

## The Influence of Beliefs on Attitudes and Behavior Toward Social Media Advertising: The Mediating Role of Attitudes Between Beliefs and Behavior

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### ABSTRACT

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**Purpose** – Considering the increasing usage of social media channels in Türkiye, this study aimed to contribute to the literature and guide marketing people about factors influencing Turkish customers' attitudes and behavior towards social media advertising to increase the efficiency of advertisements. Furthermore, the mediating effect of attitudes between beliefs and behavior was also questioned in this study.

**Design/methodology/approach** – A descriptive research method was conducted in this empirical study, with the participation of 311 individuals. A field study was performed via an online questionnaire, including Pollay and Mittal's original scale for traditional media channels' advertising, Wolin et al.'s adopted seven beliefs-factors scale for web advertising, and Wolin's attitudes and behavior measures. Hypotheses were constructed, and a model was developed to be tested with structural equation modeling in AMOS and SPSS 21 to clarify personal and societal beliefs' direct and indirect influences on attitudes and behavior.

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**Findings** – Personal factors influenced both attitudes and behavior toward social media advertising. Meanwhile, attitudes mediated the relationship between personal indicators (hedonic motivation, social role, and image) and behavior. In contrast, attitudes did not show a mediating effect between the link of product information and behavior.

**Discussion** – Personal dimensions of seven belief factors prominently stood out as a result of this study. Marketing people should consider customers' beliefs of hedonic motivation, social roles, and images and try to express essential information about advertised products on social media channels.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Social media has become an essential and indispensable part of developing and renewing communication technologies for the last two digital decades.

Social media technology allows consumers to act within a vast network. Intended messages to target audiences can be effectively and quickly spread on social media channels. The distinctive feature of social media communication from traditional channels is the realization of targeted and potential contacts separately from the process and place (Gülner and Balcı, 2011). Moreover, the introduction of web 2.0, which brought second-generation internet services like social media platforms, permitted two-sided information sharing. Traditional communication tools transmit the message from a certain point to the selected audience. In contrast, social media's mutual communication and interaction feature provide potential buyers with a precious feedback opportunity through the same channel (Kara, 2013). Development and changes in media channels brought new methods to marketing management, like social media marketing as an integral part of today's holistic communication system.

One of the most critical features of social media marketing is the possibility of continuous updates, extensive group utilization, and total shares. Numerous direct contacts with a large size of customers at a lower cost than traditional instruments are opportunities provided by social media (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). Social networks are indispensable for today's organizations to express their messages, promote goods and services, and empower their brands. Social media marketing has provided brands with significant benefits in marketing communication, providing opportunities for product and service promotion activities, sales promotions, after-

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sales customer communication, and customer loyalty programs. In addition, the digital media created by social media networks allows brands to recognize their customers better.

Meanwhile, social media advertising expenditures have significantly increased over the past twelve months. Global social media ads expenditures exceeded \$150 billion in 2021, representing 33.1 percent of total digital spending. Recent data underlined that 27.6 percent of the sixteen to sixty-four years old audience discover new brands, products, and services through social media ads. This rate differs slightly from the rate of television commercials (31.1 percent). In addition, 31.7 percent of social media investigators said they learned about new brands through an online search. Ads on Instagram stories reached monthly over 1 billion users.

Meanwhile, YouTube ads got 1 in 3 people worldwide, which rises to 37.7 percent of adults aged beyond eighteen. Again, over three-quarters of adults aged beyond eighteen in most Western countries and more than 90 percent of all adults in fourteen countries watched YouTube ads. Furthermore, the social media activities of brands also play a critical role in purchasing behavior. For example, 4 out of 10 internet users visited social networks to search for a product or brand they were involved (www.recrodigital.com, 2022).

Different studies arose about advertising, from traditional to digital media channels. Some works on online advertising studies adopted the conventional web advertising measure. However, the importance of social media advertising has risen significantly in the digital era.

In general, beliefs about advertising influence overall consumer attitudes toward advertising. Advertising has economic and social implications on consumers' attitudes (Bauer and Greyser, 1968).

The most comprehensive meaning of attitudes, which embrace all aspects of personality development, such as individual interest, motives, values, vocational adjustment derived from vocational pursuits, and other phases of one's daily life, was stated by Gronlund (1976).

*"The topic of advertising perceptions which means 'beliefs and attitudes toward advertising,' had considerable attention in the advertising literature because these perceptions of advertising clarified the path from the attitude-toward-the-ad and, conclusively, to consumers' brand attitudes and purchase intentions" (Durvasula et al., 1997: 72).*

Pollay and Mittal (1993) developed a 7- factors model, following Reid and Soley's (1982) and Sandage and Leckenby's (1980) studies. The seven-factors model states that beliefs influence consumer attitudes toward advertising about product information, hedonic (pleasure), and social role and image dimensions. Societal effects include materialism, value corruption, falsity (making no sense), and good for the economy (Pollay and Mittal, 1993). Following that study, an investigation into web advertising was conducted by Wolin et al.(2002), in which Pollay and Mittal's (1993) 7-factors measure was adopted to the web. In the literature, a few studies were based on the seven factors or on some of those determinants to clarify consumers' attitudes toward social media advertising.

Today marketers use different social media platforms to enhance their corporate and brand images. In addition, marketers use social media advertising (e.g., display ads on social networking sites) to persuade users to buy advertisers' products (Neti, 2011). However, despite the rapid global growth of social media and its revolutionary impact on the young generation's attitudes, studies in this area from a marketing communications perspective are still at the exploratory stage in developing countries.

Considering the increasing usage of social media channels in Türkiye, this study aimed to contribute to the literature and guide marketing people about factors influencing Turkish customers' attitudes and behavior towards social media advertising to increase the efficiency of advertisements. Consumers' beliefs about advertising need to be addressed in social media because beliefs influence consumers' attitudes (Bauer and Greyser, 1968; Duncan, 1990) which in turn affects their purchasing and choice behavior (Ambler et al., 2000; Rossiter and Percy, 1996). Unlike previous studies, this work investigated the mediating role of attitudes between beliefs and behavior. The measures were adopted from Pollay and Mittal's (1993) traditional 7-factors and Wolin et al.'s (2002) web-based 7-belief factors scales.

