

Attitudes toward advertising in Brunei Darussalam

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ABSTRACT

Attitudes toward advertising is an established construct in marketing. The construct has been researched mostly using the attitude theory and has been of interest to both marketing academicians and practitioners. Attitudes toward advertising have been researched with different frameworks, in different markets and for advertising in different media. However, there is limited research on consumers' attitudes toward advertising in Asian markets. In particular, there is no study so far on attitudes toward advertising in Brunei Darussalam, an affluent but less populous South East Asian market. This paper investigates attitudes toward advertising, antecedents to attitudes toward advertising and consequent behaviors in Brunei. The framework proposed by Pollay and Mittal (1993), later further by Wolin et al. (2002) is used in this paper. Responses from the consumer surveys were analyzed using Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). It was found that most of the belief factors in Pollay and Mittal framework influenced attitudes toward advertising among Bruneian consumers. Overall positive attitudes toward advertising were observed, which in turn influenced advertising-related behaviors. The significance of these traits is explained based on the distinctive socio-economic environment as well as the advertising landscape of Brunei Darussalam. Understanding consumers' attitudes toward advertising and ensuing behaviors for previously unexplored markets shall be an important initiation in improving the quality as well as productivity of advertising.

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1. Introduction

Advertising is a major societal as well as a business activity in any modern economy. In terms of marketing strategy, advertising is an important element of the marketing communications mix, which in turn is part of the widely used 4Ps of the marketing mix (Kotler & Keller 2012, chap.17). What consumers think or perceive of advertising is a question that has been of interest to the marketers and academics alike for several decades. This intrigue led to the development of 'attitudes toward advertising' as a formal theoretical construct, which has been mostly researched based on attitude theory by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975).

According to the attitude theory, attitudes are aggregate of beliefs and attitudes, in turn, cause behavioral intentions and behaviors. Using the tenets of attitude theory, a seminal framework on attitudes toward advertising was proposed by Pollay and Mittal (1993). This framework identifies several antecedent belief factors to explain attitudes toward advertising. Pollay and Mittal framework has been successfully applied in different markets and for advertising in different media (Salam et al. 2016).

In application to different markets, some similarities, as well as differences, were observed in attitudes toward advertising and antecedent belief factors which explain these attitudes. Hence, research continues in the non-US markets as Jin and Lutz (Jin & Lutz 2013) noted: "As U.S.-style consumer culture continues to spread throughout the world, the measurement of advertising attitudes is sure to remain a recurring research topic" (p.343). In the spirit of furthering the research on attitudes toward advertising for previously unexplored markets, this paper investigates attitudes toward advertising in Brunei Darussalam.

2. Research Problem and significance of the research

As an established framework to research attitudes toward advertising, Pollay and Mittal framework has been validated in different markets. In almost all cases, the markets where this model was applied were having a sizeable population and a liberal outlook to advertising. However, there is a limited application of this framework in an Islamic country like Brunei, which has a small yet affluent population and where advertising and media are strictly regulated.

Brunei, the oil-rich Sultanate located in South East Asia has a small population but enjoys a very high GDP per capita matched by a very high Human Development Index (a widely used measure of socio-economic well-being of the society). Islamic values and Malay traditions are held in high regard in Brunei and Sharia (Islamic law) has a central role in governing all the commercial activities, including media and advertising. Thus, Brunei can be regarded as a distinct society and consumer market, characterized by strong regulatory control, an affluent population, and comparatively less advertising.

The research problem this paper is addressing is that despite the uniqueness and commercial appeal of Brunei, there is no formal research on attitudes toward advertising among Bruneian consumers. From a managerial standpoint, understanding consumers' attitudes toward advertising can lead to more effective advertising (Mehta 2000). Theoretically, the application of an established framework in a distinctive market will augment the validity of the framework. Such need for research in new markets is in line with the repeated calls for cross-national applicability of theoretical models developed in the US and West (Ashill & Yavas 2005; Durvasula et al. 1993).

The research problem addressed in this study, lack of understanding of consumers' attitudes toward advertising in Brunei Darussalam, can be expressed in the form of following interrelated research questions:

RQ 1. What are the attitudes toward advertising among Bruneian consumers and what belief factors explain these attitudes toward advertising?

RQ 2. How do the attitudes toward advertising influence advertising-related behaviors among Bruneian consumers?

3. Literature Review

Although formal research in attitudes toward advertising can be traced to Bauer and Greyser (1968), there has been a surge in studies on this topic since the late 1980s and early 1990s. This surge can be attributed to the increased interest in exploring the attitudes toward advertising beyond the US market and also for advertising in new media. This literature review covers key pioneering works as well as relatively recent research on attitudes toward advertising, presented in following two sub-sections. First, earlier conceptions are covered to review the genesis and evolution of attitudes toward advertising. The discussion on earlier conception is followed by relatively recent research, which is particularly focused on the non-US markets.

