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TITLE: An Action Research on Improving Parents' Digital Advertising Literacy Skills

AUTHORS: Hediye AYDOĞAN, Ahmet AYHAN

PAGES: 276-294

ORIGINAL PDF URL: <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/2452360>

An Action Research on Improving Parents' Digital Advertising Literacy Skills

Ebeveynlerin Dijital Reklam Okuryazarlığı Becerilerinin Geliştirilmesine Yönelik Bir
Eylem Araştırması

Hediye AYDOĞAN^{*} 
Ahmet AYHAN^{**} 

Abstract

Parental mediation plays a leading role in the process of shaping children's relations with and raising awareness about digital advertisements. This study aims to qualitatively evaluate the effectiveness of the digital-based education model created to develop digital advertising literacy skills that parents need in this process. For this purpose, the action research model, which is one of the qualitative research methods, was adopted in the study and a 12-hour digital-based training was conducted with the participation of seven parents with children between the ages of 7 and 13 living in Antalya. Semi-structured interview was used to collect research data. The qualitative data obtained through semi-structured interview and observation were qualitatively content-analyzed in the MAXQDA 2020 analysis program. The results obtained from the qualitative data showed that the education model contributed to the development of parents' skills in terms of conceptual, attitudinal and performance dimensions of digital advertising literacy. It was determined that this improvement also reflected positively on parental mediation strategies. Based on the results of the research, suggestions were made to researchers, practitioners and policy makers working in this field.

Keywords: Digital Advertising, Digital Advertising Literacy, Parental Mediation Strategies, Digital-Based Education, Action Research

* Res. Asst. Dr., Akdeniz University, Faculty of Communication, Department of Advertising, Antalya, Türkiye, E-mail: hediyeaydogan90@gmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0001-9696-8742

** Prof. Dr., Akdeniz University, Faculty of Communication, Department of PR and Publicity, Antalya, Türkiye, E-mail: ahmetayhan@akdeniz.edu.tr, ORCID: 0000-0003-4500-8658

This article was produced in part from the Ph.D. dissertation entitled "A Model Proposal on Adults' Digital Advertising Literacy", which was approved by the Akdeniz University Institutional Review Board on November 20th, 2020 (decision number 241).

Makale Geçmişi / Article History

Gönderim / Received: 27.05.2022

Düzeltilme / Revised: 12.09.2022

Kabul / Accepted: 23.09.2022

Öz

Çocukların dijital reklamlarla ilişkilerini biçimlendirme ve dijital reklamlar konusunda bilinç kazanma sürecinde ebeveyn arabuluculuğu başat bir rol üstlenmektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, ebeveynlerin bu süreçte gereksinim duydukları dijital reklam okuryazarlığı becerilerini geliştirmeye yönelik oluşturulan dijital tabanlı eğitim modelinin etkinliğini niteliksel olarak değerlendirmektir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda çalışmada nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden biri olan eylem araştırması modeli benimsenmiş ve Antalya’da yaşayan, 7-13 yaş arasında çocuğu bulunan yedi ebeveynin katılımıyla 12 saatlik dijital tabanlı bir eğitim gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırma verilerinin toplanmasında yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşme ve yapılandırılmamış gözlemden faydalanılmıştır. Araştırmada yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşme yoluyla elde edilen nitel veriler MAXQDA 2020 nitel analiz programında nitel içerik analizinden faydalanılarak çözümlenmiştir. Nitel verilerden elde edilen sonuçlar, reklam okuryazarlığının kavramsal, tutumsal ve performans boyutları açısından ebeveynlerin becerilerinin geliştirilmesine eğitim modelinin katkı sağladığını göstermiştir. Bu gelişimin aynı zamanda araştırmaya katılan ebeveynlerin çocuklarının reklam deneyimlerindeki arabuluculuk stratejilerine de olumlu yönde yansıdığı tespit edilmiştir. Araştırma sonuçlarından hareketle bu alanda çalışan araştırmacı, uygulayıcı ve politika yapıcılara önerilerde bulunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dijital Reklam, Dijital Reklam Okuryazarlığı, Ebeveyn Arabuluculuk Stratejileri, Dijital Tabanlı Eğitim, Eylem Araştırması

Introduction

Advertising is everywhere (Freitas, 2014; Goldstein, 1999), and as an advertising critic. Grange states, people “breathe nitrogen, oxygen, and advertising every day” (Qin, 2019). They encounter advertising wherever they go and look According to a study by Red Crow marketing firm, the number of advertising exposed ranges from 4,000 to 10,000 per day (Marshall, 2015), and this number is increasing day by day in proportion to the increase in the share of ad spending (Deloitte, 2021). In this sense, when the statistical report showing that Turkey ranked 25th in the world market in terms of media investments and ad spending in 2021 (Deloitte, 2022) is taken into consideration, it can be extrapolated that people may experience more exposure to the advertising messages in their lives. Therefore, it can be regarded as imperative for media consumers in Turkey to develop critical literacy skills to resist and cope with persuasive advertising messages. Furthermore, when the fact that digitalization has brought about opaque forms of advertising, in which persuasive messages are deliberately disguised and can only be disclosed through critical evaluations of advertising-literate people (Bishara, 2007) is considered, it can be clearly asserted that people need to equip themselves with the advertising literacy skills adapted to the requirements of the digital age. As the fifth country in the world with the highest growth in ad investments in the digital media, Turkey initiated some attempts (the “Media Literacy Teaching Material” by Ministry of National Education, and Radio and TV Supreme Council (Altun et al., 2018; Orhon, Pembecioğlu, Altun, Tüzel & Çakmak, 2014)) to achieve this; however, most of them (Ardıç Çobaner & Ögüt, 2017; Erdem, 2014; Taşkaya & Aydoğan, 2019) focused mostly on the development of the media literacy levels of children at schools, subordinating the need for advertising literacy skills and ignoring the out-of-school environments. In this regard, Hobbs (2010) puts forth that children have problems in performing their media literacy skills outside the school where they learn these skills. In their out-of-school environments, their

