

Permission Marketing: A Systematic Review of 22 Years of Research

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Permission Marketing: A Systematic Review of 22 Years of Research

Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to systematically review the permission marketing (PM) literature by synthesizing research papers in this domain.

Design/Methodology: This study adopted a hybrid review method comprising structured literature review and lexicometric analysis.

Findings: This study examines the development of PM research over time in terms of contexts, methods and theories. Further, this review proposes a conceptual framework showing the relationships between the antecedents, mediators, moderator and consequences reported in the PM literature.

Practical implications: This review gives critical insights for implementing permission-based marketing campaigns.

Originality/value: This systematic review synthesised literature on PM domain. Further, this study provides directions with respect to alternative theories, context, characteristics and methods to extend research on this domain.

Keywords: *Permission marketing, systematic literature review, mobile/email marketing, lexicometric analysis*

1. Introduction

Greater penetration of internet and smartphone led to widespread use of e-mail marketing and mobile advertising in recent years (Maseeh et al., 2021; Yang et al., 2018). It is evident from the fact that digital advertisement spending stood at USD 325 billion in 2019 which is estimated to reach USD 526.17 billion by 2024 worldwide (Statista, 2021)¹. However, a greater use of mobile/e-mail marketing results in cluttering customers' inboxes with unsolicited commercial messages. This raises serious doubt about the effectiveness of mobile/e-mail marketing (Grant and O'Donohoe, 2007). However, permission marketing approach provides a potential solution to the problem related to unsolicited promotional messages (Krafft et al., 2017).

Permission marketing (PM) is defined as an approach to direct marketing that ensures taking customers' consent to receive promotional communication (Godin, 1999). PM reduces consumers' cost, time and effort for information search. It also helps marketers reach their target segments with a greater precision (Krishnamurthy, 2001; Marinova et al, 2002). PM makes consumers gain control over the frequency, time, place and content of messages they receive (Watson et al., 2002; Blomqvist et al., 2005). Research on PM gained momentum after the seminal work of Godin (1999). PM has been researched broadly relating to mobile marketing/SMS advertising (Jayawardhena et al., 2009; Im and Ha, 2013) and e-mail/online marketing (Reimers et al., 2016; Mahmoud et al., 2019) in several business contexts, such as hotel booking (Theocharidis et al, 2020), online shopping (Reimers et al, 2016), online gambling (Jolley et al, 2013) and entertainment services (Karjaluoto et al, 2008). While several studies have examined the drivers and barriers of consumers' attitude towards and/or interest in PM (Kraft et al, 2017; Bhatia, 2020), some studies examine the impact of PM on consumers'

¹ Digital advertising spending worldwide from 2018 to 2024 <https://www.statista.com/statistics/237974/online-advertising-spending-worldwide/>

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3 perceived value (Reimers et al, 2016), customer life-time value (Jolley et al, 2013) and
4 customer equity (Dreze and Bonfrer, 2008).
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8 Although researchers have investigated various factors driving consumers' intention to
9 participate in PM (Krafft et al., 2017; Bhatia, 2020), inconsistent findings presented by
10 previous studies limit a comprehensive understanding of these factors. Further, the literature
11 presents a fragmented outlook of theoretical underpinnings of PM research because researchers
12 used diverse theoretical views to study PM phenomenon (Reimers et al., 2016; Kurtz et al.,
13 2021). Moreover, PM has been studied across different channels of communication, such as
14 email (Mahmoud et al., 2019) and SMS (Kurtz et al., 2021).
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24 The above discussion indicates that regardless of several studies on PM, the literature
25 in this domain remains largely incoherent and fragmented. This is because the existing
26 knowledge about PM has not yet been systematically reviewed or synthesised to present
27 various factors driving consumers' responses to PM, various theoretical underpinnings of PM
28 research or different channels of PM campaigns. Therefore, a systematic literature review
29 (SLR) is essential for a well-grounded synthesis of the PM literature. Hence, this review sets
30 the following three objectives. First - to synthesize the PM literature to understand the
31 development of research in this domain. Second - to present a conceptual framework based on
32 the synthesis of the literature. Third - to put forward the directions for future research on PM.
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45 This study presents several academic as well as practical implications. Novelty of this study is
46 depicted through the proposed conceptual framework. This framework is the first of its kind
47 that demonstrates all sets of drivers of PM, different customer responses to PM and factors
48 mediating these responses, thus providing an overall understanding of PM. Further, this review
49 provides future research directions to advance the PM research in terms of alternative theories,
50 contexts, constructs and methodologies. Outcomes of the study also hold strategic significance
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3 for marketing managers, advertisers and retailers in effectively implementing PM campaigns
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5 to achieve favourable customer responses.
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8 **2. Methodology**

9 **2.1 Structure of the review**

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12 This study uses a combination of structured literature review with lexicometric analyses to
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14 synthesise the extant PM literature. Structured review provides a comprehensive synthesis of
15
16 the literature (Gopalkrishnan & Ganeshkumar, 2013) and highlights gaps in the literature,
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18 thereby providing future research avenues in a domain (Corbet et al., 2019). A lexicometric
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20 analysis follows an exhaustive analysis of the textual data to reveal the underlying clusters or
21
22 major themes of the literature domain (Abhayawansa, 2011).
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27 **2.2 Search strategy**

28 **2.2.1 Keyword selection**

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31 Consistent with Talwar et al.'s (2020) study, the authors carried out an initial search on Google
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33 Scholar using the keyword "permission marketing". In the first 25 search results, the authors
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35 observed that "permission marketing", "permission-based marketing", and "opt-in marketing"
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37 were the recurring keywords. Four experts working in the same domain were also consulted
38
39 and based on their consent, the above-mentioned keywords were used with 'OR', and 'AND'
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41 Boolean operators to search for relevant published articles across various databases.
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43 Combining these keywords, the following search string was used to perform article search:
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45 (permission AND market*) OR (permission-based AND market*) OR (permission based AND
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47 market*) OR (opt-in AND market*) OR (opt in AND market*).
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54 **2.2.2 Database selection and article search**

