

Cross-country analysis of digital content marketing in tourism

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Digital content marketing,
Digital marketing,
Tourism,
Cross-country comparison,
Content creation.

The main purpose of the paper is to evaluate the implications of DCM on the tourism market, specifically in different touristic regions. DCM is a digital inbound marketing strategy that aims to attract potential customers by producing innovative content and increasing their knowledge about services. The studies analyze the applications and outcomes of DCM strategies in the tourism market, highlighting the importance of digital marketing innovations for improving revenue in the sector. The study is based on a literature review of DCM in the tourism industry, using scientific articles from 2008 to 2023. The paper summarizes articles from selected journals to provide an overview of DCM in general. The research emphasizes the need for a cultural change in marketing approaches, shifting from "selling" to "helping" and utilizing social and electronic word of mouth in DCM. The papers provide theoretical and practical information for academics and businesses in the tourism industry, offering insights into the benefits and challenges of implementing DCM strategies. The studies also suggest the need for further research into digital content marketing, particularly in the context of B2B businesses.

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1. Introduction

'Digital Content Marketing' (DCM) is described as a digital inbound marketing strategy which is based on a customer-centric perspective addressed to the highest point of the customer's credibility on the selling products of business by using internet-based technology, unlike traditional content marketing (Holliman & Rowley, 2014; Vinerean, 2017). Internet ensures the most appropriate communication ground for 'digital content marketing' by the most frequently used digital platforms according to the frequency of use by businesses following as; social media, blog pages, e-bulletins, website articles, video and others (Rancati & Gordini, 2014). The primary motivation of DCM is to take the attention of potential customers into the digital platforms of businesses by producing innovative content not only to sell their products or services but also to increase the knowledge of customers about their services (Goldstein, 2013), which supports the production of mutual income.

The different approaches of traditional and digital marketing strategies will be outlined in the literature review part of the paper for a better understanding of its content and motivations (Appendix 1). The first group of studies concentrated the how the role of traditional marketing strategies declined after the rapid arrival of digitalization by explaining how businesses focus on adapting the origin of the new digital era to compete with

the other business. (Baltes, 2015; Cheng, 2021; Damjanović, et al., 2020; Gregoriades, et al., 2021; Holliman & Rowley, 2014; Kotler & Armstrong, 2018; Labanauskaitė et al., 2020; Lei, et al., 2017; Mathew & Soliman, 2021; Mkwizu, 2019; Rancati & Gordini, 2014; Santos, et al., 2021; Tsiakali, 2018; Tsiotsou, 2019; Vinerean, 2017). Those studies can explain one of the leading factors as to why DCM has become a significant role in achieving success in online marketing advertisement policies. The second group of studies examines DCM's social and psychological aspects, mainly focusing on the individual's purchasing behaviors, consumer engagement with businesses, and their loyalties to the brand. The second group of studies carried by Bowden & Mirzaei, 2021; He, et al., 2021; Lehnert, et al., 2020; Maeran & Mignemi, 2021; Ramesh & Vidhya, 2019; Wang, et al., 2023 those are discussed the importance of sensation of customers on the achievement of marketing campaigns. The strategy of digital content marketing can only be explained and analyzed with mentioning those social and psychological perspectives. The third group of studies found on the practices of digital content marketing strategies elaborated under the scope of the tourism industry by Cheng, 2021; Damjanović, et al., 2020; Gregoriades, et al., 2021; Labanauskaitė, et al., 2020; Lei, et al. 2017; Mathew & Soliman, 2021; Mkwizu, 2019; Santos, et al., 2021; Tsiakali, 2018; Tsiotsou, 2019; who are mainly considering to investigate its adaptations on the

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tourism sector and its impacts on the traveler's preferences. Those studies support arguments to have guidelines for the DCM in the tourism sector. Additionally, the fourth group studies focused on the analysis of the DCM with the circumstances of the role of social or electronic word of mouth and social media platforms to examine the influences of digital content marketing strategies over travelers' preferences (Dewi, et al., 2022; Dundar & Coban, 2020; Francina & Harini, 2018; Gregoriades, et al., 2021; Keke, 2022; Varadarajan, et al., 2022; Terho et al., 2022; Wang, et al., 2023). The marketing strategy of 'Word of Mouth' is a digital phenomenon that has been introduced previously, but these studies provide new terminologies called 'Electronic Word of Mouth'.

There are several motivational points about the preparation of this study. For instance, after a critical literature review, most studies illustrated the impact of digital content marketing strategy based on customer perception and behaviors as a new approach to marketing strategies. The research gap found that there are few studies those are outlined studies covering the evaluations of the impact of digital content marketing on the tourism industry, mainly including first; the analysis of different applications of DCM strategies in the tourism industry, second; its implementation and outcomes in the touristic regions. The study does not find any academic research discussing the practices and analysis of DCM results in different touristic regions in a comparative way. According to these, this study prepared conceptually by focusing the selected articles mention into the Figure 2. Because the purpose of the study was to analyze the empirically tested DCM applications into the different touristic regions into the single study. The results of this study provide both theoretical and practical information for academics and businesses who are related with marketing strategies in the tourism industry.

This paper proceeds as follows. The literature review section will examine the increasing importance of digital content marketing, and detailed sources will be outlined better to understand the digital content strategy with the selected heading. This section demonstrates more detailed studies comparing inbound and outbound marketing strategies, social-based implications, and E-Wow principles. The methodology part of the paper explains the preparation of this conceptual study in detail. The study was followed by a findings section which consisted of the reflections of DCM strategies in different touristic regional cases. In the discussion section of the paper, the applications, and reflections of digital content marketing in the tourism sector will be discussed by giving selected examples from the tourism market. The paper analyses DCM strategies by comparing the practices by cases from different regions. The impact of DCM on travelers' buying motivations for their touristic destinations will be outlined. Studies will be discussed from the findings of cases in a comparative way to understand if there is a difference in the tourism practices in marketing strategies of DMC and

if the adaptation of DCM can be differentiated in different touristic regions. The paper concludes with an overview of the findings and implications of DCM cases in the tourism industry, learning from the study. The limitations and future recommendations sections of the paper will be introduced in the last part of the paper, and it will be outlined for further research possibilities on digital content marketing.

