

Original Article

Digital Marketing Awareness and Purchase Decision-Making among Online Shoppers: Evidence from Davao City, Philippines

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Abstract. Despite the widespread use of digital marketing platforms, empirical evidence remains limited on the association between digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making, and on whether these variables differ across buyer types among online shoppers in Davao City, Philippines. This study aimed to determine the levels of digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making among online shoppers, examine whether these variables differ when respondents are grouped according to buyer-type characteristics, and determine whether a significant relationship exists between digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making. A non-experimental quantitative research design employing descriptive-correlational and descriptive-comparative approaches was utilized. Data were collected from 400 online shoppers selected through quota sampling using a structured survey questionnaire. Respondents were classified into four buyer-type groups: impulsive, hedonic, dissonance-reducing, and habitual. Data were analyzed using the mean, standard deviation, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (r). The findings revealed that digital marketing awareness ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 0.258$) and purchase decision-making ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 0.233$) were both rated very high. No statistically significant differences were found in digital marketing awareness, $F(3, 396) = 1.43$, $p = .240$, or purchase decision-making, $F(3, 396) = 1.69$, $p = .175$, when respondents were grouped according to buyer type. However, a statistically significant positive relationship was found between digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making ($r = .61$, $p < .001$). The findings indicate that higher reported levels of digital marketing awareness were associated with higher reported levels of purchase decision-making among the respondents. The study concludes that digital marketing awareness is significantly associated with purchase decision-making while recognizing that the correlational design does not establish a causal relationship between the variables.

Keywords: Buyer types; Davao City, Philippines; Digital marketing awareness; Online shopping; Purchase decision-making.

The rapid expansion of electronic commerce has transformed how consumers search for information, evaluate alternatives, and make purchase decisions. Unlike traditional purchasing environments, online shopping gives consumers access to diverse digital information and communication channels, including online reviews, electronic word-of-mouth, social media, and other internet-based marketing communications that

support consumer decision-making (Rosário & Casaca, 2023). The Philippine e-commerce environment has likewise expanded substantially. The 2024 National Information and Communications Technology Household Survey reported that 36.7% of Filipino internet users aged 10 and above purchased goods or services online, up from 23.7% in 2019, indicating a substantial increase in online purchasing activity (DICT, 2024). The same report showed that online buying and selling accounts had also expanded considerably, reflecting the growing role of digital commerce in Filipino consumers' everyday activities.

Although electronic commerce provides greater convenience, product accessibility, and comparison opportunities, it has also created a more complex environment for consumer decision-making. Consumers are increasingly exposed to personalized and targeted digital promotions, including social media advertising, influencer marketing, algorithm-driven recommendations, and emerging interactive forms of digital marketing (Dwivedi et al., 2020). These practices allow marketers to deliver commercial messages based on consumers' interests, preferences, and online activities. Consequently, consumers must evaluate not only the informational content of digital messages but also their underlying persuasive and commercial intent, particularly when promotional content is integrated into social media environments. Research on algorithmic social-media advertising shows that consumers differ in their awareness of and evaluation of algorithmic personalization and persuasion, underscoring the importance of understanding how digital advertising practices shape the content they encounter (Lina & Setiyanto, 2021).

Within this environment, digital marketing awareness has become an important aspect of consumers' ability to navigate online commercial messages. Digital marketing awareness may be understood as consumers' knowledge and understanding of digital marketing practices and their ability to recognize and evaluate the persuasive and commercial intent of marketing content encountered through digital platforms. This concept should be distinguished from simple exposure to advertisements. Exposure means consumers encounter marketing content, whereas awareness involves recognizing its commercial and persuasive nature and understanding how marketing techniques may influence consumers (van Reijmersdal et al., 2022). This distinction aligns with research on advertising literacy and persuasion knowledge, which emphasizes consumers' ability to recognize advertising, understand its persuasive intent, evaluate commercial messages, and respond to persuasive marketing practices (Hudders et al., 2020).

Digital marketing awareness also overlaps conceptually with, but should not automatically be equated with, advertising literacy and persuasion knowledge. Advertising literacy generally encompasses consumers' knowledge and skills for recognizing and evaluating advertising messages, while persuasion knowledge concerns their understanding of marketers' persuasive strategies and their ability to respond to persuasive attempts (Van Reijmersdal & Van Dam, 2020). Recent research highlights the relevance of consumers' understanding of persuasive and data-driven advertising practices as digital advertising increasingly involves personalized and targeted marketing content across online environments. In the present study, digital marketing awareness is therefore treated as a broader consumer awareness of digital marketing practices encountered during online shopping, including recognition and understanding of promotional and persuasive techniques.

The theoretical relationship between digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making can be explained through the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) developed by Petty and Cacioppo (1986). The ELM proposes two primary routes through which individuals process persuasive messages: the central route, which involves relatively thoughtful consideration of message arguments, and the peripheral route, which relies more heavily on affective associations, contextual information, or peripheral cues. The model further proposes that individuals' motivation and ability to process information influence how much they elaborate on persuasive messages. In online shopping environments, consumers encounter both substantive information, such as product information and reviews, and peripheral persuasive cues, including influencer characteristics, popularity, credibility, endorsements, and other promotional signals that can shape consumer responses (Vrontis et al., 2021). Digital marketing awareness may therefore matter for how consumers recognize and evaluate these persuasive elements. This theoretical perspective provides a basis for examining whether digital marketing awareness is associated with, rather than assumed to cause, differences in purchase decision-making.

