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Behavioural Insights into Digital Nudge Marketing: A Study of Consumer Behaviour and Digital Literacy in Healthy Food-Related Product Education Contexts

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Abstract: The jamu industry, the locally grown healthy beverage industry in Indonesia, embarks on the opportunity to support the consumer food lifestyle. This study examines a company producing Jamu products that uses a digital platform to market its offerings. Fluctuations in purchases have led the company to adopt a Nudge business strategy in its digital content marketing. This study surveys the role of digital nudges on consumers' purchase intentions and decisions regarding Jamu products. Nudging marketing proposes a selling technique by manipulating customer behaviour closer to the deal. This study applies a quantitative approach with a Partial Least Squares-based Structural Equation Modelling (SEM-PLS) method. Data collection techniques were conducted by surveying 124 customers of Jamu products manufactured by a Jamu company based in Bandung City. The results show that nudges do not directly influence purchasing decisions but significantly impact those decisions when mediated by purchase intention. This study contributes to digital marketing and consumer behaviour literature by providing insights into how nudging marketing can be strategically implemented to promote local and healthy food-related products in modern digital business environments.

Keywords: Consumer Behaviour; Content Marketing; Nudging Marketing; Technology E-marketing; Healthy Drinks

Introduction

The abundant agricultural sector makes Indonesia known as an agrarian country. Biopharmaceutical plants such as ginger, galangal, and cardamom hold significant potential with their diverse agricultural products. These plants are widely recognised for enhancing body resistance (Hakim, 2015). Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused changes in people's lifestyles, especially in maintaining health. Indonesians tend to consume healthy drinks made from natural ingredients compared to chemical-based drugs because they have essential compounds that produce non-toxic drug molecules, and their activity is more effective (Kusumo et al., 2021). One of these natural products is Jamu, a traditional Indonesian herbal drink.

With the rise in health awareness during the COVID-19 pandemic, the consumption of Jamu in Indonesia increased significantly. According to *Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan Kesehatan* (B2P2TOOT) (2020) 79% of respondents consumed Jamu to increase body resistance during the pandemic. This trend highlights Jamu's multifaceted benefits, encompassing health, economic growth, and trade opportunities. The

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export value of Jamu in 2021 increased by 10,96% compared to 2019 (Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS), 2021). Consequently, the Jamu industry has become a lucrative agribusiness sector, providing excellent opportunities for entrepreneurs.

This study took a case study of one prominent company (PT XYZ) leveraging this potential in Bandung City, which utilises natural resources to produce Jamu as a business venture. The company actively engages in online marketing activities to maximise its market reach, particularly on social media platforms like Instagram. Many companies use social media to promote and introduce their business to the public (Chen et al., 2022). Marketing activities via social media are not only adaptable to the market but are an essential part of the sales strategy (Kemp, 2021). A 2020 McKinsey survey revealed that online business growth had doubled within a year, and McKinsey projects that digital activities will boost the Indonesian economy by 10% by 2025 (McKinsey & Company, 2020).

Hootsuite's January 2023 survey identified Indonesia's five most-used social media platforms: WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and Telegram (Hootsuite (We are Social), 2023). PT XYZ capitalises on Instagram for its digital marketing efforts. However, despite using digital platforms, the company relies heavily on paid advertising, leading to fluctuating sales and higher marketing expenses. Therefore, a strategy is needed to encourage consumers to purchase Jamu produced by PT XYZ, namely applying Nudge in Digital Content Marketing. The concept of Nudge, popularised by recent behavioural studies (Sunstein, 2014, offers a behavioural approach to guide consumer decision-making subtly. This study examines the role of digital nudges on consumer buying intentions and buying decisions for healthy drink products called Jamu, made from natural biopharmaceutical plants.

