Consumer Attitudes Towards Social Network Advertising: Predictors and Outcomes

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CONSUMER ATTITUDES TOWARDS SOCIAL NETWORK ADVERTISING: PREDICTORS AND OUTCOMES

STAVOVI POTROŠAČA PREMA OGLAŠAVANJU NA DRUŠTVENIM MREŽAMA: PREDIKTORI I ISHODI

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Abstract

Purpose – This study explores the impact of perceived trust, search for novelty and perceived usefulness on consumer attitudes towards social network advertising, and the impact of those attitudes on buying intention, buying and word-of-mouth information spread.

Design/Methodology/Approach – The research included convenience sample of 265 respondents. Online survey distributed through Facebook and Instagram was used as a research method. The data was analysed using a multiple regression analysis.

Findings and implications – The results show that positive attitudes towards social network advertising depend on perceived trust and usefulness. The impact of the search for novelty on consumer attitudes towards social network advertising proved to be insignificant. Furthermore, buying intention, buying and disseminating information by word-of-mouth represent relevant outcomes of consumer attitudes towards social network advertising. This research has implications for companies in terms of a better understanding of the relevant predictors and outcomes of consumer attitudes in on-

Sažetak

Svrha - Glavna je svrha ovoga rada istražiti utjecaj percipiranoga povjerenja, traženja noviteta i percipirane korisnosti na stavove potrošača prema oglašavanju na društvenim mrežama, kao i utjecaj tih stavova na namjeru kupovine te kupovinu i širenje usmene komunikacije.

Metodološki pristup - Uzorak je bio prigodan i obuhvatio je 265 ispitanika. Korištena je metoda online anketiranja provedenog putem društvenih mreža Facebook i Instagram. U analizi prikupljenih podataka korištena je metoda višestruke regresije.

Rezultati i implikacije - Rezultati pokazuju da pozitivni stavovi potrošača prema oglašavanju na društvenim mrežama ovise o percipiranom povjerenju i korisnosti. Utjecaj traženja noviteta na stavove potrošača prema oglašavanju na društvenim mrežama nije se pokazao značajnim. Nadalje, rezultati pokazuju da su namjera kupovine, sama kupovina i usmena komunikacija značajni ishodi pozitivnih stavova potrošača prema oglašavanju na društvenim mrežama. Rezultati istraživanja imaju marketinške implikacije za tvrtke u vidu boljeg razumijevanja relevantnih prediktora i ishoda stavova

line advertising context. Managers can also benefit from the findings when creating successful communication strategies.

Limitations – A major research limitation is the use of non-probability convenience sample that did not capture the population as a whole. Therefore, this may be regarded as a future research direction.

Originality – This study sheds new light on relevant predictors and outcomes of consumer attitudes towards social network advertising, which was not previously researched from the proposed framework perspective.

Keywords – advertising, consumer attitudes, social networks, predictors, outcomes

prema oglašavanju u online kontekstu kao i pri kreiranju uspješnih komunikacijskih strategija.

Ograničenja - Ograničenjem se može smatrati korištenje prigodnog uzorka koji nije obuhvatio populaciju u cijelosti, a što se može promatrati i kao smjernica za buduće istraživanje.

Doprinos - Ovo istraživanje daje uvid u nova saznanja u pogledu relevantnih prediktora i ishoda stavova potrošača prema oglašavanju na društvenim mrežama, a što do sada nije istraživano na predloženi način.

Ključne riječi - oglašavanje, stavovi potrošača, društvene mreže, prediktori, ishodi

1. INTRODUCTION

Social media provides an effective way of communicating with consumers and monitoring their behaviour, and has been widely accepted among both consumers and businesses. However, when it comes to researching advertising and consumer attitudes in the online social context, the research is scarce (Johnston, Khalil, Le & Cheng, 2018). Recently, researchers have started looking into advertisement credibility, avoidance, behaviour intentions (Tran, 2017; Shareef, Mukerji, Dwivedi, Rana & Islam, 2017), privacy risks and perceived usefulness (Lin and Kim, 2016). Despite fast social media growth and social media advertising enthusiasm, theoretical and empirical knowledge on the efficiency of social media advertising and its influence on consumer behaviour is scarce (Johnston et al., 2018).