Empirical research supports the relevance of consumers' awareness and understanding of digital persuasion. Studies of advertising literacy have examined consumers' ability to recognize advertising and understand its

persuasive intent, while research on persuasion knowledge indicates that consumers draw on their knowledge of marketers' persuasive tactics when responding to marketplace persuasion (Wang et al., 2023). A recent meta-analysis further indicates that persuasion knowledge is associated with consumers' coping responses and evaluations of marketplace persuasion, demonstrating its relevance to how consumers respond to marketers' persuasive attempts (Eisend & Tarrahi, 2021). Research on social-media advertising has shown that consumers differ in their awareness, critical evaluation, and ability to cope with algorithmic persuasion, indicating variation in consumers' understanding of algorithmically driven marketing practices (Voorveld et al., 2023). These findings suggest that consumers' awareness of digital marketing practices is a relevant construct for understanding how individuals navigate increasingly persuasive online shopping environments.

Purchase decision-making refers to the process through which consumers recognize needs, seek and evaluate information and alternatives, and ultimately decide whether to purchase products or services (Petcharat & Leelasantitham, 2021). In online environments, consumers may consider product information, reviews, perceived risk, trust, recommendations, promotional offers, and other informational and social cues before completing a purchase. Philippine research has likewise shown that online consumer behavior is influenced by factors associated with digital commerce. A study of 997 Philippine respondents on e-commerce use found that trust, self-efficacy, perceived risk, and hedonic and utilitarian motivations shaped consumers' attitudes and intentions toward e-commerce platforms (Capistrano et al., 2023). A 2024 Philippine study on online live selling found significant relationships among customer perceived value, purchase intention, and actual purchasing behavior, demonstrating the growing importance of digitally mediated purchasing environments in the country (Ong et al., 2024). These findings reinforce the importance of examining purchase decision-making within the contemporary digital marketplace.

Purchase decision-making may also be examined in relation to different buyer-type characteristics. The characteristics considered in the present study draw on complementary consumer-behavior perspectives rather than a single unified buyer typology. Impulsive buyer-type characteristics are grounded in Rook's (1987) conceptualization of impulse buying. Rook described impulse buying as a distinctive form of purchasing behavior involving the onset of a buying impulse and examined the subjective experiences associated with consumers' impulsive urges and their consequences. Thus, consumers with stronger impulsive characteristics may be more inclined toward spontaneous, immediate purchasing responses.

Hedonic buyer-type characteristics are grounded in Arnold and Reynolds' (2003) framework of hedonic shopping motivations. Their study developed and validated a six-dimensional measure of hedonic shopping motivation comprising adventure, gratification, role, value, social, and idea shopping motivations. The framework demonstrates that shopping may involve experiential and pleasurable motivations beyond purely functional or utilitarian objectives. Accordingly, consumers exhibiting stronger hedonic characteristics may place greater importance on enjoyment, excitement, gratification, social experiences, and other pleasurable aspects of shopping.

In contrast, dissonance-reducing and habitual buyer-type characteristics are grounded in Assael's (1987) consumer buying behavior framework. Assael's framework classifies buying behavior according to two dimensions: the consumer's level of involvement and the perceived differences among brands. Dissonance-reducing buying behavior occurs when consumers are highly involved in a purchase but perceive relatively few differences among available brands. Habitual buying behavior occurs when consumers have low involvement and perceive few meaningful differences among brands, resulting in greater reliance on familiarity and routine.

These complementary perspectives provide a theoretical basis for examining how consumers may differ in their responses to digital marketing information and online purchasing situations. Consumers with stronger impulsive characteristics may respond more spontaneously to immediate marketing stimuli, whereas consumers with stronger hedonic characteristics may place greater emphasis on enjoyment and experiential value (Suher & Hoyer, 2020; Mallari et al., 2023). Consumers exhibiting stronger dissonance-reducing characteristics may be more concerned with reducing uncertainty and avoiding post-purchase regret when making highly involving purchases, whereas those with stronger habitual characteristics may rely more heavily on familiarity, convenience, and established purchasing routines (Palalic et al., 2020). These characteristics matter in digital shopping environments because online consumers are continually exposed to promotional messages, personalized recommendations, social endorsements, discounts, and other persuasive cues.

The use of buyer-type characteristics in the present study therefore describes different tendencies in consumer purchasing rather than establishing four mutually exclusive psychological identities. The four characteristics originate from complementary theoretical traditions: impulse buying from Rook (1987), hedonic shopping motivations from Arnold and Reynolds (2003), and dissonance-reducing and habitual buying behavior from Assael (1987). An individual consumer may display more than one characteristic depending on the product, purchasing situation, level of involvement, or marketing context. Consequently, the study treats these characteristics as operational groupings based on the characteristics measured by the research instrument rather than as a single comprehensive psychological typology.

The Philippine context further underscores the relevance of examining digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making. The Philippine e-commerce environment has become increasingly shaped by digital marketplace platforms, with Shopee, Lazada, TikTok Shop, and other online platforms serving as important channels for consumer purchasing and business-to-consumer transactions (KPMG, 2024; DTI, 2024). Research among online shoppers in Panabo City, Philippines, further showed the relevance of live-selling environments to consumer purchasing behavior, with Facebook Live Selling significantly related to purchase intention and perceived entertainment, discounts, and product quality influencing consumers' purchase intentions (Egot et al., 2022). The increasing integration of e-commerce, social media, and live selling consequently exposes Filipino consumers to diverse forms of digital marketing and persuasion (PSA, 2025).