In the digital age, where decisions are increasingly made online, nudges have become a strategy to influence consumer behaviour subtly. By integrating principles from behavioural economics and digital innovation, Nudge in marketing leverages technology to guide consumer choices effectively. Personalised, data-driven approaches further enhance marketers' ability to influence decision-making while aligning with consumer well-being (Sunstein, 2014). Nudge is an aspect of choice architecture that predictably influences behaviour without limiting options or significantly altering economic incentives (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008). This strategy is widely recognised for encouraging healthier lifestyles and improving decision-making in various domains, including marketing. Recent studies by Blom et al. (2021) and Münscher et al. (2016) highlight that Nudge effectively shifts consumer preferences, such as promoting healthier food choices. Similarly, Harbers et al. (2020) demonstrated that providing clear and relevant information significantly impacts purchasing behaviour, emphasising the role of Nudge in shaping consumer decisions in the digital landscape.

This study applies the frameworks of libertarian paternalism (Sunstein, 2014) and involvement theory (Liu et al., 2017). Libertarian paternalism argues that consumers can respond to marketing stimuli and make autonomous decisions without coercion or manipulation. Meanwhile, involvement theory explains that consumer engagement is a crucial predictor of attitudes and purchase behaviour, especially when content resonates with their interests (Liu et al., 2017). In digital content marketing, Nudge strategies may include addressing relatable issues, offering financial incentives such as free or bundled products, and providing clear, actionable information (Blom et al., 2021). To do so, this study begins by presenting conceptual background and framework (see Figure 1).

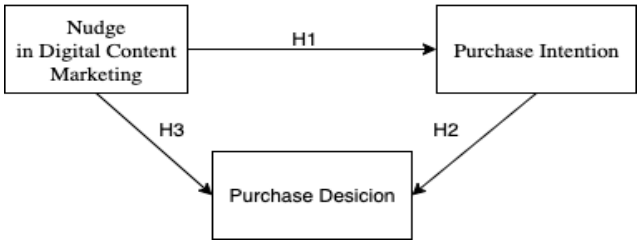

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Digital content marketing, as described by Kotler & Keller (2019), is a powerful tool for influencing consumer buying intentions by providing relevant information and fostering interaction. Studies by Abdjul & Saputra (2022) and Subasinghe & Weerasinghe (2020) confirm that digital content marketing significantly affects consumer purchase intentions, laying the foundation for the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Nudge in digital content marketing affects purchase intention.

Kotler & Keller (2019) said that buying interest is a consumer behaviour that arises because of reciprocity from consumers to buy a product or service. If consumers have a positive purchasing interest in a product or service, then the consumer is likely to make a purchase. This is also in line with research conducted by Solihin (2020), which states that purchasing interest impacts purchasing decisions. Hence, consumers with high purchasing interest are more likely to buy directly. This is supported by research by Hanapi & Sriyanto (2018), who argue that buying interest influences purchasing decisions. Thus, the hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: Consumer purchase intention affects purchase decisions

Businesspeople widely use digital content marketing to convey information about products and promotions to consumers through digital content marketing. Therefore, research conducted by Fadhilah & Saputra (2021) says digital content marketing influences purchasing decisions. Apart from that, research conducted by Supriatna et al. (2022) said the same thing, namely that digital content marketing influences purchasing decisions. Therefore, this research hypothesised:

Hypothesis 3: Nudge in digital content marketing affects purchase decisions

Previous studies discussed the mediating role between digital content marketing and purchase decisions. Chasanah (2022) stated that digital content marketing influences purchasing decisions mediated by purchasing interest. Thus, this research proposes the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4: Nudge in digital content marketing affects purchase decisions mediated by purchase intention.

Method

This research used a case study of PT. XYZ, located in Bandung City, is an enterprise dedicated to preserving traditional wellness heritage by crafting natural Jamu products and delivering them to consumers through modern digital platforms. The data collection was conducted from February to June 2024. This location was selected based on the company's alignment with the Nudge concept and the third Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), "Good Health and Well-Being". The company actively promotes a healthy and sustainable lifestyle, making it a suitable context for studying the impact of Nudge in digital content marketing.

