

DETERMINANTS OF ATTITUDE TOWARD ADVERTISEMENTS AMONG YOUNG WORKING PROFESSIONALS: A PLS-SEM EXAMINATION OF THE ADVERTISING VALUE MODEL IN AN EMERGING DIGITAL MARKET

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – Attitude toward advertisements is a central determinant of advertising effectiveness, yet its antecedents remain under-examined among young working professionals in emerging digital markets. Drawing on Ducoffe's Advertising Value Model (AVM), this study examines the influence of five factors — credibility, informativeness, hedonism, materialism and privacy concern — on attitude toward advertisements (AAD) among young working professionals in northern India, and establishes their relative importance.

Design/methodology/approach – Primary data were collected from 600 young working professionals across Punjab, Haryana and Chandigarh through a structured questionnaire using five-point Likert scales. The proposed model was tested using partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS, following a two-stage measurement-and-structural assessment with bootstrapping (5,000 subsamples) and out-of-sample predictive validation via PLSpredict.

Findings – All five factors significantly influence AAD. Four exert positive effects — informativeness ($\beta = 0.275$) is the strongest, followed by hedonism ($\beta = 0.258$), credibility ($\beta = 0.250$) and materialism ($\beta = 0.245$) — while privacy concern exerts a significant negative effect ($\beta = -0.200$). The model explains 57.1% of the variance in AAD ($R^2 = 0.571$) and demonstrates superior predictive performance relative to a linear-model benchmark.

Research limitations/implications – The study is cross-sectional and employs purposive sampling within three northern Indian states, which constrains causal inference and generalisability. The findings nonetheless extend the AVM to a digitally engaged professional cohort in an emerging market and provide empirical grounding for privacy-calculus reasoning in this context.

Practical implications – Advertisers targeting young professionals should prioritise informational value, supported by entertainment and credibility, while adopting privacy-respectful, consent-first data practices, since privacy apprehension measurably erodes advertising attitude.

Originality/value – The study offers one of the few PLS-SEM examinations of advertising-attitude antecedents specific to young working professionals in an emerging digital market, integrating materialism and privacy concern into the classical AVM and ranking the relative contribution of each factor.

Keywords Attitude toward advertisements, Advertising Value Model, Informativeness, Privacy concern, PLS-SEM, Young working professionals

1. INTRODUCTION

Understanding the factors that shape consumers' attitudes toward advertisements has been a central concern in advertising research for several decades. Attitude toward advertisements (AAD) reflects an individual's overall evaluative disposition toward advertising messages and plays a pivotal role in determining how audiences perceive, process and respond to promotional communication. A favourable advertising attitude is associated with higher message elaboration, more positive brand associations and increased purchase intention, whereas an unfavourable attitude is associated with ad avoidance, scepticism and diminished persuasive effectiveness (MacKenzie and Lutz, 1989; Vakratsas and Ambler, 1999). Because advertising attitude mediates the path from exposure to behavioural response, identifying its antecedents has enduring theoretical and practical value.

The rapid migration of advertising into digital, mobile and data-driven environments has renewed scholarly interest in these antecedents. Ducoffe's (1995, 1996) Advertising Value Model (AVM) has provided the dominant theoretical lens, identifying informativeness, entertainment and credibility as the principal drivers of perceived advertising value and, in turn, advertising attitude. The model has been validated across numerous media and markets, and a substantial body of subsequent work has confirmed informativeness, entertainment and credibility as robust, cross-platform determinants of advertising attitude. However, the digital transformation of advertising has also introduced considerations the original model did not anticipate — most prominently, the pervasive collection and use of personal data, which has made privacy concern a salient determinant of how consumers evaluate advertising (Smith et al., 2011; Mo et al., 2023). In parallel, individual-level value orientations such as materialism have been shown to condition receptivity to advertising messages (Richins and Dawson, 1992).

Despite this progress, three gaps remain. First, relatively little empirical work has examined how these classical and contemporary factors operate together within a single integrated model. Second, the cohort of young working professionals — who combine independent income, high digital engagement and substantial daily advertising exposure, and who therefore constitute a commercially critical audience — has received limited dedicated attention. Third, the great majority of advertising-attitude studies have been conducted in mature Western markets, leaving the emerging-market context, where digital adoption is rapid but data-protection regulation is still maturing, comparatively under-researched. India, with its large and fast-growing population of digitally active young professionals, offers a particularly relevant setting in which to address these gaps.