The issue is particularly relevant in Davao City, Philippines, where researchers have also investigated online shopping and digital consumer behavior. A study of online shoppers in Davao City examined online shopping behavior using survey data from 200 respondents, providing local empirical evidence of consumer engagement with digitally mediated purchasing activities. Other local research has examined the role of online reviews in consumers' purchasing behavior in Davao City, with evidence that consumers rely heavily on online reviews when evaluating products and making purchase decisions (Lucero et al., 2025). However, existing local studies have generally examined broader consumer behavior, product reviews, or other aspects of online purchasing rather than specifically examining the association between digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making while considering buyer-type characteristics.

The research gap therefore extends beyond the geographic setting. Previous research has examined digital advertising, advertising literacy, persuasion knowledge, online consumer behavior, impulse buying, hedonic shopping motivations, and different forms of consumer buying behavior. Nevertheless, these strands of literature have not been sufficiently integrated in the local context to determine whether consumers' levels of digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making differ across buyer-type characteristics and whether the two principal constructs are significantly associated among online shoppers in Davao City. The present study addresses this empirical gap by examining digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making together while considering impulsive, hedonic, dissonance-reducing, and habitual buyer-type characteristics as grouping variables.

The study is primarily anchored in the Elaboration Likelihood Model by Petty and Cacioppo (1986), which explains how consumers process persuasive digital marketing messages through central and peripheral routes. The ELM is complemented by established consumer-behavior perspectives on impulse buying, hedonic shopping motivation, and buying-decision behavior, providing a theoretical basis for the buyer-type characteristics examined in the study. Together, these perspectives provide a conceptual foundation for examining whether consumers' awareness of digital marketing practices is associated with their purchase decision-making and whether these constructs differ across buyer-type characteristics.

Accordingly, this study aims to determine the level of digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making among online shoppers in Davao City, Philippines; determine whether digital marketing awareness differs when respondents are grouped according to buyer-type characteristics; determine whether purchase decision-making differs across buyer-type characteristics; and examine whether a significant relationship exists between digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making. By addressing these objectives, the study seeks to contribute empirical evidence to the literature on digital consumer behavior and online purchasing in the Philippine context. The findings may provide useful information for online consumers, educators, digital marketers, business

organizations, and policymakers regarding consumers' awareness of persuasive digital marketing practices and their purchase decision-making patterns. The findings may also support consumer education and responsible digital marketing initiatives. However, because the study uses a non-experimental correlational design, interpret any observed relationship between digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making as a statistical association rather than a causal effect.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative, non-experimental research design using descriptive-correlational and descriptive-comparative approaches. A non-experimental design was appropriate because the researchers observed and measured the variables in their existing conditions without manipulation or experimental intervention (Ghanad, 2023). The descriptive component was used to determine the levels of digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making among online shoppers in Davao City, Philippines. The correlational component was employed to determine whether a statistically significant relationship existed between digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making. The descriptive-comparative component was used to determine whether significant differences existed in the levels of digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making when respondents were grouped according to their buyer-type characteristics.

The study did not attempt to establish a cause-and-effect relationship between digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making. Instead, the correlational analysis aimed to determine the direction and strength of the statistical association between the two variables. Similarly, the comparative analysis examined differences in the measured variables across buyer-type characteristic groups without implying that membership in a particular group caused differences in digital marketing awareness or purchase decision-making.

Research Participants

The study participants were 400 online shoppers in Davao City, Philippines, who had experience purchasing products through at least one of the three selected online shopping platforms: Shopee, Lazada, and TikTok Shop. The researchers determined the sample size of 400 respondents in accordance with the recommendations of the institution and the research panel. The researchers followed the recommended sample size to provide sufficient observations for the descriptive, comparative, and correlational analyses specified in the study. The researchers employed a non-probability quota sampling technique, with quotas established based on the four buyer-type characteristics examined in the study: impulsive, hedonic, dissonance-reducing, and habitual. The study set an equal quota of 100 respondents for each buyer-type group, for a total of 400 respondents. Equal quotas ensured each buyer-type group was adequately represented in the comparative analysis.

Respondents were classified by buyer type using a structured procedure. The four buyer-type characteristics were assigned numerical codes for respondent classification: 4 = impulsive, 3 = hedonic, 2 = dissonance-reducing, and 1 = habitual. During data collection, respondents were screened using the buyer-type indicators in the questionnaire and classified according to the prescribed scoring procedure. Data collection continued until the required quota of 100 respondents for each buyer-type group was reached. Thus, the final sample consisted of 100 impulsive, 100 hedonic, 100 dissonance-reducing, and 100 habitual buyer-type respondents.

The platform requirement was independent of the buyer-type quota. Respondents were not required to use all three online shopping platforms. To qualify for participation, a respondent needed to have purchased products through at least one of the following platforms: Shopee, Lazada, or TikTok Shop. Consequently, a respondent could use only Shopee, only Lazada, only TikTok Shop, or any combination of the three platforms. The study did not establish equal quotas for the three platforms because the primary sampling quota was based on buyer-type characteristics.

The inclusion criteria required participants to: (1) be 18 years old or above; (2) have experience purchasing products through at least one of the three selected online shopping platforms; (3) be currently residing in Davao City, Philippines; and (4) voluntarily agree to participate in the study. Respondents who were below 18 years old, had no experience purchasing through any of the identified platforms, did not meet the geographic requirement, or submitted substantially incomplete questionnaires were excluded from the study.

Because quota sampling is a non-probability sampling procedure, not every online shopper in Davao City had an equal probability of being selected. Buyer-type quotas may also produce a sample distribution that does not necessarily reflect the actual proportion of buyer types in the population. Therefore, interpret the findings within the characteristics of the study sample, and do not generalize them to all online shoppers in Davao City without qualification.