parents play a key role in helping children develop these skills by enacting active parental mediation (Gündüz Kalan, 2010; Spielvogel & Terlutter, 2011; 2013). However, some studies (Akcan & Kazaz, 2020; Ardiç Çobaner & Ögüt, 2017; Erdem, 2014; Lievens, 2015; Livingstone, Van Couvering & Thumim, 2005) acknowledge that particularly parents are deprived of these skills in the digital age, and thus digital advertising literacy education for parents is regarded necessary.

Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services of Turkey launched a notable program ('Family Education Program'), in which modules in various topics including media are provided for parents and other family members to keep up with the requirements of the 21st century, and the teaching materials for media education entitled 'Understanding Media' (Aydeniz, 2012c), 'Getting Acquainted with Media' (Aydeniz, 2012b) and 'Using Media Consciously' (Aydeniz, 2012a) are remarkable resources for program participants to recognize and question the media; however, it is considered that they may be insufficient to contribute to the development of digital advertising literacy skills of parents since they do not completely focus on advertising and digital advertising in particular. As being the first to propose, implement and evaluate a digital advertising literacy education model for parents by considering their needs and requests, this study also intends to positively affect parental mediation engagements, and fill the gap in the literature by not only defining problems, but also attempting to developing solutions. In line with the aims of the study, answers are sought to the following questions:

1. How does the model contribute to the parents' digital advertising literacy skills?
2. How does the model contribute to the parents' mediation strategies?

Conceptual Framework

The advances in information and digital technologies have brought about new forms of advertising and changed the way advertising reaches its target audiences. Defined as any persuasive message related to products, services and ideas engaging with consumers via digital media (Cho & Lee, 2018, p. 335), digital advertising is classified under six main types by Deloitte (2021): Display or cost-per-click, video, search engine, influencer, classified, and other, and other include sub-types such as connected TV, in-game, and email.

Digital advertising can easily mushroom (Qin, 2019) and camouflage itself in the environment where it brings its audiences with its mostly covert messages. Since its messages can be personalized (Dash & Belgaonkar, 2013; Kelley & Bartel Sheehan, 2022; Yıldırım Becerikli, 2013), people can familiarize themselves with, develop pleasant attitudes towards, show willingness to engage with, and stop avoidance from the advertising (Belch, Belch, Kerr, Powell & Waller, 2020; Kelly-Homes, 2016; Qin, 2019). In addition, it provides many other advantages for advertisers such as fast reach, efficiency, easy update, effective measurement, low budget, and space – and time-free distribution (Belch et al., 2020; Dash & Belgaonkar, 2013; Kelley & Bartel Sheehan, 2022; Önay Doğan, 2015; Pickton & Broderick, 2005; Qin, 2019; Yıldırım Becerikli, 2013). From the perspective of consumers, it can help them save time by immediately offering what they search for (Hamilton, 2017; Karpap Aktuğlu, 2006; Kelly-Homes, 2016). Though sounds good, this is done mostly through privacy

violations by tracking and analyzing the personal data without users' recognition and consent (Karpas Aktuğlu, 2006; Kelley & Bartel Sheehan, 2022; Kelly-Homes, 2016). Another related problem stated by consumers is that it is interrupting their digital media experience due to its repeatability (Hamilton, 2017; Karpas Aktuğlu, 2006; Kelly-Homes, 2016). Regarding this, it can be acknowledged that the advantages surpass the disadvantages for advertisers while it is exact opposite for consumers. However, most consumers are unaware of digital advertising related problems, therefore the need for the development of digital advertising literacy skills is underlined.

Defined as "the ability to recognize, evaluate and understand advertisements and other commercial messages" (Malmelin, 2010, p. 130), digital advertising literacy is claimed to leverage the wellbeing of the digital society (Hudders, Cauberghe & Panic, 2016; Kelly-Homes, 2016; Rozendaal, Oprea & Buijzen, 2016; Spiteri Cornish, 2014). While stated essential for children due to their immature and limited cognitive and affective abilities to critically assess advertising (Hudders et al., 2016; Rozendaal et al., 2016), it is also asserted that parents should acquire and/or improve digital advertising literacy skills (Duerager & Livingstone, 2012; Hudders et al., 2016; Livingstone & Blum-Ross, 2020; Rozendaal et al., 2016) to manage actively their parental mediation processes. In the Turkish society, it is stated by some work (Tezel Şahin & Özbey, 2007; Tutkun & Tezel Şahin, 2016; Ulutaş & Özpınar, 2013) that mothers take the responsibility of caring and raising the children in the family more than fathers are expected to do.

