

An Assesment of Public Attitudes Toward Advertising-in-General in Turkey

Türkiye’de Reklama Yönelik Genel Tutumun Değerlendirilmesi

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Abstract

Despite widespread literature on attitudes toward advertising in general, there is still need for country specific researches with big samples, especially in regards to developing economies. Current work (n=2004) focuses on the Turkish public attitudes toward advertising and the effect of beliefs and demography as differentiating factors. Turkish people’s perception of advertising falls between negative and neutral. They are more favorable towards advertising as institution than advertising as instrument, which were found to be the strongest predictors of attitudes toward advertising in general. In contrast to American-European mainstream, demographic factors have minor effect on the attitudes toward advertising in general.

Keywords: Advertising As Institution, Advertising As Instrument, Attitude, Attitude Toward Advertising

Öz

Reklama yönelik tutum araştırmalarının geniş yelpazesine rağmen özellikle gelişmekte olan ekonomilere yönelik, geniş örneklemler, ülke özelinde araştırmalara ihtiyaç olduğu gözlenmektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı Türkiye’de insanların (n=2004) reklama yönelik tutumun ve reklamlarla ilişkili inançların tutuma olan etkisinin demografik faktörler üzerinden incelenmesidir. Türkiye’de insanların reklama yönelik algısı nötr ile olumsuz aralıktadır. Kurum olarak reklama yönelik tutumları reklamın uygulamalarına yönelik tutumlarına oranla daha olumludur. Kurum olarak reklama yönelik tutum aynı zamanda reklama yönelik genel tutumun diğer faktörler arasında da en güçlü belirleyici

cişidir. Avrupa-Amerika odaklı araştırmaların aksine, Türkiye’de reklama yönelik genel tutum bulgularına bakıldığında demografik faktörlerin etkisinin düşük düzeyde olduğu gözlemlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kurum Olarak Reklam, Uygulama Olarak Reklam, Tutum, Reklama Yönelik Tutum

Introduction

The advertising industry and academia conducted extensive research on the attitudes toward advertising since the seminal work of Bauer and Greyser (1968). Their quest has been to obtain leads on the effects of advertising attitudes on advertising performance. This particular interest has been motivated by several reasons. First, as Lutz (1989) posited, attitude toward advertising in general is one of the key predictors of attitude toward the ad (A_{Ad}), which is an important determinant of brand attitude and purchasing intentions. In that sense, negative attitudes could impede the effectiveness of advertising. Second, having an insight into how the public sees advertising can generate significant correction strategies on the part of businesses, moreover it can reveal new ways of looking at advertising education from the perspective of universities.

Mittal (1994, p.8) warned that advertising was in crisis. What impelled Mittal to conclude such an emerging crisis were his findings on negative public assessment of advertising. Although previous research took

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into account different public attitudes including adult consumers (Zanot, 1981; Mittal, 1994; Shavitt et al., 1998; Millan and Mittal, 2010) and student samples (Haller, 1974; Larkin, 1977; Andrews, 1989; Pollay and Mittal, 1994; Beard, 2003; Jin and Lutz, 2013) and revealed various aspects of the subject at hand, majority of the data was limited to the population in the North American-European mainstream. To close this gap, recent studies also emphasized cross-cultural variations (Durvasula et al., 1993; Andrews et al., 1994; Zinkhan and Balazs, 1998; Bush et al., 1999; Ashill and Yavas, 2005; Petrovici and Paliwoda, 2007). In that respect, the erosion of the American public opinion toward advertising may not hold relevance for other geographic regions. Therefore, to identify the consistencies and discrepancies in the consumer evaluations of advertising across time and cultures and, to enhance the universality of the past survey findings, call for more national studies with large samples. This work corresponds to such need by investigating the dimensionality of current public attitudes toward advertising in general in Turkey and prevailing beliefs behind these attitudes.

Given the increasing degree of advertising in Turkish consumers' life, proliferation of media channels, intense consumer segmentation strategies in terms of marketing efforts, it becomes increasingly imperative to address the following questions:

- How does the public feel about the advertising at this point in time?
- Do different demographic factors (i.e. age, socioeconomic status, education) influence public perceptions of advertising?

