

Investigation of the effects of consumers' attitudes towards social media advertisements on their purchasing behaviours

Tüketicilerin sosyal medya reklamlarına yönelik tutumlarının satın alma davranışları üzerindeki etkilerinin incelenmesi

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Abstract

Today, brands and businesses widely use social media ads to reach targeted customers. Therefore, examining the effect of social media advertisements on consumers' purchasing decisions stands out as an essential research topic. For this reason, it is crucial to reveal the factors that are effective in the purchasing behaviour of consumers in advertisements made on social media. In the light of these facts, effects of the ad credibility, perceived personalisation, ethics of social media advertising, attitude towards social media advertising variables on social shopping intention and the moderating effects of gender, age and educational status were examined. The research gathered data from 421 individuals living in Kocaeli via a questionnaire technique, and the obtained data were analysed using hierarchical regression tests. Findings of the analysis indicate that ad credibility, ethics of social media advertising and attitude towards social media advertising positively affect social shopping intention. Furthermore, age was found to have a moderating role between social shopping intention and ethics of social media advertising and attitude towards social media advertising. In contrast, educational status was found to have a moderating role between social shopping intention and ad credibility and attitude towards social media advertising. This study is expected to clarify the factors for the social shopping intention with demographic differences.

Keywords: Social Media, Purchase Intention, Social Media Advertising

Jel Codes: M30, M31, M37

Öz

Sosyal medya reklamları hedeflenmiş müşterilere ulaşmak amacıyla markalar ve işletmeler tarafından günümüzde yaygın olarak kullanılmaktadır. Sosyal medya reklamlarının tüketicilerin satın alma kararındaki etkisinin incelenmesi önemli bir araştırma konusu olarak öne çıkmaktadır. Bu nedenle sosyal medya üzerinden yapılan reklamlarda tüketicilerin satın alma davranışlarında etkili olan unsurların ortaya konulması önemlidir. Bu gerçekler ışığında çalışmada; sosyal medya reklamlarına güven, sosyal medyanın reklam etiği, sosyal medya reklamlarından algılanan kişiselleştirme ve sosyal medya reklamlarına yönelik kullanıcı tutumu değişkenlerinin sosyal medya aracılığıyla satın alma niyeti üzerindeki etkileri ile cinsiyet, yaş ve eğitim düzeyinin düzenleyici etkileri incelenmiştir. Araştırma kapsamında Kocaeli ilinde yaşayan 421 kişiden anket tekniği ile veriler toplanmış ve elde edilen veriler hiyerarşik regresyon testleri kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Analizin bulguları, sosyal medya reklamlarına güven, sosyal medyanın reklam etiği ve sosyal medya reklamlarına yönelik tutumun; sosyal medya aracılığıyla satın alma niyetini olumlu etkilediğini göstermektedir. Yaşın, sosyal medya aracılığıyla satın alma niyeti ile sosyal medya reklam etiği ve sosyal medya reklamlarına yönelik kullanıcı tutumu arasında; eğitim düzeyinin ise sosyal medya aracılığıyla satın alma niyeti ile sosyal medya reklamlarına güven ve sosyal medya reklamlarına yönelik kullanıcı tutumu arasında düzenleyici bir role sahip olduğu bulunmuştur. Bu çalışmanın demografik farklılıklar ile sosyal medya aracılığıyla satın alma niyetini etkileyen faktörlerin netleştirilmesine katkı sağlaması beklenmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Medya, Satın Alma Niyeti, Sosyal Medya Reklamcılığı

Jel Kodları: M30, M31, M37

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Introduction

Today, social media ads come to the fore as a marketing tool that brands and businesses frequently use. In 2020, the total amount spent on social media advertisements worldwide reached \$132 billion. This figure will exceed \$200 billion in 2024 (Statista Research Department, 2021: 1). These ads are used effectively for specific target audiences or by targeting specific regions to reach desired customers. Accordingly, it is observed that social media occurs more and more in the marketing literature. When a search is made with the search word "social media marketing" in the Web of Science database, it is seen that nearly 23,000 studies have been conducted. These data show the weight of social media in marketing literature. It is observed that these studies are related to many aspects of social media marketing. In this context, the effects of some issues such as the ad reliability, personalisation of ads, attitudes towards social media ads and the ethical aspect of social media ads on consumers' purchase behaviour come to the fore as an essential research topic. With the increase in the number of studies in this field, meta-analysis studies have also been carried out. For instance, in their meta-analysis, Ibrahim, Aljarah & Ababneh (2020: 544) found a positive relationship between social media marketing activities and purchase intention. Balakrishnan, Dahnil & Yi (2014: 177) found that social media effectively promoted product purchase intention and brand loyalty. In addition, it has been observed that many studies have been conducted examining the relationship between consumers' attitudes towards social media and their purchasing intentions, which is the main subject of our study (Moore and Rodgers, 2005: 10; Zhafirah, 2019: 1024; Yaakop, Anuar & Omar., 2013: 154; Ramnarain and Govender, 2013: 1885; Keyzer, Dens & Pelsmacker, 2015: 126; Jothi and Gaffoor, 2017: 576; Kim and Huh; 2017: 92; Kumar, 2017: 1; Alalwan, 2018: 65; Indrabrata and Balqiah, 2020: 62; Weismueller, Harrigan, Wang & Soutar, 2020: 160; Isip and Lacap, 2021: 76). In this context, it is aimed to determine the effects of ad credibility, attitudes towards social media ads, perceived personalisation and ethics of social media ads on shopping intention through social media in that study. In addition, the moderating effect of demographic variables such as gender, age and education level on this effect was investigated.

Literature review

Social media and social media marketing

Social media, which is a concept that has entered our lives as a result of the technological revolution in the world, is defined as online tools where content, ideas, perspectives and media can be shared (Santosa, 2020: 1). However, many definitions have been made since the concept of social media emerged. Some of these are as follows: Social media is all internet-based structures based on the user-centred content production and modification of technological and ideological configurations on Web 2.0 (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010: 61). In another definition, social media is social networking sites that allow internet users to communicate online based on activities such as content sharing and personal comments (Appel, Grewal, Hadi & Stephen, 2020: 79).