Parental mediation strategies refer to the various interpersonal communication strategies which the parents apply in their attempts to interfere with the possible negative effects of the media on the lives of their children (Clark, 2011) by controlling, monitoring and/or making explanations about the media contents (Warren, 2001). Several kinds of parental mediation strategies are extant in the literature, but this study rests on three common strategies: restrictive, co-viewing, and active. Restrictive mediation refers to parents' hindering, limiting and/or ruling their children's media consumption through time-limits, app-limits, device-limits, content-limit, limit on access zone (e.g. living room, kitchen, school, etc.) and filtering (Benedetto & Ingrassia, 2020; Holiday, 2018). The medium-level mediation strategy is the co-viewing strategy, requiring parents to accompany the media consumption process of their children without making any comments and/or critical discussions regarding the media content (Benedetto & Ingrassia, 2020; Vijayalakshmi, Lin & Lacznia, 2020), and turning them into a "passive observer" (Robertson, Aitken, Thyne & Watkins, 2016). Lastly, parents apply active mediation strategy when they discuss and comment on media contents, pose their children related questions, and explain the positive and negative aspects of the contents (Benedetto & Ingrassia, 2020; Spiteri Cornish, 2014), resulting in children's making educational inferences and developing a normative attitude and action (Holiday, 2018; Livingstone & Helsper, 2006) while turning parents into "gatekeepers" (Valkenburg, Krcmar, Peeters & Marseille, 1999). It is urged that active mediation increases advertising literacy levels, while restrictive mediation hinders the interaction between children and advertising content, resulting in children's having problems in adapting to the digital age, develop and improve literacy skills, and learn beneficial information from the media contents (Duerager & Livingstone, 2012; Hudders & Cauberghe, 2018; Spiteri Cornish, 2014). In this regard, when the fact that parents do not have a manual for how to behave in such cases

is taken into consideration, it is expected that advertising literacy education will be of great avail for them to adapt to this process as much as possible (Benedetto & Ingrassia, 2020; Vijayalakshmi, Lin & Laczniak, 2020), and equip them with necessary skills and knowledge.

Being an advertising-literate individual means going beyond differentiating advertising from other contents. Like advertising with several dimensions including cognitive and affective dimensions, advertising literacy consists of dimensions that need to be considered for understanding, determining and analyzing the phenomenon and levels of advertising literacy skills of the members of the society. Some models (Hudders et al., 2015; Malmelin, 2010; Nas, 2018; Ritson & Elliott, 1995; Rozendaal, Lapierre, van Reijmersdal & Buijzen, 2011) explaining the dimensions of the advertising literacy exist in the literature; however, this study draws upon the model by Rozendaal and fellows (2011) since it includes a dimension which takes into account the advertising literacy performance. The model dimensions, components, and strategies are explained in the table below:

Table 1. Advertising Literacy Dimensions, Components/Strategies & Operational Definition

Dimensions	Component and Strategies	Operational Definitions
Conceptual advertising literacy	Recognition of advertising	"Differentiating advertising from other media content"
	Understanding selling intent	"Understanding that advertising tries to sell products"
	Recognition of advertising's source	"Understanding who pays for advertising messages"
	Perception of intended audience	"Understanding the concept of audience targeting and segmentation"
	Understanding persuasive intent	"Understanding that advertising attempts to affect consumers' behaviour by changing their mental states"
	Understanding persuasive tactics	"Understanding that advertisers use specific tactics to change consumers' attitudes, cognitions, and behaviours"
	Understanding advertising's bias	"Being aware of the discrepancies between the advertised and the actual product"
Attitudinal advertising literacy	Skepticism toward advertising	"Having the tendency to disbelieve advertising"
	Disliking of advertising	"Having a general negative attitude toward advertising"
Advertising literacy performance	Counter arguing	"Rebutting the arguments in advertisements"
	Attitude bolstering	"Generating thoughts that are consistent with one's own attitude"
	Negative affect	"Getting irritated or angry"
	Assertions of confidence	"Asserting that advertisement could never change one's opinion"
	Selective exposure	"Paying no attention to advertisements"

*Adapted from Rozendaal et al. (2011), Oprea and Rozendaal (2015)

In their research on primary school aged children, Oprea and Rozendaal (2015) found no correlation between conceptual and attitudinal advertising literacy, conceptual advertising literacy and advertising literacy performance, but a positive correlation between attitudinal advertising literacy and advertising literacy performance. Contrary to Oprea and Rozendaal's (2015) finding, Rozendaal and fellows (2013; 2016) revealed that there was a positive correlation between the

conceptual and attitudinal advertising literacy, which means that the higher individuals' conceptual advertising literacy is, the higher their attitudinal advertising literacy will be.

