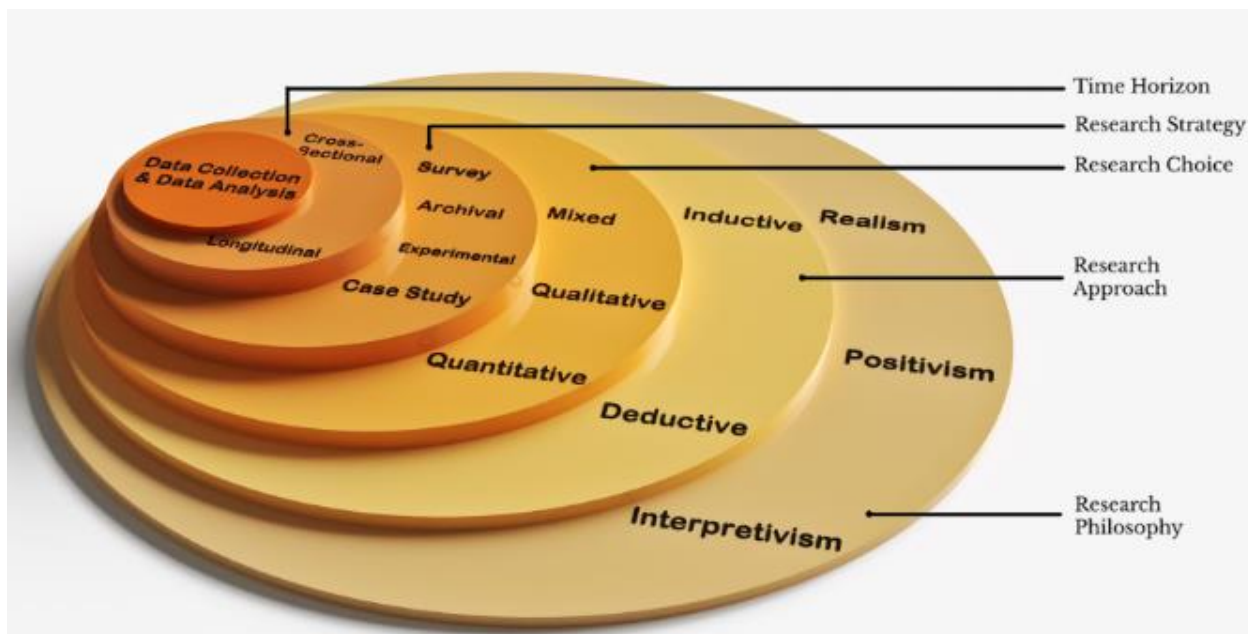
FIGURE 8 Research Onion Framework (Penmypapers, 2017).

3.2 Research Philosophy

The philosophy of research deals with the nature, source as well as development of knowledge. Within simple terms, research philosophy is a belief related to how data related to the phenomenon can be gathered, analysed, and interpreted. In other words, it is a technique to choose a proper conceptual direction to gather appropriate results for the research aim. Based on the research onion, research philosophy is of three different types such as realism, interpretivism, and positivism. Positivism research philosophy is based on the concept that knowledge subsists beyond what has been examined, and, according to positivists, knowledge can be either false or true, or even meaningless (Beltrones, 2022). On the other hand, the realism philosophical approach is based on the idea the world exists independent of the human mind, and it describes the nature of reality. Finally, interpretivism focuses on the impact of social and cultural variables. So, in this study, the researcher adopted an interpretivism research philosophy to examine different methods of digital marketing and their impact on different cultures. So, this philosophy can help the researcher to develop a proper understanding of different cultures, traditions, and customs that can help in meeting the objectives of the study.

Besides, this philosophy increases knowledge and understanding, and it also sets out neither to undermine nor promote cultural beliefs.

3.3 Research Design

It is simply a framework related to the research methods as well as techniques chosen by a researcher to conduct the research. The research design is of different types such as correlational, descriptive, diagnostic, experimental, and explanatory research designs. Correlational research design is also known as a non-experimental research technique. This design simply helps the researcher to develop a relationship between two closely connected variables. In descriptive research design, a researcher is interested in describing the case or solution under the research study. Within diagnostic research design, the researcher looks to evaluate the underlying cause of a specific phenomenon or topic (Li & Zhang, 2022). Experimental research design helps in establishing cause and effect relationship of a situation. Explanatory research design uses the thoughts and ideas of the researcher related to the subject to explore theories further. But, within this study, the researcher uses a descriptive research design as with the help of this design, the researcher can gather the proper information to describe the phenomenon systematically. Moreover, this research design will also allow the researcher to answer the research question more effectively. This type of research design also provides the researcher an opportunity to assimilate qualitative and quantitative data collection methods.

3.4 Research Strategy

In simple words, the research strategy is the overall plan developed by the researcher to conduct the study. It acts as a guide for the researcher in planning, executing as well as monitoring the entire study. Research strategy can be divided into two different categories such as qualitative and quantitative research strategy. Quantitative research strategy deals with logic, numbers, and an objective stance. In addition to that, quantitative research strategy also focuses on unchanging and numeric data, and also on convergent reasoning instead of divergent reasoning. On the other hand, qualitative research strategy is used to understand the attitudes, beliefs, interactions, and behaviors of people. So,

based on this, a qualitative research strategy is the best suited for this study. In addition to that, with the help of a qualitative research strategy, the researcher can gather in-depth information related to the topic and can develop proper knowledge and understanding related to the topic or phenomenon (Hart and Hill, 2022). One of the major benefits of this strategy is that the researcher can gather as much data as possible from a relative sample size. Besides, it is a most flexible approach than the quantitative research strategy as it allows participants to express themselves in the form of an interview in this study.