Data were collected via an online questionnaire distributed through WhatsApp to respondents who met specific criteria, including familiarity with the company's products and digital marketing campaigns. The questionnaire consisted of 20 items on a 5-point Likert scale, focusing on purchase intention, decision-making, and perceptions of Nudge strategies in marketing. The questionnaire was validated through a pilot test with 30 respondents and revised based on feedback. Secondary data were obtained from academic journals, books, and credible online publications to support the analysis and interpretation of findings.

The collected data were analysed using the PLS-SEM method with the SmartPLS 3.0 software (SmartPLS GmbH, 2021). PLS-SEM was chosen for its ability to analyse complex models and its suitability for exploratory research. Sample size determination followed the guidelines proposed by Hair Jr et al. (2014), using Cohen's (1992) power table for R^2. With three arrows pointing to a construct and an R^2 minimum of 0,10, the required sample size was 124 respondents at a 0,05-significance level. This methodology ensures the reliability and validity of the data while addressing the research objectives to examine the influence of Nudge strategies in digital content marketing on purchase intentions and decisions.

Result and Discussion

An overview of the study participants is provided to contextualise the analysis and illustrate the audience targeted in the context of health food, which is related to digital nudge marketing tailored to this study. Table 1 shows the demographics of the respondents and their purchase behaviour.

Table 1. Demographics of the Respondent

	Items	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	83.87
	Male	16.13
Age	18 - 24 years old	3.24
	25 – 34 years old	83.87
	35 – 44 years old	7.25
	>45 years old	5.64
Revenue (IDR)	< 5.000.000	37.90
	5.000.000–10.000.000	42.75
	> 10.000.000	19.35
Product Type	Jamu	67.75
	Others	32.25
Frequency of Shopping for Health Products	< 5	92.75
	5 – 8	6.45
	> 8	0.80
Bundle Products Increase Shopping Interest	Yes	96.77
	No	3.22
Free Products Increase Shopping Interest	Yes	100
	No	0

Measurement Model Evaluation

There are four stages to test the outer model: indicator reliability, internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2019). Testing the reliability indicator can be seen from the outer loading value, with the minimum value of outer loading being above 0,708 (Hair et al., 2019). The measurement model was evaluated for reliability and validity to ensure the robustness of the constructs. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and the reliability coefficient. The results indicated that all constructs met the acceptable reliability thresholds of 0,70–0,90 (Hair et al., 2019). Specifically, Nudge in Digital Content Marketing achieved a Cronbach's alpha of 0,817 and a composite

reliability of 0,879, Purchase Intention showed a Cronbach's alpha of 0,886 and a composite reliability of 0,917, and Buying Decision had a Cronbach's alpha of 0,723 and a composite reliability of 0,43. These results confirm that the constructs exhibit good internal consistency.

Validity was tested through convergent and discriminant validity assessments. Convergent validity, measured by Average Variance Extracted (AVE), showed that all constructs exceeded the minimum threshold of 0,5. For example, Nudge in Digital Content Marketing recorded an AVE of 0,896, Purchase Intention achieved an AVE of 0,892, and Buying Decision obtained an AVE of 0,509. Discriminant validity was confirmed using the Fornell-Larcker Criterion and the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT). All HTMT values were below the critical threshold of 0.9, indicating adequate discriminant validity among the constructs.

Collinearity diagnostics were conducted by examining the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values, which all fell below the acceptable threshold of 3. For instance, Indicator X.1 had a VIF value of 1,381, Indicator Y.1 recorded a VIF of 1,552, and Indicator Z.1 showed a VIF of 1,541. These results confirm the absence of multicollinearity issues within the indicators.

Structural Model Evaluation

R-squared value (R^2) in a study using PLS-SEM indicates the quality of a structural model (Ghozali, 2014). Hair et al. (2017) explain that the R^2 is grouped into three: a strong model with a value of 0,75, a moderate model with a value of 0,5, and a weak model with a value of 0,25.