Method

The current study adopted action research model as a qualitative research design for the qualitative evaluation of the effectiveness of the digital-based digital advertising literacy education model created for improving parents' digital advertising literacy skills. Chosen for its compliance with the nature of the study, action research is "any systematic inquiry conducted by teacher researchers, principals, school counselors, or other stakeholders in the teaching/learning environment to gather information about how their particular schools operate, how they teach, and how well their students learn" (Mills, 2014, p. 8). As implied in the definition, action research enables researchers to collect data about a defined problem within a specified time period, and to implement a new action based on the findings from the data through a systematic plan in a learning environment. In this study, the first author carried out the action research after obtaining ethical approval from the Akdeniz University Institutional Review Board on November 20th, 2020 with decision number 241; however, in order to identify the potential problems, which could be experienced during the implementation of the education model, and test the clarity of the interview questions beforehand (Bell, Whitehead & Julious, 2018), three pilot studies were executed virtually on Zoom in 2020 (15-30 June 2020; 5-12 July 2020; 15-25 July 2020) with 8 participants for each. The parents were selected through purposive sampling method which required that parents had to have children aged 7-13, be a digital media user and show a low level of digital advertising literacy skills. The pilot studies began with the pre-testing of the digital advertising literacy skills of parents through an online questionnaire form adapted from Rozendaal and fellows (2016), and through an online semi-structured interview based on the interview questions adapted from Spiteri-Cornish's (2014) study, and those who scored low in the pre-testing stage were recruited in the training. Based on the evaluations of parents' needs and levels of digital advertising literacy skills and of their expectations from the training determined under the supervision of two experts, six different training modules focusing on the Rozendaal and fellows' (2011) and Oprea and Rozendaal's (2015) dimensions of advertising literacy and the parental mediation strategies were developed and revised until the researchers and two experts assured that the training modules could be used for the main action research because no new data could be attained from the last pilot study and the responses reiterated, which indicated that the research reached the data saturation point. Since three pilot studies resulted in data saturation, no further pilot studies were conducted. Each training ended with the post-tests (online questionnaire and online semi-structured interview) in order to find out whether and how the training modules contributed to the digital advertising literacy skills of participants. During this process, the pre – and post-interview forms were also modified for the participants could easily understand what was being investigated. This research was conducted with seven parents (six mothers, one father). Seven pre – and post-interviews resulted in data saturation and no new themes emerged, so no further participants were recruited in the research. Furthermore, seven participants were considered sufficient for focus groups as also claimed by some (Bloor & Wood, 2006; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018; Creswell, 2014)

that focus groups with four to twelve participants yielded more effective results. The participants were aged between 34 and 51, and while three of them were parents of female children, four were parents of male children. While minimum education level of parents of female children was high school, the maximum education level was associate degree, and their spouses were graduates of high school (at the lowest level) and bachelor programs (at the highest level). They were housewives, and their spouses were a teacher, a private sector worker, and a policeman. Most of those with male children worked as a teacher while only one of them was a retired civil servant. Their spouses were an academic, a civil servant, a teacher, and a retired civil servant. Their minimum education level was high school, and their maximum education level was bachelor, while their spouses graduated from high school (at the lowest degree) and graduate school (at the highest degree). They were selected through criterion sampling, one of the purposive sampling methods, which requires the researcher to select cases upon specific criteria (Cohen et al., 2018). The criteria determined were as follows:

1. Being a digital media user,
2. Having children aged between 7-13 (since some studies (Can & Toruk, 2003; Öktem, Sayıl & Çelenk Özen, 2006) show that this age group is vulnerable to digital advertising due to their high level of digital advertising consumption, and Google (2021) define children aged under 13 as those to be supervised by their parents),
3. Having children enrolled at determined schools in Antalya in the academic year 2020-2021,
4. Having a low level of digital advertising literacy skills.

Semi-structured forms for online interviews were used before and after the implementation of the action plan prepared originally by the researchers in order to collect data from participants, since semi-structured interviewing empowers researchers to understand in-depth how participants define, rationalize and reflect on their own behavior, action, and opinions (Cohen et al., 2018; Creswell, 2014; Mills, 2014), and is utilized in the stages of identifying problems and evaluating actions in the action research (Dawson, 2009). In order to accomplish this, the interviews were made with the adapted version of the interview form developed by Spiteri-Cornish (2014). The pre-implementation interviews were conducted in November-December 2020 and January 2021, and the post-implementations were in February-March 2021. They lasted 45 minutes to one hour, were video-recorded with the permission of the participants, and were transcribed simultaneously on MAXQDA 2020 by the first author, anonymizing the participant names and using nicknames determined by participants.