A descriptive study was conducted with an online questionnaire among 311 people selected using a convenience sampling technique. The frequency analysis described the sample. EFA and factor analyses were carried out to shorten the number of variables. Finally, the research model and the hypotheses were tested with SEM.

Following the conceptual framework of this study, the following hypotheses were proposed to be tested.

**H1:** *Seven belief factors influence customers' attitudes toward social media advertising.*

**H2:** *Seven belief factors affect customers' behavior toward social media advertising.*

## 2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1. Personal Uses

#### 2.1.1. Product Information

Firms should offer adequate information about their goods and services to motivate customers to choose their goods, products, and brand. Information senders' attempts to attract customers (Lee and Hong, 2016), the influence of product information on digital commerce and social networking service (SNS) advertising (Gao and Koufaris, 2006; Taylor et al., 2011), as well as in television advertising (Resnik and Bruce, 1977) mentioned in previous studies.

Moreover, following the role of product information on customers' attitudes toward mobile message ads (Phau and Teah, 2009), product information's beneficial influence on consumers' responses to social media advertising was empirically stated (Lee and Hong, 2016). In a collective-oriented economy, customers usually seek product details online and discover "*interpersonal information exchange by simultaneously enhancing social relationships*" (Dao et al., 2014: 275). "*The increasing sophistication of online social networking services such as brand pages have enabled brands to transform passive observers to active participants and collaborators that generate new ideas*" (Carlson et al., 2017: 84). Information-loving consumers appreciate advertising (Arli, 2017).

Meanwhile, previous works found a positive and robust relationship between the quality of information on a website, customers' satisfaction, and retention (Kim and Niehm, 2009; Demirbař et al., 2022).

Customers' curiosity may also result in a good assessment of the commercials and the social media advertisement's informativeness (Zeng et al., 2009). All the above-considered studies underline the effect of sufficient product information in social media advertising in empowering customers' buying behavior, purchasing decisions, and increasing customers' interest in social media ads. Therefore, the following hypotheses were proposed:

**H1a:** *Product information influences customers' attitudes toward social media advertising as a dimension of personal belief factors.*

**H2a:** *Product information as a dimension of the personal belief factors influences customers' behavior towards social media advertising.*

#### 2.1.2. Hedonic Motivation

Social media platforms were described as a new place for people to find entertainment and have fun, and "*customers are more attracted to social media ads due to their creativity and attractiveness levels*" (Alalwan, 2018: 67). According to media uses and gratifications theory, "*consumers actively seek out media to satisfy either utilitarian or hedonic needs.*" Entertaining ads positively affect attitudes toward the ad (Taylor et al., 2011: 260). Intrinsic motivation, in other words, entertainment, influences social media advertising value and customers' attitudes (Shareef et al., 2017). There is also a strong correlation between entertainment and customers' attitude toward social media ads (Jung et al., 2016). Previous investigations (Pollay and Mital, 1993; Ducoffe, 1995; Wolin et al., 2002) pointed out that informativeness and entertainment are the two most robust dimensions of consumers' beliefs about advertising. "*Consumers' various product perceptions such as concept or technology newness, and relative advantage impact their hedonic and utilitarian values*" (Ashraf et al., 2018: 3). Advertising entertainment means its attractiveness, as well as consumers' pleasure and enjoyment from that advertisement. In a virtual environment, pleasant entertainment advertisements satisfy consumers' hedonic needs (Edwards et al., 2002). Thus, hedonic motivation may be crucial in customers' reactions and interest in social media ads. Accordingly, the coming hypotheses were constructed:

**H1b:** *Hedonic motivation as a dimension of the personal belief factors affects customers' attitudes toward social media advertising.*

**H2b:** Hedonic motivation as a dimension of the personal belief factors alters customers' behavior toward social media advertising.

### 2.1.3. Social Role and Image

"Much advertising provides lifestyle imagery, and advertising communication specifies a brand image or personality, the portrayal of typical or idealized users, associated status or prestige, or social reactions to purchase, ownership, and use" (Pollay and Mittal, 1993: 102). Explicit and interactive messages in web advertising enhance the communication of social messages (Wolin et al., 2002). Value expressive impact enhances the self-image associated with a referent celebrity or hero. In contrast, the practical effect "is manifested in an individual's need to comply with expectations of others to achieve rewards or avoid punishment" (Lee and Hong, 2016: 365). "The degree to which consumers perceive a personalized advertisement to be self-related or in some way instrumental in achieving their personal goals and values" (Alalwan, 2018: 69). Sharing knowledge in a virtual community in which "people connect communally without ever meeting, following the development of the internet" (Gruzd et al., 2011: 1295), about social media advertising, with a customer or customer-to-customer, is an entire group action being more influential in shaping consumers' behaviors and raising their interest, compared with other groups (Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2002). Accordingly, the following hypotheses were postulated:

**H1c:** Social role and image as a dimension of the personal belief factors acts on customers' attitudes toward social media advertising.

**H2c:** Social role and image as a dimension of personal belief factors affect customers' behavior toward social media advertising.

## 2.2. Societal Effects

### 2.2.1. Good for the economy

Advertising plays an influential role in increasing consumption, and it facilitates the acceptance of new goods and technologies, fosters employment, lowers the cost of production, creates healthy and fair competition in the market, and results in prudent use of resources, improving the standard of living (Pollay and Mittal, 1993). In addition, social media advertising saves consumers' time. It makes them aware of new goods and products, price reductions or free delivery, extension in distribution, or modifications in goods and services. Like web advertising, consumers "choose within a wide variety of merchandise from home or offices" (Wolin et al., 2002: 92) in social media advertising.

The internet and social media significantly altered peoples' shopping habits (Ramanathan et al., 2017). Social media penetrated through retailing philosophy. It is vital to shape customers' mindsets and reveal actual and potential clients' implicit and explicit needs by attracting their interest. Social media creates sophisticated customers by helping them to "develop new ideas and tactics in searching, evaluating, selecting, and buying products and services" (Wang et al., 2019: 1). Social media is a new channel for attracting and keeping customers (Ayojedi and Kumar, 2019). It also brings "opportunities for businesses to become more attractive" and is well-known universally (Hajli, 2014: 390). Social media advertising "induces positive perception and responses among social networks likely create the worth-of-mouth effect" by raising brand awareness and sales revenue (Lee and Hong, 2016: 360).

