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The Effect of Ad Appeals on The Consumer's Purchase Intention in Monitoring Social Media Advertisements

Sosyal Medya Reklamlarının Görüntülenmesinde Reklam Çekiciliklerinin Tüketici Satın Alma Niyeti Üzerindeki Etkisi

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Abstract

In social media ads, measuring effectiveness requires observing signs of positive user interaction. Advertisements, with word-of-mouth marketing driven by positive reactions and perceptions among social media users, tend to generate increased sales and a high return on investment from ad campaigns. However, adverse factors such as privacy concerns and environmental pressures might hinder users from displaying these positive responses. Thus, in some cases, even if users' attitude is positive towards the social media ad they are exposed to, they may choose not to interact with it. Therefore, the impact of an ad on purchasing cannot be solely attributed to the attitude towards interaction; the attitude towards social media advertisements must also be taken into account. Advertising effectiveness literature emphasizes rational and emotional appeal and advertising creativity as factors influencing consumer attitudes toward advertising. Studies on interaction behavior have typically focused on individual interactions, such as liking, so we also focused on liking as interactions in the current study. The current research addresses two fundamental questions: What factors prompt users positive responses to social media advertising? Is positive user engagement with social media ads an indicator of purchasing behavior?

Keywords: Social Media Advertising, Advertising Appeals, Theory of Planned Behavior, Attitude toward Interaction, Structural Equation Modelling

Öz

Sosyal medya reklamlarında etkinliği ölçmek, kullanıcıların olumlu etkileşiminin izlerini gözlemlemekten geçmektedir. Sosyal medya kullanıcıları arasında olumlu tepkiler ve algılar tarafından yönlendirilen ağızdan ağıza

pazarlama etkisi ile reklamlar, artan satışlar ve reklam kampanyalarından yüksek yatırım getirisi sağlama eğilimindedir. Ancak, gizlilik endişeleri ve çevresel baskılar gibi olumsuz faktörler, kullanıcıların bu olumlu tepkileri göstermesini engelleyebilir. Bu nedenle, bazı durumlarda, kullanıcıların maruz kaldıkları sosyal medya reklamına karşı tutumu olumlu olsa bile, onunla etkileşime girmemeyi seçebilirler. Bu nedenle, bir reklamın satın alma üzerindeki etkisi, etkileşime yönelik tutuma tek başına atfedilemez; sosyal medya reklamlarına yönelik tutum da dikkate alınmalıdır. Reklam etkinliği literatürü, tüketici tutumlarını reklama karşı etkileyen faktörler olarak rasyonel ve duygusal çekicilik ile reklam yaratıcılığını vurgular. Etkileşim davranışı üzerine yapılan çalışmalar tipik olarak beğenme gibi bireysel etkileşimlere odaklanmıştır, bu nedenle biz de mevcut çalışmada etkileşimler olarak beğenmeye odaklandık. Mevcut araştırma iki temel soruyu ele almaktadır: Kullanıcıları sosyal medya reklamlarına olumlu yanıt vermeye ne yönlendirir? Sosyal medya reklamları ile kullanıcıların olumlu katılımı, satın alma davranışının bir göstergesi midir?

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Medya Reklamcılığı, Reklam Çekicilikleri, Planlı Davranış Teorisi, Etkileşime Karşı Tutum, Yapısal Eşitlik Modeli

Introduction

Social media is a concept that many believe they understand. The term "social" refers to the fundamental human need for interaction, while "media" traditionally encompasses newspapers, magazines, and television, all of which exert significant influence on society. Major media companies leverage this power to shape people's behavior. Individuals seek to acquire and share information about others, places, and events. In the past, news was disseminated through newspapers and within local communities. To fulfil those two needs, technology introduced social media. Social media satisfies the requirements for receiving and transmitting news and plays a pivotal role in fulfilling the human need for interaction and information dissemination (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010, p. 59).

Moreover, in academic literature, comprehensive definitions exist of social media as "the marketing of goods and services through online social channels and the communication and connection with larger communities that are not attainable through traditional advertising channels" (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010, p. 59). On the other hand, some definitions try to explain more briefly, such as "informing people with each other" and "a new form of media where individuals share content such as photographs and engage in social interaction" (Taprial and Kanwal, 2012, p. 8).

According to Merriam-Webster (n.d.), social media is "electronic communication within online communities where users share information, ideas, personal messages, and content." This modern form has transformed information sharing from a one-sided process to a dynamic, interactive one, becoming a phenomenon of simultaneous, two-way sharing (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010), offering challenges and opportunities. The shift from mass to interactive communication has empowered businesses, enabling direct customer engagement. It has also prompted a re-evaluation of traditional marketing, leading to innovative strategies (Zahay, 2015, p. 10).

Internet advertising began in 1994 and remains in early development. Early failures, like pop-up and email ads, stemmed from applying outdated principles, initially leading experts to believe the Internet wouldn't be vital for advertising (Cudmore et al., 2009, p. 289). The early 2000s saw social media's rise, shifting toward customer engagement and integrating marketing into a single platform. Google's 2005 personalization features marked a new phase focused on 'intelligence.' This approach uses targeted interactions and data collection to distinguish individual users (Kelly-Holmes, 2015, p.213).