Against this background, the present study addresses two research questions. First, which factors — among credibility, informativeness, hedonism, materialism and privacy concern — significantly influence attitude toward advertisements among young working professionals in an emerging digital market? Second, what is the relative importance of these factors? To answer them, the study develops and tests an extended AVM using partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM), which is well suited to predictive, theory-extension research involving multiple latent constructs (Hair et al., 2019).

The study makes three contributions. Theoretically, it extends the AVM by integrating materialism and privacy concern into the classical framework and validating it among young working professionals in an emerging market. Empirically, it establishes a clear, evidence-based ranking of the determinants of advertising attitude for this cohort. Practically, it offers

advertisers actionable, prioritised guidance for designing effective and privacy-sensitive advertising. The remainder of the paper is organised as follows: Section 2 develops the theoretical framework and hypotheses; Section 3 describes the methodology; Section 4 reports the results; Section 5 discusses the findings; Section 6 sets out the implications; and Section 7 concludes with limitations and directions for future research.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES

2.1 The Advertising Value Model

The conceptual framework is grounded in the Advertising Value Model (Ducoffe, 1995, 1996). The AVM conceptualises advertising value as a cognitive assessment of the worth and utility of advertising to consumers, and posits that this perceived value, together with the resulting attitude, governs how consumers respond to advertising messages. In its original formulation the model identified three antecedents — informativeness, entertainment and irritation — with informativeness and entertainment enhancing advertising value and irritation diminishing it. Subsequent research broadened the model, most importantly by adding credibility as a key positive antecedent, on the grounds that the believability of an advertisement conditions whether its informational and entertainment value is accepted (Brackett and Carr, 2001). The AVM has since become one of the most widely applied frameworks in advertising research and has been validated across television, web, mobile and social-media contexts.

Two developments in the contemporary advertising environment motivate the extension of the AVM adopted here. First, the rise of data-driven, behaviourally targeted advertising has made the use of personal information a routine feature of digital advertising, and with it, consumer privacy concern has emerged as a salient negative determinant of advertising evaluation (Smith et al., 2011; Mo et al., 2023). Second, advertising increasingly trades in lifestyle, aspiration and status imagery, the reception of which depends on consumers' own value orientations — notably materialism (Richins and Dawson, 1992; Pollay and Mittal, 1993). The present study therefore models five antecedents of advertising attitude: credibility, informativeness and hedonism from the established AVM tradition, and materialism and privacy concern as theory-consistent extensions. The five are conceptualised as exogenous latent variables influencing the endogenous construct, AAD.

2.2 Credibility

Credibility refers to the extent to which advertising messages are perceived as trustworthy and believable (MacKenzie and Lutz, 1989). It encompasses perceptions of source honesty, message accuracy and brand transparency. Advertisements perceived as credible elicit more favourable responses because trust reduces perceived risk and increases confidence in the information conveyed. A substantial body of evidence links advertising credibility to positive advertising attitudes across media (MacKenzie and Lutz, 1989; Brackett and Carr, 2001). The importance of credibility has, if anything, increased in the digital era: the proliferation of sponsored content, influencer marketing and algorithmically targeted advertising has heightened consumer scepticism, making credibility a critical gatekeeper between message exposure and favourable attitude formation. Accordingly:

H1. Credibility has a significant positive effect on attitude toward advertisements.

2.3 Informativeness

Informativeness denotes the usefulness and relevance of the information advertisements provide to support consumer decision-making. It occupies the core of Ducoffe's (1995) model as the primary driver of advertising value, on the premise that consumers value

advertising principally as a source of decision-relevant information. When advertisements deliver meaningful, accurate and timely product information, consumers are better able to evaluate alternatives and are more likely to form favourable attitudes toward the advertising itself (Logan et al., 2012). Informativeness has been repeatedly identified among the most stable and robust determinants of advertising attitude across digital touchpoints, and its salience is expected to be particularly pronounced among working professionals, whose time constraints and decision orientation heighten the appeal of informative content. Hence:

H2. Informativeness has a significant positive effect on attitude toward advertisements.

