

AI AND INNOVATION FOR SMART INDIA TRANSFORMING FINANCE AND MARKETING

Editors

Dr. T. M. HEMALATHA

*Dean, School of Commerce, Rathinam College of Arts and Science (Autonomous),
Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India.*

Dr. A. SARAVANAKUMAR

*Assistant Professor and Head, Department of Commerce,
Rathinam College of Arts and Science (Autonomous), Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India.*

Dr. M. M. VISHNU

*Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce,
Rathinam College of Arts and Science (Autonomous), Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India.*

Mrs. P. GIRIJA

*Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Rathinam College of Arts and Science (Autonomous),
Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India.*

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PERSONALIZED DIGITAL MARKETING AND DIGITAL ADDICTION AMONG YOUNG ADULTS IN COIMBATORE

Dr. D. Divya

Assistant Professor, Department of B.Com (Finance)
NGM College (Autonomous), Pollachi, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu

Abstract

In recent years, digital platforms have become a part of every young adult's daily lives especially in urban area like Coimbatore. In Personalized digital marketing the content and advertisements are tailored to an individual's preferences and are widely used by brands to increase engagement and influence consumer behaviour. Although these strategies can supplement the effectiveness of marketing, they can also lead to over-involvement and compulsion to engage with digital media, which is sometimes termed digital addiction. The current conceptual study examines the association between exposure to personalized digital marketing in regard to digital addiction among young adults in Coimbatore. Drawing on Indian scholarship on the causes of social media addiction and its consequences for mental health and cognitive patterns regarding social media use and the lifestyle behaviors that follow, the paper explains a framework that connects exposure to digital marketing with increased addictive behaviors and the resulting impact on health, lifestyle, and interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, the study provides insights for educators, policymakers, and digital marketers for promoting healthier digital engagement in young adults. The results highlight the need for balanced and responsible use of digital technology, and culturally sensitive interventions to mitigate digital dependency.

Keywords: Personalized digital marketing, Digital addiction, Social media addiction, Young adults, Mental health.

Introduction to Digital Platforms and Personalized Marketing

The increasing availability of smartphones, the decline in the cost of Internet access, and the accelerating growth of social media have completely changed the patterns of communication, knowledge-seeking, socialization, and consumption preferences of young adults. Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, and similar platforms have become a part of the daily routine of Generation Z and Millennials. Along with this digital acceleration, tailored digital marketing has become a strategic tool that brands use in an attempt to access and impact users in a differentiated way. One-to-one digital marketing uses data analytics to personalize content, advertisements and recommendations based on personal interests, online browsing behavior and engagement. Personalized marketing also helps to promote longer durations of usage online by providing the consumer with a better experience and developing brand loyalty. Platforms using algorithms that favor user-behavior information are aimed at extending platform dwell time, which may lead to compulsive media use. As a result, it has been expressed that engagement mechanisms aimed at capturing the attention of users, as opposed to offering user wellbeing, could be the root cause of a predisposition towards excessive and, even, addictive digital practices.

Objectives of the Paper

- To examine the extent of exposure to personalized digital marketing among young adults in Coimbatore.
- To analyze the relationship between personalized digital marketing and digital addiction among young adults.
- To assess the psychological mechanisms that contribute to compulsive digital usage.
- To evaluate the impact of digital addiction on mental health, lifestyle patterns, and interpersonal relationships of young adults.

Personalized Digital Marketing: Concept and Mechanisms

Personalized digital marketing is the application of consumer data and digital capabilities to provide personalized content, personalized advertisements, and personalized recommendations to a specific user. The variables used in personalization include search history, previous viewing behaviour, geolocation data, and interaction patterns to recommend content that best suits the preferences of the individual. This is opposed to the traditional mass marketing in which the same message is spread to large groups. The main aim of personalised marketing is to improve on relevance and engagement. Whenever a content matches with the interests of the person, chances of it being clicked, shared, and remembered are higher, thus resulting in greater engagement rates and a more powerful brand memory. The recommendation engines on YouTube and Instagram offer suggestions for videos and posts based on past interactions, creating a personalised user feed that enables unlimited exploration.

Psychological Mechanisms of Engagement

As much as personalised marketing increases the relevance of the user, it also triggers psychological processes which encourage the use of it habitually. The presence of such features as automatic suggestions in the form of algorithms, automatic play of videos, and alerts serves as stimuli that keep enticing users to the platform. In the long run, it may result in addiction whereby users are under pressure to look at updates regularly, and even when it comes at the cost of other activities. These mechanisms have the ability to strengthen cognitive and emotional attachment to digital platforms. Suppose, when a user is constantly presented with the content that aligns with his or her interests and preferences, he or she might feel that this platform comprehends and confirms him or her. In the long run, the perceived personalization may lead to the emotional reinforcement, which strengthens the frequency of use and period of use.

Digital Addiction: Understanding the Issue

Digital addiction refers to the compulsive and excessive use of digital media and the resultant negative impact on the well-being and daily operation of an individual. Digital addiction, as opposed to casual interaction, is defined by someone having a loss of control, constant obsessiveness with digital activity and usage despite knowledge of negative

effects. One of the most studied forms of addiction is social media addiction; it is usually characterized by a compulsive worry about social networks, excessive time spent online past the expected or desired limit, and anxiety or irritability at the thought of being without social media. These trends are similar to other behavioral addictions like gambling or gaming, which implies that the intervention strategies must be similar.