2. Literature Review:

According to the preparation of this study, forty scientific articles used year from 2008 to 2023. The website of the 'Content Marketing Institute' was also visited to see the practices of digital content marketing cases. The academic literature has showed into the Appendix 1 includes the review of all the used academic literature consisting of entire study of the paper, without of the articles founded in Turkish language (Aslan & Tarakçı, 2022; Bozkurt, 2021; Cokal & Buyukkuru, 2018; Dundar & Coban, 2020; Hamzacebi & Yozgat, 2019; Ozarslan & Alpaslan, 2018; Simsek & Dincel 2020), the book (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018) and magazine (Goldstein, 2013).

The Appendix 1, as mentioned Appendices, will be emphasized in the following sections of the literature review. The primary literature shows that many studies concentrated on outlining the emergence and context of digital content marketing (DCM) strategies in contrast to traditional marketing strategies.

Traditional Content Marketing

Outbound marketing can be introduced as the synonym of traditional content marketing, which describes any marketing activity that pushes out to the customer with classic marketing methods, such as newspaper, TV and radio advertisements, posters for billboards, leaflets, etc. (Lehnert, et al., 2021). Furthermore, those marketing methods could be called 'interruptive marketing', as an advertisement method mainly occurs in front of customers who cannot easily ignore it. Rendón, et.al (2014) adds that push strategies can be defined as one of the main steps of the traditional promotional strategy to promote the increasing number of product sales. Following this marketing method, there is no communication or dialogue between the company and the customer. The main reason can be assumed that the interruptive marketing method of traditional content marketing is based on pushing or bombarding customers with many advertisements until they surrender them. (Lehnert, et al., 2021; Rendón, et al., 2014).

Other studies of traditional marketing argue that companies must interact with customers often not only for their content marketing effects on customers but for not lose their loyalties to the product. For instance, companies must interact with customers directly to receive their feedback. However, those methods are costly and not always possible, so receiving feedback and protecting customers'

loyalty can be limited to traditional marketing (Ramesh & Vidhya, 2019; Cokal & Buyukkuru, 2018).

Furthermore, the studies (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018; Aslan & Tarakci, 2022; Keke, 2022) analyzed that traditional marketing started to lose its importance especially since 2000, due to the decline of the impact of traditional mass media on the market. Therefore, businesses started to prefer digital communication channels focused on the target audiences for sharing effective and tailor-made content for customers.

In the contemporary world, the market's competitiveness shows an increasing trend where traditional marketing loses its effect, and there is a need to create value for customers to be competitors. In short, traditional marketing tools or direct promotion procedures needed to be revised both for the company's brand and customers' loyalty to understand current marketing methods. The fundamental reason is individuals' interest has shifted to digital tools such as using smartphones to connect to the digital world instead of traditional marketing tools like radio, newspapers, TV, etc.

Digital Content Marketing

The terminology of 'digital content marketing' cited by Rowley (2008) who can be accepted as the leading scholar for introducing the relationship between the 'digital content marketing' and 'e-marketing'. She assumes that "Digital content marketing is the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating, and satisfying customer requirements profitably in the context of digital content, or bit-based objects distributed through electronic channels". (p.522)

Digital content marketing (DCM), consider on needs and concerns of customers (Baltes, 2015; Lehnert, et al., 2021) while creating and ruling online campaigns because first it targets to understand the customer's disadvantaged situations and then focus to find relevant solution on these cases. For instance, DMC also considers emphasizing not only the demographic and occupational aspects of customers, it's also works on to realize aims and difficulties of customers), (Lehnert et al., 2021).

In other words, the core argument of the inbound marketing strategy is defined as the value-based customer, which is concentrated 'pulling' customer instead of 'pushing' throughout advertisement. For instance, the target of digital marketing cannot arrive to the success point if there is a missing knowledge or lack of understanding about potential customers (Baltes, 2015).

Content creation is a familiar phenomenon if there is a question about evaluating either the traditional or digital marketing approaches. However, following the digitalization era, scholars need to discuss and analyze the creation of content under the name of 'Digital Content Marketing Strategy or Method'. The main reason can be assumed that consideration as the wide range of using

technology by consumers leads to changes in their traditional buying practices, which affects the businesses' selling practices simultaneously (Cheng, 2021; Damjanović, et al., 2020; Gregoriades, et al., 2021; Labanauskaitė, et al., 2020; Lei, et al., 2017; Mathew & Soliman, 2021; Mkwizu, 2019; Santos, et al., 2022; Tsiakali, 2018; Tsiotsou, 2019)

Certain studies suggest that digital content marketing is the essential instrument of digital marketing, which must be within the quality and innovative content creation if there is an aim of succession (Baltes, 2015). The 'Digital Content Marketing Method aims to create more innovative and remarkable content (Baltes, 2015) to reach customers on digital platforms by focusing on their trust (Baltes, 2015). Most of the scholars (Baltes, 2015; Bowden & Mirzaei, 2021; He, et al., 2021; Lehnert, et al., 2021; Maeran & Mignemi, 2021; Ramesh and Vidhya, 2019; Wang et al., 2023) define the inbound marketing method which is one of the main elements of DCM and it gives importance to the features of customer's personality. It may call a 'buyer persona', meaning that without the sense of their motivations, concerns, resistance, pains and challenges, the campaign cannot succeed (Lehnert, et.al, 2021) where customers become more integrated, active and close to supporting provided campaign from the business.

On the other hand, the studies (Baltes, 2015; Rancati & Gordini, 2014), highlighted the need for education and specialized content marketing expertise in the sector. They should be well educated and experienced first to plan the content and then use strategies to accomplish the aims of DCM by using its methodologies. Therefore, hiring content marketing managers or experts is becoming the critical starting point for companies.

Most of the studies founded into the literature that scholars explains DCM by focusing on the changing of customer behaviors due to the increasing number of digital platforms. Moreover, the studies found out that content creation becoming more important and need to reshape for the adaptation of modified customers' behaviors who often uses the digital platforms.

- *Digital Platforms and New Terminologies of Digital Marketing*

Following the digitalization period, new terminologies have also been studied by researchers. (Coban and Dundar, 2020; Gregoriades, et al., 2021; Dewi, et al. 2022; Lehnert, et al., 2021; Varadarajan, et al., 2022) such as the 'Electronic Word of Mouth' (E-WOW) or 'Online Word of Mouth'. It can be accepted as the new terminology of online channels, which has the same meaning as 'worth of mouth' as part of the traditional marketing method. E-WOW is the convenient and an effective way of online communication marketing tool to encourage customers to buy a product or service into the digital market (Yudhistira & Bali 2018).

