

The Main Inclinations in Digital Advertising Research: A Content Analysis of Articles Published in Journals Indexed in SSCI

Dijital Reklam Araştırmasında Temel Eğilimler: SSCI'de Taranan Dergilerde Yayımlanan Makalelerin İçerik Analizi

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ABSTRACT

In this study, the articles focused on digital advertising published in the journal indexed in Social Sciences Index (SSCI) in a 10-year period were analyzed. The main objective of the study is to reveal the prominent inclinations in the field of digital advertising research. Within this context, the research trends were examined focusing on the premier refereed academic publication in the field of advertising. In this descriptive research, content analysis was performed in order to investigate the articles published in Journal of Advertising, Journal of Advertising Research and International Journal of Advertising in a period between 2003 and 2012. In this frame, the articles were coded according to categories named as the year of journal, name of publication, occupation of the author(s), domicile of author affiliation, main focus of the study, article type, research design, method, and sample during the period under review. The findings of the study indicated that empirical, quantitative researches focused on effect were overwhelmingly conducted in the Journal of Advertising Research, the International Journal of Advertising, and the Journal of Advertising between the period of 2003 and 2012. In addition, it was revealed that multiple methods were predominantly employed, and general population and students preferred as sample.

Keywords:

Advertising, content analysis, digital advertising, communication research.

ÖZ

Bu çalışmada 10 yıllık dönemde Social Sciences Index'de (SSCI) taranan dergilerde yayımlanan dijital reklamcılığa odaklanan makaleler analiz edilmektedir. Bu çalışmanın temel amacı, dijital reklam araştırması alanındaki ön plana çıkan eğilimleri ortaya koymaktır. Bu bağlamda, araştırma eğilimleri reklam alanındaki önde gelen hakemli akademik yayınlara odaklanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Tanımlayıcı nitelikte olan bu çalışmada, 2003-2012 yılları arasında Journal of Advertising, Journal of Advertising Research and International Journal of Advertising dergilerinde yayımlanan makaleleri incelemek amacıyla içerik analizi gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu çerçevede, analiz edilen dönemde makaleler derginin yılı, yayının adı, yazar(lar)ın mesleği, yazarın bağlı olduğu kurumun konumu, çalışmanın ana odağı, makale tipi, araştırma tasarımı, yöntem ve örneklem kategorileri altında kodlanmıştır. Çalışmanın bulguları, 2003-2012 yılları arasında Journal of Advertising Research, International Journal of Advertising ve Journal of Advertising dergilerinde çoğunlukla ampirik ve etkiye odaklanan niceliksel araştırmaların yayımlandığını göstermektedir.

Anahtar sözcükler:

Reklam, içerik analizi, dijital reklamcılık, iletişim araştırması.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the present study, the articles associated with digital advertising published in the journals indexed in Social Sciences Index (SSCI) were examined. In this regard, Journal of Advertising, Journal of Advertising Research and International Journal of Advertising were analyzed. In this descriptive research, the articles were examined using content analysis during the period 2003 and 2012. Within this context, first, studies focused on a content analysis of articles in the field of advertising were mentioned. In this manner, the studies related to digital advertising were reviewed in terms of their main focus and methods. In the second part, the method of the current study was explained, and, in this respect, the process of journal and article selection, coding procedure, unit of analysis, analytic techniques, and intercoder reliability were described. In the third part, the findings of the research were presented, and in this frame, it was revealed that the frequencies of articles related to digital advertising according to categories during the period analyzed. In the conclusion part, the prominent inclinations in the field of digital advertising research were revealed, and recommendations for future researches were presented.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Research trends studies or journal studies provide a comprehensive and detailed analysis of main directions in the field of advertising. In this regard, the articles are examined in terms of theoretical, and methodological inclinations in order to map out advertising research. These studies are aimed to contribute to reveal a review of perspectives and approaches, and provide valuable insights for future investigations. In this manner, a number of studies have been conducted to analyze the research patterns in the field of advertising (e.g., Pasadeos et al., 1998; Ford and Merchant, 2008; Barry, 1990; Fastoso and Whitelock, 2007; Muncy, 1991; Muncy and Eastman, 1998; Okazaki and Mueller, 2007; Pitt et al., 2005; Taylor, 2005; Zou, 2005). Within this context, the prominent researches associated with digital advertising were mentioned in this section. In this respect, Chang-Hoan Cho and Hyoung Koo Khang (2006) examined internet-related articles published in the 15 premier journals in communication, marketing and advertising. Internet-related papers published between the period of 1994 and 2003 were analyzed by using content analysis. In this frame, each article was coded according to year of publication, name of journal, name and affiliation of authors, research topics, theoretical applications, research questions/hypotheses, research methods, sampling methods, sample size, response rates, unit of analysis, and statistical analyses. It was determined that 537 papers of 4,050 total papers in the 15 journals (13,3 %) were about the internet. The findings of the study indicated that for advertising journals, exploratory research (42,3 %) and descriptive research (49,5%) preferred rather than explanatory research (8,1 %) in terms of research purpose (p. 151). In this manner, it is underlined that more explanatory research studies are needed for internet-related research in communication, marketing, and advertising (p. 158). Besides, it was specified that 53,3 % of all internet-related articles involving data collection used online techniques, whereas 46,7 % used offline data collection methods for advertising (p. 154). In addition, the findings of the study revealed that 77,8 % of internet research in advertising used nonprobability sampling methods, and, a substantial proportion of internet research studies (40 %) in advertising used basic descriptive statistical analyses such as frequency, mean, and correlation (p. 159). Chang and Hyoung's study provides a comprehensive and elaborate analysis of authorship, methods, topics, units of analysis, and theories, and includes the evaluation of different fields -marketing, advertising, and communications-, and compares them to each other. As another example of this line, Ha (2008) focused on an evaluation of the conceptual foundations, theoretical and practical contributions of online advertising research, and aimed to propose a research agenda for further investigations. In this regard, online advertising researches published in *Journal of Advertising*, *Journal of Advertising Research*, *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, *International Journal of Advertising*, *Journal of Marketing Communications*, and *Journal of Interactive Advertising* were analyzed between the period 1996 and 2008. The findings of the study pointed out that common topics in the period under review were attitudes towards online advertising, online media planning, interactivity in online advertising, online advertising processing/execution, audience measurement, online-offline advertising synergies, and online advertising education (p. 32-33). This study makes precious contributions to the field however only researches which were deemed noteworthy were reviewed, and evaluated in this article. Similarly, Li (2011) examined the most prominent articles related to web and interactive advertising published in the *Journal of Advertising Research* in a 15-year period. In this regard, articles which are highly influential, still largely current, or possibly inspirational for future investigations of interactive advertising were evaluated. The findings of the study revealed that six themes of often-cited the studies published in the *Journal of Advertising Research* were display advertising, interactive media planning and reach/frequency estimates, the web as an advertising medium, electronic word of mouth, the web integration with other media, and new concepts and models of advertising (p. 13-14). This study also makes substantial contributions to the field although only researches which were highly influential were reviewed, and evaluated in this article. Besides, Kim and McMillan (2008) also focused on internet advertising research, and provided a bibliometric analysis of academic literature on internet advertising. In this respect, most-cited authors and articles, and co-citation patterns were investigated in a 10-year period (1994-2003). The citations took place in articles associated with internet advertising published in *Journal of Advertising*, *Journal of Advertising Research*, *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, and *Journal of Interactive Advertising* were examined. The findings of the study indicated that the *Journal of Advertising Research* has played an important role in shaping the field of internet advertising (p. 102). Besides, it was determined that six primary themes seemed to emerge were effectiveness of internet advertising, interactivity, electronic commerce, advertising processes, attitude toward the site/ad/brand, and comparisons to traditional media (p. 106). Apart from that, Okazaki and Barwise (2011) analyzed the researches focused on mobile advertising. The authors reviewed the articles published in major academic journals from 1993 to August 2010. In this regard, ABI/INFORM Global, Academic Research Library, Arts&Humanities Full Text, EBSCOhost Business Source, Emerald, Elsevier SD Freedom Collection, IEEE Xplore, and Wiley InterScience databases were investigated. Only the journals indexed in either the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) or the Science Citation Index (SCI) were selected. The findings of the study pointed out that emerging topics include device-readable printed codes in print advertisements and packaging; mobile search; location-based mobile communications and promotions; branded mobile entertainment, particularly games; and user-generated mobile content and social networking (p. 59). The findings of the study also indicated that most mobile advertising research conducted in Asia and Europe, not the United States. Okazaki and Barwise's study provides a comprehensive analysis of mobile advertising research. Within this context, the present study is aimed to reveal recent research patterns in the field of digital advertising. In this regard, the current study focused on what are the domicile of author affiliation and the occupation of authors, which subjects are most frequently studied, and which methodological approaches preferred in digital advertising research.