In their research about consumers' reactions towards social media advertising, taking into consideration different cultures and the global social media, Johnston and others (2018) found that positive attitude towards social media advertising increases consumers' activity and interaction on those media. In general, consumers' attitudes towards advertising has become an important and unavoidable topic among scholars around the world due to the susceptibility of consumers to changes, which makes them interesting for exploration within the variety of frameworks.

Boateng and Okoe (2015a) researched the determinants of attitudes towards social media advertising and found several important factors, such as credibility, materialism, corruption value and corporate reputation. The authors recognised the relevance of such attitudes for consumer behaviour on social networks. Furthermore, Noprisson and others (2016) explored attitudes toward three advertising channels, namely text messages, e-mail and social media, and determined that irritation, fun and informativeness are crucial for the first two channels,

while credibility plays an important role for social media.

The analysis of available literature shows that little is known about personalised advertising on a social network, such as Facebook. For the purpose of segmentation, Tran (2017) researched the perception of ads on Facebook and their influence on consumer behaviour with respect to factors such as ad credibility, avoidance, scepticism and ad attitude. Lin and Kim (2016) researched consumer attitudes in the context of sponsored advertising, perceived usefulness, risk perception, privacy and intrusion issues, and showed that privacy and intrusion might be perceived as the predictors of usefulness. In addition, it seems that intrusion and usefulness influence attitudes towards sponsored advertising, while only privacy impacts the product buying.

Furthermore, some scholars (Shareef et al., 2017) explored advertising value and attitudes towards Facebook in the context of message source credibility. Here, researchers focused on different sources, such as associative, aspirational and marketing expert groups, showing that attitudes towards advertising can vary depending on the message source. Hyder, Ilyas, Nawaz and Rehman (2014) tried to estimate the effects of Facebook advertising on the behaviour of young consumers, accounting for a moderating role of gender and showing that behaviour can be greatly influenced by social network advertising. Ahmad, Khan and Rahman (2018) studied gender perceptions of social network ads and online buying. They showed that both male and female consumers have similar positive attitudes towards social network ads.

The main purpose of this study is to explore consumer attitudes towards social network advertising from the perspective of different determinants and effects. Here, the variables of perceived trust, usefulness and novelty search denote predictors, while buying intention, buying and word-of-mouth communication variables represent behaviour outcomes. Past research

analysis shows that social media and networks should be continuously examined and that no studies explore the proposed framework in a similar way. This research aims to fill this gap in the existing literature. That is, the research on consumer attitudes towards social network advertising is scarce (Luna-Nevarez & Torres, 2015). In addition, researchers suggest further exploration of trust and usefulness in order to understand these concepts important for technology adoption better (Choi & Ji, 2015). Furthermore, consumers search for optimal levels of stimulation in their choice of behaviour (Assaker et al., 2011). Given this notion, along with the importance of consumer attitudes for behavioural outcomes and the stimulating nature of advertising, it seems reasonable to explore the impact of consumer's novelty seeking on the attitudes towards social network advertising. This might result in novel findings and contribute to consumer behaviour and technology acceptance theories.

Furthermore, the scientific contribution of this paper lays in understanding the relevance social network and advertising have for consumers in the modern world. Past research focused either on social media or only on a particular network, such as Facebook, while the insights covering the variety of social networks are rare. According to researchers (e.g. Bahmanziari et al., 2003), consumers need to have faith in providers when faced with technology which takes different forms, while adopting new products. Ease of use and usefulness play important roles as major determinants of the attitudes towards technology and/or the provider, as well as trust, which serves as stimulus for adopting novelty in the context of technological. In addition, the attitudes can reveal the perceptions of usefulness, which is an important determinant of product or service adoption (Jahangir & Begum, 2008). Trust is regarded as a crucial element of online interactions, including social network services, due to the potential harmful practices in online setting, such as unauthorised tracking activity and personal data disclosure (Sledgianowski &

Kulviwat, 2009). Moreover, perceived usefulness is considered a strong cause of user acceptance and usage behaviour (Sledgianowski & Kulviwat, 2009). Yang and Brown (2015) argue that social competence, important for social media usage, is dependent on users' attitudes about the usefulness of social media and the ways of using them. Therefore, the scarcity of research in terms of social network advertising attitudes and the importance of the researched predictors for new product acceptance justify further exploration of this field using the proposed framework. Another contribution is to fill the gap in the existing literature when it comes to researched outcomes, especially in the case of unexplored buying and word-of-mouth communication concepts.

