

**DIGITAL MARKETING DURING THE COVID-19  
PANDEMIC:  
A FIELD STUDY IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR**

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**ISIK UNIVERSITY  
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## **DEDICATION**

Dedicated to my Parents, who sent me on the path towards intellectual pursuit and whose prayers efforts are great source of strength to me in every noble venture & dedicated to my Honorable teachers, loving brother and Sisters who encourage me and took time out to help me in every possible manner.

# **DIGITAL MARKETING DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A FIELD STUDY IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR**

## **ABSTRACT**

Using the interactivity theory of marketing, the major goal of this research was to look into the effects of digital marketing elements (trendiness, interactivity, and attractiveness) on the performance of higher education institutions via the moderating function of online trust. The characteristics of digital marketing that were considered in this research were trendiness of services, digital marketing interaction, and attitude toward advertising. Using email and a self-administered questionnaire, data were gathered for this exploratory investigation. A total of 360 students from Azerbaijan's universities took part in the survey. SPSS 25 and Smart PLS 3 were used for data analysis. Students' performance at higher education institutions improves when they use fashionable and participatory digital marketing, according to the research. Academic achievement at universities has been shown to be significantly improved when students are exposed to engaging digital marketing campaigns. In the meanwhile, the link between university performance and internet trust is greatly moderated. With authorization, customers have the ability to regulate the flow of information and customize the communications they receive. Managers, on the other hand, profit greatly from co-creative projects. However, if the consumer considers the communications obtrusive, the efforts are for nothing.

**Keywords:** attractive digital marketing, interactivity of digital marketing, trendiness, performance of higher educational institutions, online trust.

# COVID-19 PANDEMİSİ SIRASINDA DİJİTAL PAZARLAMA: EĞİTİM SEKTÖRÜNDE BİR SAHA ÇALIŞMASI

## ÖZET

Pazarlamanın etkileşim teorisini kullanarak, bu araştırmanın temel amacı, çevrimiçi güvenin düzenleyici işlevi aracılığıyla dijital pazarlama öğelerinin (trendlilik, etkileşim ve çekicilik) yükseköğretim kurumlarının performansı üzerindeki etkilerini incelemektir. Bu çalışmada dikkate alınan dijital pazarlamanın özellikleri, hizmetlerdeki eğilimler, dijital pazarlama etkileşimi ve reklama yönelik tutumdur. E-posta ve kendi kendine uygulanan bir anket kullanılarak, bu keşif araştırması için veriler toplandı. Ankete Azerbaycan üniversitelerinden toplam 360 öğrenci katıldı. Veri analizi için SPSS 25 ve Smart PLS 3 kullanıldı. Araştırmaya göre, öğrencilerin yükseköğretim kurumlarındaki performansı, güncel akımlara uygun ve katılımcı dijital pazarlama kullandıklarında artmaktadır. Üniversitelerdeki akademik başarının, öğrenciler ilgi çekici dijital pazarlama kampanyalarına maruz kaldıklarında önemli ölçüde arttığı gösterilmiştir. Bu arada, üniversite performansı ile internet güveni arasındaki bağlantı büyük ölçüde yönetilmektedir. Yetkilendirme ile müşteriler, bilgi akışını düzenleme ve aldıkları iletişimlerini özelleştirme olanağına sahiptir. Öte yandan yöneticiler, ortak yaratıcı projelerden büyük ölçüde yararlanır. Bununla birlikte, tüketici iletişimi rahatsız edici buluyorsa, çabalar boşunadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** çekici dijital pazarlama, dijital pazarlamanın etkileşimi, trend olma, yükseköğretim kurumlarının performansı, çevrimiçi güven.

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **1.INTRODUCTION**

In the introductory chapter the author discusses the impact of digital marketing on higher educational institutions performance during COVID-19. The author outlines the main problem statement, research objectives and states Research gap as well as research questions.

### **1.1 Research Background**

COVID-19, has a devastating effect on all aspects of human existence throughout the globe. In response to the COVID-19 epidemic, the World Health Organization (2020a) imposed extensive social isolation as a precaution. This unique coronavirus, in terms of social distance, prompted all businesses to conduct their company cautiously and forced millions of workers to work from home. Short-term challenges for retailers and brands include health and safety, supply chain concerns, labor shortages, cash flow issues, customer demand, and issues with sales and marketing (Donthu and Gustafsson 2020). Statistics reveal that 90% of hotel rooms are unoccupied due to a decline in the tourism industry's normal operations (Asmelash & cooper 2020). In the airline industry, 90% of the workforce has been laid off, and in 2020 tourist destinations were expected to make fewer profit (Donthu and Gustafsson 2020).

People's buying habits have changed as a result of being confined to their houses during the pandemic. Kim and Chao (2019) observed that 46 percent of respondents intend to decrease their spending during the pandemic, even while demand for some categories, such as food and household products, surged in importance. The nature of the

pandemic scenario has also influenced the business sector to adapt its company strategy and corporate structure. Businesses are migrating to e-commerce or online platforms in an effort to adapt to the digital revolution. COVID-19 has spurred a fivefold increase in internet-based sales and a 16 percent increase in online traffic (Kim and Chao 2019). One of the greatest ways for their clients to engage with their prospective consumers is via digital marketing, and 34% of digital firms report that their clients have raised the amount they spend on digital marketing (Bauer and Lasinger 2014).

The COVID-19 epidemic had a significant influence on the economy and business sector (Prihadini, Nurbaity, and Rachmadi 2020), Global commerce has been significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic during the economic crisis because to the increased expenses of trade, the interruption of products, disturbance of personal and professional travel, non-trade policies and the degree of uncertainty (Rahmanov, Mursalov, and Rosokhata 2021). According to the (Iyke 2020) COVID-19 pandemic had a devastating effect on the world economy because of its rapid and lethal spread (Gil-Alana and Claudio-Quiroga 2020). Due to increased social isolation and repression, corporate leaders have had to scramble to come up with innovative marketing methods in a short period. In today's digital age, the majority of customer interaction takes place on social media, thus it's imperative that marketing plans updated.

Digital marketing is a new approach to generate sales without contacting people face-to-face through online channels. This approach is carried out by aiming to address the emotional characteristics of customers and associate brands. A customized marketing strategy is capable of forming strong alliances and establishing personal interactions with customers. Meanwhile, businesses are advised to improve their social media, beginning with developing fascinating material both in terms of graphics and relevant product descriptions, leveraging the website to offer more extensive company information, and maximizing sales via marketplaces and e-commerce in order to grow markets and build loyal customers.

International business faces both opportunities and threats as a result of globalization. Increasing globalization, privatization, and economic liberalization are all necessary for global economic progress (Luo et al., 2010). Furthermore, economic development is dependent on the most efficient use of natural resources, MONETORY

INVESTMENT, labor input, technology used in manufacturing, and the degree of consumer demand. The COVID-19 virus is responsible for a new ailment that is now affecting individuals throughout the world, especially in impoverished nations. The COVID-19 pandemic is one of the world's most significant health threats, and its emergence could not have been predicted in recent years. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that coronavirus, which causes heart disease, is irresistible and hazardous illness. This epidemic is spreading rapidly in the United States, therefore measures have been put in place to slow its spread throughout the globe (Fernandez and Shaw 2020). Many people have been impacted by the recent coronavirus outbreaks. As a result of COVID-19, businesses throughout the globe are able to demand millions of dollars from workers who telecommute because of the favorable distance circumstances (Abiad, Arao, and Dagli 2020).

There was an immediate rise in market activity after the first lockdown was imposed. Essential products were in plenty at their lowest point in the supply chain. There were shortages of face masks and disinfectants at medical stores during the first stages of lockdown. As a consequence, critical and medicinal commodities were illegally sold and distributed. Each and every one of us must play a role in the battle against sickness. Maintain a minimum distance of one meter between individuals to break the COVID-19 link (Hemmer et al., 2021). We must all do our part in preventing sickness from spreading further. Government-issued instructions for disease control must be followed by all citizens and consumers alike. All consumers must follow the medical team's COVID-19 care guidelines, which are necessary and mandatory.

Essential supplies were purchased and stockpiled on the market when lockdown was announced. COVID-19 requires the use of social distancing ideas in higher education learning activities. Several prominent software programs for information technology may be used to conduct online education (Abdillah et al., 2021). Many individuals died and others were afflicted during the coronavirus epidemic. As a result of the extreme measures adopted by governments all over the globe (such as travel restrictions, halting all sporting, social, and economic activities as well as quarantines, social distance, etc.), the virus continues to spread (Benreguia, Moumen, and Merzoug

2020). In order to punish those who spread bogus information, the law has to be used. Consumption patterns and market conditions are both impacted by the COVID-19 illness.

The term "socially responsible marketing" has gained a lot of traction recently as the economy has suffered. Studies of customer behaviour in the digital world are the focus of (Rosokhata et al., 2020). Numerous scientists have been looking at how health care affects both the economy and consumer behaviour. Education sector, are cutting the markup on the product, i.e., its ultimate (retail) value is lower because of the economic crisis and decreased demand. According to (Bortolotti, Boscari, and Danese 2015), there are issues with customer behaviour in the digital world because of COVID-19. Despite the significance of these investigations, the scientific significance of modifying consumer behaviour during quarantine remains significant.

The digital age has the potential to be a key period for all human activities that support business operations. Increasing digital marketing expenditures and smartphone sales that allow for quick service may be influenced by this indication (Dave Chaffey, Smith, and Smith 2013). There are individuals who are aware and finally modify their purchasing habits because of this awareness. Customers' behavior changes at a faster pace when observed in context of COVID-19 like they prefer to make buying decisions online instead of physical purchase (Schwarzl and Grabowska 2015).

Additionally, the digital marketing system includes educational services such as private institutions, which are now competing for new students in a highly competitive marketplace. Digital marketing research has been undertaken by a large number of academics during the last several years. One of them is Yuliana (2000), who studies the impact of social media on the competitiveness between seller and another of private sector. An investigation of how social media affects sales competitiveness was the goal of this research project. Only qualitative descriptive analysis was performed in this study.

It also employs qualitative descriptive analysis, income analysis, and comparison analysis when discussing the usage of social media to improve profitability (Roostita et al., 2011). Using a qualitative descriptive technique, this study examines the interaction between the researchers and the topic of their study, Facebook, as an online corporate communication medium. The author of this study relies on theories of marketing communication and technological determinism in his investigation. Pringsewu had an

issue in that many farmers had little knowledge of internet technologies, such as online marketing and sales, according to the findings.

University presidents and deans are trying to come up with new methods to educate and learn as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. The use of open communication platforms like Google Classroom and Zoom has been mandated by a number of Azerbaijani colleges. Using Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube to engage with students is a common practice in educational institutions and among staff members. The usage of social networking sites (SNSs) like Facebook and WhatsApp by universities' employees to communicate with students has increased in recent years. As a consequence of the COVID-19 programme, students and teachers in developing countries are now compelled to communicate virtually for the first time. In the absence of an online learning management system, educational institutions may utilize social media to communicate with students and promote online learning opportunities (Sobaih and Moustafa 2016). Online learning (OLE) may be improved by incorporating students' and faculty's use of social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn (Awidi, Paynter, and Vujosevic 2019). Al-Aufi and Fulton (2014) found that social media may be used to enhance and expand students' educational experiences via a variety of methods, such as providing students with more information and resources. Social media is now being used in public institutions that historically depended on in-class communication to sustain formal academic communication before the worldwide pandemic of COVID-19, rather than learning management systems (LMS) (Bumblauskas and Vyas 2021). Formal academic communication is defined in this research as using social media only for academic purposes such as teaching and learning, student help, building an online community, and programme marketing and promotion. Specifically, the research looks on how instructors and students communicate in the classroom using various social media platforms.

## **1.2 Azerbaijan Higher education**

Azerbaijan's government has also taken steps to prevent the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) in education institutions. Education-related activities in Azerbaijan were suspended on March 2 by the decision of the Azerbaijani Cabinet of Ministers'



operational headquarters (2020). The novel coronavirus pushed institutions to go online as a consequence. The Ministry of Education has provided numerous sorts of distant education in an effort to ease part of the problem. TV lessons called "Lesson Time" began on state television (Medeniyyet channel) on March 11. The lessons primarily cover all courses and briefly describe the contents of the lessons (Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan, 2020, March 11). Additional 1621 video lectures have been posted on the portal of Education's Ministry video.edu.az site that includes Khan Academy classes as well as 3D animated films. Classes based on the national curriculum have been developed with the help of local and foreign professors. A project called "Virtual School" was announced on April 2 by the Ministry of Education to assist TV classes by ensuring that distant education is interactive and expanding the possibilities for online teaching (Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan, 2020, March 31). On April 1, the Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan began offering free online courses using the "Microsoft Teams" platform, which was developed specifically for that purpose.

Teachers may use the platform to conduct online education mostly via video interactions. Utilize interactive features, arrange teacher-student dialogues, upload different lesson materials (bigger ones as well), organize online classes using a calendar tool to set group work, use an evaluation function and more (Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan, 2020, April 1). Advertising programs (promotions), e-mail marketing, and customer trust are all being examined in this study in order to better understand how website visitors process advertising information. Observation, interview (interview), and a review of published research are all viable options for gathering data. Descriptive qualitative analysis is used in this study.

### **1.3 Purpose of this Research**

The purpose of this research was to education sector have adapted their digital marketing strategies in response to the epidemic digital media tools are used by the higher education sector during COVID 19 to interact with the students. The digital transformation, its management, and the retention for future development are all things we're trying to investigate at higher education institute. These findings will help us better understand how education sector is coping with pandemic-related marketing problems

by implementing digital transformations, as well as how the education sector is sustaining relationships with its consumers as a result of these changes. This study's goal will be achieved by the usage of the following research questions.