Research Instruments

The study used a structured survey questionnaire to collect data on the variables under investigation: digital marketing awareness as the independent variable and purchase decision-making as the dependent variable. The respondents' buyer-type characteristics served as the grouping variable for the comparative analysis. The questionnaire consisted of three major sections: buyer-type characteristics, digital marketing awareness, and purchase decision-making.

The first section identified respondents' predominant buyer-type characteristic for grouping. Four buyer-type characteristics were considered: impulsive, hedonic, dissonance-reducing, and habitual. These categories were selected based on established consumer behavior literature. Impulsive buyer characteristics reflect spontaneous and immediate purchasing tendencies associated with impulse buying (Rook, 1987). Hedonic buyer characteristics reflect the pleasurable, experiential, emotional, and enjoyment-oriented aspects of shopping described in Arnold and Reynolds' (2003) hedonic shopping motivation framework. Dissonance-reducing and habitual buyer characteristics are based on Assael's (1987) consumer buying behavior framework, which distinguishes buying behavior according to consumers' level of involvement and perceived differences among alternatives.

The buyer-type classification was not treated as an adapted survey instrument. Rather, the four categories were established as the grouping variable based on the buyer-type characteristics identified in the consumer behavior literature. Respondents were classified according to the buyer-type characteristic that corresponded to their responses, following the study's prescribed classification procedure. For data-processing purposes, the categories were assigned numerical codes: 4 = impulsive, 3 = hedonic, 2 = dissonance-reducing, and 1 = habitual. These numerical values served only as categorical codes and did not represent levels of measurement or scores indicating that one buyer type was higher or lower than another. The researchers continued the survey until they reached the predetermined quota of 100 respondents for each buyer-type group. The final sample therefore consisted of 400 respondents, distributed equally among the four groups: 100 impulsive, 100 hedonic, 100 dissonance-reducing, and 100 habitual respondents.

The second section measured digital marketing awareness, the independent variable. The instrument was adapted from Boerman and Van Reijmersdal (2020) and De Jans et al. (2020) and contextualized to the online shopping environment. The digital marketing awareness scale consisted of 20 items designed to assess respondents' awareness and understanding of digital marketing practices encountered during online shopping. The items focused on respondents' recognition and understanding of persuasive and promotional marketing practices in digital environments. The adaptation involved contextualizing the items to the online shopping setting while retaining their intended conceptual meaning.

The third section measured purchase decision-making, the dependent variable. The instrument consisted of 20 items developed from the consumer decision-making concepts discussed by Kotler et al. (2021) and Schiffman and Wisenblit (2021) and contextualized to purchase decision-making. The items assessed respondents' self-reported decision-making practices when purchasing products through online platforms. The construct therefore represented self-reported purchase decision-making rather than objectively observed purchasing transactions. This operationalization aligns with the study's descriptive-correlational design.

The questionnaire items measuring the study's variables underwent face and content validation before the pilot test and final administration. Three experts with relevant academic and/or professional expertise reviewed the questionnaire for relevance, clarity, appropriateness, and alignment with the constructs being measured. The instrument obtained an overall content validity rating of 4.5 out of 5.0, indicating a high level of content validity based on the evaluation scale used by the researchers. The researchers incorporated the validators' comments and recommendations into the questionnaire before pilot testing and final data collection.

The buyer-type categories were likewise reviewed as part of the overall instrument and study design to ensure

that the classification was understandable and appropriate for the intended respondents. Since buyer type served as a categorical grouping variable rather than an adapted multi-item measurement scale, it was not treated as a separate adapted psychometric scale.

A pilot test was conducted among 30 respondents who met the general eligibility requirements of the study but were not included in the final sample. The pilot test assessed the clarity, comprehensibility, and internal consistency of the questionnaire items measuring the principal study variables. We assessed reliability using Cronbach's alpha. The 20-item digital marketing awareness scale had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.815, while the 20-item purchase decision-making scale had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.781. These coefficients indicate acceptable internal consistency for the two measurement scales. Cronbach's alpha was not applied to the buyer-type grouping variable because the four buyer-type groups – impulsive, hedonic, dissonance-reducing, and habitual – were used as categorical classifications rather than as a single psychometric scale. The buyer-type classification was established based on the theoretical characteristics identified in the consumer behavior literature and the classification procedure specified in the study.

Respondents rated the items measuring digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making on a four-point Likert scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, and 4 = Strongly Agree. The four-point scale required respondents to indicate a directional response and avoided the selection of a neutral midpoint. The mean scores were interpreted using the following ranges:

Mean Range	Verbal Interpretation
3.26–4.00	Very High
2.51–3.25	High
1.76–2.50	Low
1.00–1.75	Very Low

Data Gathering Procedure

After the research proposal was approved, the researchers secured authorization from the appropriate academic authorities, including the Program Head of the College of Business Administration and the St. John Paul II College of Davao Thesis Committee, as required by institutional procedures. The researchers also secured the necessary permission to conduct data collection within the identified study setting. Before administering the questionnaire, the designated validators reviewed and validated the instrument, and the researchers incorporated the recommended revisions. The researchers then conducted a pilot test to evaluate the instrument's clarity and reliability before final data collection.