On the other hand, the impact of social media advertising can be measured immediately. In case of adverse effects on individuals, it can be compensated and improved in the short run to prevent the business from damaging attack or development. Businesspeople perform social media analytics to evaluate their current position.

Moreover, customers are actively engaging in social media advertising about promotional or free (Wolin et al., 2002) deals in brick-and-mortar and click stores (Ramanathan et al., 2017). This engagement highlights production and stock management planning for those stores. Based on the above statements, the following hypotheses are proposed:

**H1d:** Economical impact as a dimension of the societal belief factors impresses customers' attitudes toward social media advertising.

**H2d:** *Economical impact as a dimension of the societal belief factors acts on customers' behavior toward social media advertising.*

### 2.2.2. Materialism

Materialism is "a set of belief structures that sees consumption as the route to most, if not all, satisfaction" (Pollay and Mittal, 1993: 102). Social media users are "faced with an enticing array of material goods, which may promote commercial concerns resulting in materialism" (Wolin et al., 2002: 93). Another definition is "the importance one puts on acquiring and owning material possession in one's life" (Lee et al., 2022: 84). In social media platforms, "seamlessly blend in everyday life narratives with branded content, thereby influencing a large array of audiences for brand awareness and purchase." Meanwhile, "social media platforms, Instagram particularly, open windows into other users' lives through dynamic visual affordances and have thus been found to promote materialism" (Lee et al., 2022: 78-79).

Materialism is the value placed in one's life on getting and possessing material assets (Lee et al., 2022). Meanwhile, it has seamlessly embedded in regular life narratives with promotional content on social media platforms to influence a wide range of people for brand recognition and purchase. Moreover, social media platforms, particularly Instagram, encourage consumerism since they provide windows into other users' lives through dynamic visual affordances. On the other hand, worldly people and consumers are described as "material possession brings success, happiness, and psychological well-being. Materialistic consumers' perception is higher through social media advertising content. They find reliable brand-related posts and frequently purchase recommended brands" (Lee et al., 2022: 78-85). Related to these findings, two hypotheses were proposed:

**H1e:** *Materialism as a dimension of the societal belief factors impresses customers' attitudes toward social media advertising.*

**H2e:** *Materialism as a dimension of the societal belief factors induces customers' behavior toward social media advertising.*

### 2.2.3. Falsity/No Sense

Besides advertising serving as an information source, "it has potential societal consequences by making commonplace the telling of half-truths and other self-serving deceptiveness justifying cynicism" (Pollay and Mittal, 1993: 103). Like other channel advertising, social media ads also explain magical results by promoting goods and services that encourage the falsity factor (Wolin et al., 2002). Consequently, the following hypotheses were tested.

**H1f:** *Falsity as a dimension of the societal belief factors touches customers' attitudes toward social media advertising.*

**H2f:** *Falsity as a dimension of the societal belief factors acts on customers' behavior toward social media advertising.*

### 2.2.4. Value Corruption

Advertising plays a role in molding society, as social media advertising does. However, sometimes ads can contradict parents' values expected to be installed by their children (Pollay and Mittal, 1993). Hence social media ads may result in this kind of contradiction by ending with users' value corruption as a severe concern that leads them to avoid watching advertising on social media platforms (Wolin et al., 2002). Accordingly, two following hypotheses were constructed:

**H1g:** *Value corruption as a dimension of the societal belief factors deteriorates customers' attitudes toward social media advertising.*

**H2g:** *Value corruption as a dimension of the societal belief factors stirs customers' behavior toward social media advertising.*

## 2.3. Social Media Advertising Behavior: Attitude Impact

Beliefs can be accepted as a precursor to attitudes, which is an antecedent to behavior (Lavidge and Steiner, 1961). Positive attitudes create a positive tendency toward advertising (Smith and Swinyard, 1982; Assmus et al., 1984; Wolin et al., .2002). In this study, Wolin's scales on web advertising were

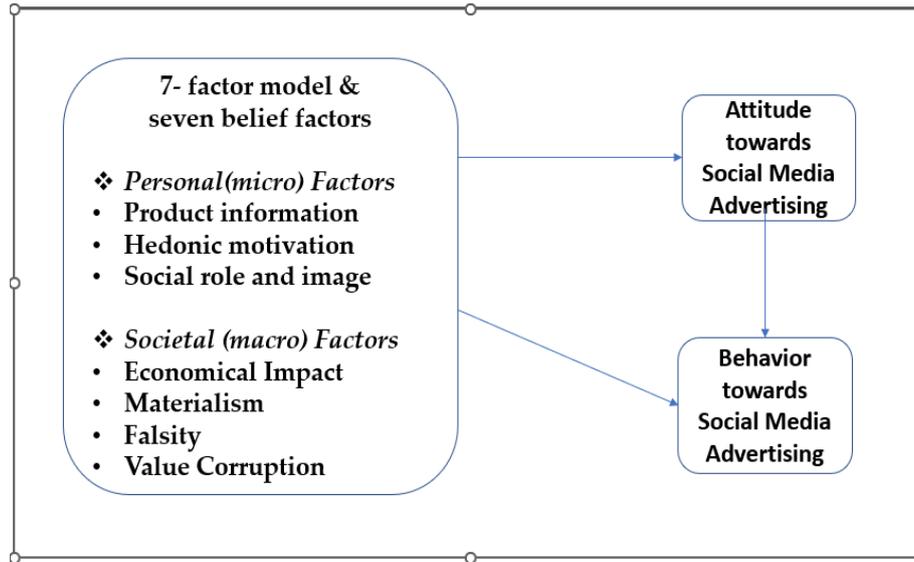
adopted for social media advertising. Furthermore, the mediating role that attitudes play between beliefs and behaviors was also questioned in this study. Therefore, the following hypothesis was assessed.

**H3:** Attitudes mediate the relationship between beliefs and behavior toward social media advertising.

### 3. RESEARCH METHOD

#### 3.1. The Research Model

Following the conceptual framework of this study, the following research model was constructed to be tested in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** The Conceptual Model of The Study

The model was evaluated with structural equation modeling (SEM). "SEM includes procedures incorporating both unobserved and observed variables. SEM is a widely and easily applied method for modeling multivariate relations, or estimating point or interval indirect effects, and for theory testing. Furthermore, SEM can effectively address numerous research problems involving nonexperimental research" (Byrne, 2010: 3-4). Due to those vast possibilities, SEM was preferred in this descriptive study to evaluate direct and indirect relationships between the research model components and test the hypotheses.