2.4 Hedonism

Hedonism reflects the entertainment and pleasure value derived from advertising content, including its emotional appeal, creativity and aesthetic engagement. The AVM positions entertainment alongside informativeness as a primary source of advertising value, and uses-and-gratifications scholarship similarly identifies enjoyment and emotional gratification as central motives for media engagement (Ducoffe, 1995; Sundar and Limperos, 2013). Advertisements that are engaging, enjoyable and emotionally resonant generate positive affect that transfers to the advertising and the advertised brand. In the contemporary environment, where short-form video and other entertainment-rich formats dominate the attention of younger audiences, hedonic value is an increasingly important contributor to advertising attitude. Therefore:

H3. Hedonism has a significant positive effect on attitude toward advertisements.

2.5 Materialism

Materialism refers to the importance individuals attach to possessions and consumption as indicators of success, happiness and social status (Richins and Dawson, 1992; Pollay and Mittal, 1993). Because advertising frequently trades in imagery of aspiration, lifestyle and status, individuals with stronger materialistic orientations are likely to find advertising more congruent with their values and therefore more agreeable. Materialistic consumers may regard advertising as a useful source of information about the consumption symbols that matter to them, and as affirmation of a value system they endorse. This construct is especially pertinent to young working professionals, for whom consumption is often bound up with identity formation and the signalling of professional success. Thus:

H4. Materialism has a significant positive effect on attitude toward advertisements.

2.6 Privacy concern

Privacy concern captures individuals' apprehension regarding the collection, use and potential misuse of their personal information in advertising contexts (Smith et al., 2011). In data-driven digital advertising, where behavioural targeting and algorithmic profiling are routine, heightened privacy concern is associated with negative advertising perceptions, reduced trust and increased ad avoidance. The relationship is theoretically grounded in the privacy-calculus perspective (Dinev and Hart, 2006), under which consumers weigh the perceived benefits of personalised advertising against the perceived risks to their personal data; where risk perceptions dominate, advertising attitude deteriorates. Consistent with this reasoning, Mo et al. (2023) report a significant negative effect of privacy concern on advertising attitude in personalised, data-driven settings. This consideration is particularly relevant in emerging markets, where digital adoption has outpaced the development of data-protection regulation. Accordingly:

H5. Privacy concern has a significant negative effect on attitude toward advertisements.

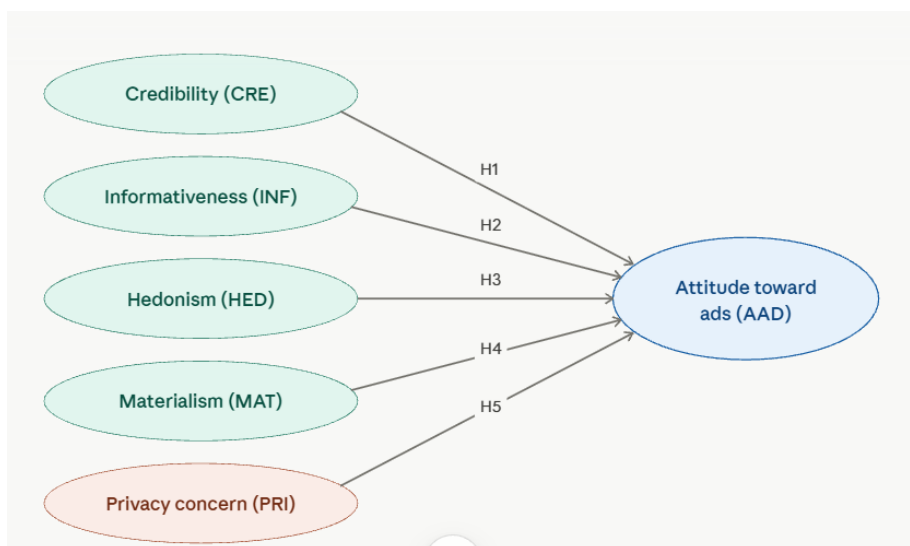


Fig. 1: Conceptual model / Research framework — the five predictors (CRE, INF, HED, MAT, PRI) and their hypothesised paths to AAD]

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Sample and data collection

Primary data were collected from 600 young working professionals residing in Punjab (343 respondents, 57.2%), Haryana (152, 25.3%) and Chandigarh (105, 17.5%). A purposive non-probability sampling approach was adopted in order to efficiently reach respondents meeting the defining criteria of the cohort — working professionals in the early-to-mid career stage who are active users of digital media. The achieved sample size of 600 substantially exceeds the minimum requirements for PLS-SEM estimation with the present model complexity and provides ample statistical power for the analysis (Hair et al., 2019).