Marketing dynamics are very different from 20 years ago. The preferences of today's consumers are shaped according to the product's existence in social media, according to the likes of other consumers to use the product or find an environment where they can freely express their opinions (Hanna, Rohm & Crittenden, 2011: 268). The increasing use of social media tools has accelerated the development of social media marketing, thanks to the low cost of advertising in this medium. It is a place where consumers' personal information is kept and stored. It facilitates communication between the business and the customer (Aydın, 2018: 54). Today, hundreds of social media tools continue to exist. However, when we look at the most used social media tools among them, it has been observed that social media tools such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, WeChat, TikTok etc., stand out. According to the Hootsuite 2022 report on the internet and social media usage globally, the first three social media platforms that stand out in terms of active user numbers are Facebook with 2.91 billion users, Youtube with 2.56 billion users, and Instagram with 1.47 billion users. According to the report, social media platforms such as Douyin, Weibo, Snapchat, Twitter, Pinterest also have many users (Hootsuite 2022). A significant contribution of social media tools to marketing is that they have a function that makes users' likes, opinions, wishes and expectations clear (De Vries, Gensler & Leeflang, 2012: 83). It has been revealed that these social media behaviours offer essential opportunities for marketing strategies. It has been observed that these social media behaviours can be used to support and advocate brands or products (Van Meter, Grisaffe & Chonko, 2015: 70). This feature, which distinguishes social media tools from other marketing tools, allowed social media users to express their opinions about each other and the products and services they use and to share their experiences (Chitra and Kalaiselvi, 2021: 2131). Thanks to these channels, hundreds of businesses advertise their products and communicate directly with their customers every day.

Attitude towards social media advertising

In its most general definition, advertising is the publication of persuasive messages for any product, service and idea through various media, paid for by a particular person or organisation (Arens, Weigold & Arens, 2009: 7). The definition made by the American Marketing Association (AMA) is: "Advertising is the placement of announcements and messages in time or space by business firms, nonprofit organisations, government agencies, and individuals who seek to inform and persuade members of a particular target market or audience regarding their products, services, organisations, or ideas." (Elden, 2015: 136-137). Advertisements that can be defined in many ways have some key features. In particular, the frequent repetition of the messages to be given and their appeal to a broad audience adds value to the advertisement. Therefore, advertisements show an expansionist feature. It also allows companies and brands to exaggerate their products and services using sound, image, and colour. Consequently, they have a strengthened expressiveness. On the other hand, advertisements are impersonal, and people do not feel obligated to respond or show interest in them (Kotler and Keller, 2009: 527).

When exposed to the commercial, the consumer's willingness to respond positively or adversely to the impulses provided in the advertisement is known as advertising attitude (MacKenzie and Lutz, 1989: 51). Advertising attitude, just like brand attitude, consists of three components: cognitive, behavioural and emotional. While the mental component reflects the thoughts and evaluations of the consumers about the advertised product or service, the behavioural part expresses the consumers' desire to act positively or negatively towards the advertised product or service (De Pelsmacker, Geuens, & Van den Bergh, 2001: 63).

Advertising in social media has recently gained weight in the field of marketing. Social media advertising has surpassed traditional media (Natarajan, Balasubramanian, Balakrishnan & Manickavasagam, 2013: 697). Social media advertisements are an essential promotional tool for businesses in intense competition today (Weinberg, 2009: 3). Social media ads are a new platform for marketers to increase brand value and create awareness (Jerome, Shan & Khong, 2010: 111). This situation is closely related to the viewpoints and attitudes of the users towards these advertisements.

For this reason, it is observed that many studies have been carried out examining consumers' attitudes towards social media advertisements. In this context, Chung and Austria (2010: 581) surveyed to reveal the factors related to attitudes towards social media marketing messages and the gratification of using social media. As a result of the study, the researchers have found that attitudes toward social media ads are closely related to social media information and interaction gratifications. However, these researchers found that attitudes toward social media ads are not related to entertainment gratification. Besides, positive social media ads increase the hedonic values of online shoppers. Boateng and Oke (2015: 248) tried to examine the factors determining consumers' attitudes towards social media advertising in their study. They found that credibility, value corruption, materialism and corporate reputation affect consumers' attitudes towards social media advertising. Eid, Nusairat, Alkailani & Al-Ghadeer (2020: 2361) investigated customer views regarding social media advertisements and discovered that design elements, entertainment, engagement, and informativeness of commercials had the most influence on consumer opinions. Zhafirah (2019: 1024) also examined the effect of the positive attitudes of individuals who actively use social media on purchasing behaviour. She found a positive and robust relationship between positive participant attitude towards the content of Facebook ads and participant purchasing behaviour. In addition, they concluded that as the participants' attention towards Facebook ads increases, their positive attitudes towards content and visuality also increase, which in turn positively affects the participant's attitude towards Facebook ads. Ramnarain and Govender (2013: 1885) conducted a study to reveal the effect of social media on the purchasing behaviour of young consumers. It was discovered that 92 per cent of the participants utilise social media to gain information and promote products, and the information they obtain influences their purchasing decisions directly or indirectly. As a result, when we examine the research, we may conclude that consumers' perceptions of social media advertisements are influenced by information, amusement, ad legitimacy, and ad design. It can be noted that these attitudes can be practical on the purchasing behaviour of consumers.

Ethics in social media advertising

Ethics stands out as a subject that has been discussed and tried to be defined throughout history. It has been observed that many thinkers, researchers and writers have defined this concept in various ways since ancient times. Today's ethics is based on the old Greek word "ethos". Ethos has a meaning of behaviour and character (Pojman, 2001: 2; Murphy, Laczniaik & Harris, 2016: 6 2009: 163). Ethics is a topic discussed in every field of life today, and social media ethics has started to be addressed with the spread of social media. While the ethical problems in the traditional media continue, ethical issues have emerged in new media and started to come to the fore, as the new media and the social media enter

people's lives and even take place in the middle of their lives. In this context, it is seen that social media advertisements also cause ethical problems. Advertisements on social media can be published much more freely and without rules than in traditional media. At the same time, advertising in conventional media is done within the framework of specific regulations. Therefore, the user is continuously exposed to ad content. The user has to watch that ad to reach the information they want or to come to the page they want. For example, when entering the web page of a news site, the first thing the user sees is advertisements such as a car or shoes-clothing, etc. Although users want to close these ads, which last for several seconds, they watch the ad until the closed window (Goldfarb and Tucker, 2011: 393). This situation reveals the imposition of advertisements on individuals and can disturb users. For this reason, it is seen that social media advertisements are discussed in terms of ethics.