3. METHOD

A content analysis was conducted in order to reveal the inclinations in the field of digital advertising research. Content analysis was described as “an observational research method that is used to systematically evaluate the content of all forms of recorded communication” (Kolbe and Burnett, 1991: 243). In this frame, the process of journal and article selection, coding procedure, unit of analysis, analytic techniques, and intercoder reliability were explained in this section.

3.1. Journal Selection

In this descriptive research, prominent journals focusing on advertising indexed in Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) were analyzed. SSCI is an interdisciplinary citation index, and includes 3000 of the world's leading social science journals across 50 disciplines (http://thomsonreuters.com/products_services/science/science_products/a-z/social_sciences_citation_index/). This index provides information to determine the articles cited most frequently and by what publisher and author (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_Sciences_Citation_Index). In this study, as a first phase, the journals' titles include the term advertising in SSCI index were investigated. In this frame, SSCI database was scanned in terms of the word “advertising” included in the journal title. In this context, three journals were determined. These journals –the Journal of Advertising, the Journal of Advertising Research, and the International Journal of Advertising- were among the premier and prominent academic peer-reviewed publications in the field of advertising.

3.2. Article Selection

In the second phase, the articles focused on digital advertising published in the Journal of Advertising, the Journal of Advertising Research, and the International Journal of Advertising were selected for analysis, and content analyzed in a period between 2003 and 2012. In the process of article selection, the studies were specified based on the categorization of Communication&Mass Media Complete database. The categorization of this database preferred in order to provide objectivity. In the Communication&Mass Media Complete database, articles are classified into different categories (title, subject, keywords etc.) by experts in the area of communication and advertising. Thus, in the case of a study on same topic conducted by another researcher, this research design makes it possible to include and select the same articles in the current study. Within this context, Communication&Mass Media Complete database was scanned in order to determine the articles focused on digital advertising. The words related to digital advertising were investigated in the title of the article, and subject terms sections. In this frame, the main search terms were digital advertising, internet advertising, online advertising, interactive advertising, wireless advertising, cell phone advertising, social media and advertising, interactive television and advertising, outdoor advertising and digital, mobile advertising. In this context, the articles not associated with digital advertising were not taken into account in the analysis. Besides, editorial, book reviews, and commentary sections in the journals were excluded in the analysis.

3.3. Coding Procedure

The articles published in the Journal of Advertising, the Journal of Advertising Research, and the International Journal of Advertising were analyzed according to the procedures below. The coding scheme was developed based on previous studies focused on the content analysis of articles in the field of advertising (e.g. West, 2007; Yale&Gilly, 1988; Muncy, 1991; Muncy&Eastman, 1998; Chang&Hyoung, 2006). In the present study, the articles related to digital advertising were classified into 9 categories. In this regard, each article was coded for name of the journal, year of the journal, the occupation of author(s), domicile of author affiliation, type of article, research design, main focus of study, method, and sample. Within this context, the occupation of author(s) was coded as academician, practitioner and collaborated. The domicile of author affiliation was coded based on information about the authors in the first page of the article or at the end of the article. In the case of not enough information about authors, the domicile of author affiliation was coded based on internet country codes in the e-mail addresses. Type of article was classified into two main categories: empirical research and theoretical -non-empirical- article. Empirical research is defined as “data-based articles reporting on primary or secondary research efforts”, and theoretical article is defined as “non-data-based articles that built on previous research and/or practice to offer theoretical propositions” (Pasadeos et al., 1997). The research design was classified into three main categories: quantitative, qualitative, and combination. Following Yale and Gilly (1988) and West's (2007) study, the subcategories of main focus of the study was coded as practice, effects, content, social, method, and other. Regarding Yale and Gilly's (1988), Taylor (2005), and West's (2007) study, method was classified into survey, experiment, content analysis, secondary data analysis, interview, focus group, case study, multiple methods, conceptual, and other. In this respect, it is important to note that in the current study, both the primary method and pilot study were taken into account in the analysis. Following Yale and Gilly's (1988), and West's (2007) study, sample was classified into student, adults, case study, websites, general population, experts, secondary data, advertisements, combination, non-empirical, and other.

