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## ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

### Providing Digital Marketing Model with Customer Participation Approach with Intervening Role of Knowledge Management

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#### ABSTRACT

Due to the spread of activities in the virtual world and on the Internet, this research was conducted with the aim of presenting a digital marketing model with a customer participation approach with intervening role of knowledge management. This research is qualitative-quantitative. In the qualitative part, the statistical population includes all CEOs as well as managers of related units (marketing, research and development, business development) who are active in different industries, and sampling was done using the snowball method, and finally with 16 saturated interviews. There was a comment. The data collection tool included a semi-structured interview, and the Foundation's data theory method and MAXQDA software was used to analyze the specialized interviews. In a small part, they form also, for the survey in the quantitative part, experts, employees and customers are also included in the statistical population, and sampling was done using the accessible and random method, and 384 people were selected using the Cochran formula. The data collection tool included a questionnaire, and structural equation modeling and SPSS and PLS software were used to analyze the data. Based on the results, the digital marketing model was designed with the approach of customer participation. This model is in the form of 97 secondary codes, 20 concepts and 6 main categories including causal conditions, interveners, central category, strategies and consequences, and the influencing factors are determined in each dimension. Also, according to the tests, all the relationships in the model and the validity of the model were confirmed and the impact of the dimensions on each other was evaluated. ©authors

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## 1. Introduction

The concept of marketing and customer management has evolved over the years, and until the 1990s, marketing focused on customer transactions (Asannejad et al., 2022). Organizations' goals developed over time and this exchange-based perspective slowly evolved into relationship marketing, with their main goal being to build positive relationships with customers and ensure customer satisfaction and loyalty through better products and services (Ozuem & Willis., 2022). However, marketing managers and researchers realized that customer satisfaction is not enough to make them loyal and profitable over time. Loyalty and profitable satisfaction should be promoted to a higher level and reach the stage of favorable differentiation and sustainable competitive advantage. Therefore, the goal of organizations was promoted from the stage of communication marketing to the participation of customers in all possible ways. In marketing, participation is discussed as the activity of the customer towards the company and is defined as customer participation (Adams et al., 2019).

Customer involvement is recognized as one of the main drivers of a company's financial success. Advances in technology, digital media, social media, and mobile communications have created a new playing field for marketers that will allow marketers to reshape customer experiences and build meaningful relationships. In addition, digital technologies and devices such as smartphones, Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence promise everything in the near future (Clarence & Keni, 2022).

The importance of customer participation for the success of companies in gaining competitive advantage and increasing profitability is an important issue, and the ambiguities that companies have to create partnership and also improve the shopping experience of customers in the country have become an important challenge (Shankar et al., 2022). Considering the tremendous speed of the digital world and emerging technologies, as well as its tremendous impact on marketing, in order to develop effective marketing strategies for customer engagement, it is necessary to have a deep understanding of customer behavior (in this article, customer engagement)

and the factors influencing it. Today, not paying attention to digital marketing will lead to the failure of the brand (Haji Hosseini et al., 2021). Also, in our country, despite the development of this field at the global level, there has been limited growth, and it seems that the lack of knowledge and studies in this field is the main reason for this issue, and the review of the studies conducted in this field indicates that there are many research gaps in this field. There is a field and each of the researches have dealt with a specific aspect of digital marketing and there is no comprehensive model in order to improve customer participation in this field. Therefore, this article seeks to answer the question of what are the effective components in digital marketing with the approach of creating customer participation and what is its process model?

Previous research on the use of channels and consumer preferences in a multi-channel environment has mainly focused on the search stage (e.g. before purchase) or the purchase stage and considers the purchase process as a dynamic and long-term journey through multiple channels. Different, it has not been addressed that this issue can cause problems for companies in planning and targeting the marketing process. According to the McKinsey (2018) report, such a gap in the deep understanding of customer behavior and knowledge of the experiences gained by customers even in the best companies, has led to a decrease in the expected results from the marketing process and customer satisfaction. On the other hand, the process of rapid changes in digital technologies has had a great impact on customers' lifestyles, which has led to changes in marketing strategies and processes. But according to the McKinsey Consultants Group (2018), an integrated model and model for multi-channel marketing in the digital age that can demonstrate the impact of marketing on continuous customer experiences (the length of the customer journey) and can be measured and evaluated, from It is the requirements of the present age that should be considered. Therefore, the current research has been prepared with the same goal and with a focus on improving the overall customer experience in digital channels, and it intends to identify the effective structures in creating the customer

experience by examining the technology trends and its impact on the customers' lifestyles and their purchasing behavior. After designing the model derived from these structures, proceed to weigh the relationship between the structures and explain it in the operational environment. Based on this, covering the gap in existing studies, which is the lack of attention to customer participation during the customer journey and through different channels under one umbrella in the digital environment, has been identified by exploiting the potential in digital technologies, in order to make the marketing system more efficient and The higher profitability of the company shows the main goal of the current research. Therefore, due to the lack of a comprehensive model in the field of digital marketing in various industries with the approach of customer participation and the lack of development of this field in our country in line with the global growth of digital marketing, this research seeks to fill the existing research gaps in this field by examining this issue.

One of the important goals of organizations, especially educational organizations, is to produce, share and transfer knowledge, and this is done by its managers (Bakhtiari et.al, 2023). A knowledge-oriented organization is a legal-real set that takes an organizational form by being placed in a planned economicsocial structure and uses knowledge, human expert forces, and a dynamic organizational structure to create and produce products (Hosseini Nia et.al, 2023).

The necessity of doing this research and its importance is very significant considering the many advantages of digital marketing in order to achieve the goals of companies and although digital marketing has many advantages, but for the implementation of successful digital marketing, you cannot rely solely on the Internet, companies in digital marketing in addition to Based on the use of information technology, by training and motivating and cultivating marketing talents and culture in employees, they expand and institutionalize marketing at all levels of a company, in other words, marketing is not limited to specialized marketing departments, but should be all The employees of the company should participate in this matter in order to achieve profitability and

co-creation of value with customers through partnership and customer experience. Digital marketing and its application in the direction of customer participation has had a limited growth in our country compared to the global development of this field, and many businesses have not yet entered this field and do not have enough knowledge about it. Examining the background of the research in this field indicates that there have been very limited researches in this field and therefore there are many ambiguities that need to be answered and gain knowledge and information in this field. Therefore, according to the stated importance and necessity, the current research seeks to provide a comprehensive model for digital marketing with a customer participation approach to increase the awareness of company managers and provide practical suggestions for the development of this field in various industries.