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57 Articles were searched using shortlisted keywords on more than eight online databases:
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59 Emerald, ProQuest, Springer, JSTOR, Wiley Online Library, Sage, EBSCO Host, Scopus,
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3 ScienceDirect, Web of Science, Taylor & Francis, and Google Scholar. All the papers using
4 selected keywords in the title, abstract or keyword list, were considered for this SLR with
5 cognizance of inclusion and exclusion criteria.
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10 **2.3 Journal selection and inclusion/exclusion criteria**

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13 We adopted the process suggested by Voola et al. (2022) to select the articles included for this
14 review.
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19 *Identification:* Initially, 538 records were identified from the selected databases using the
20 search keywords. Subsequently, duplicate records (396 records) that were downloaded twice
21 or more were excluded from the list.
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26 *Screening and Eligibility:* After excluding 396 records, 142 records were screened as per the
27 article inclusion/exclusion criteria. Accordingly, a manuscript to qualify for this SLR, it should
28 be (1) a scholarly work, (2) associated with PM, (3) published in a peer-reviewed journal.
29 Additionally, to ensure the quality of the review, only articles published in journals rated as A*
30 or A by Australian Business Deans Council (ABDC) Journal Quality List or in journals having
31 an impact factor one or more in Journal Citation Report (JCR) were shortlisted (Paul and
32 Criado, 2020). Accordingly, 68 non-scholarly articles and 22 articles published in non-peer-
33 reviewed journals were dropped. Further, nine articles were excluded due to non-conformance
34 with the journal quality criteria. Thus, remaining 43 articles entered the eligibility stage.
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48 *Inclusion:* The 43 full-text articles meeting the eligibility criteria were thoroughly read. Out of
49 them, five articles were excluded as they lacked focus on PM. Thus, the remaining 38 articles
50 were included for this review.
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55 [Insert Figure 1 here]
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3. Findings and Discussion

Details of the 38 articles are presented in Table 1 which shows that the PM research has evolved over 22 years starting from 2000 to 2021. The 38 research papers selected for this study have been published in 28 academic journals belonging to different fields, such as marketing, business management, information systems and tourism.

Critical observation shows that PM has been studied broadly in the contexts of mobile marketing (Kurtz et al., 2021; Tong et al., 2020), e-mail marketing (Yang et al., 2018; Mahmoud et al., 2019), and retail/e-commerce (Theocharidis et al., 2020; Krafft et al., 2021). Researchers in PM have mainly examined the factors driving consumers' willingness to provide personal information and participate in a PM campaign (Bhatia, 2020; Krafft et al., 2017) and outcomes of permission marketing, such as increased sales/purchase (Zhang et al., 2017; Reimers et al., 2016), customer retention / loyalty (Yang et al., 2018; Jolley et al., 2013) and customer equity (Dreeze and Bonfrer, 2008).

[Insert Table 1 here]

3.1 Methodological perspectives

3.1.1 Research settings

This section synthesizes the PM literature in terms of the countries where the data were collected from. Accordingly, only empirical studies involving primary data (30 papers) were considered. Table 2 presents the list of 22 countries where PM research has been carried out. Country-wise distribution shows that 63.5% of the research was conducted in five western countries, namely USA (eight studies) followed by UK and Germany (five studies each) and Finland and Australia (four studies each). Overall, this distribution suggests that PM research is mainly concentrated in the Western contexts.

[Insert Table 2 here]

3.1.2 *Research design and data collection*

Table 3 shows that slightly over 50% of papers (20 out of 38 papers) adopted survey-based design while five studies adopted experimental design. Other studies employed qualitative-method (three papers), mixed-method (two papers) and conceptual approach (eight papers). However, we did not find any systematic review paper on PM, justifying the need for a SLR on this domain.

[Inset Table 3 here]

Further, 15 survey-based studies and four experimental studies employed online method for data collection, while five survey-based studies and one experimental study employed offline method for data collection. Preference for online mode of data collection is possibly because PM campaign is mainly implemented through email marketing.

The majority of the studies (23 studies) used general consumer sample while only seven studies considered student sample. Researchers preferred general consumer sample because normally real consumers are the actual beneficiaries of PM.

3.2 Theoretical perspectives

3.2.1 Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB): In PM, Tsang et al. (2004) applied TRA to show that seeking permission to send mobile advertising builds positive consumer attitude, which further drives consumers' intention to receive mobile advertisements leading to actual behaviour. Bamba and Barnes (2007) and Jayawardhena et al. (2009) used the underpinnings of TPB to examine the role of perceived behavioural control in PM research. They argue that when consumers perceive greater control over opt-in conditions,