3.5 Data collection

Data collection can be referred to as a process of gathering as well as measuring the information on variables of interest within a set systematic fashion enabling the researcher to answer the research question. In addition to that, it is the process of gathering as well as analysing accurate data from different sources to get answers related to the research problem. With the data collection, the researcher can control as well as standardise the process for high validity and reliability. Data collection is of two different types such as primary data collection and secondary data collection method. The primary data collection method is a type of data collection that is collected by the researcher directly from the main source. On the other hand, the secondary data collection method involves compiling existing data sources from different types of channels (Mazhar *et. al,* 2021). In this study, the researcher will use both primary and secondary data collection methods. In primary data collection, the researcher interviewed the manager of five multinational companies such as Tesco, Toyota, Amazon, Unilever, and Lenovo. Interviews will be conducted face-to-face, by phone, and via video with the managers of these companies. Managers will be contacted via phone and mail to set up interviews. Telephonic interviews were conducted for 30 minutes only and it was enough time to record their responses. But only employers of Toyota and Amazon were contacted via phone. The data will be collected from other companies from their company websites. The topics that have been observed are "Tesco's Digital Marketing Strategies: A Detailed Case Study"; "Unilever Digital Marketing and Ecommerce"; "Lenovo plans 'more energetic' marketing as it makes smartphone push"; "Unilever's Organizational Culture of Performance"; "Lenovo Social Impact: Smarter knows a diverse workforce is an

unstoppable workforce." Also, this method is cost-effective, and the researcher can gather a huge volume of data in a short period. In addition to that, the researcher can have control over the data collection process. In addition to that, data will be collected from 25 research papers related to the topic consisting of five different local digital marketing companies that will be analysed from different locations.

3.6 Data Analysis

The process of data analysis is important as it allows the researcher to provide the final audience with a better understanding and knowledge related to the topic. Data analysis involves working with data to glean useful information that can be used to make proper and informed decisions. It involves multiple activities such as gathering, cleaning, as well as organisation of the data. Besides, it also involves the application of logical or statistical techniques to give sense to the raw data collected. Data analysis is of different types such as descriptive, predictive, and thematic analysis. Descriptive data analysis simply tells what happened and helps in describing and summarizing quantitative data (Babbie *et. al,* 2022). Predictive data analysis uses data from projections about the future. Finally, thematic data analysis is the method of analysing qualitative data. This study is based on a qualitative research strategy; therefore, the researcher uses a thematic data analysis for this study. Thematic data analysis allows the researcher to encompass themes to interpret the gathered data effectively and evaluate the outcomes related to the topic.

3.7 Ethical considerations

The study examining the modern methods of digital marketing and how they are affected by different cultures is based on both primary and secondary data collection methods. So, the researcher made sure that no sentiments of respondents are hurt, and that proper confidentiality of the participants is maintained. Also, the researcher made sure that there was no scope for data breaches. Moreover, secondary data is collected from authentic sources with proper references to maintain the quality of the study (Calia *et. al,* 2022). In addition to that, recent secondary data is collected for the study to maintain the validity and relevance of the study and information gathered.

Chapter 4 – Data Analysis

4.1 Primary Data Collection

4.1.1 Modern digital marketing importance

It can be interpreted from the responses of managers that modern digital marketing has great importance within the current business scenario. Employer of Toyota replied that digital marketing is extremely important as it has helped its business to mainly focus on targeted customers across the world and has also helped the company to generate more and more revenue. Employer of Amazon also replied that modern digital marketing has made their advertising process cost-effective and, not only that, modern digital marketing has helped the company to advertise its products and services at low costs and can also promote their products and services on a single platform. From the Tesco web page, it can be analysed that another importance of modern digital marketing in the current business scenario is that it has enhanced brand awareness through on-page and off-page search engines optimization strategies and it posts five blogs every month. From the Unilever web page, it can be analysed that, competitive advantage has been a major beneficial actor for modern digital marketing, and it is responsible for enhancing the unique selling position of the company. Moreover, another importance of modern digital marketing is that it has helped companies to increase their customer base and reach a huge target audience within less amount of time. From the Lenovo web page, it can be anlysed that digital marketing was an effective tool for generating and retaining loyal customers and also agreed that modern digital marketing is also responsible for increasing the customer base.

Thus, it can be interpreted that based on the responses of employers , one of the major importance of modern digital marketing in the current business scenario is that it helps in increasing the customer base. The main reason behind this is that modern digital marketing can prove an effective strategy for companies to influence and motivate customers to make purchases. Besides, it is easy to target a huge customer base across the world and impact customers. Also, the majority of employers focused on how modern digital marketing can prove to be an effective tool for brand awareness as various digital

marketing platforms help companies to generate awareness more easily as compared to traditional marketing. With the help of digital marketing companies, companies can communicate with their customers and share views, comments, videos, and so on. This can help in developing a strong relationship with customers and generate more and more loyal customers. Thus, it can be concluded that modern digital marketing has great importance in the present business scenario and proves to be a key to success.

4.1.2 Modern methods of digital marketing

Employer of toyota replied that there are various methods of digital marketing where companies can market their products and services. But she focused more on social media marketing as it helps its company to expand across the globe within a short period. So, according to employer, social media marketing is an effective way of digital marketing to promote products and services on international levels. But, contradicting employer of Toyota and Amazon's replied that search engine optimization is the most effective method of digital marketing by giving a valid reason that with the help of SEO the company can increase its rank in search engines and can increase search engine traffic for the company's website. A company with a high rank on search engines and with high website traffic has a high chance of customer conversions which can prove beneficial for the company's growth and expansion.

On the other hand, from Lenovo web page it can be said that social media marketing is an effective way of digital marketing. The reason given is that social media marketing is the easiest way to post and share content and pay to reach the public. From Tesco's web page it can be analysed that content marketing is an effective way of digitally marketing products and services in the current business scenario. With the help of content marketing, a company can achieve the goal to make the content reader make purchases. According to Unilever the mobile marketing method is the most effective way of digital marketing. But, according to the web page of Unilever it is a logical reason that mobile marketing is more focused on reaching more and more target audiences via smartphones and tablets which are used by the majority of people across the world.