After determining the target audience correctly, the issue that needs to be focused on is whether the message is conveyed effectively. Many marketing experts have difficulty measuring the effectiveness of social media campaigns. Even though they are much more efficient than traditional media, it is not easy to fully monitor the results. However, interactions between social network users (e.g., likes, shares, or comments) can be analysed to assess how effectively a social media advertisement achieves its intended goals and shapes user perceptions of the ad. (Lee and Hong, 2016, p.363). In many studies, attitude towards these interactions has been used instead of attitude towards advertising, and the effect on purchasing has been evaluated as the only antecedent of the attitude toward direct interaction (Gustin, 2012). However, when we consider the interactions from the consumers' perspective, which will provide much more than expected for businesses, especially with the appearance of these interactions on other people's home pages, we should not forget that there are elements that will negatively affect the attitude towards interaction, such as privacy concerns and environmental pressure. Therefore, it should not be equated with the attitude towards advertising. Some argue that it should be done (Lipsman et al., 2012). Although the antecedents and successors of these two concepts are expressed with similar variables,

this study was conducted considering that the attitude towards advertising is a mental process that only evaluates the advertisement. In contrast, the attitude towards interaction should be evaluated in the same model as a separate evaluation process is required for interaction after evaluating the advertisement.

In this study, we provided detailed information about the variables in the model. We then summarised the participants' socio-demographic characteristics using descriptive statistics and frequency and percentage distributions. We conducted a reliability analysis of the scales used in the research, employing Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient method. Following the reliability analysis of each scale, we subjected them to exploratory factor analysis to test their structural validity. Once the reliability and validity analyses of the scales were completed, we made goodness of fit measurements to determine the compatibility of the model obtained from the theory with the available data. We then analyzed the hypothesis tests with the help of Structural Equation Modeling, testing cause and effect relationships between the variables, and interpreted the results.

Literature

On advertising effectiveness, many studies try to highlight which factors influence the consumer attitudes, like rational appeal, emotional appeal, creativity, annoyance, and social signals (Ducoffe, 1996; Gao and Koufaris, 2006; Logan et al., 2012; Reinartz and Saffert, 2013; Liu, 2014; Lee and Hong, 2016). Among those studies, Taylor et al. (2011) grouped those factors into informativeness (rational appeal), entertainment (emotional appeal), and advertising creativity as critical to effectiveness.

According to Swani et al. (2013), attitudes are shaped by both emotional responses and cognitive evaluations following exposure to a persuasive message. In addition to that, they add emotional appeals in ads play a critical role in boosting word-of-mouth as well. Because when content is emotionally charged, it gets twice as many likes. Alhabash et al. (2013) found that emotionally appealing messages are more likely to be shared online. But that would not be enough, because the link between emotional appeal and interaction also depends on ad awareness and social visibility. If content is perceived as advertising, even if emotional appeals improve the attitudes toward the ad, do not necessarily increase liking or sharing (Lutz, 1985). This is because social media involves dual processing. Users first evaluate the ad (cognitive/

emotional), then consider its social implications of endorsing it publicly (Chin et al., 2015). Emotional content can produce positive private responses but also raise concerns about self-presentation or perceived commercialism (Swani et al., 2013). At that point, we need to divide attitudes toward the ad and the interaction into separate key factors for predicting engagement. These studies suggest that stronger emotional appeals lead to more positive user attitudes toward the ad than toward the interaction. Rational appeals allow informed decision-making, fostering positive attitudes (Lee and Hong, 2016). Creativity, characterized by differentiation and relevance, influences ad effectiveness. Differentiation involves novelty and surprise; relevance relates to audience value. Smith et al. (2007) found creative ads increase engagement and positive perceptions. However, in social media, high advertising awareness means that novelty might cause skepticism or mistrust, especially if ads seem overly polished and disconnected from organic content (Reinartz and Saffert, 2013; Ducoffe, 1996). Creativity's impact varies by product, audience, and platform norms (Taylor et al., 2011). Measurement tools must distinguish between differentiation and relevance to predict attitudes and behavior accurately.

While some consumers enjoy advertising, the majority perceive it as misleading rather than informative (Mehta, 2000; Wang and Sun, 2010). Mehta (2000) finds out that consumers who feels manipulation or inaccuracy in advertisements are likely to negative attitude , respond negatively etc toward the related ads and the brand, leading to reduced engagement in positive behavior. Negative attitudes toward advertising are often influenced by social factors such as false or misleading advertisements, privacy concerns, their impact on social values, and general discomfort with advertising (Wang and Sun, 2010; Laroche, 2005). Privacy issues on social media are increasingly becoming a cause for concern. Certain studies have reported that privacy concerns contribute to some social media users closing their accounts (Stieger et al., 2013). Additionally, it has been found that privacy concerns discourage self-disclosure; the higher a user's privacy concern, the less information they are willing to disclose on their social media accounts (Zlatolas et al., 2015). Consequently, consumers who are sensitive to the fact that others' interactions with advertisements can be used to reflect their preferences, values, or characters are less inclined to engage with advertisements.

People's feelings about a brand in social media ads can influence their behavior. Individuals who prefer a brand on Facebook are 38% more

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likely to buy from it than those with negative views, highlighting the importance of brand loyalty. When users relate to ad messages and have positive past experiences with a brand, they become more engaged. Even cautious users who follow a brand tend to develop a positive attitude and are more likely to interact with ads (Taylor et al., 2011).

Research shows social influence stems from two needs: being right and liked. Being right relates to informational social influence, relying on others' info to understand the environment. Being liked ties to normative influence, conforming to others' expectations (Deutsch and Gerard, 1955, p. 629). When users encounter a social network ad that many people like, they will likely engage with the ad to align with the majority opinion. This herding effect is described as a social phenomenon where accepting beliefs, ideas, enthusiasms, and tendencies increases when others accept them (Rikkers, 2002). When a social network user observes widespread interaction about a message on platforms such as Facebook, they are more inclined to join in the enthusiasm. The viewers may guess the message's quality and worthiness from how much they liked or shared (Alhabash et al., 2013). As a result, the more intense the social pressure a user experiences to conform to the expected interaction of others on social media, the more powerful they intend to interact.