#### **1.4 Problem Statement**

Digital marketing in the education sector is the focus of this research, which also examines how the Covid-19 epidemic affects it, as well as what the future holds for digital marketing in the wake of the pandemic. What challenges do they have when using digital marketing, and how do they succeed in attracting students as a result. It is one of the most important environmental issues in modern marketing history, and it might have a huge influence on the principles of marketing. As a result of extensive lockdowns and social distance limitations, Covid-19's short-term influence was immediately noticeable. Customers' increasing desire to have a say at all stages of the business process has changed how marketers function and affected marketing techniques at the strategic and tactical levels, posing tough decisions and difficulties to marketers (Winer, 2009). The COVID-19 epidemic has raised the competitive pressure on apparel companies tremendously, while testing many facets of the business climate. To recover some influence over customer-controlled social media arena, education sector has invested in social media presence, notably during the worldwide pandemic. To that end, the researcher looking at how COVID-19 affects digital marketing in this research. As a result, both education sector was forced to adopt digital reality immediately.

#### **1.5 Research Objective**

The study has following objectives:

1. To investigate the impact of digital marketing on the higher educational institution performance.
2. To explore the moderating role of trust between digital marketing and higher educational institution performance.

## **1.6 Research Questions**

1. What is the impact of digital marketing on higher educational performance?
2. Can online trust moderate the digital marketing and higher educational performance?

## CHAPTER 2

### 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 The Evolution of digital marketing

The changing communications environment compels firms to adapt their old strategies for marketing and to embrace new channels of communication. However, the challenges for scholars as well as practitioners include digital marketing as the notion continues to evolve as there is even no approved definition. Moreover, some scholars use the term "digital marketing" (Järvinen et al., 2012; Durkin, McGowan, and McKeown 2013) or "internet marketing" (Jensen 2006) or "e-marketing" (Strauss et al., 2016; Chaffey 2008). While public media provide recommendations and best practices for online success, scholarly research on this topic is still very limited and divided. According to the special edition of *Industrial Marketing Management* (2013), When it comes to developing new products and disruptive technologies and managing partners, the focus is on open innovation, as is providing consumer value (Obal and Lancioni 2013). The world of business, particularly marketing, has been transformed by digital technology. Consumer behaviour is critical in digital marketing since customers have embraced the internet and social networking platforms (Vinerean et al., 2013). Knowledge and brand loyalty impact consumer purchasing decisions (Nizar and Janathanan 2018). Technological advancements have altered how people think, behave, and communicate. A company's bottom line may now be significantly improved via the use of technology. Digital economy characteristics are now taken into account. As businesses and trade transactions become more dependent on the internet as a means of

communication, collaboration, and co-operation, the emergence of the digital economy (Situmorang et al. 2010). Customers may be targeted in a cost-effective and relevant way by using the internet and digital distribution channels for digital marketing (Satyo Bowo Laksono 2009). CM, influencer marketing (IM), content automation (CA), campaign marketing (CM), email direct marketing (EDM), and display advertising (DA) are all forms of digital marketing, according to Saveria (2016). These include SEO and SEM, as well as other digital media like YouTube, WhatsApp, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

According to the Maryanto (2017) definition of digital marketing, the use of electronic media to promote a product or brand is called digital marketing. There are a number of phrases that may be used interchangeably to represent digital marketing, which uses the internet and mobile devices such as smartphones or tablet computers to provide site pages, emails, video streaming, and social media interactions. Digital marketing (e-marketing) and electronic marketing (e-marketing) are both terms that relate to the use of electronic media in advertising efforts. What we call "digital media marketing" refers to the use of digital technology to create an online conduit to the market for marketing operations that seek to profit and establish and grow customer connections through the use of digital media (websites, e-mail, databases, digital TV, blogs, feeds, podcasts, and social networks).

The world of business, particularly marketing, has been transformed by digital technology. Consumer behaviour is critical in digital marketing since customers have embraced the internet and social networking platforms (Vinerean et al., 2013). Knowledge and brand loyalty impact consumer purchasing decisions (Nizar and Janathanan 2018). Technological advancements have altered how people think, behave, and communicate. A company's bottom line may now be significantly improved via the use of technology. Digital economy characteristics are now taken into account. As businesses and trade transactions become more dependent on the internet as a means of communication, collaboration, and co-operation, the emergence of the digital economy (Situmorang et al., 2010). Digital marketing is a marketing approach that utilizes digital distribution methods to contact customers in a manner that is relevant, personal, and cost-effective (Satyo Bowo Laksono 2009). influencer marketing (IM), content automation (CA), campaign marketing (CM), email direct marketing (EDM), and

display advertising (DA) are all forms of digital marketing, according to (Saveria, 2016). These include SEO and SEM, as well as other digital media like YouTube, WhatsApp, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

The current misunderstanding over the term might explain part of this paucity of study on the digital marketing. This is why the following table shows the presently literature-focused definitions.

**Table 2.1** Digital marketing definitions

<b>Author (Year)</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Parsons, Zeisser, and Waitman (1998)	“First, the use of new forms of interactive media to create new forms of consumer-to-marketer interactions and transactions (such as the World Wide Web, on-line services, private dial-up services); second, the integration of interactive media with other elements of the marketing mix “digital marketing.”
Smith, (2011)	“E-marketing is essentially online marketing: online client demands are identified, anticipated and met. This requires maintaining tight ties with the clients and maintaining them online”
(S. L. Smith and Fagelson 2011)	“Digital marketing is a developing idea that use digital technology to produce an integrated, targeted, quantifiable communication that enables consumers to acquire and maintain deeper connections”
(Gilmore, Gallagher, and Henry 2007)	“In conjunction with other marketing communication tools, the Internet and its related technologies and features, such as global online and web presence, e-mails, real-time communication, and time delayed and interval communication, contribute to marketing objectives.”
(S. L. Smith and Fagelson 2011)	“Digital marketing is the activity of promoting digital distribution channels for goods and services”
(Järvinen et al. 2012)	“Digital marketing is using all types of digital and social media platforms that enable organizations to promote consumer engagement”
(Strauss et al. 2016)	“Customers, customers, partners, and society as a whole benefit from the use of information technology to produce, communicate, distribute and exchange offerings of value.”
(Dave Chaffey, Smith, and Smith)	“E-marketing is central to e-business and to better know and understand the customers, add value to products, broaden distribution canals and boost sales via digital media marketing campaigns, such as

2013)	Internet marketing and affiliate marketing. E-marketing, internet marketing or digital marketing”
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Table 2.1 continued

<b>Author (Year)</b>	<b>Definition</b>
(Järvinen and Karjaluoto 2015)	“Digital marketing is the marketing of electronic devices and channels for the promotion of marketing goals. digital marketing comprises website marketing, search engines, online advertising, e-mail marketing, and social media”
(Dave Chaffey, Smith, and Smith 2013)	Digital marketing's goals are achieved via the use of digital technology and media”
(Amui et al. 2017)	“Digital marketing may be considered as digital technology facilitating activities, institutions and processes enabling consumers and other parties involved to develop, to communicate and to provide value”

Researchers have proposed many definitions, but certain similarities may be found as they relate to a basic marketing principle, the interactions between organizations and their consumers who utilize new technologies (Dave Chaffey, Smith, and Smith 2013; Gilmore, Gallagher, and Henry 2007; Järvinen et al. 2012). When it comes to defining digital marketing, one of the first concepts presented by Parsons, Zeisser, and Waitman (1998), is still relevant today. New kinds of corporate participation and the incorporation of new media into the conventional marketing mix are both discussed in this section of digital marketing.

### **2.1.1 Digital marketing Channels**

The new digital channels might include social network sites, on-line advertising, search engines marketing, content marketing, mobile marketing, e-mail and sponsorships. However, there is no general agreement on the number and categorization of digital marketing channels. In this way, different experts have diverse perspectives on the quantity and kind of tools and channels now available. Although there was a great

deal of attention in social media and social media marketing in the field of academia (Michaelidou, Siamagka, and Christodoulides 2011; Castronovo and Huang 2012; Dateling and Bick 2013). Table 2 provides an overview of current channels of digital marketing recognized in academic literature.

**Table 2.2** Communications channels of digital marketing

<b>Author (Year)</b>	<b>Channels</b>
(Rowley, 2001)	Advertisement and word-of-mouth; portals and search engines; website and search engine design.
(Jensen, 2006)	Promote your business by using public relations techniques such as sponsorship and viral marketing. You can also use email marketing and microsites as well as mobile rental services and games to drive traffic to your site. The mobile phone's home page.
(Bang-Jensen and Gutin 2008)	Advertising (display of advertising, optimization of search engines, affiliate programs); online communication relations (e-mail marketing, e-learning), interactive online communication (e-contests, microsites, online games); Mobile sites (SMS and MMS sites, WAP/3G sites)
(Winer, 2009)	Blogs, video sites, reviews and recommendations (online PR (e.g. buttons, banners, pop-up), video games and mobile advertisements). Non-offensive websites (social networking sites) and podcasts. Generated by the user.
(Shimp, 2010)	Advertisement displays/banners; the diversity of media kinds; blogs, podcasts and social networks; email, search engine advertising, and behavioral advertising targeting.
(Truong and Simmons 2010)	There are two types of online/internet platforms: those that allow for online advertising and those that allow for customer list payments through e-mail marketing.
(Eid and El-Gohary 2013)	Electronic data interchange; client interactions; email marketing; intranet marketing; extranet marketing; and mobile marketing and telemarketing are examples of internet marketing.
(Leeflang et al., 2014)	Company website; e-mail communication; social networking sites; natural search, sponsored keywords; banner adverts, mobile SMS, own online store, applications; Third party internet shop, interactive voice recording.



According to the Maryanto (2017) definition of digital marketing, the use of electronic media to promote a product or brand is called digital marketing. There are a number of phrases that may be used interchangeably to represent digital marketing, which uses the internet and mobile devices such as smartphones or tablet computers to provide site pages, emails, video streaming, and social media interactions. Digital marketing (e-marketing) and electronic marketing (e-marketing) are both terms that relate to the use of electronic media in advertising efforts. What we call "digital media marketing" refers to the use of digital technology to create an online conduit to the market for marketing operations that seek to profit and establish and grow customer connections through the use of digital media such as YouTube, Twitter, WhatsApp, Zoom, Facebook etc. These social media marketing channels used are described as follows:

- **SEO (Search Engine Optimization):** When optimizing a website for search engines, may enhance the quantity of visitors a website receives (Prihadini, Nurbaity, and Rachmadi 2020).

- **Content Marketing:** Marketers use this phrase to describe their strategy to marketing operations that focuses on the creation and distribution of information that is useful to a specific target audience, relevant to that audience, and consistent, in order to keep that audience engaged and urge them to take profitable action (Prihadini, Nurbaity, and Rachmadi 2020).

- **Influencer Marketing:** When a person has a significant effect on society, they are an influencer. In certain communities, they may be public personalities, such as celebrities, bloggers, or YouTubers. One of the most effective ways to enhance brand recognition and revenue is via the collaboration of an influencer and a business (Prihadini, Nurbaity, and Rachmadi 2020).

- **Marketing Automation:** The objective is to generate income while maximizing efficiency. – Repetitive work may be delegated to marketing teams, allowing them to concentrate on more challenging issues. As a bonus, this eliminates the chance of human mistake. In this section, we'll show you a few examples of marketing automation: It is possible to send a welcome email, an

email to remind you of an event, a birthday or anniversary greeting and feedback and review (Prihadini, Nurbaity, and Rachmadi 2020).

- **E-mail Marketing:** Building a relationship of trust with clients via email marketing is an effective way to transform one-time buyers into long-term customers. Email marketing is a great method to keep consumers up to date on new items and specials. To keep up with the companies they love, 28 percent of internet consumers in the United States said they sign up for store or product emails (Prihadini, Nurbaity, and Rachmadi 2020).

- **Campaign Marketing:** Print and internet marketing are two of the most common forms of campaigns that may be used. Both of these items are aimed at improving a brand's image. As far as media is concerned, there's just one difference: banners and flyers are printed, and flyers or brochures are sent. Marketing campaigns may also be used to satisfy marketing funnels like Brand, Leads, Sales, and Loyalty, in addition to attaining AIDA objectives (Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action) (Prihadini, Nurbaity, and Rachmadi 2020).

- **E-Commerce Marketing:** Online shopping through the internet is a kind of E-Commerce, where digital money transfers are used to complete transactions, according to the term's description (Prihadini, Nurbaity, and Rachmadi 2020).

- **Social Media Marketing:** Marketers use third-party websites, such as those on social media networks, to carry out their advertising campaigns. It is possible to sell and promote a product or service using several social media platforms. Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram are three of the most often promoted social media platforms. Companies and brands may use this medium to conduct targeted and well-structured marketing. Social media marketing does not necessarily have to do with purchasing and selling (Prihadini, Nurbaity, and Rachmadi 2020).

Mobile phones (SMS and MMS) and other non-interest channels that provide digital media services may be used to develop digital marketing operations (Saveria 2016). In digital marketing, technology and digital media, most notably the internet, are used to accomplish marketing goals (Benreguia, Moumen, and Merzoug 2020). It is the use of interactive technology, such as the internet, to construct and connect specified

dialogues between corporations and their consumers. It is now possible for advertisers to have unparalleled access to customers and key influencers through the internet and mobile devices like smart phones and gaming systems (Struggles 2009). Use of web-based mediums including blogs, websites and email campaigns to promote a product or service is known as "digital marketing" or "e-commerce" (Sanjaya, 2009).

Using digital media, such as the internet, mobile phones, and billboards, to promote goods and services is known as data-driven marketing (Tan and Nasuridin 2010). In electronic means such as email, websites, online forums and newsgroups, interactive television and mobile communications, a kind of direct marketing in which customers are linked to vendors (Kotler and Armstrong 2010). The sole difference between digital marketing and traditional marketing is the use of cutting-edge technology and scientific research.

When it comes to digital marketing, "servicing" and "engagement" of consumers, as well as acquisition and retention, have become more commonplace. According to (Busca and Bertrandias 2020), digital marketing is achieving marketing objectives using digital technology that may aid in achieving the marketing objectives. Internal and external communications are managed using digital channels that provide a dual perspective (Dave Chaffey, Smith, and Smith 2013). For Royle and Laing (2014), digital marketing aims to acquire and retain consumers as well as establish stronger interactions with customers using digital technologies. Over and above all of these criteria, the strategic underpinning of all marketing techniques that concentrate on the connection and successful communication with the consumer is highlighted.

