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Factors Affecting the Attitude towards Permission-based Marketing

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Abstract: *The aim of the study is to investigate the barriers and motivation to permission-based marketing. The data was collected from young university-level students who are frequent internet users and possess all the necessary gadgets. Convenience sampling was used for data collection. A survey questionnaire adapted from various sources was floated among various social media networks, and the total responses received from the whole country were 298. The majority of respondents were from AJK, university students. PLS-SEM was used for data analysis, and the data were analyzed using SPSS21 and Smart PLS3 software. The results don't support the hypothesis developed on the basis of existing theory, and the possible reasons are contextual distrust of online marketing. Online scams and frauds are the major factors of this distrust. The study results have implications for the managers for formulation of their online marketing strategies.*

Key Words: Permission Based Marketing, Personal Relevance, Perceived Consumer Empowerment

Introduction

Digital marketing has taken the place of traditional marketing in the modern period (Moedeen et al., 2023). Clutter will be the reason for the replacement of traditional advertising. In order to capture attention, traditional marketing displaces viewers' or readers' daily routines (Allen & Olivia, 2022). Marketers should establish a relationship with customers that benefits both parties without betraying consumer confidence, jeopardizing personal data, or going beyond the scope of the authority they have been granted (Nigam et al., 2023). An organization's ability to employ e-marketing to attract attention determines the effectiveness of its marketing plan. The transformation of relationship marketing from transactional marketing Structure Impacted tasks, people, and technology (Lina, Hou & Ali, 2022). The rapid advancement of technology in daily life has increased consumers' willingness to share their private information with marketers (Amarnath et al, 2021). Currently, prospective clients can receive pertinent messages. Customers, however, find repeated messages annoying. Getting the customers' previous consent to receive promotional materials could be a solution to this issue. Permission marketing is the term Godin (1999) used to describe this idea in 1999. Permission marketing was defined by Godin (1999) as a replacement for bond marketing operations.

Giving permission is the first step in establishing a permission relationship between a customer and a business. The surfacing of a reward is continued by this process, which begins with the consent of the customer (Sergeeva & Koenig, 2023). Rewards that raise customer awareness ensure that this relationship will last for a long time. Potential clients can currently be reached with relevant messages (Dholakiya & Pratik, 2022). In addition to having a favorable effect on consumers' responses to interactive marketing techniques, permissions are a legal obligation (Tan et al., 2023). The use of permission marketing is a good way to address both legal problems and confidential difficulties. Companies mostly offer incentives in order to include potential customers in their marketing strategies, after which the relationship is maintained with consumers who are interested (Coomar & Debolina, 2022). By offering more benefits to begin closer

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connections with customers, the power of permission can be increased. In the permission marketing battle, "strangers turn into friends and friends into lifetime customers," according to Godin (1999, 36).

The concept of permission marketing has grown in popularity recently, particularly as consumer worries about internet privacy have risen (Mashhad et al., 2023). The difficulty with permission-based marketing is getting only potential buyers and clients who raise their hands or provide their consideration. In order to temporarily redirect attention or change a customer's behavior, the personal connection level of authorization makes use of unique relationships between the customer and the marketer (Leiser & Caruana, 2021). It is the most effective type of permission marketing and can identify significant changes in consumer behavior (Godin, 1999). At the level of most frequent-customer programs, point permission entails customers giving their consent for the company to collect their personal information and promote their goods and services to them through a points-based loyalty program (Grifn & Julie, 2022). The greatest type of consent that may be obtained from clients is intravenous permission. Customers must trust the marketer to decide what to buy on their behalf (Jonsson & Tufvesson, 2023). The strongest sort of consent that many marketers will ever obtain is what is known as purchase-on-approval (Godin 1999). Companies will generate enormous profits out of these relationships and secure their position in the market for a long time while consumers receive personalized and pertinent marketing messages that they want and look forward to receiving. And they will develop their brand equity in this way (Sergeeva 2023).

Many businesses ask customers for permission to send them promotional communications, yet only a few companies receive the customers' business. Therefore, businesses with more registered clients have a competitive advantage over rivals and can market their goods (Dimond, 2022). In the majority of nations, businesses cannot distribute promotional materials to clients without their permission. It is crucial for various businesses to win customers' consent to send them promotional messages (Hassan et al., 2017). Companies can increase the number of customers giving permission by understanding the elements driving attitudes toward permission marketing. There haven't been many studies looking at what influences people's attitudes towards permission-based marketing (Bhatia, 2020). As a result, the current study targets to pinpoint the encouraging and discouraging elements affecting perceptions of permission marketing in Pakistan.