Thus, based on the responses, it can be interpreted that social media marketing is the most effective way of modern digital marketing as social media marketing can help in reaching more and more target customers in a short period, and it is the platform where people and customers post and share content. It can also be interpreted that mobile marketing is also an effective way of modern digital marketing as with the help of mobile marketing a company can target a huge customer base with the help of smartphones and tablets. In addition to that, with the help of mobile marketing, a company can reach customers through websites, social media, text messages, emails, and other mobile applications. Also, with mobile marketing companies can directly tailor special content and offers to people belonging to different geographical locations. Thus, it can be concluded that social media marketing and mobile marketing can prove to be effective ways of digital marketing.

4.1.3 Impact of culture on digital marketing strategies

Employer of Toyota, agreed with the fact that culture has a significant impact on the company's digital marketing strategies. The reason given by the employer is that culture affects the lifestyle choices of people, and it is essential for the company to focus on cultural values and understand the needs and preferences of customers as well. Employer of Amazon reverted that there is a link between the culture and the digital marketing strategy of the company. But, he gave a rhetorical answer by comparing its business culture with the customer culture. But, he also agreed that the culture of a person also impacts the lifestyle of a customer, including their buying patterns and buying behaviors. Based on the data collected from the websites of Unilever, Lenovo, and Tesco it can be analysed that digital marketing strategies and culture are directly linked to each other.

Modern businesses across the world are considering the culture of customers before developing a digital marketing strategy. But also argued that it is not easy to develop a proper understanding of different cultures while operating internationally. So, this can make strategy development even more difficult. Also, with different culture comes people with different attitudes, lifestyles, and attributes which can significantly impact the digital marketing strategies of a company. While operating internationally there exists a huge

cultural diversity that deeply influences product choices which in turn can impact digital marketing strategies.

Thus, it can be interpreted from the responses given that the majority of respondents agreed with the fact that culture has a huge impact on the digital marketing strategies of companies. The basic reason behind this is cultural diversity. People with different cultures have different lifestyles, norms, rituals, and preferences that impact the digital marketing strategy of a company. Different countries and people living in these countries have different customs, religious beliefs, and taboos so on which a company has to consider while developing a digital marketing strategy. But, on the other hand, it is equally difficult for marketers to understand and develop knowledge of different cultures to develop a perfect digital marketing strategy. Thus, it can be concluded that culture has a huge impact on the company's digital marketing strategy, but marketers need to develop a proper understanding of different cultures before developing a marketing strategy.

4.1.4 Cultural elements impacting the digital marketing strategy

Employer of Toyota Poonam Rani, replied that various cultural elements can impact the company's digital marketing strategy, but she mainly focused on the deep-value cultural element. Based on values, people can judge what is acceptable and what is not acceptable. But the employer also argued that values, on the other hand, can also be expressed individually, and the company needs to understand societal and individual values. But on the other hand, employer of Amazon argued that language is the major cultural element that impacts the digital marketing strategy. He also added that while developing digital marketing strategies internationally, differences in language can pose a huge challenge to marketers. It can also be analysed from the data collected through Lenovo, Unilever, and Tesco web pages that the norms of a business can impact the digital marketing strategy of a company. When a company operates in different countries, there surely exist cultural differences that impact the digital marketing strategies which may be due to differences in business norms of two different countries. Religion is the major cultural element that impacts the digital marketing strategy. The employers also argued that religion is the most powerful cultural element which can impact consumer

buying behavior and buying process. Traditions and taboos are also the cultural elements that impact the digital marketing strategies of a company. The employers also focused on how taboos and traditions need to be understood by companies to make an effective marketing strategy.

Thus, it can be interpreted from the responses given by the employers of companies that different cultural elements can have a significant impact on the company's digital marketing strategies. The reason behind this is that all the respondents mentioned different cultural elements that they deal with while operating businesses in different countries. It can also be said that while operating a business internationally, there may exist different cultural elements based on a type of culture and people's values and beliefs. It can be concluded that a marketer needs to evaluate different cultural elements while running a business internationally to develop an effective digital marketing strategy as it has a huge impact on the marketing strategies.

4.1.5 Cultural dimensions affecting modern digital marketing strategies

Employer of Toyota has picked the collectivistic side as the manager thinks that people mostly prefer to belong to their social framework where they can share the values of one's groups. In addition to that, collectivistic people get easily influenced by friends and family and copy each other. On the other hand, Amazon believes that low power index culture can help companies to develop effective digital marketing strategies. The companies employer reasoned that the low power index encourages people as well as employees to participate in the development of digital marketing strategies, and it can also make the marketing strategy more influential and effective. But, from Unilever's and Tesco's web page the information also revealed that the collectivistic cultural dimension can help companies in the development of effective marketing strategy. The reason behind this is that within the collectivistic society it is easy for companies to target and motivate such audiences as people get influenced by each other. Lenovo Company does not agree with the above facts as the company think that high power distance cultural dimension can prove to be effective for the company while developing a digital marketing strategy. The reason given behind this is that high-power distance cultures encourage bureaucracy and

respect for rank due to which sub-ordinates need to develop strategies according to the rules and regulations. But this may not prove to be effective in the current business scenario.

So, based on the responses, it can be interpreted that the majority of respondents replied that it is the collectivistic cultural dimension that impacts digital marketing strategies as it helps companies to target families and societies easily and people get easily influenced by each other. In addition to that, masculinity-femininity can also be considered a major cultural dimension that can help companies in developing effective digital marketing strategies. So, it can be concluded that with the help of Hofstede's cultural dimension a company can understand different cultures and can be able to develop a proper digital marketing strategy while operating in different countries of the world.

