

An Empirical Study on the Adoption of Digital Media Marketing among Rural Enterprises in Virudhunagar District

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Abstract

The present study examines the adoption of digital media marketing and its influence on the growth of rural entrepreneurship in Virudhunagar District, Tamil Nadu. The study is based on primary data collected from 200 rural entrepreneurs using a structured questionnaire. A descriptive and analytical research design was adopted, and the data were analyzed using statistical tools such as reliability analysis, correlation, and linear regression through Jamovi. The reliability results indicate high internal consistency of the scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.968$). The regression analysis reveals a strong relationship between digital media marketing and growth ($R = 0.988$, $R^2 = 0.977$), indicating that digital marketing significantly contributes to business growth. Among the variables, social media and video marketing were found to have a significant positive impact, while e-commerce platforms, email marketing, and search engine marketing showed no significant influence. The findings highlight the importance of digital transformation in enhancing rural enterprise performance and suggest the need for increased awareness and effective utilization of digital marketing tools.

Keywords: *Digital Media Marketing, Rural Entrepreneurship, Business Growth, Social Media Marketing, Video Marketing, Digital Adoption*

1. Introduction

Digital transformation has significantly reshaped the way businesses operate, particularly in the field of marketing. The emergence of digital media marketing tools such as social media, search engine marketing, email marketing, video marketing, and e-commerce platforms has created new opportunities for business growth and customer engagement. In recent years, rural entrepreneurs have increasingly begun to adopt these digital tools to enhance their market reach and competitiveness.

Rural enterprises, which traditionally relied on conventional marketing methods, are now gradually shifting towards digital platforms due to increased internet penetration and Smartphone usage. This shift not only helps in cost-effective promotion but also enables entrepreneurs to connect with a wider audience beyond geographical boundaries.

Despite these advantages, the extent of adoption and its impact on the growth of rural entrepreneurship remains an important area of study. Therefore, this research focuses on analyzing the adoption of digital media marketing and its influence on the growth of rural enterprises in Virudhunagar District.

2. Review of Literature

Recent studies highlight that digital marketing has become a key driver of business growth, especially for small and medium enterprises. A systematic review published in the *Journal of Indian Business Research* (2023) found that digital marketing significantly influences SME performance, though its impact varies depending on the strategy adopted. Similarly, recent research indicates that tools such as social media, search engine optimization, and e-commerce platforms help businesses overcome traditional barriers, improve customer engagement, and enhance competitiveness. Empirical evidence also suggests that organizational capabilities and innovation play a crucial role in determining the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies in improving business performance.

Further, recent studies (2023–2024) emphasize that digital marketing adoption enables SMEs to expand their customer base, increase sales, and improve brand visibility. However, challenges such as lack of technical knowledge, limited resources, and inadequate

infrastructure continue to hinder effective implementation. Bibliometric and review studies also reveal a growing research interest in digital transformation and marketing practices, highlighting the importance of data-driven strategies and digital capabilities for sustainable growth. Overall, the literature confirms that while digital marketing positively impacts business growth, its effectiveness depends on the level of adoption and the ability of enterprises to utilize digital tools efficiently.

3. Statement of the Problem

In the rapidly evolving digital era, businesses are increasingly adopting digital media marketing tools to enhance their performance and competitiveness. While urban enterprises have widely embraced these technologies, rural entrepreneurs still face challenges in effectively adopting and utilizing digital marketing strategies due to limited awareness, digital literacy, and infrastructural constraints. Although digital media marketing offers benefits such as wider market reach, cost efficiency, and improved customer engagement, its actual impact on the growth of rural entrepreneurship remains unclear. In particular, there is a lack of empirical evidence examining how different digital marketing tools influence business growth in rural areas like Virudhunagar District. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by analyzing the adoption of digital media marketing and its effect on the growth of rural enterprises

4. Objectives of the Study

- ↳ To analyze the adoption of digital media marketing among rural entrepreneurs.
- ↳ To examine the influence of digital media marketing on the growth of rural entrepreneurship.
- ↳ To identify the most effective digital marketing tools contributing to business growth.
- ↳ To assess the relationship between digital media marketing variables and growth.
- ↳ To provide suggestions for improving digital marketing adoption among rural enterprises.

5. Hypotheses

H₀: There is no Relationship between Digital Media Marketing and Growth of Rural Entrepreneurship

6. Research Methodology

The present study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to examine the adoption of digital media marketing among rural enterprises and its influence on their growth in Virudhunagar District, Tamil Nadu. The study is primarily based on primary data collected through a structured questionnaire administered to rural entrepreneurs. The questionnaire includes sections on demographic profile, adoption of digital media marketing tools, and growth-related factors, measured using a five-point Likert scale. A total of 200 respondents were selected using a convenience sampling technique, ensuring adequate representation of rural business units.

The collected data were analyzed using Jamovi to derive meaningful insights. The study considers Social Media, E-Commerce Platform, Email Marketing, Search Engine Marketing, and Video Marketing as independent variables, while Growth of Rural Entrepreneurship is treated as the dependent variable. Various statistical tools such as descriptive statistics, reliability analysis (Cronbach's Alpha and McDonald's Omega), correlation analysis, and linear regression were employed to examine relationships and test the hypothesis.