Researchers describe digital marketing as a sort of branding and product promotion aimed at raising consumer awareness of products and brands and encouraging them to make purchases via the use of digital platforms or devices" (Tien et al., 2020). Asia digital marketing Association defines digital marketing as an approach to marketing operations and information exchange that utilizes the digital media channels will be used by companies to market their brands and goods on the internet (Alshaketheep et al., 2020).

Using the internet and other electronic media, digital marketers carry out their marketing strategy and goals. One way to describe it is as an internet-centric marketing

strategy that makes use of a variety of digital media to reach out to potential customers. Marketers that use digital marketing contact their consumers using a variety of mediums, including internet, mobile devices, email, social media, search engines, and video streaming platforms. There are many who, on the other hand, believe that digital marketing is a whole new undertaking, requiring entirely new approaches to interacting with, understanding, and engaging with clients in new ways. Digital marketing has a very narrow focus and is very targeted. As a result, companies and marketers may zero in on a certain client group and choose the best channel via which to reach that target audience of potential customers. Digital marketing is more engaging than conventional marketing methods. A.I.-based technologies like Chatbots and other social media platforms, such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and others, allow for two-way communication between a business and its customers via marketing and consumer feedback. Digital advertising is very adaptable and can be adapted and personalized to meet the demands and wants of a wide range of customers without a lot of effort, thereby removing the shortcoming of conventional advertising methods.

Marketing agencies use a wide variety of advertising tactics, such as advertising, promotion of products, media relations, direct marketing and assistance. Typically, the approach of brand engagement is reinforced via media, TV and other channels, including cinema and radio. In recent days, however, more and more interactive channels such as social networking, web sites, blogs and chat rooms have been utilized to talk to and engage with customers, workers, and other partners. The digitization made it simpler for companies, consumers and customers to engage more freely. Some merchants regard the digital channel as a further way of enhancing traditional contact marketing instruments (Brodie et al., 2011). On the other hand, other researchers acknowledged that marketing knowledge change takes place due to the immersive characteristics of multimedia channels (Mangold and Faulds 2009; Liu, Karahanna, and Watson 2011; Järvinen and Karjaluo 2015).

The marketer has often urged consumers to prepare their commercials and branding. However, the regulation from company to consumer marketing interaction is changing with the advent of new technologies. The marketing and access to multimedia applications, internet and interactive channels encouraged users to make own advertising

and brand stories and share them with them (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010; Ertimur and Gilly 2012; Lawrence, Fournier, and Brunel 2013). Additionally, the incorporation of consumer information created on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and Instagram in a corporate contact mix was extensively distributed (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010; VanMeter et al., 2013). One of the great new features of marketing nowadays is the fact that adverts start to employ customer ads and consumer brand contacts (CGBC) (Lawrence, Fournier, and Brunel 2013). This has been an important feature of marketing in the market. Academics studied the discrepancy in the effectiveness of traditional CGA advertising (Lawrence, Fournier, and Brunel 2013). Whether CGA is good or not, however, it seems to be divided between observations and inadequate information (Steyn et al., 2011). An examination of the influence of CGA and CGBC on market performance is also necessary (Gensler et al., 2013). In this respect, the role of culture in the efficacy of CGMC, business advertising and brand contact in the fields of digital space is uncertain.

## **2.2 The role of digital marketing**

Digital marketing is an advanced approach to make sales without having to contact customers face-to-face. Consumers' emotions and their associations with brands are the focus of this marketing approach. Consumers may create strong links and personal connections with customized marketing strategies. Social media optimization begins with the creation of visually appealing and relevant product-related content, followed by the introduction of more detailed business information on the company website, maximizing sales through marketplaces and e-commerce to expand the market, and building emotional engagement with customers in order to retain them. In the digital world, any human actions that may assist corporate operations might be significant. Indicators such as these have the potential to influence the pace at which digital marketing expenses rise and the number of smartphones sold in developed countries (Prihadini, Nurbaity, and Rachmadi 2020).

### **2.2.1 Digital Marketing offer fair competition Potential**

Businesses of all sizes may take advantage of digital marketing's fair competition prospects by promoting their brands online. It's no longer the case that only large, international corporations can understand and effectively use digital marketing for their firm. Currently, the function of digital marketing for small and medium-sized businesses is quite crucial. Due of its ability to boost productivity and business outcomes. Small and medium-sized companies, as well as new firms, have a significant edge when it comes to promoting online. The most apparent benefit is the ability to immediately connect with consumers without the need for conventional calling techniques (Prihadini, Nurbaity, and Rachmadi 2020).

### **2.2.2 Effective and cheap**

Compared to conventional advertising methods, businesses who use digital Marketing dominate the advertising budget. Gartner's advertisement expenditure analysis demonstrates that internet advertising saves companies 40% on their advertising costs reported in (Redjeki and Affandi 2021; Ayush et al., 2020). Additionally, digital marketing is expected to replace traditional marketing expenditure by 28% of the organizations surveyed, according to the study (Redjeki and Affandi 2021; Ayush et al., 2020).

## **2.3 Digital marketing goals**

Brand promotion and marketing via the media are two of digital Marketing's primary responsibilities. Branding and lead generation are intertwined in digital marketing. Sales, subscriptions, leads, and transactions are currently the only metrics that matter to businesses in the modern world of business.

### **2.3.1 Revenue guarantee**

To ensure sales, efficient digital marketing promotion plays a critical function in boosting conversion rates. Because of this, corporations and individuals alike are very

interested in the topic. Specific leads may be targeted, converted, and turned into income. Digital marketing systems are used by small and medium-sized enterprises, and they have an advantage of 3.3 times when it comes to enhancing company outcomes reported by (Giang n.d.). Your business's success may be boosted by using online marketing to open new doors.

### **2.3.2 Digital marketing and firm efficiency**

Customers will flock to your business if you utilize an effective digital marketing approach. It provides a quick call to action (CTA) opportunity for the client. It is possible to use a wide range of methods to get Clients to take action once they've been called. It informs us what your visitors normally do when they visit your site. Digital marketing offers a plethora of options from which the organization may pick and choose to reach our target audience and influence their purchase behaviour.

Many studies have shown the effectiveness of the internet as a tool for marketing campaigns (Jarvenpaa and Todd 1996). E-commerce and digital marketing in the wood products and furniture industries are well-established practices (Vlosky and Westbrook 2002). Before making a large investment in digital marketing and risking interfering with their current channels, there is no established method of success that may aid management in determining how effective digital marketing may be. Wood goods and furniture sectors are particularly vulnerable to this problem, since items are generally offered in specialized showrooms, malls, retail outlets as well as at worldwide fairs and exhibits (Ratnasingam et al., 2020).

Marketing operations were severely impacted by the extensive use of Covid-19, in large part because of the lockdown. Because of the greater speed at which consumers adopted digital technologies, this paves the way for digital marketing to flourish. What's the effect on digital marketing and advertising? Here are a few things to consider.

## **2.4 Benefits of Digital marketing**

Digital marketing has the potential to bring several advantages, including increased potential, decreased costs, improved management, enhanced customer service,

and the ability to outperform the competition. Technology developments require that businesses keep their procedures up to date. There is a risk that production, revenue and communication may suffer if it fails to recognize the advantages of online marketing (Cheng et al., 2021). Businesses must prepare to satisfy the demands of their customers and use creative technological initiatives in order to sustain quality, grow revenue, and improve communication (Cheng et al., 2021).

Increased Customer Loyalty with Frequent Communications: acquiring and retaining new consumers is more expensive than keeping the ones you already have. It might be difficult to build customer loyalty. In order to increase sales, you must keep your customers happy and keep them coming back for more. Digital marketing has made it simpler than ever for businesses to stay in touch with their consumers. Personalized emails and social media are heavily used for this purpose (Gondane and Pawar 2021).

#### **2.4.1 Cost effectiveness**

The cost-effectiveness of online marketing is one of its most significant advantages. A firm may save money and get more leads by using digital marketing. Small-to-midsize firms have a difficulty competing with bigger corporations using conventional marketing strategies. Big companies have the resources to spend on television, radio, and other forms of advertising. To compete with these bigger enterprises, small businesses find it difficult. Digital marketing, on the other hand, evens the playing field for all firms. It's a low-cost method of promoting your company to potential customers. Digital marketing and advertising may be done on a shoestring budget in many instances (Gondane and Pawar 2021).

#### **2.4.2 Digital Marketing is measurable**

When money is spent on a marketing effort, it's critical to keep eyes on how well it's working. A strategy's success or failure is critical to the success of a corporation. It is one of the most important advantages of a digital marketing plan to be able to track and analyses your outcomes. However, it is difficult to assess the efficacy of old procedures. Traditional lead tracking solutions do not provide a clear way to identify the source of a



lead without questioning every individual who visits a company. The campaign's success may be precisely measured using digital marketing techniques (Gondane and Pawar 2021).

#### **2.4.3 Digital marketing improves your conversion rate**

One of the most significant advantages of digital marketing is an increase in sales. A higher conversion rate may be achieved when money is put in online marketing tactics, such as CRO (conversion rate optimization). That's because they're better at targeting individual customers. Conversion rates rise when marketing efforts target those who are more likely to be interested in business. This in turn helps the business to grow (Gondane and Pawar 2021).

#### **2.4.4 Helps target ideal customers**

A successful marketing effort relies on the correct individuals being targeted. People that are interested in working with an organization must be able to find them. When it comes to internet marketing, targeting individual customers is the most important benefit. Traditional marketing strategies are tough to use to target consumers. As a general rule, businesses send their messages out into the world in the goal of finding potential customers. Obtaining enough leads to justify your marketing expenditures is difficult. People that are interested in your company may be reached via digital marketing. Organizations aim to attract customers who are already interested in their organization, goods, or services. Is a degree of detail that conventional marketing can't compete with (Gondane and Pawar 2021).

#### **2.4.5 Digital marketing and higher education sector**

Sectors of digital marketing and Instruction Because of the different social media platforms and channels available, it is now possible to communicate with potential clients on a more personal level than ever before. It is possible to track the effectiveness of digital marketing, and the target audience may be reached in a timely manner, providing rapid feedback and allowing for improvements to be made at a lower cost. Getting feedback is becoming more and more difficult as well as costlier and less useful.

Education institutions should expect a bright future as long as technology continues to advance, and as long as digital marketing is creative and imaginative enough to meet consumers' expectations. Schools and universities may take use of social media's potential via digital marketing. Different social media channels are employed to share the content with a worldwide target audience. Videos and other creative work that has been shared widely. Students' purchasing decisions are significantly influenced by digital advertising on popular social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter. More than 98 percent of today's young population is active on social networking sites, which is why the majority of educational institutions are embracing social media in order to attract more students.

It is one of the fastest-growing educational centers in the world, and Azerbaijan is no exception. Many Azerbaijani businesspeople and venture capitalists are joining the education industry as competition grows in the country. Experts in digital marketing have also reaped the benefits and generated a wealth of possibilities as a result. Even educational institutions have begun using modern marketing strategies to stay competitive, such as appealing and up-to-date websites, search engine optimization, and a variety of social media platforms. Digital marketing has grown in importance as a competitive marketing technique. Marketing through the internet Benefits & Importance of Education Sector: To what extent is your company's name known to the general public? Instantaneous Feedback It can be quantified. Impactful and Easy to Use.

## **2.5 Digital marketing and COVID-19**

New marketing techniques, viewpoints, and trends have evolved due to COVID-19. It's becoming more difficult for many colleges and universities to keep up with the quick pace of development while also determining the best marketing strategies to use. It's not only Turkey that's feeling the brunt of the financial crisis. Personal care, education, and healthcare spending all saw decreases between 4% and 16% from the same time previous year. Online shopping and home delivery, on the other hand, have seen significant growth of 20% and 13%, respectively. A return to normality and a shift in marketing tactics toward digital reinforcement are among the many adjustments educational institutions should anticipate to make to their marketing in the wake of the

COVID-19 outbreak (Elhajjar and Yacoub 2022). Due to the stress of recent epidemic diseases, new services have been tested and put into operation more quickly than ever before in order to keep up with this trend. There have been numerous challenges with COVID-19, but it has also inspired many firms to create and make attempts to speed up the digital transformation process. When the social quarantine order was announced, there was a considerable uptick in the number of video communication applications being downloaded (Southwick et al., 2021). The popularity of video-based social networks like TikTok, YouTube, and Facebook is only increasing as people spend more time online. As a result, mobile gaming is becoming the most popular form of entertainment in the world (Southwick et al., 2021).

## **2.6 University Marketing Strategy**

An educational institution's value as a product and its students' value as customers is a difficult issue. However, a shift to a student-centered teaching paradigm demands an understanding of marketing potential. Students in an educational system are raw resources for industry, hence the issue is how these raw materials' quality is determined (Alibrandi, 1990). there are two sorts of educational service providers: public education and non-public education services (Dardjowidjojo, 1991) the quality of young students in an educational system is important because they are raw materials for industry (Alibrandi, 1990). Digital marketing, as explained by (Pride and Ferrell 2016), utilizes all forms of digital media, including the internet, mobile devices, and interactive ones, to foster consumer interaction and dialogue. Alumni may be actively reinforcing and support, or they can re-engage in specific techniques, which is why digital marketing in higher education is crucial (Peruta, Helm, and Benson 2018).

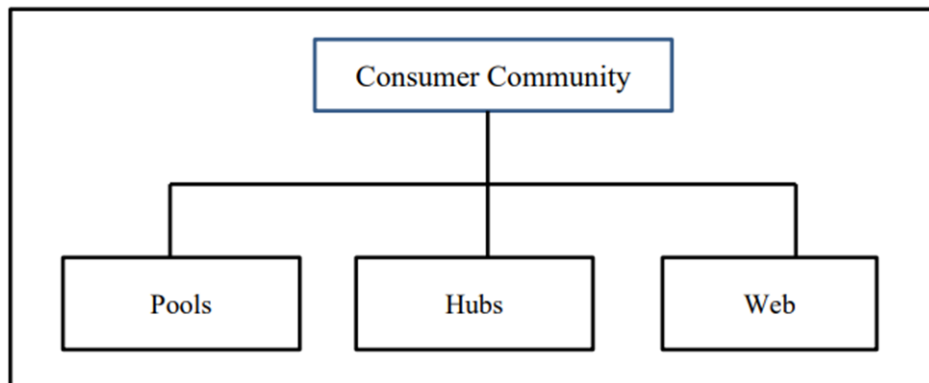
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offered in specialized showrooms, malls, retail outlets as well as at worldwide fairs and exhibits (Ratnasingam et al., 2020).