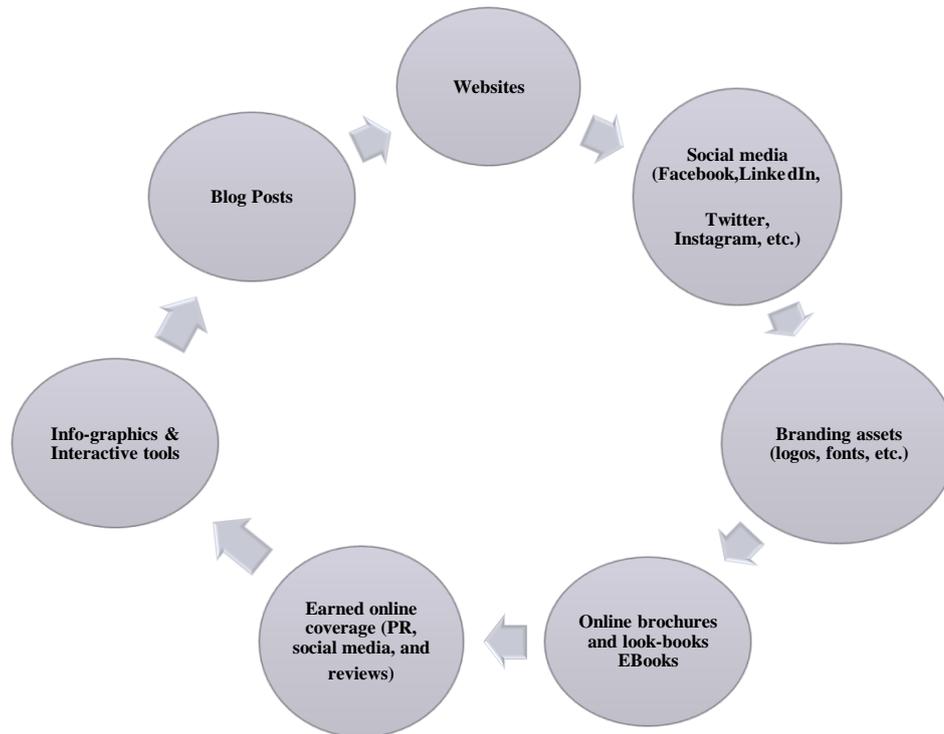


Figure 1: List of Social Media Channels: Improving Promotional Effectiveness of Organizations, Inspired by: (Francina & Harini, 2018)

Additionally, ‘Social Media Marketing’ (SMM) is another new terminology that comes from ‘marketing’ and ‘social media’ (Keke, 2022) which are other primary tools of DCM strategies and are an irreplaceable part of marketing tools companies with many advantages for their advertisements (Keke, 2022). Companies can identify the customer profiles and measure the results of the efficiency of their promotions by using social media channels as listed in Figure 1, those provide adequate services to reach their potential customers (Keke, 2022) and digital presence of the companies (Francina & Harini, 2018).

Overall, scholars underline that well-prepared content creation for social media marketing is a significant factor in reaching the target group for announcing their products and increasing their number of customers, both the creation of content (Keke, 2022; Varadarajan, et al., 2022). Moreover, they suggest that content creators should copy the style of other companies’ marketing attitudes and languages and be more innovative and creative to be more competitive in the market. They argue that social media cannot be apart from successful digital marketing in general and methods of digital content marketing because first, it’s a unique platform which serves a ground between company and customer on the same level (Keke, 2022) and second, it easier and quicker communication platform among them (Varadarajan, et al., 2022). For instance, customers can buy products or plan their entertainment activities like a reservation at a restaurant, hotel, cinema and other activities at home; that reason also motivates

industries to give more importance to the digital marketing world (Ramesh 2019). Only this method can help companies increase their performance in digital content marketing. (Terho, et al., 2022; Wang, et al., 2023)

Furthermore, many researches have been done to analyze the impact of social media channels on customers’ purchase decisions, whether they affect them positively or negatively. Lodhi and Shoab (2017) argued that people are more interested to see online adverts rather than advertisements on TV, newspapers, billboards and etc., so they highlighted that social media and online shopping channels have a positive impact on digital marketing. Janathanan and Nizar (2018) added that social media channels also positively impact customers’ buying behavior because social media have cost-efficient information, satisfaction and consumer trust.

In short, social media channels and marketing are the leading platforms of DCM where it pursues its strategies. Therefore, the impacts of DCM on digital marketing can only be measured by considering those platforms which can collect data from the users for innovative content creations by companies.

Summary of the Review

The comparison of the main elements of traditional and digital derive for clear understanding and The Table 1 listed below; includes the summary of the subject of content creation in the ‘Traditional Marketing’ and ‘Digital Marketing’.

Table 1. The main features of Traditional (Outbound) Marketing and Digital (Inbound) Marketing

	Traditional & Outbound Marketing	Digital & Inbound Marketing
Base	Interruption based	Permission based/organic
Focus	Push tactics/firm seeks customers	Pull tactics/customers come to firm
Target	One-way communication to large audiences	Two-way communication with interested audience
Aim	Unidirectional, goal to increase sales	Co-creation of value, long-lasting relationships
Tactics	Traditional, Print, TV, radio, etc.	Channels: SEO, WOM, social media, digital disintermediation

Source: Lehnert, et al., 2021, p.4

As listed above, the marketing strategies of content creation reshaped from traditional to digital methods to adapt modified customer behaviors and preferences. For instance, when companies start to design digital marketing, they first need to ask individuals' permission on digital platforms to be connected, which means two-way communication to follow and follow-on social media. Secondly, companies must create innovative content to attract customers' attention and pull them into their marketing product or service.

In contrast, companies use tactics to engage with their potential customers to push them into their marketing strategies with direct campaign posts in traditional marketing methods. For example, using newspapers, TV, radio forecasts, and distribution of leaflets and posters are the main tools of the traditional way of marketing to reach their customers. In short, those tactics are becoming traditional, and the business sector knows they must find new tactics to reach customers. In this context, digital

platforms play a crucial role in users who need to be connected by companies for their marketing targets.