7. Analysis and Interpretation

7.1. Demographic & Business Profile of the Respondents (N = 200)

S. No.	Particular	Result
1.	Gender Distribution	There is an equal distribution of male and female respondents (50% each), ensuring a balanced gender representation. This indicates that both men and women are equally participating in the adoption of digital media marketing.
2.	Age Distribution	The majority of respondents (60.8%) belong to the age group of 20–40 years, indicating that young and middle-aged entrepreneurs are more inclined towards adopting digital media marketing tools.

3.	Educational Background	The respondents have diverse educational backgrounds, with the highest proportion holding undergraduate degrees (26.9%) and a significant share having postgraduate qualifications (20.8%), suggesting that education plays a role in digital adoption.
4.	Marital Status	A majority of respondents (52.3%) are married, indicating that individuals with family responsibilities are also actively engaging in digital entrepreneurship.
5.	Form of Business	The majority of respondents (69.2%) operate sole proprietorship businesses, reflecting that individual ownership influences decision-making in adopting digital media marketing.
6.	Types of Business	Most respondents (64.6%) are engaged in trading activities, suggesting that trading businesses are more likely to adopt digital marketing for promotion and sales.
7.	Monthly Turnover	A considerable portion (45.4%) earns less than ₹25,000 per month, highlighting that even small-scale entrepreneurs are adopting digital media marketing.
8.	Registration Status	A notable proportion (44.6%) is registered entrepreneurs, indicating moderate formalization which may influence digital adoption.
9.	First Generation Entrepreneurship	The majority (76.9%) are first-generation entrepreneurs, suggesting that new entrants are more open to adopting digital marketing practices.
10.	Years of Adoption of Digital Media Marketing	Most respondents have adopted digital media marketing within the last 5 years, indicating a recent and growing trend of digitalization among rural enterprises.

Source: Primary Data

7.2. Adoption of Digital Media Marketing

Reliability Analysis

Table :1 Scale Reliability Statistics

	Cronbach's α	McDonald's ω
scale	0.968	0.970

Source: Calculated Data.

The reliability analysis of the scale measuring the adoption of digital media marketing shows excellent internal consistency, with Cronbach's Alpha ($\alpha = 0.968$) and McDonald's Omega ($\omega = 0.970$). These values are well above the recommended threshold of 0.7, indicating that the scale is highly reliable for measuring the construct.

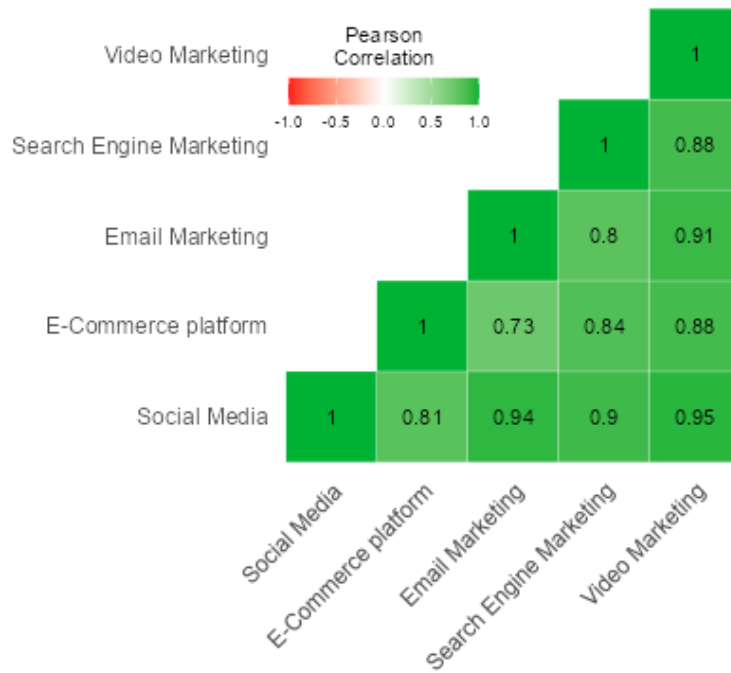
Table : 2 Item Reliability Statistics

	If item dropped	
	Cronbach's α	McDonald's ω
Social Media	0.952	0.955
E-Commerce platform	0.970	0.972
Email Marketing	0.965	0.966
Search Engine Marketing	0.963	0.965
Video Marketing	0.952	0.954

Source: Calculated Data.

The item-wise analysis indicates that the Cronbach's Alpha values, if any item is deleted, range from 0.952 to 0.970. Since all values remain high, it confirms that each item—Social Media, E-Commerce Platform, Email Marketing, Search Engine Marketing, and Video Marketing—contributes significantly to the overall scale. Therefore, no item needs to be removed, and all variables are retained for further analysis.

Figure: 1 Correlation Heatmap



The correlation heatmap indicates a strong positive association among the digital media marketing variables, suggesting that these factors are interrelated. This implies that enterprises adopting one form of digital marketing are likely to adopt others as well.