3.4. Unit of Analysis and Analytic Techniques

In the study, the unit of analysis was specified as articles in the process of evaluation of the papers. In this respect, regarding the domicile of author affiliation category, the unit of analysis was specified as the location of author institutions. The descriptive analysis of the articles published in the Journal of Advertising Research, the International Journal of Advertising, and the Journal of Advertising was performed, and the frequencies, and percentages of articles associated with digital advertising according to categories mentioned above were revealed during the period under review.

3.5. Intercoder Reliability

In the current study, the articles were coded by the author, and the master student, who studied in the field of public relations and advertising. In this manner, it is important to note that as stated in The Vancouver Agreement (VA), “authorship credit should be based on 1) substantial contributions to conception and design, acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data; 2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and 3) final approval of the version to be published. Authors should meet conditions 1, 2, and 3.” (http://www.icmje.org/ethical_1author.html). Within this context, in the present study, design, main focus, method, and sample of the research were determined by the author. Besides, the author collected the data, coded the articles, performed the analysis, and evaluated the data. In addition, the draft of the article, and final version to be published were prepared by the author. In this process, master student was informed about coding procedure, and only the coding of the articles was performed by the master student.

In the present study, intercoder reliability was calculated using Cohen’s Alpha. In this manner, Zwick (1988) pointed out that Cohen’s kappa is the most widely used reliability coefficient. Cohen’s kappa was 1.0 for the year of journal, 1.0 for occupation of the author(s), 1.0 for domicile of author affiliation, 1.00 for type of article, 1.0 for research design, 0.85 for main focus of study, 0.93 for method, and 0.90 for sample.

4. FINDINGS

The findings of the study indicated that 145 articles associated with digital advertising were published in the Journal of Advertising Research, the International Journal of Advertising, and the Journal of Advertising between the period of 2003 and 2012. The number of articles according to year in the journals was presented in Table 1.

During the first five-year period (2003-2007), 39,3 % of the articles related to digital advertising were published in the Journal of Advertising Research, the International Journal of Advertising, and the Journal of Advertising. As shown in Table 1, the second five-year period (2008-2012) provided predominantly the largest share. During the second five-year period, 60,7 % of the articles associated with digital advertising were published in the Journal of Advertising Research, the International Journal of Advertising, and the Journal of Advertising.

Table 1: The Number of Articles by Year

Year	Frequency	Percentage (%)
2003	9	6,2
2004	11	7,6
2005	9	6,2
2006	11	7,6
2007	17	11,7
2008	9	6,2
2009	23	15,9
2010	15	10,3
2011	27	18,6
2012	14	9,7
Total	145	100

The number of articles according to year in the Journal of Advertising Research, the International Journal of Advertising, and the Journal of Advertising between the period of 2003 and 2012 was shown in Table 2. The findings of the study revealed that the articles related to digital advertising were mostly published in the Journal of Advertising Research. In this regard, it was determined that 47,6 % of the articles related to digital advertising were published in the Journal of Advertising Research. Besides, 26,9 % of the articles associated with digital advertising were published in the International Journal of Advertising, and 25,5 % of the articles were published in the Journal of Advertising during the period 2003 and 2012. Within this context, as mentioned above, Cho and Khang (2006) performed a content analysis of published internet-related articles in 15 major journals in communications, marketing, and advertising. In this regard, it was revealed that 13 internet-related articles were published in the Journal of Advertising, and 55 internet-related articles were published in the Journal of Advertising Research, and 8 internet-related articles were published in the Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising between 1994 and 2003 (p. 143, 149). Along similar lines, the findings of the present study indicated that the articles associated with digital advertising were substantially published in the Journal of Advertising Research.

Table 2: The Number of Articles by Journals

Journal	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Journal of Advertising Research	69	47,6
International Journal of Advertising	39	26,9
Journal of Advertising	37	25,5
Total	145	100

Table 3 provides the number of articles according to authors' occupation in the Journal of Advertising Research, the International Journal of Advertising, and the Journal of Advertising during the period 2003 and 2012. In this frame, the findings of the study indicated that 69,0 % of the articles were authored by academicians. On contrast with this, 15,2 % of the articles were authored by practitioners. In this manner, West (2007) pointed out that "a personal observation since taking up the post of Editor in mid-2004 is that hardly any sole-practitioner papers are submitted" (p. 548). The findings of the present study revealed that 14,4 % of the papers were written collaboratedly -by academicians, practitioners or graduate/undergraduate students. In this regard, 10,3 % of the articles were authored by academicians and practitioners. 3,4 % of the papers were written by academicians and graduate/undergraduate students. Joint academician-practitioner-student papers had the lowest share, and only 0,7 of the articles were authored by academicians, practitioners and students. Within this context, in Cho and Khang's research focused on an analysis of internet-related articles (2006), it was specified that 92,2 % of all articles published in the journals under review were submitted by academicians between 1994 and 2003 (p. 150). Similarly, the findings of the present study indicated that the articles were overwhelmingly authored by academicians. Besides, it is noteworthy to point out that joint academician-practitioner papers or joint academician-student papers less preferred.