Normative influence, often called "subjective norm," is a critical concept in the planned behavior theory. Subjective norm reflects how individuals perceive others' opinions on a behavior, tied to adaptation and utilitarian effects in Kelman's framework. Research shows subjective norms influence adoption of new tech like B2C e-commerce and instant messaging. This influence is expected to be even more pronounced regarding the intention to use social networks, where user behaviors are transparent to others. Users often feel pressure to conform to the expectations of their online acquaintances in order to maintain positive relationships within their reference groups. This pressure can lead to behaviors such as liking or sharing posts. The subjective norm is related to higher-tier motivations, such as maintaining positive relationships or identifying with specific individuals. When users perceive herd behaviour among online friends, they are more likely to comply with their expectations. In essence, the basic need to conform to the majority opinion to reduce uncertainty and achieve personal goals triggers the need to conform to the norms set by the reference group. Therefore, users who recognize the influence of herd behavior

related with showing empathy are also tend to recognize the influence of subjective norms.

Some studies focus on how people interact with ads rather than just their attitude towards the ad, which is more commonly examined. The attitude towards advertising refers to an individual's tendency to react positively or negatively to a specific advertising stimulus in each context. This means that it only addresses evaluations of the advertisement itself. On the other hand, the attitude towards interacting is based on the attitude towards the ad but is also linked to social media. When users see an ad, they first evaluate it and then evaluate their interaction. This suggests that their engagement and advertising outcomes may be different. The viral behavior of social media users depends directly on the nature of the advertisement. For example, if users perceive an ad as extraordinary and touching, they will likely click "Like" or "Share" to inform others about their opinion of the ad. However, these actions may not necessarily translate to a willingness to purchase, as they may be influenced differently by advertising effectiveness, concerns, and social influences. Therefore, rather than using these attitudes interchangeably, we believe that the attitude toward interacting with social media ads will affect purchase intention and overall attitudes toward the ads themselves (Lee and Hong, 2016).

The attitude towards interaction is a social media user's sentiment about viral activities like sharing responses to ads. Alhabash and McAlister (2015) note that content goes viral on platforms like Facebook and Twitter through digital transmission, generating the E-WOM. Hence, in this research, it is fitting to define interaction attitude as "a user's evaluations of the behavior of disclosing and disseminating their reactions to a social media advertisement." In this context, attitude toward interaction can significantly influence the success of an advertising campaign, as its effectiveness relies on users' attitudes toward interaction and the viral behavior they will exhibit, creating E-WOM. Social media plug-ins, like the "Like Button", encourage more frequent E-WOM behavior, and users often express emotional evaluations of social media ads within their social networks (Swani et al., 2013). A positive attitude towards interaction can lead to a solid intention to engage in that behavior. Chin et al. (2015), conduct a research about Facebook users' motivations for Like Click behavior, and as a result they identified a significant positive correlation between attitude and intention.

Understanding the link between likes and sales is crucial. While some believe more likes boost revenue, skeptics point to 'cheap fans' and question the accuracy of likes as purchase indicators (Lee et al., 2015). However, evidence shows a Facebook Like can correlate with selling 4.5 extra items and generating $468, with each like worth at least $8 (Lee and Hong, 2016). Positive discussions foster favorable brand views, influencing purchase intent (Martensen and Mouritsen, 2014). Studies also find a positive link between Facebook interactions and purchase likelihood (Pöyry et al., 2013). Liking an ad reflects emotional endorsement and can increase curiosity and purchase intent, making it a strategic move for marketers to encourage likes.

Data Set and Methodology

One of the challenges marketing professionals face when running social media campaigns is ensuring that the ad reaches the intended target audience effectively. Additionally, many struggle to measure the success of these campaigns due to the difficulty in comprehensively tracking their outcomes. However, interactions between social network users (for example, "Likes" or "Shares") can be examined to evaluate how well the advertisement on any social media platform meets its objectives and consumers' attitudes about the advertisement (Lee and Hong, 2016, p. 366). For a social media ad to be considered adequate, any sign that a user has responded positively to it is an important indicator (for example, clearly expressing support for the ideas conveyed or their mood regarding the ad). However, in responding positively, the user's perception of what those around him will think and privacy concerns are seen as essential obstacles. Therefore, in some cases, although one may have a positive attitude toward the advertisement, his or her attitude toward responding positively may not be positive. Positive responses from the user on a social network will accelerate the spread of the advertisement among other users to a certain extent. They will significantly help increase the brand's awareness. According to a related report, not only fans who were 'exposed' to the ad but also 'friends of fans' spent more money after interaction occurs. Advertisements that generate positive perceptions and reactions among social media users are more likely to trigger word-of-mouth marketing effects, leading to increased sales and a higher return on investment from social media advertising campaigns. (Gustin, 2012; Lipsman et al., 2012).

The current research is guided by three essential questions that carry substantial implications for social media advertising and consumer

behavior. What are the antecedents of social media advertising that promote favorable user responses? Is positive user behavior towards social media advertising a dependable predictor of constructive purchasing actions? Do various positive user behaviors towards social media advertising exhibit comparable dynamics? These inquiries not only direct the course of the research but also emphasize its significance and potential influence within the field, highlighting the importance and relevance of the study to the audience.

Within the scope of this study, which focuses on the antecedents and outcomes of positive consumer behavior towards social media advertisements, participants, each of whom is an active social media user, were asked to answer the survey based on the advertisements they encountered on the social media they most actively use. This methodology emphasizes ecological validity by capturing participants' responses to advertisements encountered naturally within their social media environment, rather than subjecting them to stimuli selected by researchers. Although experimental designs that feature uniform exposure to advertisements provide greater control over creative elements and message content (Lee and Hong, 2016), they may diminish the generalizability of findings to real-world settings in which users are exposed to diverse, algorithmically targeted advertisements (Kelly-Holmes, 2015). Our design selection reflects a trade-off: achieving enhanced external validity at the expense of reduced experimental control over advertisement characteristics. This naturalistic approach is particularly appropriate for investigating advertisement-awareness contexts, wherein users consciously recognize content as advertising and assess it accordingly (Cudmore et al., 2009). Nonetheless, we recognize that uncontrolled variability in ad creativity, format, and product category may have attenuated some hypothesized relationships. Future research using standardized advertisement stimuli across experimental conditions would complement our findings by isolating the effects of specific creative appeals while controlling for confounding variables.