In summary, the literature review of the knowledge of traditional and digital marketing was emphasized in the previous sections and find out that there is no parallel relationship between traditional and digital content marketing methods, which is also seen in the above table. However, both strategies are eager to reach potential customers to sell their products and services, which could be counted as a similarity.

3. Methodology:

The methodology of the study is conceptual. Therefore, neither quantitative nor qualitative research techniques have been used for the preparation of the study. The aim of the is not concentrate on the measure any variables about the scope of the digital content marketing. The study was constructed to provide beneficial outcomes for the tourism sector by completing literature review of the DCM with tested data from different countries. The study used scientific articles since 2008 – when the scientific journals started to publish into the literature until 2023. In accordance with thirty nine selected journals, the total of thirty four articles has been summarized into Appendix 1 for an overview of DCM in general. Furthermore, five articles has been founded those are including specific cases of touristic regions.

After completing the literature review of fifteen years of period all sections of the study were constructed. The aim of the study is to analyze DCM strategies by comparing the practices of digital platforms by selected cases from different regions. The main research question of the study in “What are the reflections of ‘Digital Content Marketing’

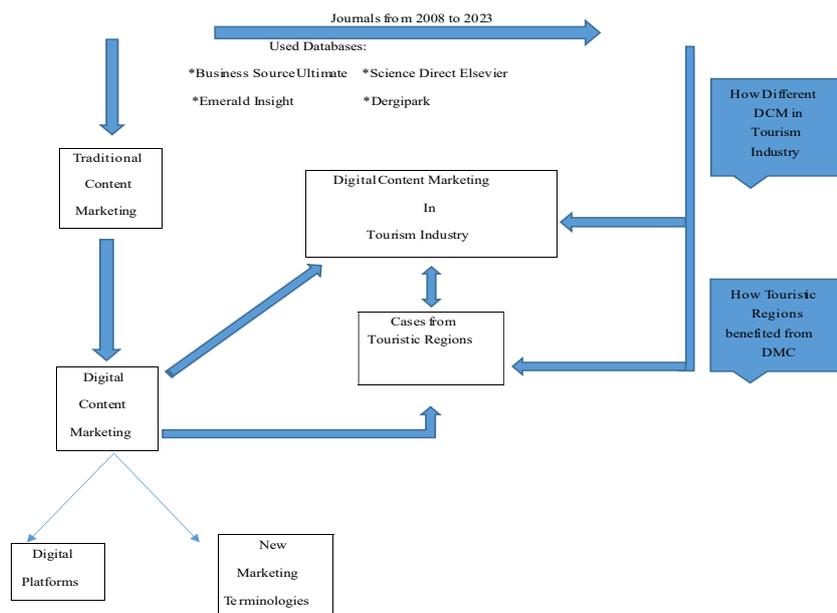


Figure 2: The Route Map of the Study

Source: Created by author.

strategies into the different touristic regions” Additional, the study has two sub-questions; the first; “How Different DCM in Tourism Industry” and second “How Touristic Regions benefited from DMC”. After a wide range of literature reviews, there is a need founded in academia to analyze the reflections of DCM of tourism industry by considering cross-country comparison in single study. Therefore, it is considered that this study will make significant contributions to literature.

4. Findings:

In the discussion part of the paper, first, the examination of the increasing importance of digital content marketing into the current marketing strategies in the tourism industry will be outlined, second; the cross-country comparison of the DCM strategies will be studied to find out the different approaches of its applications and results by introducing case examples in the field of tourism industry. Moreover, the applications and reflections of digital content marketing in the tourism sector will be discussed by giving selected examples from tourism sector into the discussion part. Its aim is to analyze DCM strategies with comparing the practices of digital platforms by selected cases from different regions, as summarized into the Table 2.

Digital Content Marketing in Tourism Industry

The paper selects to explore the dimensions of Digital Content Marketing (DCM) on behalf of the tourism industry. The first reason is the outcomes of the literature identified that it is more substantial approach for tourism industry compare with other business areas, and the second reason is it concentrates more on dialog basis and persuasive methods rather than aggressive methods by

digital platforms (Maeran & Mignemi, 2021). Understanding opportunities of the market and practicing the correct and customer centric digital content marketing strategies (Damjanović, et al., 2020) towards the potential customers is play a key role for determining the success of business’s annual targets (Vitouladiti, 2014). Therefore, DCM advice business to focus on sensations of customers to provide alternatives solutions to them if their aim is to arrive the desired achievement from their campaigns (Lehnert, et al., 2021).

According to the Table 2 as below, the selected cases will be evaluated in a comparative way to understand if there is difference in the tourism practices in marketing strategies of DMC and if the adaptation of DCM can be differentiated in different touristic regions

According to the case studies mentioned into the above table, all the research (Khmiadashvili, 2019; Mathew & Soliman, 2021; Simsek and Dincel 2020; Yudhistira & Bali, 2018) are conducted to the questionnaire method except study on Africa (Mkwizu, 2019) which is used conceptual review method. Those studies provide specific knowledge about practicing digital platforms by customers in touristic regions with empirical surveys. The outlined studies in Table 2 aim to discover the impact rate of DCM strategies and digital platforms into their specific regions for using the outcomes of surveys in order to build up better digital marketing strategies for their target groups.

The outlined literature in Table 2 showed that the tourism industry accepted the impact of DCM in their digital marketing strategies. The main reason can be explained briefly that the tourism industry is the global sector, and its market is worldwide due to the target group of the sector.