Significance of Study

The current study adds value to the prevailing literature by offering insights into the essential factors that lead to persuasive permission-based marketing and the factors that annoy consumers as well. Moreover, it also offers insights to marketers and practitioners about the importance of permission-based marketing in shaping consumer behavior. Manager's decision-making in implementing permission-based marketing will also be convenient, and they will be able to persuade customers toward their brand. The study will be a guideline in the age of digitization to know the importance of permission-based marketing and will be able to meet the company's legal requirements.

Literature Review

Personal Relevance and Permission-Based Marketing

One major driver of customer links to a corporation can be identified as the need for personal, relevant information. Consumers typically agree to share their data with businesses in exchange for pertinent and individualized information about them. Milne & Gordon (1993) confirmed that relevance has favorable effects on the attitude towards direct marketing activities in the context of interactive marketing (Jonsson et al, 2023). Beyond that, Baek & Morimoto (2012) described that the level of personalization lowers uncertainty towards media. According to (Amarnath et al, 2021) relevance is thought to be a situation under which customers are more likely to use and benefit from marketing tools. (Hassan et al., 2017) Found in their research on local advertising that businesses that provide customized information encourage customer information disclosure.

H1: Personal relevance positively affects the attitude towards permission-based marketing.



Monetary Incentives and Permission-Based Marketing

According to (Chopra et al, [2023](#)), incentive-based publicity refers to the chance or financial reward that consumers obtain in exchange for viewing smartphone commercials. The user is then justified in receiving mobile advertisements in exchange for providing personal information or urged to do so. The study by Milne and Gordon ([1993](#)) demonstrates that financial incentives matter to consumers even more than message relevancy. The beneficial function of incentives is not universally supported by empirical data (Kumar et al, [2014](#)). This could be the result of consumers viewing rewards like financial benefits as deceptive, which makes them react negatively (Hartemo [2016](#)).

H2: Monetary incentives positively impact the attitude towards permission-based marketing.

Entertainment and Permission-Based Marketing

When compared to financially rewarding interactions and socially relevant conversations, entertainment plays a considerable role in social contact channels. Entertainment values increase market awareness of e-commerce and new developments in comparison to mobile consumer marketing (Kupor et al., [2015](#)). Additionally, there is a link between media use and decisions to permit mobile advertising. According to (Jonsson et al [2023](#)), the desire to use mobile services is significantly positively affected by the perception of fun. High entertainment value also contributes to e-commerce and emerging technologies being more widely accepted. Perceived delight was discovered by (Dholakiya & Pratik, [2022](#)). The behavioral intention to use mobile adverts is influenced by the unified theory of acceptance and use of the technological prototype. More recently, Krafft et al. ([2017](#)) found a positive correlation between entertainment and the likelihood of obtaining authorization.

H3: Entertainment has a positive effect on attitudes toward permission-based marketing.

Privacy Concerns and Permission-Based Marketing

According to Lin et al. ([2013](#)), "the ability or sometimes right of individuals and groups to withhold information about themselves or remove themselves from public view" is the definition of privacy in its broadest sense. Consumers are required to enter their personal information during registration with a business that sends promotional communications. The value that consumers place on their personal information is related to how they see privacy issues. Numerous research studies have discovered a connection between privacy concerns and giving consent for promotional offers (Tiwari et al, [2023](#)). Consumers are concerned about who gets access to their personal information and want more details about how it is used before giving consent, according to (Limpf et al, [2015](#)). Mobile advertisers have a duty to convey acceptable messages while attempting to avoid compromising privacy or security concerns (Liu et al., [2012](#)). Permission marketing looks to be a good strategy to address legal challenges and privacy concerns and to communicate with customers. These justifications lead us to the hypothesis that:

H4: Privacy concern has a negative effect on attitude towards permission-based marketing.

Intrusiveness and Permission-Based Marketing

An earlier study found that when communication is perceived as annoying, obtrusive, or unsettling, customers respond less favorably to it. Consumers' attitudes toward mobile advertising are negatively obstructed by perceived annoyance, which is characterized as one source of aggravation. Consumers' negative reactions to internet banner ads are explained by their perceived intrusiveness. Consumers are frequently irritated by traditional and digital marketing communications. Overwhelming amounts of marketing messages make it difficult for consumers to actually distinguish between opt-in and spam (Maseeh et al, [2023](#)). Consumers will ultimately express the same unfavorable sentiment towards permission-based marketing as a result of such experiences. (Soares & Pinho, [2014](#)). Companies should also try to send amusing digital messages to lessen users' perception of intrusiveness and initiate a more positive attitude toward the message (Luna et al., [2013](#)).

Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H5: Intrusiveness has a positive effect on attitude towards permission-based marketing.

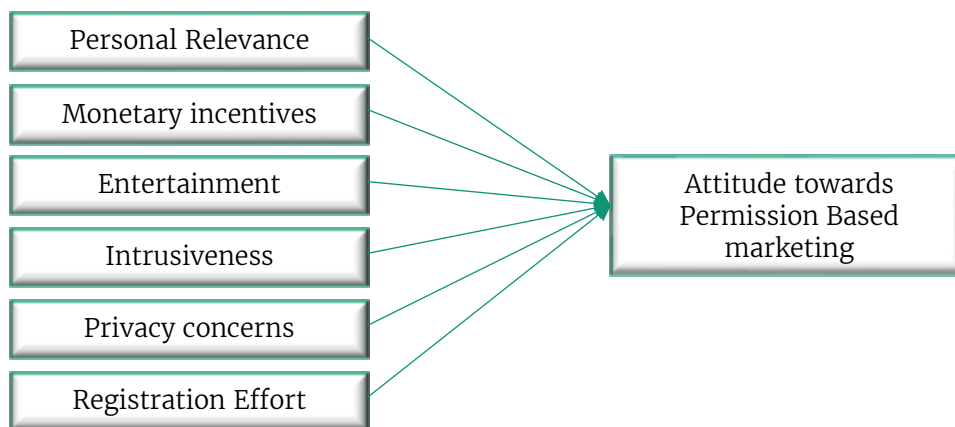
Registration Effort and Permission-Based Marketing

Sign-up processes must be fulfilled for each consumer to obtain permission-based direct marketing. When deciding to accept interactive marketing communications, the perceived cost of the registration process (time and/or effort) might be a roadblock. When reading the terms and conditions during the registration process, consumers may become disturbed, perplexed, or even scared, stopping them from giving their approval. Thus, a significant barrier to enrolling in consumer interaction programs is a high registration effort. Consumers must go through time-consuming sign-up procedures in order to obtain permission-based direct marketing messages, claim Krafft et al. (2017). Customers' willingness to consent to receiving information about marketing promotions is negatively impacted by the quantity and complexity of the information requested by the business (Krishnamurthy, 2006). On the basis of these studies, we conclude:

H6: Registration effort has a positive effect on attitude towards permission-based marketing.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework



Research Methodology

The population of the current study is young students in all Universities of Pakistan because they are frequent users of internet services, carry necessary gadgets with them, and remain online most of the time. Convenience sampling was used, and data were collected from students using an online questionnaire. Formal emails were sent to different groups, and it was also shared with various students' social media groups. The questionnaire attached a formal permission letter for the survey, which assured the anonymity of the data. A total of 298 students responded to the survey. Because the survey was online, we cannot decide the response rate. The survey was shared through different social media platforms, and many students saw the questionnaire but did not respond. The majority of the students belong to AJK Universities. The possible reason may be the researcher's network in the particular geographic area. However, the response was collectively diverse.

Measurement of Variables

The five-point Likert scale for the survey was adapted from different valid sources. Perceived relevance items are extracted from Krafft et al. (2017), two perceived financial incentive elements are extracted from Krafft et al. (2017), and three perceived entertainment elements and two perceived consumer empowerment elements are taken. Swain et al. (2023) provided two measures relating to perceived intrusiveness; Krafft et al. (2017) provided two items relating to perceived privacy concerns, and Krafft et al. (2017) provided two items pertaining to perceived registration effort. Regarding permission, marketing was taken into consideration.

Research Findings and Results

The data were analyzed using SPSS21 and SmartPLS3 software, and the PLS-SEM technique was used for data analysis.

**Table 1**

Statistics

	Gander	Age	Education
Valid	298	298	297
Missing	0	0	1

Note: This analysis shows that the total sample size is 298, and the targeted sample is well-experienced and educated. There is one missing data in education and nine missing data in experience (Table 1).