In this regard, the main aims of this research is to determine and explain the digital marketing model with the approach of customer participation according to the recent trends, which is examined in the form of the following sub-aims:

1. Determining the components of the digital marketing model in order to promote and improve customer participation according to future marketing trends.
2. Determining the relationships between the components of the digital marketing model in order to promote and improve customer engagement according to future marketing trends.
3. Determining the logic between the components of the digital marketing model in order to promote and improve customer engagement according to future marketing trends.
4. Validation and testing of the digital marketing model in order to promote and improve customer participation according to future marketing trends.

## 2. Literature Review

### *Digital marketing*

Digital marketing means using techniques and channels to connect with where customers spend most of their time: the online world. A website, an online business, digital advertising,

email marketing, online sales, etc., are all spectrums that fall under the umbrella of digital marketing (Haji Hosseini et al., 2021). Digital marketing includes all marketing that uses electronic tools or the Internet. Businesses communicate with their specific and effective customers through digital channels such as search engines, social media, email and website. The desire to use digital media by consumers, as well as the potential desire of users to join the digital age, has encouraged many companies to use digital marketing to reach their target markets (Krings et al., 2021).

Digital marketing is not only an effective force for the growth of a company or an economic enterprise, but it is the fate of all traditional marketing maneuvers in an economic enterprise. Digital communications are more consistent, faster, measurable, and effective, and digital marketing offers as many benefits to consumers as it does to marketers (Cartwright, 2021). Digital marketing has been able to reduce the distance between customers and marketers of products and services and has caused an increase in customer purchases and major changes in customer behavior. Nowadays, in most cases, consumers can easily get a lot of information online before deciding to buy a particular product. They have access to suppliers all over the world and also have up-to-date market prices at the time of their purchase (Yogesh, 2021).

Digital channels have overcome traditional limitations such as time and place limitations to communicate with a wide range of audiences; at the same time, digital technology allows the completion of the marketing message with high precision to target very specific segments within the market; Digital marketing is able to control customers. This means that digital marketing is designed to target specific sets of customers and its form can attract target customers who are looking for brands, products and services (Zhang et al., 2022).

Digital marketing allows for better results. For example, traditional marketing, known as inbound marketing, emphasizes television, radio, and newspapers, and is designed for the general public, while digital marketing, or inbound marketing, focuses on mobile media, social media, search engines, and social networks. Due to the fact that digital marketing

is focused on internet tools, it can help business owners in saving marketing costs as well as communicating with an unlimited number of audiences and customers (Olson et al., 2021).

### ***Knowledge management (KM)***

Different organisations exercise 'knowledge' as power over others to better understand and develop competitive strategies. Knowledge is created through communications between people and social structures; it is defined as 'a set of defensible beliefs that could facilitate an individual action' (Nonaka, 1994). Ooi (2014) stated that 'Knowledge is an intangible asset' and is a provenance of competitive edge for individuals and organisations because it is hard to emulate. Previous studies suggested that knowledge gained from different stakeholders, such as suppliers, consumers and research institutions, is vital for organisations to generate green innovation (Cui et al., 2020; Tseng et al., 2018)

Organizations have many resources and assets to carry out their missions and achieve their goals. Some of these resources and assets are very valuable and strategic, which play a central role in gaining the competitive advantage of the organization. Knowledge is one of these resources and assets for all organizations (Yu, 2019).

For the progress and realization of organizational goals, proper management is needed, and in the meantime, due to the knowledge of the new era, human resource management is very important (Asali et.al, 2023).

Organizational knowledge is a set of relatively new organizational activities aimed at improving organizational decision-making and organizational performance (Askari and Askari, 2017). Creating and expanding the culture and atmosphere in the organization that encourages this type of communication and interaction is one of the necessities of knowledge management (Abdolzadeh et.al, 2023). In order to timely react to rapid changes of market and customer demand, firms are encouraged to develop a knowledge-nurtured culture. It is widely recognized that knowledge is not only an important resource of a firm but it also serves as a basic source of competitive advantages (Gunsel et.al, 2013). An efficient

knowledge management strategy allows organizations to prepare and overcome environmental challenges and changes (Kafashpoor et.al, 2013)

### ***Customer involvement***

Customer participation refers to the customer's role in the process of producing tangible goods or services. The nature of services makes customers more willing to participate in its production and delivery compared to tangible goods. Customers, a complementary part of the service delivery system or a means to say "have they achieved the desired results of the service or not?" are (Wardati, 2019). Therefore, if customers do not play the role of participation in their production effectively, the desired results will not be achieved. Researchers have identified 4 unique elements of customer engagement.

1) Purpose of participation: here the role of customers is defined. What is the purpose? The goals can be improving user relationships, reducing innovation time, or getting new ideas from customers.

2) Participation stages: strategic planning, idea generation, idea screening, business analysis, design process.

3) The intensity level of customer participation: It refers to the way customers participate in the innovation process. There can be a wide range of participation sizes that can vary depending on the type of product and the development process.

4) Mode of participation: Modes in which customers participate, the mode can be, for example, focus groups, face-to-face interviews, brainstorming, etc. Customer participation in the strategy and sales process is relatively unknown. Customer engagement is mostly used in manufacturing companies that are developing new products. Attracting new customers online usually seems a bit difficult. In the online world as in the offline world, the competition to attract customers is very high. But in order to be able to do this correctly as a business brand, there are many solutions. However, the most important issue is familiarity with new techniques in virtual space and the online world (Patma et al., 2021).

In this context, social networks are considered one of the important topics in attracting new

customers online. According to studies, 80% of people follow at least one business or brand on Instagram. People usually follow brands that celebrities follow. Being active in social networks will increase awareness of the business brand. Half of the world's population has social media accounts. Social networks increase interaction with customers. Customers like to know who is behind a particular brand. The audience should be asked for their opinion and help them if needed. In social networks, use appropriate content that is enjoyable for them and interact with customers on social networks. Social networks are a great opportunity to get traffic without paying anything. Therefore, they can be a good opportunity for advertising for the brand (Muslim et al., 2020).