3.1. Earlier conceptions

Bauer and Greyser (1968) is a pioneering study in attitudes toward advertising, which presented seven belief statements covering consumers' views on advertising. These belief statements were grouped into two distinct factors, economic and social effects of advertising. The economic effects represent the positive side of advertising that it helps in economic activities like increased sales and create jobs. Social effects of advertising, on the other hand, are concerned with the potential moral hazards advertising can create in terms of deteriorating social values. An important difference between attitudes toward advertising as an institution and attitudes toward advertising as an instrument was put forth by Muehling (1987). It was found that attitudes toward advertising as an institution was a distinct construct and was also regarded as more significant in explaining consumers' overall attitudes toward advertising.

Andrews (1989) was a major leap in the theoretical conceptualization of attitudes toward advertising since the pioneering work of Bauer and Greyser (1968). Andrews (1989) posited that attitudes toward advertising should be kept separate from beliefs about advertising. It was suggested that research on attitude toward advertising hitherto was in effect measuring beliefs about advertising.

The important distinction between beliefs and attitudes toward advertising, posited by Andrews (1989) was in line with the famed attitude theory by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975). According to the attitude theory, beliefs are “subjective probability of a relation between the object of the belief and some other object, value, concept, or attribute.” (Fishbein & Ajzen 1975, p.131). In the same framework, attitudes are “a person’s general feeling of favorableness or unfavorableness toward some stimulus object” (Fishbein & Ajzen 1975, p.216). Based on both these definitions, the ‘object’ under investigation in research on attitudes toward advertising is ‘advertising’. Another important tenet of attitude theory is that the beliefs are antecedents for attitudes and attitudes lead to overt actions or behaviors.

The basic framework by Bauer and Greyser (1968) and subsequent theoretical conceptions led to one of the most significant works on attitudes toward advertising – a framework proposed by Pollay and Mittal (1993). Relying on the tenets of attitude theory, Pollay and Mittal (1993) proposed seven belief factors as antecedents to attitudes toward advertising. These factors were an expansion of the original seven statements of Bauer and Greyser (1968). Pollay and Mittal framework was validated using students as well as a household sample.

Important furtherance of Pollay and Mittal framework was made in a study extending attitudes toward advertising to advertising-related behaviors (Wolin et al. 2002). It was established that for online advertising, attitudes toward advertising also predict behaviors related to advertising. This relationship of attitudes and behaviors further aligned the attitudes toward advertising research with the attitude theory. Relationship of attitudes to behaviors also gave insights into why and how consumers react to advertising with behaviors like information seeking or avoiding or ignoring advertisements. It is plausible that whether or not consumers seek information from advertising or avoid advertising has a direct bearing on the effectiveness of advertising. Therefore, these behaviors are important for the advertising industry, which is consistently concerned with the effectiveness of advertising.

3.2. Contemporary research in attitudes toward advertising

Most of the early research in attitudes toward advertising focused on the US market (Yavas 1997; Ewing 2001). In recent years, attitudes toward advertising has been increasingly researched in the non-US markets and also for the advertising of new media. This section presents a review of selected studies on attitudes toward advertising in the non-US markets.

In Yavas (1997), existing concepts of attitudes toward advertising were applied to Saudi Arabia. Based on an adult sample, economic and social effects emerged as sound predictors for attitudes toward advertising. Similar results were observed in another study on the Saudi Arabian market. With much clearer distinct positive and negative items like 'advertising is useful for providing product information' and 'advertising is misleading'; it was found that negative sentiments towards advertising prevailed among Saudi consumers. Also, there was clear support for regulation of advertising (Alabdali 2009). In a study purposely aimed at the non-US markets, differences between New Zealand and Turkey were investigated. It was found that despite the geographical and social diversity, consumers showed similarities in attitudes and beliefs toward advertising. Again, the social and economic effects of advertising were found to be significant (Ashill & Yavas 2005).

Owing to its comprehensiveness, Pollay and Mittal framework has been used - either fully or partially - in some recent non-US studies. Comparing with the North American frame of reference of Pollay and Mittal framework, Manso-pinto & Diaz (1997) found attitudes toward advertising to be more positive among Chilean students. It was attributed to a different social and economic outlook toward advertising. In two different studies, it was observed that the Pollay and Mittal model and its proposed belief structure was broadly applicable to five countries in South Asia (Ramaprasad 2001) and Taiwan (Yang 2000). Both studies were particularly concerned with the application of Pollay and Mittal framework in diverse cultures. In Ramaprasad (2001), some differences in belief structures and attitudes toward advertising among five South Asian countries points to a need for continued research on this construct in diverse settings. Similarly, Pollay and Mittal framework was applied in Romania and Bulgaria, two transitional European economies. Despite having similarities in a number of socio-economic factors, consumers from both markets exhibited different attitudes toward advertising (Paliwoda et al. 2007).