Marketing operations were severely impacted by the extensive use of Covid-19, in large part because of the lockdown. Because of the greater speed at which consumers adopted digital technologies, this paves the way for digital marketing to flourish. What's the effect on digital marketing and advertising? Here are a few things to consider.

However, there was no reliable data on how effective these tools were used in terms of registration or increased institutional value in a study conducted by the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, which examined how the university uses digital and online social media for marketing (Merrill, 2011). found that social media may be a cost-effective recruiting tactic; in 2010; the research was conducted on 30 foreign students in universities found that 96 percent of schools used Facebook (66 percent) as their outreach medium. YouTube is used by 46 percent of respondents, while LinkedIn is used by 33 percent. 94 percent of colleges and universities use Facebook, 60 percent of them use Twitter, LinkedIn, and/or YouTube to engage with alumni; yet, only roughly 57% of colleges and universities utilize social media to promote to students.

Online marketing activities, according to Anyangwe (2011), have a greater impact on university achievement. "Marketing concerns will now increasingly converge with strategic decision making at the institution," said Richard Taylor of Leicester University. Students who join online social networks are more likely to apply to college, according to research on the use of social networks.



**Figure 2. 1** Consumer community

**Source:** Kartajaya, & Kotler. (2010). Marketing, 3.

According to Susan Fournier in consumer communities can be formed in three models, namely: Pools, Hubs and the Web (Kartajaya n.d.). The first kind of community is called a "Pool," and it is made up of people who have a lot in common with one another in terms of interests, values, aspirations, and even physical characteristics. In the Hubs style of community, individuals create a group due of their adoration for a one person. It's common for communities like these to depend on a few individuals. In the meanwhile, the Web community, the third type of community, is a community developed due of the interaction between members. As a result of platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and others, these groups are inherently simple to develop. Instagram, according to (Diamond, 2015) has a list of five factors that must be present in order to get customers to interact. These are the components: excellent customer testimonials, a team, a product, an event, and documentation

## **2.7 Digital marketing and pperformance of higher education institution**

Improving people's lives is at the heart of what "performance" is all about. Carton and Hofe (2006) Organizational performance is defined by Verweire, Van Den Berghe, and Berghe (2004) as the gap between the value created by an organization via the use of its productive assets and the value anticipated by the asset's owners. Keeping universities operational depends on their ability to meet or exceed the expectations of their various constituencies. The productivity ratio of a company is a key indicator of its efficiency Manzoni and Islam (2009). Earnings, market share, and customer happiness are further indicators of success, according to (Beattie, Goodacre, and Thomson, 2006). Financial service performance (Kassahun 2010), learning and student affairs performance (Fielden, 2008; Lanvin et al., 2019), research, development, and innovation performance (Fielden, 2008; Lanvin et al., 2019), and community service performance (Lanvin et al., 2019).

An ongoing process is described as customer involvement in which the appropriate amount of contact is maintained with the client, according to Kaur et al., (2018) Because it is always in contact with customers, digital marketing is able to provide a high degree of client engagement on a continuous basis. Using a "push marketing" strategy, social media, online content, and affiliate marketing all work together in order to provide

marketing information to customers whenever they log on. Customer concerns are answered, consumer comments are included in marketing material, and social media elements like "like" and "share" allow for a more effective method of interacting with the customer. There are 7.6 billion urbanized people, or 56% of the overall population, (Lu, Wu, and Hsiao 2019). This creates a vast terrain for digital marketing. Over 67% of the world's population uses a mobile phone, with 5.1 billion people in the globe owning a cell phone. There are around 4.3 billion Internet users in the world, or about 57% of the urban population. Social media is a wonderful venue for digital technology since it is used by 3.4 billion people worldwide. It's possible for a corporation to manage its online presence in a number of ways, including through social media, ecommerce-based marketing, email marketing and blogging. Customers and marketing strategy guide an organization's approach. Effective digital marketing may help companies achieve their business goals while also being operationally efficient. According to Peresadko et al., (2014), this is what it is. A comparison of the costs of traditional marketing against digital marketing shows that digital marketing is much less expensive. There are four ways to reach 2,000 people for \$150: radio, newspaper, magazine, and direct mail. When it comes to internet search and social networking, digital marketing costs \$50 to reach 2,000 individuals.

According to digital marketing, a company's income may be raised (Kannan 2017). Increasing sales may be accomplished via a variety of digital means. Consumers who are knowledgeable about a product or service are more inclined to acquire it. As a result, you'll have a stronger online presence and a more successful digital marketing strategy. Dwivedi et al., (2020) claim that digital marketing is 60% less costly than traditional marketing approaches for growing a business. Digital marketing allows you to interact directly with your customers. A digital marketing strategy may reach clients in the smartphone and mobile industry. Digital marketing has a near-instantaneous impact on revenue growth. At Covid-19, there were noticeable shifts in business viewpoint (Patel and Malpani 2020). Instead of expanding, businesses are changing their focus away from traditional commercial methods and toward newer, more cutting-edge methods. Customers expect better online purchase experiences when marketing is done digitally. As a consequence of a decrease in in-store visitation, COVID-19 has resulted in an

increase in online transactions. In times of pandemic crises, digital marketing has become an increasingly vital aspect of corporate strategy. Digital marketing, according to Chinese academics, has the ability to dramatically improve a company's prospects of survival and development. Using digital marketing to promote sales may result in a rise in income. Despite the growth of digital marketing, traditional marketing continues to be more expensive. The use of this technology in digital marketing might assist to increase brand recognition and trust. ' Businesses of all sizes may now compete with larger organizations thanks to content performance monitoring. Real-time data from digital marketing may be utilized to rapidly monitor and adjust marketing activity.

A new generation of smart digital technologies will drive the future of digital marketing, according to (Appel et al., 2020). Digital marketing will be made more scalable, efficient, and cost-effective by using AI, big data analysis, and cloud computing. Digital marketing will be a part of every firm, and businesses will be able to manage their digital marketing environments on their own with the aid of specialized tools. According to De Vries and Carlson (2014), the future of digital marketing is bright because of its scalability and worldwide reach. In the future, digital marketing will become an integral element of every firm, and conventional marketing will fade into the background. On the basis of literature review following hypothesis have been developed:

H1: Digital marketing has a significant impact on higher education institution performance.

### **2.7.1 Interactive digital marketing**

In the existing literature, interactivity was characterized in a variety of ways. In trying to group various categories, scientists have invented phrases such as interactions between humans and humans and machines (Cho and Leckenby 1997; Ha and James 1998; Ko, Cho, and Roberts 2005). Research on the impact of interactive aspects of online communications has begun with the increase on the internet. These studies concentrate on people's involvement with messages, recognizing that Messages may also be interactive, especially online (Macias 2003; Sundar and Kim 2005). Another approach to classify concepts is by interaction perceptions (McMillan and Hwang 2002). This idea

is based on the marketing heritage of consumer perception research, which considers that interaction is best understood by customers.

Finally, the interaction is process-based. Rafaeli (1988) has been a pioneer in this field and his work has led to the notion of instructiveness theory (Song and Zinkhan 2008; Voorveld, Neijens, and Smit 2009). Rafaeli has suggested that interactivity could be seen as a process of reciprocal messaging, where the key is an interchange of messages that connect to prior messages, rather than relying on messaging and consumer perceptions when defining interactivity. This link between messages is essential for process-based interaction (Rafaeli 1988). More recently, internet website and company presence, interactivity in advertising has been regarded (Schibrowsky, Peltier, and Nill 2007; Song and Zinkhan 2008). The Internet is a tremendously effective tool to facilitate such two-way reciprocal relationships.

As part of their research theory, Song and Zinkhan (2008) applied this process-based paradigm. According to Rafaeli (1988), the concept of interactivity holds true, inasmuch as it claims that the method in which customers engage with a company and the level of loyalty they have to that company are both influenced by their views of interaction. The use of interaction theory to mobile advertising is a logical next step. Thus, Rafaeli (1988) interaction theory serves as the foundation for this study's discussion of the importance of the process of organizations and consumers exchanging signals. However, our study focuses primarily on the practice of interaction between firms and consumers facilitated by mobile technology rather than the notion of interactivity.

Interactivity in publicity has been proved to provide value to the customer (Baek and Morimoto 2012). The messages thus refer to earlier messages, and this sort of two-way interaction is used to build the interactivity (Rafaeli 1988; Bezjian-Avery, Calder, and Iacobucci 1998; Song and Zinkhan 2008). In a commercial context Bezjian-Avery, Calder, and Iacobucci (1998) defined interactivity as "a process that instantly unfolds, meets, alters and satisfies the demands and wants of clients." This concept recognizes that interactivity involves the customer in the advertising process, which makes it possible to provide the consumer with better personalized products. Three constructions, including communication direction, user control and time are identified by McMillan



and Hwang (2002), as similar in many interactive experiments. This study modifies four structures we call "personalization, authorization, intrusion and time" to improve (or decrease) perceptions of POP values (Dickinger et al., 2004; Delre et al., 2007). On the basis of literature review following hypothesis have been developed:

H1a: Attractive digital marketing (content) has a significant impact on higher education institution performance.

H1b: Interactive digital marketing (content) has a significant impact on higher education institution performance.

### **2.7.2 Trendiness of the Brands**

Social media is the best place to stay up to date on the latest news and trends (Naaman, Becker, and Gravano 2011). Because they are more reliable than the company's traditional marketing efforts, they take over as the primary means of doing searches (Mangold and Faulds 2009). According to Muntinga, Moorman, and Smit (2011), social media has the ability to disseminate information depending on current events. Knowledge, monitoring, pre-purchase information, and inspiration are included as four main sub motivations. Knowledge concerns information about a firm that customers get knowledge and expertise from other customers to comprehend more products/brands. Surveillance is watching the social environment and maintaining it up-to-date. It refers to all important actions when it comes to pre-purchases. To make purchasing selections easier to consumers. Finally, inspiration says consumers get knowledge about the firm and then get inspired to inspire them (Muntinga, Moorman, and Smit 2011). On the basis of literature review following hypothesis have been developed:

H1c: Trendy digital marketing content has a significant impact on higher education institution performance.

### **2.7.3 Role of Trust**

In terms of marketing, the key to establishing effective long-term connections is trust. Customers need to interact and buy online, because the media, giving them

tranquilly, creates greater contentment, brand equity and patronage. Rohm, Kaltcheva, and Milne (2013) pointed out, in the context of the atmosphere of trust between friends/co-workers in social networking settings, that clients exchange and search information (social interest, goods, services, etc.) on SM. The consumers' failure to trust websites has, nevertheless, been a major impediment to online transactions (Rios and Riquelme 2008) and is a constraint on the commitment to the connected brands by consumers. This lack of confidence comes from several causes such as security/privacy, e-fraud, etc. (Gorriz, 2003). Indeed, online media literature has shown that consumers are worried mainly about usage of data collected online by corporations (Miyazaki and Fernandez 2001) and hence limit their online purchases and interaction (Brown and Muchira 2004). Several researchers have seen confidence as a contextual and conditional variable that works rather than a direct component (Langfred, 2004; See-To and Ho 2014). In other words, involvement conduct comes largely via multiple motivating elements and, instead of motivating, the situation in which this commitment behaviour happens should play a moderating function (Alsaad, Mohamad, and Ismail 2017). Thereby, if clients have more confidence in specific brands, their dedication, dedication, and loyalty to them is thought to be greater, thus promoting their own purchasing intentions (Sánchez-Franco, Buitrago-Esquinas, and Yñiguez-Ovando 2015).

H2: Online trust moderates the relationship between digital marketing and higher education institution performance

## CHAPTER 3

### 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides a comprehensive research design and methods for the achievement of research aims. The first research design, then the population and sample size are discussed, and demographic data are further mentioned. This explains the method for collecting and measuring variables. The discussion of the statistics instruments used for data analyses ends in this chapter.

#### 3.1 Research Design

As a result of this descriptive research, study like this is more apprehensive, aimed at what is relatively what it is has happened and how, and the digital marketing impact on higher education institution performance (Gall et al., 2007). Sometimes interchangeably, descriptive and quantitative research can be used. The difference between these two also can be shown. This study is in nature exploratory, in general, an exploratory study focuses on the fact that unknown situation has been determined, no information or similar research available helping to resolve a situation or clarifying it (Sekaran and Bougie 2016) as descriptive investigation could be quantitative or qualitative in two types.

#### 3.2 Research Method: (Quantitative)

A quantitative research strategy is used to explain the methodology used in this study. The remainder of the empirical research was divided into two categories: tests for

comprehending occurrences and investigations that investigate the consequences or causes of those events. Descriptive research is aimed at finding "what is" and quantitative and experimental methodologies are used to generate descriptive data (Gall and Borg 1989). Data were obtained through quantitative approach. The quantification and collection of data relating to research is essentially a quantitative process. The collected data can be utilized as phenomenal occurrence frequencies for more complex data (Bell, Bryman, and Harley 2018). Using easy procedures to determine the precise relationship between the variable, quantitative research aids businesses in managing tough projects that are more likely to include numerical data (Saunders, 2011). Regardless of whether the study is descriptive or experimental, there is a strong correlation between the two types of results when comparing them. After the results, the variation of the experimental subject is indicated or examined before and after the experiment (McNabb, 2017). In order to simplify the variables by asking questions from the audience the reasons why the quantitative method is chosen to determine the exact difference among the constructs 'digital marketing,' Performance of Higher Education Institution' and trust. The variables' relationships were analyzed through SPSS 25. After the necessary research information has been collected, you can easily see what other variable impacts can actually benefit from using these analysis programmes. All these things help later to identify the hypothesis nature.