#### 3.2. Data Collection Method and Sampling

In this study, the data were obtained using a convenient sampling technique, and the snowball method was used to reach the participants (Nunan et al., 2020).

The sample size was determined according to Thumb's rule. "10 cases/observations per indicator variable in setting a lower bound of an adequate sample size" (Hair et al., 2011: 144). There are thirty-one observed indicators in the study. Accordingly, the minimum requested sample size of 310 was provided. As a result, 311 valid out of 343 distributed forms were obtained, with a reasonable return rate of 90.7%. All participants offered their consent to answer an online questionnaire.

All answers were voluntarily kept private in the research. Two hundred three participants were students of Yeni Yüz Yıl University in the faculty of economics and administrative sciences. The rest 108 respondents, comprising 35 % of the sample, are peers and peers' relatives, from whom the data were collected using snowball sampling. To conduct this empirical study, the permission of the Ethics Board of İstanbul Yeni Yüzyıl University, numbered 2022/05-861, was officially obtained on 6 May 2022. Therefore, the survey was taken place between 10 May- 05 June 2022.

### 3.3. Measures

During the investigation, the questionnaire was derived from Pollay and Mittal's (1993) 7- factors scale and from Wolin et al.'s (2002) seven belief factors scale, which was adopted from Pollay's scale including personal and societal factors. As noted earlier, personal (micro) users have three determinants – product information, social role and image, and hedonic pleasure—including ten items, and societal (macro) factors have four determinants with 13 items. Attitudes and behavior separately included four statements. The Likert-type 5-point scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) are used to score thirty-one items of the original scale. The Cronbach's alpha values of Wolin et al.'s (2002) seven belief factors were 0.6906 for product information; 0.6876 for hedonic/pleasure; 0.7504 for social role and image; 0.5130 for good for the economy; 0.6778 for materialism; 0.5969 for falsity, and 0.6368 for value corruption. Meanwhile, 0.8625 for attitudes and 0.6181 for behavior. AGFI was 0.98; RMSR was 0.09 as a goodness-of-fit statistic of the model.

Besides applying the five-point Likert scale as the interval scale to above 31 statements, nominal and ratio scales are also used to measure the sample's social media usage and demographic characteristics.

The variables assessed in the model and their literature sources are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** The Variables Used in This Study and Their Sources

Construct	References in the literature
Seven-belief Factors	Pollay and Mittal (1996); Wolin, Korgaonkar, and Lund (2002)
Attitudes	Wolin, Korgaonkar, and Lund (2002)
Behavior	Wolin, Korgaonkar, and Lund (2002)
Demographic Variables	Wolin, Korgaonkar, and Lund (2002)

### 3.4. Demographic and Social Media Usage Characteristics of the Sample

Females comprised 60% of the sample, of which 75% were single. Almost three-quarters of the participants were young, 56.6% were between 18 and 22 years old, and 17% were between 26 and 33 years old. Middle-aged respondents between 34-49 years old compose 11.2%, and late middle-aged ones made up 10.6%. Seventy-one percent of participants were graduates, 18% were postgraduates, and the remaining 10% were vocational school graduates. Regarding occupations, 48% were students, 16% were employees, 10% were administrators, 7% were self-employed, 5% were retired, 2% were occupying administrative positions, 7% were self-employed, 5% were retirees and 2% were workers. SML business owners made up 2% percent. 32% of the attendants had an income between TRY 5001 and 10000, while 50% did less than TRY 5000.

In terms of the social media channel usage frequency, frequently and permanently used social media channels were 16.4% Facebook, 47% Instagram, 93.3% WhatsApp, 68.5% YouTube, 25.4% Twitter, 7.4%Pinterestt, 2% Viber, 3% myspace, 8% Snapchat, 15% LinkedIn, 3.5% foursquare and 11.6% google plus.

The respondents' device preferences to connect to social media were 18% private pc, 3% corporate pc, 6% tablet, and 95% smart and android devices.

70% of the attendants found the search motor engine effective for advertisement, 68% saw the website, 39% did e-mail, 81% believed social media channels, 57% did word-of-mouth, and 44% mobile marketing.

## 4. FINDINGS

### 4.1. Exploratory Factor Analysis

The questions were translated and then reverse-translated to look for problems with authenticity. The data analysis started by conducting KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) and Bartlett tests and calculating the scales' reliability via Cronbach's alpha( $\alpha$ ) values for all dependent and independent variables of the research model.

KMO is a sample adequacy statistic, while Bartlett's indicates a good relationship between the variances to continue the analysis at a 5% significance level (Durmuş et al., 2010)

An explanatory factor analysis was applied to the model's independent variables to reveal the hidden dimensions behind measurable and visible features that cannot be observed and measured (Tunçer ve Atan, 2020). The KMO value of the EFA was 0.888, and Bartlett's test results in Table 2 indicated the appropriateness of the sample data for the factor analysis. Variables were extracted using principal component analysis with varying-maximizing orthogonal rotation and extraction criteria of eigenvalues greater than 1.

**Table 2.** EFA Results(The orthogonal component matrix of the scales of the latent variables)

	Component				
	HMSRI	ASCSV	PI	Good for Eco.	Statements
D6	0.821				Sometimes I take pleasure in thinking about what I saw, heard, or read in social media advertisements.
D5	0.760				Overall, I consider social media advertising a good thing.
D4	0.739				Sometimes, social media advertisements are even more enjoyable than other social media content.
D9	0.711				Social media advertising helps me know which products will or will not reflect the sort of person I am.
D10	0.642				Social media advertising helps raise our standard of living.
D12	0.598				Social media advertising persuades people to buy things they should not buy.
D11	0.536				Social media advertising is necessary for the development of social media channels.
D15		0.800			Social media advertising makes us a materialistic society, overly interested in buying and owning things.
D16		0.799			Social media advertising makes people buy unaffordable products to show off.
D22		0.760			Social media advertising makes children request their parents to buy unaffordable products.
D14		0.726			Social media advertising makes low-income profiles unhappy by promoting unaffordable goods and services.
D21		0.664			Social media advertising distorts the value of our youth.
D23		0.656			Social media advertising promotes undesirable values in our society.
D13		0.584			Because of social media advertising, people buy a lot of things they do not need.
D1			0.796		Social media advertising is a valuable source of information about local sales.
D2			0.783		Social media advertising tells me which brands have the features I am looking for.
D3			0.779		Social media advertising helps me keep up to date about products/services available in the marketplace.
D18				0.842	In general, social media advertising results in lower prices.
D19				0.708	In general, social media advertisements present an accurate picture of the product advertised.
<b>KMO</b>					0.888
<b>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</b>					
	Approx. Chi-Square				2715.654
	df				171
	Sig.				0.00
<b>Total Variance Explained (%)</b>					62.267
<b>Fac.Var.Expl.(%)</b>	20.946	19.671	12.260	9.390	
<b>Reliability</b>	0.868	0.846	0.859	0.724	