Table 3: The Number of Articles by Author's Occupation

Author's Occupation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
academician	100	69,0
practitioner	22	15,2
collaborated	21	14,4
collaborated (academician-practitioner)	15	10,3
collaborated (academician-student)	5	3,4
collaborated (academician-student-practitioner)	1	0,7
academician-practitioner ¹	1	0,7
not stated	1	0,7
Total	145	100

Table 4 lists the number of articles according to the domicile of author affiliation in the Journal of Advertising Research, the International Journal of Advertising, and the Journal of Advertising. The findings of the study pointed out that author institutions were domiciled across North America, Europe, Asia, and Oceania. In this frame, North America was the main subcategory, and provided a substantial number of the articles with 51 % of all the articles. Besides, Europe provided a notable share with 18,9 % of all the articles. North America and Europe followed by Asia (11 %), and Oceania (8,9 %). On the contrary, Africa had the lowest share (0,3 %). Within this context, in Cho and Khang's study focused on an investigation of internet-related articles (2006), it was revealed that a large proportion of author institutions were domiciled in America, and Michigan State University, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the University of Southern California, and the University of Florida provided a substantial number of all the articles (p. 150). Along similar lines, in West's study (2007) focused on a content analysis of the inputs and outputs of the International Journal of Advertising during the period 1992-2006, the findings of the study indicated that North America provided the largest share (overwhelmingly US scholars) followed by Asia, the UK, Europe and then Australasia, and the rest of the world (South America and Africa) provided an insignificant number of papers (p. 547). Contrary to previous findings, in Okazaki and Barwise's study (2011) examined researches mobile advertising, it is underlined that most mobile advertising research has been conducted in Asia and Europe, not the United States (p. 59). In this manner, the findings of the current study indicated that the frequency of the

¹ In the article named "Managing E-mail Advertising Frequency from the Consumer Perspective" published in Journal of Advertising in 2011, it is stated that the author is associate director of AID (a subsidiary of the Omnicom Group, Versailles, France), and an associate professor, Business Administration Institute (IAE), University of Science and Technology, Lille, France.

articles by author institutions were overwhelmingly dominated by America. In this respect, it is notable to point out that 48,9 % of author institutions were domiciled in America while the rest of the world -20 county which author institutions were domiciled- had a low share in terms of domicile of author affiliation.

Table 4: The Number of Articles by Domicile of Author Affiliation

Domicile of Author Affiliation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
NORTH AMERICA	177	51
America	171	49,3
Canada	6	1,7
EUROPE	65	18,9
UK	13	3,7
Spain	11	3,2
Belgium	10	2,9
France	8	2,3
Sweden	6	1,7
Germany	4	1,2
Austria	4	1,2
Holland	3	0,9
Norway	3	0,9
Finland	2	0,6
Greece	1	0,3
ASIA	38	11
China	15	4,3
Korea	12	3,5
Japan	5	1,4
Singapore	4	1,2
Israel	2	0,6
OCEANIA	31	8,9
Australia	22	6,3
New Zealand	9	2,6
AFRICA	1	0,3
South Africa ²	1	0,3
Other ³	4	1,2
Not stated	31	8,9
Total	347	100

Table 5 provides frequencies and proportions of the articles according to main focus of the study between the period of 2003 and 2012 was presented. The findings of the study revealed that studies on advertising effect came into prominence

² In the article named “Digital Video Recorders and Inadvertent Advertising Exposure” published in the Journal of Advertising Research in 2009, author institution is stated as Millward Brown South Africa in the first page of the article.