Besides scientific contribution, this paper also has several marketing implications. That is, the results can be used by marketing experts in order to understand consumer social media and online behaviour better, as well as relevant predictors and outcomes regarding social network advertising attitudes. This way marketing experts can improve the use of social networks and advertising as important business tools, and positively influence behaviour outcomes, such as buying intention, buying and word-of-mouth communication. These outcomes can be considered successful sales carriers. Furthermore, this study is tied to Croatia, a transitional country, and as such extends the understanding of this field in a different market context.

This paper consists of six sections. The introductory part is followed by literature overview and hypotheses development, covering the researched variables of trust, usefulness and search for novelty, as well as outcomes, i.e. buying intention, buying, WOM communication and their relationships. The fourth section encompasses research methodology and provides the information on the sample, measurement scales and analysis of research results. The fifth section discusses analysis results, while the last one provides conclusions along with research limitations and future research directions.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Social media gained in popularity immediately after market introduction and were widely accepted by consumers very fast. From June 2018 until January 2020 alone, the number of active users on social media increased by 13%. In Croatia, 48% of the population, i.e. 2 million of people, are social network users. The majority of the population (88%) uses Internet every day, while 12% of the population uses it at least once a week or month (Kemp, 2018). Furthermore, in 2018, more than 26 billion dollars were spent on social media advertising, with expectations of reaching more than 37 billion dollars in 2020 (Guttmann, 2019). This demonstrated the importance of social media for both private and business users.

The main reasons for researching the selected predictors (e.g. trust, usefulness) lies within their importance for consumers' everyday online activities, while consumer's openness towards novelties represents a potential precondition for accepting online communication, advertising and advertised products/services. In addition, the relationships exploring purchase and social network advertising, including attitudes, were found to be underexplored, as well as WOM communication link, whereby WOM represents the most powerful tool when it comes to persuasiveness and credibility. Therefore, this research is expected to result in novel findings about underexplored factors and relationships.

Trust can be defined as one person's set of beliefs resulting from an individual perception of certain attributes. When it comes to trust in marketing, it can encompass brands, products, services and points of sale (Flavian, Guinaliu & Gurrea, 2006). Trust is based on buyers' expectations that sellers will not behave opportunistically and will not exploit the situation, but will rather behave in a reliable, ethical and socially acceptable way, fulfilling their obligations even when consumers are vulnerable to a certain degree. Therefore, consumers' perceptions of

sellers' reliability and credibility play important roles in the buying decision-making process.

Search for novelty can be described as an individual characteristic tied to a variety of activities, such as seeking new stimuli, impulsive decision making, fast mood changing and frustration avoidance (Cloninger, 1986; Cloninger, Syrakic & Przybeck, 1993). The search for novelty is based on information search through motivational force (Hirschman, 1980). The main premise behind this concept is to be found within the search for intensive sensations as responses to new stimuli (Zuckerman, 2015).

Perceived usefulness is an independent construct recognised in the technology acceptance model (TAM). It represents the level at which individuals believe that the usage of a particular technology will enhance their performance. The technology acceptance model theory presumes that perceived usefulness represents a direct predictor of behavioural intention of technology usage (Abdullah, Bakar, Hamid & Razak, 2016). In the online context, consumers might believe that online shopping will enhance their performance and productivity, and for that reason consumers might have positive attitudes towards online buying. Moreover, perceived usefulness refers to the insights on how a site (e.g. social network) can offer value, effectiveness and any kind of an advantage to consumers (Jin et al., 2014).

Consumer behaviour intention relates to consumers' subjective estimation of future behaviours. There are several types of behavioural intentions, such as buying intention, repurchase, consumption and search. Although intention is a significant behaviour indicator, it is subject to change due to its dependence on different factors and circumstances (Blackwell, Miniard & Engel, 2001). Considering basic marketing postulates, buying intention may be regarded as consumer's planned orientation towards buying a particular product, service or brand. The main aim of marketing effort is to stimulate buying intention, and finally the actual buying (Belch

& Belch, 2003), although the former might not lead to the latter.

Word-of-mouth communication (WOM) refers to interpersonal and informal communication among friends, family members and acquaintances. It can influence buying decisions and attitudes formation, impact consumer expectations as well as product/service satisfaction. WOM is perceived as the most persuasive and influential type of communication because consumers perceive informal sources as more credible and less risky (Kursan Milaković, 2014).

3. HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

3.1. Trust, search for novelty, perceived usefulness and attitudes towards social network advertising

The levels of media persuasiveness and trust impact the perceived credibility. If consumers do not trust a particular medium, they might not pay attention to advertised content and products (Boateng & Okoe, 2015b). Compared to offline purchasing, trust is more important for online buying, because consumers might experience higher risk in e-commerce due to the absence of physical attributes (Pappas, 2016). Reliability of a particular medium affects consumer perceptions about information reliability, meaning that the capability of a consumer to trust a social media advertisement depends on consumer's trust in that particular social medium. If consumers do not trust the chosen medium, it is less likely that they will pay attention to ad content and advertised product (Noprisson et al., 2016).

Boateng and Okoe (2015a) determined that trust is a factor which stimulates the adoption of positive attitudes towards social media advertising, i.e. that there is a positive relationship between credibility and consumers' attitudes towards social media advertising. In addition,

consumers seem to like social media because they see no risk and can trust the information they see. According to some researchers (e.g. Noprisson et al., 2016), only credibility, as opposed to informativeness and the feeling of irritation, has an impact on consumer attitudes towards social media advertising. For instance, Yang, Huang, Yang and Yang (2017) argue that for online video ads (e.g. YouTube ads), perceived fun, informativeness, irritation and ad credibility influence viewers' attitudes towards these ads. Therefore, ads can provide enjoyable consumer experiences entailing the need for escapism, diversion, aesthetic enjoyment or emotional freedom. On other hand, some consumers do not share positive experiences due to the perception of online video advertising as irritating, boring or offensive.

Past research analysis shows that trust and social media advertising relations were studied in the context of text-messaging advertising, e-mail marketing and particular social networks separately (e.g. Facebook, YouTube). Given the lack of studies encompassing general consumer views about several social networks within one study, and the need for acquiring new knowledge respectively, the hypothesis is formulated as proposed:

H1: Perceived trust positively influences consumer attitudes towards social network advertising.

Search for novelty may be viewed as a motivator for new information search (Hirschman, 1980) and as an important behaviour influencer. However, no past research has dealt with this factor in terms of consumer attitudes and social media advertising. That is, literature analysis shows that this concept was not researched with respect to the attitudes towards social network advertising relationship, or within a similar research framework. As these results might reveal some new insights, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Consumers' search for novelty is positively associated with positive consumer attitudes towards social network advertising.

Although perceived usefulness can influence behavioural intention (Choi & Ji, 2015), research with regards to attitudes towards social network advertising is scarce. Along with perceived ease, usefulness is the most important determinant of using any system influenced by external variables, such as social, cultural and political factors (Surendran, 2012). Lin and Kim (2016) claim that the perceived usefulness of Facebook ads is a significant and positive usefulness perception predictor of attitudes towards those ads. That is, perceived usefulness of Facebook ad positively influences the attitude towards Facebook advertising and buying intention of the advertised product.

The existing research results provide space for additional research of perceived usefulness of social network ads with respect to the coverage of various social networks and general consumer attitudes. Thus, the following hypothesis if suggested:

H3: Perceived usefulness positively impacts consumer attitudes towards social network advertising.

3.2. Attitudes towards social network advertising and buying intention, buying and WOM

Boateng and Okoe (2015b) stress the importance of consumer attitudes and their relationship to behaviour. It seems that consumers who have positive attitudes towards social media advertising might positively react to those ads and be more prone to buying the advertised product or search for additional product information. Yang and others (2017) argue that consumer attitudes towards YouTube advertisements might lead to buying intention. Such consumers might have strong positive attitudes towards video advertising and might also complete the buying process. Jin and others (2014) stress that most studies exploring online buying focused on purchase intention instead of concrete online buying behaviour. Furthermore, Lin

and Kim (2016) argue that consumers do not like Facebook advertisements and that they are less likely to buy products as a result of Facebook ads interaction. However, although the intensity of the relationship was not high, the mentioned researchers indicate a positive impact of those ads on buying intention.

Perceived ease of using ads on social network may influence the attitude towards advertising on that particular network and the product buying intention (Lin & Kim, 2016). Consumers who have positive attitudes towards social media advertising are more likely to be inclined towards buying actions or search for additional information (Boateng & Okoe, 2015b). In addition, such attitudes might influence buying intention (Yang et al., 2017). Furthermore, consumer attitudes towards social media advertising may depend on the experience provided by the company. In other words, consumers that companies care for will have more positive attitudes towards their social media advertising (Boateng & Okoe, 2015b).