The sample comprised 59.0% male and 41.0% female respondents. In terms of age, 72.9% were below 35 years, reflecting the study's focus on younger professionals. Educational attainment was high, with 99.0% holding at least a graduate qualification, and 44.0% were in private salaried employment. Information technology and IT-enabled services constituted the largest single sectoral group (25.5%). The profile thus represents an educated, digitally engaged and economically active cohort that encounters advertising intensively across digital platforms in the course of daily life.

3.2 Measures

All focal constructs were operationalised as reflective latent variables and measured using multi-item scales adapted from established prior literature and refined for the study context. Attitude toward advertisements was measured with seven items; credibility, informativeness, hedonism, materialism and privacy concern were each measured with six items. All items were assessed on five-point Likert scales ranging from strong disagreement to strong agreement. The use of established, multi-item reflective scales supports content validity and aligns the measurement approach with prior advertising-attitude research, facilitating comparability of findings.

3.3 Analytical approach and common method considerations

The model was estimated using PLS-SEM in SmartPLS. PLS-SEM is appropriate for predictive and theory-extension research involving multiple latent constructs, performs well with complex models, and does not impose restrictive distributional assumptions (Hair et al.,

2019; Sarstedt et al., 2022). Analysis followed the recommended two-stage procedure: the reflective measurement model was assessed first — examining indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity — followed by assessment of the structural model, encompassing collinearity diagnostics, the significance and relevance of path coefficients, explanatory power (R^2), effect size (f^2) and out-of-sample predictive relevance. Path significance was evaluated through bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples, and predictive relevance through the PLSpredict procedure (Shmueli et al., 2019).

Because the data were self-reported and collected through a single instrument, the potential for common method bias was considered in the research design. Procedural safeguards included assuring respondents of anonymity to reduce evaluation apprehension, and using clear, concise item wording to minimise ambiguity. The low inter-construct correlations subsequently observed in the discriminant-validity analysis — in particular the very low associations involving privacy concern — together with the theoretically differentiated pattern of effects, are inconsistent with the presence of a dominant common method factor, providing reassurance that common method bias is unlikely to have materially distorted the findings.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Measurement model

The reflective measurement model was assessed against the four standard criteria. With respect to indicator reliability, all outer loadings exceeded or met the 0.708 threshold (range 0.706–0.808); the single marginal value, AAD7 (0.706), was retained because its removal did not improve composite reliability or average variance extracted, consistent with established practice (Hair et al., 2019). Bootstrapping confirmed that all 37 indicator loadings were highly significant, with t-statistics ranging from 25.712 to 52.730 (all $p < 0.001$).

Internal consistency reliability was strong and consistent across all six constructs, with Cronbach’s alpha between 0.853 and 0.890, rho_A between 0.859 and 0.891, and composite reliability (rho_C) between 0.891 and 0.914. No construct approached the 0.95 ceiling that would indicate indicator redundancy. Convergent validity was confirmed, with average variance extracted (AVE) ranging from 0.576 to 0.616, all comfortably above the 0.50 threshold. Table I summarises these measurement-model results.

Table 1: Measurement model: reliability and convergent validity (N = 600)

Construct	Items	Loading range	α	rho_C	AVE
Attitude toward ads (AAD)	7	0.706–0.808	0.890	0.914	0.604
Credibility (CRE)	6	0.748–0.787	0.857	0.894	0.583
Hedonism (HED)	6	0.755–0.805	0.875	0.906	0.616
Informativeness (INF)	6	0.748–0.785	0.859	0.895	0.586
Materialism (MAT)	6	0.744–0.791	0.866	0.899	0.598
Privacy concern (PRI)	6	0.721–0.792	0.853	0.891	0.576

Note. α = Cronbach’s alpha; rho_C = composite reliability; AVE = average variance extracted. Thresholds: loadings ≥ 0.708 ; α and rho_C ≥ 0.70 ; AVE ≥ 0.50 (Hair et al., 2019).

Discriminant validity was assessed using the heterotrait–monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations, currently regarded as the most sensitive criterion in PLS-SEM (Henseler et al., 2015). As shown in Table II, all HTMT values were well below the conservative 0.85 threshold, the highest being 0.583 (HED–AAD). Privacy concern exhibited especially low associations with the other constructs (as low as 0.047 with credibility), confirming that it captures a conceptually distinct domain. Bootstrapped 95% confidence intervals provided further confirmation, with all upper bounds below 0.645, none approaching 1.0. Discriminant validity was therefore established for all construct pairs.