Table 2: Summary of Selected Studies into the Literature into the Tourism and Hospitality Sector: A Cross Country Comparison

Author	Region	Date	Methods/ Applications	Findings/ Outcomes
Mkwizu 2019	Africa	2019	Literature review as a research methodology Integrative literature review with content analysis	International tourist arrivals by UNWTO reported a steady growth in the number of tourist arrivals to Africa. Facebook subscribers which imply that digital marketing like social media marketing, creative content and mobile advertising can act as digital marketing trends, to increase international tourist arrivals for Africa.
Khmiadashvili 2019	Georgia Tbilisi	2019	Questionnaire – Research was conducted in Seventy hotels (in Tbilisi)	Sixty percent of hotels have their own website and forty percent of hotels use social media management. A hundred percent of hotels have Facebook Business pages. Sixty Seven percent have Instagram business page. Eighty four percent of hotels prefer Facebook than Instagram.
Simsek & Dincel 2020	Turkey Kusadasi	2020	Questionnaire – Research was conducted in Eleven hotels Five Hotels in Kusadasi	Eighty One percent of the most used social media platforms are Facebook and Instagram. The content marketing strategies are not very active in Five-star hotels in Kusadasi. Almost all hotels are required to produce valuable content within a planning framework and to publish it jointly from all communication channels (website, social media).
Mathew & Soliman 2021	Egypt & Oman	2021	A quantitative approach was adopted by collecting surveys in Egypt and Oman.	Tourism consumers' attitudes are influenced by the PCO of DCM. PEU positively influences PEJ of using DCM. PU is significantly impacted by PEU of DCM. PU has a significant impact on customers' attitudes toward using the DCM for tourism purposes. PEU has a substantial effect on the clients' attitudes toward using DCM in tourism.
Yudhistira & Bali 2018	IndonesiaBali	2018	Questionnaire: Three Hundred Eighty-Five respondents - social media and had never visited Melasti Beach	Digital content marketing has an indirect effect on the interest of tourists visiting through social word of mouth. These indirect promotion bootstrap results are significant, so digital marketing can directly or indirectly affect content through word-of-mouth promotion of visiting interest.

Source: elaborated by author.

Therefore, DCM can be explained in short that it is essential marketing strategy and has positive impact to be practiced by its stakeholders because of its quicker, easier, and cheaper to reach the global target group by using suitable digital platforms (Damnjanović, et al., 2020).

The literature outlined that the market of tourism sector is based on 'Global Sale', without landscape border, so the learning practices of DCM is necessary to provide and maintain the sustainability of its market (Bozkurt, 2021). The 'digitalization' is the breaker of geographical obstacles and the efficient usage of internet which is the major tool of DCM, is performed that more effective and faster communication between its stakeholders (Bozkurt, 2021). In line with the outcomes of the online surveys, they can achieve the most desirable DCM on the marketing strategies gathering the information from most visited social media platforms. (Khmiadashvili, 2019; Mathew & Soliman 2021; Mkwizu, 2019; Simsek and Dincel 2020; Yudhistira & Bali 2018)

In case of preferences of social media channels, Facebook and Instagram is the top two ones with more than Eighty percent those are using both customers and individuals. Furthermore, Instagram can be accept the most commonly used one which is also a more influential social media account (Ozarslan & Alpaslan, 2018) in the tourism sector than Facebook. Therefore, countries create several marketing policies to create their image via Instagram which gives priority of creation video and visual contents by travelers (Ozarslan & Alpaslan, 2018).

5. Discussions:

The selected cases outlined into the Table 2 found out that, Facebook and Instagram are the most used social media channels in terms of digital marketing by hotels in in Tbilisi (Khmiadashvili, 2019) same as in Turkey (Simsek & Dincel, 2020). In contrast, Facebook should be use for main tools for increasing international tourist arrivals in Africa, (Mkwizu, 2019). On the other hand, DCM has an indirect effect on EWOW, but those indirect effects also have a significant input on tourists' visiting interest in Bali (Yudhistira & Bali 2018). In contrary, Mathew and Soliman (2021) discuss the impacts of DCM in MENA Regions and they found out that that perceived enjoyment and perceived convenience are pioneers of customers' attitudes, in terms of customer's intentions and behavior of using DCM to buy and select tourism products and services. Perceived enjoyment and perceived convenience, usefulness has significant positive impacts towards tourism customers' behaviors for tourism purposes by using DCM in Egypt and Omman which was empirically examined by TAM (Technology Acceptance Model) (Mathew & Soliman, 2021).

The digital platforms, as outlined into the literature part, provide all the necessary information about the potential customers which is another positive impact of DCM in the tourism sector. Vitouladiti, 2014; mentioned that regard as

the analysis of customers' opinions obtained by digital platforms that provide better understanding of their weaknesses and strengths to improve and perceptions of customers for future marketing policies. For instance, the stakeholders of tourism industry can formalize a set of projects, plan and develop correct campaigns, maintain and enhance owing resources for restoring their weaknesses to be more competitive in the market (Hamzacebi, et al., 2019).

Recent studies show that the methods of DCM have some different arguments in the field of tourism. Damnjanović, et al., 2020, added that, only focusing on customer centric policies is not enough and building up the online networks is vital to be and stay competitive and reach the highest income. He underlines that cooperation with digital stakeholders is a supportive element to improve the brand visibility and digital identity to become more successful into the market. In contrary, another one of the recent studies (Jianwei, et al., 2022) shows that there is a lack of information technology and digital market professionals in tourism industry who are assisting companies to be more competitive into the market and achieve sustainable growth into the sector. Their research addressed that, this global absence can be solved with three contributors; first, the tourism management curriculums of educational boards should be updated based on latest technology and its applications in industry, second, companies should switch their traditional hiring procedures and give more chance to students who graduated from niche disciplines of the universities such as mobile application designs, digital content creating and blogger editorial programs rather than basic engineering programs and finally, companies should give more opportunities for their IT experts to be part of their marketing strategies. (Jianwei, et al., 2022)

On the other hand, there are other recent research stressed to study on cognitive and psychological level aspects of customer behaviors and perceptions into the tourism industry. Some scholars, suggest that cognitive and psychological level of customers is crucial in tourism sector and emotions of tourists should be consider one of the important elements while designing the digital marketing content for target group customers (Santos, et al, 2022). Similarly, Cheng (2021) analyzed the impact of cognitive, emotional and behavioral engagement of customers on repurchase behaviors in the tourism industry. He found out that instead of there is a strong correlation of cognitive and behavioral engagement on brand loyalty, there is no correlation between the emotional behavior and brand trust.