According to some scholars (e.g. Tončev, Kostić & Džamić, 2015) not much is known about the motivation behind consumers' further recommendations based on their attitudes and experiences tied to a particular brand, product or service. No studies exploring direct attitudes and concrete buying relationship, or their impact on WOM communication, were found. However, due to its persuasiveness and credibility (Mazzarol et al., 2007), WOM may represent a new and relevant outcome for both consumers and companies. Given a lack of research of this factor, with respect to social network advertising and consumer attitudes, new insights may be revealed.

Past research analysis shows that there are some contradictions in gained insights when it comes to the influence of social media attitudes on consumers' behaviour outcomes. Unlike the contradictory results about the buying intention, no valid results were found in terms of the actual buying. It is therefore assumed that this

PICTURE 1: Predictors and outcomes of social network advertising attitudes
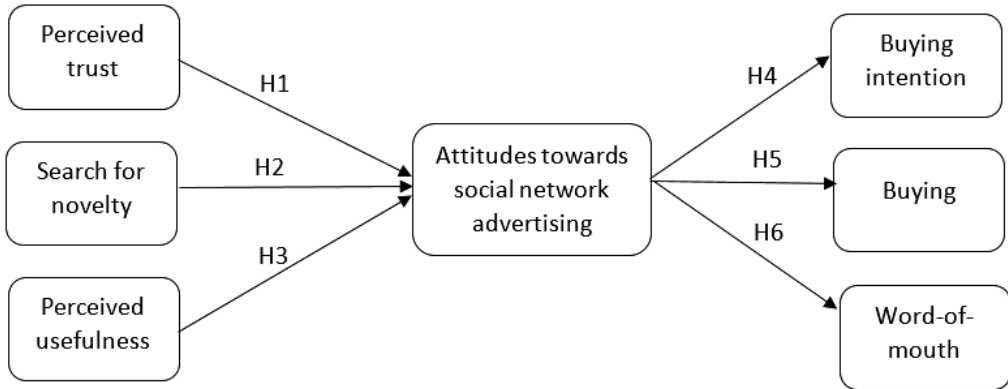
SOURCE: Authors

research might lead to some new findings. Considering the aspects discussed previously, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H4: Positive attitudes towards social network advertising positively influence buying intention.

H5: Positive attitudes towards social network advertising positively affect concrete buying.

H6: Positive attitudes towards social network advertising positively affect word-of-mouth communication.

With respect to literature overview and the research framework of this paper, the research model can be proposed as shown in Picture 1.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper considers the predictors and outcomes of attitudes towards social network advertising. The predictors include perceived trust, usefulness and search for novelty, while the outcomes encompass buying intention, buying and WOM information spread.

4.1. Sample and measurement scales

The research was conducted on 265 respondents in the Republic of Croatia using an online questionnaire distributed through Facebook and Instagram. The survey was carried out in April 2019 and comprised a convenience sample. Survey questions were formulated as statements, and a five-degrees Likert scale was used, whereby the respondents needed to express their attitudes by choosing the grades ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Measurement scales were mostly adapted from relevant authors and modified to a certain extent. The modifications comprised of inserting "social network" terms within the items in order to fit the researched context better. The used measurements scales with corresponding items are shown in Table 1.

4.2. Research results

The data was analysed using a statistical package for social science, i.e. SPSS 23, and by performing a variety of statistical methods and techniques. First, data was checked for missing values, outliers, and normality of distribution. Then, hypotheses were tested with multiple regression analyses.

4.2.1. Sample and variable description

There were 82.6 % female and 17.4 % male respondents in the sample. The sample is dominated by examinees aged 21 to 30 (70.6 %), followed by consumers younger than 20 (12.5 %), and those between 31 and 40 (7.9%). These are followed by consumers between 41 and 50