-Roman Fasahmi et al. (2022) identified the effective factors of digital content marketing of consumer involvement with the brand. In the performance analysis section of countries and highly cited authors, and in the science drawing section, five clusters including user-generated content, user-generated content analysis, consumer engagement with the brand, content spread in collective communities, and types of content sources in the analysis of co-citation pairs were identified. Also, three repeated words "user-generated content", "social media" and "communication of verbal recommendations" were presented in the co-occurrence analysis of words. The results show that the five constructs of social media characteristics, source characteristics, content characteristics, online collective community characteristics, and consumer characteristics are among the most important previous constructs of content marketing. Also, in terms of context, product, person's personality, matching content and media, culture and artificial intelligence are introduced as the most important platforms of this process. Consumer participation is the most important behavioral decision and consumer engagement with the brand is the most important output of the digital content marketing process.

-Zhang et al., (2022). In their article argued that customer participation, including information sharing, responsible behaviors, and in-role feedback, promotes older customers' digital skills and basic needs satisfaction,

leading to higher appreciation of digital affordances and well-being. Additionally, online employees' customer orientation positively moderates the above relationships. This study provides insight for service providers to include older customers in e-services.

-Setkute & Dibb (2022) in an article concluded that distinctive pattern of marketing practices arising from this combination of factors and the limited role of digital marketing within it, are revealed. These insights extend the debate about digital marketing's use by showing empirically that a "one size fits all" ways of thinking about digital marketing is not appropriate for B2B SMEs. The implications for researchers and practicing managers are considered.

-Zamani et al., (2022) in their research concluded that digital marketing strategies are the major underlying factors of a model that affects content marketing. Also, content marketing strategy affects the knowledge management of consumers and the quality of service delivery and development. It ultimately leads to consumer engagement. Finally, by creating brand value and increasing its competitiveness, consumers' intention to buy can be increased.

-Clarence & Keni (2022) in an article argued that digital marketing, customer engagement, and brand preferences can predict purchase intentions. The results of this study are expected to provide implications for companies to determine the right strategy to create and increase consumer buying intentions

-Shankar et al., (2022) in their research argued that digital marketing communication pertains mostly to a specific, national level rather than a global level, despite the porousness of national boundaries for digital marketing. Authors derive important insights, identify key research gaps and questions in each of the dyads along these dimensions. Authors suggest approaches to address these research questions under three major components: substantive issues, data, and methods. These approaches can offer the insights that managers need to better formulate digital marketing strategies in local and global contexts.

-Hien et al., (2022) in their research concluded that brand awareness only moderates the relationship between attitude toward digital marketing and customer purchase intention. The results would help managers have the right direction for the business strategy to adapt and develop the business despite any difficult circumstances.

-Saura (2021) in his article concluded that a holistic overview of the main applications of Data Sciences to digital marketing and generate insights related to the creation of innovative Data Mining and knowledge discovery techniques. Important theoretical implications are discussed, and a list of topics is offered for further research in this field. The review concludes with formulating recommendations on the development of digital marketing strategies for businesses, marketers, and non-technical researchers and with an outline of directions of further research on innovative Data Mining and knowledge discovery applications.

-Akrami & Hajialiakbari (2021) in their research concluded that population and statistical sample in this article includes managers and experts, including university professors and highly experienced managers in the branches of Bank Shahr in Tehran province, whose number has been selected using Cochran's formula of 125 people. Also, the results of hypotheses based on marketing effect. Digital has not had a significant effect on the two variables of consumer participation and consumer value ( $p < 0.05$ ), but in relation to the role of digital marketing on consumer trust, this rate is acceptable ( $p > 0.05$ ).

-Rangaswamy et al., (2020) in an article argued that Digital business platforms (DBPs) such as eBay, Google, and Uber Technologies have seen enormous growth; this paper explores their salient characteristics, the role of marketing in helping DBPs succeed, and important research topics for theory and practice. A new conceptual framework based on insights from transaction cost analysis outlines the role and impact of marketing in DBPs. A key role for marketing is to increase the number and quality of interactions on a DBP while reducing transaction costs for users and production costs for the DPB. The DBPs' interactions and the data thus generated are key

enablers of value creation and value appropriation on these platforms. However, there are several challenges to resolve in value creation and value appropriation because DBPs cater to the needs of many different types of users. Therefore, DBPs should carefully coordinate and manage interactions among users on different sides of a platform. For researchers, there are many opportunities to reconceptualize some of the traditional roles of marketing in the context of DBPs.

Due to the lack of a comprehensive model in the field of digital marketing in various industries with the approach of customer participation and the lack of development of this field in our country in line with the global growth of digital marketing, this research seeks to fill the existing research gaps in this field by examining this issue.

### 3. Methodology

In this research, the purpose is applied-developmental in terms of type and descriptive-survey in terms of method. In this research, a mixed exploratory approach was used, which includes a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. Interviews and questionnaires have been used to answer the research questions. According to the development process in the research, the inductive method has been used to identify the variables in order to design the model. In the sampling phase, according to the use of the interview tool, purposeful sampling was used. To collect data, the tool of observing organizational actions related to the research topic and exploratory interviews with managers, business elites in the number of 16 people were used. For the validity and reliability of the qualitative technique, the agreement index of two coders was used and 0.886 was obtained. This stage of the research, which was dedicated to qualitative methods, the results were considered as the foundation of the next stage. In the second step, the identified model was tested using theme analysis and its validity was evaluated using structural equation analysis and SMARTPLS software. This phase of the research, which belonged to quantitative methods, was used to analyze the model more precisely. Its statistical population includes experts and employees related to digital

marketing in the active companies of the country and the customers of these companies. The statistical sample of this department is 384 people using Morgan's table and the samples were selected by available and random sampling. For validity and reliability of quantitative technique, convergent and divergent validity indices were used.