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3 such as time, location and frequency of receiving advertisements, they tend to grant permission
4
5 to receive SMS advertisements.
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8 *3.2.2 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM):* Reimers et al. (2016) reported that the relevance
9
10 of permission seeking e-mail improves consumers' Perceived Ease of Use (PEoU) and
11
12 Perceived Usefulness (PU) of online shopping leading to greater purchase intention. Similarly,
13
14 in the context of mobile coupons, PEoU and PU act as the enablers of consumer attitude which
15
16 in turn drives consumers' intention to grant permission to access personal information to
17
18 receive coupon deals (Im and Ha, 2013).
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23 *3.2.3 Social Exchange Theory:* Social exchange theory suggests that individuals' participation
24
25 in an exchange situation is driven by their own self-interest and cost-benefit analysis (Homans,
26
27 1961). With this underpinning, Krafft et al. (2017) evaluated various economic and
28
29 psychological costs and benefits as drivers of consumers' intention to grant permission to
30
31 receive personalized marketing communication.
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35 *3.2.4 Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) Theory:* The S-O-R framework postulates that
36
37 external stimulus generates organisms through internal psychological processes leading to a
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39 response (Jacoby, 2002). Yang et al. (2018) used the underpinnings of S-O-R framework to
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41 show that post-stay opt-in email advertisements sent by a hotelier act as external stimuli which
42
43 generate consumers' positive feelings (organism) towards a hotel brand, influencing their
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45 response; intention to revisit the hotel.
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50 *3.2.5 Uses and Gratification Theory:* Uses and gratification theory explains why people
51
52 actively seek use of a specific medium to satisfy their needs and what gratifications they get
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54 from this (Katz and Blumler, 1974). Sanden et al. (2019) applied this theory in a retail context
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56 to understand that gratifications, such as in-store entertainment and reduction in
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58 time/cost/effort in shopping drive consumers to grant permission for in-store marketing. Hence,
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3 using permission-based in-store communication helps customers accomplish their shopping
4 needs by providing greater convenience.
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8 *3.2.6 Social Contract Theory:* Social contract theory argues that when consumers share their
9 personal information with marketers, it is considered an implied social contract which is
10 breached when marketing transaction occurs without consumers' consent (Culnan, 1995).
11 Based on this understanding, Phelps et al. (2000) studied customers' willingness to provide
12 their personal information in the context of permission-based e-mail marketing. Their study
13 found that when customers have greater control over the number and type of marketing
14 communication to be received, they have a greater willingness to share their personal
15 information for receiving email marketing campaign.
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19 *3.2.7 Privacy Calculus Theory:* This theory focuses on the benefits and risks of disclosing
20 personal information, suggesting that individuals disclose their personal information if this
21 disclosure is backed by some benefits (Maseeh et al., 2021). Kurtz et al. (2021) used the
22 underpinning of this theory to articulate that the benefits and risks of providing personal
23 information significantly influence consumers' intention to disclose personal information to
24 permission-based mobile advertising.
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27 **3.3 Frequently discussed variables in PM and development of a conceptual framework**

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29 The second objective of this SLR is to develop a conceptual framework (Figure 2) integrating
30 the antecedents, mediators and consequences reported in the PM literature.
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[Insert Figure 2 here]

53 **3.3.1 Antecedents of consumer responses to PM**

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56 *3.3.1.1 Marketing communication or message related factors:* Message related factors are
57 highly important for a PM campaign (Yang et al. 2018). Relevance of marketing
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3 communication to target audience is one of the essential building blocks of PM (Godin, 1999).
4
5 Since relevance of promotional messages is key to initiate relationship with customers,
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7 'message relevance' (Bhatia, 2020) and 'content' (Yang et al, 2018) are crucial for favourable
8
9 consumer responses to PM. When promotional messages are intrusive in nature, consumers
10
11 develop negative attitude towards advertisements (Wiese et al., 2020), whereas
12
13 informativeness of promotional messages develops consumers' favourable attitude towards
14
15 mobile advertisements (Merisavo et al., 2006). Therefore, the degree of 'intrusiveness' (Bhatia,
16
17 2020), 'irritability' (Mahmoud et al., 2019) and 'informativeness' (Mahmoud et al., 2019) of
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19 the message play a key role in consumer responses to PM. Apart from these factors, the
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21 frequency and number of email/SMS and time of sending messages are vital in PM
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23 environment (Carroll et al., 2007; Dreze and Bonfrer, 2008).
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29 *3.3.1.2 Customer related factors:* Customer-related drivers are vital for a successful PM (Bauer
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31 et al., 2005). Consumers' greater perceived trust/credibility on marketer (Theocharidis et al.,
32
33 2020) develops their favourable attitudes towards PM. In general, when consumers are
34
35 innovative in nature, they tend to adopt a product/service faster (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980).
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37 Therefore, the degree of 'consumer innovativeness' propels their favourable attitude towards
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39 PM (Gao et al., 2013). Since ease of using a technology facilitates its adoption (Davis, 1989),
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41 'perceived ease of use of technology and registration effort' are crucial for acceptance of PM
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43 (Theocharidis et al., 2020). Another customer related factor driving consumers' attitude
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45 towards PM is knowledge about mobile technology (Watson et al., 2013). Consumers' attitude
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47 gets strengthened in the presence of favourable subjective/social norms associated with
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49 SMS/email marketing usage (Im and Ha, 2013). Further, when consumers perceive that they
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51 have a greater control (perceived behavioural control) over the number, frequency and time of
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53 receiving marketing communication, they develop greater intention to grant permission to
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55 receive SMS/email advertisement (Krafft et al., 2017).
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3 3.3.1.3 *Cost and benefit related factors*: The main costs related to PM are risk and privacy
4 concerns (Bhatia, 2020; Kurtz et al., 2021) that arise from possible misuse of personal
5 information and hinder consumers' willingness to participate in PM (Krafft et al., 2017).
6
7 Further, several benefit-related factors drive success of PM. One such factor is
8 'enjoyment/entertainment' (Bhatia, 2020). When consumers perceive that the promotional
9 messages are entertaining, they tend to develop positive attitude towards PM (Reimers et al.,
10 2016). When consumers perceive that the promotional messages are useful, they are willing to
11 provide their personal information and permission to receive promotional messages (Bauer et
12 al., 2005). Thus, 'usefulness/utility' of the promotional messages in terms of helping consumers
13 in their purchase decision is an important benefit (Theochridis et al, 2020). Apart from these,
14 monetary incentives, such as discounts associated with the PM drive consumers' intention to
15 give permission to receive SMS/email advertisement (Kurtz et al., 2021).
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30 **3.3.2 Mediators**

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33 As per the Technology Acceptance Model, attitude acts as a mediator while predicting
34 consumers' intention to use a technology. Further, when consumers find the marketing
35 communication as relevant, they tend to develop interest (Krishnamurthy, 2006) in PM.
36 Accordingly, the PM literature suggests that the marketing communication related factors (e.g.,
37 relevance) and consumers' evaluation of the costs and benefits of PM influence consumers'
38 attitude towards and their interest in PM which drive their participation in PM (Krishnamurthy,
39 2006).
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50 **3.3.3 Consequences or dependent variables**

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53 The frequently studied dependent variables in PM are consumers' intention/willingness to
54 provide personal information (Phelps et al, 2000; Brey et al, 2007), intention/willingness to
55 give permission to receive SMS/email advertisement (Bamba and Barnes, 2007; Krafft et al,
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2017) and acceptance of mobile/SMS marketing (Carroll et al, 2007; Gao et al, 2013). In addition, a few studies have examined consumers' purchase/intention to purchase (Reimers et al., 2016; Theocharidis et al., 2020) and probability of customer retention (Dreeze and Bonfrer, 2008) as consequences of PM. As such, researchers suggest that consumers' online purchase and probability of customer retention get boosted in a PM environment (Zhang et al., 2017; Reimers et al., 2016).