Our research is limited by time and cost, leading us to choose convenience sampling, a non-random method. As detailed in the sampling section, we aimed to select a sample that resembles the population.

Our study focused on popular social media apps in Turkey that use native advertising: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

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Participants were over 18, make their own purchases, and live in Istanbul, about 20% of Turkey's population.

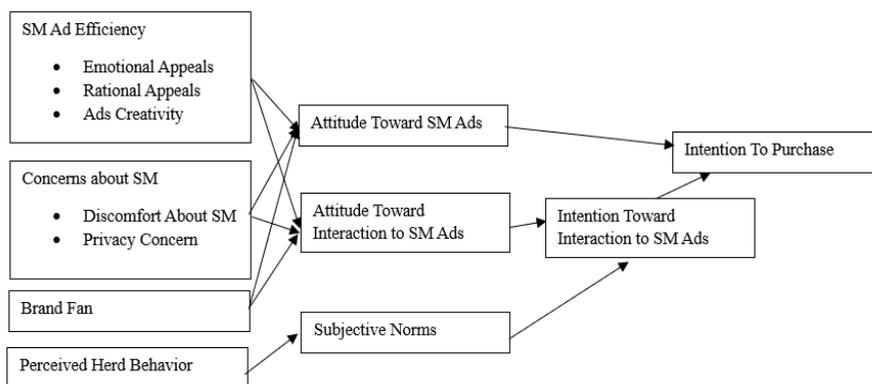**Figure 1.**

Research Model

Figure 1 above shows the model examining the antecedents of attitude towards social media advertisements, intention to interact, and their effects on purchase intention.

H1: Attitude towards interacting positively affects the intention to interact.

H2: The intention to interact positively affects the intention to purchase.

H3: Attitude towards Social Media advertisements positively affects purchase intention.

H4: Emotional appeal positively affects attitudes towards interaction.

H5: Emotional appeal positively affects attitudes towards social media ads.

H6: Rational appeal positively affects attitudes towards interaction.

H7: Rational appeal positively affects attitudes towards social media ads.

H8: Advertising creativity positively affects the attitude towards interaction.

H9: Advertising creativity positively affects attitudes towards social media advertisements.

H10: Privacy concerns regarding advertisements negatively affect the attitude towards interaction.

H11: Privacy concerns regarding advertisements negatively affect attitudes towards social media advertisements.

H12: Being disturbed by advertisements negatively affects the attitude towards interaction.

H13: Being disturbed by advertisements negatively affects the attitude toward social media advertisements.

H14: Brand fandom positively affects attitudes toward interaction.

H15: Brand fandom positively affects attitudes towards social media advertisements.

H16: Subjective norms positively affect attitudes towards interaction.

H17: Perceived herd behavior positively affects the subjective norm regarding interaction.

Due to time and cost constraints, this research used a convenience sampling method without aiming to generalize the results. In the preliminary study, consumers using the social media applications Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram, where native advertising is most commonly encountered, were included in the research. People who interacted with these contents without realising they were not advertisements were excluded from the research because they could not pass the screening questions. The attitudes of people aware that these contents were advertisements were measured.

Data was meticulously collected for this research using the innovative "Google Survey" application. This tool seamlessly integrated into online surveys and was distributed to participants via social media applications and e-mail, with the address: https://forms.gle/yc5dc1taV4Q9Qy549. The unique advantage of this method lies in its speed and cost-effectiveness of data collection. Moreover, it eliminates the issue of missing data, a common problem in traditional surveys.

The scales included in the survey used within the scope of the research were taken from the relevant literature and adapted for this research

within the framework of the relationships established based on the literature review. For advertising effectiveness, three scales consisting of 3, 3 and 4 items were used respectively, with the subheadings of emotional appeal, rational appeal and advertising creativity, adapted from the scales used by Lee and Hong (2016). While concerns about advertising were measured with 2 dimensions: privacy concern and disturbing, Wiese and Akareem's (2020) 6-item scale was used for privacy concern, and Mattke et al.'s (2019) 4-item scale was used for disturbing. Taylor et al.'s (2011) 4-item scale is used for brand fans. For perceived herding behavior, subjective norms, and attitude towards interacting with social media ads, Lee and Hong's (2016) four-item scales are used for each. Intention to interact with social media ads Halaszovich and Nel's (2017) 3-item scale is used, attitude towards social media advertisements was measured by adapting Wiese and Akareem's (2020) 6-item scale, and purchase intention was adapted from Wang and Chang's (2013) 5-item scale. Thus, 50 items were used in the survey, demonstrating our research's comprehensive and well-planned nature. Apart from these scale expressions, the survey includes socio-demographic questions expected to reveal detailed participant information.

After the survey form was prepared, experts reviewed it, and their feedback was instrumental in refining the survey. In addition to the Expert Opinion, a pre-test was conducted with a group of 30 people, where feedback on the survey was also collected from the participants. Taking this feedback into consideration, the survey was finalised. As a result of this pre-test, it was determined that the entire survey was completed in an average of 12 minutes, and the participants were informed about this in the preliminary information form. Through Google Surveys, where the survey is presented to the participants, it is ensured that no questions are left blank, thus preventing missing values. The survey was applied continuously between 16.06.2021 and 16.07.2021. Participants were contacted via e-mail, and e-mails were sent to a total of 1854 people and responses were received from 623 of them. The data of 8 participants who marked the same option for all questions in these surveys and 42 participants who marked the same direction for other questions on the same scale as the reverse coded question were excluded from the research. Thus, the remaining 573 surveys were used to continue the research.