Data were collected through a face-to-face survey using the approved structured questionnaire. Potential respondents were screened based on the established inclusion criteria and the remaining available quota for their respective buyer-type group. Before answering the questionnaire, each participant was informed of the study's purpose and general nature, the voluntary nature of participation, the expected involvement, and the measures taken to protect the confidentiality of their responses. Participants provided informed consent before completing the questionnaire. The researchers checked completed questionnaires for completeness before encoding and analysis. Questionnaires with substantial missing responses that met the predetermined exclusion criteria were excluded from the final dataset. The collected data were encoded, cleaned, and analyzed using the statistical procedures specified in the study.

Data Analysis

The study used descriptive and inferential statistical procedures to answer the research questions. Mean and standard deviation were used to describe the levels of digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making among the respondents. The mean estimated the central tendency of the responses, while the standard deviation indicated the extent of variation in respondents' scores.

To determine whether significant differences existed in digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making across the four buyer-type characteristic groups, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was employed. ANOVA was appropriate for comparing the mean scores of more than two independent groups. The analysis produced the corresponding F-statistic and p-value for each dependent variable. To examine the association between digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making, we used the Pearson product-moment

correlation coefficient (Pearson's r). Pearson's r was employed to determine the direction and strength of the linear relationship between the two continuous variables. The resulting correlation was interpreted as an association and was not considered evidence of a causal effect. Before conducting ANOVA and Pearson's r , the researchers assessed the relevant assumptions of the statistical procedures. For ANOVA, the researchers examined independence of observations, approximate normality of the dependent variables within groups, and homogeneity of variance. For Pearson's r , the researchers assessed independence, linearity, and the approximate normality of the variables. The specific assumption-testing procedures and results should be reported in the Results section where applicable. The level of significance for all inferential statistical tests was set at $\alpha = .05$. A p -value below .05 was interpreted as evidence of a statistically significant result, whereas a p -value equal to or greater than .05 was interpreted as not statistically significant. Statistical significance was interpreted in relation to the specific research hypothesis and did not imply causation.

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to applicable ethical principles governing research involving human participants, including respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. Before data collection, the researchers secured the required approval from the St. John Paul II College of Davao Thesis Committee and permission from the Program Head of the College of Business Administration, in accordance with institutional research procedures.

Participation in the study was entirely voluntary. Before completing the questionnaire, each participant received an informed consent statement explaining the study's purpose, the general procedures involved, the expected duration of participation, the voluntary nature of participation, and the participant's right to decline participation or withdraw at any point without penalty. Participants were also informed that they could decline to answer any question that made them uncomfortable.

The study involved minimal anticipated risk because the data were collected through a structured questionnaire concerning participants' online shopping practices, awareness of digital marketing, and purchase decision-making. No questions were intentionally designed to require disclosure of highly sensitive personal information. Participants were informed that they could discontinue participation if they experienced discomfort or did not wish to answer questions.

To protect participants' privacy and confidentiality, the questionnaire did not request respondents' names or unnecessary personally identifying information. Completed questionnaires and electronic datasets were stored securely on password-protected devices and were accessible only to the researchers or authorized research personnel. Data were used solely for academic research purposes and were presented in aggregated form to prevent the identification of individual participants. The researchers will retain research records only for the period required by the institution and applicable research policies and will securely dispose of them thereafter.

The researchers also recognized the possibility of selection, self-report, social desirability, and common-method biases. Because quota sampling is a non-probability procedure, the researchers could not eliminate selection bias. To minimize its potential effect, the researchers followed the predetermined platform quotas and applied the same eligibility criteria to all potential participants. The researchers addressed self-report bias by providing standardized instructions, assuring participants of confidentiality, and allowing respondents to complete the questionnaire without pressure to provide responses. We used the same questionnaire and administration procedures for all respondents to promote measurement consistency. Common-method bias was recognized as a potential limitation because the principal variables were measured through the same self-administered questionnaire; therefore, the findings were interpreted within the limitations of the cross-sectional self-report design.

The researchers also maintained objectivity throughout data collection, analysis, and interpretation. The researchers specified statistical procedures before analysis, processed responses using established scoring procedures, and reported findings based on the results generated from the collected data rather than selectively reporting favorable or significant results. The researchers acknowledge, however, that these procedures minimize, but do not eliminate, potential sources of bias.

Results and Discussion

Level of Digital Marketing Awareness of Online Shoppers

Table 1 presents the level of digital marketing awareness among online shoppers. The respondents obtained an overall mean of 3.48 (SD = 0.258), interpreted as Very High. This finding indicates that the respondents reported a high level of awareness of various digital marketing practices encountered in online shopping environments. In particular, the results suggest that respondents were generally aware of how digital platforms use promotional messages, product information, social media content, mobile marketing, and other online marketing practices.

Table 1. *Level of Digital Marketing Awareness of Online Shoppers*

	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Descriptive Equivalent
1.	being aware of mobile marketing messages that disclose discounts and special offers through clickable links	3.54	.58	Very High
2.	being aware that price offers communicated through mobile marketing are clear and affordable	3.41	.55	Very High
3.	being aware when websites send marketing notifications to mobile device	3.43	.51	Very High
4.	being aware of new offers and promotions from websites frequently visit through mobile marketing messages	3.34	.57	Very High
5.	being aware of online content that provides relevant information about products plan to buy	3.50	.50	Very High
6.	being aware that online platforms allow to conveniently search, compare, and select products	3.53	.52	Very High
7.	being aware of product information and reviews available on YouTube and other online review platforms	3.51	.54	Very High
8.	being aware that blogs and online reviews provide links that lead directly to product pages	3.49	.54	Very High
9.	being aware of marketing activities conducted on social media platforms	3.49	.54	Very High
10.	being aware that products are promoted and explored through social media	3.50	.52	Very High
11.	being aware of advertisements displayed on social media platforms	3.55	.56	Very High
12.	being aware that online retailer websites provide product information accessible through social media	3.58	.52	Very High
13.	being aware of promotional emails sent by online retailers	3.37	.58	Very High
14.	being aware of email promotions from online retailers, particularly regarding electronic goods	3.42	.57	Very High
15.	being aware that emails from online retailers contain links to their websites	3.44	.56	Very High
16.	being aware that email messages from online retailers promote their products	3.37	.56	Very High
17.	knowing how online platforms encourage impulse buying through limited time offers	3.52	.61	Very High
18.	being aware of how promotional messages are timed to influence buying decisions	3.59	.55	Very High
19.	understanding how online platforms highlight popular or trending products	3.54	.52	Very High
20.	determining whether a digital advertisement is trustworthy	3.41	.55	Very High
	Overall	3.48	0.26	Very High