4.2 Secondary Data Collection

4.2.1 Phenomenon of digital marketing

It can be analysed for the study done by Kingsnorth, (2022) where the researcher revealed that digital marketing has its footsteps around the 90s but soon it became the most talked about the phenomenon from the last decade as the most effective branding and marketing tool within the digital space. Marketers around the world took it as a lucrative opportunity as people across the world started socializing digitally due to the advent of various social apps. In addition to that, even companies started exploring CRMs as well as other digital platforms. Digital marketing is ever evolving with new and new avenues opening every day. So, various marketers around the world are exploring numerous strategies as well as their take on various marketing intelligence tools that have helped companies in building brands. Digital marketing has brought seamless marketing experiences that are mainly focused on customer expectations. In the present business scenario, the digital ecosystem gives brands a chance to be present and become a part of customers' daily life through smartphones, desktops, in-app, on-site, video, social, voice, and IoT. So, this has resulted in a seamless marketing experience. On the other hand, it can also be analysed from the study that digital marketing has increased

personalization. It can be analysed that a huge volume of customer data is available to brands that allow companies to personalize their messages, customer experiences, and even offers provided to customers. Also, with the help of digital marketing, companies can easily increase their level of personalization which they can offer to customers without sacrificing efficiency.

On the other hand, it has been argued by Deb *et. al,* (2022) that researchers suggested that AI, deep learning, and machine learning are also other important phenomena of digital marketing. In this study, researchers suggested that both ML (Machine learning) and AI (Artificial intelligence) have gotten a lot of buzz over the past few years. Both AI and ML have revolutionized the process of digital marketing and have enhanced customer interaction as well.

4.2.2 Culture and Strategy

The study done by Proksch *et. al,* (2021) is an exploratory study about culture and marketing strategy in which researchers suggest that culture can be described as a collection of beliefs, laws, customs, and morals that forms structures or behavior in how a person perceives the world. It can be analysed that cultural norms pass from older members to young members of society, and these norms are then shared by almost all. So, it can be said that culture acts as guidance for the behavior shown by a person and also creates social groups that may be different from one another and may react differently to a particular situation. But, a culture within the business is considered as a shared mental software of people, and all businesses today have become glob*al,* Due to these business practices have become more competitive, and it has become important for companies to understand the impact of culture on their digital marketing strategies. In addition to that, this study also suggested that companies also need to monitor the ongoing changes within different cultures and develop digital marketing strategies accordingly.

On the other hand, it has been argued by Tatarinov & Tatarinov (2021) that having a good understanding of culture can help the company in shaping its strategic decisions and

moves as well. It can also be analysed that cultural differences are normally based on how people take control and dominate the environment, to what extent the thinking of people can be changed, group and individualistic behaviors, how people prefer doing things, and how the space is foreseen about orientation and privacy towards time such as past, future or present. So, it can be said that these are factors that can be used by companies to explain and define how they can manage different situations based on a strategy that is influenced by different cultures.

4.2.3 Culture and digital marketing strategy

Hofstede (1991) stated that culture is simply a collective mental programming of people within a particular environment. In addition to that, culture is not a characteristic of individuals but encompasses several people that are conditioned by the same life experience and education. But Franco, (2022b) stated that an idea or knowledge of how various cultural variations can influence digital marketing strategies state that it is the demographics, values, verbal, and non-verbal communication that can influence the behavior of consumers which in turn can influence the digital marketing strategy. On top of cultural differences, Qurtubi *et. al,* (2022) pointed out in their study that companies should have a market-oriented culture to develop an effective digital marketing strategy. The basic reason behind this is that market-oriented culture does not only affect the performance of the company directly but also affects the digital marketing strategy-making process indirectly. In the present business scenario, the digital marketing strategy-making process is a very complex set of activities, and it can affect the performance of the firm in considerable detail.

So, it can be analysed from this paper that firms need to consider various cultures to operate their business successfully at international levels. Understanding the company culture, customer culture, and business culture is key to the success of digital marketing strategy making. In addition to that, companies are growing rapidly and are always looking for new opportunities for growth and expansion, but the achievement of this vision can be possible only through effective cultural understanding and the development of effective digital marketing strategies. Before developing digital marketing strategies, the things

which need to be taken into consideration are values, beliefs, changes in cultural dimensions, religion, lifestyle, and education. The reason behind this is that culture can be characterized by these factors and the level of thinking of groups and individuals.

4.2.4 Modern ways of digital marketing

It can be analysed from the study conducted by Sharma & Siby, (2022) where researchers are of opinion that email marketing is still considered one of the most powerful modern methods of digital marketing in the current business scenario. In addition to that, researchers also suggested that if a company can take the advantage of email marketing, it can transform its fortunes. Email can be considered an excellent medium for building relationships with customers and clients as well. This study also revealed that social media marketing is also the most important method of modern digital marketing. Local and international companies give strong preferences to social media platforms to market their products and services. Moreover, a company can promote its brand on social media in many ways to enhance its social media presence. But, the type of social media platforms a company uses depends on the type of audience the company wants to reach. But Saini, (2022) argued that the most successful method of modern digital marketing is search engine optimization as it allows companies to generate more traffic to company's websites. Besides, this method also makes sure that the website of the company appears higher in various search engines.

So, it can be said that this modern method of digital marketing helps firms in marketing by enhancing brand awareness. Moreover, the researcher suggested that there is no better way to advertise the brand freely than through SEO. It is simply the master of modern digital marketing techniques in a present business scenario. On the other hand, this study also revealed that video marketing is the best method of modern digital marketing. It can be assessed from the study that, quick and short videos are quicker than texts in attracting customers. Be it entertaining, educational, live, or pre-recorded video, video content is the most reliable modern digital marketing option. This study also showed that more than 80% of customers across the world opt for video or search engines to learn about new products or check reviews and almost 55% of customers do it before buying a product or a service (Simplilearn, 2022). The success rate of this method is high

as videos can create an emotional connection with customers and spread the message that a company wants to convey.