TABLE 1: Measurement scales and items

Measurement scale/ variable	Items
Perceived trust *(adapted from Boateng et al., 2015a,b; Yang et al., 2017)*	I believe the ads on social networks.
	I use the ads on social networks as a reference while buying.
	I believe that ads on social networks are credible.
	I think the ads on social networks are reliable.
	The ads on social networks are convincing.
Search for novelty *(adapted from Manning, Bearden & Madden, 1995)*	I frequently search for new product/service/brand information using social networks.
	I like the exposure to new product/service/brand information on social networks.
	I like the sites/profiles on social networks that inform about new products and brands on the market.
	I frequently search for new products using social networks.
	I think ads on social networks are useful for finding different product/services.
	I use social networks when searching for new product experiences.
	While searching the social networks, I use the first available opportunity to research about new products/services.
Perceived usefulness *(adapted from Lin & Kim, 2016)*	I find social network ads useful because they offer insights which brands, i.e. products, have the attributes I search for.
	Ads on social networks are useful because they keep me posted about new products/services available on the market.
	I find ads on social networks useful since they keep me informed about available products/services.
	Social network ads are useful because they shorten the time for searching the product/service.
	The ads on social networks are useful because I can find out product prices.
Buying intention *(adapted from Lin & Kim, 2016; Boateng & Okoe, 2015b)*	I would buy product advertised on social networks.
	I would buy a product advertised on a particular storyline.
	I would buy product/service advertised in the articles published on social networks.
	I would buy a product that I was introduced to through social networks.
Buying *(self-developed)*	I saw an ad on a social network and bought that product.

Measurement scale/ variable	Items
WOM communication spread *(adapted from Mowen, Park & Zablah, 2007)*	I frequently inform others about products and brands that I see on social network ads.
	I like to introduce others to new products and brands that I saw in social network ads.
	I like to help others by providing them with information about different products I saw in social network ads.
	Friends ask me about new product/service information advertised on social networks.
	Friends think I am a good source of information when it comes to new products advertised on social networks.
Attitudes towards social network advertising *(adapted from Pollay & Mittal, 1993; Mehta & Purvis, 1995)*	Advertisements on social networks are fun and interesting.
	I find advertisements on social networks deceitful.
	Advertisements on social networks are a good thing.
	Advertisements on social networks are unwanted interruptions.
	I like to watch ads on social networks.
	Most of the advertisements on social networks are boring.

Source: Research

years of age (5.3%), consumers aged 51 to 60 (3.4%), and finally those older than 61 (0.4%). As for the level of education, the majority of respondents fall into the category of graduate study (34.7%), followed by high school graduates (24.5%), undergraduates (23.4%), professional studies graduates (13.6%) and postgraduates (3.8%). With respect to the shares of social networks used, respondents use multiple social networks, with the majority using Facebook (90.2%) and Instagram (88.3%), followed by YouTube (51%), LinkedIn (18.9%), Snapchat (16.2%) and Twitter (7.5%). Only 2.4% of respondents use other social networks, such as WhatsApp, Pinterest, Tumblr, Viber or Reddit.

With respect to explored variables, the results show that consumers do not have great trust (mean=2.47, st.dev.=0.76) in social networks or extremely positive attitudes towards social network advertising (mean=2.80, st.dev.=0.82). They score moderately on search for novelties (mean=3.21, st.dev.=0.94), perceived usefulness (mean=3.22, st.dev.=0.96) and buying (mean=3.28; st.dev.=1.34), while a little bit less on other aspects such as buying intention (mean=2.89, st.dev.=0.96) and WOM information spread (mean=2.60, st.dev.=1.08).

4.2.2. Measurement scale reliability

Measurement scale reliability was tested using Cronbach alpha coefficients, shown in Table 2. This suggests that the used measurement scales exhibit adequate reliability values.

4.2.3. Linear regression

Linear regressions were used to test the hypotheses, i.e. the influence of three predictors (perceived trust, usefulness and search for novelty) on consumers' attitudes towards social network advertising and the impact of their attitudes on buying intention, buying and WOM information spread. Standardized regression coefficients were used for the estimation; the hypothesis was accepted if the p-value was <0.05 and if the coefficient showed the adequate path di-

TABLE 2: Measurement scales reliability

Measurement scale	Cronbach's alpha
Perceived trust	0, 876
Search for novelty	0, 902
Perceived usefulness	0, 920
Buying intention	0, 897
WOM communication spread	0,922
Attitudes towards social network advertising	0, 788

Source: Authors

rection. The regression results and hypothesis status are shown in Table 3.

5. DISCUSSION

The main purpose of this paper was to research the predictors and outcomes of consumer attitudes towards social network advertising. Selected predictors were perceived trust, usefulness and search for novelty, while the outcomes were buying intention, buying and word-of-mouth information spread.