In the qualitative part, the research is exploratory and was conducted using a semi-structured interview, and for data analysis, the Grounded theory method was used based on the opinion of Strauss and Corbin (1998) and MAXQDA software was used for initial coding of the interviews. Therefore, the tool for collecting data and information in this section has been a semi-structured interview. Then the percentage of observed agreement (PAO) was calculated. Also, the proportionality index was used, which is presented at the end of the qualitative analysis. In grounded theory, methods such as focus groups and interviews are used to collect the desired information, and along with it, a comprehensive review of literature and background is done in the entire data collection process. In this method, theory formation is done through the coding process (free coding, central coding and selective coding). The open (free) coding stage includes the process of breaking down, comparing, conceptualizing and categorizing the data. In the core coding stage, the categories are related to each other, and in the selective coding stage, the process of regularly selecting the core category and relating it to other categories, validating the relationships, and filling the empty spaces with categories that need to be modified and expanded. In order to measure the validity of the quantitative part, the face validity method and the CVI index were used, so that the questions were initially formulated using the researcher-made method, and after editing and corrections, provided it to a number of professors and experts and after obtaining their opinions, the CVI index for the questionnaire was 0.805. The final questions were re-measured with the factor analysis method and Cronbach's alpha method and SPSS software were used to measure reliability. For this purpose, with SPSS software, the total reliability coefficient was

calculated using Cronbach's alpha method for the questionnaire equal to 0.809.

#### 4. Findings

In this section, the findings of the research have been presented. In this regard, firstly, the demographic characteristics of the experts have

been examined, followed by the analysis of interviews through Grounded theory, and then the quantitative analysis of the data has been presented.

*Table 1. Descriptive statistics of experts*

Row	Interviewee code	Gender	Education	Age	A history of specialized activity in the field of marketing (Years)
P1	A	M	Ph.D	52	23
P2	B	M	Ph.D	47	17
P3	C	F	MA	41	12
P4	D	M	MA	39	10
P5	E	M	Ph.D	43	16
P6	F	M	MA	36	7
P7	G	M	Ph.D	41	12
P8	H	F	Ph.D	39	11
P9	I	M	Ph.D	41	23
P10	J	M	Ph.D	39	5
P11	K	M	Ph.D	49	14
P12	M	M	Ph.D	30	8
P13	N	M	Ph.D	42	6
P14	L	F	MA	38	6
P15	O	M	MA	36	13
P16	P	M	Ph.D	37	16

Based on the purpose of the research, a part of the conducted interviews was stated in the following table

*Table2. sample of conducted interviews*

interview	Extracted code
Since knowledge serves as a resource for initiatives, improvements and process upgrades, understanding and encouraging the use of knowledge in digital marketing processes is essential.	The importance of knowledge in business
In the digital marketing model, digitization of processes can be facilitated by improving customer experience and benefiting from customer knowledge.	Digitization of processes
By combining the knowledge of the customers and the internal knowledge of the organization, more effective and targeted marketing strategies are created.	The need for core knowledge in marketing
Using customer knowledge in choosing and optimizing marketing techniques can help these techniques to be more effective.	High efficiency of digital marketing techniques
Using customer knowledge in choosing and optimizing marketing techniques can help these techniques to be more effective.	Perceived convenience of online shopping



In the following, the coding based on the data model of the Strauss-Corbin Foundation is specified in the table:

**Table3. Coding of categories and their classification**

Optional category	The central category	Initial code
Causal conditions	The age of knowledge and technology	The importance of knowledge in business
		Digitization of processes
		The need for core knowledge in marketing
		High efficiency of digital marketing techniques
		Perceived convenience of online shopping
	Customer behavior in the digital space	Market orientation towards technology and digitalization
		Identifying the need for online shopping based on current life conditions
		Perceived quality in terms of time and cost management
		Reducing excess traffic and optimizing timing
		Increasing the variety of purchase options in digital marketing
	Competitors and changes in the business environment	Competitive pressure due to digital marketing possibilities
		Unlimited access to markets and development of digital competitors
		Increasing strategies for attracting customers and aggressive strategies
		Digital business growth due to simple structure and no need for physical facilities
Background conditions	Organizational Culture	Education and promotion of knowledge among employees
		A culture that accepts innovation and creativity
		learned organization
		Customer oriented culture
		Creating value with customers is a priority
	Digital infrastructure	Development of necessary hardware and software
		Blockchain
		cloud computing
		Use of virtual reality and augmented reality
		Strong internet bandwidth
	data base	Using omnichannel procedure
		Create a dynamic database
		Recording customer behavior trends based on data
		Mandatory entry of customer information
		Obtaining up-to-date information from the market environment and competitors
Intervening conditions	flexibility	Encouraging customers to participate in content creation
		Maintaining a balance to meet customer needs
		The priority is to meet the customer's needs
		Balancing tangible and intangible assets
	Cooperation	Cooperation with top suppliers
		Participatory Management
		Government cooperation
		Active and positive cooperation of managers and employees in the implementation of customer engagement and knowledge management strategies
		Active interaction and cooperation with customers
	Economic conditions	Pricing strategies
		Lack of facilities and government financial assistance
		Review of economic trends
		Exchange rate fluctuations
		Attention to the needs of the target community and production based on their financial ability
	Strategies	Knowledge-based analysis
Using artificial intelligence in organizational decision making		
Decision-making based on customer-oriented knowledge		
Designing customer-oriented strategies		Using future research techniques in business choices
		Create contests and award prizes to participating customers
		Using a customer interaction solution
		Create a sense of value in the customer
		Strategies to retain existing customers
		Strategies for attracting new customers
		Selection of marketing techniques suitable for goods and services

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Optional category	The central category	Initial code
	Creating innovative knowledge	Identifying the taste of customers in the use of marketing techniques
		Supporting employee knowledge registration
		Encouraging employees in the ideas of ease of absorbing knowledge
		Encouraging innovation and creativity of employees
	Smart digital content	Application of digital technology in marketing creativity
		Using storytelling techniques
		Creating attractive and serial content to attract customer attention
		Creating fun and playful content
consequences	Optimizing customer retention	Using expert marketers in the field of producing appropriate content
		Current customer satisfaction
		Customer loyalty
		Attracting customers by customers
	Good reputation and brand management	Attract active customers
		Business reputation based on customer preferred features
		Brand loyalty
		Brand equity
		brand value
		Excellence in product or service based on brand name
	profitability	Positive word of mouth marketing
		Increase customer purchases
		Reduce overhead costs
		Reducing storage and maintenance costs
		Balance between production and sales
	Knowledge-based business	Customer approved pricing
		Up-to-date business based on knowledge procedures
		Creating an inimitable competitive advantage
		Reducing organizational errors based on recorded knowledge
	Business growth	Future oriented system based on past knowledge
		Being a role model in the market
		Improving position in the market
		Increase branches or business growth
		Establishing foreign and domestic investment
		Expansion of global markets
		Internationalization of business
	Positive customer experience	Reaching customers and maintaining trust
		Repurchase customers
Perceived customer security		
Increase interaction with customers		
Receive customer comments, suggestions and criticisms		
Organizing knowledge	Correctly meeting the customer's needs	
	Proper understanding of organizational and market resources	
	Correct targeting	
	Creating value from customer and organization knowledge	
		Optimization of marketing processes