### **3.3 Research Approach**

For this study, an inductive and deductive method to basic learning is developed to construct the basic basis of research and a pre-study that allows people to get a restricted understanding of a topic by collecting information from persons on influencers. New data is inductively acquired once the hypotheses have been answered by conducting sample questionnaires. The inductive method begins with an analysis of a given instance, tries to develop preliminary hypotheses, and takes early ideas together make situation to further study. It seeks to assess whether particular generalization is applicable, yet they are open and receptive to possible alternatives (Hyde, 2000), Turning to the deductive method selected for this type of study, they require double-specific inductive and deduction approaches, so that the researcher can only start with known facts and try to

interpret them. Deductive method entails an understanding of the fundamental facts behind the study of social variables.

### **3.4 Data Collection Method**

The research includes quantitative data in this thesis. According to (Bryman and Bell 2011), researchers might utilize several approaches to collect data, depending on the quantitative analysis. The study is quantitative and uses the primary method of data collection.

### **3.5 Research method**

In order to focus the scope of the research to an area in desperate need of attention, this thesis will begin with a pre-survey inquiry to gauge interest in the potential thesis subject among influencer followers. For example, a pre-survey that helped define the subject of the research by collecting opinions from people regarding influencers may be used in conjunction with an inductive approach to reduce the scope of the study. Finally, when the questions have been answered, additional data will be obtained inductively utilizing survey questionnaires.

Qualitative and quantitative approaches are used into the study's design. Qualitative research is an important part of our investigation. One of the most often used strategies in qualitative research is the use of explanatory surveys, in which the theory-based correlations between variables are sought. Models and hypotheses are analyzed using a qualitative technique that emphasizes the explanation and comprehension of the circumstances around the aspects (Creswell and Creswell 2017). There are several advantages to doing qualitative research, such as showing the researcher how an individual views a dynamic social reality (Bell, Bryman, and Harley 2018).

#### **3.5.1 Study settings**

To conduct the research, all investigations used the correlation type, which was then assessed in a non-contrived setting. A contrived setting is used to assess even the most basic tests such as lab experiments. correlative research is used in this study. This research is non-contrived in nature (Sekaran and Bougie 2016).

### **3.5.2 Time horizon**

It's a one-time study that might take weeks or months to gather all of the data needed for a cross-sectional evaluation (Sekaran and Bougie 2016). In contrast, longitudinal studies are focused on more than one variable in tracking changes over time. As a result, the present research will use a cross-sectional approach. The proposed research would utilize a cross-sectional design to track the changes in the dependent variables over a single timeframe rather than longitudinal approach.

### **3.6 Population and sample**

The targeted sample is a next step in determining the goal of the research is to identify the most appropriate method of study. In order to develop judgments that may be applied to the whole target population, a sample of individuals is targeted for sampling (Bell, Bryman, and Harley 2018; Cooper and Schindler 2003; Sekaran and Bougie 2016). On the basis of the following issues, the sample has been developed (Fowler, 2013). A probability sampling approach will be used for the first sample, while a non-probability sampling method will be used for subsequent samples. The sample frame, which specifies the population unit, is the second consideration. The sample size, the number of individuals needed, and the response rate are the third and last considerations. Respondents and their information are essential for the intended purpose of data collection before data collection can begin. Probability sampling was used in this research to gather data. Probability sampling, according to Bell, Bryman, and Harley (2018) and Sekaran and Bougie (2016) has an equal chance of becoming a part of the sample from the population. We choose the public universities for the purpose of data collection. Probability was selected for the present study since the research goal was to cover a large sample in a short period of time (Sekaran and Bougie 2016).

#### **3.6.1 Sampling frame**

Authors like Bell, Bryman, and Harley (2018), and Sekaran and Bougie (2016) have all described how they establish the sample frame for their studies. Each unit in the targeted population is listed in the sample frame, according to this definition. This

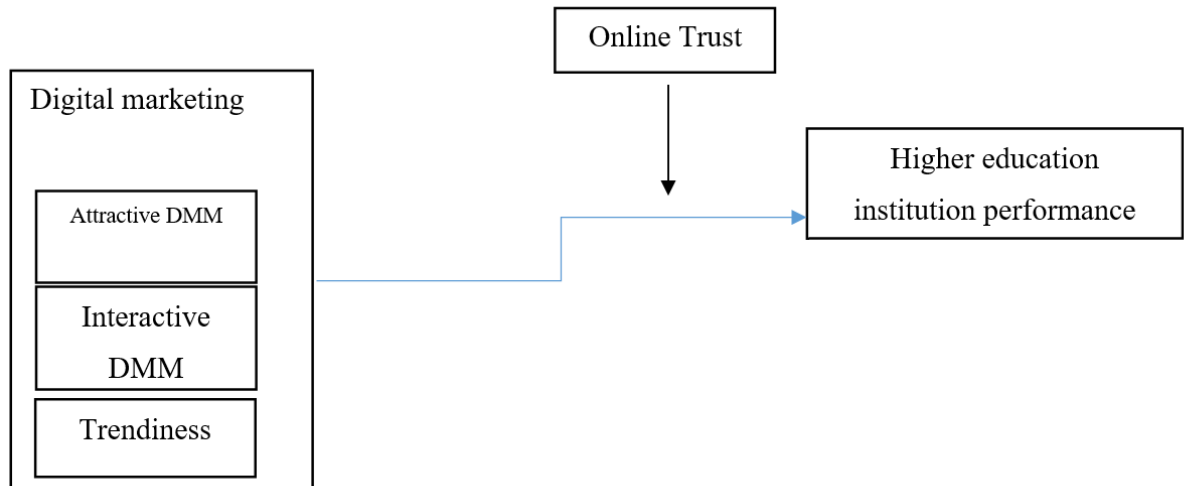
research uses (Rice, 2010) sample frame criterion. In his view, all issues are important or treated appropriately from the people. Also, make sure that the sample that is picked from the intended group covers the whole population. This study collect data from the student of public as well as private universities in Azerbaijan.

### **3.6.2 Sample size**

Choosing a sample size is a challenging process due to the inaccuracy or incorrect answer. Using a sample size that is too small will result in a lower level of accuracy and an increased likelihood of error and incorrect explanation (for example, an estimated negative error for an estimated variable) (Comrey and Lee 2013). Similarly, if the sample size is bigger than planned, examining the replies of individuals wastes time, money, and resources (Hair and Jnr 2009). How large or small the sample size should be to produce an accurate and trustworthy result from a chosen population is a challenging question to answer. According to the most often cited rules of thumb for data analysis methods like structural equation modelling, the sample size for this research has been determined (SEM). From the sample population, 360 respondents from educational institutions of Azerbaijan replied to the questionnaire of this study.

### **3.7 Theoretical framework and hypothesis of the study**

As the title of this study is “Influence of digital Marketing on higher educational institution performance during COVID-19. The Fig. 2 shows the research framework which is developed on the basis of previous studies as detailed at the literature review section.



**Figure 3. 1** Conceptual model

### **Hypothesis**

H1a: Attractive digital marketing content has a significant impact on higher education institution performance.

H1b: Interactive digital marketing (content) has a significant impact on higher education institution performance.

H1c: Trendy digital marketing content has a significant impact on higher education institution performance.

H2: Online trust moderates the relationship between digital marketing and higher education institution performance

### **3.8 Measuring instrument**

Likert scale (1-5) was used in questionnaire for closed question for all investigated variables.

#### **3.8.1 Development of questionnaire**

An already developed questionnaire of relevant research has been used instead of developing new questionnaire. A questionnaire has been developed by collective



questions from different authentic published work with the relevance of model. Questionnaires have validity which shows that a measure has actually provided measurement of a concept. As the questionnaire has constructed on the base of theoretical models from prior studies, indicators are well implemented to express truly the concept indicators for measurement of topic “impact of digital marketing on Higher Education Institution performance”.

**Table 3.1** Variable items and sources

S. No	Variable's	Items	Source
1	Interactivity	2	Jiang et al. (2010).
3	Digital marketing	5	Kim, A.J., & Ko, E. (2012).
4	Online trust	4	Chen, Yu-Hui and Barnes, S. (2007).
6	Trendiness	2	Srinivasan et al. (2002)
7	Performance		(Fielden, 2008; Kassahun, 2010; Wang, 2010)

### 3.9 Data Screening

The general data of the respondents and their responses to the survey instruments are provided in the preliminary analysis. In the current investigation, a version of IBM SPSS statistics 23 is used. In which data coding, editing, verification, outliers and non-engaged responses are investigated. In the first phase, each variable is labeled to specify, and a specific number is allocated for probable answers. It was also found that missing folders that had lost more than 10% value were ignored. For those of fewer than 10%, medians from surrounding points were replaced, (Hair et al., 2014). Unengaged replies are handled with the typical derivation of each scenario. The folder with a default value of less than 0.7 was eliminated since these folders appear to be unengaged responses.

### 3.10 Data preparation and examination

The data is involved in various processes, according to Bhattacharjee (2012), such as data encoding, data input, lack of data, and transfer of data. The study is based on an

e-mail and self-administered questionnaire, as we specified. It provides respondents with a certain level of automation, and all replies are automatically entered on a tablet. You can download and analyze all those respondents. The respondents sometime not fill data when delivered through email. Some responses are missed.

### **3.10.1 Data Entry**

As previously said, insert the numerical values generated by an Excel sheet at this step.

### **3.10.2 Missing data**

An efficient opportunity outside of the respondent's absence (e.g. data input errors or data collecting problems) or activities about the respondent (e.g. refusal to reply) that leads to lack of qualifications (Hair, Bowman, and Sauer 1986). The data set lost 10 values. This test compares the current pattern and expects that the missing data will be dispersed randomly. Thus, Roderick and Farquhar (2002) did the MCAR test (missing completely at random occurrence) and showed that it is not available. It also shows that they are not based on the methodical outline unseen (Hair et al., 2011; Klarner et al., 2013). This study lacked a minor quantity of information because an online gathering strategy was used. The collecting of data decreases the amount of missing data because responders cannot move on to the following question until a specific question is answered (Hair et al., 2011). but not 100% avoid the missing data problem. Because some respondents fill half questionnaire and some fill completely.

#### **3.10.2.1 Suspicious response patterns**

Before analysis of the data, the response pattern is checked. It was used to examine whether the same answer was given to respondents for large percentage of (Hair, Bowman, & Sauer, 1986) and (Hair et al., 2016) issues, and, if so, the respondent should be removed from the data set.

### **3.10.2.2 Outliers**

An outlier is a person who gives an extreme answer to a single question or gives an extreme answer to all questions. As a result, the data should be examined for the existence of outliers in order to understand the sort of effect they have owing to their function in statistical tests (Hair et al., 2014). In IBM SPSS, box plots and stem-and-leaf plots were employed to identify responders (Mooi & Sarstedt, 2011). There was no answer discovered to be an outlier.

### **3.10.2.3 Data distribution**

It is important for data not to be too normal, as non-normal data might make it harder to determine parameter significance (Henseler et.al., 2009). The response pattern is deemed to be normal if the skewness and the kurtosis are almost zero (Hair et al., 1986). Non-normality was not an issue since there was an indication range of +3 to -3 for skewness/kurtosis information. Asymmetry was not regarded a severe issue since these indicators weren't used in isolation to evaluate their separate structures; hence, the disparity was not discounted, and the indicators were kept. In order to analyse the data acquired from the sample, descriptive statistics were generated using the SPSS software statistical package.

## CHAPTER 4

### 4 RESULT AND ANALYSIS

In this part it was specified a comprehensive investigation on the information gathered from the respondents utilizing the structured questionnaire. By considering the conceptualization of the model, research methodology, and research hypothesis talked about in Chapter 3, to confirm and approve the model was directed a data analysis has been done of survey responses. This part likewise exhibits the examination of survey's response including response rate & non-response bias test. The following section explains the estimation model, reliability and validity by assessment of the model. The last area of this part displays hypothesis testing dependent on the outcomes from all the directed tests.

#### 4.1 Demographic Profiles

The demographics information of respondents which included gender, age, employment status, Marital Status, current occupation, educational qualification, home country, Language. The targeted population for this specific research were students and teachers who perceived the impact of digital marketing on higher educational institutions during COVID-19, the sample was selected through convenient sampling method. Contrasted and a mail survey approach, a group self-controlled methodology can accomplish a higher response rate (Goudge, 2006; Sekaran and Bougie 2016). This was the situation in this survey where 370 questionnaires were disseminated to respondents, out of which 360 complete questionnaires were returned back. Given the high reaction rate in this particular survey, any non-response bias is certainly not a difficult issue,

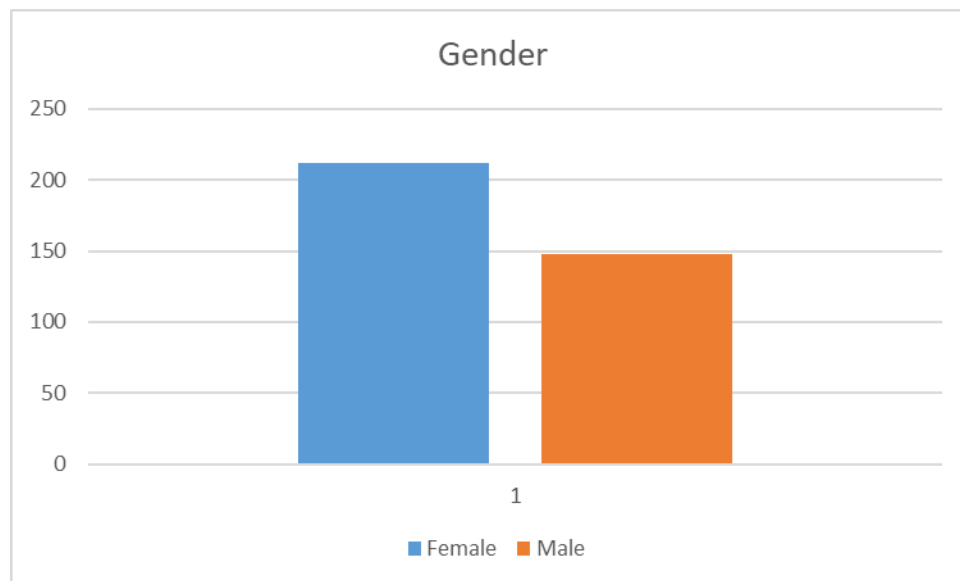
since it is contended that high reaction rates diminish the probability of huge non response biases (Dillman et al., 2009; Malhotra et al., 2003).