Research Findings

The research data was analysed using two powerful tools: SPSS 29.0 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and AMOS 26.0 (Analysis of Moment Structures). These programs, widely used in the social sciences, were employed to create frequency distributions of socio-demographic characteristics, perform validity-reliability analyses, and conduct confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling. This scientific british underscores the credibility of the research.

Descriptive Statistics on Demographic Characteristics

First, we will discuss the participants' socio-demographic data details. Data regarding gender, education level, marital status, age, and income status were evaluated. According to the findings, 573 total participants, including 355 females and 218 males, means 62 % of the total participants are female, and the remaining 38% are male. If we check the marital status of the participants, 305 of them are single, 241 of them are married, 22 of them are divorced, and 5 of them are widows, which means 53,2 % of them are single, 42,1 of them are married, 3,8 % of them are divorced, and remaining 0,9 % percent are widows. In age frequencies, we will face that 99 of the participants are in the group the age between 18 and 26, 306 of the participants are in the group the age between 27 and 35, 133 of the participants are in the group the age between 36 and 44, 24 of the participants are in the group the age between 45 and 53, and remaining 11 participants are at 54 or older. Their percentage is as follows: 17,3 % of the participants are in the group the age between 18 and 26, 53,4 % of the participants are in the group the age between 27 and 35, 23,2 % of the participants are in the group the age between 36 and 44, 4,2 % of the participants are in the group the age between 45 and 53, and remaining 1,9 % participants are at 54 or older. At last, if we check the educational level, 3 of them graduated from primary school, 41 of them graduated from high school, 244 of them have a bachelor's degree, 7,32 % of them have their master's, and 50 of them have a PhD. That means 0,5 % of them graduated from primary school, 7,32 % of them graduated from high school, 42,6 % of them have a bachelor's degree, 41 % of them have their master's, and 8,7 % of them have a PhD.

Reliability and Validity Analyses of the Scales Included in the Study

In this study, the alpha method (Cronbach's Alfa) was used to measure

the reliability of the scales. Cronbach's alpha values found acceptable for all the scales and the results are like as follows: privacy concerns 0,812; ads creativity 0,905; discomfort with sm ads 0,84; brand fan 0,941; attitude toward sm ads 0,919; perceived herd behavior 0,862; purchase intention 0,806; subjective norms 0,877; emotional appeals 0,873; attitude toward interaction 0,929; rational appeals 0,897; intention toward interaction 0,924.

The concerns about social media advertisements used in the study were addressed in two ways. These dimensions are privacy concerns and harassment. Exploratory factor analysis was applied to see whether the items were correctly differentiated. Three items (GzE1, GzE4 and GzE6) deleted from the privacy concerns dimension during the reliability analysis were not included in the factor analysis, and the factor analysis of the scale was conducted with a total of 7 items in 2 dimensions. The KMO value of the scale measuring concerns about social media advertisements (0.727) is above the minimum required value (0.50). In addition, the result of the Bartlett sphericity test measuring the general significance of all correlations in the correlation matrix was also found to be significant at a significance level of 99%. Thus, it is possible to talk about the suitability of factor analysis to measure the validity of this scale. The final factor loadings of the items concerning social media advertisement components with varimax rotation are greater then acceptable level 0.70.

The study addressed the social media advertising effectiveness scale in three dimensions: rational appeal, emotional appeal, and advertising creativity. While applying exploratory factor analysis, the RY4 expression removed from the advertising creativity dimension during the reliability analysis was not included in the factor analysis, and the factor analysis of the scale was conducted with a total of 9 expressions in 3 dimensions. The results of the KMO sampling suitability measurement and Bartlett sphericity test, which were conducted to decide on the suitability of factor analysis, are given in Table 3. The KMO value was relatively high at 0.891 and was found to be at a significance level of 99% with the Bartlett sphericity test. It was decided that the factor analysis was appropriate for validity. As a result of the exploratory factor analysis of the social media advertising effectiveness scale, three factors were obtained from the literature. While the expressions in the scale were divided into factors, no problematic situation was observed. According to the analysis results, separating expressions into emotional appeal, rational appeal, and

advertising creativity is possible.

Afterwards, the attitudes towards social media advertisements, purchase intention, and brand fan scales were taken, respectively. The KMO value performed to evaluate the suitability of the attitude towards social media advertisements scale for factor analysis is relatively high, with 0.917, and it was determined that the data was suitable for factor analysis at a 99% significance level with the Bartlett sphericity test. The final factor loadings of the expressions in the attitude towards social media advertisements scale obtained with the principal component analysis are given. Since it consists of a single factor, no rotation was applied. While the expressions in the scale were divided into factors, no problem was observed for any expression. There is no need to remove any expression from the scale. Validity analysis was performed without including the SAN2 expression in the purchase intention scale, which was previously deemed appropriate to remove in the reliability analysis. The KMO value is evaluated as suitable with 0.765, and it was determined that the data was suitable for factor analysis at a 99% significance level with the Bartlett sphericity test. Since it consists of a single factor, no rotation was applied. While dividing the items in the scale into factors, no problem was observed for any item. No item was removed from the scale. The brand fan scale is evaluated as appropriate with a KMO value of 0.751, and it was determined that the data were suitable for factor analysis at a significance level of 99% with the Bartlett sphericity test. No rotation was applied because it consisted of a single factor. While dividing the items in the scale into factors, no problem was observed for any item. No item was removed from the scale.