Table 2: Discriminant validity: HTMT ratios (N = 600)

Construct	AAD	CRE	HED	INF	MAT	PRI
AAD	–					
CRE	0.553	–				
HED	0.583	0.331	–			
INF	0.574	0.354	0.307	–		
MAT	0.576	0.352	0.395	0.335	–	
PRI	0.313	0.047	0.163	0.077	0.101	–

Note. All HTMT values are below the conservative 0.85 threshold (Henseler et al., 2015), confirming discriminant validity.

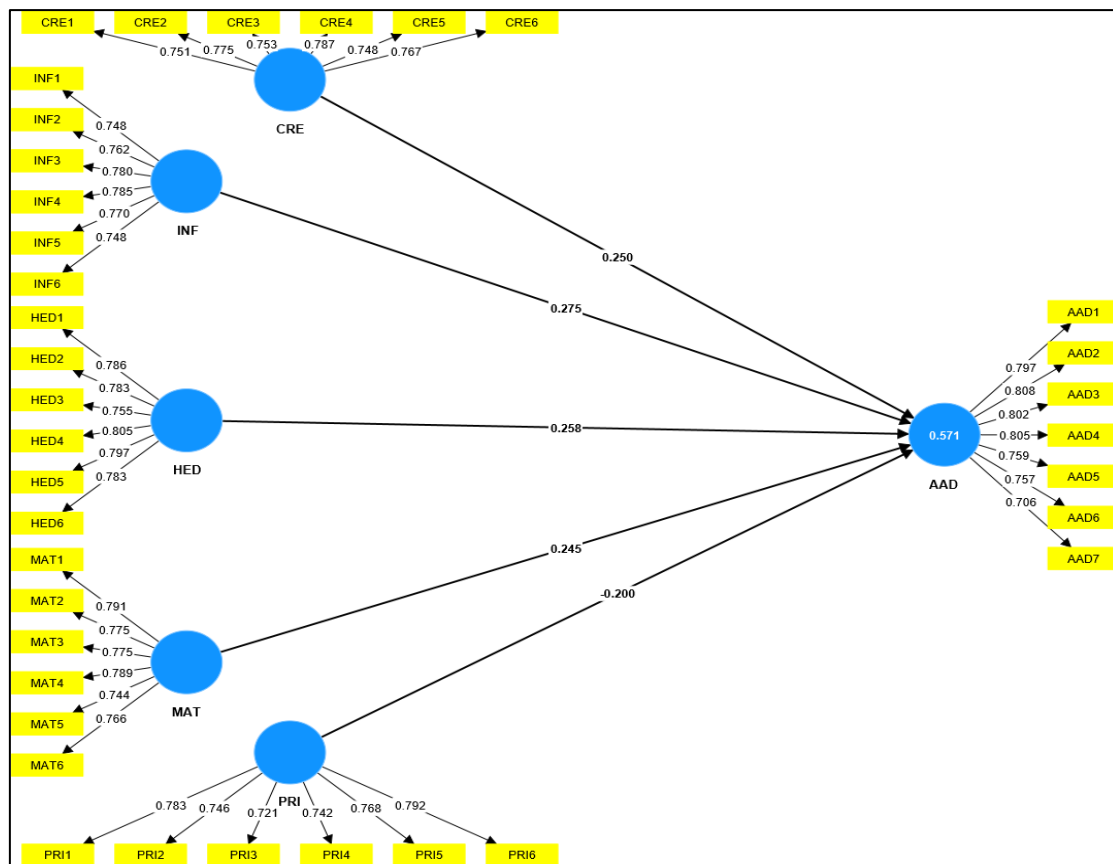


Fig. 2: Measurement Model for Factors Influencing Attitude Toward Advertisements (SmartPLS output)

4.2 Structural model and hypothesis testing

Before interpreting the structural paths, collinearity was examined using the variance inflation factor (VIF). All predictor VIF values fell well below the conservative threshold of 3.0 (range 1.024–1.235), with privacy concern recording the lowest value — consistent with its low HTMT associations — confirming that each predictor contributes independently and that multicollinearity does not distort the estimates (Hair et al., 2019).