Among the 20 indicators, the highest-rated item was being aware of how promotional messages are timed to influence buying decisions, with a mean of 3.59 (SD = 0.55). This result suggests that respondents were particularly aware of the timing of promotional messages and time-sensitive promotional strategies. Such strategies may include limited-time offers, countdown promotions, and other forms of urgency-oriented marketing. This finding is consistent with Supriyanto et al. (2024) and Sun et al. (2024), who discussed the relevance of promotional strategies and digital marketing techniques in shaping consumers' responses in online environments. The second-highest-rated indicator was being aware that online retailer websites provide product information accessible through social media, with a mean of 3.58 (SD = 0.52). This indicates that respondents were also highly aware of the interconnected nature of online retail platforms and social media channels. This awareness may reflect consumers' familiarity with how product information is distributed across multiple digital touchpoints.

In contrast, the lowest-rated indicator was being aware of new offers and promotions from websites frequently visited through mobile marketing messages, with a mean of 3.34 (SD = 0.57). Although this remained within the Very High category, its comparatively lower mean suggests that respondents reported somewhat less awareness of promotional offers delivered through mobile marketing messages than of other digital marketing practices. One possible explanation is notification fatigue, wherein consumers encounter numerous digital notifications and may therefore pay less attention to individual promotional messages. However, this explanation should be regarded as a possible interpretation rather than a conclusion of the present study because notification fatigue was

not directly measured. Khairati et al. (2025) similarly discussed consumers' experiences with large volumes of digital notifications.

Overall, the findings indicate that respondents reported substantial awareness of digital marketing practices across mobile marketing, social media, online reviews, email marketing, and promotional strategies. The results are generally consistent with literature emphasizing consumers' increasing exposure to and recognition of persuasive digital content (Hudders et al., 2019; Feijoo et al., 2023). However, the findings should not be interpreted as evidence that respondents possessed advanced advertising literacy or persuasion knowledge in every situation. Awareness, recognition, and critical evaluation are related but conceptually distinct constructs. The present results primarily indicate the respondents' self-reported awareness of the digital marketing practices represented by the questionnaire items.

Level of Purchase Decision-Making of Online Shoppers

Table 2 shows that respondents obtained an overall mean of 3.53 (SD = 0.233) for purchase decision-making, interpreted as Very High. The result indicates that respondents reported frequently engaging in decision-making practices when purchasing products online. These practices included comparing brands, reading product reviews, considering product features, evaluating seller ratings, and considering price and quality.

Table 2. *Level of Purchase Decision-Making of Online Shoppers*

	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Descriptive Equivalent
1.	comparing different brands before deciding which product to buy	3.70	.48	Very High
2.	considering brand reputation when evaluating products	3.64	.50	Very High
3.	reading product reviews to compare options before purchasing	3.72	.45	Very High
4.	considering both price and quality when comparing brands	3.52	.52	Very High
5.	evaluating product features carefully before making a purchase decision	3.54	.52	Very High
6.	trusting well-known brands more than lesser-known brands when buying online	3.51	.50	Very High
7.	comparing seller ratings before choosing a product	3.49	.52	Very High
8.	considering warranty or return policies when comparing brands	3.52	.56	Very High
9.	buying a product frequently see advertised online.	3.46	.58	Very High
10.	encouraging to purchase when discounts or special offers are available	3.51	.50	Very High
11.	purchasing after seeing positive online reviews	3.56	.52	Very High
12.	planning purchases based on online promotions or campaigns	3.50	.52	Very High
13.	purchasing products that find through digital marketing advertisements	3.51	.54	Very High
14.	feeling motivated to buy when advertisements match interests	3.50	.54	Very High
15.	developing purchase plans after repeated exposure to digital advertisements	3.48	.54	Very High
16.	purchasing a product because saw it advertised online	3.39	.58	Very High
17.	buying products from brands discovered through digital marketing	3.48	.54	Very High
18.	feeling that digital advertisements influence online purchasing behavior	3.49	.56	Very High
19.	satisfying with the products purchased after seeing them advertised online	3.56	.54	Very High
20.	repurchasing from a brand found online if the quality is high	3.55	.52	Very High
	Overall	3.53	0.23	Very High

The highest-rated indicator was reading product reviews to compare options before purchasing, with a mean of 3.72 (SD = 0.451). This finding suggests that product reviews were an important information source respondents reported using when evaluating alternatives. Online reviews can provide consumers with information generated by other users and may help them evaluate product quality and reduce uncertainty. This finding is consistent with Peña-García et al. (2024), who emphasized the role of online reviews in consumers' purchase-related evaluations. Similarly, Kim and Kim (2022) reported that customer reviews can reduce uncertainty associated with online purchasing. The second-highest-rated indicator was comparing different brands before deciding which product to buy, with a mean of 3.70 (SD = 0.482). This result further indicates that respondents frequently reported comparing alternatives before purchasing. The findings suggest that respondents' purchase decision-making involved information search and evaluation rather than relying exclusively on a single digital marketing message.