Perceived herd behavior, subjective norms, attitudes toward interacting with social media ads, and intentions toward interacting with social media ads were asked separately to evaluate liking behaviors. A validity analysis of the perceived herd behavior scale was performed without including the ASDB4 item, which had previously been removed from the reliability analysis of the relevant situations. Analysis was handled by including three items. The results of the KMO sampling suitability measurement and Bartlett sphericity test for each situation is suitable to evaluate the suitability of the perceived herd behavior scale for factor analysis. The KMO value was 0.735 for likes and it was evaluated as appropriate. In addition, when the Bartlett sphericity test was considered to have a significance level of 99%, it was determined that the data was suitable for factor analysis. The scale used no rotation

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since it consisted of a single factor. Validity analysis for the subjective norms scale was performed. The KMO value was found to be 0.822 for likes and value was evaluated as appropriate. In addition, when the Bartlett sphericity test was considered to have a significance level of 99%, it was determined that the data was suitable for factor analysis.

Validity analysis for the attitude scale towards interacting with social media advertisements was performed. The KMO value was 0.853 for likes and value was evaluated as appropriate. In addition, when the Bartlett sphericity test is considered at a significance level of 99%, it was determined that the data were suitable for factor analysis. The validity analysis of the intention scale to interact with social media ads was performed. Since no item was previously removed in the reliability analysis, the analysis of the relevant case was continued by including all items. The analysis for the case was handled with 5 items. The KMO value was 0.845 for likes and values was evaluated as appropriate. When the Bartlett sphericity test is considered to have a significance level of 99%, it was determined that the data were suitable for factor analysis.

Hypothesis tests

First, the measurement model was handled, confirmatory factor analysis was applied, and the model's appropriation values were evaluated. Then, through the structural model, the cause-effect relationships between the variables in the model were tested, and the relationship of the theoretical model with the structural model and the data at hand was tested by looking at the values of goodness. Finally, the test of hypotheses created in the model was performed, and the related results were interpreted.

Structural Equation Model for Likes

Before the measurement model was tested, maximum likelihood estimation was selected as the estimation method. The prerequisite of this method is that the data has a normal distribution; as we have already mentioned, it is possible to say that the data in the model has a normal distribution when we look at the clutch and distortion of the data. Immediately after the first measurement, there are various methods to look at the harmony of the data obtained with the model. The most used statistic among the goodness of fit indices is chi-squared. The chi-square that tests the harmony between the model and the data is shown by χ^2 sembol. The Chi-square test tests a hypothesis

as to whether there is a difference between the model developed in the covariance structure of the observed variables and the model developed. Small $\chi2$ is a sign of the height of the compliance. The model can also be meaningful in cases where the chi-square is large. The degrees of freedom (df) is the element that determines this. If the square is smaller than three times the degrees of freedom, we can discuss a good harmony between the data and the measurement model. This explains the standard chi-square ($\chi2/$ df) to us. The standard chi-square value is found by dividing the chi-square by the degrees of freedom, and this value for the model is acceptable at 3,067. Since the standard chi-square for the evaluation is not sufficient, primarily due to the sensitivity to the sample volume, other goodness of fit indices were also examined, and GFI (0.814), CFI (0.915), IFI (0.915) and TLI (0.903) values found as an acceptable, AGFI (0.780) and NFI (0.879) found very close the acceptable level. In addition, the RMSEA value was also checked, and it was found in an acceptable range with a value of 0.06.

Since some values were very close to the acceptable level but below, the modifications suggested in the analysis program were applied, starting with the one that would have the most effect. Only the modifications between the two error terms of the same variable were considered here. The standard chi-square value after the modification has a good fit value of 2.541, which is divided by the chi-square (2111.810) degrees of freedom (831). Since the standard chi-square for the evaluation is not sufficient enough, other goodness of fit indices were examined, and GFI (0.848), AGFI (0.819), NFI (0.900), CFI (0.937), IFI (0.937) and TLI (0.928) values were found to be acceptable. Later, RMR and RMSEA values were also checked and found to be in an acceptable range with values of 0.055 and 0.052, respectively. Factor loads were obtained with the standardized regression coefficients obtained from confirmatory factor analysis after modifications. For all regression coefficients, the P value is less than 0.01. This shows that factor loads are uploaded to the factors correctly. In addition, regression coefficients were relatively high. Due to the sufficient level of model compliance degrees, the structural model test was continued.

Table 1.

Values Regarding the Compatibility of the Structural Model with Post-Modification Data (For Likes)

Goodness Of Fit İndices	Measured Value	Perfect Fit	Good Fit	Acceptable
χ^2 Fit Test (Df=852)	2186,12	≤ 2Df	≤ 3Df	≤ 5Df
χ^2 / Df	2,566	≤ 2	≤ 3	≤ 5
GFI	0,845	≥ 0,90	≥ 0,85	≥ 0,80
AGFI	0,820	≥ 0,90	≥ 0,85	≥ 0,80
CFI	0,934	≥ 0,95	≥ 0,90	
NFI	0,897	≥ 0,95	≥ 0,90	
IFI	0,934	≥ 0,95	≥ 0,90	
TLI	0,927	≥ 0,95	≥ 0,90	
RMR	0,068	≤ 0,05	≤ 0,07	≤ 0,08
RMSEA	0,052	≤ 0,05	≤ 0,07	≤ 0,08
Hoolter .05	241			
Hoolter .01	249			

When the structural model was tested, the first thing to look at was the goodness of fit indices. The chi-square statistic was found to be 2740.301. This value, slightly more than three times the degrees of freedom, is acceptable. The standard chi-square value is within an acceptable range for the model with 3.172. Since the standard chi-square alone was insufficient for the evaluation, other fit indices were also examined. While the values of GFI (0.804), CFI (0.907), and IFI (0.908) were at an acceptable level, AGFI (0.776), NFI (0.871), and TLI (0.898) were slightly below the acceptable level. In addition, the RMR and RMSEA values were also examined, and they were within an acceptable range with 0.071 and 0.062, respectively.