3.3.4 Moderator

PM literature suggests that when consumers have prior experience of mobile marketing, they have a greater tendency to disclose personal information in a PM campaign (Im and Ha, 2013). As such, prior experience strengthens the impact of perceived ease of use and usefulness whereas, weakens the impact of risk and privacy concerns as well as subjective norms/social norms (Im and Ha, 2013). Hence, consumers' prior experience acts as a moderator that facilitates consumers' intention to participate in a PM campaign.

3.5 Results of lexicometric analysis

A lexicometric analysis (similarity analysis and factorial correspondence analysis) was executed on the corpus of 38 articles selected for the review. The outputs are presented in Figure 3.

[Insert Figure 3 here]

3.5.1 Similarity analysis

A similarity analysis was run with the word "*permission*". Figure-3a suggests four interrelated segments with the main concept "*permission*". The first segment, "*information*" comprises words related to granting permission to provide personal information, such as privacy, control, concern, company and location. The second segment "*email*" comprises email marketing outcome related words, such as response, purchase and behavior. The third segment "*attitude*"

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3 comprises attitudes and perceptions related words, such as perceived risk, perceived usefulness,
4 belief, positive and intention. The fourth segment “*advertise*” comprises words related to
5 channels used for PM campaigns, such as channel, digital, internet, and promotion. Thus,
6 similarity analysis indicates that the PM literature is inter-connected with consumer attitudes
7 and perceptions, channels of PM, issues related to providing personal information and
8 outcomes of PM.
9

16 17 **3.5.2 Factorial correspondence analysis**

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19 Factorial correspondence analysis identifies key groups of words in the corpus (Reinert, 1990).
20 The results are presented in a dendrogram (Figure-3b) which shows hierarchy of word clusters.
21 The dendrogram presented four classes of words in our corpus. Class 1 ‘*cost-benefit drivers*’
22 comprises words related to costs and benefits of PM, such as privacy, intrusiveness, incentive,
23 monetary, benefits and lottery. Class 2 represents ‘*consumer attitudes and behaviour*’ related
24 words, such as attitude, intention, acceptance, perceive and behavioural. Class 3 ‘*PM*
25 *outcomes*’ focuses on the words related to measuring the effectiveness of PM campaign, such
26 as average, rate, percent, response, spend and expenditure. Class 4 ‘*PM and retail*’ comprises
27 words related to the application of PM in retail, such as customer, retail, store, retailer, location
28 and target. Thus, it can be inferred that PM research focuses mainly on exploring costs and
29 benefits driving customer attitudes and behaviours of PM, analyzing the outcome/effectiveness
30 of PM, and the implications of PM in retail.
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46 47 **4. Future research directions**

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49 The future research directions are presented in terms of theory development, context,
50 characteristics and method (Srivastava et al., 2020) leveraging the TCCM framework used by
51 Jebarajakirthy et al. (2021).
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4.1 Theory development:

This SLR showed that TRA, TPB and TAM are the widely used theories to investigate the drivers of consumers' willingness to participate in PM. However, the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT/UTAUT2) framework is considered a more comprehensive theory for predicting consumer behaviour around technology adoption (Jadil et al., 2021). This theory posits that performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, facilitating conditions, hedonic motivation, price value and habit drive consumers' intention and actual use of information technology (Venkatesh et al., 2003, 2012). Hence, researchers can examine the role of these factors in driving consumers' acceptance of PM.

Attribution theory can also be applied to PM research. Attribution theory explains the causes for an individual's behaviour can be two types: dispositional (internal reasons) and situational (external reasons) attributions (Heider, 1958; Fiske and Taylor, 1991, p. 23). In PM, the factors, such as consumer innovativeness, mobile technology knowledge, perceived behavioural control and privacy concerns can be dispositional attributions whereas, contents, informativeness, frequency and number of email/SMS, time of sending the message, and monetary incentives can be situational attributions. It would be interesting to evaluate and compare the influence of dispositional and situational attributions on consumers' acceptance of PM.

4.2 Context

Table 2 indicates that a larger portion (59%) of empirical research on PM was conducted in five Western countries, namely USA, UK, Germany, Finland and Australia. This distribution challenges the generalizability of the findings across the world, especially in the non-Western countries. Therefore, future studies on PM can be conducted in non-Western countries.

Moreover, PM research is predominantly conducted in the service-centric contexts, such as hospitality, online shopping, online gambling, in-store retail and entertainment services. Hence, it is recommended that future studies can focus on product-centric businesses, such as fast-moving consumer goods.

4.3 Characteristics

4.3.1 Role of consumer personality: Consumer innovativeness drives consumers' attitude towards mobile/email marketing which results in the acceptance of PM campaign (Gao et al., 2013). Since consumer innovativeness is a consumer personality trait (Schiffman et al., 2011), it indicates that consumer personality plays an important role in PM. However, literature has rarely shown the role of other consumer personality traits, such as dogmatism, need for uniqueness, need for cognition and optimum stimulation level. Thus, studies can examine the role of abovementioned consumer personality traits in driving consumers' responses to PM.

4.3.2 PM and consumer-brand relationship: PM improves customer retention and loyalty (Dreze and Bonfrer, 2008). However, the role of PM in building consumer-brand relationship leading to brand loyalty is still not examined. Hence, researchers can compare the efficacy of permission vs non-permission-based marketing in generating greater consumer-brand relationship and consumer loyalty.

4.3.3 Moderating role of moral norms: Moral/personal norm drives an individual's altruistic/ethical behavior (Schwartz, 1977). Since PM is an ethical marketing practice where marketers seek consumers' permission before sending promotional messages (Krishnamurthy, 2006), consumers' moral norms might influence their decision to participate in PM. Hence, future studies can examine the role of individuals' moral norms in their responses to PM.