4.2.5 Online marketing platforms to improve the process of modern digital marketing

As per the view of Geyser, (2022) various online marketing platforms are available to the company to improve the process of modern digital marketing. One of the most used online platforms is Loomly. It focuses on scheduling and social media marketing and this platform can be used to make the management of content and brand easy for marketing teams in the current business scenario. In addition to that, it also allows the company to collaborate effectively on building a successful brand. With the help of this online platform, a company can manage the content of social media, ads, and organic posts. Refersion is another online marketing platform to improve the process of digital marketing. Using this platform allows companies to track and oversee influencers, ambassadors, and affiliate marketing programs.

In addition to that, Refersion also gets connected with popular marketing apps and e-commerce platforms to manage the performances. Another online platform available to marketers is Referral Factory. It specializes in helping such brands that want to develop a huge portion of their digital marketing spending towards referral marketing. Here, a company can manage its referral programs from various existing tools of business that a company can use such as Zapier, Salesforce, HubSpot, and more. Also, companies can use Campaigner which is also a popular online marketing platform for improving the company's digital marketing process. This platform offers marketers advanced marketing automation, powerful personalization through SMS and emails, and intuitive reporting. Besides, this platform also provides an e-commerce-targeted version. Moreover, this platform also includes tools that help companies to assist at all funnel stages, from capturing email addresses through nurturing and automating leads to retaining and converting customers.

4.2.6 Cultural impact on modern digital marketing

Aleksandra *et. al,* (2021) analysed that culture completely defines the way of lifestyle as well as the characteristic of a specific group of people. But, with the increasing importance

of globalization, the construct of culture has developed into a complex area that is not easy for marketers to understand. Issues related to the culture have also attracted the attention of researchers for decades and this led to landmark contributions that are used by various businesses. This study also suggested that culture is a type of phenomenon that is very difficult to understand and maybe insufficiently described as it is rooted deeply in human consciousness and thus, its exploration is limited. So, based on this it can be said that culture could have a huge impact on the digital marketing strategies of the company. Culture significantly impacts marketing strategies; thus, companies cannot ignore the analysis as well as the importance of local and international culture before marketing their brands.

Agreeing with this study, Madan & Rosca, (2022) also said that the marketing plans should be entirely based on the culture of the country or region in which a company operates. Customers get attracted to advertisements that have a cultural touch and describe cultural values, customs, norms, traditions, and so on. This study also suggested that a company needs to focus on culture before promotions as culture affects the product decisions and buying behavior of a consumer. But on the other, if a company is aware of the cultural values of its targeted customers it can prove to be a huge benefit for the company, for example, local companies of a particular country as they are aware of the culture they belong to.

So, in this case, it is easy for a company to develop a digital marketing strategy effectively. But if the company operates in a foreign country, it will be really difficult for the company to understand the cultural values of the host country. For example, it will be very hard for a UK company to understand Chinese cultural values and beliefs. But it requires extensive research before promoting a brand which can be a time-consuming process. This can also impact the digital marketing strategy.

4.2.7 Components of culture and its impact on digital marketing methodologies
Kingsnorth, (2022) clarified in their study that culture comprises various components and these components have a direct impact on modern digital marketing methodologies. The

researcher further expressed that one of the major cultural components that can impact marketing strategies is religion. The religious beliefs of people can shape the digital marketing campaigns of companies and they cannot afford to harm the religious sentiments of people at any cost. For example, companies can advertise pork and alcohol in Muslim countries, similarly, companies cannot promote beef in India as a cow is considered a sacred anim*al,* based on these examples, it can be analysed that this cultural component has a huge impact on digital marketing strategies.

On the other hand, Chaikovska & Shkeda (2021) did not agree with this fact, as they argued that people across the world have and are compromising with their religious beliefs but it is the mentalities and values that determine the individual choices and lifestyle. Now, what individuals feel is correct or appropriate, and what is crucial and attractive can influence buying behavior. It has nothing to do with religious beliefs and other cultural components. But, Abuhashesh *et. al,* (2021) suggested that cultural variability has a huge impact on modern digital marketing strategy. Cultural variabilities such as individualism and collectivism can impact marketing strategies. For example, most western countries are experiencing individualistic attitudes and most Asian countries have collectivistic attitudes. So, based on this, a company needs to shape its digital marketing strategies. This study also suggested that the power distance index can also impact the marketing strategies of a company. Another component is masculinity-femininity, as there are some male and female-driven societies, and also most companies market their brands based on male and female target customers.

4.2.8 How culture affects 4Ps of digital marketing mix

It can be interpreted from the study conducted by Kingsnorth, (2022) that the concept of culture brings to mind various aspects such as traditions, customs, languages, religion, legal and political systems as well as the business culture of a community. Also, it is evident from the study that cultural identity is not characterized by an individual but is a set of ideas, symbols, and values that are shared by members of the same society. So, it can be analysed that local culture has become a more important element in promoting brands within international markets. This study also revealed that cultural differences

strongly emerge in business environments and it may be very difficult for companies to understand and adapt the marketing mix. But, each element of the marketing mix (place, product, price, and promotion) undergoes a radical change within the cultural adaption phase.

FIGURE 9 4Ps of Digital Marketing (Singh, 2022).

In the support of this study, Magnani, (2022) explained all 4 marketing mix elements in the study. The researcher suggested that product decision is quite diverse and ranges from product specifications to branding issues and packaging. So, companies need to consider the impact of culture particularly in the area of packaging, presentation, and positioning of the product. Moreover, while setting prices, the cultural factors that influence the decision of the company are the existing government rules and legal order. The legal system of a country is responsible for adopting a pricing system based on market competition and state-controlled pricing. It can also be analysed from this study that decisions related to distribution channels are taken on the basis of factors such as types of channels available, consumer needs, presence of intermediaries, and managing effective relationships within the distribution channel. But all of these are influenced by those factors that shape the cultural dimension of each market. It can also be analysed that the impact of culture on communication decisions. Cultural identity directly influences digital marketing strategies along with the choice of content.