 In addition to these, Hoolter indices were also examined. These data provide the minimum sample size required for testing the model hypotheses at 0.05 and 0.01 significance levels. In this model, while the values were 195 at the 0.05 significance level, it was found that a sample size of 202 at the 0.01 significance level would be sufficient. Therefore, it is seen that the 573 surveys collected within the scope of the research are pretty sufficient. Since some values were very close to the acceptable level but below, the modifications suggested in the analysis program were applied, starting with the one that would have the most effect. Only the modifications between the two error terms of

the same variable were considered here.

After modification, the standard chi-square value is within an acceptable range of 2.566, divided by the chi-square (2186.12) and the degrees of freedom (852). Other fit indices were also examined, and while the values of GFI (0.845), AGFI (0.820), CFI (0.934), IFI (0.934) and TLI (0.927) were at an acceptable level, NFI (0.897) was slightly below the acceptable level. However, it is known that the NFI value is affected by the sample size, and the TLI value eliminates this problem by adding the degrees of freedom to the calculation. Then, the RMR and RMSEA values were examined and found within an acceptable range of 0.068 and 0.052, respectively. In addition to these, the Hoolter indices were also examined. In this model, the values after modification were 241 at the 0.05 significance level, while a sample size of 249 was sufficient at the 0.01 significance level.

The final model demonstrates acceptable fit across multiple indices, with most values meeting or approaching conventional thresholds (Hu and Bentler, 1999). While the NFI value (0.897) falls slightly below the 0.90 benchmark, this index is known to be sensitive to sample size and may underestimate fit in large samples (Bentler, 1990). The TLI (0.927), which adjusts for model complexity and degrees of freedom, exceeds the acceptable threshold, thereby providing stronger evidence of good fit. The RMSEA value of 0.052 indicates a close fit, with the upper bound of the 90% confidence interval remaining below 0.08. Collectively, these indices support the adequacy of the structural model for hypothesis testing. The Hoelter indices (241 at α=.05; 249 at α=.01) confirm that the sample size is more than sufficient for detecting the hypothesized effects, thereby instilling confidence in the statistical power of the analyses. Then, the hypotheses were tested, and the related unstandardized p values, critical ratio, standard error, and regression coefficients are given in Table 2.

Table 2.

Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for the Structural Model (For Liking)

Hypothesis	Estimation	Standard Error	Critical Ratio	P Value	Accepted/Not Accepted
ETKNB <--- ETKTB	1,074	,054	19,776	***	H1: Accepted
SAN <--- ETKNB	,047	,023	2,046	,041	H2: Accepted
SAN <--- SMKT	,729	,050	14,518	***	H3: Accepted
ETKTB <--- DÇ	,055	,056	,976	,329	H4: Not Accepted
SMKT <--- DÇ	,141	,051	2,744	0,006	H5: Accepted
ETKTB <--- RÇ	,182	,055	3,304	***	H6: Accepted
SMKT <--- RÇ	,542	,057	9,583	***	H7: Accepted
ETKTB <--- RY	-,105	,053	-1,969	0,049	H8: Accepted
SMKT <--- RY	-,011	,048	-,225	,822	H9: Not Accepted
ETKTB <--- GZE	-,019	,040	-,477	,633	H10: Not Accepted
SMKT <--- GZE	,017	,036	,480	,631	H11: Not Accepted
ETKTB <--- RE	-,098	,039	-2,545	,011	H12: Accepted
SMKT <--- RE	-,197	,037	-5,351	***	H13: Accepted
ETKTB <--- MF	,053	,032	1,668	,095	H14: Accepted
SMKT <--- MF	,052	,029	1,778	,075	H15: Accepted
ETKTB <--- ÖNB	,704	,045	15,753	***	H16: Accepted
ÖNB <--- ASDB	,529	,041	12,783	***	H17: Accepted

When the significance levels given in Table 8 are examined, it is seen that the hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H5, H6, H7, H8, H12, H13, H16 and H17 were accepted at the significance level of α=0.05 and the hypotheses H14 and H15 were accepted at the significance level of α=0.10. However, the hypotheses H4, H9, H10 and H11 were rejected.

According to these results, it can be said that advertising effectiveness generally affects the attitude towards both social media advertisements and interaction, which has a positive effect on purchase intention. However, the negative effect of privacy concerns in the subheading

of concerns about social media advertisements was rejected for both attitudes. Although it will be discussed in more detail in the results section after the model for commenting and sharing is considered, the main reason for this situation may be that people with high privacy concerns prefer not to be on social media at all. It can be said that the subjective norms and perceived herd behavior included in the theory of planned behaviors show the expected effect. The fact that emotional appeal does not have the expected effect on attitude towards interaction and advertising creativity on attitude towards social media advertisements will be discussed in the conclusion section.

Conclusion

First, there is a prevailing view that the results cannot be generalized since the participants were shown certain advertisements and, therefore, the advertisement was manipulated. Although this problem was tried to be prevented by asking the participants, each of whom is an active social media user, to answer the survey based on the advertisements they encountered on the social media they used most actively, the selection of convenience sampling, one of the non-probability sampling methods, as a sample type due to time and cost constraints prevents the generalizability of the research results. In subsequent studies, selecting one of the probability sampling methods may eliminate this problem.

Suppose we review the research results when liking is treated as one of the interaction types. In that case, advertising effectiveness generally affects both attitudes towards social media advertisements and interaction, which in turn positively affect purchase intention. However, the negative effect of privacy concerns, including the subheading "concerns about social media advertisements," has been rejected for both attitudes. It can be said that subjective norms and perceived herd behaviors, as included in the theory of planned behavior, have the expected effect. Emotional appeal has not shown the expected effect on attitudes towards interaction, and advertising creativity has not shown the expected effect on attitudes towards social media advertisements.