The 12-hour digital based training was carried out on weekends between the dates February 6 and 21 in 2021. The first focus group lasted 60 minutes, the second lasted 75 minutes, the third lasted 71 minutes, the fourth lasted 61 minutes, the fifth lasted 60 minutes, and the last one lasted 65 minutes. After each focus group, the first author transcribed and macro-analyzed the data obtained, and made online discussions on the problems and future steps with two experts during the peer debriefing interviews made on the same or the following day when the focus group interviews were carried out. The first training session focused on the introduction of the digital advertising to the

participants, and on the distinctive features of digital advertising which differ it from digital contents. For this purpose, after the participants were introduced to each other, they were presented with one digital content and one listicle native advertising on Onedio (a social content platform in Turkey), and they were directed to discover the differences between the two contents by posing them some leading questions until they found out which one was advertising. Based upon the same advertising, they were asked to identify and share what they thought the characteristics of digital advertising were, and what differentiated it from both digital contents and traditional advertising. After they shared their thoughts and opinions about digital advertising, the facilitator (who is the first author) made an online presentation on what digital advertising is, how it works, and what it generally intends. During the presentation, the participants were asked which one they and their children encountered mostly in their visits to which digital media platforms, and which one they felt discomfort with mostly. After they shared their reactions to digital advertising the presentation was ended, and their feedback for the first training were collected through reflections.

In the second training session, which was centered upon the professional and financial structure of digital advertising, the aim was to help participants attain and/or improve the skills of recognition of advertising's source and of understanding the advertising's target audience, and in order to fulfill this aim, the participants were invited to a brainstorming activity on who the actors of both traditional and digital advertising ecosystem could be. After receiving their responses, a PowerPoint presentation was shared with the participants in order to provide an in-depth explanation of the roles and functions of the actors in the advertising ecosystem, and they were interrogated about which actors they and their children could easily identify. In this part, especially an informative video on online behavioral advertising produced by IAB UK (2012) and subtitled by YourOnlineChoices (n.d.) was played, and the participants were invited to make a discussion about the video provided. After the discussion ended, the participants were divided into four groups ('advertiser', 'advertising agency', 'publisher', and 'consumer'). In this role-playing part, the participants jointly determined a brand (which was 'Lays', Fritolay's sub-brand), and were asked to evaluate what they would do in their role for a digital advertising campaign of their brand. In this part, awareness-raising questions were posed to help them evaluate critically how the advertising sector determines and segments their target audience online, and thus understand the structure of the digital advertising sector deeply.

The third training session was oriented towards the development and/or improvement of the participants' skills of understanding selling intent, persuasive intent, persuasive tactics, and advertising bias. Building bonds with the previous two training sessions, the participants were asked to share their opinions about what they thought the purposes of digital advertising were, and the missing ones in their answers were made up by the facilitator. Afterwards, the facilitator made a detailed presentation on what the components of digital advertising were, and raised questions regarding which ones they could easily comprehend and why. After the discussion, they were invited to which kinds of digital advertising they could never forget and felt that they should buy the advertised product or service, and why in order for them to discover which component of digital advertising led them to this behaviour. By establishing connections with their responses, the special persuasive tactics and techniques utilized in digital advertising were provided in a presentation,

and discussions were carried out on the related topics through up-to-date cases. As a follow-up of the third training session, the fourth one focused on the elements used for the meaning-making process of digital advertising, and the learning outcomes were determined as ‘realizing the creative executional strategies of digital advertising’, ‘understanding the role of scale of shots and camera movements in the meaning-making process of advertising’, ‘understanding the role of colour for advertising meaning’, ‘understanding the role of sounds in creating meaning in advertising’, and ‘understanding the role of casting in advertising meaning’. After leading to a discussion on these topics among participants, the facilitator provided some current examples, and posed questions regarding which of these creative elements of digital advertising attracted their attention most, and how the actual meaning of the digital advertising could be created in a different way. Later on, they were invited to imagine and design a mini digital advertisement verbally for the brand which they determined in the second training session by using the creative elements mentioned in the present session, and to explain why they used the specific elements for their work instead of others for them to critically evaluate their choices and to realize whether the current advertising campaigns on digital platforms they encountered might affect how they imagined. Afterwards, they were asked to take note of the digital advertisements they ran across till the subsequent training session, and to perform parental mediation for the digital advertising experiences of their children, and evaluate the reactions of their children to the digital advertisements encountered. The actions planned for the education model also undertook the mission of supporting the parents in their contention against the digital advertising and its effect on their children, and thus the fifth training session involved the educational process regarding the ways of struggling against and coping with digital advertising, of overcoming the problems through effective parental mediation strategies, and of understanding how to verify information on the digital platforms (the need for the last one was determined during the preliminary interviews). For this purpose, the participants were invited to a discussion on whether digital advertisements provided true and factual information in order to persuade their target audiences, and then they were presented with some exemplary cases of digital advertisements in Turkey, upon which some punitive fines were imposed by the Turkish Board of Advertisements due to the misleading and deceptive information involved. After some discussions on the misleading and deceptive characteristics of digital advertisements, they were questioned about how to make complaints regarding such kinds of advertisements, which yielded the fact that parents were unaware of that particular issue. Upon this, they were informed about the steps they could follow for complaint submissions after they found out that any digital advertisement included misleading information through activating their information literacy skills which were narrated with the help of an informative video on information literacy produced with the contributions of Istanbul Bilgi University (Vidobu, 2019). Right after that, they were provided with a reading on how online behavioral advertising targets its audiences based on the famous Target case, and then the facilitator posed questions regarding how they prevented themselves from digital advertising and made a mini presentation on the steps to hinder from digital advertising (e.g. ad-blocking, managing cookies, etc.). The presentation ended with a question regarding how they mediated the digital advertising experiences of their children, and upon their responses, their parental mediation strategies were

discussed based on the pros and cons of each type of parental mediation strategy as explained in the related literature.