In an overall perspective, analyzing the data collection of digital platforms give possibility to digest the correlations of customer's identity and content creation to answer their travel plans and it also increase the competitiveness of company in the market (Scorrano, et.al, 2019). As seen into the findings of selected cases in Table 2, public and private authorities of countries can apply to conduct surveys to

understand their countries', regions or companies position in the digital arena, in terms of points of their strengths and weaknesses on their appearance in digital world. (Khmiadashvili, 2019; Mathew & Soliman, 2021; Mkwizu, 2019; Simsek and Dincel 2020; Yudhistira & Bali, 2018). In case of knowing the collected data, it supports more awareness about the sensory, emotional, cognitive and self-diagnostic communication attitudes throughout customers for creating promotional contents to build up two-way communication (Scorrano, et al., 2019). Besides, Tsiakali (2018), conducted a survey and found out that, user generated content is more influential on travelers' behavior than marketing generated content and he also underlined that 'neuroticism' or emotional stability shaping travelers' behaviors in the decision-making process. Added by, Maeran and Mignemi (2021) use of user generated content in digital content marketing where consumers can dialog with the company and other consumers has positive impact on tourist of tourists' behavior and engagement with the brand value. In sum, if the industries can empirically analyze the customers' tendency in which digital channels they prefer to use, they can achieve to benefits from its results at the highest point. (Khmiadashvili 2019; Mathew & Soliman 2021; Mkwizu, 2019; Simsek and Dincel 2020; Yudhistira & Bali, 2018). As a whole, recent studies emphasized that marketing campaigns in tourism industry should be more focused on consumer's emotional needs and concerns who desire to feel safe both before take a decision about their vocations and during their vocations as well. (Maeran & Mignemi, 2021; Tsiakali 2018;)

In conclusion, authorities of tourism industry should pursue empirical surveys as a main part of their marketing plans and strategies which enable to measure the customers' satisfactions and perceptions about the service or product. Receiving feedback from the customers can help to route the future marketing strategies which also provide very useful knowledge for content creators.

6. Conclusion:

The paper examined published scientific research articles for the last fifteen years. Previous studies show that most articles focused on analyzing digital content marketing as a new policy of digital marketing, emphasizing the new phenomena in marketing strategies. Therefore, those researchers defined the new leading principles of the DCM by arguing its effectiveness in the technologically driven business market. In brief, the previous research on digital content marketing situated significant points on the tactics of its implementations for companies, including reaching the new potential customer and protecting existing customers, creating correct policies for understanding consumer behaviors and engagement and analysis of customer needs, concerns, and challenges. The trick is that DCM should not generalize its target group, first; it should consider the segment of customers, such as if there is travel for business and holiday and then design the content, so it should be on the segment and preferences of customers.

Furthermore, the paper proposed that there is a need to observe the advantages of DCM utilized by companies from different sectors. The tourism sector was chosen for this paper there are few scientific articles in the literature consider the examination of DCM in this tourism industry. Moreover, this paper may be accepted as the first paper, which aimed to compare the utilization of DCM in the different touristic regions previously studied to the current paper. The outcomes of the research highlighted that operations of the tourism industry should concentrate on adapting other digital marketing practices to gain achievement on the target group. The research summarizes that the country's tourism policies can only be part of digital marketing innovations if there is an aim at improving the tourism sector's revenue. There is a very high rate of using technological tools in countries by individuals, and its rate will be higher soon with the new generation.

According to the findings of social media channels, Facebook can be less effective than Instagram because Facebook users are different based on age factors. For example, Facebook users' age is higher than Instagram, who are challenged to adopt new tools because Instagram content is more creative and innovative, such as creating reel videos, editing photos and other similar services.

Additionally, content creators should be give more consideration on psychological reflections in tourism industry, because recent studies stress that there is an intense correlation between emotional issues and tourist behaviors relating to their travel preferences. This approach can be introduced as the difference of DCM approach in tourism industry compare with other industries, and digital content creators should not skip this aspect to be more creative into their content designs. In brief, tourism companies should be more educated to be understand and improve knowledge of digital tools and DCM methods to apply digital solutions to analyze the customer's perceptions for their satisfaction which means earning more revenue.

The paper suggested that tourism authorities should first; consider the increasing trend of internet use among communities as an advantage to leverage their marketing strategies to boost tourism campaigns worldwide, second; the core idea of the paper may encourage and motivate the business to stress the adaptation of DCM into their marketing strategies to reach their target groups in cheaper, quicker and more accessible options compared to the traditional marketing approach, third, in light of the investigation of various tourism practices of DCM by different countries in this paper, it could be beneficiary not only for academia and also for managers in the field. Finally, this paper has theoretical and practical knowledge that could interest scholars and business experts.

7. Limitations and Recommendations for future studies

The study used four academic database platforms while its preparation those are mentioned in Figure 2. Moreover, the study only used scientific journals which prepared by either English or Turkish languages. Therefore, these can be highlighted as the major limitations of the study. Because, there could be possibilities to find more scientific journals published in different academic databases prepared by different languages regard as the scope of the study. This paper has abbreviated the current knowledge and findings in the tourism sector literature and indicates several future research paths. First, future research could be studied on adapting Augmented Reality and VR technology techniques into digital content marketing strategies. Second, future research could empirically explore DCM's potential challenges and weaknesses in business organizations. Third, there are some negative issues and consequences of digital marketing and digital channels due to the controlling challenges. For example, controlling customers' comments on social media channels takes work. These difficulties can be examined by drawing research designs in the future, including the negative aspects of digital marketing. Last, social Listening and Omni channel are other new terminologies in terms of marketing areas which can be introduced in another study. Omni channel is especially about the concept of price marketing guarantee, which could be a handy digital platform for the tourism industry.

In particular, the progressions in technology will continue to develop and expand globally. Therefore, companies should follow up on those advancements and keep their agenda up to date for sustainable development in their industries.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Summary of the Used Articles for Preparation of Literature Review of the Study