#### 4.1.1 Gender

In this study sample size was 360 respondents. the respondent was asked about gender. The results of the distribution by gender show that most respondents are female which was 212 and men 148. The results are shown in given Table and Figure 4-1.

**Table 4. 1** Respondent Gender

Demographic variables	Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Valid responses	Female	212	58.89%
	Male	148	41.11%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100%</b>



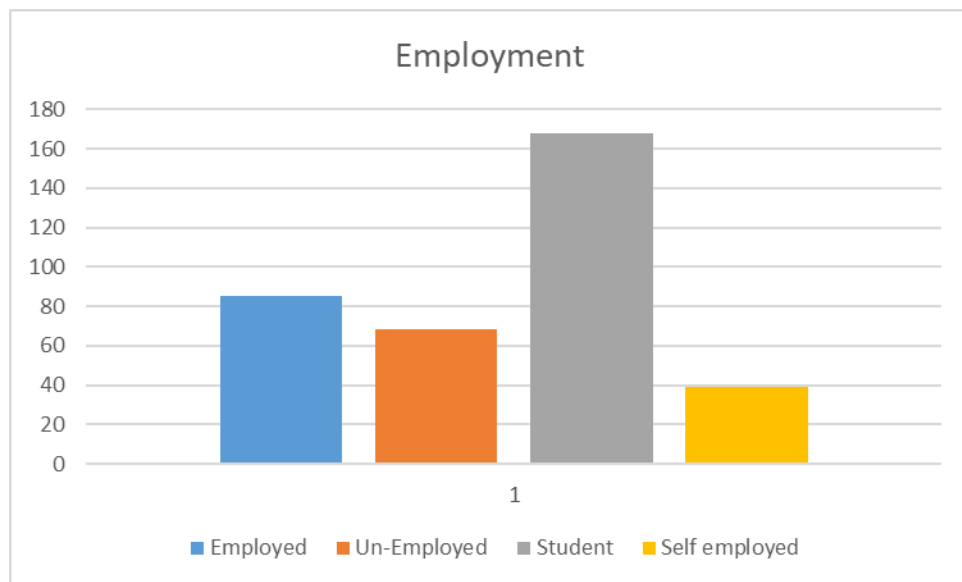
**Figure 4. 1** Gender

### 4.1.2 Employment

The result shows that the respondents have the designation of "students" in high response than other employment status, i.e., un-employed, employed, and self-employed. The result show that in table and graph, 85 respondents are employed, which show 23.61% of total respondent, un-employed are 68 which is the 18.89% of total respondents. Students are 168 which is 46.67% of total respondents and self-employed are 39 which is the 10.83% of total respondents. The result show below in Table & Figure 4-2.

**Table 4. 2** Employment status

Demographic variables		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	Employed	85	23.61%
	Un-Employed	68	18.89%
	Student	168	46.67%
	Self employed	39	10.83%



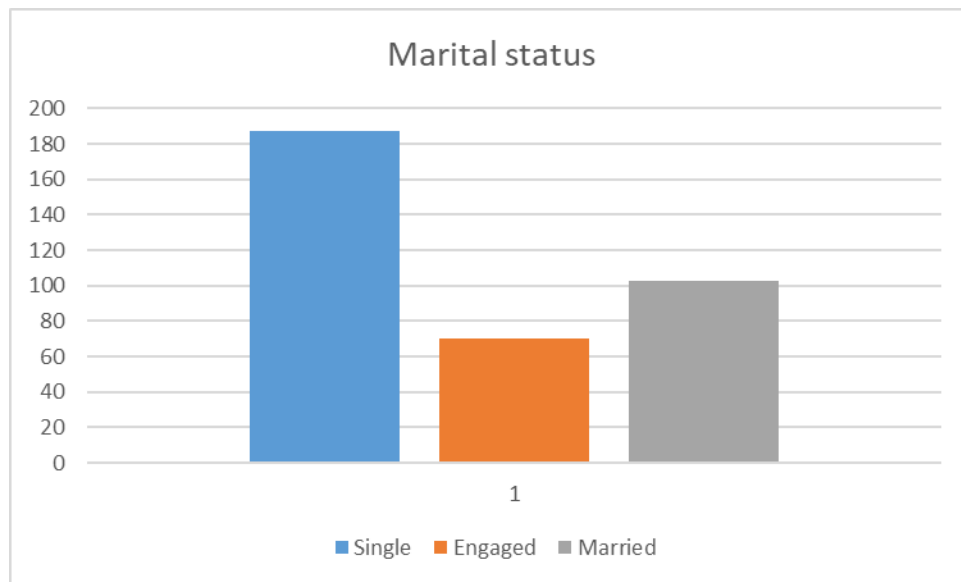
**Figure 4. 2** Current employment status

### 4.1.3 Marital status

Respondents were separated into two groups based on their marital status: men and women. The majority of the responders are single, according to the statistics. According to the results, there are 187 people who answered the survey who are single (51.94%). With a response rate of 19.44%, 70 people said they were engaged, while 103 people said they were married, with a response rate of 28.61%.the results are shown in below Table & Figure 4-3.

**Table 4. 3** Marital status

Demographic variables		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	Single	187	51.94%
	Engaged	70	19.44%
	Married	103	28.61%



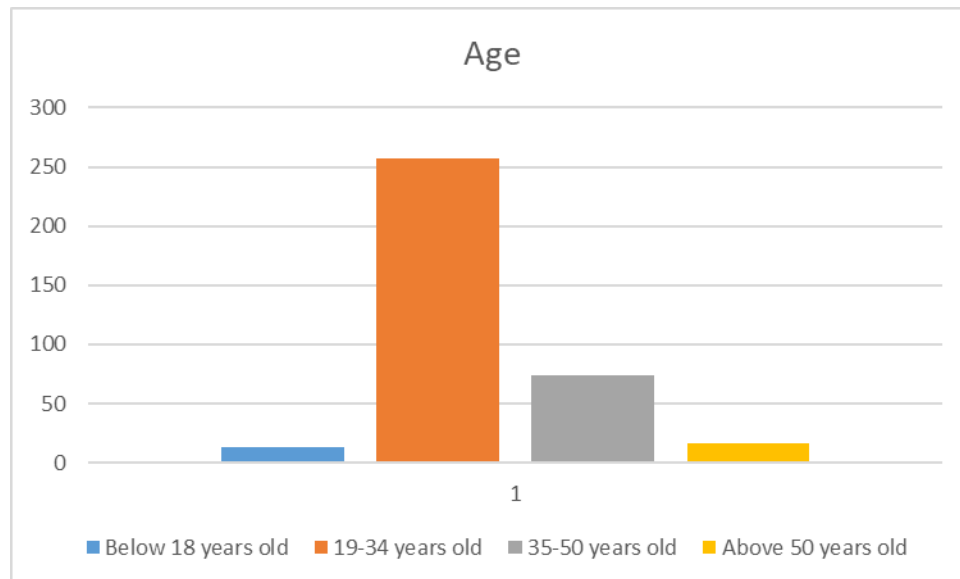
**Figure 4. 3** Marital status

#### 4.1.4 Age of respondents

Inquiries on respondents' ages make up the second half of the surveys. The respondents are broken down into four groups, each with a distinct demographic. The first group is comprised of 13-year-olds, which accounts for 3.61 percent of the sample. There are 257 people in the 19-34 age range, or 71.39 percent of the entire sample. There are 74 people in the 35-to-50-year-old age group, which accounts for 20.56 percent of the sample. There are 16, or 4.44 percent, of people over the age of 50 in the fourth section. In the following Table & Figure 4-4, you can see the results.

**Table 4. 4** Respondent age

Demographic variables		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	Below 18 years old	13	3.61%
	19-34 years old	257	71.39%
	35-50 years old	74	20.56%
	Above 50 years old	16	4.44%



**Figure 4. 4** Respondent Age

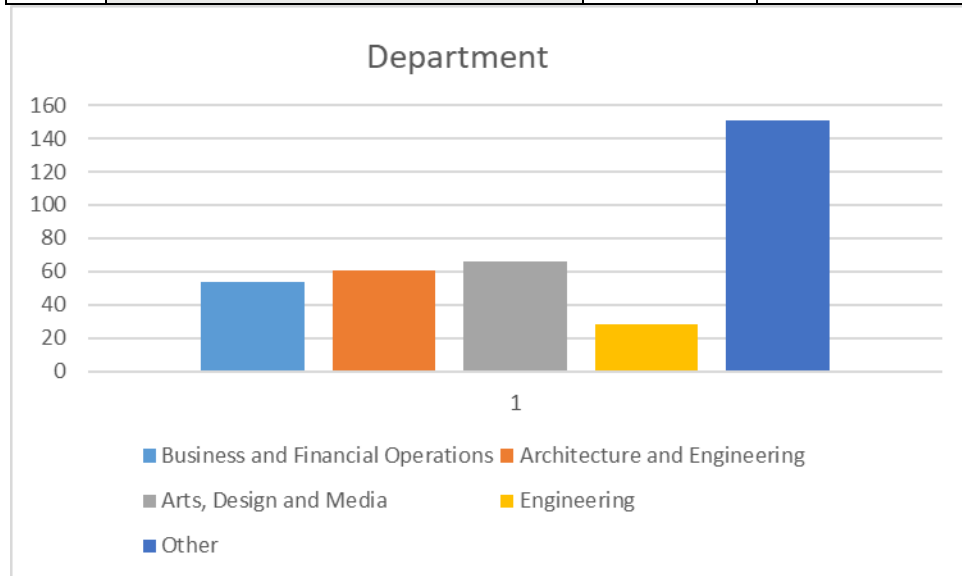


#### 4.1.5 Current department

Based on assessments in tables and graphs, the findings reveal this frequency and percentage. The results show that there are 54 respondents belonging to business and financial operations with 15% respondents. 61 respondents belong to architecture and engineering with 16.94%. 66 respondents belong to Arts, design, and media with 18.33 % response rate. 28 respondents belong to engineering with response rate 7.78%. 151 respondents belong to other occupation categories with 41.94% response rate as shown in following Table & Figure 4-5.

**Table 4. 5** Current department

Demographic variables		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	Business and Financial Operations	54	15%
	Architecture and Engineering	61	16.94%
	Arts, Design and Media	66	18.33%
	Engineering	28	7.78%
	Other	151	41.94%



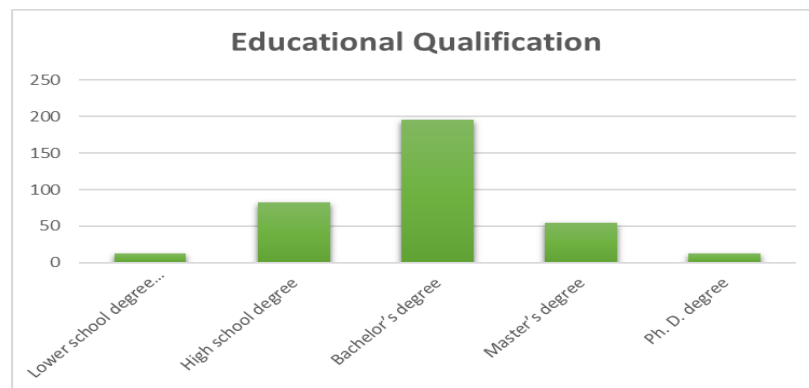
**Figure 4. 5** Current Department

#### 4.1.6 Education

Based on assessments in tables and graphs, the analysis findings demonstrate this frequency and proportion. The results show that there are 13 respondents are having to lower school degree, that is, 3.61% of the whole sum of respondents, 83 high school respondents, 23.06% of the whole sum of respondents, and 196 bachelor's degree holder, the total number of respondents 54.44%, 54 respondents were master's degree, accounting for 15% of total respondents, of which 13 were Ph. D, accounting for 3.89% of the total number of respondents as shown in following Table & Figure 4-6.

**Table 4. 6** Education of respondents

Demographic variables		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	Lower school degree (elementary/middle school)	13	3.61%
	High school degree	83	23.06%
	Bachelor's degree	196	54.44%
	Master's degree	54	15.00%
	Ph. D. degree	14	3.89%



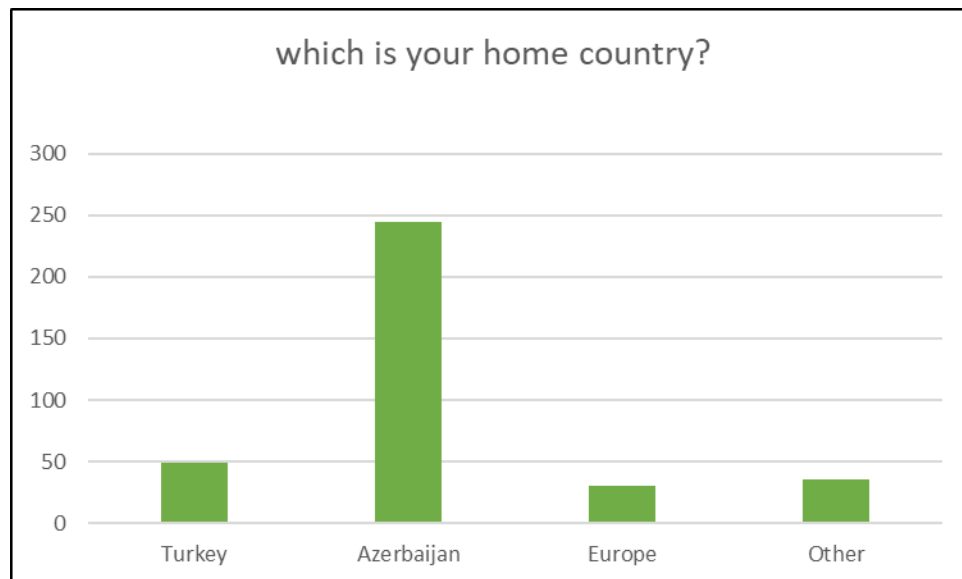
**Figure 4. 6** Education

#### 4.1.7 Home Country

Tables and graphs indicate this frequency and percentage depending on the findings of the analysis. The results show that there are 49 respondents home country is turkey, that is 13.61% of the whole sum of respondents, 244 from Arab countries, which is 67.78% of the whole sum of respondents, 30 belong to Europe, the total number of respondents 8.61%, 36 respondents from other countries, accounting for 10.00% of total respondents as shown in following Table & Figure 4-7.