³ In the article named “Assessing advertising efficiency: Does the internet play a role?” published in the Journal of Advertising in 2010, it is stated that the author is a full professor of accounting and management control in the Department of Business Economics, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (Spain) and IESEG School of Management (France). In the article named “Practitioners’ perceptions of advertising strategies for digital media” published in the International Journal of Advertising in 2010, author institution is stated as Brock University (Canada), and ESC Rennes Business School (France). In the article named “Can old media enhance new media?” published in the Journal of Advertising Research in 2010, it is stated that the author is the managing partner of the London and Munich offices and cofounder of the European operations of Vivaldi Partners. In the article named “Getting the balance right: Commercial loading in online video programs” published in the Journal of Advertising in 2012, it is stated that the author is the executive director and chief research officer in the Disney Media&Advertising Lab, Texas (America), and professor and director in the Murdoch University (Australia).

and prevailed in the journals under review. In this frame, advertising effect category provided the largest share with 73,1 % of all the articles. It can be seen in Table 5, this category followed by studies on advertising practice, and advertising practice the most preferred second topic with 15,9 % of all the articles. On contrast with this, studies on content (4,1 %), social (2,1 %), and method (0,7 %) had the lowest shares during the period 2003 and 2012. Within this context, in Cho and Khang’s research focused on an analysis of internet-related articles (2006), it was specified that the most often researched topic was internet usage, perception, and attitude toward the internet (p. 151). It was determined for advertising journals, the top three topics most often studied were internet advertising effectiveness, website design, content, and perception issues, and internet usage, perception, and attitude toward the internet (p. 151). Similarly, the findings of the current study revealed that the researches focused on effect were predominantly conducted in the field of digital advertising.

Table 5: The Number of Articles by Main Focus of the Study

Main focus of the study	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Advertising Effects	106	73,1
Advertising Practice	23	15,9
Content	6	4,1
Social	3	2,1
Method	1	0,7
Other	6	4,1
Total	145	100

The frequencies and proportions of articles by article type in the Journal of Advertising Research, the International Journal of Advertising, and the Journal of Advertising was showed in Table 6. The findings of the study revealed that 94,5 % of the articles in the journals were predominantly empirical. On the contrary, 5,5 % of the papers were theoretical article between the period of 2003 and 2012. In Yale and Gilly’s study on trends in advertising research (1988), it is pointed out that empirical articles were favored in all journals (p. 17), and 69 % of articles were empirical in JAR, and 65 % of articles were empirical in JA” (p. 18). Similarly, the current study indicated that empirical studies overwhelmingly preferred rather than non-empirical studies in the digital advertising research.

Table 6: The Number of Articles by Article Type

Article Type	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Empirical	137	94,5
Theoretical	8	5,5
Total	145	100

Table 7 presents the number of articles by research design in the Journal of Advertising Research, the International Journal of Advertising, and the Journal of Advertising. According to the analysis, quantitative research design category provided the largest share with 75,9 % of all the articles. On contrast with this, qualitative research design category had a low share (6,9 % of all the articles). The findings of the study pointed out that researchers less preferred combination of quantitative and qualitative research designs (11,7 %). In this respect, 5,5 % of all the articles was non-empirical studies during the period 2003 and 2012. Within this context, Kim and Weaver (2002) pointed out that previous studies revealed that more quantitative than qualitative research articles have been published in the communication field (p. 527). As another example of this line, in Cho and Khang’s study focused on an investigation of internet-related articles (2006), it was revealed that 73 % of all internet-related articles used quantitative research methods while 27 % of all internet-related articles used qualitative research methods. In another study, Ha’s paper focused on the evaluation of online advertising researches (2008), the findings of the study indicated that most authors used the quantitative approach to conduct empirical studies in online advertising (p. 40). In this manner, Ha underlined that “quantitative studies facilitate statistical testing and generalization of the results, and are generally easier to get accepted for publication in scholarly journals” (p. 40). Within this context, the findings of the current study also indicated that quantitative research design were overwhelmingly preferred rather than qualitative research design.