Extraction method: Principal component analysis, rotation method, maximum variance method. HMSRI: hedonic motivation and social role and image; ASCSV: accelerator of materialism and corruption in social value; PI: product information.

7-factors emerged as four dimensions with nineteen items instead of the original seven components with twenty-three items. Hedonic and social role and image dimensions were merged and became a

unidimensional variable, holding seven statements called hedonic motivation and social role and image(HMSRI). On the other hand, two distinct dimensions of materialism and corrupt value arouse as one merged construct called an accelerator of materialism and corruption in social value (AMCSV) with seven items. The product information(PI) variable has held its originality with three original items, and finally, good for the economy construct contributed to the study with two statements.

The four components explained 62.267% of the variation, surpassing the minimum expected value of 50%. The four indicators' Cronbach's  $\alpha$  values were beyond 0.70, indicating that the statements explained well the belonging determinants.

Attitudes and behavior towards social media advertising were other determinants of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with the extracted items at the end of the following factor analyses (Bollen and Lennox, 1991), which were presented with the KMO and Bartlett's tests in Tables 3 and 4.

**Table 3.** Factor Analysis Results of Attitudes  
(The orthogonal component matrix of the attitudes toward social media advertising scale)

	Component	
	Attitudes	Statements
J1	0.882	Social media advertisements are good.
J2	0.868	Social media advertisements are necessary.
J3	0.859	Social media advertisements are essential.
J4	0.850	I like social media advertisements.
<b>KMO</b>	<b>0.817</b>	
<b>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</b>		
Approx. Chi-Square	690.567	
df	6	
Sig.	0.00	
<b>Total Variance Exp. (%)</b>	<b>74.772</b>	
<b>Reliability</b>	<b>0.887</b>	

Extraction method: Principal component analysis, rotation method, maximum variance method.

All original items appeared as a conclusion of the factor analysis under a unidimensional factor, explaining 74.772% of the variation. The KMO value is 0.817, and Bartlett's test results in Table 3 emphasized the appropriateness of the sample data for the factor analysis. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  value of 0.887 indicated that the statements successfully explained this dimension.

**Table 4.** Factor Analysis Results of Behavior  
(The orthogonal component matrix of the behavior towards social media advertising scale)

	Component		
	Considering SMA	Neglecting SMA	Statements
I2	0.941		I focus on social media advertisements to be well informed.
I1	0.934		I consider social media advertisements
I4		0.911	I immediately leave the site when I meet with a social media ad.
I3		0.733	I neglect social media advertisements
<b>KMO</b>	<b>0.600</b>		
<b>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</b>			
Approx. Chi-Square	690.567		
df			
Sig.	0.00		
<b>Total variance Explained (%)</b>	<b>82.986</b>		
<b>Fac.Var.Expl.(%)</b>	56.166	26.821	
<b>Reliability</b>	0.903	0.604	

Extraction method: Principal component analysis, rotation method, maximum variance method. SMA: social media advertising

Behavior appeared in two subdimensions: considering social media advertising (SMA) and neglecting social media advertising. However, four original statements remained, explaining 82.99% of the variation. Therefore, the KMO value of 0.60 was not solid but acceptable. Nevertheless, Cronbach's  $\alpha$  value of 0.604 was also suitable for neglecting SMA determinants because of holding a few(two) statements while considering SMA has an excellent Cronbach's  $\alpha$  value of 0.903 in Table 4.

The results of EFA and the factor analyses of attitude and behavior demonstrated that the model was well designed, and the scales of the variables were well selected. Meanwhile, all the factors' loadings in Tables 2, 3, and 4 being above 0.50, emphasized the excellent construct validity of the model. Therefore, since the scales were acceptable, the CFA phase was launched via AMOS 21.

#### 4.2. Test of the Research Model

The CFA was conducted concerning the explicatory factor analysis (EFA) results and the factor analysis results of the dependent variable to verify the factor structure's efficacy and stability. The composite reliability measured the reliability of each dimension in the structural equation model.

**Table 5.** Reliability and Validity Examinations (attitude is endogenous)

Variable	Item	UC.	SE	Z-Value	p-Value	SC.	Cronbach's $\alpha$	CR	AVE
Hedonic	D6	1.000				0.773	0.868	0.84	0.50
Motivation,	D5	0.856	0.063	13.626	***	0.660			
and Social	D4	0.998	0.081	12.297	***	0.701			
Role and	D9	0.982	0.076	12.903	***	0.732			
Image	D10	0.827	0.072	11.505	***	0.660			
(HMSRI)	D12	1.018	0.080	12.760	***	0.725			
Product	D3	1.000				0.802	0.859	0.86	0.67
Information	D2	1.054	0.065	16.093	***	0.870			
(PI.)	D1	0.995	0.068	14.672	***	0.790			
Attitude	J1	1.000				0.929	0.887	0.90	0.82
	J2	0.887	0.052	17.197	***	0.888			

In Tables 5 and 8, the factor loadings of all indices equal to or above 0.5 emphasized the convergent validity of the model. Another convergent validity indicator is "to obtain all CR (composite reliability) values that are higher than AVE's (average, variance extracted), and all AVE's must be equal or greater than 0.05" (Yaşlıoğlu, 2017: 82), and all concurrent validity requirements were provided. Furthermore, besides having correlation values below the cross line, as shown in Table 7, two other conditions of the discriminant validity were also observed. MSV (maximum squared variance) and ASV (average shared square conflict) were calculated regarding "the highest correlation coefficient between the latent constructs for MSV and the mean of the squared correlation coefficients between latent constructs for ASV" (Yaşlıoğlu, 2017: 83). The latent variables of the model exhibited the characteristics MSV<AVE; ASV<MSV, as seen in Table 6.