In summary, research on attitudes toward advertising has come a long way. Pollay and Mittal framework has repeatedly proven to be robust and comprehensive as it continues to be applied in diverse markets. Studies in previously unexplored markets have revealed differences, both in the attitudes toward advertising and the antecedent factors explaining these attitudes. These differences necessitate that every market and consumer segment should be researched discretely, rather than generalizing results of a particular market to others.

4. Advertising in Brunei – a market review

Brunei is located in South East Asia, specifically on the Island of Borneo, which it shares with different states of Malaysia and Indonesia. The Muslim majority Sultanate is an Islamic monarchy with a population of less than half a million and has a high GDP per capita owing to vast oil and gas reserves. Key socio-demographics of Brunei Darussalam in comparison with aggregates of its region, ASEAN are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Key demographics and economic indicators – Brunei Darussalam vs. ASEAN

Indicator ¹	Brunei Darussalam (Ranking in ASEAN)	ASEAN region ²	Brunei's ranking in ASEAN
Population (in Thousands)	417.2	628,937.3	10th
Pop. Density (Person / sq. km.)	72.3	140.1	9th
GDP per capita (US\$, PPP)	30,942.0	3,866.8	2nd
Global Human Development Index (HDI) rank ³	30th	NA	NA

¹ All figures are taken from ASEAN official website, <http://data.aseanstats.org>; figures updated in 2016

² ASEAN stands for 'Association of South East Asian Nations' – a regional alliance of ten countries of South East Asian region. For details: <http://www.asean.org>

³ HDI data is developed and published by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP); data source: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/trends>

As it can be seen from the information in Table 1, Brunei is a small economy. It is not uncommon for small economies to have limited media and advertising landscape. The same is true for Brunei as well. A small number of indigenous media outlets in print and electronic media carry advertising from brands operating in Brunei. Lack of published data on advertising expenditure in Brunei means limited comprehension of the potential of the advertising industry in the country. However, it can be safely assumed that advertising expenditure and intensity in Brunei is much less than the neighboring ASEAN markets like Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore.

Another aspect of media and advertising in Brunei is regulatory control. Driven by the aim of ensuring consumer right protection, a strong regulatory control on commercial activities is enforced in Brunei. Consumer Affairs Division of Department of Economic Planning and Development (DEPD, also known as JPKE) maintains a vigilant control on commercial activities concerning ordinary consumers. The main focus of these regulatory controls is on consumer protection from unfair practices including deceptive communications, overpricing and price control. For instance, there are strict guidelines for businesses to avoid any deceptive communication practices like false claims. Likewise, there are clear guidelines on the procedures for launching price sales by businesses. Consumers are also educated about their rights and ways to lodge complaints with the DEPDP's consumer affairs team⁴.

In addition to the controls on consumer rights and protection, there are legal and regulatory controls based on Islamic Sharia. Since Brunei is an Islamic monarchy, Sharia (or Islamic law) governs all the activities including media content in the country. It is typical in Islamic countries to have legal and regulatory safeguards against morally inappropriate content in media (Luqmani et al. 1989; Rice & Al-Mossawi 2002). Furthermore, Sharia-based laws in Brunei forbid any content in media which contravenes to Islamic values.

⁴ This information is taken from the official website of DEPDP, <http://www.depd.gov.bn>

Limited advertising and strong regulatory control based on consumer protection and Islamic Sharia are important aspects of advertising in Brunei. These aspects are distinct from other ASEAN markets, for which there has been research in attitudes toward advertising (e.g., Run and Ting, 2013). Thus, owing to the unique socio-economic and regulatory aspects of advertising, it will be useful to research attitudes toward advertising in Brunei.