Among the identified components, for the purpose of follow-up and analysis, the coding paradigm was chosen and according to it, a linear relationship was established between the sub-codes and the main codes under research. This relationship was

determined in the scope of causal conditions, background conditions, intervening conditions, strategies and consequences. Figure (1) shows the coding paradigm and, in other words, the qualitative research process model.

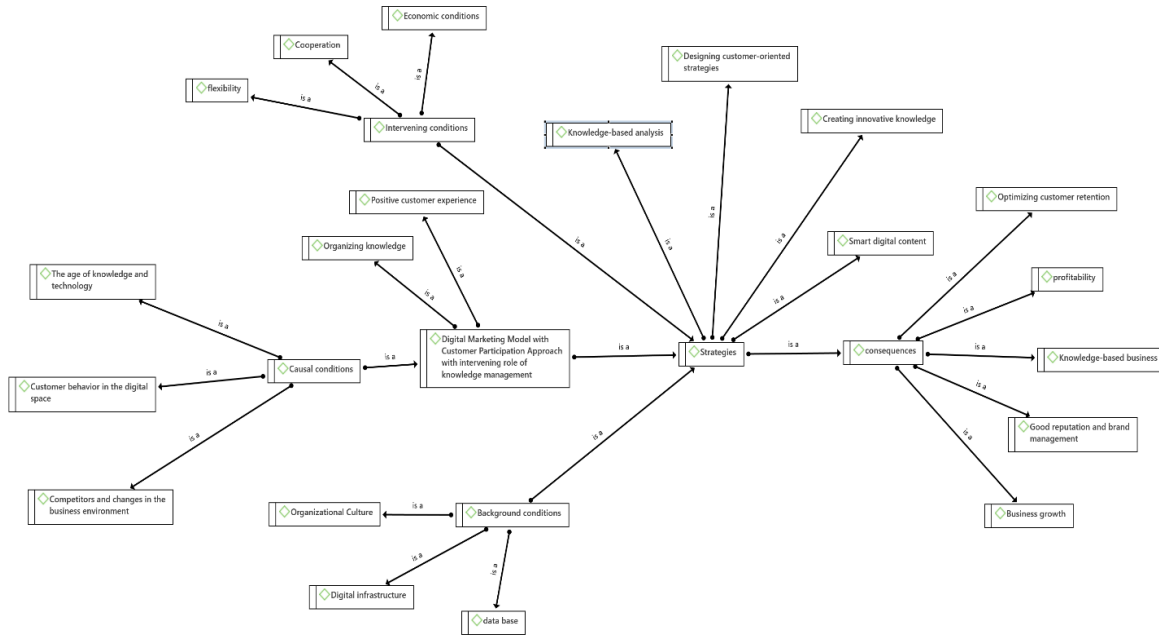


Fig1. Proposed paradigm model

In this part, the fitting of the proposed model is discussed. Using the method of structural equations, based on the opinion of 384 respondents, the model questionnaire was done. Before implementing the structural equation analysis method, the importance of sufficient sample size to perform factor analysis should be checked. One of the methods of checking the adequacy of the sample size for factor analysis is the use of the sample adequacy index, which is known by the symbol KMO. The SPSS statistical program displays the statistical information related to the KMO index as follows:

Table4. Output of SPSS software for KMO

KMO coefficient to determine the adequacy of the sample size		0.868
Bartlett test statistic	Chi score statistic	1123.76
	Degrees of freedom	383
	Significance level	0.000

If the value of KMO index is more than 0.7, the sample size is suitable for factor analysis. The value of KMO was also 0.868 and within the acceptable range, so the second stage begins

"Structural equation modeling" is an integrated statistical method that analyzes the relationships between observed variables and latent variables. With the increase in the complexity of the research process and the

emergence of various issues in the social and behavioral fields, and with the expansion of the movement of statistical software, the desire of researchers to investigate and evaluate statistics using advanced methods has increased. This tendency has increased especially in the direction of using the SEM (structural equation modeling) method. Structural equation modeling deals with the simultaneous analysis of relationships between a set of variables. This method reveals efficiency when a dependent variable becomes an independent variable in correlation relationships between variables.

Convergent validity

For convergent validity, average variance extraction (AVE) and composite reliability (CR) are calculated. The following relations should be established:

$$CR > 0.7$$

$$CR > AVE$$

$$AVE > 0.5$$

Table 5. Convergent validity and reliability of research variables

	CR	AVE	Cronbach's alpha
Causal conditions	0.820	0.611	0.835
Main article	0.733	0.633	0.908
Background conditions	0.746	0.657	0.738
Intervening conditions	0.766	0.638	0.833
Strategies	0.831	0.600	0.849
consequences	0.759	0.735	0.865

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Cronbach's alpha of all variables is greater than 0.7, so in terms of reliability, all variables are confirmed. The value of average variance extracted (AVE) is always greater than 0.5, so convergent validity is also confirmed. Composite reliability value (CR) is also greater than AVE.

**Divergent narration**

Divergent validity is one of the criteria for evaluating the fit of measurement models, which covers two issues:

b)

- a) Comparison of the correlation between the indicators of a structure with that structure in contrast to the correlation of those indicators with other structures, b) Comparison of the correlation of a structure with its indicators in contrast to the correlation of that structure with other structures.