4.3.4 PM and consumer emotions: Though consumer behavior is governed by both cognitive and emotional responses (Schiffman et al., 2010), the PM literature rarely focuses on consumer

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3 emotions. Consumer emotions are of two types – positive emotions, such as happiness, and
4 love or negative emotions, such as fear and anger (Laros and Steenkamp, 2005). Thus, it would
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6 be interesting to study how PM evokes consumers' positive/negative emotions leading to their
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8 purchase behavior.
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12 *4.3.5 Failure of PM campaign:* Subscribers have the option to opt-out of a PM campaign.
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14 However, studies have not yet explored the reasons why consumers opt-out leading to failure
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16 of PM. Hence, future studies can explore factors that make consumers opt-out of a PM
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18 campaign or examine factors responsible for failure of PM.
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21 **4.4 Methods**

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23 Table 3 shows that mixed-methods approach did not receive much attention in the PM
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25 literature, as only two of 38 articles are based on mixed-methods approach. Since mixed-
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27 method provides more insightful understanding of a phenomenon (McKim, 2017), this method
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29 can be adopted to explain a newer phenomenon in PM. For example, social media-based PM
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31 is a recent phenomenon, and hence researchers can adopt qualitative approach to understand
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33 factors driving consumers' acceptance of social media-based PM and then validate their effects
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35 using a quantitative study.
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40 Further, most studies in PM domain have adopted cross-sectional research. Hence, more
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42 longitudinal studies can be conducted because this research provides more valid results over
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44 time. For example, due to rapid technological developments, businesses tend to adopt new
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46 digital platforms for marketing communication. Thus, a longitudinal study can evaluate how
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48 consumer responses to PM varied over time.
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5. Academic and practical implications

5.1 Academic implications

Academic implications of this study are as follows. First, our review demonstrates that although PM has been studied over two decades, the domain still remains highly fragmented due to inconsistencies related to the contexts, methodologies, theories and constructs used in PM research. Hence, this systematic review synthesized the PM literature to study the research development in this domain over time. Accordingly, this study contributes to the PM literature by presenting the state of PM research in the last 22 years.

Second, this study discusses various theories used by researchers to explain consumer responses to PM. TRA, TAM and TPB are widely used theories in PM research. Further, we recommend two alternative theories for future studies on PM. These theoretical underpinnings advance the theoretical foundation of PM literature.

Our review also suggests that constructs studied in the PM research remain scattered. Therefore, the third contribution of our study is made through development of the conceptual framework which is the first of its kind developed by integrating widely studied variables (i.e. antecedents, mediators and consequences) in the PM literature. The novelty of this framework mainly lies in classifying the antecedents into message related, customer related and cost-benefit related factors. The framework provides a coherent picture of how these factors drive consumer responses to PM.

Fourth, lexicometric analysis performed in this study identifies the clusters of concepts in the PM literature. Similarity analysis derives the key themes in the PM domain and the interrelation between these themes are presented through factorial correspondence analysis. Hence, this review provides a detailed comprehension of different concepts examined in the PM domain.

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3 Finally, this SLR identifies some overlooked areas in PM and recommends specific future
4 research directions in terms of theories, contexts, characteristics and methods to advance the
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6 body of knowledge in the PM domain.
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10 **5.2 Practical implications**

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12 This study provides practical implications to implement PM campaigns successfully.
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14 Marketers need to address the message related, customer related and cost-benefit related factors
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16 for generating favourable customer responses to PM. Concerning the message related factors,
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18 PM campaign should be relevant to customers and the message contents need to be interactive
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20 and informative. Further, optimum frequency of sending the promotional messages is crucial.
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22 Hence, marketers can take consumers' consent regarding how many promotional messages
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24 they would prefer to receive and at what time.
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30 The conceptual model suggests that privacy concern is the major cost while the major benefit
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32 is monetary incentives. Hence, marketers need to ensure that there is no misuse of customers'
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34 personal data. It is recommended that marketers offer various monetary incentives, such as
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36 discounts and vouchers to consumers which would help achieve higher subscription to PM and
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38 drive purchase intention. Further, the registration process to participate in PM needs to be
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40 simple in a sense that it takes less time and effort.
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45 **6. Conclusion**

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47 To conclude, the purpose of this study was to review the PM literature in terms of research
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49 settings, methodologies and theories. Synthesis of the literature lead to the development of a
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51 conceptual framework demonstrating the relationships between antecedents, mediators and
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53 consequences of PM. Finally, this SLR suggested future research directions to advance PM
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55 literature with regards to theories, contexts, characteristics and methods. Overall, this study
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57 contributes to marketing communication literature, particularly to PM literature.
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Tables and Figures