5. Framework & Hypotheses

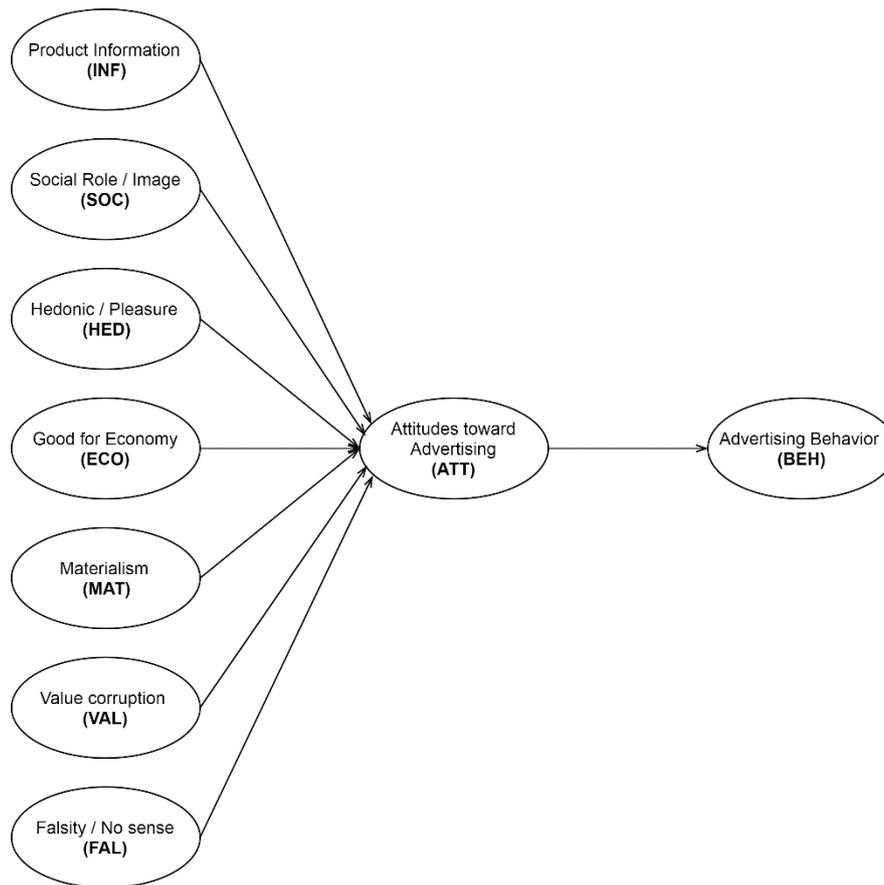
This study uses Pollay and Mittal (1993) framework to investigate consumers' attitudes toward advertising. The 7-factor model proposes seven belief factors as antecedents of attitudes toward advertising. A brief review of factors is given Table 2, followed by the framework in Fig. 1.

Table 2. Key elements of the theoretical framework

Factors	Examples of indicators describing each factor	Categorization (for Belief factors)	
		Personal vs. Social	Positive vs. Negative
Beliefs toward advertising			
Product info.	Advertising tells me which brands have the features I am looking for		
Social role & image	Advertisements tell me what people with lifestyles similar to mine are buying and using	Personal factors	Positive factors
Hedonic / Pleasure	Sometimes advertisements are even more enjoyable than other media content		
Good for Economy	Advertising helps our nation's economy		
Materialism	Advertising makes people buy unaffordable products just to show off	Social factors	Negative factors
Value Corruption	Advertising promotes undesirable values in our society		
Falsity	In general, advertising is misleading		
Attitudes toward advertising	(1) Consider advertising: a good/bad thing (2) Overall: like / dislike advertising (3) Opinion about advertising: favorable/unfavorable		
Advertising behavior	When I see an advertisement, I pay attention to it		

Here the factors are also clubbed as personal and social factors. This categorization means that one set of factors, personal factors, have more impact on individuals while other factors, social factors, have more of social implications. Another categorization is of positive and negative factors. This implies that some factors have a positive association with attitudes toward advertising, while others have a negative association. In other words, consumers having strong positive beliefs about advertising will have more positive attitudes toward advertising and vice versa.

Figure 1. The framework of Attitudes toward advertising



In Pollay and Mittal (1993), the main hypotheses were about the positive and negative direction of relation for each of the seven belief factors with attitudes toward advertising. Similar conception was used in Wolin *et al.* (2002) while extending the relation of attitudes to advertising with advertising-related behaviors.

In case of Brunei, positive belief factors explaining the attitudes toward advertising seem to be applicable, as such. However, it must be noted with caution that factor like product information and social role and image may have a weak significance as Brunei has limited advertising. It is plausible that consumers have gotten accustomed to not relying on the informative-ness aspect of advertising. Then, for the negative belief factors, consumers’ concern for values is supposed to play a role, and it is expected that negative beliefs about advertising will also be prevalent. Overall, it can be anticipated that since advertising in Brunei is well-regulated and limited in quantum, positive factors will be of greater significance. It is safe to hypothesize that the originally proposed directions of Pollay and Mittal (1993) are also expected to hold in Brunei. This is expressed in H1 and H2.