The structural paths were tested through bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples. As reported in Table III, all five hypothesised paths were statistically significant at $p < 0.001$, with t -statistics substantially exceeding the 1.96 critical value, leading to support for all five hypotheses. Four predictors exerted positive effects on advertising attitude, while privacy concern exerted a significant negative effect.

Table 3: Structural path coefficients and hypothesis testing (N = 600)

Hyp.	Path	β	t-value	p-value	Outcome
H1	Credibility → AAD	0.250	8.711	< 0.001	Supported (+)
H2	Informativeness → AAD	0.275	9.780	< 0.001	Supported (+)
H3	Hedonism → AAD	0.258	8.318	< 0.001	Supported (+)
H4	Materialism → AAD	0.245	8.270	< 0.001	Supported (+)
H5	Privacy concern → AAD	-0.200	7.684	< 0.001	Supported (-)

Note. Bootstrapping, 5,000 subsamples. β = standardised path coefficient. Significance: $t > 1.96$, $p < 0.05$ (two-tailed).

The model explained 57.1% of the variance in advertising attitude ($R^2 = 0.571$; adjusted $R^2 = 0.568$), representing moderate-to-substantial explanatory power by the conventional benchmarks (Hair et al., 2019); the negligible difference between R^2 and adjusted R^2 indicates no overfitting. Effect-size analysis, reported in Table IV, mirrored the path-coefficient ranking: informativeness made the largest individual contribution ($f^2 = 0.150$, approaching a medium effect), followed by hedonism (0.127), credibility (0.121), materialism (0.113) and privacy concern (0.091).

Table 4: Explanatory power, effect sizes and predictive relevance (N = 600)

Predictor	f^2	Effect level	Model-level indices
Informativeness (INF)	0.150	Small–medium	R^2 (AAD) = 0.571
Hedonism (HED)	0.127	Small–medium	Adjusted $R^2 = 0.568$
Credibility (CRE)	0.121	Small–medium	$Q^2_{\text{predict}} = 0.313\text{--}0.357$
Materialism (MAT)	0.113	Small–medium	(all > 0; PLS > LM)
Privacy concern (PRI)	0.091	Small	VIF = 1.024–1.235

Note. f^2 benchmarks: 0.02 small, 0.15 medium, 0.35 large (Cohen, 1988). $Q^2_{\text{predict}} > 0$ confirms predictive relevance; PLS-SEM errors were lower than the linear-model (LM) benchmark on all AAD indicators (Shmueli et al., 2019).

Out-of-sample predictive relevance was confirmed through PLSpredict: all seven AAD indicators returned Q^2_{predict} values above zero (0.313–0.357), and the PLS-SEM model produced lower prediction errors (RMSE and MAE) than the naive linear-model benchmark

across every indicator. The model therefore not only explains a substantial share of variance in advertising attitude but also generalises to new observations, enhancing its practical utility.