Turkey presents an important outlet for such inquiry because it is one of the fastest growing advertising markets. By 2013, advertising expenditures in Turkey has reached 3.55 billion dollars with %10 growth estimation for 2014 (Turkish Association of Advertising Agencies, 2014). With the exception of few studies using small samples, little is known about public attitudes toward advertising in Turkey. Hence, this study will present a benchmark for further research by shedding light on these questions.

Attitude Toward Advertising in General

McKenzie and Lutz defined attitude toward advertising in general as "a learned predisposition to respond in consistently favorable or unfavorable manner to advertising in general" (1989, p.53). Considerable research has emphasized the construct of attitude toward advertising in general and developed models to examine its underlying antecedents (Bauer and Greyser, 1968; Sandage and Leckenby, 1980; Lutz, 1985; Muehling, 1987; Andrews, 1989; Pollay and Mittal, 1993; Shavit et al., 1998; Mehta, 2000; Beard, 2003; Dutta-Bergman, 2006; Petrovici and Paliwoda, 2007).

Lutz claimed that advertising in general is one of the five key determinants of attitude toward the ad (A_{Ad}), the others being: ad credibility, ad perceptions, pre-existing attitudes toward the ad sponsor and the mood (cited in Mckenzie and Lutz, 1989). However, the root of the literature on attitude toward advertising dates back to Bauer and Greyser (1968) who executed the first systematic academic work on the subject. They examined advertising by establishing a relationship between consumers' attitude toward advertising and their evaluation of specific ads through belief statements. Their work showed that advertising in general involves various dimensions and serves both economic and social functions.

Sandage and Leckenby (1980) suggested a differentiation between two components of attitudes toward advertising: institution and instrument. Advertising as institution represents various roles advertising play for the society in general and is defined through advertising's purpose and effects. Advertising as instrument corresponds to its implementation related elements, hence the practices. They theorized that both dimensions influence global attitudes toward advertising. Nevertheless, a broader explanation for the attitudes toward advertising cannot be provided without the examination of the beliefs about advertising.

Fishbein, in his summative model of attitude, claimed that one's attitude toward an object is a function of one's beliefs about the object (cited in O'Keefe, 2002). In his view, attitudes emanate from beliefs. According to Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), a belief connects an object (e.g., advertising) with an attribute (e.g., advertising results in better products for the public). In that sense, an attribute can be seen as a summary of the

feelings leading to it (Olson et al., 2008). Therefore, the attitudes toward advertising in general cannot be examined without taking into account the influence of the feelings about advertising. Research on such influencing factors was first conducted by Bauer and Greyser (1968) who developed an eight item belief set that related to positive and negative outcomes of advertising in the economic and social areas. The set included the following belief statements:

1. Advertising is essential.
2. Most advertising insults the intelligence of the average consumer.
3. In general, advertising results in lower prices.
4. Advertising often persuades people to buy things they shouldn't buy.
5. In general, advertisements present a true picture of the product being advertised.
6. Advertising helps to raise our standard of living.
7. Advertising results in better products for the public.
8. Today's standards of advertising are higher compared with ten years ago.

These belief statements were later included in the belief sets by other researchers (Haller, 1974; Larkin, 1977; Lutz, 1985; Durand and Lambert, 1985; Muehling, 1987; Alwitt and Prabhaker, 1994). Within this perspective, the predispositions as well as the attitudes of the Turkish public toward advertising in general will also be examined in this paper.

In recent years, questions concerning the cross-national applicability of these belief measures and attitude models were raised by various researchers (Durvasula et al., 1993; Andrews et al., 1994; Zinkhan and Balazs, 1998; Bush et al., 1999; La Ferle and Lee, 2003; Ashill and Yavas, 2005; Petrovici and Marinov, 2007; Truong et al., 2009; Ling et al., 2010; Millan and Mittal, 2010). Durvasula et al. (1993) found that opinions about advertising show diversity across countries. These variations were thought to have a connection with differences in "advertising intensity, executional styles, norms of acceptability in advertising, and cultural backgrounds" (Durvasula et al., 1993, p.635) in the countries under scrutiny. Andrews et al. (1994) claimed that Russians perceived advertising in

general more positively than their US counterparts. Ashill and Yavas (2005) concluded that consumers in New Zealand and Turkey had predispositions on the believability of advertising, and thus, advertising should be both regulated and controlled. Ling et al. (2010) found that being informative is the most important antecedent in affecting Malaysian consumers' attitude towards advertising. Petrovici and Marinov (2007) also had a similar finding and stated that informational value of advertising is a significant predictor of public opinion toward advertising in general in Romania and Bulgaria. Moreover, informants in both EU accessing countries are found to be more positive about advertising as institution than about its practices. Another Eastern European culture, Czech Republic reflects a different case. Czechs have a neutral attitude toward advertising (Millan and Mittal, 2010). Their opinions range from severe criticism to enthusiasm at the two ends, and ambivalent, unbothered, conflicted categories in between. They believe that advertising is good for country's economy and this belief is the most influential factor in explaining the variance in general attitude.