The primary income sources of commercial websites are mainly online ads. In this sense, delivering advertisements to as many internet users as possible becomes one of the direct purposes of the website and social media. False and sensational labelling and captioning are often used on social media to achieve this goal. In this way, social media users browsing the internet, wondering about the shocking tag or title they encounter, open the link and learn what the content on that page is while viewing many advertisements on their computer (O'Sullivan-Gavin and Amazeen, 2016: 9; Baglione and Tucci, 2019: 143). On the other hand, differences between the content of advertisements and products may also emerge as a particular ethical problem and may affect the behaviour of consumers. For instance, Ferreira, Michaelidou, Moraes & McGrath (2017: 183) found that if consumers' perceptions of advertisement are controversial, consumers' ad avoidance and avoidance behaviour is moderated by consumers' ethical judgment of consumers.

Perceived personalisation

Advertisements without personalisation are broadcast on traditional television, radio and newspapers. Advertising messages are transmitted to millions of people through these advertising channels. The rapid increase in messages sent to users through different channels undoubtedly makes consumers' attitudes towards advertisements negative (Mittal, 1994: 35). It seems possible that these negativities, which we can see as a side effect of mass communication, can be overcome with a personalised and personalised touch in digital media. Consumers are more positive and open to personalised messages (DeZoysa, 2002: 8; Kim and Han, 2014: 256; Shanahan, Tran & Taylor, 2019: 57)). In their research, Kim and Han (2014: 256) looked into the impact of personalisation on social media advertising. According to the researchers, personalisation improved the informativeness, believability, and pleasure of the advertising message. On the other hand, they discovered that personalisation hurts irritation. Shanahan et al. (2019: 57) found that perceived personalisation positively impacts consumer brand engagement and attachment, increasing perceived quality and brand loyalty of brands advertising on Facebook. In addition, users tend to share their personal information to receive more relevant messages to their interests. (Chen and Hsieh, 2012: 543).

Different tools are used in social networking sites to make personalisation. Popular platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Linked In allow advertisers to segment and target audiences based on their users' demographic and psychographic features. Some options can prevent ads from appearing on the buyer side of the ad, although they are more limited (Nasir, Keserel, Surgit & Nalbant 2021: 1; Serrano-Malebrán and Arenas-Gaitán, 2021: 1). Personalising the advertisements by the consumers will enable the ad to provide more appropriate, timely and valuable information for the buyer. The fact that the given message is in the area of interest of the people will enable the message and the company to be perceived as more reliable. This will also make the buyer feel less uncomfortable (Aydin, 2018: 54).

Ad credibility

Ad credibility, conceptualised by MacKenzie and Lutz (1989: 51), is a concept related to the target audience's perceptions about the accuracy and credibility of the advertisement. The audience's perception of the ad's claim is based on trust, trust in the advertiser (the advertiser's belief in honesty), and the perceived consistency of the ad's claim. This structure is generally used in studies to measure ad credibility. However, according to Soh (2006: 124), credibility in an advertisement also includes elements that reflect the quality of the information conveyed in the ad (true, accurate, precise and complete, etc.), and the credibility component also demonstrates the consumer's evaluation of the informational value of the advertisement. Therefore, considering all the elements that make up the credibility component, it can be said that credibility refers to the consumer's inclusive evaluation of the ethical principles of advertising, including honesty, reliability and the quality of the information presented in the advertisement. In other words, it can be said that credibility in the context of advertising is the evaluation of ethical standards and the quality of the information conveyed in

advertising. Ad credibility is the degree to which the consumer can correctly and honestly perceive the claims made about the brand in the advertisement (Kavanoor, Grewal & Blodgett, 1997: 219).

Ad credibility can be affected by many variables. However, ad credibility is much more affected by the credibility of the advertiser and the message carrier (Gotlieb and Sarel, 1991: 38; Choi and Rifon, 2002: 20). Ad credibility is directly related to how the consumer perceives the advertiser or seller as a reliable source of information (Wu, Huang, Li, Bortree, Yang, Xiao & Wang, 2016: 1492). The advertiser's credibility can instil confidence in the consumer about the brand's reputation, integrity, and goodwill. The reliability of advertising is evaluated through the content conveyed by the advertisement (Choi and Rifon, 2002: 12).

Hypotheses and research model

The relationship between social shopping intention and ad credibility

Studies investigating the credibility of ads published on social media have found a significant positive relationship between consumer purchasing behaviour and ad credibility. For example, Weismueller et al. (2020: 160) determined that source credibility in social media ads impacts consumer purchase intention. In this context, it is seen that influencers are used primarily to increase the credibility of advertisements. However, it is seen that studies are showing that the credibility of social media advertisements does not affect consumer behaviour (Yaakop et al., 2013: 154). Moore and Rodgers (2005: 10), on the other hand, showed that if there is low trust in advertisements, purchasing behaviour is negatively affected. Kumar (2017: 1) also found that when the confidence in social media advertisements increases, the purchasing behaviour of consumers is positively affected. In line with these studies, the "H1: Ad credibility affects social shopping intention positively" hypothesis was developed.

The relationship between social shopping intention and ethics of social media advertising

It can be stated that the ethics of social media advertisements are effective in users' purchasing behaviour. For example, Isip and Lacap (2021: 76) found that when the perceived risk in social media advertisements increases and users' trust decreases, their purchasing behaviour is negatively affected. While it is true that morally questionable marketing on social media erode consumer trust and raise perceived risk, it is also true that the belief that social media advertisements include accurate information has a favourable impact on purchase behaviour. (Jothi and Gaffoor, 2017: 576). As a result, it can be stated that social media ethics affect the purchasing behaviour of consumers in social media. In line with these studies, the "H2: Ethics of social media advertising affects social shopping intention positively" hypothesis was developed.