**Table 6.** The goodness of fit indices of the structural mode (attitude is endogenous)

Fit Index	$X^2/df$	GFI	RMSEA	IFI	NFI	TLI	CFI
Acceptable range*	<5	>0.90	<0.07	>0.9	>0.9	>0.8	>0.90
Model's value	1.739	0.957	0.049	0.900	0.959	0.976	0.982

\*The reference values depend on the sample size > 250 and the observed variable number  $\geq 30$  (Byrne, 2011).

The goodness-of-fit indices were also coherent with the expected ones (Hair et al., 2014), as shown in Tables 6 and 9. A value of  $X^2/df$ , less than 5, indicates a good fit for the tested models. In Tables 6 and 9, CFI values of 0.982; NFI values of 0.959 and 0.943; TLI values of 0.976 and 0.955 were within the suitable fit intervals. The RMSE values of 0.049 and 0.066 and GFI values of 0.957 and 0.940 pointed to excellent fits. In conclusion, all appropriate indices were in the acceptable range, and the model fitted well. Hence, the tested models indicating the effect of personal(micro) factors on attitudes and behavior were valid, and the results of the two tested direct effect models were dependable.

**Table 7.** Distinction Validity

	HMSRI	PI	MSV	ASV
HMSRI	(0.710)			
PI	0.748	(0.821)	0.552	0.552

$p < 0.01\%$ . The diagonal is the square root of AVE. MSV  $(0.748^2) < AVE$ ; ASV  $((0.748^2)/1) \leq MSV$ . HMSRI: hedonic motivation, social role, and image; PI: product information.

A correlation coefficient lower than the root square of the AVE proves the discriminant validity (Civelek, 2018).

**Table 8.** Reliability and Validity Examinations (behavior is endogenous)

Variable	Item	UC.	SE	Z-Value	p-Value	SC.	Cronbach's $\alpha$	CR	AVE
Hedonic Motivation, and Social Role and Image (HMSRI)	D6	1.000				0.779	0.868	0.84	0.51
	D5	0.857	0.062	13.749	***	0.666			
	D4	1.001	0.080	12.521	***	0.709			
	D9	0.965	0.075	12.850	***	0.726			
	D10	0.818	0.071	11.539	***	0.659			
Product Information (PI)	D12	1.007	0.079	12.799	***	0.723	0.859	0.86	0.67
	D3	1.000				0.805			
	D2	1.043	0.065	16.079	***	0.864			
Behavior	D1	0.994	0.067	14.777	***	0.792	0.887	0.97	0.64
	I1	1.000				0.822			
	I2	1.003	0.072	13.397	***	0.747			
	I3	1.001	0.068	14.702	***	0.777			
	I4	1.098	0.067	16.272	***	0.841			

The latent variables of the model, hedonic motivation, social role and image (HMSRI), and product information (PI) were correlated and differentiated at a 0.01% significance level, as seen in Tables 7 and 11.

**Table 9.** The goodness of fit indices of the structural mode (behavior is endogenous)

Fit Index	$X^2/df$	GFI	RMSEA	IFI	NFI	TLI	CFI
Acceptable range*	<5	>0.90	<0.07	>0.9	>0.9	>0.8	>0.90
Model's value	2.369	0.940	0.066	0.966	0.943	0.955	0.982

\*The reference values depend on the sample size  $> 250$  and the observed variable number  $\geq 30$  (Byrne, 2011).

#### 4.2.1 Composite Results of the Research Model

**Table 10.** Reliability and validity examinations of the research model (behavior is endogenous; attitude is a mediator)

Variable	Item	UC.	SE	Z-Value	p-Value	SC.	Cronbach's $\alpha$	CR	AVE
Hedonic Motivation and Social Role & Image	D6	1.00				0.776	0.868	0.84	0.51
	D5	0.85	0.062	13.707	***	0.661			
	D4	1.004	0.080	12.502	***	0.708			
	D9	0.97	0.075	12.883	***	0.727			
	D10	0.82	0.071	11.533	***	0.659			
Product Info.	D12	1.01	0.079	12.855	***	0.726	0.859	0.86	0.67
	D3	1.001.05				0.803			
	D2	0.97	0.065	16.118	***	0.866			
Attitudes	D1		0.067	14.765	***	0.792	0.887		0.82
	J2	1.00				0.880			
	J1	1.10	0.062	18.626	***	0.938			

Behavior	I1	1.00				0.822	0.887	0.97	0.64
	I2	0.99	0.071	13.923	***	0.739			
	I3	0.99	0.067	14.708	***	0.770			
	I4	1.10	0.066	16.633	***	0.847			

In Table 10, the factor loadings of all indices were equal to or above 0.5, and all CR (composite reliability) values were higher than AVE's (average variance extracted) that were above 0.05, ensuring the convergent validity of the research model (Yaşlıoğlu, 2017).

**Table 11.** Distinction validity of the composite model

	HMSRI	PI	MSV	ASV
HMSRI	(0.710)			
PI	0.745	(0.821)	0.555	0.555

$p < 0.01\%$ . The diagonal is the square root of AVE.  $MSV (0.745^2) < AVE$  and  $ASV ((0.745^2)/1) \leq MSV$ . HMRI: hedonic motivation and social role and image; PI: product information.

Besides having correlation values below the cross line, two other conditions of the discriminant validity ( $MSV < AVE$ ;  $ASV < MSV$ ) were also obtained, as seen in Table 11.

### 4.3. Structural Equation Modeling and Path Analysis

The performance of the structured modeling was monitored with path analysis.

#### 4.3.1. Direct Effects

**Table 12.** The results of the path analysis and the test of hypotheses (direct effects)

Path to	UC.	SE.	CR.	<i>p</i>	SC.	Hypotheses	Hypotheses
HMSRI → ATTITUDES	0.623	0.113	5.530	***	0.521	H1b, H1c	Confirmed
Prod.Info. → ATTITUDES	0.212	0.103	2.052	0.040	0.185	H1a	Confirmed
HMSRI → BEHAVIOR	0.557	0.082	6.797	***	0.639	H2b, H2c	Confirmed
Prod.Info. → BEHAVIOR	0.149	0.072	2.078	0.038	0.178	H2a	Confirmed
ATTITUDES → BEHAVIOR	0.254	0.054	4.685	***	0.304	H3	Confirmed

HMRI: hedonic motivation, and social role and image; PI: product information.