Authors	Type	Findings	Originality	Limitations
Rowley 2008	Conceptual	DCM is a multi-faceted approach to understanding customer value is necessary, that shape consumer's experiences, and values of their decision making processes	It summarize unique characteristics of digital content, and associated consequences for digital content marketing.	It needs to focus on specific sectors such as news, music and journal publishing, and the challenges facing specific groups of stakeholders in these sectors.
Rendón et al, 2014	Conceptual	Marketing actions to follow should consider joining the so-called vertical marketing systems, in which without losing their independence are integrated into distribution groups allow a better competitive.	The internationalization of the hotel industry in Morelia has not been the object of scientific and monographic analysis from the marketing point of view.	Its only focused on the hotel industry in Morelia
Holliman & Rowley 2014	Conceptual and Empirical	CM requires a cultural change from "selling" to "helping", which in turn requires different marketing objectives, tactics, metrics and skills to those associated with more traditional marketing approaches.	This research positions digital content marketing with regard to prior theory, and provides both an agenda and suggestions for practice.	In the absence of prior research, other than some useful practitioner surveys that profile the approaches that B2B businesses are taking to digital content marketing, there is plenty of scope for further research into digital content marketing
Rancati, & Gordini 2014	Empirical	Content marketing managers should abandon the idea of the CM as merely being a simple tactic to publish and share content; and begin to carefully plan CM strategies, using human resources increase the use of economic-financial metrics to properly assess the impact of CM on value creation	To evolution of the concept of CM and the main metrics used for its measurement; and analyze the degree of use and effectiveness of CM strategies and metrics by a sample of Italian firms	The main limitations of the research are first the small size of the sample and then the fact that the analysis has been conducted only at an aggregate level regardless of size, business sector or geographical area of the sample.
Vitouladiti 2014	Empirical	From a marketing management perspective this study revealed visitors' opinions which helped to understand better their experience in relation to the strengths, weaknesses and improvements of the destination	The limited use of this approach in this kind of destinations makes this study a contribution to the research field.	This research is limited to one market segment only. More testing, extended to several target markets is desirable in order to replicate and verify the functionality of the approach.
Baltes, 2015	Conceptual	The main role played by content marketing is to inform and educate audiences in order to develop a privileged relationship with them and to determine brand loyalty.	Content marketing and the importance that it has within the marketing policies, and the proper means of developing a correct CM strategy	It investigates the branded content in Facebook, findings of this study may not be applicable to SNSs that have very different design and functions and it focuses on the integrated resort industry in Macau
Lei et al., 2017	Empirical	Promotional content on increasing online customer engagement, and it has the highest effect in driving the number of comments, and also a significant positive impact in driving the number of likes.	Limited studies in the hospitality field, there is a lack of insights and guidance to understand SNS marketing	It investigates the branded content in Facebook, findings of this study may not be applicable to SNSs that have very different design and functions and it focuses on the integrated resort industry in Macau.
Vinerean, 2017	Conceptual	The most important challenge relates to the change in marketing paradigm from online selling online, to supporting and helping consumers in online settings.	Because of this there is a research gap that needs to be filled with a variety of perspectives that help the understanding of this concept.	The limitations of this studies are those commonly associated with theoretical research.
Ozarslan & Alpaslan, 2018	Empirical	Instagram has the top priority in travel planning where video and visual content is frequently shared.	the question of whether countries (G20 members) use this platform effectively taking into consideration or not	Due to the changing number of content every day, there was a time pressure to complete the data to analyze reliable comparisons.
Nizar & Janathanan, 2018	Empirical	Correlation for both dependent and independent and descriptive statistics was found by using the SPSS software for this research	It develops a much functional and less complexed process to develop social media marketing in order to predict the consumer purchase behavior.	Researcher has used deductive approach and based on testing hypothesis it would not encourage contrast thinking and also limits the creativeness
Francina & Harrini, 2018	Conceptual	Based on the comparison strategical insights were suggested to the company for increasing the online presence of the firm.	The purpose of the study is to analyze the online presence of various IT firms	Three companies from IT sector are chosen randomly and their website is compared with that of the Mallow's product-Codekalam.

Hamzacebi & Yozgat 2019	Conceptual	This study has shown that perception management practices carried out through social media platforms can be effective in mobilizing the masses.	This paper aims to explain how, and which ways, the tourism industry use to manage perceptions of target groups. Main aim is to examine how to manage perceptions through social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook to affect perceptions of target groups.	There are only two examples considered in the study.
Tsiakali, K., 2018	Empirical	Findings revealed that the neuroticism is the most influential trait when travelers read social media content, both User-Generated-Content and MGC.	Exploring the personality's role in the travel decision-making process, when tourists read UGC on the social media and read content on social media.	It focused on association between the personality traits and consumer decision-making which restricts the interpretation and findings.
Ramesh & Vidhya 2019	Conceptual and Empirical	There is a significant effect of consumer perception on digital marketing, and effectiveness of digital marketing on online consumer buying behavior.	The study is to find out the effect of digital marketing on online consumer buying behavior at Vellore city	It is limited to hundred consumers of digital marketing and its effect on online consumer buying behavior at Vellore city
Scorrano et al., 2019	Empirical	Empirical application shows that the proposed logical framework can yield important reflections-Napa Valley's.	The study can be considered an important protocol.	The limitation of the research is represented by the application of the operative process to a single case study
Tsiotsou, 2019	Empirical	Results confirm cultural differences in overall service evaluations and attributes of tourists from various European regions.	It is the first study that examines cross-cultural differences in hotel appraisals from a supranational perspective	This study is limited to tourists from the four European regions visiting Greece and to the hotels
Damnjanović et al., 2020	Conceptual	The case study present the hotels' current (loyal) and potential clients as well as hotel marketing strategies.	It explain how hotel managers define client value proposition for Accor Hotels, with a better understanding of modern trends in the hospitality industry	Its only focused on Accor Hotels
Lehnert, et al., 2020	Conceptual	The study highlights the importance of consumer personae, critical content creation and customer strategies.	This work combines traditional theoretical research and analysis to provide a comprehensive and clear illustration of what inbound marketing is and where it can be used in	Some difficulties to find up to date articles about the concept of the study
Bozkurt 2021	Conceptual	After the literature review, it was concluded that an extremely important issue such as tourism marketing has been neglected by the academic community, and there is a need for more, diverse, qualified studies on the subject that require not only quantitative but also qualitative data collection and even data collection, analysis and interpretation using mixed research methods.	As a result, by reviewing the literature, this study targets to present and analyses studies that were published in TR Dizin indexed journals, hence contributing to reduce this gap in the academia	The sample numbers used in empirical studies and the methods used for this purpose are also It raises serious doubts about the reliability of some of them.
Labanauskaitė et al., 2020	Empirical	All the measures indicates that e-marketing tools are effective and there are areas for improvement in Lithuania.	It is based on the assessment of tourism e-marketing communication tools in a customer approach	Further empirical research is needed to test and validate this pre-liminary framework developed
Gregoriades et al., 2021	Conceptual and Empirical	In e-marketing, the content of the message plays an important role in the formation of a customer's attitude towards the message source.	This paper presents a machine learning approach involving tourists' electronic word of mouth (eWOM) to support destination marketing campaigns	The main limitation of this work resides in the quality of the data and issues with possible fake reviews that might have affected the results.
He et al., 2021	Conceptual and Empirical	The three forms of brand-owned SMCM, are positively correlated with consumers' brand personality perceptions and brand attitudes	A framework was established to delineate those paths by which owned social media content marketing influences consumers' attitudes towards a brand	The examination of the content marketing focuses on a single brand, and no comparison of different brands was performed.
Maeran & Mignemi 2021	Conceptual and Empirical	The beliefs about other people's brand choices and the social visibility of the same brands could affect CE, and in turn, consumer behavior	The present study aims to highlight the possible effects of some aspects of consumer social context on brand-related behavior.	Further research needed to evaluate beliefs about what other people choose and what they know about their brand choice about the predictions of CE