The relationship between social shopping intention and perceived personalisation

Personalisation is essential for social media ads. Because, as much as possible in social media ads, personalised ads specific to target groups positively affect advertising effectiveness (Aydn, 2018: 54). According to Keyzer et al. (2015: 126), consumers who perceive an advertisement in a social communication network more personally will have a more positive attitude towards the brand and be more willing to click on the ad. Because according to the results of this research, attitudes towards personalised advertisements directly affect purchasing behaviour. According to Kim and Huh (2017: 92), consumer reactions to tailored advertisements had a significant and favourable impact on the amount of interest in perceived commercials, whereas privacy concerns had a weak and negative impact. The "H3: Perceived personalisation affects social shopping intention positively" hypothesis was developed in line with these studies.

The relationship between social shopping intention and attitude towards social media advertising

Social media has significant effects at every stage of the consumer decision-making process and affects consumers' general views and attitudes (Mangold and Faulds, 2009: 357). Therefore, consumer attitudes towards social media advertisements can also affect shopping intention on social media. Because Isip and Lacap (2021: 76), Boateng and Okeo (2015: 248) and Wassan and Yousaf (2017: 1) revealed in their respective studies that consumers' attitudes towards social media advertisements affect consumer behaviour. In line with these studies, the "H4: Attitude towards social media advertising affects social shopping intention positively" hypothesis was developed.

The relationship between social shopping intention and demographic features

It is thought that demographic variables like education level, age, and gender effectively affect the relationship between the variables expressed in the above hypotheses. Because studies have shown that these elements positively impact the association between social media marketing and purchase behaviour (Kataria, 2017: 1; Sharma and Parmar, 2018: 45). In line with these studies, the "H5: Gender

has a moderator role in these relationships", "H6: Age has a moderator role in these relationships", and "H7: Educational status has a moderator role in these relationships" hypotheses were developed.

The research model is presented in Figure 1.

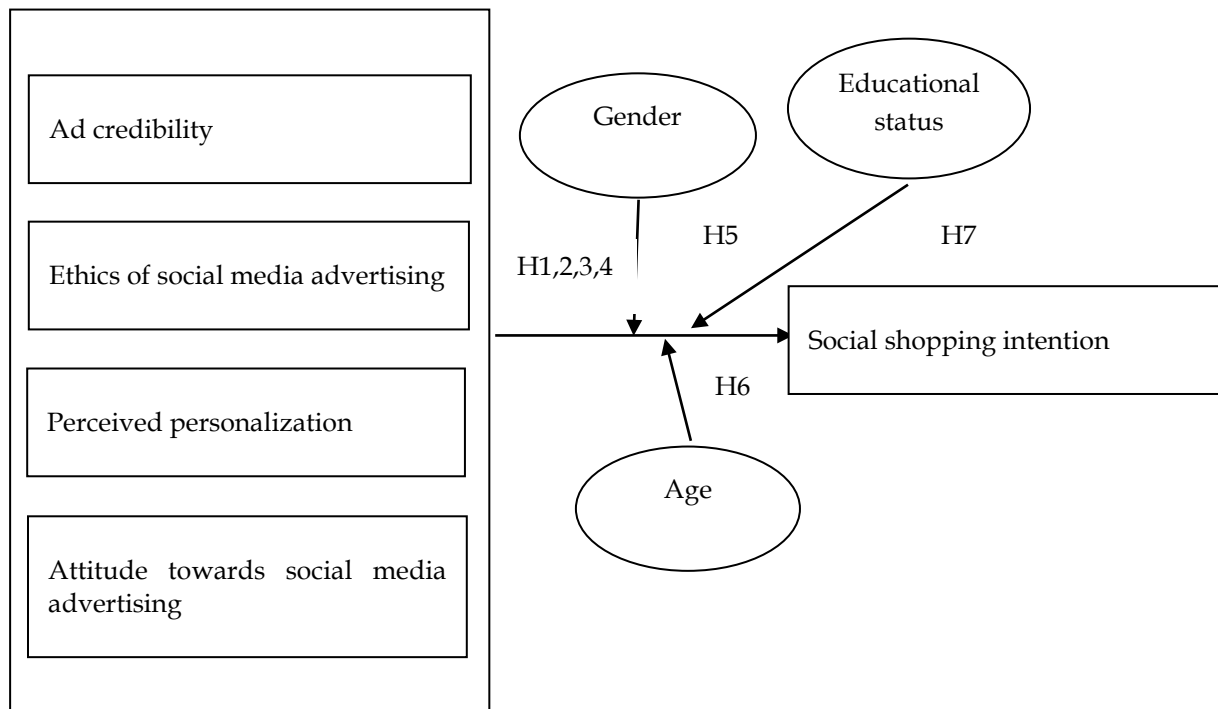


Figure 1: Research Model

Source: Developed by the author

Methodology

Data collection method and scales used

The research population consists of social media users aged 18 and above who live in Kocaeli. Data were collected face-to-face and online in June 2018. The convenience sampling method was preferred in the research. First, a pilot study was conducted with 50 participants and validity and reliability tests. In line with the results obtained from the pilot test, minor adjustments were made, and the final form of the questionnaire was prepared. After the pilot study, the questionnaires were applied to 439 people. The incomplete and incorrectly filled questionnaires were eliminated, and 421 questionnaires were evaluated. The statements of the "Ad credibility" and "Perceived personalisation" variables were adapted from Tran (2017) 's, the ones of the "Ethics of social media advertising" variable from Baglione, Harcar and Spillan (2017) 's, the ones of the "Attitude towards social media advertising" from Shao, Ross and Grace (2015) 's and the ones of the "Social shopping intention" from Li (2019) 's studies to that study. SPSS 22 and AMOS 24 were preferred to analyse the data obtained through the questionnaires. Descriptive statistics and hierarchical regression analyses were used in the research. Ethics committee approval was received for this study from Kocaeli University, Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee on 23/01/2022 and 175828 document number.