Since the American-European research dominates the investigation of the attitudes toward advertising in general, such cross-cultural validations of models already in use and the insights reflecting other geographic regions and cultures with different economic background, political climate and media usages are important in terms of the extension of the academic knowledge on the subject. Usman et al. (2010) found that culture has a significant moderating effect between beliefs and general attitudes toward advertising. Within this framework, this exploratory study among Turkish consumers may also present useful implications for further cross-cultural literature and contributions for bridging the gap.

Demography as an Antecedent of Advertising in General

Given the increasing differentiation in consumer needs, wants and demands; tailor made communication efforts for specific segments is growing in importance every day. As a result, to study the demographic correlates of the advertising construct becomes increasingly a point of academic and industrial focus. Past research has shown links between various demographic characteristics – age, gender, race, income, and

education – and attitudes toward advertising. Shavitt et al. (1998) pointed several demographic differences in attitudes toward advertising. Their analysis demonstrates that males, younger consumers, persons with less education and income, and nonwhites exhibited more favorable advertising attitudes. In contrast, Bush et al. (1999) presented findings that support a positive association between gender and attitudes toward advertising in the direction that women had more positive attitudes as compared to men. In their examination, race also was found to have an effect on advertising attitudes. Dutta-Bergman (2006) who examined the informational utility and regulatory support dimensions of attitudes toward advertising concluded that age was positively correlated with consumer reliance on advertising information for decision making.

Moreover, both education and income are proven to have significant relations with the public conception of advertising. Research provides that more education may lead to an increase in the level of skepticism about advertising. As the education level of consumers increase, so does their likelihood to question social institutions such as advertising (Zinkhan, 1998). Similarly, the enjoyment of advertising is greater in less educated consumers and their buying decisions tend to rest more on advertising as compared to their more educated counterparts (Shavitt et al., 1998). Consumers with lower income do not show a different trend. They were found to be less offended by advertising whereas higher income consumers possess a higher dislike of advertising (Alwitt and Prabhakar, 1992).

This study expands also on earlier literature regarding the demographic antecedents of advertising attitudes in the sense that it tries to delineate the effect of education, age and socioeconomic status on the public attitudes toward advertising in general within the Turkish context.

Research Questions

The current attitudes of the Turkish public toward advertising's social and economic functions and their underlying beliefs behind them may be different from those studied earlier and in other geographic regions and cultures. Therefore, the primary goal of this study is to investigate current public attitudes in Turkey toward advertising in general. It relies significantly on previous research on attitudes toward advertising by way of incorporating Sandage and Leckenby's mea-

surement of advertising as institution and as instrument with Bauer and Greyser's measurement of belief statements.

A second emphasis of this study is to inspect the effects of demography on the attitudes toward advertising in general. To examine the demographic variances in attitudes toward advertising in general is important for two reasons:

1. Today's communication efforts by various brands becomes increasingly tailor-made in order to respond to varying needs and wants of consumers on the most micro level.
2. In relation with the increasingly heterogeneous nature of the needs and wants, multi-layered consumer segmentation necessitated to look each individual segment with different demographic qualities separately.

Therefore, the current research sought to find answers for the following questions regarding the beliefs and attitudes toward advertising in general and the differences in these attitudes as a function of demographic characteristics (e.g. education, age, socioeconomic status):

RQ₁: What are the attitudes of the public in Turkey toward advertising in general?

RQ₂: Do demographic characteristics and beliefs toward advertising have an effect on the Turkish public attitudes toward advertising in general?

Methodology

Sample

This study used the research data produced by TNS (a leading international marketing research company, part of Kantar Media). The inquiry was conducted via face-to-face survey method and the interviews were carried out in 18 cities with a sample of 2004 respondents representing the 18 years old and over population living in the cities and in the countryside of Turkey between 01.08.2010 – 02.09.2010. The sample distribution by cities is shown in Table 1. City and rural breakdown is %75,1 and %24,9 respectively. In the selection of the sample, probable sampling was used.