7.3. Adoption of Digital Media Marketing Influence the Growth of Rural Entrepreneurship

Ho: There is no Relationship between Digital Media Marketing and The Growth of Rural Entrepreneurship

Linear Regression

Table: 3 Model Fit Measures

Model	R	R ²
1	0.988	0.977

Note. Models estimated using sample size of N=200

Source: Calculated Data.

The model fit results show a very strong correlation ($R = 0.988$) between digital media marketing variables and growth. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.977$) indicates that 97.7% of the variation in growth is explained by the independent variables included in the model. This demonstrates an excellent model fit and high explanatory power.

Table: 4 Omnibus ANOVA Test

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Social Media	2.11075	1	2.11075	87.9309	<.001
E-Commerce platform	0.04849	1	0.04849	2.0199	0.157
Email Marketing	8.01e-4	1	8.01e-4	0.0334	0.855
Search Engine Marketing	0.00418	1	0.00418	0.1741	0.677
Video Marketing	2.68469	1	2.68469	111.8403	<.001
Residuals	4.65691	194	0.02400		

Source: Calculated Data.

The ANOVA results reveal that Social Media ($F = 87.9309$, $p < 0.001$) and Video Marketing ($F = 111.8403$, $p < 0.001$) have a statistically significant effect on the growth of rural entrepreneurship. In contrast, E-Commerce Platform ($p = 0.157$), Email Marketing ($p = 0.855$), and Search Engine Marketing ($p = 0.677$) do not exhibit a significant influence, as their p-values exceed the 0.05 level. This indicates that only selected digital marketing tools significantly contribute to growth.

Table: 6 Model Coefficients - Overall Growth

Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	p
Intercept	-0.23796	0.0517	-4.607	<.001
Social Media	0.48455	0.0517	9.377	<.001
E-Commerce platform	0.04105	0.0289	1.421	0.157
Email Marketing	0.00614	0.0336	0.183	0.855
Search Engine Marketing	-0.01127	0.0270	-0.417	0.677
Video Marketing	0.54055	0.0511	10.575	<.001

Source: Calculated Data.

The regression coefficients indicate the influence of each digital media marketing variable on the growth of rural entrepreneurship. The intercept value ($\beta = -0.23796$, $p < 0.001$) is statistically significant, representing the baseline level of growth when all predictors are held constant.

Among the independent variables, Social Media ($\beta = 0.48455$, $p < 0.001$) and Video Marketing ($\beta = 0.54055$, $p < 0.001$) show a positive and statistically significant impact on growth. This implies that an increase in the use of social media and video marketing leads to a significant improvement in business growth, with video marketing emerging as the most influential factor.

On the other variables such as E-Commerce Platform ($\beta = 0.04105$, $p = 0.157$), Email Marketing ($\beta = 0.00614$, $p = 0.855$), and Search Engine Marketing ($\beta = -0.01127$, $p = 0.677$) do not have a statistically significant effect on growth, as their p-values exceed the 0.05 level. Although e-commerce and email marketing show a positive relationship, their impact is minimal, while search engine marketing shows a negative but insignificant relationship.

Overall, the results suggest that only selected digital media marketing tools particularly social media and video marketing play a significant role in enhancing the growth of rural entrepreneurship.

8. Findings

- ↳ The study reveals that rural entrepreneurs show a high level of adoption of digital media marketing tools, supported by strong reliability ($\alpha = 0.968$).
- ↳ The demographic analysis indicates that young and middle-aged entrepreneurs (20–40 years) are more active in adopting digital marketing practices.
- ↳ The majority of respondents are first-generation entrepreneurs, showing openness to digital transformation.
- ↳ The regression results indicate a very strong relationship ($R = 0.988$) between digital media marketing and growth of rural entrepreneurship.

- ↳ The model explains 97.7% of variation ($R^2 = 0.977$) in growth, indicating high explanatory power.
- ↳ Among the variables, Social Media and Video Marketing have a significant positive impact on growth.
- ↳ E-Commerce Platform, Email Marketing, and Search Engine Marketing do not show significant influence on growth.

9. Suggestions / Recommendations

- ↳ Rural entrepreneurs should focus more on social media and video marketing, as they significantly influence business growth.
- ↳ Training programs should be conducted to improve awareness and effective usage of e-commerce platforms, email marketing, and search engine marketing.
- ↳ Government and support agencies should provide digital marketing training and infrastructure support in rural areas.
- ↳ Entrepreneurs should adopt an integrated digital marketing strategy instead of relying on a single tool.
- ↳ Efforts should be made to improve digital literacy among rural entrepreneurs, especially for advanced tools like SEO and email marketing.
- ↳ Financial assistance and incentives may be provided to encourage technology adoption and digital expansion.

10. Conclusion

The study concludes that digital media marketing plays a significant role in enhancing the growth of rural entrepreneurship. The findings indicate a strong relationship between digital marketing adoption and business growth. Among various tools, social media and video marketing emerge as the most effective strategies for improving entrepreneurial performance. However, other tools such as e-commerce platforms, email marketing, and search engine marketing do not show a significant impact in the present study, indicating the need for better awareness and utilization. Overall, the study highlights the importance of digital transformation in promoting sustainable growth among rural enterprises

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