Limitations of the research

The research is limited to the participants living in Kocaeli and therefore cannot be generalised for the whole of Turkey.

Data analyses

Demographic and social media usage characteristics of participants

Of the participants, 54,9% of them are females, and 45,1% of them are males. According to their marital status, 61,5% are single, and 38,5% are married. Most of the participants belong to the middle-income group. According to job status, private sector employees are in the majority. Most of the participants have an educational level higher than high school education. As for social media usage characteristics, they use Instagram and Facebook, spend 2-3 hours on social media and have about 251-500 friends on social media the most. The mean for the participants' age is 29,55±10,27.

Table 1: Demographic and Social Media Usage Characteristics of Participants

| Variable | f | % | Variable | f | % |
|--|----------|----------|--|----------|----------|
| Gender | | | Marital status | | |
| Female | 231 | 54,9 | Married | 162 | 38,5 |
| Male | 190 | 45,1 | Single | 259 | 61,5 |
| Socio-economic status | f | % | Job Status | f | % |
| Lower income group | 13 | 3,1 | Student | 145 | 34,5 |
| Middle-lower income group | 61 | 14,5 | Private sector employee | 171 | 40,7 |
| Middle income group | 266 | 63,2 | Public sector employee | 46 | 10,9 |
| Middle-upper income group | 72 | 17,1 | Retired | 12 | 2,7 |
| Upper income group | 9 | 2,1 | Housewife | 47 | 11,2 |
| Monthly income | f | % | Number of friends on social media | f | % |
| 0-2.000 TL | 101 | 24,0 | 1-100 | 76 | 18,1 |
| 2.001-4.000 TL | 213 | 50,6 | 101-250 | 111 | 26,4 |
| 4.001-6.000 TL | 70 | 16,6 | 251-500 | 124 | 29,5 |
| 6.001-8.000 TL | 17 | 4,1 | 501-750 | 65 | 15,4 |
| 8.001-10.000 TL | 8 | 1,9 | 751-1000 | 16 | 3,8 |
| 10.001 TL and higher | 12 | 2,8 | 1001 and higher | 29 | 6,9 |
| Educational status | f | % | Daily time spent on social media | f | % |
| Primary school | 42 | 10,0 | 0-1 hour | 69 | 16,4 |
| High school | 86 | 20,4 | 2-3 hours | 141 | 33,5 |
| Associate degree | 175 | 41,6 | 4-5 hours | 117 | 27,8 |
| Bachelor's degree | 96 | 22,8 | 6-7 hours | 57 | 13,5 |
| Master's degree and higher | 22 | 5,2 | 8 hours and more | 37 | 8,8 |
| Most used social media platform | f | % | | | |
| Instagram | 173 | 41,1 | | | |
| Facebook | 137 | 32,5 | | | |
| Youtube | 30 | 7,1 | | | |
| Google plus | 25 | 5,9 | | | |
| Other | 18 | 4,4 | | | |
| Twitter | 16 | 3,8 | | | |
| Linkedin | 9 | 2,1 | | | |
| Printest | 7 | 1,7 | | | |
| Forums | 6 | 1,4 | | | |
| N=421 | | | | | |

Scales' validity

CFA (confirmatory factor analysis) was performed on the scales in the study for validity. "Maximum likelihood method" was selected while performing CFA. The standardised regression coefficients obtained for the scale items resulting from CFA are as in Table 2. One thing of the "Ethics of social media advertising" scale (Advertising on social media violates our traditions) was removed because of having a very low coefficient. As seen in the CFA results in Table 2, Items belonging to each scale are combined under a factor.

Table 2: Standardised Regression Coefficients Obtained From CFA

| Scale | CFA |
|---|-------|
| <i>Ad Credibility</i> | |
| 1. I use personalised advertising on social media as a reference for purchasing. | 0,803 |
| 2. I trust personalised advertising on social media. | 0,922 |
| 3. The content provided by personalised advertising on social media is credible. | 0,850 |
| <i>Ethics of social media advertising</i> | |
| 1. Advertising on social media is fair. | 0,770 |
| 2. (R) Advertising on social media is not appropriate. | 0,825 |
| 3. Advertising on social media is acceptable. | 0,795 |
| 4. Advertising on social media is morally right. | 0,687 |
| 5. Advertising on social media is culturally acceptable. | 0,509 |
| <i>Perceived personalisation</i> | |
| 1. Personalised advertising on social media makes buying recommendations that comply with my needs. | 0,640 |
| 2. Personalised advertising on social media makes it easy to order tailor-made products for me. | 0,791 |
| 3. Personalised advertising on social media is tailored to my situation. | 0,875 |
| 4. Personalised advertising on social media makes me think I am a unique customer. | 0,806 |
| 5. Personalised advertising on social media is customised to my needs. | 0,830 |
| <i>Attitude towards social media advertising</i> | |
| 1. Generally, social media advertising is interesting. | 0,819 |
| 2. Generally, social media advertising is entertaining. | 0,928 |
| 3. Generally, social media advertising is informative. | 0,825 |
| 4. Generally, social media advertising is convincing. | 0,664 |
| <i>Social shopping intention</i> | |
| 1. I find it safe to shop through social media. | 0,871 |
| 2. Possible risks in shopping on social media are minimised. | 0,866 |
| 3. Overall, I feel shopping on social media is as safe as e-commerce. | 0,849 |

Note: (R) Reverse coded.

The results of CFA are also presented in Figure 2.