The last training session was intended to (re)activate the advertising literacy performance skills of the participants based on a learning-by-practicing activity. The participants were provided with a brief for a digital advertising campaign with an aim of raising awareness against the digital advertising, which is anti – digital advertising. Before they prepared for their anti-digital advertisements, a rememorative presentation was made by the facilitator, where the issues in the previous sessions were briefly summarized. During their presentations of anti-digital advertisements, they were asked to which particular topics they focused on heavily. After the self – and group-assessments of the mini anti-digital advertising projects of the participants, the sessions were completed. The qualitative data were analyzed during and after the data collection process in line with the nature of action research (Mills, 2014). Qualitative content analysis was employed in order to systematically and flexibly analyze the meaning of the qualitative data and classify them as parts of the categories listed in the coding scheme (Schreier, 2012). In this study, both inductive and deductive approaches were used to constitute the codes and themes (see Appendix A) in the data (Neuendorf, 2019). Deductively, the codes were determined from the advertising literacy and parental mediation strategies literature, and later, the coders developed new codes inductively from the data, as can be clearly seen in the Appendix A. The analysis of the responses was based on frequency analysis, and the comparative results were illustrated using MAXMaps's two-cases modeling. For the reliability of this study, stability approach (in which the same researcher examines the same data at different times) was applied (Krippendorff, 2004), the first author coded the whole data, the intercoder reliability was tested by Brennan and Prediger's (1981) Kappa reliability formula embedded into MAXQDA 2020 since Kappa reliability formula is a highly established formula for measuring the intercoder reliability coefficient for research (McHugh, 2012), and the Kappa values were 0.72, 0.76, and 0.84 respectively, which indicated that the coding process was substantially reliable, as Landis and Koch (1977, p. 165) asserted. Direct quotes were also used for the reliability of the study. For the validity, the criteria that data are descriptive, that the research focuses more on the processes than results (meaning that what is important for research is how the research is being carried out rather than how it results since the process is accepted to yield substantially significant insights and understanding for the researcher), and that the data are verified by the participants (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 247) were taken into consideration. Besides, peer debriefing was included in the action research process for professional monitoring and guidance (Creswell, 2014; Mills, 2014), where experts in the domain provided their recommendations, criticisms and evaluations regarding how action research could be led.

As is the case in other research, this study also has some limitations. The main limitation of this study is that it rests on the data obtained from seven parents residing in Antalya in 2021. Other limitations include the employment of only digital advertising types for research, the design of the study in line with Rozendaal and fellows' (2011) advertising literacy dimensions, the attendance of parents born before 1992 and with children aged between 7-13 as well as time and budget limitations.

Results

The demographic data showed that parents connected to the Internet mostly via smartphones (N=7), followed by laptops (N=4), tablets (N=1) and PC (N=1). Most of them (N=5) stated that they used Internet per 3-5 hours daily, while only two of them were informed about Internet usage for 6-9 hours daily. The reasons for Internet usage were mostly “keeping up with social media” (N=7), followed by “entertainment/hobby” (N=5), “watching videos” (N=5), “searching for information” (N=5), and “professional development” (N=3). All of them reported that they encountered digital advertising mostly on YouTube, and most of them said they were exposed to digital advertising on Google (N=5) and shopping websites (N=5), followed by social media platforms other than YouTube (N=4) and online news sites (N=4). The frequency of encountering digital advertising was mostly “nearly always” (N=4), and “always” (N=3).

After the inductive and deductive content analysis was performed on the qualitative data with the use of MAXQDA 2020, the comparisons between the pre-implementation and post-intervention interviews in terms of the advertising literacy dimensions and components/strategies of participants were illustrated by using the two-cases model in MAXMaps feature (see Figure 1).