Table 2. R-Square (R^2)

	R-Square (R^2)
Buying Decision	0.554
Purchase Intention	0.573

Sources: Data Processed (2024)

Based on the analysis results in Table 2, the purchasing decision variable has an R2 of 0,554, meaning that 55,4% of the purchasing decision variable can be explained by the purchase interest and Nudge variables in digital content marketing, while variables outside the model explain 44,6%. This variable is also grouped into a moderate model because it has a value of 0,554. Furthermore, the purchase interest variable has an R^2 of 0,573, which means that 57,3% of the purchase interest variable can be explained by the Nudge variable in digital content marketing, while variables outside the model explain 42,7%. Like the purchasing decision variable, the purchasing interest variable is grouped into a moderate model because it has a value of 0,573. Path Coefficient is used to determine and evaluate possible causality or cause-effect relationships between statistical variables within a structural model framework (Hair et al., 2017). The cause-and-effect relationship is stronger if the Path Coefficient value is 0 to +1. Conversely, if the Path Coefficient value is from -1 to 0, the cause-and-effect relationship tends to be negative.

PLSpredict has a function to validate the strength of the PLS prediction test. The power of the prediction test can be seen by comparing it with the basic linear regression (LM) model (see Table 3). The PLS model will be said to have good predictive power if the RMSE (Root Mean Square Error) and MAE (Mean Absolute Error) of the PLS model are lower than those of the linear regression model (Hair et al., 2019). If all the PLS model measurement items have RMSE (Root Mean Square Error) and MAE (Mean Absolute Error) values lower than the linear regression values, then the PLS model has high predictive power. However, if it is only large, it has medium predictive power (Hair et al., 2019). It is known that from nine observations of RMSE and MAE values, five PLS model measurement items have lower RMSE and MAE values than the LM. Therefore, the PLS model in this study has medium predictive power.

Table 3. PLSpredict

Item	PLS		LM	
	RMSE	MAE	RMSE	MAE
Making a buying decision after comparing with other products (Y.1)	905,935	767,231	908,940	773,936
Making a buying decision because of a consumption habit (Y.2)	807,652	638,951	842,081	656,194
Recommending the product to others (Y.3)	865,846	699,276	892,234	721,168
Buying the product because satisfied with previous purchase (Y.4)	880,343	718,965	874,860	715,587
Information searching (Z.1)	860,810	675,484	846,357	647,862
Buying consideration (Z.2)	811,668	644,754	813,656	659,673
Interest to try (Z.3)	782,882	622,715	753,071	597,344
Willing to know the product (Z.4)	839,067	653,345	878,529	676,862
Willing to buy the product (Z.5)	847,608	673,567	832,741	659,136

Sources: Data Processed (2024)

Path Coefficient is used to determine and evaluate possible causality relationships between statistical

variables within a structural model framework (Hair et al., 2017). If the value of the Path Coefficient is in the range of 0 to +1, then the causal relationship is getting stronger; on the contrary, if the value of the Path Coefficient is in the range of -1 to 0, the causal relationship tends to be negative. The analysis results in Table 4 show that the value of the path coefficient nudge in digital content marketing on purchase decisions is positive, although low, 0.056. Likewise, the path coefficient value of purchase intention through purchase decisions and a nudge in digital content marketing through purchase intention has a positive value and is close to +1. This explains that the causality relationship between the two is relatively high. According to Hair et al. (2017), the effect Size (f^2) or f-square shows the magnitude of the influence of endogenous variables on exogenous variables. Value of Effect Size (f^2) or f-square is grouped into three: low effects with values between 0,02 to 0,15, medium effects with values between 0,15 to 0,35, and high effects with values above 0,35 (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 4. Path Coefficient and F-square