**Table6. Fournell and Locker method**

	Causal conditions	Main article	Background conditions	Intervening conditions	Strategies	consequences
Causal conditions	0.830					
Main article	0.533	0.885				
Background conditions	0.436	0.69	0.826			
Intervening conditions	0.601	0.645	0.802	0.843		
Strategies	0.534	0.538	0.765	0.534	0.864	
consequences	0.428	0.51	0.649	0.418	0.613	0.83

**Table7. HTMT Matrix**

	Causal conditions	Main article	Background conditions	Intervening conditions	Strategies	consequences
Causal conditions						
Main article	0.773					
Background conditions	0.638	0.633				
Intervening conditions	0.555	0.504	0.549			
Strategies	0.438	0.476	0.477	0.744		
consequences	0.597	0.384	0.748	0.696	0.503	

Q2 values above zero indicate that the observed values are well reconstructed and the model has predictive ability.

Table8. Q2 values

var	consequences	Strategies	Intervening conditions	Background conditions	Main article	Causal conditions
Q2	0.167	0.262	0.297	0.373	0.327	0.266
F2	0.554	0.693			0.554	
R2	0.597	0.787			0.556	

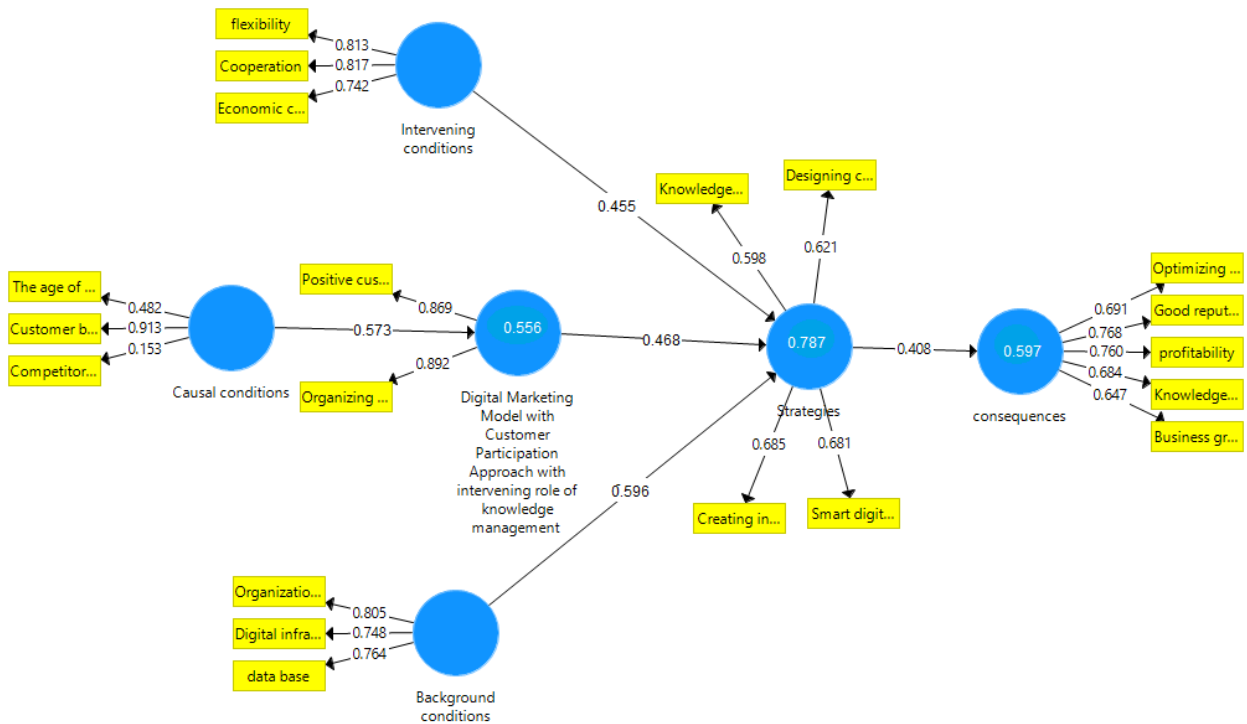


Fig2. factor load of the research model

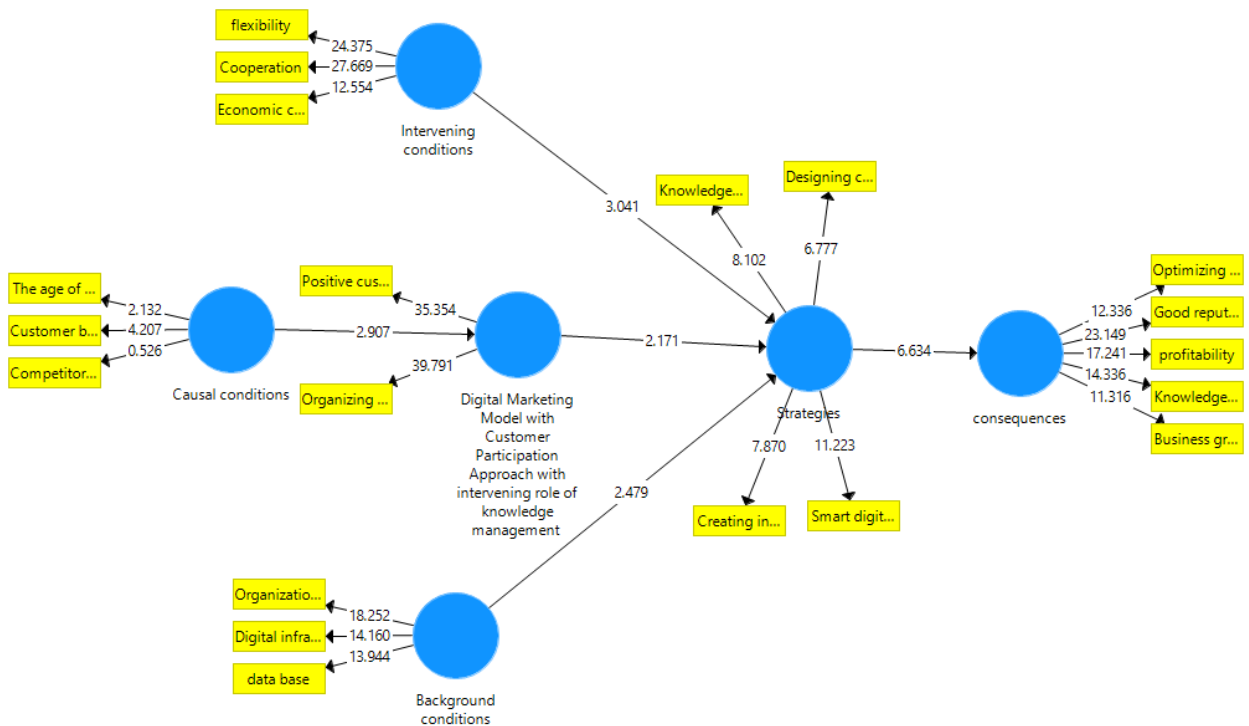


Fig3. T-statistics of the research model

Based on the designed model, the basic hypotheses of the research are examined in the table below.