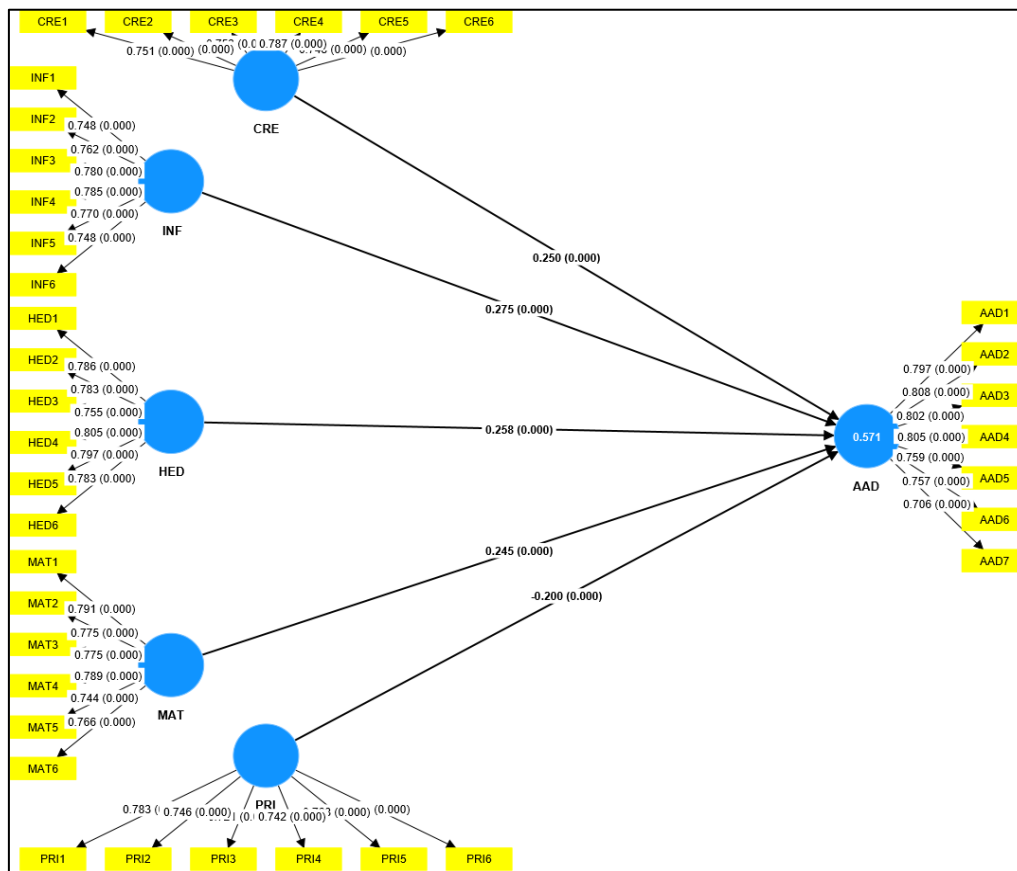


Fig. 3: Structural model with standardised path coefficients and R² (SmartPLS output)

Order of importance. Combining path coefficients and effect sizes, the predictors rank as follows: informativeness ($\beta = 0.275$, $f^2 = 0.150$) > hedonism (0.258, 0.127) > credibility (0.250, 0.121) > materialism (0.245, 0.113) > privacy concern (-0.200 , 0.091). Notably, the four positive predictors fall within a narrow effect-size band (0.113–0.150), indicating that no single positive factor dominates attitude formation.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings provide strong empirical support for an extended Advertising Value Model among young working professionals in an emerging digital market, with all five hypothesised relationships supported and the model explaining a substantial 57.1% of the variance in advertising attitude. The discussion below interprets each relationship in light of theory and prior evidence.

The finding that informativeness is the strongest predictor of advertising attitude provides direct empirical confirmation of Ducoffe's (1995, 1996) central proposition that informational value is the principal source of advertising value. For young working professionals — who are educated, time-pressed and decision-oriented — advertising that delivers useful, relevant and accurate information is evidently the most effective route to a favourable attitude. This result is consistent with the consistent identification of informativeness as among the most robust determinants of advertising attitude across digital touchpoints, and it suggests that, for this cohort, the informational function of advertising outweighs its purely persuasive or aesthetic functions in shaping evaluation.

The strong positive effect of hedonism confirms that entertainment and emotional engagement remain powerful contributors to favourable advertising attitude, in line with both the AVM and uses-and-gratifications reasoning (Ducoffe, 1995; Sundar and Limperos, 2013). In an environment dominated by entertainment-rich formats, advertising that is enjoyable and emotionally resonant generates positive affect that transfers to the advertising itself. The closely comparable effect of credibility reaffirms the enduring importance of trust: in a digital landscape marked by sponsored content, influencer marketing and synthetic media, believability functions as a gatekeeper that determines whether informational and hedonic value is accepted (MacKenzie and Lutz, 1989; Brackett and Carr, 2001).

The positive effect of materialism supports the view that materialistic value orientation increases receptivity to advertising that resonates with consumption and status aspirations (Richins and Dawson, 1992; Pollay and Mittal, 1993). For a professional cohort among whom consumption is closely tied to identity and the signalling of success, advertising that speaks to aspiration is evaluated more favourably. This finding underscores the role of individual value orientations — not only message characteristics — in shaping advertising attitude.

Perhaps the most theoretically consequential finding is the significant negative effect of privacy concern. This result extends the AVM into the contemporary data-driven environment, which the original model did not contemplate, and provides direct empirical grounding for the privacy-calculus perspective (Dinev and Hart, 2006) in an emerging market. Even among a digitally engaged professional cohort accustomed to personalised advertising, apprehension about the use of personal data measurably suppresses advertising attitude, echoing Mo et al. (2023). The finding is particularly salient in a context where digital advertising has expanded faster than data-protection regulation, and it indicates that privacy is now an integral component of how consumers evaluate advertising rather than a peripheral concern.