Table 1. Articles included in the study

S.No	Citation	Title	Journal
1	Kolesar & Galbraith (2000)	A services-marketing perspective on e-retailing: implications for e-retailers and directions for further research	<i>Internet Research</i>
2	Phelps et al. (2000)	Privacy concerns and consumer willingness to provide personal information	<i>Journal of Public Policy & Marketing</i>
3	Klang (2001)	Who do you trust? Beyond encryption, secure e-business	<i>Decision Support Systems</i>
4	Barwise & Strong (2002)	Permission-based mobile advertising	<i>Journal of Interactive Marketing</i>
5	Tezinde et al. (2002)	Getting permission: exploring factors affecting permission marketing	<i>Journal of Interactive Marketing</i>
6	Brandal & Kent (2003)	Improving email response in a permission marketing context	<i>International Journal of Market Research</i>
7	Kavassalis et al. (2003)	Mobile permission marketing: framing the market inquiry	<i>International Journal of Electronic Commerce</i>
8	Merisavo & Raulas (2004)	The impact of e-mail marketing on brand loyalty	<i>Journal of Product & Brand Management</i>
9	Rowley (2004)	Just another channel? Marketing communications in e-business	<i>Marketing Intelligence & Planning</i>
10	Tsang et al. (2004)	Consumer attitudes toward mobile advertising: an empirical study	<i>International Journal of Electronic Commerce</i>
11	Barwise & Farley (2005)	The state of interactive marketing in seven countries: interactive marketing comes of age	<i>Journal of Interactive Marketing</i>
12	Bauer et al. (2005)	Driving consumer acceptance of mobile marketing: A theoretical framework and empirical study	<i>Journal of Electronic Commerce Research</i>
13	Krishnamurthy (2006)	A comprehensive analysis of permission marketing	<i>Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication</i>
14	Merisavo et al. (2006)	The effectiveness of targeted mobile advertising in selling mobile services: an empirical study	<i>International Journal of Mobile Communications</i>
15	Bamba & Barnes (2007)	SMS advertising, permission and the consumer: a study	<i>Business Process Management Journal</i>
16	Brey et al (2007)	Web-based permission marketing: Segmentation for the lodging industry	<i>Tourism Management</i>
17	Carroll et al. (2007)	Consumer perceptions and attitudes towards SMS advertising: recent evidence from New Zealand	<i>International Journal of Advertising</i>
18	Dreze & Bonfrer (2008)	An empirical investigation of the impact of communication timing on customer equity	<i>Journal of Interactive Marketing</i>
19	Karjaluoeto et al. (2008)	Exploring gender influence on customer's intention to engage in permission-based mobile marketing	<i>Electronic Markets</i>
20	Jayawardhena et al. (2009)	Antecedents to permission based mobile marketing: an initial examination	<i>European Journal of Marketing</i>

S.No	Citation	Title	Journal
21	Gao et al. (2013)	Consumers un-tethered: A three-market empirical study of consumers' mobile marketing acceptance	<i>Journal of Business Research</i>
22	Im & Ha (2013)	Enablers and inhibitors of permission-based marketing- A case of mobile coupons	<i>Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services</i>
23	Jolley et al. (2013)	Permission email messages significantly increase gambler retention	<i>Journal of Business Research</i>
24	Watson et al. (2013)	Consumer attitudes towards mobile marketing in the smart phone era	<i>International Journal of Information Management</i>
25	Kumar et al. (2014)	Modelling customer opt-in and opt-out in a permission- based marketing content	<i>Journal of Marketing Research</i>
26	Berman (2016)	Planning and implementing effective mobile marketing programs	<i>Business Horizons</i>
27	Reimers et al. (2016)	Permission email marketing and its influence on online shopping	<i>Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics</i>
28	Krafft et al. (2017)	Permission marketing and privacy concerns — why do customers (not) grant permissions?	<i>Journal of Interactive Marketing</i>
29	Zhang et al. (2017)	Dynamically managing a profitable email marketing program	<i>Journal of Marketing Research</i>
30	Yang et al. (2018)	Post-stay email marketing implications for the hotel industry: Role of email features, attitude, revisit intention and leisure involvement level	<i>Journal of Vacation Marketing</i>
31	Mahmoud et al. (2019)	Email is evil! Behavioural responses towards permission-based direct email marketing and gender differences	<i>Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing</i>
32	Sanden et al. (2019)	In-store location-based marketing with beacons: from inflated expectations to smart use in retailing	<i>Journal of Marketing Management</i>
33	Bhatia (2020)	Drivers and barriers of permission-based marketing	<i>Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing</i>
34	Theocharidis et al. (2020)	An approach towards investigating factors affecting intention to book a hotel room through social media	<i>Sustainability (MDPI)</i>
35	Tong et al. (2020)	Personalized mobile marketing strategies	<i>Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science</i>
36	Wiese et al. (2020)	A framework for Facebook advertising effectiveness	<i>Journal of Business Research</i>
37	Krafft et al. (2021)	Insight is power: Understanding the terms of the consumer-firm data exchange	<i>Journal of Retailing</i>
38	Kurtz et al. (2021)	An empirical analysis of location-based mobile advertising – Determinants, success factors and moderating effects	<i>Journal of Interactive Marketing</i>

Table 2. Countries and number of publications on Permission Marketing

Sl. No	Country	1998-2001	2002-2005	2006-2009	2010-2013	2014-2017	2018-2021	Total
1	USA	1	1	1	2	2	1	8
2	UK		2	2	1			5
3	Germany		2	1		1	1	5
4	Finland		1	3				4
5	Australia		1		1	1	1	4
6	China		1		1			2
7	Belgium						1	1
8	Brazil		1					1
9	Canada			1				1
10	France		1					1
11	Greece						1	1
12	India						1	1
13	Italy				1			1
14	Japan		1					1
15	Netherland						1	1
16	New Zealand			1				1
17	Norway		1					1
18	Oman						1	1
19	Saudi Arabia						1	1
20	Taiwan		1					1
21	UAE						1	1
22	South Africa						1	1

***Note:** Conceptual papers are not included in this list. Six studies for which data were collected from multiple countries, were accounted for whichever countries they were carried out.

Research Methods	#	Sample Type	
		Student	Other
Survey based			
<i>Online</i>	15	Mahmoud et al. (2019)	Tezinde et al. (2002); Brandal and Kent (2003); Merisavo and Raulas (2004); Brey et al. (2007); Karjaluoto et al. (2008); Im and Ha (2013); Watson et al. (2013); Reimers et al. (2016); Krafft et al. (2017); Yang et al. (2018); Bhatia (2020); Theocharidis et al. (2020); Wiese et al. (2020); Kurtz et al. (2021)
<i>Offline</i>	5	Tsang et al. (2004); Bauer et al. (2005); Jayawardhena et al. (2009); Gao et al. (2013)	Phelps et al. (2000)
Experiment			
<i>Online</i>	4	-	Dreze and Bonfrer (2008); Zhang et al. (2017); Jolley et al. (2013); Kumar et al. (2014)
<i>Offline</i>	1	-	Merisavo et al. (2006)
Qualitative (/Interview)	3	-	Barwise and Strong (2002); Barwise and Farley (2005); Sanden et al. (2019)
Mixed methods	2	Carroll et al. (2007); Bamba and Barnes (2007)	-
Conceptual	8	Kolesar and Galbraith (2000); Klang (2001) ; Kavassalis et al. (2003); Rowley (2004); Krishnamurthy (2006); Berman (2016); Krafft et al. (2021); Tong et al. (2020)	