Research results show that not all predictors affect consumer attitudes towards advertis-

ing with the same intensity or significance. Perceived usefulness proved to influence consumer attitudes towards social network advertising significantly and positively, followed by the variable of perceived trust. This led to the acceptance of hypotheses H1 and H3. To some degree, these results are in an accordance with Pappas (2016), Boateng and Okoe (2015a) and Lin and Kim (2016).

Unexpectedly, as consumer search for novelty was shown not to influence attitudes towards social network advertising, hypothesis H2 was rejected. The reason for this might be found in the sample. That is, the respondents were nei-

TABLE 3: Testing hypotheses

Hypotheses	β coefficient	Status
H1: Perceived trust positively influences consumer attitudes towards social network advertising.	0, 295	Supported
H2: Search for novelty is positively associated with positive consumers' attitudes towards social network advertising.	0, 033	Rejected
H3: Perceived usefulness positively impacts consumer attitudes towards social network advertising.	0, 465	Supported
H4: Positive attitudes towards social network advertising positively influence buying intention.	0, 579	Supported
H5: Positive attitudes towards social network advertising positively influence buying.	0, 468	Supported
H6: Positive attitudes towards social network advertising positively impact word-of-mouth communication spread.	0, 623	Supported

Source: research

ther highly innovative nor paid much attention to search for novelties.

Considering the behavioural outcomes, consumers' attitudes towards social network advertising positively influence WOM information spread, buying intention and buying, in that order of intensity. These results led to the acceptance of H4, H5 and H6 hypotheses. The results regarding buying intention are in accordance with findings of Lin and Kim (2016), while those related to buying and WOM represent novel findings.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Scientific contribution can be found in the answers on how social network advertising functions from consumers' perspectives. These findings contribute to the theory of consumer behaviour by overcoming contradictory insights and enriching the existing knowledge, in terms of underexplored factors such as search for novelty, buying and WOM. Furthermore, this research encompassed the variety of social networks, which has not been the case so far. Some novelties can also be found in the aspect of methodology. That is, the measurement scales dealing with search for novelty and attitudes towards social network advertising were modified to a certain extent to reflect the social network context, as such measurement scales do not exist in this particular form. Therefore, the scales were modified in order to measure the new concepts, while exhibiting high reliability. The results contribute to consumer behaviour theory, as well as to the TAM theory, by offering insights on the relevance of trust and perceived usefulness determinants for the attitude towards social network advertising. The results also indicate links between such attitudes and behavioural outcomes of buying, buying intention and word-of-mouth communication.

Beside scientific contribution, this paper also has practical implications. Marketing experts can

have better understanding of the relevance of consumer attitudes towards social network advertising, their causes and effects, as well as the importance of investing marketing efforts in order to create and maintain favourable consumer attitudes. With respect to research results, marketing experts should pay considerable attention to consumers' perceived trust and usefulness, since these proved to be the most significant influencers on attitudes towards social network advertising. In addition, marketing experts need to communicate useful information that is likely to shorten the search time and provide adequate offers, and keep consumers informed and up to date with available products or services. Moreover, this means that marketeers need to constantly think about developing practical and user-friendly sites and ads.

In order to develop and/or maintain a high level of trust, marketeers can include other people's advocacies in their communication strategy and in that way reduce the risk associated with the unknown products and online buying. This might also result in positive word-of-mouth information spread. Marketeers need to consider consumers' usage of social media and the opportunities of using the social networks for constant communication. That includes advertising, which can strengthen the messages of trust, credibility and practicality and facilitate the act of buying or giving recommendations. This can be achieved with the primary purpose of creating and reinforcing positive attitudes towards advertising. All these factors contribute to creating valuable and interesting content, which influences the image of the company, the product and overall consumer experience.

This paper has some limitations. The research was done on a convenience sample, so future studies might be conducted on a representative sample. Another limitation of this study is the reliance on only three personal factors, whereby the inclusion of more factors, or different categories, such as demographics, situational and

social factor might show different significance of the explored variables. Given the relevance of the search for novelty, the relationship of this factor and social network advertising attitudes should be explored, which was not possible in this study due to the apparent insignificance of this relationship. The reasons for this might lie in the nature of the sample or the survey method used, which might involve the possibility of respondents' insincerity when answering questions. Therefore, future research might base the model exploration on a method that would be more qualitative in nature.

In addition, future research can test the proposed model including more individual variables and exploring the relationships between the outcomes as well. Finally, considering the limitations and future research directions, it can be concluded that attitudes towards social network advertising are an interesting and dynamic field that deserves further exploration.

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