Digital Addiction and Its Relevance

Digital addiction is an element of behaviour that is characterized by high levels of compulsive and excessive use of digital platforms, often with negative psychological, social and physical consequences. Although the construct has no formal clinical acceptance, it has common features with addiction in other areas: preoccupation with use of digital devices, loss of control, increasing tolerance (needing more and more screen time), withdrawal effects on disconnection. It has been studied using empirical studies by Indian researchers that have made clear-cut patterns of troubled social media use and the psychological effects of the same on the young people. These researchers suggest that a considerable percentage of young adults spend considerable time on digital material, and this tendency is associated with increased anxiety, stress, and a range of mental health challenges. When analyzed within the framework of Coimbatore, the city with a high rate of technological adoption and a high number of smartphone owners, the nexus between personalized digital marketing and digital addiction appears to be a relevant prism through which the possible convergence between modern marketing strategy, trends in youth behavior, and well-being may be viewed.

Literature review of Social Media Addiction in Indian Youth

A study conducted in Coimbatore using the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS) with 100 adolescents found high adherence to social media addiction, particularly among those aged 18–20 years (Haripriya et al., 2024). Another research from Coimbatore reported that excessive social media use was associated with negative psychological outcomes, including stress, emotional distress, and poorer mental health among young people (Abinayaa, 2023). Studies among Indian young adults aged 18–35 have also shown that higher levels of social media addiction are significantly related to low coping self-efficacy and greater social comparison tendencies (Srivastava, 2024). In addition, research in Tamil Nadu medical students demonstrated that social media addiction is associated with adverse health effects such as poor sleep quality, supporting the conclusion that addictive social media use poses significant mental health and lifestyle challenges in Indian youth (Siddharthan et al., 2024).

Personalized Marketing and Digital Addiction: The Link

Personalized digital marketing is closely linked to digital addiction through several interconnected psychological and technological mechanisms. Personalized content algorithms are continuously tracking user behaviour and preferences and thus creates an algorithmic reinforcement loop in which increasingly tailored content is provided to

maximise engagement metrics. This relationship motivates the user to invest more time in digital media since the perceived relevance and interest in the content creates a feeling of self-resonance. In addition to this, the search of instant gratification through instant provision of desired commodities, audiovisual media, or social interactions triggers neural reward circuitry, thus, establishing habitual checking behaviors.

Emotional involvement also reinforces this connection, where custom-made content often creates an emotional response, which can be excitement, validation, or inspiration, which further creates a stronger attachment of a user to the platform. Working together, these mechanisms can enhance compulsive patterns of use and undermine the ability of people to regulate their consumption of digital devices. The young adults are especially vulnerable to such phenomena because of the developmental processes, such as the identity formation, peer pressure, and their search of social approval. In areas with high levels of social media usage and exposure to digital marketing like Coimbatore, where interest in fitness, fashion or socially relevant causes is high, personalized content that does not conflict with such interests may continually grab attention and encourage regular interaction. Such repeated, emotionally intense exchanges could over time become patterns that can be said to be addiction-like which has been confirmed by empirical research on the social media dependence among young people in India.

Health, Lifestyle, and Relationship Outcomes

- **Psychological Health Effects:** Over time through heavy digital usage and addiction, there are psychological health effects which have been well documented. According to the Indian research, stress, anxiety, and emotional distress are associated with high levels of social media use. Teenagers who have spent extended hours on social networks note an effect that is more like a state of psychological stress, including irritability and lack of life satisfaction. Patterns of addiction can also be a source of loneliness and isolation.
- **Lifestyle Disruptions:** Digital addiction can disrupt daily routines and healthy lifestyle practices. Overuse of the screen time usually replaces other activities like exercise, sleep, and social interaction. Young adults who spend a significant amount of time online will often have disturbed sleeping habits, lack of physical exercise, and ignoring of offline duties.
- **Social Relationship Impacts:** Digital communication may undermine human relationships. Although social media can help us connect with people who are distant, the quality of interaction in reality can be affected because of overdependence. Those users who prefer their Internet communication over the personal interactions might have difficulties in developing the real relations with those people who do not use the Internet. These effects help to see how the problem of digital addiction that is strengthened with the help of individualized digital marketing influences not the psychology of people only but also the way they live and the physical wellness.

Conceptual Framework



Figure 1: Conceptual Framework - Personalized Digital Marketing and Digital Addiction

This model describes the indirect impact of personalized digital marketing on health and social outcomes mediated by digital addiction.

Recommendations

- **Promoting Healthy Digital Habits:** To reduce the impact of digital addiction, the promotion of healthy digital habits is essential, i.e., the encouragement of young adults to adopt healthy digital habits, including putting a limit on screen-time, physical activity, and taking a regular break to avoid digital platforms.
- **Educational and Institutional Support:** educational institutions, colleges and community organisations can include digital-literacy programmes that explain to students their psychological impact of personalised digital marketing and of self-control. Learning about the influence of algorithms on behaviour will enable people to make sound decisions in terms of online interaction.
- **Policy and Platform Design:** the digital platform designers and policymakers should also look into integrating into their product or policy the functionality that will encourage healthy use, like usage notifications, time-tracking apps, and content filter options. The potential impact of addiction can be reduced by promoting ethical design thinking practices that focus on the well-being of the users.

Conclusion

Customized online marketing has revolutionized the online world by enabling companies to personalize online content that appeals to its individual tastes and preferences. Nevertheless, this increased interaction may also create a tendency of obsessive use of digital devices that are similar to addiction especially in young adults. Studies in Coimbatore as well as larger research on the effects of social media addiction show the psychological and social effects of overuse of digital communication. The individualization and its connection to digital addiction are key factors that will help foster

more healthy digital behavior patterns. Through an integrative approach, the educational, institutional, and policy-based intervention, one can help to promote balanced and responsible use of digital platforms among young adults in Coimbatore and other areas.

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