FGD- Focus group discussion

Figure 1: Article inclusion/exclusion process (PRISMA flow diagram)

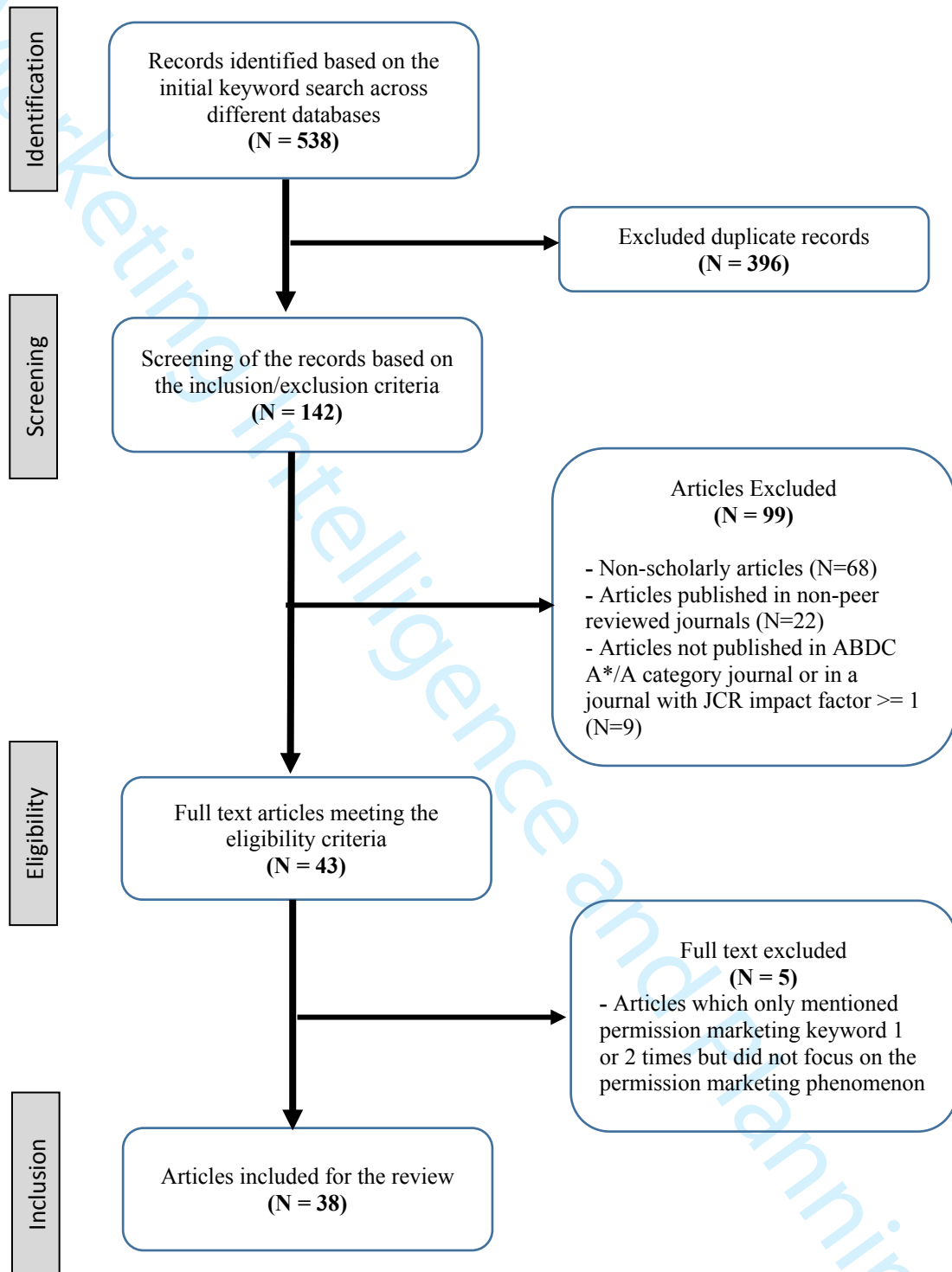
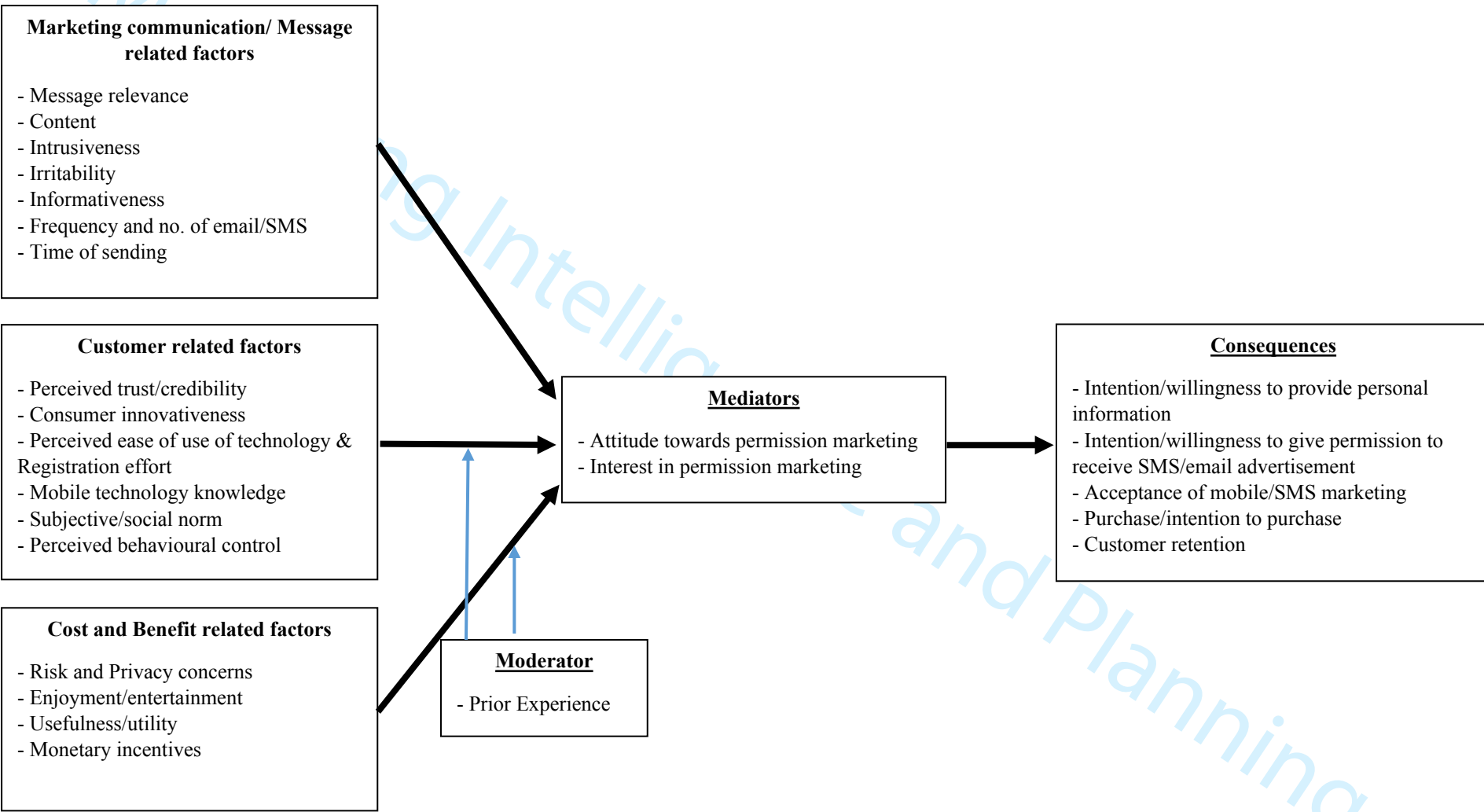