The lowest-rated indicator was purchasing a product because they saw it advertised online, with a mean of 3.39 (SD = 0.584). Although this indicator remained Very High, its comparatively lower score suggests that exposure to an online advertisement alone was less strongly reported as a purchase-related practice than activities such as reading reviews and comparing products. This finding may indicate that respondents considered other sources of information alongside advertisements. However, the study did not directly measure the relative causal

influence of advertising, reviews, or other information sources; therefore, this interpretation should remain descriptive.

Overall, the results show that respondents reported frequent engagement in information-oriented purchase decision-making practices. The findings should not, however, be interpreted as proof that respondents were objectively rational consumers. Because the data came from self-reported Likert-scale responses, the results describe reported decision-making practices rather than objectively observed purchasing behavior. Nevertheless, the findings are consistent with research emphasizing the importance of online reviews, information evaluation, comparison, and other digital information sources in consumers' purchase decisions (Lim et al., 2022; Peña-García et al., 2024; Migkos et al., 2025).

Differences in Digital Marketing Awareness and Purchase Decision-Making when Analyzed by Buyer Type

The study examined whether digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making differed significantly among the four buyer-type groups: impulsive, hedonic, dissonance-reducing, and habitual buyer-type groups, as shown in Table 3. Each group included 100 respondents, for a total sample of 400 online shoppers. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine whether the mean levels of digital marketing awareness differed across the four buyer types. The analysis yielded $F(3, 396) = 1.43$, $p = .240$. Because the p-value exceeded the .05 level of significance, the result was not statistically significant. Thus, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This indicates that the observed mean differences in digital marketing awareness among the four buyer-type groups were not statistically significant in the present sample.

Similarly, the ANOVA for purchase decision-making produced $F(3, 396) = 1.69$, $p = .175$, which was also not statistically significant at the .05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected. The results indicate that mean differences in purchase decision-making across impulsive, hedonic, dissonance-reducing, and habitual buyer-type groups were not statistically significant.

Based on the reported F-values and degrees of freedom, the estimated eta-squared effect sizes are approximately $\eta^2 = .011$ for digital marketing awareness and $\eta^2 = .013$ for purchase decision-making, indicating small effects. These values suggest that only a small proportion of the variance in the respective outcomes was associated with differences among the four buyer-type groups.

The absence of statistically significant differences should not be interpreted as meaning the four buyer types are identical or that buyer type is unimportant. Rather, the findings indicate that the study did not obtain sufficient statistical evidence to conclude that the mean levels of digital marketing awareness or purchase decision-making differed across the four groups.

Table 3. *Difference in the Level of Digital Marketing Awareness and Purchase Decision-Making when Analyzed by Buyer Types*

Variable	Group	Mean Square	F-value	p-value	Decision on H_0
Digital Marketing Awareness	Between Groups	0.094	1.43	.240	Fail to reject H_0
	Within Groups	0.066			
Purchase Decision-Making	Between Groups	0.089	1.69	.175	Fail to reject H_0
	Within Groups	0.053			

Note. Significant at the .05 level of significance

One possible explanation is that online shoppers, regardless of their buyer-type characteristics, encounter many of the same digital marketing environments and platform features. Online marketplaces commonly provide consumers with product reviews, seller ratings, product comparisons, recommendations, promotional offers, and return policies. Such common features may provide similar information and decision-making opportunities to users across different buyer types. However, this explanation was not directly tested in the present study and should therefore be regarded as a possible interpretation rather than an established explanation.

The findings can be considered in relation to previous literature on digital consumer behavior. Boerman and Van Reijmersdal (2020) emphasized the importance of consumers' recognition and understanding of digital advertising practices, while research on online purchasing behavior has demonstrated the importance of platform

characteristics and digital information sources in consumers' decisions. However, the present study's nonsignificant group differences suggest that the four buyer-type classifications did not produce statistically distinguishable levels of digital marketing awareness or purchase decision-making within this sample. Accordingly, the results should not be interpreted as confirming that buyer type has no relationship with digital marketing awareness or purchase decision-making in the broader population. Instead, they indicate that this sample showed no statistically significant differences among the four buyer-type groups.

Relationship Between Digital Marketing Awareness and Purchase Decision-Making

Table 4. Relationship Between Digital Marketing Awareness and Purchase Decision-Making

Variable	Purchase Decision-Making		
	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>	Decision on H_0
Digital Marketing Awareness	0.61	<.001	Rejected

Note. Significant at the .05 level of significance

Table 4 presents the relationship between digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making. Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient revealed a statistically significant positive association between the two variables, $r = .61$, $p < .001$. Since the p -value was below the .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. The correlation coefficient of .61 indicates a positive association of moderate-to-strong magnitude between the two variables. In practical terms, respondents who reported higher levels of digital marketing awareness also tended to report higher levels of purchase decision-making as measured by the study instrument. Conversely, respondents reporting lower digital marketing awareness tended to report lower scores on the purchase decision-making measure.

Importantly, this result represents an association, not a causal effect. Because the study employed a non-experimental, cross-sectional correlational design, the findings do not establish that digital marketing awareness causes, improves, or directly influences purchase decision-making. Other factors not examined in the study may also contribute to both variables. Therefore, statements that digital marketing awareness makes consumers more informed, improves purchasing decisions, or “reduces” impulsive buying should not be made based solely on the present findings.