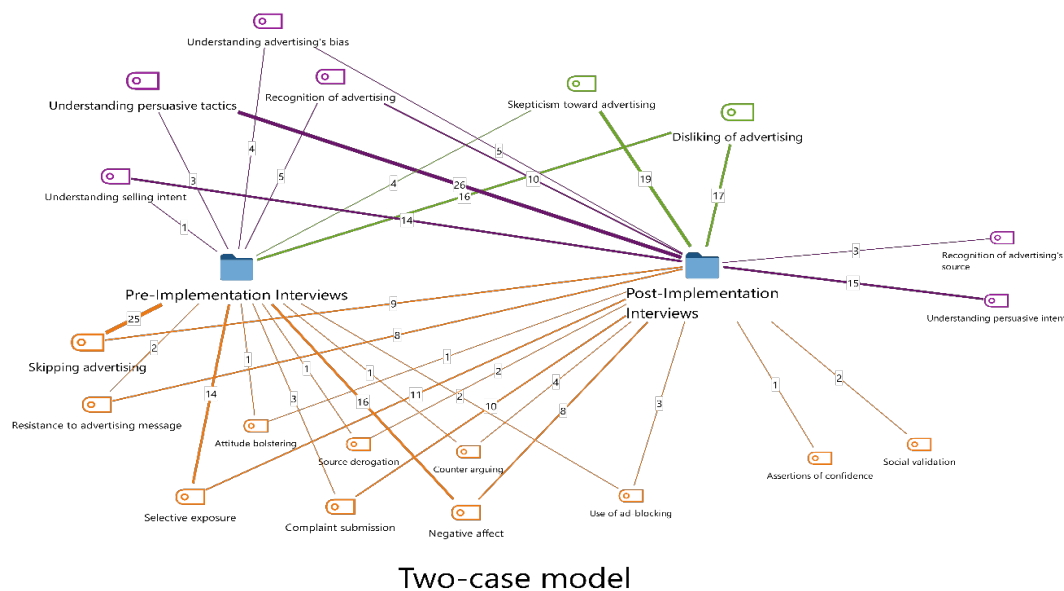


Figure 1. Two-Case Model Comparing Results in Terms of Advertising Literacy Dimensions

As for Q1, it can be stated that parents' level of digital advertising literacy improved in terms of conceptual, attitudinal and performance dimensions. When digital advertising literacy is evaluated in terms of conceptual advertising literacy, it is noteworthy that parents showed significant improvement in the sub-dimensions of understanding persuasive tactics (pre: 3; post: 26), understanding the persuasive intent (pre: 0; post: 15), recognizing the advertising's source (pre: 0; post: 3), recognition

of advertising (pre: 5; post: 10), and understanding the selling intent (pre: 1; post: 14). Compared to the pre-implementation interviews, the ability of parents to recognize the advertising's source (pre: 0; post: 3) and to understand the persuasive intent (pre: 0; post: 15) was reflected only in the post-implementation interviews. At the point of understanding the advertising's bias (pre: 4; post: 5), there was an increase in the levels of the parents, albeit slightly.

Within the scope of attitudinal advertising literacy, it was determined that especially the parents performed better in the skepticism toward advertising sub-dimension (pre: 4; post: 19) by executing critical and disbelieving attitudes toward ads they encountered. . At the same time, it was revealed that parents performed relatively better in the post-implementation interviews compared to the pre-implementation interviews in terms of developing a feeling of dislike for advertisements (pre: 16; post: 17).

When the skills of the parents were evaluated in line with the advertising literacy performance, it was observed that the parents performed better in the strategies of skipping the advertisement (pre: 25; post: 9), selective exposure (pre: 14; post: 11), and negative affect (pre: 16; post: 8) in the pre-implementation interviews, but in the post-implementation interviews, strategies such as resistance to advertising messages (pre: 2; post: 8), submitting complaints about advertisements (pre: 3; post: 10), use of ad-blocking (pre: 2; post: 3), source-derogation (pre: 1; post: 2), and counter arguing (pre: 1; post: 4) were found to be more developed. Although the parents did not show any improvement in attitude bolstering (pre: 1; post: 1), it was noted that, contrary to the results from the pre-implementation interviews, parents showed advertising literacy performance in terms of assertions of confidence (pre: 0; post: 1) and social validation (pre: 0; post: 2) only in the post-implementation interviews.

Two-Case Model

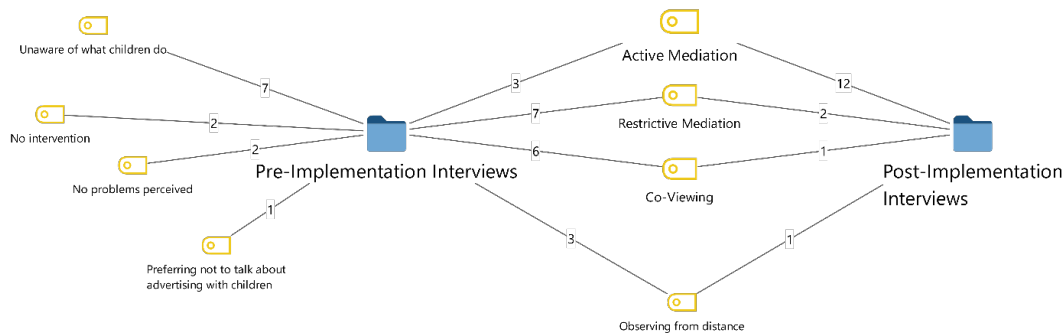


Figure 2. Two-Case Model Comparing Results in Terms of Parental Mediation Strategies

As for Q2, the Figure 2 illustrates that there is a notable difference between the parental mediation strategies of participants before and after the implementation of education model. It can be clearly seen that participants mostly preferred to make no intervening action (pre: 2; post: 0) on the media and digital advertising consumption of their children by stating that they did not know what their children do on digital media (pre: 7; post: 0), that they did not perceive the digital advertising consumption of their children as a problematic issue (pre: 2; post: 0), and that they did not talk about digital advertising with children at times when they did not use digital media simultaneously (pre: 1; post: 0). Some of the notable quotes from participants are as follows:

Ankaralı: “We track what they do by keeping our eyes on from distance, because we have never observed anything which may affect their lives critically, there have never been any bad impacts on them” (Pre-implementation interview)

Papatya: “Actually, there has been nothing so far that I should consider as a threat or problem” (Pre-implementation interview)