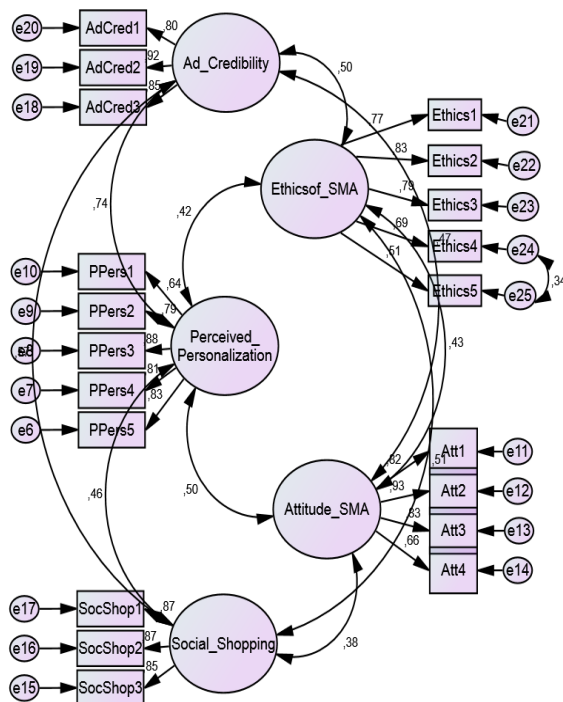


Figure 2: The results of CFA

Fit indices for CFA are as in Table 3. Table 3, CMIN/SD, GFI, AGFI, NFI and RMSEA indices are acceptable. CFI and NNFI are slightly below the excellent range, and this situation can be ignored.

Table 3: Fit Indices for CFA

| Fit Measure | Model Fit | Acceptance Range |
|-------------|-----------|------------------------------|
| CMIN/SD | 2,793 | Acceptable < 3, Good < 2 |
| GFI | 0,902 | Acceptable >0,90, Good >0,95 |
| AGFI | 0,870 | Acceptable >0,85, Good >0,90 |
| CFI | 0,948 | Acceptable >0,95, Good >0,97 |
| NNFI | 0,948 | Acceptable >0,95, Good >0,97 |
| NFI | 0,922 | Acceptable >0,90, Good >0,95 |
| RMSEA | 0,078 | Acceptable <0,08, Good <0,05 |

Source: Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger and Müller (2003)

Three criteria- content, convergent and discriminant validity criteria- were examined for validity. All of the five scales ("Ad credibility", "Ethics of social media advertising", "Perceived personalisation", "Attitude towards social media advertising" and "Social shopping intention") used in the research were published in scientific publications before. Thus, it can be said that all of the five scales provide content validity (Hair, Babin, Black and Anderson, 2010).

As a result of the CFA, the items in the scales were combined under the structure they belong to, and it was seen that there was a correlation between the things combined under the same system. Thus, it can be said that convergent validity is ensured for all of the five scales (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988).

As a result of CFA, it is seen that the factors are differentiated from each other. Thus, it can be said that both scales provide discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2010).

Reliability

Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the scales were calculated for reliability. Cronbach's alpha coefficients are as in Table 4. Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) state that Cronbach's alpha coefficient should be above 0,70 to ensure reliability. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient calculated for the "Ad credibility" scale is 0,889, for the "Perceived personalisation" scale is 0,891, for the "Ethics of social media advertising" scale is 0,848, for the "Attitude towards social media advertising" scale is 0,882 and for the "Social shopping intention" scale is 0,897. Thus, it can be said that the scales are reliable.

Table 4: Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients Calculated for Scales

| Scales | Cronbach's Alpha |
|---|------------------|
| Ad credibility | 0,889 |
| Ethics of social media advertising | 0,848 |
| Perceived personalisation | 0,891 |
| Attitude towards social media advertising | 0,882 |
| Social shopping intention | 0,897 |

Correlation analysis and testing research hypotheses with hierarchical regression analysis

Before the correlation analysis, whether the research variables show a normal distribution with the kurtosis and skewness coefficients, it has been determined that the skewness and kurtosis coefficients are between -2 and +2, thus complying with the normal distribution (Mardia, 1985). Therefore, Pearson correlation analysis was used for correlation analysis because the research variables showed normal distribution.

The mean of the age variable was calculated as 29,55, and those aged 29 and below were coded as "1 (Low)", and those over 30 were coded as "2 (High)". The median of the educational status variable was calculated as 3, and associate degree and below participants were coded as "1 (Low)", and

undergraduate and higher participants were coded as "2 (High)". For the gender variable, female participants were coded as "1" and males as "2". The results are as in Table 5.

The most vital relationship with "Social shopping intention" is "Ad credibility", and the connection is positive (+r= 0,510, p<0,01). "Ethics of social media advertising" (+r= 0,472, p<0,01), "Perceived personalisation" (+r= 0,414, p<0,01) and "Attitude towards social media advertising" (+r= 0,354, p<0,01) are other variables with a significant relationship with "Social shopping intention" and the connections are positive.

The relationships between "Social shopping intention" and gender (+r= 0,007, p>0,05), age (+r= 0,021, p>0,05), educational status (+r= 0,005, p> 0,05) are insignificant.

Table 5: Correlation Analysis Results

| Variable | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|-------|-------|---|
| 1. Ad credibility | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 2. Ethics of social media advertising | 0,462** | 1 | | | | | | |
| 3. Perceived personalization | 0,676** | 0,365** | 1 | | | | | |
| 4. Attitude towards social media advertising | 0,456** | 0,398** | 0,464** | 1 | | | | |
| 5. Gender | -0,095 | 0,011 | -0,056 | -0,059 | 1 | | | |
| 6. Age | 0,032 | -0,017 | 0,038 | 0,021 | -0,013 | 1 | | |
| 7. Educational status | 0,076 | 0,018 | 0,061 | 0,090 | 0,100* | 0,033 | 1 | |
| 8. Social shopping intention | 0,510** | 0,472** | 0,414** | 0,354** | 0,007 | 0,021 | 0,005 | 1 |

Note: ** p<0,01, * p<0,05

The hypotheses of the research were tested using hierarchical regression analysis. Ad credibility, ethics of social media advertising, perceived personalisation, attitude towards social media advertising which are the antecedents of social shopping intention, were determined as independent variables. Social shopping intention is the dependent variable of the research. The moderator variables whose effects were examined in the study are gender, age and educational status. To avoid multicollinearity (Edwards and Lambert, 2007), the mean centring process was applied to all independent and moderator variables.