Table 2

Gender

	Frequency	Percentage
Male	117	39.3
Female	181	60.7
Total	298	100.0

Note: The analysis shows that out of 298 people, 117 (39.3%) were male and 181(60.7%) were female. The analysis showed that the majority of the respondents were females in the study.

Table 3

Age

	Frequency	Percentage
18-25	66	22.1
26-33	118	39.6
34-41	93	31.2
42-49	19	6.4
50 and above	2	.7
Total	298	100.0

Note: In the current study, 66 (22.1%) respondents belonged to age group 1, 118 (39.6%) respondents belonged to age group 2 years, 93(31.2%) employees belonged to age limit within group 3 years, 19(6.4%) employees lie in the range of group 4, and only 2(.7%) respondents are Above 50 years (Table 3).

Table 4

Component Matrix

Construct	Standardize loading	Alpha	CR	AVE
Personal relevance				
PR1				
PR2	.678	.715	.839	.636
PR3				
Monetary Incentives				
MI 1				
MI 2	0.731	0.70	60.871	0.722
Entertainment				
Ent1				
Ent2				
Ent3	0.727	0.587	0.76	0.526
Intrusiveness				
Intrusive1				
Intrusive2				
Intrusive3	.553	0.720	0.873	0.776
Privacy Concern				
PrivCon1				
PrivCon2	.578	0.715	0.891	0.805
Registration				

Reg1	.693	0.684	0.470	0.417
Reg2				
Permission based marketing				
PBM1				
PBM2				
PBM3	.673	0.471	0.733	0.487

The model specified in this study has seven constructs with reflective measurement models. Table 1 reveals that the composite reliability value is 0.893 for personal relevance, 0.871 for monetary incentives, 0.763 for entertainment, 0.873 for intrusiveness, 0.891 for privacy concern, 0.470 for registration, and 0.733 for permission-based marketing. This finding demonstrates six variables have a satisfactory level of internal consistency reliability. In this example, the average age variance extracted value is 0.636 for personal relevance, 0.722 for monetary incentives, 0.526 for entertainment, 0.776 for intrusiveness, 0.805 for privacy concerns, 0.417 for registration, and 0.487 for permission-based marketing. Since five values are above 0.5, the measure used in this study has a high level of convergent validity.

Discrimination validity was assessed via the Fornel-Lacker criterion. Table 2 shows that the square root of AVE of reflective construct personal Relevance, Monetary Incentives, Entertainment, intrusiveness, privacy concern, Registration effort, and permission-based marketing is larger than the corresponding latent variable correlation (LVC)

Table 5
Discriminant Validity

	APBM	Ent	Intrusiveness	MI	PR	PC	RE
APBM	0.692						
Ent	0.370	0.725					
Intrusiveness	0.256	-0.026	0.881				
MI	0.384	0.593	0.185	0.897			
PR	0.377	0.565	0.297	0.519	0.519		
PC	-0.034	-0.169	0.268	-0.106	0.092	0.897	
RE	0.313	0.114	0.451	0.262	0.173	0.186	0.646