*Table 9. The table of results obtained from the estimation of structural equations*

Relationships	factor load	T statistic
Causal conditions have a significant effect on the main category.	0.573	2.907
The main category has a significant impact on strategies.	0.468	2.171
Strategies have a significant impact on outcomes.	0.596	2.479
Intervening conditions have a significant effect on the strategy.	0.455	3.041
The underlying conditions have a significant impact on the strategy.	0.408	6.634

As shown in the structural equation estimation results, causal relationships with a factor load of 0.573 and a t-statistic of 2.907 have a direct and significant effect on the main category. Therefore, causal conditions have a positive and significant effect on the main category. The main category with a factor load of 0.468 and a t-statistic of 2.171 has a direct and significant effect on strategies. The main category has a positive and significant effect on strategies. Strategies with a factor load of 0.596 affect the results. Strategies have a positive and significant impact on outcomes. Intervening conditions have a direct and significant effect on the results with a factor load of 0.455, so the intervening conditions have a positive and significant effect on the strategy. Finally, the conditions of the bed with a factor load of 0.408 have a direct effect on the results. The underlying conditions have a positive and significant effect on the strategy.

## 5. Discussion

In recent years, the number of internet users has increased a lot, and for this reason, the internet has become a suitable space for introducing and advertising all kinds of businesses, and for this reason, knowing the digital marketing processes in order to be more involved with the customer, in order to achieve success. It has become a necessity. The review of the researches in this field indicates the existence of many research gaps in this field, so that the research conducted in this field have not investigated digital marketing with a record of customer

participation, and no comprehensive model has been presented in this field. Therefore, considering the importance of digital marketing and customer participation in the success of companies, the present research was conducted with the aim of presenting a digital marketing model with a customer participation approach to determine the components and provide practical solutions for the development of digital marketing and increasing the awareness of marketing managers. In line with the purpose of the research, through interviews with experts and with the foundation's data theory method and MAXQDA software, the important components were identified and analyzed and validated quantitatively using the data collected from the questionnaire tool and using structural equation modeling.

In response to the main research question, what is the digital marketing model with customer participation approach? Finally, 97 final codes, 20 concepts and finally 6 main or later categories were formed, and the details of the results of the research model are explained below.

a) Causal conditions: Causal conditions are events that create situations, topics and issues related to the phenomenon and to some extent explain why and how individuals and groups engage in this phenomenon. In the open coding stage, where the analyzes were based on sentence analysis, including interviews, 40 separate final codes were extracted, and based on the analysis of the next stage, that is, axial coding, these codes were categorized into 14

concepts and finally 7 subcategories. In this research, the concepts of the importance of customer-centricity, changing market trends, strategic planning, framing, cost reduction, efficiency and optimization, using digital capabilities, improving customer communication, enjoyable shopping, awareness and recognition for shopping, facilitating shopping processes, access and time saving, branding and advertising, new marketing processes have been obtained as the causal concepts of digital marketing with the approach of customer participation. Finally, based on the findings, the causal conditions in the model of this research are: customer-oriented, time management, cost management, relationship management, appropriate decision-making, well-being and comfort, new marketing techniques.

b) The Main phenomenon (digital marketing with a customer participation approach): because the main goal of this research was to design and explain a model of digital marketing components with a customer participation approach, the main phenomenon studied is digital marketing with a customer participation approach. In the stage of open coding and with careful analysis of the interviews, 15 separate final codes were extracted, and based on the analysis of the next stage, that is, axial coding, these codes were categorized into 6 concepts and finally 3 subcategories. In this research, the concepts of customer interaction, value co-creation, process optimization, value creation, new technologies, new marketing have been obtained as the concepts of digital marketing phenomenon with customer participation approach. Finally, based on the findings, the variables related to the phenomenon in the model of this research are: customer participation, value co-creation, business growth and globalization.

c) Contextual conditions: Contextual conditions are the events under which strategies and actions are used to manage the phenomenon. 17 final codes were extracted in the open coding stage and with careful analysis of the interview, and based on the analysis of the next stage, i.e. axial coding,

these codes were categorized into 6 concepts and finally 3 subcategories. In this research, the concepts of customer recognition and program, conditions and trust of the digital platform, digital platforms, new technologies, communication facilitation, and customer-brand synergy have been obtained as the basic concepts of digital marketing with a customer participation approach. Finally, based on the findings, the contextual conditions in the model of this research are: customer trust, information technology, targeted marketing.

d) Intervening factor: Intervening factors are broad and general conditions that act as facilitators or limiters of strategies. In the stage of open coding and with careful analysis of the interviews, 19 separate final codes were extracted, and based on the analysis of the next stage, i.e. axial coding, these codes were categorized into 6 concepts and finally 3 subcategories. In this research, the concepts of accessibility and existing laws, customer awareness, technology development, political and economic problems, social factors, cultural factors have been obtained as digital marketing intervention concepts with customer participation approach. Finally, based on the findings, the Intervening factor in the model of this research is knowledge management and its sub-factors are: legal and knowledge factors, environmental scientific factors, individual factors.

e) Actions and strategies: strategies and actions are plans and actions that help to implement the digital marketing process with a customer participation approach. In the stage of open coding and with careful analysis of the interviews, 27 separate final codes were extracted, and based on the analysis of the next stage, that is, axial coding, these codes were categorized into 8 concepts and finally 4 subcategories. In this research, the concepts of personalization of marketing, creation of customer clubs, digitalization platforms, increasing awareness, planning and attracting efficient resources, updating facilities, using optimal processes, research and development as concepts of digital marketing strategies with

customer participation approach have been obtained. Finally, based on the findings, the strategies in the model of this research are: customer-oriented strategies, commercialization strategies, creativity strategies, innovative strategies.