**Table 4. 7** Home Country

Demographic variables		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	Turkey	49	13.61%
	Azerbaijan	244	67.78%
	Europe	31	8.61%
	Other	36	10.00%



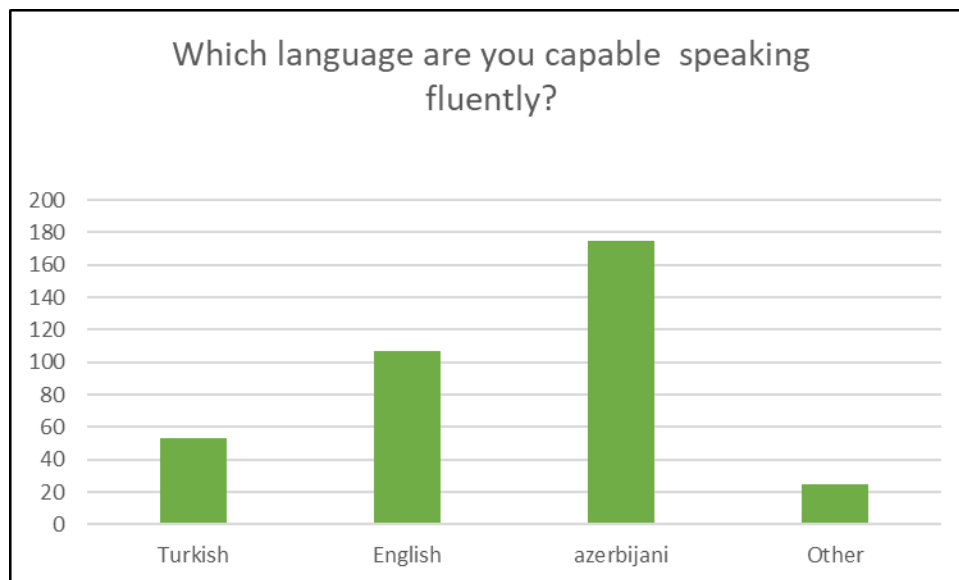
**Figure 4.7** Home country

#### 4.1.8 National language

Tables and graphs indicate this frequency and percentage depending on the findings of the analysis. The results show that there are 53 respondent speaking Turkish Language, that is 14.72% of the whole sum of respondents, 107 respondent speaking language is English, which is 29.72% of the whole sum of respondents, 175 respondent speaking language, 48.61% respondents, 25 respondents speak other languages, accounting for 6.94% of total respondents as shown in following Table & Figure 4-8.

**Table 4. 8** national language of respondents

Demographic variables		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	Turkish	53	14.72%
	English	107	29.72%
	Azerbaijani	175	48.61%
	Other	25	6.94%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 4. 7** Speaking language / Chart

In this part it was specified a comprehensive investigation on the information gathered from the respondents utilizing the structured questionnaire. By considering the conceptualization of the model, research methodology, and research hypothesis talked about in Chapter 3, to confirm and approve the model was directed a data analysis has been done of survey responses. This part likewise exhibits the examination of the survey's response including response rate & nonresponse bias test, data screening, and preliminary investigation which includes missing values, typically, & basic technique data normality. The following area talks about the estimation model, reliability and validity by assessment of the model. The last area of this part displays hypothesis testing dependent on the outcomes from all the directed tests.

#### 4.2 Reliability and validity

The measurement model was evaluated using Anderson and Gerbing (1988) double-stage technique before application to structural equation modelling. digital marketing, interactivity, trends, online trust, performance of higher education institution are respective latent variables in the measurement model. Table 4.3 demonstrates the validity and reliability analysis of the measurement model.

**Table 4. 9** Model reliability and validity

Constructs	Items	Composite reliability	Factor Loadings	Average variance extracted	Cronbach Alpha
Trendiness	TRE-1	0.896	0.652	0.582	0.737
	TRE-1		0.763		
Interactivity	INT-1	0.965	0.621	0.576	0.959
	INT-2		0.752		
Attractive DM	ADM-1	0.928	0.649	0.563	0.720
	DM-2		0.654		
	DM-3		0.705		
	DM-4		0.850		
	DM-5		0.755		
Online Trust	OT_1	0.924	0.826	0.765	0.938
	OT_2		0.835		

	OT_3		0.856		
	OT_4		0.903		
Institution Performance	IP-1	0.863	0.768	0.678	0.862
	IP-2		0.671		
	IP-3		0.873		
	IP-4		0.877		

The loading of the Trendiness variable for confirmatory factor analysis varied from 0.652 to 0.763. The factor-related value of composite reliability (CR) is 0.763 and the average extracted variance (AVE) is 0.563. The loading of the interactivity for confirmatory factor analysis varied from 0.621 to 0.752. The factor-related value of composite reliability (CR) is 0.956 and the average extracted variance (AVE) is 0.576. The loading of the Trendiness variable for confirmatory factor analysis varied from 0.652 to 0.763. The factor-related value of composite reliability (CR) is 0.763 and the average extracted variance (AVE) is 0.563. The factor loading for confirmatory factor analysis linked to variable online trust were between 0.82 and 0.91. The value of the component CR is 0.924 while the value of the AVE is 0.765. Since each factor's fitness indicators and item loads at acceptable levels (>.69) are quite high, we can say that for the dimensions employed in the measures model the convergent validity is guaranteed. The validity of discrimination was estimated using AVE findings of 0.56 to 0.76. The AVE values surpassed the phi square of the buildings, which gave discriminatory validity. All components in the model are thus distinctive in structure and discrimination has been guaranteed (Anderson and Gerbing 1988; Fornell and Larcker 1981). Therefore, the measuring model may be said to be valid and dependable.

### 4.3 Descriptive Statistics

We may practice working with large amounts of data by using descriptive statistics (McDowall and Saunders 2010). The standard deviation is the difference between the average response and the standard deviation, while the mean value is the central tendency of the replies. The average value of each of the variables is approximately 3, indicating that the bulk of the solution is agreed upon by all parties. There are a large number of possible responses to a given question, as shown by the

standard deviation. There are outliers in data if there is a large degree of variation. There must be a standard deviation of less than 1, and the table below demonstrates that all variables have a standard deviation of less than 0.67-0.86.

**Table 4. 10** Descriptive Statistics

<b>Dimension/Variable</b>	<b>Sample size</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Trendiness	360	1	5	3.68	0.67
Interactivity	360	1	5	3.54	0.78
Attitudes toward advertisement	360	1	5	3.87	0.76
Social media marketing	360	1	5	4.25	0.82
Online Trust	360	1	5	3.98	0.86
Purchase Intention	360	1	5	3.65	0.81

The table shows variables with their related data which are included in the investigation. Description of variables is provided in the first column of the table. The second says about the sample size. In the 3rd column, minimal values are shown. In the fourth column the maximum values are shown. The last column displays the default settings. To measure each variable, a 5-Likert scale was employed. The independent variable trendiness mean value=3.68 and SD=0.67 respectively. The interactivity shows mean value of 3.54 and SD=0.78. Likewise, the moderator, online trust represents the mean =3.98 and SD=0.86. At last, the dependent variable higher education institution performance reveals value of mean=3.65 and SD=0.81.

#### **4.4 Correlation Analysis**

Table 4.11 illustrates the correlations between the structures of the study model. The correlation values in the model have varied from 0.263 to 0.627 according to table 4.5. Correlation analysis reveals the interdependence of many variables. The connection or relationship between two statistically continuous variables is discussed by (Orodho,

2009). To further understand the relationship between variables and significance, look at Table 4.3. Both variables move in the same direction when the sign is positive. This shows that variables move in opposite directions even if the negative sign shows that they are in conflict with one another. Correlations between +1 and -1 are permitted. The absence of a value implies the existence of that value. The value of the correlation 0.10 to 0.29 is the weak correlation of the values 0.30 to 0.49 and the value 0.5 and 0.8 is the high correlation of the value (Cohen, West, and Aiken 2014). Tables reveal a correlation of 0.263, indicating a favorable but modest relationship between digital marketing trends and sales. There is a direct correlation between increased use of social media and Institutional performance. The connection between digital marketing aspects and institution performance is modest and favorable, with a value of 0.340. This means when there is digital marketing also enhance the performance of higher education institution.

**Table 4. 11** Correlation analysis

Sr. #	Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Trendiness	1					
2	Attractive	0.263**	1				
3	Interactivity	0.380**	0.627**	1			
4	Online Trust	0.254 **	0.535**	0.552**	1		
5	Performance	0.354**	0.475**	0.362**	0.314**	1	
Note: * “significance level 0.05 level (2-tailed)”							
** “Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)”							

#### 4.5 Structural Model and Hypotheses Test

Structural equation modelling was utilized to examine the hypotheses of the investigation. The following table shows the structural model.



**Table 4. 12** Results of the hypotheses in the research model

<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Path Coefficient</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Stand. Dev</b>	<b>T-value</b>	<b>P-values</b>	<b>Decision</b>
<b>H1a</b>	Attractive digital marketing -> performance of higher education institution	0.70	0.127	13.368	0.005	Agree
<b>H1b</b>	Interactive digital marketing > performance of higher education institution	0.18	0.070	2.589	0.000	Agree
<b>H1c</b>	Trendy digital marketing -> performance of higher education institution	0.67	0.212	9.078	0.045	Agree

Table 4.12 demonstrates that an H1a hypothesis is accepted as findings ( $\beta = 1.70$   $t = 13.368$ ;  $p < .001$ ) which demonstrates Attractive digital marketing has beneficial effects on performance of higher education institution. Same hypotheses are also accepted in the field of interactive digital marketing and, which implies that interactive marketing and trendy digital marketing are good ( $\beta = .67$ ;  $t = 9.078$ ;  $p < .045$ ) (Tümer et al., 2019). Interactive digital marketing has significant impact on performance of higher education institution ( $\beta = .18$ ;  $t = 2.589$ ;  $p < .05$ ). the results support the hypothesis H1a, H1b, H1c, all have significant impact on performance of higher education institution.

#### **4.6 Testing the Moderating Variable and the Results**

There was a discussion in the above section on the direct connection between marketing on digital marketing and performance of higher education institution. The moderating function of online confidence between digital marketing and performance of higher education institution is examined in this section. Therefore, to test the moderator hypothesis, a separate template was developed which used the moderator variable between the independent and dependent variables in order to test the impact of the standardized moderator score. The moderating variable should be assessed based on the

interaction between independent and dependent variables (Holmbeck, 1979). The Smart PLS 3.0 research tested moderation hypotheses and the customer desire to purchase was indicated in digital marketing through the whole process and online trust was the variable that moderated them. These buildings' standardized values were employed in order to overcome the issue of multi-linearity as recommended by (Aiken, West, and Reno 1991). By doing this, there were no problems in testing the moderating variable due to the substantial correlation between the constructor and the interaction term (Ozdogan and Altintas 2010).

The moderate effect of online trust has been investigated in this research taking into account the connection between digital marketing and higher education institution performance. The results of brand trust impacts on the connection between digital marketing and higher education institution performance shown in Table 4.13.

**Table 4. 13** Testing the moderator hypothesis and results

Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	Path coeffi	Stand. Dev	T-value	P-value	Decision
<b>H1</b>	digital marketing > Performance of higher education institution	0.70	0.127	13.368	0.005	Agree
<b>H2</b>	OT*DM -> performance of higher education institution	0.220	0.144	2.447	0.035	Agree

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

The purpose of this research was to examine the effect of the digital marketing on performance of higher education institution with the moderating effect of online trust. This chapter discusses the empirical results and consequences of this thesis, as well as the limitations and recommendations for further study.

#### **5.1 Empirical findings**

This study's findings provide some interesting insights into performance of higher education institution performance. The world is rapidly changing and staying up to speed on the latest trends is a powerful motivation for peoples to interact with digital marketing pages of higher education institution. It is critical for higher education institution enthusiasts to have up-to-date knowledge about the courses offered by institution. Respondents do not see their interaction with higher education institution digital marketing accounts as a leisure activity; rather, they want to acquire important information. According to the findings, certain advertising characteristics have a substantial impact on the customer's opinion toward a higher education institution. According to the findings of this research, there was a favorable relationship between digital marketing with appealing content and the higher education institution performance.

This study tackles an important topic in the field of Higher Education Marketing research. In this study, more empirical research on the marketing of higher education institutions in various geographic regions is also addressed (Awidi, Paynter, and Vujosevic 2019). Azerbaijan's Higher Education Marketing activities have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, according to our literature research and the goals of this research. The economic, health, and social problems have a significant impact on the marketing of higher education, but most studies fail to take this into consideration. By identifying the COVID-19 epidemic as one of the most important environmental shifts in contemporary marketing history, this study expands our understanding of marketing and its potential influence on higher education institutions. In this research, we looked at some of the ways in which the pandemic may affect marketing theory. On the basic marketing principles, context, and strategy, we paid great attention. There is a lot of opportunity for colleges to take advantage of this pandemic's crisis-based marketing endeavors, which might lead to a new wave of online advertising. Academic institutions are expected to follow suit in the wake of such shifts. Students' behaviour, attitudes, and views will change as a result of fundamental changes in people's lives, and clever marketers will modify their policies and methods to reflect these changes (Bumblauskas and Vyas 2021). As it is, it seems that marketing must adapt to the new conditions. As a result of the societal constraints enforced to stop the spread of COVID-19, higher education institutions throughout the world have been impacted by the epidemic. According to the findings of the literature research and the interviews conducted, the majority of organizations have used management and operational strategies and digital marketing tactics to improve stability and sustainability throughout the pandemic phase (Dieste, Panizzolo, and Garza-Reyes 2021). Students and managers alike are under more pressure than ever before, which has prompted an urgent move to online education, digital marketing, and new management methods. In order to keep their educational programmes and other activities running smoothly, these institutions' leadership teams sought to avoid any disruptions. Universities have faced several problems in reconsidering how they operate, promote, and communicate as a result of this health issue.