Table 1. City Samples

City	Frequency	Percent
Adana	79	3,9
Ankara	132	6,6
Antalya	90	4,5
Bursa	213	10,6
Diyarbakır	81	4,0
Manisa	99	4,9
Erzurum	69	3,4
Gaziantep	82	4,1
İstanbul	378	18,9
İzmir	117	5,8
Kayseri	71	3,5
Kırklareli	34	1,7
Konya	134	6,7
İçel	73	3,6
Samsun	140	7,0
Zonguldak	76	3,8
Denizli	67	3,3
Malatya	69	3,4
TOTAL	2004	100

Questionnaire, Its Administration and Translation

Respondents were asked about their advertising related attitudes and beliefs, and their demographic classifications. The questionnaire was initiated with an introductory statement defining the purpose of the questionnaire. The statement read as follows:

This questionnaire is about your thoughts and feelings about advertising.

Following this statement was a two-part question about their overall attitude toward advertising on a 5-point Likert scale (Shavitt et al., 1998). The subjects were asked whether they generally like or dislike advertising and then they were asked to assess the degree of liking vs. disliking.

Next, eight 5-points Likert-type statements were incorporated to measure their attitude toward the two different components of advertising (Sandage and Leckenby, 1980): advertising as institution (good/bad, strong/weak, valuable/worthless and necessary/unnecessary) and advertising as instrument (clean/dirty, honest/dishonest, sincere/insincere and safe/dangerous).

Finally, seven out of eight belief statements of Bauer and Greyser (1968) were integrated to evaluate advertising subjects' belief toward advertising in general.

The last item ("standards of advertising as compared to ten years ago") was left out due to the reservations voiced by Andrews (1989) (e.g. the length of the item and the difficulty to decide the dimension to which it belongs- economic or social).

Before the administration of the survey, it was translated into Turkish by a bilingual expert and then back translated into English to prevent any errors in meaning.

Measures

Age was measured by a single item, "age of the respondent". The scale ranged from 1 to 5, with 1= "18-24", 2= "25-34", 3= "35-44", 4= "45-54", 5= "55+". Education was measured by a single item "education level of the respondent". The scale ranged from 1 to 6, with 1= "illiterate", 2= "no education/literate", 3= "primary school", 4= "secondary school", 5= "high school", 6= "college". Socioeconomic status (SES) was measured by 5 main clusters such as A, B, C1, C2 and DE.

In Turkey, each leading research company uses its own internal ad-hoc SES measurements. TNS that conducted this research is one of these companies. Although SES measurements may differ from company to company, they have mostly similar methods to measure SES. In this sense, TUAD (Turkish Researchers Association) studies set a common frame of reference. In 2012 TUAD with leading research companies launched a new SES measurement for usage in syndicated research projects in Turkey which is mainly based on the education and occupation of the main income earner in the household (Tüad, 2014).

Education, age and socioeconomic status were put into analysis as independent variables. These variables were already included as demographic determinants in previous research on the attitudes toward advertising (Shavitt et al. 1998, Dutta-Bergman 2006, Petrovici and Paliwoda 2007).

Data Analysis

Measurement of attitudes toward advertising in general based on demography and dimensions of advertising involve the sample breaking based on demographic characteristics, mean and standard deviations for each dimension (institution and instrument, beliefs toward advertising). This process was devised in order to present a general picture of where the Turkish

public stands in terms of their perception of advertising. Finally ANOVA and regression analysis were used to gain a deeper understanding of the subject at hand.

ANOVA

To measure each demographic variable's effect on the attitudes of the public toward advertising in general ANOVA analysis was conducted. Three independent demographic variables (age, socioeconomic status and education) were incorporated into the analysis.

Regression

To examine the effect of demographic factors, the attitude toward advertising as institution and instrument and the beliefs on the public attitude of advertising in general, a hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted. A total of 6 independent variables, grouped in six separate blocks were included in the analysis.

In the first stage of the regression analysis age was entered, followed by education, and then SES. Beliefs toward advertising in general, attitude toward advertising as institution and as instrument were subsequently entered as variables in respective order.