4.2.9 Challenges in dealing with culture while developing modern digital marketing strategies

From the study conducted by AL-TAIE *et. al,* (2022), it can be analysed that there are various challenges that a company can face related to culture while developing digital marketing strategies. This study suggested that one of the major challenges is the difference in communication styles. The way people communicate varies widely between and even within cultures. Across some cultures, phrases and words are used in different ways and it is very difficult for marketers to understand these phases or words. So, it can create problems while developing a digital marketing strategy. Moreover, this study also suggested that it is not easy for marketers to develop an understanding and knowledge of different at the same time in culturally diverse countries, for example, Asian countries like India, China, and Pakistan. So, this may require extensive research from marketers which can be a time-consuming process making the development of a digital marketing strategy even more difficult. It can be analysed from the study conducted by Roy, (2021) that a lack of proper training in the management of culturally diverse marketing teams can also be a challenging process. Cross-cultural digital marketing managers feel that they need the right tools to market their brands digitally. Developing a digital marketing strategy based on culture can impose some challenges but lots of opportunities as well depending on the level of cultural awareness.

4.3 Findings and Results

Based on the primary and secondary research, it can be said that there are some agreeing points related to the topic and some disagreeing statements while comparing two types of data. But it can be said that based on the replies of employers of companies and secondary data that there are various modern ways of digital marketing and these digital marketing strategies are affected by different cultures. While analysing the replies given by employers of MNCs, they collaboratively agreed with the fact that modern digital marketing has huge importance for businesses in the current business scenario. Modern digital marketing has become an important factor in the survival of the business. Modern digital marketing allows local and international businesses to focus on targeted customers no matter where they are located. The same has been viewed by different authors who

opinioned that modern digital marketing does not only allow companies to focus on targeted customers but also can generate more and more revenues. In addition to that, the authors also suggested that modern digital marketing has made the business transition to a modern digital model which has helped companies to survive in a highly competitive market. But employers did not consider the importance of modern digital marketing, but they rather focused on how modern digital marketing has proved to be cost-effective in comparison to traditional means of marketing. Also, they replied that digital marketing is also comparatively more effective than traditional marketing. But contradicting this, secondary research revealed that modern digital marketing has also allowed companies to get connected with their customers at any time, and this also helped modern businesses to make their marketing campaigns more effective. In addition to that, primary and secondary research both revealed that modern digital marketing has been beneficial for SMEs and large business organisations as it provides opportunities to spread messages across the globe and attract customers in a short period.

Secondary research revealed that in the current business scenario various modern ways or methods of digital marketing are available to companies to promote their brands across the world. On the other hand, primary research also suggested the same, where managers of MNCs also listed some modern methods of digital marketing that they used to market or promote their brands. But on comparison of results, it can be said that social media marketing is the most common method of digital marketing. Social media marketing has proven to be an effective tool in promoting brands and generating brand awareness across the globe. Moreover, primary and secondary research showed that almost everyone across the globe uses various social media apps such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and others. It has become easy for local and international brands to promote their products and services on social media. So, it can be said that social media marketing is the most effective modern way of digitally marketing products and services. In addition to that, primary and secondary data also revealed that search engine optimization (SEO) is also an effective modern method of digital marketing. The logic behind this is that companies use SEO to enhance their ranks on various search engines and can also increase traffic to their company website. A company with a high rank on

search engines and with high website traffic has a high chance of customer conversions which can prove beneficial for the company's growth and expansion. On the other hand, secondary data showed that the video marketing is also an effective modern digital marketing method. As video marketing became a common method of digital marketing and its success rate or conversion rate is high as video marketing can generate emotions. It can also be analysed from the secondary data that companies can use various online digital marketing platforms to enhance the process of modern digital marketing. But, nothing like this has been mentioned by managers during the interview. Researchers are of the view that online marketing platforms like Loomly, Refersion, and Campaigner can be used by markets to improve their digital marketing process. With the help of these online platforms, companies can manage their business and marketing performances and also provide advanced marketing processes and e-commerce-targeted versions.

After analysing the primary and secondary data, it can be said that different types of cultures have a significant impact on digital marketing. During the interview, employer agreed with the fact that the impact of culture on digital marketing is high. They replied that culture affects the lifestyle choices of people, and it is essential for the company to focus on cultural values and understand the needs and preferences of customers as well. In addition to that, primary data also revealed that digital marketing strategies and culture are directly linked to each other, thus modern businesses across the world are considering the culture of customers before developing a digital marketing strategy. Moreover, primary data also revealed that with different culture comes people with different attitudes, lifestyles, and attributes which can significantly impact the digital marketing strategies of a company. Thus, the primary data suggested that culture has a huge impact on the company's digital marketing strategy, but marketers need to develop a proper understanding of different cultures before developing a marketing strategy. On the other hand, secondary data also revealed the same and suggested that it is important for companies to consider different types of cultures before developing a digital marketing strategy. The authors also viewed that culture affects the product dimensions as well as the buying behavior of people. Thus, it can be said that companies have to analyse the different types of cultures that exist in a country or a particular region while developing

modern digital marketing strategies. It can also be analysed that to develop effective digital marketing strategies to attract customers across the world and generate effective relationships with them, cultural understanding is a must. But, on the other hand, developing knowledge related to different cultures is not an easy process, and every marketing manager has to deal with this challenge.

Various studies also revealed different components of culture also impact digital marketing strategies, and the same has been argued by the majority of employers during the interview. But it can be analysed those different authors and employers focused on different components of culture that impacts digital marketing strategies. But both primary and secondary data collection showed that religion is the most important cultural element that needs to be considered by marketers while developing digital marketing strategies. Religion has been claimed to be the most powerful cultural element as it directly impacts buying behavior and customer choices. In addition to that, other important cultural elements that have been discussed by authors and managers are values and customs. Values can be expressed individually and collectively, but companies need to understand these values before developing a digital marketing strategy. If a company does not respect people's values and customs, it can create a huge problem for the company. On the other hand, secondary data revealed that, mentalities and values that determine individual choices and lifestyles. So, this cultural element is ignoring all other elements of culture and suggested that what individuals feel is correct or appropriate, and what is crucial and attractive can influence buying behavior. So, it can be said that it is the mentality of a person that affects buying behavior. In this case, it is very difficult for marketers to understand this cultural element.