Table 7: The Number of Articles by Research Design

Research Design	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Quantitative	110	75,9
Qualitative	10	6,9
Combination	17	11,7
Theoretical	8	5,5
Total	145	100

Table 8 provides the number of articles by method in the Journal of Advertising Research, the International Journal of Advertising, and the Journal of Advertising. According to the analysis, multiple method category provided predominantly the largest share with 51,7 % of all the articles. In this respect, it is important to note that -as mentioned above- in the present study, both the primary method and pilot study were taken into account in the analysis. The findings of the current study pointed out that a substantial proportion of the researchers conducted survey. In this context, survey category provided a remarkable portion of the articles with 20 % of all the articles. Survey followed by secondary data analysis with 9,7 % of all the articles. It can be seen in Table 8, content analysis (6,9 %), case studies (2,8 %), interview (1,4 %), meta analysis (1,4 %), and bibliometric analysis (0,7 %) less preferred in the field of digital advertising. Within this context, in Cho and Khang’s study focused on an investigation of internet-related articles (2006), it was revealed that experiment (29,9 %) and survey (29,1 %) were the research method most often employed for advertising journals. Similarly, in Yale and Gilly’s study on trends in advertising research (1988), it was determined that experiments and surveys are the most frequently used empirical methods by the researchers (p. 17-18). Along similar lines, the findings of the current study indicated that multiple method category prevailed in the digital advertising research, and a substantial proportion of the researchers conducted survey.

Table 8: The Number of Articles by Method

Method	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Multiple Methods	75	51,7
Survey	29	20,0
Secondary Data Analysis	14	9,7
Content Analysis	10	6,9
Case Study	4	2,8
Interview	2	1,4
Meta Analysis	2	1,4
Bibliometric Analysis	1	0,7
Conceptual	8	5,5
Total	145	100

The number of articles by sample in the Journal of Advertising Research, the International Journal of Advertising, and the Journal of Advertising was presented in Table 9. The findings of the current study pointed out that the primary sample was general population with 23,4 % of all the articles during the period 2003 and 2012. This sample closely followed by combination subcategory with 20,6 % of all the articles. Besides, students was one of the primary samples with 20 % of all the articles. Secondary data analysis came next with 10,3 % of all the articles. Secondary data analysis followed by experts (4,1 %), adults (2,8 %), advertisements (2,8 %), and case study (2,8 %). Within this context, in West’s study (2007) focused on a content analysis of the International Journal of Advertising between the period of 1992-2006, the findings of the study pointed out the rise of student samples, and the general decline in the number of studies analyzing advertisement (p. 549). Within this context, Cho and Khang underlined that more representative samples (general population samples rather than student samples) are needed in the advertising field (2006: 159). In this manner, the current study indicated that general population, combination, students, and secondary data analysis overwhelmingly preferred rather than experts, adults, case study, and advertisements in the digital advertising research.

Table 9: The Number of Articles by Sample

Sample	Frequency	Percentage (%)
General Population	34	23,4
Combination	30	20,6
Student	29	20,0
Secondary Data	15	10,3
Experts	6	4,1
Adults	4	2,8
Case Study	4	2,8
Advertisements	4	2,8
Children	2	1,4
Teenagers	1	0,7
Other	8	5,6
Non-Empirical	8	5,5
Total	145	100

5. CONCLUSION

This analysis provides a general overview of digital advertising research in the axis of articles published in the Journal of Advertising Research, the International Journal of Advertising, and the Journal of Advertising indexed in SSCI. In the conclusion of the study, the findings of the study pointed out that digital advertising researches dominated by author institutions domiciled in America. In spite of this, author institutions domiciled in European, Asian, Ocenian, and African countries had notably low shares in terms of domicile of author affiliation. Besides, it was determined that a significant portion of all the digital advertising articles was authored by academicians. The main findings of the study indicated that empirical, quantitative researches focused on effect were conducted during the period 2003 and 2012. Besides, it is notable to point out that multiple methods predominantly used in digital advertising research. It is also noteworthy to mention that general population and students predominantly preferred in the field of digital advertising. On contrast with this, non-empirical studies, qualitative research design and studies focused on content, social issues and method less preferred.

The present study focused on a analysis of main directions and research patterns in the field of digital advertising. In this manner, it can be recommended to examine, and focus on more specific areas in this field. In this frame, it can be suggested to conduct a content analysis of articles based on cultural studies approach in the field of digital advertising. Besides, it can be recommended to examine the most prominent theoretical approaches in digital advertising researches. Along similar lines, it would be noteworthy to investigate the most prominent analytic techniques (e.g. regression, factor, discrimination, and cluster) in this field. It can also be recommended to investigate the most studied medium in the field of digital advertising. In addition, the present study was limited to Journal of Advertising, Journal of Advertising Research, and International Journal of Advertising. In this manner, eliminating this limitation was also proposed for further investigations. In this regard, it would be valuable to investigate the other most prominent journals in the field of advertising and marketing in order to map out digital advertising studies.

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