Figure 2
Structural Model with T-values

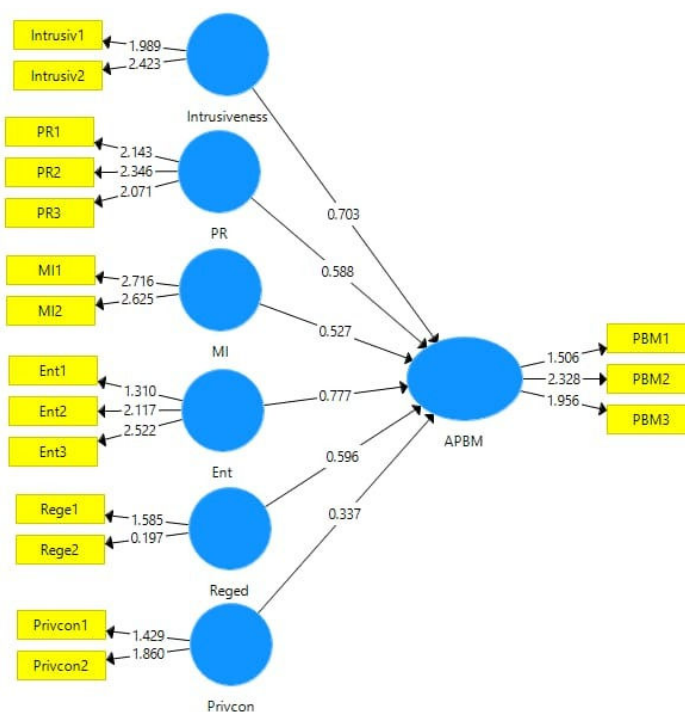




Figure 3

Structure Model with path co-efficient

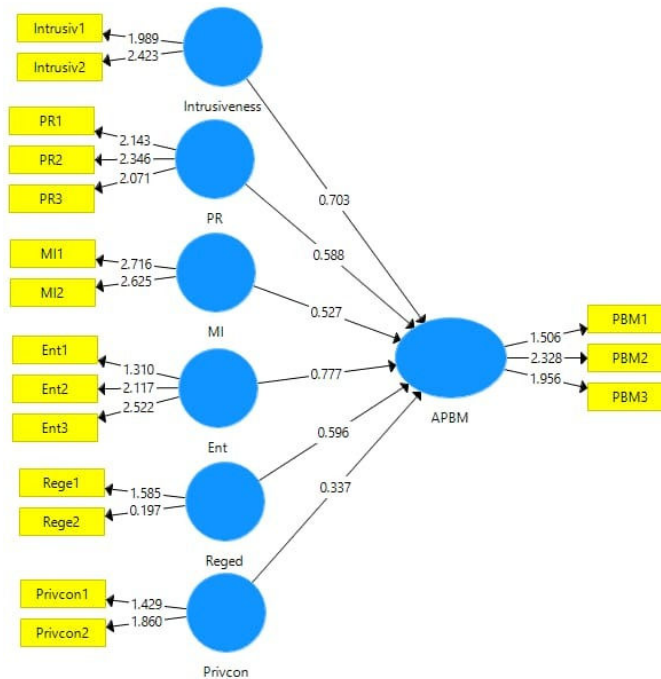


Table 6

Path Coefficient

	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values
Ent → APBM	0.188	0.225	0.243	0.777	0.438
Intrusiveness → APBM	0.129	0.150	0.184	0.703	0.482
MI → APBM	0.115	0.136	0.218	0.527	0.598
PR → APBM	0.146	0.136	0.248	0.588	0.557
PrivCon → APBM	-0.073	-0.026	0.218	0.337	0.736
Reg → APBM	0.192	0.047	0.322	0.596	0.551

Table 6 shows the Original sample, the sample mean, standard deviation, T statistics, and P values of variables. The beta value of PR on APBM is 0.146 with a mean of personal relevance of 0.136, a standard deviation of 0.248, a T statistic of 0.588, and a P value of 0.557, which shows the insignificant relationship between these two variables; hence, H1 is not supported. The beta value of MI is 0.115, with a T value of 0.527 and a P value of 0.598. Hence, H2 is not supported. The original sample of entertainment effect on attitude toward permission-based marketing is 0.188 with a sample mean of 0.225, a standard deviation of 0.243, T statistics of 0.777, and a p-value of 0.438, which is the insignificant result. Hence, H3 is not supported. The beta value of privacy concern is -0.073 with a Sample mean of -0.026, standard deviation of 0.218, T statistic of 0.337, and P value of 0.736, which shows that the results are insignificant and don't support H4. The beta value of intrusiveness on APBM is 0.129 with a Sample mean of 0.150, a standard deviation of 0.184, a T statistic of 0.703, and a P value of 0.482, which is also an insignificant result. H5 is not supported. The beta value of registration on APBM is 0.192 with a Sample mean of 0.047, standard deviation of 0.322, T statistic of 0.596, and P value of 0.551. Hence, the results are insignificant and don't support H6.

Discussion

H1: has not been supported due to insignificant results. One of the reasons is information bombardment. Nowadays, this is an era of information flow. A large amount of messages are being sent by different companies to customers regarding their products and services, etc., so due to a lot of messages and emails, customers somehow lose their interest in such types of messages. They don't consider that stuff as relevant stuff for them because the information flow to the customer is too much. A lot of companies approach

customers within a short span of time. Secondly, the customers are not that aware of the facts, and they don't consider anything relevant to them unless and until they have detailed information about anything.

Thirdly, they are reluctant to consider online messages to them as important because of cybercrimes and online fraud. The financial issue also has a role because the per capita income of the people is quite low, so they don't consider ads important and relevant for them. Their focus is mostly on household items. Sometimes, even if they consider anything important for them, they still don't buy because of a lack of resources in the current era of high inflation. The relationship between personal relevance and attitude toward permission-based marketing was rebuilt, which was reflected in many previous research studies conducted by many researchers, too. Customers who understand that any promotional message is pertinent to their needs have a positive perception of permission-based marketing.