Figure 2. Conceptual framework – Permission marketing



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Figure 3. Outputs of lexicometric analysis

Figure 3a. Similarity analysis

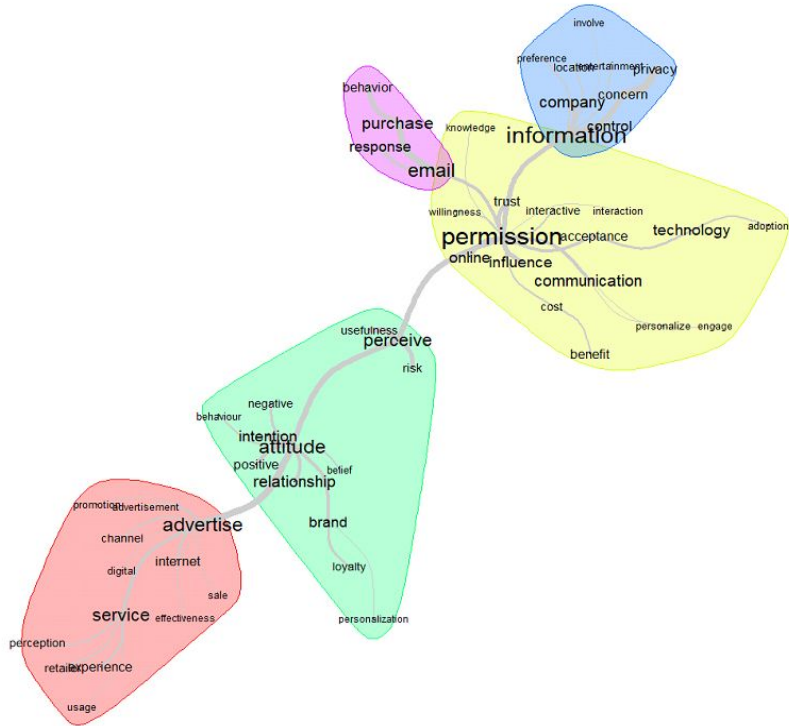
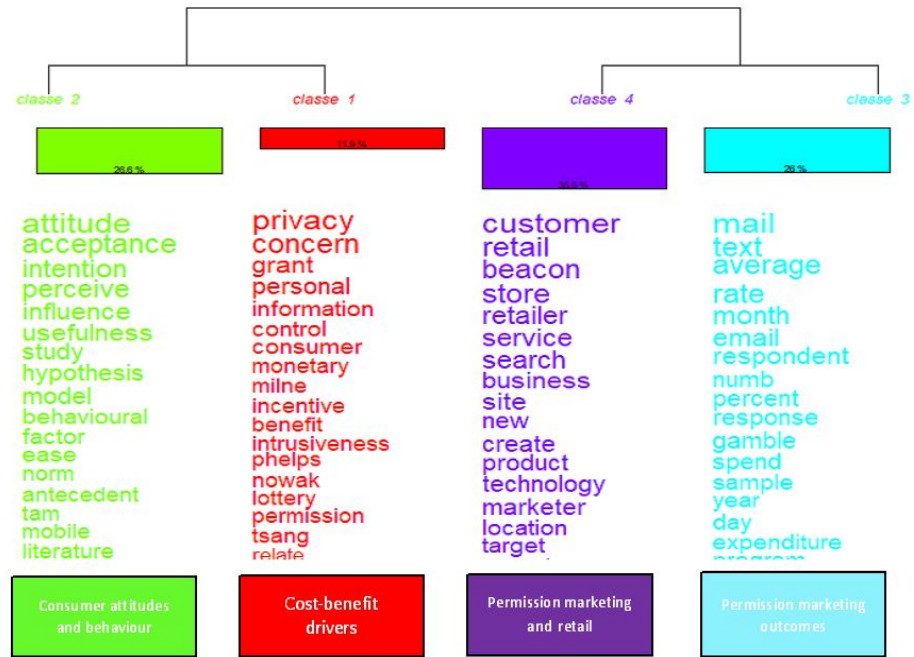


Figure 3b: Dendrogram with named clusters



Marketing