The path analysis for direct effects revealed relationships between hedonic and social roles, images, product information, and attitudes at a 5% significance level. Therefore, in Hypotheses H1a, H1b, and H1c, there were positive and statistically significant relationships between HMSRI, product information, and attitudes. HMSRIs were confirmed. The relationship between product information and attitudes was statistically significant. A regression coefficient of 0.521 with a *t*-value of 5.530 indicated a stronger bond between HMSRI and attitudes, compared to the link between product information and attitudes due to a regression coefficient of 0.185 with a *t*-value of 2.052. Both *t*-values exceeded the threshold *t*-value of 1.96 at a 5% significance level.

Hypothesis H1 was partially confirmed; in other words, H1 was supported only for personal (micro) factors, including hedonic motivation, social role and image, and product information, whereas our societal (macro) factors, being materialism, good for the economy, corrupt value, and falsity, did not show any relationship with attitudes in this empirical study.

Therefore, H1a, H1b, and H1c were accepted, whereas H1d, H1e, H1f, and H1g were rejected, as shown in Table 15.

Another CFA was conducted to determine the impact of seven belief factors on behavior toward social media advertising.

The path analysis showed that, at a 5% significance level, there were positive, statistically significant, and strong correlations between HMSRI and behavior. Like the previous path analysis, a regression coefficient of 0.639 with a  $t$ -value of 6.797 pointed to a stronger bond between HMSRI and attitudes compared to the link between product information and behavior due to a regression coefficient of 0.178 with a  $t$ -value of 2.078. Both  $t$ -values exceeded the threshold  $t$ -value of 1.96 at a 5% significance level.

Meanwhile, HSMR presented a more powerful bond with behavior than with attitudes, regarding two regression coefficients of 0.639 in the path to behavior. At the same time, it was 0.521 in the direction of attitudes at a 1% significance level. The impact of the link between product information, attitudes, and behavior was close in the path analyses (0.185 and 0.178) at a 5% significance level with  $t$ -values of 2.052 and 2.078 passing the threshold of 1.96.

In conclusion, Hypothesis H2 was partially supported by personal factors, including hedonic motivation, social role and image, and product information. However, four societal factors, materialism, good for the economy, corrupt value, and falsity, did not present any relationship with behavior in this empirical investigation.

In conclusion, Hypotheses H2a, H2b, and H2c were confirmed, whereas H2d, H2e, H2f, and H2g were rejected, as shown in Table 15.

#### 4.3.2. Composite Path Analysis of the Research Model

**Table 13.** Composite Path Analysis (mediating effect)

Path to	Total Effect	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	CR.	P
HMSRI→ATTITUDES	0.534	0.534	0.000	5.333	***
Prod.Info.→ATTITUDES	0.192	0.192	0.000	2.118	0.034
HMSRI→BEHAVIOR	0.565	0.429	0.136	5.207	***
Prod.Info.→BEHAVIOR	0.144	0.096	0.049*	1.428	0.153*
ATTITUDES →BEHAVIOR	0.254	0.054	0.00	4.685	***

\*0.153 $\geq$ 0.05 and  $t$  value < the threshold value of 1.96. HMRI: hedonic motivation, and social role and image; PI: product information.

In Table 13, the indirect regression coefficient between product information and behavior was not statistically significant due to a 15.3% significance level being above the expected upper rate of 0.05% and additionally due to a  $t$ -value of 1.428 being below the threshold  $t$ -value of 1.96. In conclusion, attitudes did not mediate the relationship between product information and behavior; product information directly influences consumers' behavior toward social media advertising.

**Table 14.** The Goodness of Fit Indices of the Structural Model

Fit Index	$X^2/df$	RMSEA	IFI	NFI	TLI	CFI
Acceptable range*	<5	<0.07	>0.9	>0.9	>0.8	>0.90
Model's value	1.981	0.056	0.973	0.947	0.964	0.973

\*The reference values depend on the sample size > 250 and the observed variable number  $\geq$ 30 (Byrne, 2011).

All fit indices were within the acceptable range, as seen in Table 14, indicating a good fit for the composite model.

HMSRI presented a statistically significant indirect effect on behavior toward social media advertising, pointing to a mediating role of attitudes in this relationship. The direct bond regression coefficient between HMSRI and behavior, which was 0.565, diminished to 0.136, at a 5% significance level, in the case of an indirect connection indicating a partial mediating role of attitudes on behavior toward social media advertising (Ocak, 2020). Table 13 explains that the total effect between HMSRI and behavior consists of the direct and indirect impact, clarifying that 0.76% of this bond was composed of the direct influence, whereas 0.24% comes from

the indirect effect. Thus, Hypothesis H3 was partially approved, meaning that attitudes mediated the relationships between the beliefs of hedonic motivation and social role and image. In contrast, the bond between production information and behavior did not change related attitudes at a 5% significance.

All statistically significant paths were depicted in Figure 2, and all supported, and unsupported hypotheses in this investigation were summarized in Table 15.

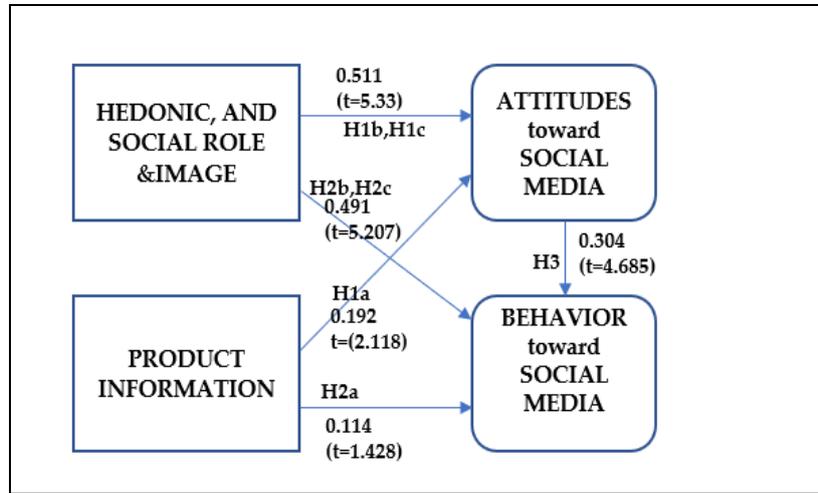


Figure 2. The Final Research Model

Table 15. Hypotheses Test Results

Hypothesis	Supported	Not Supported
	H1a H1b H1c	
		H1d H1e H1f H1g
	H2a H2b H2c	
		H2d H2e H2f H2g
H3 (partially)	Personal beliefs (social role and image, and hedonic /pleasure)	Social beliefs (good for the economy, falsity, corrupts value, and materialism), and product information as a personal belief