The finding can be interpreted cautiously through the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) of Petty and Cacioppo (1986). The model proposes that individuals may process persuasive information through different routes depending on factors such as their motivation and ability to process information. From this perspective, greater awareness of persuasive marketing practices may be consistent with greater attention to and evaluation of marketing information. However, the present study did not directly measure central-route processing, peripheral-route processing, motivation, or elaboration. Therefore, the result does not directly confirm the ELM. Rather, the significant association is compatible with one theoretical interpretation offered by the model. The finding is also consistent with studies suggesting that consumers' ability to recognize and understand digital marketing practices is relevant to their evaluation of online persuasive content (Boerman & Van Reijmersdal, 2020; Feijoo et al., 2023). Other recent studies have likewise emphasized the role of digital information evaluation in consumers' online purchase-related behavior. Nevertheless, the direction and mechanism of the relationship require further investigation using longitudinal, experimental, or structural models.

The significant correlation also warrants consideration of alternative explanations. For example, individuals who frequently shop online may also develop greater familiarity with digital marketing practices and more established purchase decision-making routines. Thus, the observed association could potentially reflect shared experience with online shopping rather than a direct effect of one variable on the other. Variables such as frequency of online shopping, age, education, digital experience, product category, income, trust, perceived risk, and platform usage may also contribute to the relationship. Overall, the results provide empirical evidence of a significant positive association between digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making among the respondents. The finding supports the relevance of examining consumers' awareness of digital marketing alongside their online purchase decision-making while recognizing that the correlational design does not permit causal conclusions. The result demonstrates that digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making are statistically associated in the present sample. However, interpret the correlation magnitude as an indication of the strength and direction of the association, not as evidence of causation.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

First, the 400 online shoppers included in the study reported a very high level of digital marketing awareness ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 0.258$) and a very high level of purchase decision-making ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 0.233$). Among the indicators of digital marketing awareness, awareness of how promotional messages are timed to influence buying decisions obtained the highest mean ($M = 3.59$), while awareness of new offers and promotions received through mobile marketing messages obtained the lowest mean ($M = 3.34$), although it remained within the very high category. For purchase decision-making, reading product reviews to compare options before purchasing received the highest mean ($M = 3.72$), whereas purchasing a product because it was seen in an online advertisement obtained the lowest mean ($M = 3.39$). These findings indicate that the respondents reported frequent awareness of digital marketing practices and frequent engagement in information-based purchasing activities, particularly product comparison and review evaluation.

Second, the study found no statistically significant differences in digital marketing awareness across the four buyer types—impulsive, hedonistic, dissonance-reducing, and habitual buyers, $F(3, 396) = 1.427$, $p = .240$. Similarly, purchase decision-making did not differ significantly across the four buyer types, $F(3, 396) = 1.687$, $p = .175$. Thus, the study failed to reject the null hypotheses concerning differences across buyer types. These findings indicate that, within the present sample, there was insufficient statistical evidence to conclude that the four buyer-type groups differed significantly in their reported levels of digital marketing awareness or purchase decision-making. The nonsignificant results should not be interpreted as evidence that the four buyer types are equivalent, that buyer characteristics are unimportant, or that buyer-type segmentation is ineffective. Rather, they indicate that this sample did not show statistically significant group differences.

Third, the study identified a statistically significant positive association between digital marketing awareness and purchase decision-making ($r = .61$, $p < .001$). This indicates that respondents with higher reported levels of digital marketing awareness also tended to report higher levels of purchase decision-making. The magnitude of the correlation suggests a substantial positive association between the two variables. However, because the study employed a non-experimental, cross-sectional, correlational design, the finding should be interpreted as an association rather than evidence that digital marketing awareness causes, improves, or facilitates purchase decision-making. The result therefore provides empirical evidence of a relationship between consumers' awareness of digital marketing practices and their reported purchasing decision-making within the sampled online shoppers.

Fourth, the findings have practical implications for stakeholders involved in online commerce. E-commerce businesses and digital marketing practitioners may consider providing clearer, more transparent, and easily understandable marketing information, particularly because respondents reported high engagement with product reviews, comparisons, and other information sources. Consumer education programs may also incorporate digital marketing awareness, advertising literacy, and critical evaluation of online promotional content to help consumers assess digital marketing messages. However, these implications should be viewed as practical considerations rather than evidence that increasing digital marketing awareness will necessarily change purchase decision-making.

Finally, interpret the findings within the study's limitations. The use of quota sampling, a non-probability sampling technique, limits the generalizability of the findings beyond the respondents included in the study. The study was also conducted in a single-city setting, which may limit the applicability of the findings to online shoppers in other Philippine locations. In addition, the cross-sectional design does not permit causal conclusions, and self-reported questionnaire data may be affected by recall, social desirability, response-style, and common-method biases. Classifying respondents as impulsive, hedonistic, dissonance-reducing, or habitual buyers may also have limitations because consumer characteristics can overlap and may not always be mutually exclusive in real purchasing situations. Future studies may address these limitations by using probability sampling where feasible, including respondents from multiple cities or regions, employing longitudinal or experimental designs, incorporating behavioral or transaction-based measures, and examining additional demographic and contextual variables such as age, income, frequency of online shopping, and platform usage.

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Author 1: proposal writing, data gathering
Author 2: conceptualization, data analysis

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no financial or personal conflicts of interest that could be perceived as biasing or influencing the findings presented in this study.

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