As trade shows and other events are postponed, employees are forced to work from home. It's becoming increasingly necessary for many organizations to adjust their marketing strategies in response to the crisis's evolving changes, even though responses to the crisis are still heavily influenced by various areas and activities. Because of the lack of suitable internet connection resources imposed by COVID regulations, many educational institutions are having difficulty making the switch from traditional to digital learning. Adaptability, according to our results, is a common trait across institutions, which has resulted in improved effectiveness and efficiency as they move to online instruction. As a result of the pandemic, educational institutions were able to investigate distant possibilities such as internet platforms, offering a more adaptable and practical approach to education.

To retain and enroll students, Bumblauskas and Vyas (2021) thinks that online information is a powerful instrument for educational institutions. If online learning has been successfully integrated into many institutions, then those that are failing to adapt should look for efficient methods to preserve their standards, such as establishing means to assure fee payment and budgeting. Faculty members and overseas students have been restricted in their ability to visit educational institutions due to limitations on movement. This has hampered their ability to access instructional materials and other activities, according to the participants in our study. School activities were difficult to manage for teachers and administrators because of the absence of external evaluation. According to Nanath, Sajjad, and Kaitheri (2021), certain educational tasks cannot be performed through remote learning, resulting in obstacles to the institution's teaching processes. Foreign students constitute a significant portion of the higher education market in the United States, and as a result of travel limitations, the number of international students in abroad schools has declined. This has a negative impact on the local economy. Marketing techniques have also been altered by the epidemic, with social media and other internet channels becoming more important. The pandemic's fiscal limits and the decline in foreign student enrolment in both developing and developed nations necessitate the use of low-budget marketing tactics, according to many interview participants.

Due to financial restrictions, schools' brand image has been negatively damaged by insufficient money and promotional initiatives such as scholarships, which has resulted in student transfers and lower enrolment. In developing nations, universities relying on alumni and stakeholders to help finance their marketing and promotional efforts increase the market's competitiveness and reduce the number of foreign students enrolling, according to the respondents. According to del Rocío Bonilla et al., (2020), higher education institutions' reputation and ranking are no longer as important to students as affordability and quality of services, which has led to a rise in the demand for low-cost, high-quality education. Enhancing E-learning, e-word of mouth (eWOM), and student happiness are ways to meet the demands of students (Bumblauskas and Vyas 2021). In order to fulfil brand image objectives and alleviate pandemic implications after the use of these technologies, it is necessary to provide high-quality services and customer happiness.

Many universities used conventional marketing tactics before the epidemic, even when internet options were available. According to the respondents, initiatives including school visits, student invites, social media and branding were contrasted with a new logo, image, and appealing colors that are meant to improve an institution's reputation. According to Sahoo (2022), techniques including social media, brochures, branding, and newspaper advertisements are effective ways to increase enrolment in higher education. Our participants, on the other hand, discussed certain difficulties with digital marketing adoption that have arisen as a result of shifts in approaches and target groups. Physical activities, educational experiments, and motivating student engagement events formerly represented via conventional marketing have all been hampered by digital marketing. As a result, digital marketing has restricted its audience to young people, which has stifled learning in most adults and lowered consumer satisfaction (Nanath, Sajjad, and Kaitheri 2021). As Mariappanadar (2019) point out, higher education activities, unlike those of digital learning, extend to and include communities, stakeholders, and alumni along with students, teachers, and staff. Digital marketing, on the other hand, is what determines whether or not students are satisfied with the services they get and whether or not those services are of high quality (Prihadini, Nurbaity, and Rachmadi 2020).

The survey with higher education institutions reveal that they had already planned to implement a new approach, to embrace online tools that facilitate effective adaption, notwithstanding the epidemic. Digital newsletters, portfolios for orientation, meetings, campus tours, and customer testimonials are just some of the methods being used to suit the present market need. In addition to incorporating ICT management, identifying a suitable audience, making promotional postings, and expanding social media campaigns to promote and enhance recruiting, alternative marketing tactics were also addressed. According to del Rocío Bonilla et al. (2020), social media is an excellent marketing strategy for institutions since it allows information to be disseminated to a large audience. The use of technology in a wide range of industries gives an efficient means of executing activities and obtaining desired outcomes at a low cost and time. An improvement in education may be made as a result of the implementation of new technologies (Nanath, Sajjad, and Kaitheri 2021). There is a modest trend toward digital in the future of Higher Education Marketing, according to the interviewees. The majority of participants agree that digitization and the appropriate use of data create an efficient marketing plan that eliminates uncertainty. A majority of the people surveyed believe they are ready to take on the role of a technological pioneer in the education sector and other industries, such as healthcare and manufacturing. As del Rocío Bonilla et al., (2020) points out, resilient systems are needed to adapt education programmes and promote digitalization in all institutions. Several colleges have created and are now testing new online education platforms, according to a report by the University of (Rahmanov, Mursalov, and Rosokhata 2021). Such actions demonstrate that digitization is the future of higher education marketing.

The COVID-19 problem has caused collateral harm to academic institutions in underdeveloped nations, according to study results. Researchers who spoke with us were very concerned about the potential long-term effects of the epidemic on Azerbaijan educational institutions. There are many nations in the developing world that are striving to improve their economic and social status. In comparison to Europe and the United States, their technological and educational infrastructures are less developed. Every page of this publication reiterates that Azerbaijan is in its greatest economic crisis since the civil war ended. Azerbaijan institutions will have to rethink their marketing techniques

to demonstrate their understanding of risk management. Keeping in mind that political unrest in Azerbaijan has the potential to have a severe negative influence on the country's economy. Academic groups must recognize the need of developing long-term planning techniques in light of the country's enormous economic losses. As part of the transformation process, organizations must engage their workers, encouraging them to think outside the box when faced with new and difficult situations. Previous investigations backed up the findings of this study (Baird and Parasnis 2011).

## **5.2 Conclusion:**

Because of the shift to online platforms brought about by COVID-19, the conventional approach to educational activities in higher education has undergone a significant transformation. There was no exclusion from these modifications for the short term survival of their institutions and the accomplishment of competitive advantage, at least in the near term, since marketing tasks are essential. All living and working standards have altered after COVID-19, making digital marketing a necessity. In this research, we wanted to look at how the education business is promoting itself during the COVID-19 epidemic, as well as what academic institutions may do differently in the future. Higher education institution marketing professionals and academics alike may benefit from this study, which has theoretical implications for marketing educators and practitioners alike. Even though many studies have been done on how crises affect businesses, they have always been done within the framework of industrialized nations. There has been no systematic study on the problem in less developed or emerging nations like Azerbaijan, which is the focus of this work. Azerbaijan's present financial and economic crises, unstable macroeconomic circumstances, and political instability all contribute to the country's current predicament (Elhajjar and Yacoub 2022).

There are various reasons why research is so important in understanding the Azerbaijan academic sector and the education business. When looking at non-contemporary eastern paradigms of managerial governance, we feel that extra factors should be considered. Scholars and executives alike may benefit from focusing on the Azerbaijan context, given that Azerbaijan is now in the midst of the country's greatest



crisis. There aren't many studies looking at how organizations in Azerbaijan have reacted strategically throughout this period of unrest. Academic organizations' strategic conduct amid financial and political crises was better understood as a result.

When it comes to government and corporate funding, study findings have management consequences. In order to deal with the present developments, several universities have had to shut or lay off employees. As a consequence of the pandemic's constraints, educational systems have also been affected. Marketers need to rethink their marketing strategies and engage more with students and prospective recruits as a result of the issues we face. Educators must be pushed to think outside the box and come up with new ways of interpreting student experiences. Forth order to build strong ties with students, academic groups must put in additional effort. The necessity for improved communication and meeting the expectations of stakeholders will only increase as needs and business requirements evolve. Academic firms may emerge from this epidemic with better client connections and new enterprises on the horizon if they implement a creative marketing plan.

It is imperative that the marketing plan capitalizes on the institution's strong internet presence in order to establish credibility and attract new students. Students will be able to get more information about organization's as a result of this. Videos have a wider audience than text, and this is especially true in the educational sector. Education's visual component has a bigger effect than any number of informational booklets that a school could ever hand out. The reason for this is that many colleges and universities produce short movies and animations aimed at making an impression on students and prospective recruits. Educational institutions may benefit from the use of video advertising and animations in their marketing campaigns. In order to attract potential students and subscribers, educational institutions should make their curriculum, facilities, extracurricular activities, and other qualities as authentic as possible. To put it simply, the value of short films, for example, is found in their brief simplicity. In this study, we focus on the education business in Azerbaijan, which presents a unique difficulty.

Education sector growth cannot be analyzed in isolation from its institutional framework. COVID-19 epidemic had a significant influence on an institutional constellation in Azerbaijan, a developing nation in the middle of an economic crisis.

Several more nations might be included in the study in the future. The influence of time may differ among cultures, making it possible to uncover variances in attitudes via a cross-cultural research. Even if emerging results should be indicative of most colleges, current findings are only representative of those questioned and do not represent a wider population. There is a pressing need to undertake a quantitative research in order to get data that can be generalized. As well as resolving concerns regarding post-crisis tactics and plans and how they work over time, this study also provides new research opportunities for the future. A future study, building on this one, will analyse how post-crisis marketing techniques change and the effects of these changes on various parts of the marketing industry.

The number of people included in this study is rather limited. Interviewees' comments may be skewed, for a variety of reasons, and they may present their companies in a more favorable light than is merited. It is imperative that future studies involve a wider range of stakeholders from the organizations under study. Azerbaijan's present financial and economic crises, unstable macroeconomic circumstances, and political instability all contribute to the country's current predicament (Elhajjar and Yacoub 2022). There are various reasons why research is so important in understanding the Azerbaijan academic sector and the education business. When looking at non-contemporary eastern paradigms of managerial governance, we feel that extra factors should be considered. Scholars and executives alike may benefit from focusing on the Azerbaijan context, given that Azerbaijan is now in the midst of the country's greatest crisis. There aren't many studies looking at how organizations in Azerbaijan have reacted strategically throughout this period of unrest. Academic organizations' strategic conduct amid financial and political crises was better understood as a result.

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students, academic groups must put in additional effort. The necessity for improved communication and meeting the expectations of stakeholders will only increase as needs and business requirements evolve.

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### **5.3 Limitation and future direction**

Despite demonstrating the effects of digital mmarketing on performance of higher education institution through moderating role of online trust, the research has several limitations. One weakness of the present research is that it only uses cross-sectional data. As a result, longitudinal investigations would suffice for a new understanding. Second, other factor affecting performance of higher education institution in current model may be replaced with other moderators and mediators are added to strengthen the model and get a better understanding of the impact of digital Marketing on those two variables.

Third, extreme care should be used when generalizing the findings to all industries. As a result, empirical study in many businesses is encouraged to better understand social media marketing in diverse circumstances.

This assessment has been completed within the framework of three constraints. The biggest limitation of the investigation is that the investigation is also focused on higher education sector of Azerbaijan. In addition, the results of the test were obtained using an online survey approach. The example in this examination, like the other online surveys, includes only those who are eager to reply to the questions in the research, resulting in the following limit. Furthermore, since the members' mental states and moods are unknown, the consistency of suitable replies might be inaccurate. The last examination limitation is the propensity of accommodation testing approach. Because it would be difficult to reach all of the people involved in the study, the convenience sampling approach was used. In any event, it is impractical to use the example to represent the whole population. As a result, generalization is not permitted.

Following this study, there may be a few suggestions for subsequent investigations. The scope of this investigation is limited to higher education institution of Azerbaijan. This is a fact; things from other higher education institution from other countries may be selected for future assessments and research may be carried out. In addition, the products and the service might be considered. Moderator effects on digital marketing and performance of higher education institution may also be the focus of future study, such as age, income, compensation.

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## APPENDIX

### Questionnaire

#### Digital Marketing During the Covid-19 Pandemic

1. Gender: .....
2. Employment: (i). Employed (ii). Un-Employed (iii). Student (iv). Self employed
3. Marital status: (i). Single (ii). Engaged (iii) Married
4. Age: (i). Below 18 years old (ii). 19-34 years old (iii). 35-50 years old (iv). Above 50 years old

**5. Current department:**

(i). Business and Financial Operations

(ii). Architecture and Engineering

(iii). Arts, Design and Media

E(iv). engineering

(v). Other

Strongly disagree	disagree	Neutral	agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

	Interactivity	1	2	3	4	5
1	“I think social media advertising is effective for the companies in gathering customers’ interest to the products”					
2	“Social media advertising facilitates two-way communication between the customers and the firms”					

	<b>Institution Performance</b>	1	2	3	4	5
1	Percentage of non-tuition fee funds to total university income.					
2	Ability to finance programs and activities.					
3	Ability to meet short obligations					
4	Research income from industry					

	<b>Attractive media marketing</b>	1	2	3	4	5
1	“I like to use social networking sites to gain more knowledge about the products, services and brands”					
2	“I am satisfied with the social network marketing of brands and influencers, I follow”					
3	“Contents shown on digital networking sites of brands are interesting”					
4	“Digital media sites enable information sharing with other people”					
5	“It is easy to deliver my opinion about brands on digital networking sites”					

	<b>Online trust</b>	1	2	3	4	5
1	“The retailer that I normally use (Draz.com, Goto.com, Ishoping.pk) on social media is trustworthy on delivering the same product that I bought online without any defects and quality problems”					
2	“The information provided by the web-retailer in the website is plentiful and of sufficient quality”					
3	“The web site of this web-retailer offers secure personal privacy”					
4	“The performance of the web site of this Web-retailer fulfills my expectation”					

	<b>Trendiness</b>	1	2	3	4	5
1	“Contents shown in brand social media is the newest information about the trendiest products”					
2	“Using brand social media is very trendy”					

CV.