While analysing the primary and secondary data, it can be analysed that Hofstede's cultural dimension can prove to be an effective framework to understand different cultures. Based on this framework, there are various cultural dimensions that companies need to consider to understand different cultures. Cultural variability like individualism and collectivism can impact marketing strategies. As it can help in determining whether a country is an individualistic or collectivistic society. In the same manner, another cultural

dimension PDI (power distance index) is also used by marketers to develop digital marketing strategies. Researchers and even managers agreed with the fact that low-power distance can help in developing effective digital marketing strategies as it allows the participation of employees and people while developing digital marketing strategies. It can also be analysed from primary and secondary data that masculinity-femininity is also an important component of culture. As there are some male and female-driven societies, most companies also market their brands based on male and female target customers. Managers replied that most companies categorize their ads or marketing campaign by considering male and female attributes.

So, it can be said that there are various ways of digital marketing, and culture also has a significant impact on modern digital marketing strategies. Thus, marketers need to analyse the modern methods of digital marketing and need to develop proper cultural awareness by using various models to make their digital marketing strategies more effective.

Chapter 5 – Conclusion

It can be concluded from the study that digital marketing strategy is considered the most important factor in the present business scenario. Companies adopt modern digital marketing strategies to promote their brands across the world without geographical limitations. Modern digital marketing has eased the process of marketing and promotions. The present study also concludes that marketing strategies for promoting products or services are the most important decisions made by marketers. But it is the cultural diversity that intensifies the degree of uncertainty and difficulty in taking decisions for developing digital marketing strategies. All digital marketing strategies are framed after studying the culture of a particular group as culture varies based on the basis of religion, beliefs, values, customs, rituals, traditions, and so on. It can also be concluded that there are various cultural elements that have an indirect and direct influence on digital marketing strategies. But a good marketer wants to make its brand exist for a long time without ignoring cultural elements. So, national and international companies are analysing to whom they are offering products and what their cultural backgrounds are. Besides,

marketers are also analysing which cultural elements such as language, religion, customs, values, and others play crucial in the development of digital marketing strategy. Verbal and non-verbal communication is also an important element of culture which can help companies to promote their brands. But the major cultural element which significantly impacts digital marketing is religion. And the importance of this cultural component has been revealed both by a researcher and managers of different companies.

This study also concludes that there are various modern ways of digital marketing methods through which companies can promote their brand. The most popular method of digital marketing is social media marketing. Social media marketing allows companies to promote their brands instantly with less complexity and has a high influence on the targeted customers with a huge social reach. In addition to that, SEO is also the most effective way of modern digital marketing as it helps companies to increase their rank on various search engines and bring more and more traffic to the company website. Moreover, this study also concludes that video marketing can also be the most effective way of digital marketing. Video marketing has the capability to increase conversion rates and can influence consumers more quickly than other forms of digital marketing methods. This study also concludes that Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory is a framework that can be used by various businesses to understand the differences in cultures across different countries in which a company operates and to discern the ways of doing business across different cultures. This framework consists of different cultural variabilities such as PDI, individualistic, collectivistic, masculinity-femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and so on. So, this study concludes that the individualistic and collectivistic cultural dimension has a significant impact on digital marketing strategies. As it is easy for companies to develop marketing strategies and target a collectivistic society as people get influenced by each other. Also, a culture with a low-power index can also prove effective for companies in developing digital marketing strategies. In addition to that, the masculinity-femininity cultural dimension is used by various companies to promote gender-based brands, and this can prove effective for marketing success.

The present study also concludes that the 7Cs of digital marketing can provide a scalable and replicable modern framework that is designed to help digital marketers achieve their digital marketing goals in different cultures. In addition to that, culture also has a significant impact on the 4Ps of digital marketing which needs to be analysed by marketers to develop the most effective marketing mix elements (product, price, place, and promotion). This study also concludes that marketers face various challenges while developing digital marketing strategies. The challenges like communication styles, lack of understanding and knowledge of different cultures, and lack of proper training of culturally diverse marketing teams are also the major challenges faced by marketers. Thus, it can be concluded it is important for companies to examine proper methods of digital marketing and analyse the impact of culture on modern digital marketing strategies to make their digital marketing process easy and successful.

5.1 Recommendations

After analysing all factors, ways of modern digital marketing, and different cultural impacts on digital marketing strategies, it is clear that organisations should consider the cultural differences between different groups of people while developing digital marketing strategies. Besides, it is also recommended to marketers develop effective knowledge about the most common cultures prevailing in the country or in a particular region. This will help companies to spread a common message and convince their customers on the basis of cultural commonality. While developing digital marketing strategies, marketers should ensure diversity as well as inclusion within the decision-making process (Smith, 2021). This can prove to be the best practice to remember while launching a multicultural digital marketing campaign. A message should be directed in such a manner that target consumers should not be perceived as offensive to another group. In this case, it also recommended that while making decisions, contributions should be from multiple voices across age, gender, economic, locational, and cultural divides.

It is also recommended that while developing a digital marketing strategy, marketers should pay attention to cultural details. Paying attention to small cultural details can increase the chances of grabbing consumer attention and increasing conversion rates as

well. In addition to that, cultural consideration should be implemented in almost all aspects of business, and it should not just stop at digital marketing campaigns. Moreover, branding, slogans, and labeling should also be tailored to suit a specific cultural target group. Because of cultural diversification, it is easy for marketers to analyse and develop understating of all cultures, even people living in the same society have different customs, religions, values, and traditions (Zhou *et. al,* 2021). So, this makes judging a customer difficult. In this case, it is recommended to marketers that they should assess which types of marketing campaigns and digital marketing activities have been the most successful. So, analysing such successful marketing campaigns can give an idea to marketers on how to market their brand in different cultures without being offensive.