f) Consequences: Consequences include tangible and intangible consequences that are created by digital marketing with a customer participation approach for the country, industry and society. In the open coding stage and with detailed analysis of the interviews, 37 separate final codes were extracted, which were classified into 12 concepts and finally 6 categories based on the analysis and analysis of the next stage, which is axial coding. In this research, the concepts of increasing market share, improving customer-brand communication, financial benefits, cultural benefits, business dynamics, growth in the quality of products and services, cross-border growth and increasing opportunities, modeling successful global examples, business development, growth Innovation, social improvement, knowledge growth and optimization of business processes have been obtained as the consequent concepts of digital marketing with the approach of customer participation. Finally, based on the findings, the consequences in the model of this research are: customer participation, customer-brand value co-creation, sustainable competitive advantage, globalization, business growth and maturity, entrepreneurship.

## **6. Conclusion**

Based on the bootstrap test and hypothesis test (path coefficient and acceptable T-statistic value), the results of the analysis indicate that the conditions with the determined dimensions have a positive effect on the phenomenon of digital marketing with the approach of customer participation. Also, according to the results of the analysis, Ali's condition has a positive effect on the knowledge management (Intervening factor) and contextual conditions in digital marketing with a customer participation approach, and its elements affect the

mentioned conditions. The contextual conditions with the determined elements have a positive effect on the phenomenon and its consequences, also according to the analysis results, the contextual conditions with the mentioned elements have a positive effect on the main strategies and actions of digital marketing with a customer participation approach, and its elements on the conditions the mentioned have an effect. Also, the strategies and consequences of implementing digital marketing with a customer participation approach are affected by the interfering conditions with the determined elements, according to the results of the analysis, the interfering conditions with the aforementioned elements also affect the main strategies and measures of digital marketing with the customer participation approach. It has a positive effect and its elements affect the mentioned conditions. According to the analysis, the phenomenon of digital marketing with a customer participation approach has a positive effect on the main strategies and actions if implemented correctly, and the main strategies and actions in this field have a positive effect on the digital marketing with a customer participation approach. Finally, the results obtained from the analysis of the tests show the significance of the changes of the dependent variable and the independent variable and express the importance and effectiveness of the elements of digital marketing outcomes with the customer participation approach with the elements determined in the paradigm model.

In addition to the methodological differences between this research and similar research in this field, there are also differences in terms of the model and its components. Also, the research that deals with the field of digital marketing with the approach of customer participation is also very limited and distinguishes this research. The results of this research are somehow and indirectly consistent with a number of researches conducted in the past, some of which are mentioned below: Clarence et al. (2022) in a research on predicting purchase intention based on digital marketing,



customer interaction and brand preference. The results of data analysis showed that digital marketing, customer interaction and brand preferences can predict purchase intention. The results of this study are expected to provide concepts for companies in determining the appropriate strategy to create and increase consumer purchase intention. Setkute & Dibb (2022) investigated online brand communities, customer engagement and loyalty in the luxury fashion industry: a strategic insight. The results of the research showed that our communication through online communities can have a positive and direct effect on customer participation and ultimately create customer loyalty. Roman Fasahmi et al. (2022) identified the effective factors of digital content marketing of consumer involvement with the brand. Zamani et al. (2022) designed a content marketing model to increase purchase intention in digital marketing. The findings of the qualitative part led to the identification of the main and secondary indicators of the content marketing model in order to increase the purchase intention in digital marketing, and after confirming its validity and reliability, the research model is presented in the quantitative part. The results showed that digital marketing strategies are the underlying factor of the model that affects the content marketing strategy. Also, the content marketing strategy has an effect on the knowledge management of consumers and the quality of service delivery and development, and ultimately leads to consumer conflict. Finally, by creating brand value and increasing its competitiveness, consumers' purchase intention can be increased. Also, the results of this research are in some way consistent with the researches of Zhang et al. (2022).

Understanding the components of the digital marketing environment is essential to achieving success in digital marketing strategies. Having an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the components of the digital marketing environment makes a successful marketer, as these influential factors shape the digital marketing

environment and influence how different companies operate in a different context, both on-premises and offline. When a marketer can understand and analyze the components of the digital environment, they can have more control over the outcome of a campaign, in the sense that they can tailor their campaigns based on factors that directly influence their decisions so that their customers to target. Based on the pattern obtained from this study, practical suggestions are presented in the context of its implementation in the executive field:

- It is suggested that companies have an active marketing research unit to know the behavior trends of customers at any time and to be aware of customers;

- It is suggested that customer-oriented strategies be placed as the basis of marketing programs in order to create partnership through the correct resolution of customers' needs;

- It is suggested that companies manage and optimize their marketing expenses by increasing and expanding digital marketing;

- It is suggested that with the change of market trends, new marketing techniques such as social networks etc. should be included in the agenda of companies;

- Providing products and services in accordance with the promised quality in the digital space and advertising and avoiding deceiving customers and trying to increase the benefits received by customers, so that customers have a good feeling and experience from shopping in their store and feel like a friend next to them. Know this store brand and feel satisfied with your purchase;

- It is suggested that companies provide adequate funds for the development of their digital platform and attract customers to the brand by offering attractive plans;

- It is suggested that people specializing in the production and analysis of content and graphics should be employed in the company for the attractiveness of the content and visuals of digital marketing;

- It is suggested that digital and social media advertisements be prepared and

implemented using time and content principles and standards to be highly attractive.

### Research Limitation

The most important limitations of the current research are the impossibility of controlling other factors affecting people's feedback to digital marketing, the application of some experts' personal views and the possibility of bias in answering, the limitation of coordination and communication with the experts in question, and the difficulty of communicating with managers to conduct interviews, conducted during the outbreak period. The covid-19 virus and the collection of data and the limitation of communication with the experts in question to conduct interviews, the reliance of the findings of this study on the views and experiences of relatively limited people to the extent of theoretical saturation that this inadequacy may limit the theoretical generalizability of the research findings.

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The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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