Among the predictors, the demographic variables that were used in this study were ordinal in scale. Regression analysis can be used with either continuous or dichotomous independent variables. A variable that is initially discrete can be used if it is first converted into set of dichotomous variables by dummy variable coding with 1s and 0s. (Tabachnick and Fidel, 2007).

The Dummy Coding Process

In the process of dummy coding, one category in each individual categorical variable was chosen as a reference group. The 55+ age category was selected as reference group for the age variable, primary school category was selected as a reference group for the education variable and DE category was selected as reference group for the SES variable.

Findings

Table 2. Sample Demographics

	Frequency	Percent
Sex		
Female	1045	52.1
Male	959	47.9
Age		
18-24	281	14.0
25-34	466	23.3
35-44	481	24.0
45-55	368	18.4
55+	408	20.4
SES		
A	11	0.50
B	193	9.60
C1	230	11.5
C2	755	37.7
DE	815	40.7
Education		
Illiterate	116	5.80
No education/Literate	64	3.20
Primary	961	48.0
Secondary	268	13.4
High School	412	20.6
College	183	9.10
Total	2004	100

The public attitudes toward advertising in general in Turkey reflect a negative picture ($\bar{x}=2.68$, midpoint of the scale = 3). In terms of the dimensionality of the attitudes, consistent with findings of Sandage and Leckenby (1980) and Muehling (1987) attitudes toward the institution of advertising (as measured by the 5 item scale, $\bar{x}=2.98$) are higher than attitudes toward advertising as instrument ($\bar{x}=2.80$). Belief items manifest more positive results compared to attitudes in terms of the perception of advertising in general. Mean for each belief items ranges from 3.03 to 3.35, which is higher than the general attitude mean of 2.68 ($\bar{x}=3.14$).

Table 3. Mean Ratings of Advertising Attitudes and Beliefs

Attitude in General	Mean	Std. Deviation
	2.68	0.898

Inter-Item Correlation Value: 0.469

Attitude-Institution*		
Advertising is...		
Good / Bad	2.92	0.843
Strong / Weak	3.10	0.891
Valuable / Worthless	2.88	0.809
Necessary / Unnecessary	3.03	0.881
Summative Index	2.98	0.722

*Cronbach's Alpha: 0.865

Attitude-Instrument*		
Advertising is...		
Clean / Dirty	2.85	0.790
Honest / Dishonest	2.76	0.793
Sincere / Insincere	2.86	0.797
Safe / Dangerous	2.74	0.787
Summative Index	2.80	0.655

*Cronbach's Alpha: 0.847

Belief Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
Advertising is essential	3.03	0.881
Most advertising insults the intelligence of the average consumer.	3.11	0.942
In general, advertising results in lower prices.	3.07	0.920
Advertising often persuades people to buy things they shouldn't buy.	3.35	0.886
In general, advertisements present a true picture of the product being	3.14	0.876
Advertising helps to raise our standard of living.	3.06	0.955
Advertising results in better products for the public.	3.19	0.928
Summative Index	3.14	0.597

*Cronbach's Alpha: 0.777

Belief items when analyzed based on demography; the overall pattern reflected that people with higher socioeconomic status and education tended to preserve more positive beliefs toward advertising. As indicated in Table 4, people belonging to A socioeconomic status expressed strong agreement with all the belief items. Age did not seem to be a differentiating factor. For each age group, the answers cluster around "neither agree nor disagree" for both social (advertising insults intelligence, often persuades, presents true picture) and economic dimensions (advertising is essential, lower prices, raises standard of living, results in better products) of beliefs toward advertising in general.

In line with past research on the effects of demography on the perception of advertising (Shavitt et. al, 1998; Dutta-Bergman, 2006) younger people (age 18 to 34) had a more favorable attitude toward advertising as compared to adults and older respondents (age 35 and above). However, the outcomes of the analysis regarding the socioeconomic status and education showed discrepancies. In contrast to previous findings generated by the American-European axis, in Turkey, the increase in the socioeconomic status and the education level pointed to more favorable views of advertising. While age and education had significant impact ($p < 0.05$) on the general attitude toward advertising, socioeconomic status lead to a

Table 4. Belief Means by Demographic Segments

Belief Means by Age			
	Mean	Number	Std. Deviation
18-24	3.21	281	0.606
25-34	3.14	466	0.599
35-44	3.11	481	0.579
45-55	3.10	368	0.582
55+	3.14	408	0.621

