How Generations Perceive, React And Cope With Online Behavioral Advertising In Turkey: Recommendations For Digital Advertising Literacy Education

Hediye AYDOĞAN
Akdeniz University, Faculty of Communication, Department of Public Relations and Publicity

ABSTRACT

Online behavioral advertising (OBA) is a kind of targeted advertising, and it is currently known that Internet users are not knowledgeable and aware about this kind of advertising because of the technological complexities and covert nature of OBA, that they feel insecure when they are informed about how OBA works, and that they do not know how to cope with it. Evidence supporting this has been largely acquired through the researches administered on the youth or children. However, OBA targets all ages (generations), and whether all generations know, perceive, react to, and cope with OBA is entirely unclear. In Turkey, there is even hardly any researches exploring the state of Internet users in terms of OBA. By providing the picture of the general state of generations, it may be possible to recommend points to consider for the development of digital advertising literacy.

Here, as the second part of the research project, I employed an online survey method (N= 1208) to examine how different generations in Turkey know, perceive, react to, and cope with OBA based on the persuasion knowledge, perception, reactance, and coping strategies variables. The results reveal that generations differ in terms of their knowledge, perceptions, and coping strategies while they react similarly. Furthermore, while level of knowledge does not affect the coping strategies positively for Gen X and Y, perception is not related to coping strategies of Gen X, perception and reactance has a positive association with coping strategies of Gen Y and Z. This study shows that the higher the risk assessment of the generations is, the more their intent to cope with it is. These results indicate that digital advertising literacy education may consider equating the knowledge of generations and assisting the generations to systematically assess the relevance of their goals to those of OBA, and to decide whether they accept or reject OBA messages. While contributing to the literature by sharing the results of the quantitative analysis of the state of the generations in the face of OBA, and trying to draw attention to this type of advertising, this study also implies some points to consider for the digital advertising literacy education.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- **RQ1:** Is there any statistically significant difference among Generations X, Y, and Z in terms of a) their knowledge of OBA; b) their perception of OBA; c) their reactance to OBA; and d) their coping strategies with OBA?
- **RQ2:** Is there any statistically significant difference among generations in terms of the association between their coping strategies and a) their knowledge of OBA; b) their perception of OBA; c) their reactance to OBA, and d) their risk and benefit assessment?
- **RQ3:** Taken together, what can be recommended for the digital advertising literacy education?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

- ***Persuasion Knowledge Model (Friestad & Wright, 1994)***
  - Individuals use their persuasion knowledge to recognize the commercial intent of the advertising,
    - become more skeptical of them,
    - and cope with the persuasion attempts,
    - persuasion knowledge is indirectly correlated with the coping behavior (Ham, 2016)
- ***Protection Motivation Theory (Rogers, 1975)***
  - people are motivated to protect themselves from risks only when they realize the risky behavior.
- ***Social Exchange Theory (Thibault & Kelley, 1959)***
  - People choose between perceived costs and rewards of any behavior, and if there is a good ratio of costs (being tracked) and rewards (finding information on Net), people may prefer to keep using Internet regardless of the privacy violations.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

ONLINE SURVEY

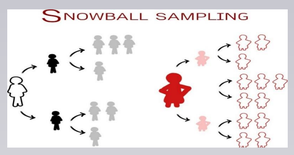
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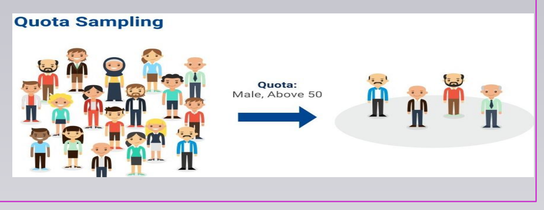
July 16
Aug 15

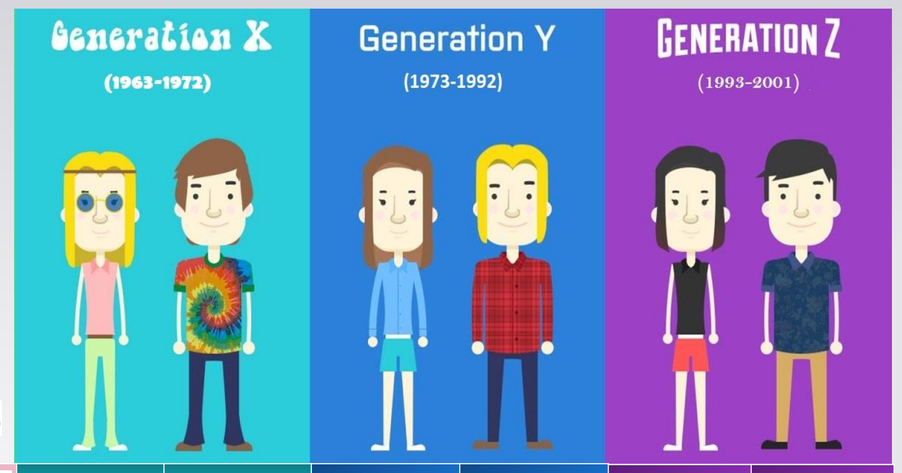
THROUGH

Outlook Web App

SAMPLING PROCEDURE







NO	201	220	199	197	195	196
	33/44/**72**/52	18/40/**104**/58	0/17/84/**98**	5/19/**91**/82	0/23/**169**/3	0/42/**148**/6
Hours	4-6 hours (40,8%)	1-3 hours (35%)	4-6 hours (38,1%)	4-6 hours (37,1%)	4-6 hours (37%)	4-6 hours (44,9%)
	Telephone (90,5%)	Telephone (93,1%)	Telephone (99%)	Telephone (98,5%)	Telephone (100%)	Telephone (100%)
	Info-Seeking (99,5%)	Info-Seeking (93,1%)	Info-Seeking (93,5%)	Info-Seeking (87,3%)	Communication (94,4%)	Communication (90,3%)

RESULTS

RQ1: Is there any statistically significant difference among Generations X, Y, and Z in terms of a) their knowledge of OBA; b) their perception of OBA; c) their reactance to OBA; and d) their coping strategies with OBA?