The first step of the created equations included the antecedents of social shopping intention and the moderator variable. Then, in the second step, the interaction of the antecedents of social shopping intention and the moderator variable was observed.

Before hierarchical regression analyses, it was checked whether the assumptions for these analyses were fulfilled. The results regarding the premises are given in Table 6. In Table 6, the VIFs of the variables in the models created are less than five and close to 1. This shows that the developed regression equations do not have multicollinearity problems, and this assumption is met Durbin Watson coefficients in all equations are between 1,5 and 2,5. This situation shows no autocorrelation problem (Sipahi, Yurtkoru and Cinko, 2010). The skewness and kurtosis values of residual values in all equations vary between -2 and +2. This shows that residual values have a normal distribution (Mardia, 1985). The mean of residual values calculated in all models is "0". Thus, it is seen that this assumption is also met (Sipahi et al., 2010).

Table 6: Assumptions for Hierarchical Regression Analysis

| Model | Multicollinearity | | Autocorrelation | Normality of Residuals | | Mean of Residuals |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------|-----------------|------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| | VIFs Range | Tolerance | DW Stat. | Skewness | Kurtosis | |
| 1. Moderator: Gender | 1,014-2,117 | 0,476-0,986 | 1,790 | 0,107 | 0,754 | 0 |
| 2. Moderator: Age | 1,011-2,236 | 0,447-0,988 | 1,802 | 0,047 | 0,818 | 0 |
| 3. Moderator: Educational status | 1,003-2,092 | 0,478-0,997 | 1,785 | 0,089 | 0,856 | 0 |

The results of the hierarchical regression analysis for the equations in which gender was determined as the moderator variable are given in Table 7. As a result of hierarchical regression analysis; at the first step ($\Delta R^2 = 0,342$; p < 0,01); ad credibility ($\beta = 0,301$; p < 0,01), ethics of social media advertising ($\beta = 0,274$; p < 0,01) and attitude towards social media advertising ($\beta = 0,094$; p < 0,05) positively affect social

shopping intention. However, in the second step ($\Delta R^2 = 0,005$; $p > 0,05$), all of the interactions of gender and the whole of independent variables are not significant ($p > 0,05$). Thus H1, H2, H4 hypotheses were accepted while H3 H5 hypotheses were rejected.

Table 7: Hierarchical Regression Analysis Results for the Equation in Which Gender was Determined as a Moderator Variable

| Variables | Social shopping intention | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|-----------|--------------|----------|----------------|
| | β_1 | β_2 | ΔR^2 | F | R ² |
| 1. Step | | | 0,342** | | |
| Ad credibility | 0,301** | 0,304** | | | |
| Ethics of social media advertising | 0,274** | 0,276** | | | |
| Perceived personalization | 0,078 | 0,081 | | | |
| Attitude towards social media advertising | 0,094* | 0,093* | | | |
| Gender | 0,041 | 0,042 | | 24,282** | 0,347** |
| 2. Step | | | 0,005 | | |
| Gender*Ad credibility | | -0,018 | | | |
| Gender* Ethics of social media advertising | | -0,040 | | | |
| Gender*Perceived personalisation | | 0,085 | | | |
| Gender* Attitude towards social media advertising | | -0,033 | | | |

The results of the hierarchical regression analysis for the equations in which age was determined as the moderator variable are given in Table 8. As a result of hierarchical regression analysis; at the first step ($\Delta R^2 = 0,340$; $p < 0,01$); ad credibility ($\beta = 0,297$; $p < 0,01$), ethics of social media advertising ($\beta = 0,277$; $p < 0,01$) and attitude towards social media advertising ($\beta = 0,093$; $p < 0,05$) positively affect social shopping intention. In the second step ($\Delta R^2 = 0,047$; $p < 0,05$), the interactions of age and ethics of social media advertising ($\beta = -0,093$; $p < 0,05$) and attitude towards social media advertising ($\beta = 0,109$; $p < 0,05$) are significant. When the coefficients of the statistically significant interactions are examined, it is seen that the age ethics of the social media advertising coefficient is negative. In contrast, the age-attitude towards social media advertising interaction coefficient is positive. That means the positive relationship between social shopping intention and ethics of social media advertising is stronger in participants 29 years and under, while the positive relationship between social shopping intention and attitude towards social media advertising is stronger in participants 30 years and above. Thus H1, H2, H4 hypotheses were accepted while the H3 hypothesis was rejected, and the H6 hypothesis was partly accepted.

Table 8: Hierarchical Regression Analysis Results for the Equation in Which Age was Determined as a Moderator Variable

| Variables | Social shopping intention | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|-----------|--------------|----------|----------------|
| | β_1 | β_2 | ΔR^2 | F | R ² |
| 1. Step | | | 0,340** | | |
| Ad credibility | 0,297** | 0,290** | | | |
| Ethics of social media advertising | 0,277** | 0,261** | | | |
| Perceived personalization | 0,079 | 0,084 | | | |
| Attitude towards social media advertising | 0,093 * | 0,094* | | | |
| Age | -0,018 | -0,021 | | 25,992** | 0,387** |
| 2. Step | | | 0,047* | | |
| Age*Ad credibility | | -0,060 | | | |
| Age* Ethics of social media advertising | | -0,093* | | | |
| Age*Perceived personalisation | | 0,024 | | | |
| Age* Attitude towards social media advertising | | 0,109* | | | |

The results of the hierarchical regression analysis for the equations in which the educational status was determined as the moderator variable are given in Table 9. As a result of hierarchical regression analysis; at the first step ($\Delta R^2 = 0,340$; $p < 0,01$); ad credibility ($\beta = 0,296$; $p < 0,01$), ethics of social media advertising ($\beta = 0,277$; $p < 0,01$) and attitude towards social media advertising ($\beta = 0,092$; $p < 0,05$) positively affect social shopping intention. In the second step ($\Delta R^2 = 0,059$; $p < 0,05$), the interactions of educational status and ad credibility ($\beta = 0,096$; $p < 0,05$), attitude towards social media advertising ($\beta = -0,133$; $p < 0,05$) are significant. When the coefficients of the statistically significant interactions are examined, it is seen that the educational status-ad credibility interaction coefficient is positive. In contrast, the educational status-attitude towards social media advertising interaction coefficient is negative. That means the positive relationship between social shopping intention and ad credibility is stronger in participants with bachelor's degrees and higher. The positive relationship between social shopping intention and attitude towards social media advertising is stronger in participants with associate degrees and lower. Thus H1, H2, H4 hypotheses were accepted while the H3 hypothesis was rejected, and the H7 hypothesis was partly accepted.