### 5. CONCLUSION and DISCUSSION

This study constructed a research model based on Pollay and Mittal’s (1993) traditional 7-factors and Wolin et al.’s(2002) seven belief factors for web-advertising models, including three facets of personal users and four elements of societal factors. The significant direct effects of seven factors on attitude and behavior and the significant indirect effects on consumers’ behavior toward social media advertising were questioned through the mediating role of attitudes.

Wolin et al.’s seven belief factors dimensions with twenty-three items were adopted for social media advertising. In addition, the unidimensional attitude and behavior scales of Wolin et al. were adopted for attitudes and behavior toward social media advertising.

The obtained data supported the personal user's scale with three features: product information, hedonic motivation/pleasure, and social role and image. In contrast, it did not keep up with the societal factors with

four dimensions good for the economy, falsity, corrupt value, and materialism. On the other hand, the collected data held up attitudes and behavior.

As a result of EFA and CFA, two personal belief constructs of hedonic/pleasure and social role and image merged and became a unidimensional construct holding their original items. That new merged dimension called HMSRI (hedonic motivation and social role and image) keeping six original statements. The third personal belief factor, product information, supported its initial three questions.

The results showed that, for the observed sample, personal factors, such as product information, hedonic/pleasure, and social role and image, directly and positively influenced attitude and behavior. Moreover, hedonic/pleasure, social role, and image indirectly affected behavior, whereas product information did not. Based on the regression coefficients, the HMSRI dimension presented more powerful direct impacts on attitudes and behavior than product information. However, the mediating analysis showed that other relevant factors, such as the hedonic/pleasure dimension, social role, and image, partially influenced behavior and attitudes.

In contrast, any societal dimension did not affect either attitudes or behavior toward social media advertising. Although the variables of materialism and corruption values appeared as a unidimensional construct holding all original items and good for the economy dimension with two questions excluding the statement “*we need social media advertising to support social media channels*” (Wolin et al., 2002: 100) in the conclusion of the EFA, those three facets disappeared at the end of CFA. Meanwhile, falsity did not appear in either EFA or CFA.

The reason for not standing out from societal belief factors might be the age profile of the research sample, in which the share of 18-33 years people composed 75%. “*The expansion of the youth segment revealed the desire of advertisers to reach young people. The purpose of advertising is to make the target audience aware of the existence of products and services, to identify them, and persuade them to buy the product and service. Young people show similar characteristics and needs when compared to each other. Music, entertainment, dance, and fashion are outstanding issues for young people*” (Uğur, 2011: 102-103.). “*If advertisements reflect the language of young people, it may be easier for them to accept the expressed messages*” (Taylor, 2000: 340-341). The findings of this investigation support the underlining points in Taylor’s (2000) and Uğur’s (2011) studies. Most samples considered product information, social position and image, and hedonic/pleasure features of social media advertising like traditional (Pollay and Mittal, 1993) and web advertising (Wolin et al., 2002).

In the meantime, the findings of this empirical study supported Ducoffee’s (1995) value of advertising in which informativeness and entertainment influenced advertising value that was also relevant for social media advertising. On the other hand, this research did not approve the predicted dimensionality of Bauer and Greyser’s (1968) belief statements regarding advertising’s economic and social dimensions in social media advertising more than five decades later.

Furthermore, attitude finalized in CFA with two items pointing out the importance and necessity of social media advertising, while behavior kept its original four statements.

Lastly, our data analysis revealed that attitudes did not mediate the relationship between product information and behavior, whereas they had a direct bond. However, attitudes partially mediated the relationships between HMSRI and behavior. The majority (76%) of the total relationship consisted of the direct effect, while the rest 24% came from the indirect influence.

Finally, the demographic findings of the study were coherent with the 2022 report of We Are Social & Hootsuite, which indicated that; the Instagram connection rate was 76.5%, replacing Türkiye at the top of the global Instagram connection rankings. The ratio of cellular mobile connection to the total Turkish population was 91.4%. 64% of weekly purchases were realized online in Türkiye, where the mobile purchase rate was 41.2%. Approximately 7 out of 10 people researched brands online, and 4 out of 10 used ad blockers in their search tools (www.recrodigital.com, 2022).

## 6. IMPLICATIONS

This empirical study brought meaningful findings to marketing people who deal with the Turkish market. The young generation presenting 75% of the research sample, was also an essential representative of the future Turkish market. People aged between 20 and 34 comprised 23% of the Turkish population, while the X and Y generations constructed 30% (www.data.tuik.gov.tr, 2021). The Z and Y generations that are natively digital and virtual will sustain their familiarity with social media channel usage and will be affected by social media advertising. Therefore, marketing people should always consider personal dimensions such as product information, hedonic/pleasure, and social role and image in the production of social media ads for today's Z and Y people.

On the other hand, conducting more studies among different sampling structures, especially among the X generation, who are well-adaptive digital people, may support the societal dimensions of seven belief factors. For example, participants between 40-59 years old presented 26% of the total population (www.data.tuik.gov.tr, 2021). Obtaining statistically meaningful support for the societal characteristics will also help marketing people reach different and broader segments via social media advertising.

There is no doubt that this work forwarded statistically significant and valuable contributions to the literature about Turkish customers' beliefs, attitudes, and behavior toward social media advertising and created a sound basis for future studies in this field.

## 8. FUTURE RESEARCH AND LIMITATIONS

Related to conducting the study among a convenient sample, the results could not be generalized. The high percentage of young participants probably prevented the extraction of the societal dimensions in the findings. Therefore, future investigations, including the X generation, should be realized to test societal components. A probabilistic sample will also help to generalize the results.

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