- Statistically significant difference in terms of persuasion knowledge [F(2,1205)= 15.860, p<0.05].
  - A Tamhane post hoc test revealed that Gen X (M= 5.39; SD= .90) is less knowledgeable than Gen Y (M= 5,74; SD= .82; p< 0.05) and Gen Z (M= 5.59; SD= .99; p<0.05).
  - A Tamhane post hoc test revealed that Gen Y (M= 5,74; SD= .82) is more knowledgeable than Gen Z (M= 5.59; SD= .99; p<0.05).
- Statistically significant difference in terms of perceptions [F(2,1205)= 7,498, p< 0.05].
  - A Tukey post hoc test revealed that Gen X (M= 4.60; SD= .63) has more negative perceptions than Gen Z (M= 4.48; SD= .56) and Gen Y (M= 4.44; SD= .65; p< 0.05).
- No statistically significant difference in terms of reactance. [F(2,1205)=2.293, p= .101].
- Statistically significant difference in terms of coping strategies [F(2,1205)= 9.453, p< 0.05].
  - A Tamhane post hoc test revealed that Gen X (M= 4,38; SD= 1.06) is more interested in coping with OBA than Gen Y (M= 4.17; SD= 1.01; p<0.05) and Gen Z (M= 4.09; SD= .83; p<0.05)

RQ2: Is there any statistically significant difference among generations in terms of the association between their coping strategies and a) their knowledge of OBA; b) their perception of OBA; and c) their reactance to OBA, and d) their risk and benefit assessment?

- When Gen X is considered (R2= .469; F= 122.852; p<0.05):
  - Knowledge (β=.-231; p<0.05) is negatively associated with coping strategies.
  - Perception (β= .105; p>0.05) is not significantly associated with coping strategies.
  - Reactance (β= .479; p<0.05) is positively associated with coping strategies.
- When Gen Y is considered (R2= .297; F= 55.222; p<0.05):
  - Knowledge (β=.-233; p<0.05) is negatively associated with coping strategies.
  - Perception (β= .340; p<0.05) is positively associated with coping strategies.
  - Reactance (β= .293; p<0.05) is positively associated with coping strategies.
- When Gen Z is considered (R2= .056; F= 7.596; p<0.05):
  - Knowledge (β=.-233; p>0.05) is not significantly associated with coping strategies.
  - Perception (β= .260; p<0.05) is positively associated with coping strategies.
  - Reactance (β= .091; p<0.05) is positively associated with coping strategies.
- Gen X, Y and Z differ from one another in terms of the association between knowledge and coping strategies.
- Gen X differs from Gen Y and Gen Z in terms of the association between perception and coping strategies.
- Gen X, Gen Y and Gen Z do not differ from one another in terms of the association between reactance and coping strategies.

RESULTS (cont.)

RQ2: Is there any statistically significant difference among generations in terms of the association between their coping strategies and d) their risk and benefit assessment?

- When Gen X is considered (R2= .333; F= 104.221; p<0.05):
  - Benefit assessment (β=-.114; p<0.05) is negatively associated with coping strategies.
  - Risk assessment (β=.435; p<0.05) is positively associated with coping strategies.
- When Gen Y is considered (R2= .270; F= 72.599; p<0.05):
  - Benefit assessment (β=-.015; p>0.05) is not significantly associated with coping strategies.
  - Risk assessment (β=.434; p<0.05) is positively associated with coping strategies.
- When Gen Z is considered (R2= .156; F= 35.916; p<0.05):
  - Benefit assessment (β=-.127; p<0.05) is negatively associated with coping strategies.
  - Risk assessment (β=.236; p<0.05) is positively associated with coping strategies.
- Gen Y differs from Gen X and Z in terms of benefit assessment.
- Gen X, Y, and Z do not differ from one another in terms of risk assessment.

RQ3: Taken together, what can be recommended for the digital advertising literacy education?

- Materials focusing more on digital communication.
- Materials to increase the level of knowledge of OBA, especially for Gen X and Gen Y.
- Instead of focusing on the knowledge acquisition of Internet users solely, it should consider showing the ways the generations can modify their perceptions and reactance towards OBA.

CONCLUSIONS

- Gen Y is more knowledgeable about OBA tactics than Gen X and Gen Z.
- Gen X has more negative perceptions towards OBA than Gen Y and Gen Z.
- Gen X is more interested in coping with OBA than Gen Y and Gen Z.
- The more Gen X and Gen Y has about OBA, the less their intent to cope with OBA is.
- The more negatively Gen Y and Gen Z perceive OBA, the more they show interest in coping with it.
- When the levels of reactance of all generations increase, their intent to cope with OBA increases higher.
- When Gen X and Gen Z are aware of the benefits of OBA, they show significantly no interest in coping with OBA.
- When generations realize risks of OBA, they show significantly higher interest in coping with OBA.
- Digital advertising literacy education should consider allowing trainees to develop reactance and coping intent instead of focusing on solely knowledge-transferring.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study provides the results of the second phase (quantitative study) of a research project on covert types of digital advertising, generations, and digital advertising literacy in Turkey.

Contact: hediyeaydogan90@gmail.com
FB: hediye.aydogan; **Twitter:**hediye_aydogan **Instagram:** hediyeaydogan