Another result indicates that the tendency of parents to prefer restrictive mediation (pre: 7; post: 2), co-viewing (pre: 6; post: 1) and observing children from distance (pre: 3; post: 1) declined steadily while their tendency to perform active mediation (pre: 3; post: 12) increased after the implementation of the study. Some of the statements reflecting this result are provided below:

Ankaralı: “Our kids know by book everything about what they watch, so we know that they would do nothing serious. In order to prevent this, we try to limit the websites that they visit, the apps they use” (Pre-implementation interview)

Ankaralı: “Now that we learned what could happen, we started to explain to our kids what they could come across, and how this can impact their lives such as their tendency to demand something which they do not need actually. Everyone should, every parent should, share their knowledge, opinions with kids, and they should explain why they think so” (Post-implementation review)

Conclusion

Advertising literacy is a set of skills which individuals should be equipped with in order to protect themselves from, cope with, and empower against advertising (Nelson, 2016; Oprea & Rozendaal, 2015). Advertising, which has become numerous in terms of the genre with digitization, can occupy every moment of consumers in the digital world, the number of which can reach millions. While this is the case, being able to critically evaluate digital advertisements and develop strategies for coping and intervening, that is, being a digital advertisement literate individual, is considered as one of the most significant skills that maintain a healthy life in this world. Although it has been observed that the studies conducted in this field of research focus mostly on children, and that education programs are created and implemented in schools, studies to identify and develop the digital advertising literacy skills of parents who are expected to guide children in their out-of-school experiences are quite insufficient. This study was conducted in order to both fill this gap in the literature and evaluate the designed and implemented education model, which was expected to support the parents' process

of developing and/or improving literacy skills against digital advertising which can disguise its real identity and intent through covert or latent forms.

One of the most significant results from the pre-implementation interviews was that contrary to popular belief, parents did not possess an efficient level of digital advertising literacy skills. Although they seem relatively better at the attitudinal skills, when evaluated in terms of conceptual and performance-based digital advertising literacy dimensions, it was seen that parents showed insufficient levels of conceptual skills such as understanding the persuasive intent and tactics, recognition of advertising, understanding advertising's bias, and performance-based skills such as skipping advertising and use of ad-blocking. Thus, it is recommended that further research concentrates on these results in order to contribute to the problem solution. Another salient result from these interviews was that parents were not aware of what their children do with advertising, and made no related interventions, supporting the findings of previous research (Horzum & Bektaş, 2014; Özgür, 2006). It was found out that parents engaged in restrictive mediation, albeit slightly. These results are in accordance with the previous studies (Duerager & Livingstone, 2012; Özgür, 2006).

Based on the findings obtained after the training, it was concluded that parents showed significant development in terms of digital advertising literacy dimensions. Indeed, there was a remarkable difference between the levels of conceptual and attitudinal advertising literacy, which was an indication of the success of the implementation of the education model. When evaluated in terms of their conceptual skills, it was observed that parents performed significantly better in understanding the advertising's persuasive intent and recognizing the advertising's source in comparison to the findings from the pre-implementation interviews, and that the skills of understanding the selling intent, advertising's bias and recognition of advertising, and particularly that of understanding persuasive tactics were advanced. Regarding the attitudinal advertising literacy skills, there was an advanced level of improvement in the skepticism toward advertising skills in the post-implementation interviews. Lastly, this study contributed to the literature by offering new kinds of strategies which could be evaluated for the advertising literacy performance depending on the research data: skipping advertising; resistance to advertising messages; making complaints; and use of ad-blocking. When the advertising literacy levels of participants were evaluated in terms of the advertising literacy performance, it was observed that they showed a significant advancement. In addition, it was understood that when the model included activities regarding attitudinal skills, there was a remarkable increase in advertising literacy performance skills. This result supports the previous findings (Opree & Rozendaal, 2015; Rozendaal et al., 2011; 2016).

The finding that only one father attended the research was a social and cultural reflection of the Turkish society, as stated in the previous studies (Tezel Şahin & Özbey, 2007; Tutkun & Tezel Şahin, 2016; Ulutaş & Özpınar, 2013). It is recommended that future research provide incentives for fathers to take part in order to make comparisons between mothers' and fathers' parental mediation strategies. It is suggested that researchers and educators lengthen the education process, that further studies use this education model in their researchers with participants from different backgrounds

and make comparisons. Lastly, this education model can be utilized in schools, public education centers, and parenting schools.

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APPENDIX A (Themes and Codes)

Conceptual advertising literacy	Attitudinal Advertising Literacy	Advertising literacy performance	Parental mediation strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of advertising • Recognition of advertising's source • Understanding persuasive intent • Understanding persuasive tactics • Understanding selling intent • Understanding advertising's bias 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skepticism toward advertising • Disliking of advertising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selective exposure • Attitude bolstering • Source derogation • Counter arguing • Negative affect • Assertions of confidence • Social validation • Skipping advertising • Resistance to advertising message • Complaint submission • Use of ad-blocking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active mediation • Restrictive mediation • Co-viewing • Observing from distance • Unaware of what children do • No intervention • No problems perceived • Preferring not to talk about advertising with children