Finally, the narrow band of effect sizes across the four positive predictors (0.113–0.150) is itself informative. It indicates that favourable advertising attitude is not the product of any single dominant lever but is assembled from several reinforcing qualities — informational, hedonic, credibility-related and value-congruent — acting in concert. This multidimensional character implies that advertising effectiveness depends on the simultaneous orchestration of these qualities rather than on excellence along any one dimension alone.

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 *Theoretical implications*

The study makes several theoretical contributions. First, it confirms the validity of the Advertising Value Model among young working professionals in an emerging digital market, with explanatory power ($R^2 = 0.571$) comparable to or exceeding that reported in analogous PLS-SEM advertising-attitude studies, thereby supporting the cross-cultural and cross-cohort robustness of the framework. Second, it extends the model by integrating two constructs absent from its original formulation — materialism and privacy concern — and demonstrates that both are significant determinants of advertising attitude. The incorporation of privacy concern, in particular, updates the AVM for the data-driven advertising environment and provides direct empirical support for privacy-calculus reasoning in a context where data-protection regulation remains nascent.

Third, by establishing a clear ranking of determinants and showing that the four positive predictors operate within a narrow effect-size band, the study advances a more nuanced,

multidimensional understanding of advertising-attitude formation, in which several reinforcing qualities jointly determine evaluation. This integrated treatment — combining classical AVM antecedents with contemporary value- and privacy-related constructs in a single model — offers a template that future researchers may extend to other cohorts, categories and markets.

6.2 Managerial implications

For advertising practitioners and brand managers targeting young working professionals, the results imply a clear and prioritised set of actions. First, because informativeness is the strongest driver of advertising attitude, creative strategy should foreground genuine informational value — specific product claims, comparative information and decision-support content — rather than relying on aesthetics alone. Second, because hedonism and credibility follow closely, this informational substance should be delivered through entertaining, emotionally engaging and creatively executed formats, and supported by credible, transparent sourcing such as verified brand accounts, authoritative endorsements and clear sponsorship labelling, especially on professional platforms where credibility is most consequential.

Third, because the four positive drivers operate in concert rather than in isolation, advertisers should orchestrate informational, hedonic, credibility and value-congruent qualities together rather than optimising any one alone. Fourth, and critically, the significant negative effect of privacy concern indicates that consent-first, transparent and minimally intrusive data practices are not merely an ethical obligation but a commercially rational strategy. Given the intensity of daily advertising exposure within this cohort, sustained exposure to privacy-invasive formats risks accumulating a substantial negative drag on advertising attitude over time; privacy-respectful advertising design therefore protects long-term attitudinal goodwill and, with it, the effectiveness of the advertising investment.

7. CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study examined the determinants of attitude toward advertisements among young working professionals in northern India through a PLS-SEM application of an extended Advertising Value Model. All five factors significantly influenced advertising attitude: informativeness, hedonism, credibility and materialism positively, and privacy concern negatively, together explaining 57.1% of the variance in advertising attitude and demonstrating sound out-of-sample predictive relevance. Informativeness emerged as the most important driver, and privacy concern as a meaningful suppressor, with the four positive factors operating as a balanced, reinforcing set rather than through any single dominant lever. The study thereby contributes an empirically grounded, context-specific account of advertising-attitude formation for a commercially critical cohort in an emerging digital market.

The study is subject to limitations that also indicate avenues for future research. First, its cross-sectional design captures associations at a single point in time and precludes firm causal inference; longitudinal and experimental designs would strengthen causal claims and illuminate how advertising attitudes evolve. Second, the purposive, non-probability sample drawn from three northern Indian states limits statistical generalisability; replication with probability-based sampling and across wider geographies and cultures would enhance external validity. Third, the study relied on self-reported measures collected through a single instrument; future work could incorporate behavioural or platform-analytics data to triangulate the findings.

Finally, while the model explains a substantial share of variance in advertising attitude, future research could incorporate additional antecedents — such as interactivity, personalisation, ad-format characteristics and platform context — and extend the model to downstream outcomes such as engagement, purchase intention and actual behaviour. Investigating how the determinants identified here interact with emerging advertising formats, including artificial-intelligence-personalised and immersive advertising, would further advance understanding of advertising effectiveness in the rapidly evolving digital environment. Notwithstanding its limitations, the present study offers both a validated theoretical extension and actionable practical guidance for advertising in emerging digital markets.

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