The study outcomes are not aligned with the previous studies because, in the Pakistani context, perception may be different on the basis of experiences and the lack of online E-commerce trends in the country.

H2: is not supported due to insignificant results. Due to a lack of awareness, most people lost their money because of fraud from cyber-attacks like fake messages from Jeeto Pakistan and the Benazir income support program. Through these messages, people are asked to send them a certain amount of money via easy paisa, and then they send back the amount of Jeeto Pakistan or Benazir income support program. So how do they make people fool? So, due to a lack of awareness, people tend to lose interest in any sort of monetary incentives that are being offered by companies. Monetary incentives motivate consumers towards permission-based marketing.

The customers who give permission for online marketing and want to be in touch with the company for those monetary incentives are very important, and there is a positive impact of monetary incentives on permission marketing. The previous studies found that when customers are given monetary incentives, they allow marketers to send them promotional messages, but our results contradict previous studies. A possible reason may be bad experiences may lead customers to distrust online products. Customers do not believe unless they experience it.

H3: is supported due to insignificant results. Now, the facility of internet is available to each and every person. People tend to watch everything on the internet because they do not have enough time to watch different types of ads again and again. They have the source of extracting information at any time from YouTube, so people do not consider entertainment as beneficial for them. Previous studies show that perceived entertainment develop consumer attitude toward permission-based marketing. The current study result contradicts the previous studies and started a new debate in the scholar's community.

H4: is not sported because of insignificant results. The main reason is people have a fear of hacking in their minds. They thought that if they shared their information, the hacker would hack all the data from their phone. So that people are reluctant to share their information. Secondly, the culture of AJK is basically not that liberal, so people tend to shy and run away from sharing their information because they have fear in their mind that the company with whom they are sharing information can leak their information, and it will create a lot of problems for them. The study explored that privacy concerns have an insignificant impact on permission-based marketing. The outcome demonstrates that customers pay close attention to the privacy of their personal information.

H5: is not supported because of insignificant results. The customer tends to get irritated because of the repetitive messages from certain companies about their products. So they don't consider their products relevant to their needs and wants.

H6: is not supported because of insignificant results. People don't like the lengthy and complicated process of registration. Due to the confusing language used throughout the registration procedure, people occasionally become irate and perplexed. Due to this, they cancel the registration process. When marketing communications are seen as obtrusive, bothersome, or irritating, consumers ignore them because of the fear of receiving too many communication messages. The consumers have specifically said that they have decided to cut the relationship with the company.



So, customers make an effort to avoid all interactions with the business that sends them communication materials. Moreover, for the registration effort as the factor, it was reported that consumers are likely to give up on the registration procedure with a company if they believe the benefits outweigh the effort needed. Consumers are less likely to consent to receiving information about marketing promotions when there is a lot of information requested of them, and it is complicated.

Conclusion

The findings of the study draw the conclusion that today, Personalization is a key factor in enticing users to open and read ads on SMS. Customers are more likely to embrace and approve advertisement communications to businesses as long as these notifications are of the view that they profit from them. In tailored communications, more specific deals are given, which leads to clients reacting to a company's direct marketing efforts. Overwhelming amounts of marketing messages make it difficult for consumers to actually distinguish between opt-in and spam. Enjoyment predicts consumer's consent to use private information. On the other hand, consumers are also worried about privacy aspects and avoid long procedures.

The process of giving consent to receive promotion-related material can be hampered by the perceived time and effort costs. The confusing and frustrating language used during the registration procedure might occasionally lead to customers canceling their registrations. Because of this, it is thought that registering interactive marketing messages requires more time and effort. This implies that marketers, in order to attract customers towards permission-based marketing, should ensure that the procedures are short and simplified enough for the consumer to be attracted to it. Also, privacy must be focused as a major factor because consumers are quite skeptical about privacy factors.

Limitations and Future Recommendations

The study has limitations such as a small sample size and financial resources deficiency, and there was also a limitation of time constraints because the study was a student's academic research project, and it was supposed to be completed in a specific time frame. It could have a broader horizon in different segments of populations but was limited to students. The sample size was also small, so it is recommended that in future studies, a large sample size should be used with diverse populations and with a vast geographic spread.

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