	Path Coefficient	f-Square (f^2)
A nudge in Digital Content Marketing → Purchase Intention	0.757	1.344
A Nudge in Digital Content Marketing → Purchase Decision	0.056	0.003
Purchase Intention → Purchase Decision	0.701	0.470

Sources: Data Processed (2024)

The analysis results in Table 4 show that purchase intention through purchase decisions and nudges in digital content marketing through purchase intention has an F-squared (f^2) > 0.35. This shows that both are included in the high-effect group. Unlike before, a variable nudge in digital content marketing through purchase decisions has a very low f-squared and is not even included in the low group. Therefore, the influence between these variables is indicated to be rejected, so a mediating variable is needed between the two. A mediation test is required to determine the relationship and influence of mediated variables. The mediation test will use the effect size, upsilon (v). Interpretation of values effect size upsilon (v) refers to Cohen's recommendation in Ogbeibu et al. (2020), where mediation is grouped into three, namely: high mediation influence with a value of 0,175, medium mediation influence with a value of 0,075, and low mediation influence with a value of 0,01.

There are calculations to find out the value of the effect size, upsilon (v):

$$v = \beta^2 MX \beta^2 YM.X$$
$$v = (0{,}757)^2 (0{,}701)^2$$
$$v = (0{,}573)(0{,}491)$$
$$v = 0{,}281$$

The results of the calculations, effect size upsilon (v) above, show that the buying interest variable as a mediator is included in high mediation because it has a value > 0,175. The significance of the influence between variables can be evaluated using the method of bootstrapping. Based on the results of the hypothesis testing analysis in Table 5, it can be concluded that Nudge in Digital Content Marketing through Purchase Intention (H_1) has a p-value of 0,000. When p-value < 0,05, the hypothesis is accepted. Likewise, with the T-statistic value, the hypothesis is accepted if it has a value > 1,96. Therefore, Nudge in Digital Content Marketing on Purchase Intention has a significant influence and is grouped into high effect because it has the value of f-square > 0,35. Also, H_1 has a path coefficient value of 0,701, meaning it has a strong causality relationship. The evaluation of the structural model and the variance explained for each model is given in Figure 2.

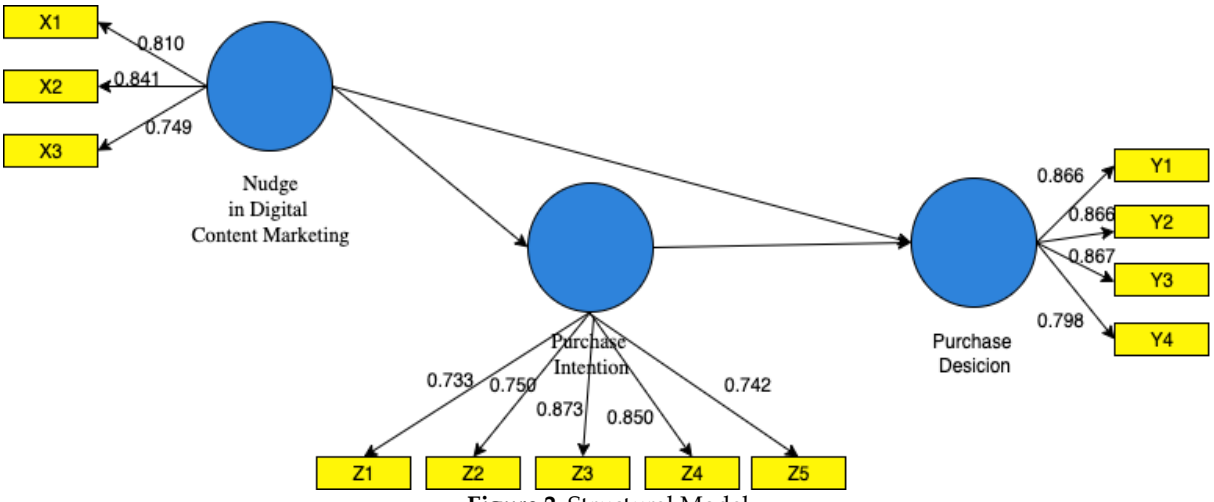

Figure 2. Structural Model

Table 5. Hypothesis Test (Direct Effect)

	Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	P-Value	f-square	T-Statistic	Results
H_1	A nudge in Digital Content Marketing → Purchase Intention	0.701	0.000	1.344	25.167	Accepted
H_2	Purchase Intention → Purchase Decision	0.757	0.000	0.470	7.104	Accepted
H_3	A Nudge in Digital Content Marketing → Purchase Decision	0.056	0.557	0.003	0.539	Declined

Sources: Data Processed, 2024

The second hypothesis (H_2) shows that purchase intention through purchase decisions has a p-value of 0,000, meaning the hypothesis is accepted (p-value < 0,05). Likewise, with the T-statistic value, the hypothesis is accepted if it has a value > 1,96. Therefore, purchase intention through purchase decisions has a significant influence and is grouped as high impact because it has a value of f-squared> 0,35. Additionally, H_2 has a value path coefficient of 0,757, which means it has a strong causality relationship.

Table 6. Hypothesis Test (Indirect effect)

	Hypothesis	P-Value	T-Statistic	Upsilon (v)	Results
H_4	Nudge in Digital Content Marketing → Purchase Intention → Purchase Decision	0.000	6.677	0.281	Accepted

Sources: Data Processed (2024)

Furthermore, it is known that Nudges in Digital Content Marketing on Purchasing Decisions (H_3) have a p-value of 0,557, where this value is > 0,05. Plus, the value path coefficient and f-square are low and do not prove that there is a significant influence between these two variables. These results align with research by Mukarromah et al. (2022), who say that the influence of digital content marketing is not directly on purchase decisions but rather through mediating variables. So, it is necessary to have a mediating variable, namely, purchase intention. After doing the calculations effect size upsilon (v), it is known that the value of the purchase intention variable is included in high mediation because it has a value > 0,175. Additionally, testing the indirect effect in Table 6 explains that the Hypothesis Nudge in Digital Content Marketing on Purchasing Decisions through Purchase Intention has an actual p-value of 0,000. When the p-value <0,05 means the hypothesis is accepted or has a significant influence.

Discussion

This study contributes to the growing body of literature on applying Nudge in digital marketing by demonstrating its indirect influence on purchase decisions through the mediating role of purchase intention. The findings align with Libertarian Paternalism (Sunstein, 2014), which posits that Nudges predict consumer behaviour without restricting freedom of choice. By confirming that Nudges influence psychological states like purchase intention rather than directly impacting decisions, the study underscores the importance of mediating variables in consumer behaviour models. Additionally, the results support the involvement theory (Zaichkowsky, 1985) by highlighting that high levels of consumer engagement—fostered through tailored, interactive content—enhance purchase intention and, consequently, decisions. This mediation effect aligns with findings by Münscher et al. (2016), who argue that the success of choice architecture interventions like Nudges depends on the activation of consumer cognitive involvement. Furthermore, the study strengthens the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) Model (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974), where Nudges (stimuli) influence internal psychological states (organisms) like intention, which then lead to behavioural responses (purchasing decisions). This theoretical foundation opens avenues for future research to investigate additional mediators such as trust or perceived value in the context of Nudge strategies.

From a practical perspective, the findings provide actionable insights for marketers aiming to optimise the effectiveness of digital content marketing strategies. The strong indirect influence of Nudges on purchase intention highlights the need for campaigns that prioritise engaging consumers and fostering interest. Subasinghe & Weerasinghe (2020), suggested that personalised and interactive content tailored to address consumer needs, such as health-focused messaging, can significantly enhance consumer engagement. Moreover, the study underscores the importance of designing digital Nudges that address consumer pain points and preferences without appearing coercive, as Harbers et al. (2020) emphasised. For instance, marketers can implement interactive tools like recommendation engines or dynamic content to build stronger consumer connections. The findings also suggest that while

Nudges alone may not directly drive purchases, their ability to influence intentions can lead to higher conversion rates when combined with strategies that simplify decision-making, such as bundling or limited-time offers (Blom et al., 2021). Lastly, the implications for companies like PT are as follows: XYZ is clear: investing in customer involvement and leveraging targeted Nudge strategies can enhance consumer interest and ultimately improve sales performance.