H1: Product Information, Social role & image, Hedonic or Pleasure and Good for economy will have a positive influence on attitudes toward advertising among Bruneian consumers.

H2: Materialism, Value Corruption, and Falsity will have a negative influence on attitudes toward advertising among Bruneian consumers.

Based on Wolin et al. (2002), attitudes toward advertising is also posited to have an influence on advertising-related behaviors, as expressed in H3. The behaviors under discussion for H3 are a mix of information seeking and ad avoidance.

H3: Attitudes toward advertising will have a significant influence on advertising behaviors among Bruneian consumers.

In terms of the nature of attitudes toward advertising, advertising in Brunei is both limited in quantum and is well-regulated. It is not expected that consumers will have negative reactions toward advertising because of high volume and limited regulations like in the US (Gao & Zhang 2011). Instead, the attitudes toward advertising will lean toward positive in Brunei, as expressed in H4.

H4: Attitudes toward advertising among Bruneian consumers will be positive or favorable.

6. Method

6.1. Instrument

In researching attitudes toward advertising, survey-based instruments are commonly used. The survey instrument for this study used the items from the original Pollay and Mittal framework. In the original Pollay and Mittal framework, there were 28 items for beliefs and attitudes toward advertising. These 28 items also included four items representing distal antecedents to advertising beliefs. These four items were not included as distal antecedents were not proven to be valid and were therefore not used in later studies. Out of the remaining 24 items, 21 were belief items or indicators, and three were attitudinal items. Additionally, four items were measuring advertising-related behaviors. These were taken from Wolin et al. (2002).

All the 28 items were measured based on a Likert scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The scale used is also in line with the scale used in the original and subsequent studies (Pollay & Mittal 1993; Wolin et al. 2002; Ramaprasad 2001).

6.2. Sample

The survey was conducted with a convenience sample of undergraduate students of Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD). As Brunei's largest and pioneer institute of higher education, UBD has a distinctive place in the country. Majority of the UBD students are of Bruneian origin, locals as well as Permanent Residents (PRs). There is a relatively small but significant body of international students in the university, who were not included in this study as the focus was Bruneian population. Beyond convenience, relying mainly on the student sample was acknowledging the fact that young students are active consumers and viewers of advertising. In order to diversify

the sample, students were also asked to get up to three surveys filled from their family and friends. Some students responded to this request voluntarily, and this helped to diversify the sample beyond university students.

Students filled surveys during classes, and each survey took approximately 10 minutes to fill. All surveys distributed in the class were returned, completely filled. Most of the students also returned the surveys, getting filled or otherwise, from their families. Out of the 307 filled surveys, three respondents did not share their demographics and were excluded. Almost all of the remaining surveys were without any missing values. There were missing values only in three items, ATT1 (2), ATT3 (14) and BEH4 (2). Since all the missing values were less than 5% of missing values, as suggested by Tabachnick & Fidell (2013), all cases were included in the analysis. Breakdown of valid surveys (n=304) is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Breakdown of valid surveys (n=304)

Age group	n	Respondent type	n	Gender	n
18 - 24 years	215	University students	242	Female	200 (66%)
25 - 34 years	45	Others	62	Male	104 (34%)
35 - 44 years	14	(friends and family			
45 - 54 years	16	members of students)			
55 and above	14				

Statements for all items and descriptive statistics for the whole sample are presented in Table 4. Two belief items (ECO1, FAL1), one attitude item (ATT1) and two behavior items (BEH1, BEH3) were worded opposite to other indicators in the construct. These items were reverse scored in the final data file before analysis.

7. Results

Main analysis was carried out using the multivariate analytic technique of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). There are two main approaches to SEM namely variance-based SEM or PLS-SEM and covariance-based SEM or CB-SEM. It is recommended that in situations where sample size is not large, is not normally distributed and the main purpose is theory testing, PLS-SEM should be used (Lowry & Gaskin 2014; Henseler et al. 2009).

Data was tested for normality using the Shapiro-Wilk test in SPSS software. All items showed significant results, implying a significant difference from a normal distribution. Since the data was not normally distributed, PLS-SEM was used. The analysis was carried out using SmartPLS 3.0 software (Ringle et al. 2015). Before analyzing the model for structural relations, the measurement model was analyzed to determine the adequacy of different constructs.