*Anova Test p=.187

Belief Means by SES			
	Mean	Number	Std. Deviation
A ^a	3.48	11	0.520
B ^{ab}	3.20	193	0.529
C1 ^{ab}	3.21	230	0.627
C2 ^u	3.12	755	0.601
DE ^b	3.11	815	0.598

*Anova Test p<.05, Superscripts denote results of Tukey Test (Tests of Homogeneity of Variances are significant). Mean with different superscripts differ from each other at p<.05

Belief Means by Education			
	Mean	Number	Std. Deviation
Illiterate	3.08	116	0.526
No education/Literate	3.16	64	0.561
Primary	3.11	961	0.602
Secondary	3.12	268	0.585
High School	3.17	412	0.632
College	3.25	183	0.554

*Anova Test p=.075

non-significant result ($p>0.05$) and was not a suitable variable for further analysis. Although the significance of their variance was proven, the post-hoc analysis for age and education did not permit for a strong reading of the variance for each category within the demographic factor.

The results of the hierarchical regressions used to estimate the incremental and total variances associated with the variable groups are reported in Table 6. In addition final betas are reported for all individual demographic variables. Overall, the variables included in the analysis accounted for 51.4 percent of the total variance in public attitudes toward advertising in general. The results of the analysis indicated that demographic factors, dimensional elements of attitudes and beliefs toward advertising contributed to public attitudes of advertising in general.

Step 1: Age was entered as the first variable into the model and 55+ was chosen as a reference category for the dummy variable process. Age accounted for a very small amount of variance in attitude toward advertising. As Table 6 indicates, none of the age category was significant in terms of attitude toward advertising in general. This result does not support the previous findings by Shavitt (1998) and Dutta-Bergman (2006).

Step 2: SES was entered into the model next. DE socioeconomic group was chosen as a reference category for the dummy variable process. The incremental R^2 for SES was 0.004 (see Table 6) this pointed to a slight additional variance in the dependent variable. Similar to age as a demographic factor, any SES category presented a significant result. Although past research did not include SES per se, it was concluded that income

Table 5. General Attitude Means by Demographic Segments

General Attitude Means by Age			
	Mean	Number	Std. Deviation
18-24 ^a	2.83	281	0.985
25-34 ^{ab}	2.71	466	0.897
35-44 ^b	2.65	481	0.883
45-55 ^b	2.62	368	0.848
55+ ^b	2.63	408	0.887

*Anova Test $p < .05$, Superscripts denote results of Games-Howell multiple comparison tests (Tests of Homogeneity of Variances are not significant). Mean with different superscripts differ from each other at $p < .05$

General Attitude Means by SES			
	Mean	Number	Std. Deviation
A	2.91	11	0.917
B	2.78	193	0.946
C1	2.78	230	0.893
C2	2.66	755	0.911
DE	2.63	815	0.872

*Anova Test $p = .071$

General Attitude Means by Education			
	Mean	Number	Std. Deviation
Illiterate ^a	2.56	116	0.879
No education/Literate ^a	2.65	64	0.810
Primary ^a	2.6	961	0.873
Secondary ^{ab}	2.75	268	0.952
High School ^{ab}	2.73	412	0.921
College ^b	2.94	183	0.878

*Anova Test $p < .001$, Superscripts denote results of Tukey Test (Tests of Homogeneity of Variances are significant). Mean with different superscripts differ from each other at $p < .05$

was a significant factor in people's feelings toward advertising (Alwitt and Prabhakar, 1992). Hence, the findings, once again, deviate from the literature as in Step 1.

Step 3: Education was entered into the model as the third group of variables. Primary school was chosen as a reference category for the dummy variable process. Education variables, as a block, accounted for less than 1 percent additional variance in public attitudes toward advertising in general. Only university as an education category demonstrated a significantly positive effect on the general attitudes toward advertising ($\beta = 0.039$, $p < 0.05$). Therefore, people with more education (university) than the reference group (primary education) had a more favorable attitude toward advertising in general.

Step 4: Past literature (see Fishbein and Azjen, 1980) suggests that attitudes emanate from beliefs. In light of this insight, belief statements were entered in the model as the first predictor regarding the dimensional elements of advertising before instrument and institution. With 13.4 percent additional variance beliefs were the second most significant influential factor in determining people's general attitude toward advertising ($\beta = 0.04$, $p < 0.05$).