Table 9: Hierarchical Regression Analysis Results for the Equation in Which Educational Status was Determined as a Moderator Variable

| Variables | Social shopping intention | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|-----------|--------------|----------|----------------|
| | β_1 | β_2 | ΔR^2 | F | R ² |
| 1. Step | | | 0,340** | | |
| Ad credibility | 0,296** | 0,291** | | | |
| Ethics of social media advertising | 0,277** | 0,260** | | | |
| Perceived personalization | 0,079 | 0,082 | | | |
| Attitude towards social media advertising | 0,092* | 0,096* | | | |
| Educational status | -0,014 | -0,018 | | 26,319** | 0,399** |
| 2. Step | | | 0,059 | | |
| Educational status *Ad credibility | | 0,096* | | | |
| Educational status *Ethics of social media advertising | | 0,036 | | | |
| Educational status *Perceived personalisation | | 0,001 | | | |
| Educational status *Attitude towards social media advertising | | -0,133* | | | |

Conclusion and recommendations

In this study, the effect of ad credibility, ethics of social media advertising, perceived personalisation and attitude towards social media advertising on social shopping intention has been examined, and quantitative research has been carried out. Some results and inferences from the analysis have been reached, and these are explained below.

The study results reveal that ad credibility, ethics of social media advertising and attitude towards social media advertising positively affect social shopping intention. When the literature is examined, it is seen that similar results are obtained. For instance, Zhafirah (2019: 1024) and Alalwan (2018: 65) found a positive, significant and robust relationship between positive attitude towards social media ads and participant purchasing behaviour. Ramnarain and Govender (2013: 1885) found social media attitude of people directly or indirectly affects their purchasing decisions. It is observed that similar results have been obtained in studies on social media ethics. Isip and Lacap (2021: 76) revealed that when the perceived risk in social media advertisements increases and users' trust decreases, their purchasing behaviour is negatively affected. In another study related to social media ethics, Jothi and Gaffoor (2017: 576) found that the perception that social media ads contain correct information positively affects purchasing behaviour. In the case of perceived personalisation, similar results have been observed in the literature. For example, Keyzer et al. (2015: 126) found that consumers with more perceived personalisation have a more positive attitude towards the product. Indrabrata and Balqiah (2020: 62) found that perceived personalisation in social media ads positively affects brand loyalty. Kim and Huh (2017: 92) found that consumer reactions to personalised ads affect the level of interest towards perceived advertisements strongly and positively. In our study, it has been determined that advertising reliability has a positive effect on purchase intention. It is observed that similar results have been obtained in the literature. For instance, Weismueller et al. (2020: 160) determined that source credibility

in social media ads has a significant positive impact on consumer purchase intention. Similarly, Moore and Rodgers (2005: 10) showed that if there is low trust in advertisements, purchasing behaviour is negatively affected. Kumar (2017: 1) also found that credibility in social media advertisements and the purchasing behaviour of consumers have a significant positive relationship. Apart from these results, Yaakop et al. (2013: 154) found that the credibility of social media advertisements does not affect consumer behaviour. In their study, İnce and Bozyiğit (2018: 39) determined that the entertainment attitude towards Instagram ads in the Y generation affects the pre-purchase, while the entertainment and disturbing attitudes affect the post-purchase consumer behaviours. Researchers have also found that both entertainment and disturbing attitudes affect pre-and post-purchase behaviours in the Z generation. Kayapınar, Kayapınar & Tan (2017: 472) found that the variables of entertainment and information have a direct effect on the attitude towards the brand, so the more the consumers find the advertisements on social media entertaining and informative, the more they develop a positive perception by displaying a positive attitude towards the brand of the advertised product or service. However, it was determined that the trust variable did not affect the attitude towards the brand. Researchers have determined that if the attitude towards the brand is positive, consumers will re-purchase that product in the future.

Furthermore, participants aged 29 and younger have a stronger positive relationship between social shopping intention and social media advertising ethics. In contrast, participants aged 30 and older have a stronger positive relationship between social shopping intention and attitude toward social media advertising. While participants with a bachelor's degree or higher education have a stronger positive relationship between social shopping intention and credibility, associate degree and lower-level participants have a stronger positive relationship between social shopping intention and attitude toward social media advertising.

Our study shows that the most critical factors affecting the social shopping intention of consumers are ad credibility, ethics of social media advertising and attitude towards social media advertising, respectively. As it can be understood from here, it is more important than social media advertisements are credible and comply with ethical values rather than being attractive, entertaining, informative and convincing. This is a situation that should be taken into account by businesses. In this context, it is necessary to pay attention to the source credibility in social media and always share correct information in advertisements to increase ad credibility.

In addition, it is considered that it would be beneficial for companies that want to increase their sales through social media to develop different strategies according to the demographic characteristics of consumers. In line with the results obtained in the research, it is necessary to emphasise the ethics of social media advertising for consumers aged 29 or younger. For consumers aged 30 or older, it's more important for ads to be engaging, entertaining, informative, and believable. Customers with a bachelor's degree or higher education value advertising reliability more than those with a high school diploma. At the same time, it is more important for ads to be interesting, entertaining, informative and convincing for customers with associate degrees and lower. Businesses can learn their customers' demographic features via an online survey on their social media platform and thus develop targeted personalised ads. For this reason, it is thought that segmentation and personalisation of advertisements in social media according to the demographic characteristics of consumers will provide target-oriented solutions.

The study is done with social media users aged 18 and above in Kocaeli. In the future, similar studies can be done with social media users living in different regions who are loyal customers of only one unique social media platform. Therefore, other variables may be used in the research model.

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