Santos, et al., 2021	Conceptual	Emotions and involvement demonstrate greater progress and scientific development to the level of tourism, marketing and consumer behavior.	A critical reflection on the importance of emotions and involvement in specific contexts of leisure and tourism.	Its only includes the post Pandemic context.
Gregoriades et al., 2021	Empirical	The method can help hoteliers optimize their marketing campaigns by designing messages that could motivate target consumers by utilizing the results.	This study resides in the combination of exogenous eWOM information derived from cultural gap and economic distance theory with endogenous eWOM's properties.	The main limitation of this work resides in the quality of the data and issues with possible fake reviews that might have affected the results.
Cheng, 2021	Conceptual	Cognitive engagement and behavioral engagement are both associated with brand trust. Emotional engagement is only marginally related to brand trust.	This study can provide appropriate input to other service industries on the role of customer engagement.	This study focuses on the association between the customer engagement and social media content marketing, which only explored online marketing activities
Bowden & Mirzaei 2021	Conceptual	Consumer loyalty relationship was most strongly and significantly mediated by affective and cognitive engagement within the OBC channel when compared to the DCM channel.	Its contributing to the examining the antecedent role of self-brand connections in predicting consumers' engagement	It conducted within the confines of one OBC, within one social networking site platform characterized by self-selected membership based on a passion and immersion with the brand
Aslan, Erdoğan, Tarakçı, 2022	Empirical	With the results of the study, nowadays the content marketing is used more effectively and efficiently in digital environment through new channels though it is very old concept.	In line with the results obtained, it is predicted that businesses should use more intensely content marketing -which is a rising trend to retain existing customers and gain new customers in an increasingly competitive environment. Moreover, it is important for businesses to prefer content sharing channels that are compatible with the target audience	To be effective in content marketing, it is necessary to analyze the target audience correctly, gain their trust and establish sustainable relationships. So first of all mistakes in target audience analysis should be avoided.
Terho et al.,2022	Empirical	DCM requires strong content-championing competence to ensure the needed contributions on the part of various firm-internal and -external experts, as well as the integration of DCM into other marketing actions	It identifies key activities for realizing customer-centric DCM in B2B markets and key contingencies that influence its performance	Its qualitative efforts targeted theory-building and it relied on a cross-sectional sample to gain a broad understanding of various firms' DCM activities
Keke, 2022	Conceptual	All digital marketing channels, social media, have significant effects on consumers' purchasing preferences.	Examination the relationship between brands and consumers in the Turkish digital marketing business.	The analysis only includes the Turkish digital marketing business.
Qian, et al., 2022	Conceptual	The research bursts the myth that either the education or the industry is fully responsible for this issue by establishing that all parties are responsible in their own ways.	It is necessary to bridge the current research gap to a certain extent.	For the qualitative research, only a small amount of textual data was used because the number of participants involved in the discussion was limited.
Dewi, et al., 2022	Empirical	The DCM has a positive effect on visiting interest, digital content marketing has a positive effect on social word of mouth, social word of mouth has a positive effect on visiting interest, and it mediates digital content marketing on visiting interest.	This research, becomes very important for marketers considering that the application of content marketing strategies presents social word of mouth on social media.	The scope used in the study only covers one tourist attraction, namely Melasti Beach, which is not too large and broad in scope, so the research results cannot be generalized to a wider population.
Varadarajan, et al.,2022	Conceptual	It present a summary table of the proposed questions on (a) digital product innovations for the greater good, (b) digital marketing innovations in communications, and (c) digital marketing innovations in channels.	It focuses on innovations for the greater good in the domain of the former and direct and mediated communications through social media platforms and Omni channel marketing in the domain of the latter	It studied latest issues in digitalization so there are some difficulties in the literature
Wang et al., 2023	Empirical	Customers make a purchase increases at the micro-level due to self-referencing and detailing, at the macro-level due to argument structuring, and at the meta-level due to linguistic style matching, while linguistic content matching negatively affects the number of customers.	A multi-level research model to conceptualize the linguistic features of content from the aspects of word usage within-content argument development and between-content linguistic mimicry and investigate their impact on consumer purchase behaviors	It collected data from one specific platform to test our research model. It does not examine how language usage influences individual consumers with different traits.

INFO PAGE

Cross-country analysis of digital content marketing in tourism

Abstract

The main purpose of the paper is to evaluate the implications of 'Digital Content Marketing' (DCM) on the tourism market, specifically in different touristic regions. DCM is a digital inbound marketing strategy that aims to attract potential customers by producing innovative content and increasing their knowledge about services. The studies analyze the applications and outcomes of DCM strategies in the tourism market, highlighting the importance of digital marketing innovations for improving revenue in the sector. The study is based on a literature review of digital content marketing (DCM) in the tourism industry, using scientific articles from 2008 to 2023. The paper summarizes articles from selected journals to provide an overview of DCM in general. The research emphasizes the need for a cultural change in marketing approaches, shifting from "selling" to "helping" and utilizing social and electronic word of mouth in DCM. The papers provide theoretical and practical information for academics and businesses in the tourism industry, offering insights into the benefits and challenges of implementing DCM strategies. The studies also suggest the need for further research into digital content marketing, particularly in the context of B2B businesses.

Keywords: Digital Content Marketing,, Digital Marketing, , Tourism, , Cross-country Comparison, Content Creation .

Authors

Full Name	Author contribution roles	Contribution rate
Fetine Bayraktar:	Conceptualism, Methodology, Software, Validation, Formal Analysis, Resources, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft, Writing - Review & Editing	100%

Author statement: Author(s) declare(s) that All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. **Declaration of**

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