Step 5: Attitude statements toward advertising as institution were entered subsequently. With an additional 30.7 percent of the variance it had the strongest effect on how people perceived advertising in general. In other words, people's feelings about advertising as institution was the most powerful predictor of their general attitude toward advertising, as compared to the other variables ($\beta = 0.414$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 6. Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Three Demographic Characteristics and Three Dimensions of Attitudes toward Advertising

	Final Beta	R ²
Age1	0.004	
Age2	-0.013	
Age3	-0.007	
Age4	-0.026	
R ² for age		0.006
SES1	0.010	
SES2	-0.014	
SES3	0.023	
SES4	0.011	
R ² change for SES		0.004
R ² after step 2		0.010
Education1	-0.017	
Education2	-0.003	
Education3	0.013	
Education4	0.031	
Education5	0.039*	
R ² change for education		0.007
R ² after step 3		0.017
Beliefs toward advertising	0.040*	
R ² change for beliefs toward advertising		0.134
R ² after step 4		0.151
Advertising as institution	0.414*	
R ² change for advertising as institution		0.307
R ² after step 5		0.458
Advertising as instrument	0.336*	
R ² change for advertising as instrument		0.056
R ² after step 6		0.514

*p < 0.05

Step 6: As the final block of variables attitude statements toward advertising as instrument were entered. This brought an additional 5.6 percent variance change, thereby making it the third most effective predictor in the model ($\beta=0.336, p<0.05$).

Overall, demographic factors accompanied with dimensional elements of advertising explain 51.4 percent of the variance in the public’s general attitude toward advertising. However, individual contribution of demographic variables in total is minimal (1.7%) as compared to total variance. The biggest contribution to the model came from advertising’s dimensional factors (49.7%). In other words, people’s perception of advertising was mediated more with what they think of the function advertising serve and its practices.

Conclusion

This study presents the most extensive research conducted on public attitudes toward advertising in Turkey. On one hand, it provides important insights into how Turkish people perceive and evaluate advertising in general. On the other hand, it functions as an adaptation of past American-European research model within the Turkish context.

This inquiry provides interesting and useful findings for academia and for the industry. First of all, the research shows that Turkish people’s perception of advertising falls between negative and neutral. Attitude toward institutional aspect of advertising is more positive than its practices, which may point to lack of executional efficiency. Further research on the instrumental dimension of advertising can generate more

detailed explanations on the subject. Or else, a different scale shedding light on different dimensions of advertising attitudes can provide deeper perspectives regarding the public perception. In that sense, Pollay and Mittal's (1993) scale that examines advertising attitudes based on personal (product information, social role, hedonic pleasure) and societal (economic contribution, corrupt values, materialism) factors can be instrumental. Additional research with different scales can help to understand the dynamics regarding advertising attitudes in Turkey.

The primary intention of this study is to reach a deeper understanding of the factors affecting people's predispositions toward advertising. To reach this end, demographic as well as dimensional factors determining advertising attitudes were analyzed in great depth. In contrast to the data produced in American-European mainstream, in Turkey demographic factors such as age, education and socioeconomic status do have minor effect on the attitudes toward advertising in general. To put another way; younger or older, higher or lower socioeconomic status, educated or less educated altogether manifests the same neutral attitude toward advertising in general. This neutrality in the perception of advertising may entail remarkable insights. Therefore, additional factors pertaining to this indifference toward advertising in general (e.g. psychographic and lifestyle factors, culture) must be taken into account with further research and with large samples as in this study.

The findings of this study show that the dimensional elements of advertising account for the greatest share in the overall variance in general public attitudes toward advertising in Turkey. The findings in this inquiry are in compliance with the American-European axis-generated hypotheses. However, further tests in different cultural settings and in regions undergoing various levels of economic development may reveal dissimilarities in advertising attitudes. Moreover, advertising density may also impact the subjects' perception of advertising in general. To investigate such possible discrepancies may lead to more accurate models with constructs and measures applicable on a global scale.

As a final remark and limitation regarding this study is that data were collected in 2010 and some time has passed since then. Consumers' attitudes in Turkey might have changed since the data were collected. However, since 2010 Turkey has kept growing as an economy and market was more or less steady, which suggest that the possible change in such a short period of time would not be significant.

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