The findings of this study open several avenues for future research to explore further the role of Nudge in digital content marketing and its influence on consumer behaviour. While this study provides a strong foundation, future research can build upon its limitations and explore additional aspects to deepen the understanding of this topic. Future research could investigate the application of Nudge in other product categories, such as sustainable or eco-friendly products, luxury goods, or subscription-based services. This would provide insights into whether the effectiveness of Nudge strategies varies across different industries and consumer segments. For instance, health-focused products like organic food or fitness-related services may benefit from targeted Nudges emphasising long-term well-being and immediate incentives (Blom et al., 2021).

While this study identifies purchase intention as a mediating variable, future research could explore other psychological mediators, such as trust, perceived value, or emotional connection**.** Understanding how these variables interact with Nudge strategies would offer a more comprehensive model of consumer behaviour. For example, examining trust as a mediator could help determine how transparency and ethical marketing practices enhance the effectiveness of Nudges in building long-term consumer loyalty (Harbers et al., 2020; Kaptein & Eckles, 2021).

Given the evolving digital landscape, future research could compare the effectiveness of Nudge strategies across different digital platforms, such as social media, e-commerce websites, and mobile applications. Platforms like TikTok and Instagram, which are highly visual and interactive, may require distinct approaches compared to more transactional platforms like Amazon or Shopee. This comparison could provide valuable insights into tailoring Nudge strategies for specific platforms (Matz et al., 2017). This study's sample was limited in size and scope, focusing on a particular context. Future research should include larger and more diverse samples to increase generalizability. Including participants from various demographic groups, cultural backgrounds, and geographic regions could reveal how contextual factors influence the effectiveness of Nudge strategies in digital content marketing (C. R. Sunstein et al., 2022)

The long-term impact of Nudge strategies on consumer behaviour remains underexplored. Future research could adopt a longitudinal approach to assess whether Nudges create sustained changes in purchase intentions and decisions over time. For instance, repeated exposure to Nudges might lead to habit formation, increasing the likelihood of repeat purchases and customer retention (Chaudhuri et al., 2022). With the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning, future research could examine how advanced technologies enhance the personalisation and precision of Nudge strategies. AI-driven recommendation systems, dynamic pricing models, or chatbot interactions could amplify the effectiveness of Nudges by providing real-time, contextually relevant suggestions to consumers (Kaplan et al., 2023). For example, personalised Nudges powered by AI could further optimise engagement and decision-making.

While nudges are designed to guide behaviour subtly, future research could delve into the ethical considerations of their use in digital marketing. Investigating consumer perceptions of transparency and manipulation in Nudge strategies would help ensure these practices align with consumer trust and satisfaction. For example, understanding the boundary between persuasive marketing and intrusive manipulation would be crucial for responsible implementation (Araujo et al., 2023).

Implication

Theoretically, this study advances understanding of how Nudge strategies influence consumer behaviour by revealing buying interest as a pivotal mediating mechanism. It extends Libertarian Paternalism and Involvement Theory to digital marketing, showing that subtle cues can drive intention formation before purchase. It also broadens Nudge's relevance to health-oriented contexts where marketing and consumer education intersect. By empirically demonstrating the mediating role of buying interest, the study offers a more nuanced explanation of the psychological mechanisms through which Nudge exerts its influence in digital food marketing contexts. This finding advance existing behavioural and marketing theories, particularly Libertarian Paternalism and Involvement Theory, by evidencing how subtle cues can stimulate consumer engagement and intention formation before actual purchasing behaviour occurs.