Developing an effective digital marketing campaign required proper knowledge, skills, and cultural awareness. So, this can be done by providing training to marketing teams on cultural diversity so that they can understand different cultures and the importance of diversity in the present business scenario. It is also recommended that while localizing the marketing content, it is essential for marketers to pay close attention to phrases and words that are solely associated with the culture of the people a company wants to target. Idioms may work well to engage particular groups of people in the country. It also recommended that to develop an effective digital marketing campaign, marketers can make effective use of different digital marketing methodologies such as social media, content marketing, SEO, video marketing, and so on (Hasan *et. al,* 2022). But companies need to be equally careful as it can increase the chances of hurting the sentiments of a large group as there are limitations in spreading the message digitally. In addition to that, a company can also bolster its insights with third-party focus groups and researchers.

5.2 Reflection

Conducting this study has been a great experience for me as it was a journey of learning and development for me. I came to know about various knowledge and skills that I was not aware of. I learned different ways of digital marketing that are used by companies in marketing their brands. I also learned about the power and importance of digital marketing in the current business scenario. While conducting the research, I also realised the importance of diversity and how different cultures can impact marketing strategies. I came

to know about different cultural elements and cultural dimensions such as Hofstede's cultural dimensions. Besides, I also developed knowledge about various research methodologies.

While conducting the study, I was able to develop proper aims and objectives for this study, and I was also able to conduct a proper literature review. But on the other hand, it was not easy for me to know about all the cultures and how all different cultures can impact digital marketing strategies, but I tried my best to try to cover some of the popular cultures or common cultures to conduct the study effectively. Also, getting approval to conduct the interview was also a challenging process, but, finally, I got the approval, and I conducted the interview effectively, but it was a time-consuming process. In addition to that, I first decided to conduct interview of 5 different managers of Lenovo, Tesco, Unilever, Amazon, and Toyota, but I was able to conduct interview of only two managers of Amazon and Toyota. So, then I decided to collect data from web pages of other three companies. In this process I chose relevant key words related the topic and searched for the company information. So, this is how I collected the data and in this process, I was able to use my online searching skills. Besides, my key word search in the Google search engine was short and definite which gave me appropriate results. So, in the end, it was a great learning experience for me, and in the future, I would like to conduct quantitative research on the same topic to get even more valid results.

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Appendix 1

Interview Questions

Toyota

Sales Executive 1: Poonam Rani

Address- Gurugram (India)

Duration: 30 minutes.

Date: 1 November 2022.

Amazon

Software Development Engineer at Amazon: Bazir Bishnoi

Washington United State(USA)

Duration: 30 minutes.

Date: 2 November 2022.

Q. 1: How important is modern digital marketing in the current business scenario?

Responses

Poonam: Modern digital marketing is extremely important in the current business scenario, it helps us to focus easily on targeted customers across the world and also helps the company to achieve huge revenue with less investment.

Bazir: I think that modern digital marketing has proven cost-effective for the company as traditional means of marketing were costly and comparatively less effective, But, modern digital marketing has enabled all types of companies with varied budgets or no budgets to market their products or services on a single platform.

Q. 2: Which modern way of digital marketing do you prefer to use to promote your company's products or services?

Responses

Poonam: Various modern digital marketing methods can be used to promote products or services. But, the most effective digital marketing method is social media marketing as it has helped the company to reach the globe instantly and is proven to be the most effective method of digital marketing.

Bazir: I think that SEO is the most effective modern method of digital marketing. SEO can get a business to rank higher in search engines and this can increase search engine traffic to the company's business website.

Q. 3: Do you think that culture has an impact on your digital marketing strategies?

Responses

Poonam: Yes, culture has a significant impact on the company's digital marketing strategies. I believe that the reason behind this is that culture can affect the lifestyle of customers so, as a marketer we need to focus on the different cultural values of customers to understand their needs and develop digital marketing strategies accordingly.

Bazir: I believe that the digital marketing strategy of the company is directly linked to the culture. We can see that all type of businesses have their own cultures and are also get influenced by the culture of their customers. Different types of cultures can affect consumers' lifestyles, buying behaviors, and buying patterns. So, in this case, companies need to develop knowledge and understanding of different cultures and develop digital marketing strategies by keeping the customer's culture in mind.

Q. 4: Which cultural element according to you has a significant impact on the company's digital marketing strategies?

Responses

Poonam: There are different types of cultural elements that can impact or affect digital marketing. I think that it is the deep values of a person or a society that defines what is not acceptable and what is acceptable. I also think that values are a part of culture's societal fabric, but on the other hand, they can be expressed individually as a result of education, family, morals, and beliefs as well. So, while developing digital marketing strategies values need to be taken into consideration.

Bazir: According to me it is the language difference that cannot be overstated while operating a business at an international level. To develop international digital marketing strategies or promote products or services a language difference can be a huge challenge. So, there is a need of using proper grammatical language while developing international digital marketing strategies.

Q. 5: Which Hofstede's cultural dimension according to you affects the company's digital marketing strategies?

Responses

Poonam: I will pick the collectivistic side as I think that people mostly like to belong to their social framework and share the values of one's groups. People get influenced by family and friends and also extend to relatives and neighbors. It helps the company to pitch for families and develop marketing strategies for people that stay together and help to attract people collectively. The majority of people get influenced by each other so by considering a collectivistic approach we can develop digital marketing strategies.

Bazir: I believe that a low power distance index culture can help in developing effective digital marketing strategies. The major reason behind this is that it encourages a participative management style as power can be distributed within the organisation. This results in creativity and the development of an effective digital marketing strategy.