Our analysis revealed some unexpected results, particularly regarding emotional appeals and privacy concerns. For instance, the fact that emotional content didn't significantly drive interaction attitudes (H4) was surprising given the existing literature. We suspect this happened because our participants were consciously evaluating these as

'advertisements.' When people know they are being sold something, they often build a mental defense, making them less likely to publicly engage with emotional content.

Similarly, the lack of impact from privacy concerns (H10 & H11) might point to a 'privacy paradox.' Many users claim to be worried about their data, yet their actual behavior on social media doesn't always reflect this fear. It's also possible that those with the highest privacy concerns have already opted out of these platforms or use them so anonymously that they weren't captured in our sample. These nuances suggest that the relationship between user concerns and their actual ad-responses is far more complex than a simple direct effect.

When all the situations are considered together, it is possible to say that advertising effectiveness, especially rational appeal, positively affects attitudes towards social media advertisements and attitudes towards interaction. Attitudes towards social media advertisements and intention to interact have a positive effect on purchase intention.

Most studies in the literature have used attitudes towards social media advertisements and attitudes towards interaction as alternatives to each other. However, the effect of attitudes towards advertisements on purchase intentions was much more robust in our case. This is a point that other studies, especially those investigating the effects on purchase intentions, should be careful about when using these two attitudes as alternatives. It can be said that different dynamics play a role in attitudes towards interaction. However, it should not be forgotten that people interacting with social media advertisements may lead to a kind of word-of-mouth marketing due to the nature of social media. Therefore, its indirect effect may be much greater than our measured direct effect.

When advertising effectiveness is considered, it is evident that rational creativity has a strong effect on both attitudes, whereas advertising creativity affects only the attitude towards interacting in a liking situation. While the effect of emotional appeal on attitude towards advertising has been confirmed, as the literature suggests, its effect on attitude towards interaction was not statistically significant. The reason why emotional appeal did not have the expected effect may be because while people can generally interact without paying attention to whether it is an advertisement or not if they are affected by such content, the focus of the research was on advertisements and the attempt was made to measure how people perceive the content they watch and see while

they are aware that it is an advertisement. When considered this way, it is possible to say that users place greater importance on informative content when they know it is an advertisement. In addition, as we mentioned at the beginning of the research, it is also possible to say that using the two attitudes in turn would not be very healthy. A key question that emerges from our data is whether the muted response to emotional appeals is a specific trait of Turkish consumers or a broader reaction to social media advertising. While one could argue that Turkish users might be more pragmatic or price-conscious in their digital habits, we believe the explanation lies more in the context of 'ad-awareness.' Because we specifically asked participants to evaluate content they recognized as ads, they likely approached them with a more critical, less emotional mindset. This suggests that the setting of the study—where people are consciously judging a commercial message—might be a stronger factor than cultural background alone. To truly separate culture from context, future studies should look at how these same users react when they aren't explicitly told they are participating in an advertising study. It is thought that the reason the effect of advertising creativity on both the attitude towards interaction and the attitude towards advertisements is not statistically significant may be related to the view that creativity can be an antecedent of appeals, as stated in a few studies. While our data suggests that the model might perform better if creativity were treated as a starting point as an antecedent rather than a parallel factor, we have remained faithful to our original framework. This decision was guided by the formal protocol approved by the Galatasaray University Ethics Committee. Since our ethical mandate was tied to the specific hypotheses and model structure we initially proposed, we believe it is vital to report our findings based on that approved path. That said, our exploratory tests do hint that a sequential model in which creativity fuels the appeals could be a very promising direction for future studies to explore under new ethical guidelines.

It was observed that being bothered by advertisements, one of the sub-dimensions considered under the dimension of concerns about social media advertisements, negatively affected both attitudes towards social media advertisements and towards interacting, as expected within the scope of the literature. This shows that attention should be paid to factors such as advertisements displayed too frequently, appearing unexpectedly in front of users, and interrupting the activities people want to do. In terms of privacy concerns, contrary to expectations based on the literature, the effect on both the attitude towards social

media advertisements and the attitude towards interacting was not found to be statistically significant. As we have stated before, the main reason for this situation may be that people with high privacy concerns prefer not to be on social media at all. In addition, it is known that people with high privacy concerns generally do not share much on social media and may even exist on these platforms with fake accounts instead of their personal information. Therefore, the fact that the relevant people encounter much fewer advertisements due to the targeting in the advertisements or do not encounter them at all may also be that they were not included in the survey because this was included as an elimination question. In future research, this relationship may be different when users are shown a specific ad rather than when participants are expected to evaluate the ad they last watched.

In general, the effects of perceived herd behavior, which is examined under the title of social impact within the scope of the research, on subjective norms and the effect of subjective norms on the intention to interact are measured based on the theory of reasoned action. They are vital, according to the literature. This positive effect shows businesses that some organic likes may be due to social pressure. Those who fail to reflect the same social pressure on the product and brand may be less likely to convert social media ads into purchases.

One thing we have to keep in mind is that we didn't break down the results by specific platforms like Instagram or LinkedIn. Each of these spaces has its own 'vibe' and user expectations. For example, someone on Instagram might be more open to a flashy, emotional ad, while a LinkedIn user is probably looking for something more professional and rational. Since we grouped all social media together, we might have missed some of these platform-specific nuances. We think it's a great opportunity for future research to take our model and apply it to each platform separately to see if the rules of engagement change depending on where the ad is shown.

Declaration

In all processes of the article, TESAM's research and publication ethics principles were followed.

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