Table 4. List of indicators in Pollay and Mittal factors

Sr.	ID	Factor	Statement	Mean	SD
1	INF1		Advertising is a valuable source of information about local sales.	3.93	0.70
2	INF2	Product Information	Advertising helps me keep up to date about products/services available in the marketplace.	4.09	0.74
3	INF3		Advertising tells me which brands have the features I am looking for.	3.65	0.93
4	SOC1		From advertising I learn about fashions and about what to buy to impress others.	3.26	0.91
5	SOC2	Social Role & Image	Advertising helps me know which products will or will not reflect the sort of person I am.	3.08	0.84
6	SOC3		Advertising tells me what people with lifestyles similar to mine are buying and using.	3.11	0.84
7	HED1		Quite often advertising is amusing and entertaining.	3.78	0.81
8	HED2	Hedonic / Pleasure	Sometimes I take pleasure in thinking about what I saw or heard or read in advertisements.	3.38	0.86
9	HED3		Sometimes advertisements are even more enjoyable than other media contents.	3.35	0.95
10*	ECO1	Good for Economy	Mostly, advertising is wasteful of our economic resources. (R)	3.65	0.84
11	ECO2		In general, advertising helps our nation's economy.	3.69	0.78
12	ECO3		In general, advertising promotes competition, which benefits the consumer.	3.92	0.80
13	MAT1		Advertising makes people live in a world of fantasy.	3.37	1.01
14	MAT2	Materialism	Advertising is making us a materialistic society, overly interested in buying and owning things.	3.58	1.00
15	MAT3		Because of advertising, people buy a lot of things they do not really need.	3.98	0.89
16	MAT4		Advertising makes people buy unaffordable products just to show off.	3.40	1.02
17	VAL1	Value Corruption	Most advertising distorts the values of our youth.	2.93	0.88
18	VAL2		Advertising promotes undesirable values in our society.	2.88	0.83
19*	FAL1		In general, advertisements present a true picture of the product advertised. (R)	3.27	0.99
20	FAL2	Falsity	Most advertising insults the intelligence of the average consumer.	2.82	0.88
21	FAL3		In general, advertising is misleading.	3.08	0.93
22*	ATT1	Attitudes toward Advertising	My general opinion of advertising is unfavorable. (R)	3.38	0.75
23	ATT2		Overall, I consider advertising a good thing.	3.74	0.69
24	ATT3		Overall, do you like or dislike advertising	3.52	0.72
25*	BEH1		When I see an advertisement, I ignore it. (R)	3.04	0.86
26	BEH2		When I see an advertisement, I pay attention to it.	3.15	0.79
27*	BEH3	Advertising Behaviors	When I see ads, I don't click on them (internet), ignore it (outdoor), turn the page (print) or change the channel (TV). (R)	2.61	1.04
28	BEH4		When I see an advertisement, I try to find more information about the product or brand.	3.56	0.98

* Sr. 10, 19, 22, 25 and 27, items marked with (R) are reverse-scored. Reported values are also for opposite statements.

7.1. Measurement model

For analyzing the measurement model, recommendations from Hair *et al.* (2014) were used. These recommendations are considered appropriate as they are formulated particularly for PLS-SEM. In the initial run of the model, factors loadings for some items were relatively below the others and a couple of them were below the 0.40 threshold. In all 7 items were deleted, which represents 25 percent of total items. The proportion of deleted items is slightly higher than the 20 percent threshold for the number of items that should be deleted in a model. Also, value corruption and falsity were merged as one factor. This is not unexpected as it has been observed in the results of Pollay and Mittal (1993). This leaves six constructs as antecedents to attitudes toward advertising.

Reliability and validity for all the constructs are analyzed using Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Fornell-Larcker criteria. For reliability or internal consistency, Hair *et al.* (2014) recommend CR values of above 0.70. This was achieved for all constructs. To establish convergent validity, it is recommended that AVE values should be above 0.50. Again, it was achieved in all constructs. Table 5 shows the item loadings and CR and AVE values for reliability and convergent validity.

Table 5. Reliability and Average Variance Extracted for latent constructs

Items*	Item loading	Construct	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
INF1	0.798	Product Information (INF)	0.794	0.658
INF2	0.824			
SOC1	0.749	Social Role & Image (SOC)	0.758	0.511
SOC2	0.732			
SOC3	0.660			
HED1	0.660	Hedonic / Pleasure (HED)	0.757	0.511
HED2	0.726			
HED3	0.755			
ECO1	0.891	Good for Economy (ECO)	0.747	0.602
ECO2	0.640			
MAT2	0.707	Materialism (Mat)	0.753	0.513
MAT3	0.531			
MAT4	0.871			
VAL1	0.881	Value Corruption (VAL)	0.800	0.668
FAL2	0.749			
ATT1	0.656	Attitudes toward Advertising (ATT)	0.785	0.550
ATT2	0.760			
ATT3	0.801			
BEH1	0.833	Advertising Behavior (BEH)	0.802	0.582
BEH2	0.848			
BEH3	0.576			

* This shows only the items that were kept and used in the final analysis

To test the discriminant validity, Fornell and Larcker criteria is used, as specified in Hair et al. (2014). This criterion required that for any factor, the square root of AVE should be greater than the correlation of that factor with all other factors. This criteria can be visually depicted and analyzed by placing the square root of AVEs on diagonal in the factor correlation matrix, as shown in Table 6. Since all diagonal values are greater than the corresponding rows and column values, all factors show discriminant validity.