This study also contributes to the theoretical discourse on consumer education and digital literacy by demonstrating how Nudge strategies can function as educational stimuli when embedded in digital marketing for health-related products. The mediating role of buying interest illustrates how consumers' cognitive engagement and knowledge acquisition

precede actual behaviour change, supporting the view that literacy and awareness are critical precursors to informed purchasing. By linking behavioural economics principles with digital literacy frameworks, the findings expand the theoretical boundary of Nudge beyond persuasion, positioning it as a tool for fostering critical consumer competencies in evaluating product information and making value-aligned choices. Furthermore, by situating the analysis within the context of healthy food–related product education, the study extends the applicability of Nudge theory to domains that integrate marketing and public well-being, illustrating its potential as both a persuasive and educational tool. In doing so, it provides a theoretical foundation for future research exploring the intersection of consumer behaviour, digital literacy, and health-oriented marketing strategies.

From a practical perspective, the study offers valuable guidance for marketers. Nudge strategies are most effective when combined with personalised, interactive content that addresses consumer problems and builds interest. Clear, targeted messaging and initiatives like recommendations, bundles, or free trials can strengthen customer engagement and improve conversion rates. Beyond immediate marketing goals, the findings suggest Nudge can be integrated into consumer education initiatives, particularly through digital channels. Educational strategies—such as interactive tutorials, gamified learning content, and knowledge-based campaigns—can enhance buying interest and build consumers' capacity to critically evaluate product claims, compare alternatives, and make informed, value-aligned decisions. In the context of healthy food–related products, these approaches can empower consumers to make choices that support their health goals while fostering digital literacy and awareness. By embedding Nudge elements within these educational efforts, marketers and educators can drive purchase behaviour, strengthen long-term consumer knowledge, and cultivate sustainable, informed consumer communities.

Conclusion

This study examined the role of Nudge in digital content marketing and its influence on purchase decisions, with buying interest as a mediating variable. Building on prior studies that emphasise the mediating role of intention in behavioural change, the findings confirm that Nudge influences purchase decisions most effectively when it first cultivates consumer intention, highlighting the strategic importance of approaches that spark curiosity, stimulate involvement, and sustain engagement. This reinforces the view that digital Nudge is not merely a persuasive tool, but a mechanism for guiding consumers toward reflective and informed choices, particularly in contexts involving healthy food–related products where education and awareness are critical. The results underscore the importance of fostering customer engagement and interest to drive purchasing behaviour, aligning with Libertarian Paternalism and Involvement Theory, and extending their application into digital literacy and consumer education. These insights offer theoretical enrichment by deepening the understanding of the psychological pathways through which Nudge operates and practical guidance for designing digital marketing and educational strategies to enhance consumer well-being while promoting sustainable market adoption.

Despite these contributions, the study is limited to a specific context and sample, affecting its generalizability. Future research should explore Nudge applications across diverse product categories and include additional variables like trust and perceived value. Expanding the sample size and diversity could enhance understanding of Nudge's broader impact. In conclusion, Nudge in digital content marketing indirectly influences consumer behaviour through buying interest. By addressing customer needs and fostering engagement, marketers can effectively guide purchasing decisions, making Nudge a valuable tool in digital strategies.

Author Contributions

Hesty Nurul Utami conceptualised the main research idea, designed the study framework, developed the methodology, and led the writing of the original manuscript draft. Sulistyodewi Nur Wiyono conducted the core investigation, coordinated fieldwork and contributed to data interpretation. Raihana contributed to the design of managed project administration, research instruments, and data analysis and validated the data. Dini Turipanam Alamanda provided general supervision during the research process and supported the preparation of visual materials. Dwi Novanda Sari contributed to the initial data organisation and manuscript finalisation. Koblarp Chandrasapth contributed to and assisted in the critical review of the manuscript.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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