Table 6. Comparison of correlations of latent constructs with square root of AVE

Constructs (↓/→)	INF	SOC	HED	ECO	MAT	FAL	ATT	BEH
INF	0.811							
SOC	0.108	0.715						
HED	0.250	0.241	0.715					
ECO	0.325	0.075	0.213	0.776				
MAT	0.002	0.338	0.094	-0.034	0.716			
FAL	-0.023	-0.038	-0.092	-0.143	0.244	0.817		
ATT	0.339	0.205	0.415	0.478	-0.159	-0.321	0.742	
BEH	0.233	0.266	0.317	0.330	-0.086	-0.217	0.521	0.763

Diagonal values (bold, italicized) are square root of AVE values.

All diagonal values are greater than corresponding row and column values.

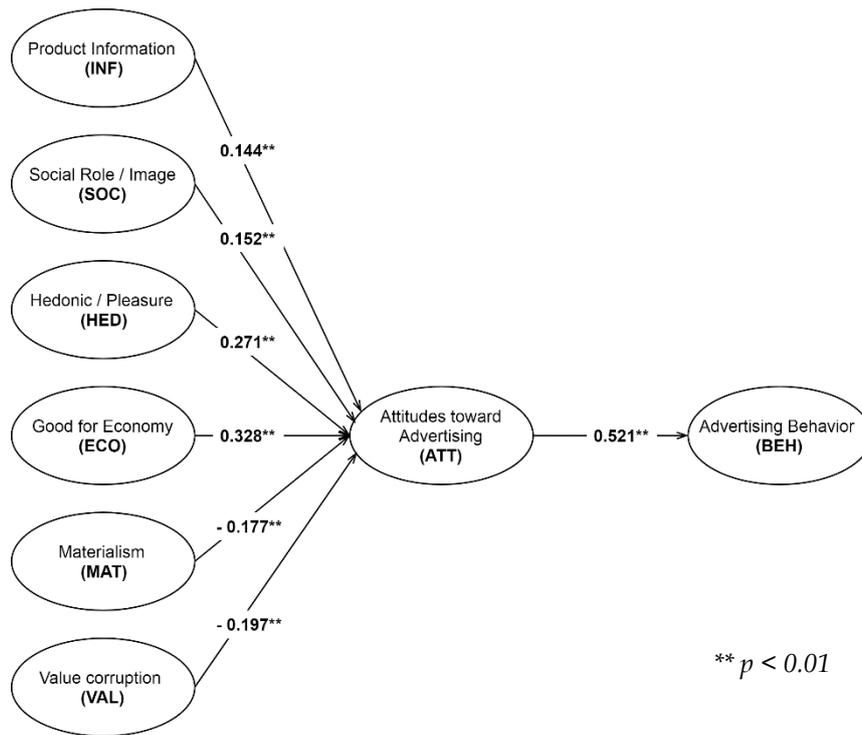
7.2. Structural model and hypothesis testing

Subsequent to establishing the adequacy of the measurement model, hypothesis testing was done using the structural model. The results for analysis of the structural model showed that the path coefficients for all the belief constructs were significant in the same direction, as hypothesized. Since data was non-normally distributed, the bootstrapping technique was used to test the significance of path coefficients.

Product information, Social role and image, Hedonic / Pleasure and Good for Economy had a significant and positive influence on attitudes toward advertising. Thus, H1 was supported. Negative belief factors Materialism and Value Corruption had a negative influence on attitudes toward advertising. Thus, H2 was also supported. Attitudes toward advertising had a significant positive influence on advertising behavior. Thus H3 was also supported. The path coefficients, significance test using p-values and effect size for each relationship are tabulated in Table 8.

Values of coefficient of determination or R-square (R²) indicate that the seven belief factors explained 0.474 or 47.4% of the variance in attitudes toward behavior. Subsequently, attitudes toward advertising explained 0.310 or 31.0% of the variance in advertising behaviors. As suggested by Hair et al. (2014), both fall in between weak and moderate values of 25% and 50% respectively.

Figure 2. A structural model with Path coefficients



To test the hypothesis on nature of attitudes toward advertising, H3, a t-test was conducted for the average values of three attitudes items with the midpoint value of 3.00. The values of three items of attitudes, as well as their overall average, was above the midpoint showing positive attitudes toward advertising. However, t-test helped determine whether the attitudes were significantly positive. The overall average for the three items of attitudes toward advertising was 3.539, and it was significantly different from the midpoint value of 3.00 ($p < 0.001$). Thus, H4 was also supported that attitudes toward advertising leaned towards positive and were favorable among Bruneian consumers.

8. Discussion

The results showed overall applicability of Pollay and Mittal framework for attitudes toward advertising in Brunei. This oil-rich ASEAN nation is quite different from other markets where this model was tested before. However, the validity of the framework shows its robustness. The results supported all the hypotheses. As for the antecedent beliefs, all four positive belief factors and two negative belief factors came out as influencing factors for attitudes toward advertising.

Beyond the significance of influence, the magnitude of influence of different factors on attitudes is also important. Among the four positive factors, good for economy (ECO) has the highest coefficient followed by Hedonic (HED). This shows an appreciation of the economic effects of advertising among Bruneian consumers. Somewhat similar observations were made for the Saudi Arabian consumers, who strongly value the importance of advertising for economy (Alabdali 2009).

Interestingly, Good for Economy was the strongest factor among all Pollay and Mittal factor across all generational cohorts in a study conducted in the neighboring region of Sarawak, East Malaysia (Run & Ting 2013).

Good for economy is followed by beliefs about the Hedonic (or pleasure) and social role for advertising. This order is meaningful in the Bruneian context, as it means that consumers see advertising as an agent for economic growth as well as entertainment. Product information has the weakest albeit significant effect on attitudes toward advertising among Bruneian consumers. Although advertising's information role is widely accepted in different markets but is the least important for Bruneian consumers.

Out of the three negative belief factors, value corruption and falsity merged as one factor whereas materialism remained as a significant factor. Stronger concern for the element of falsehood in advertising can be due to bad experiences, personal or observed. Even government's comprehensive awareness campaigns to guide consumers on misleading aspect of advertising (as available on DEPD's website) can be credited with bringing such awareness, which in turn translates into heightened concern for falsity in advertising. Likewise, Bruneian consumers show concern for value corrupting aspect of advertising.

From the collective review of both positive and negative belief factors, another aspect emerges that can guide future research in attitudes toward advertising. Three belief factors, in particular, Product information, Social role and image, and Materialism are grounded in the advertising's role as a source of information and persuasion for consumers. These three factors had little or no influence on attitudes toward advertising. Social role and image and Materialism proved to be insignificant, and Product information came out as the least significant among positive factors. It seems that Bruneian consumers do not find advertising to have much informative or persuasive value.

It can also be seen from the results that there are overall positive attitudes toward advertising among Bruneian consumers. In one way, this shows that positive belief factors dominate the negative ones in influencing attitudes toward advertising albeit both positive and negative beliefs are clearly present. Another reason is that with strongly regulated and controlled amount of advertising, consumers do not find advertising to be as undesirable. Also, since Bruneian economy is facing pressures from a slump in global oil prices, consumers at large seem to have a welcoming overture for any commercial economy that can lift the economy. This is observable with Good for economy being the strongest influencer of attitudes toward advertising.

The results showed that attitudes toward advertising influenced advertising-related behaviors. The behaviors that were investigated in this paper can be dubbed as 'seeking information from advertising' and 'ignoring or avoiding advertising'. A

significant influence of attitudes toward advertising in consumers' behaviors toward advertising has implications for the advertisers. This means that if advertisers want consumers to see their advertisements and not avoid them, the advertisers should pay attention to the attitudes toward advertising. Also, the advertisers should pay attention to the antecedent factors which can create favorable attitudes for their advertisements. According to the results of this research, advertising should be a mix of the source of information and entertainment. At the same time, it should be credible and not conflicting with local values.

9. Conclusion and directions for future research

This paper presents an unprecedented investigation of attitudes toward advertising in Brunei – a market which is small yet affluent and which is both progressive yet traditional in its outlook. Using an established framework, it was found that attitudes toward advertising in Brunei were generally positive. Attitudes toward advertising were also found to be a significant influencer on whether or not consumers will use advertising or avoid it. Considering the importance of attitudes toward advertising, any advertising strategy in the Bruneian market can make use of the antecedent belief factors that play a role in forming these attitudes.

This is the first study in Brunei on attitudes toward advertising. While the results can be deemed as insightful, more work needs to be done. Some diversification in terms of age group was achieved in the sample, but a more representative sample can be used in future works. With a more representative sample, differences between demographic and sub-groups within Bruneian population can also be studied. For instance, differences among male and female consumers and differences among different age groups can be more insightful. In future research, using Pollay and Mittal (1993) framework is recommended.

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