Self-Expressiveness as Consumers’ Motivation to Share Online Video Advertisements in Jakarta

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ABSTRACT

This study is a replication study of Self-Enhancement as a Motivation for Sharing Online Advertising by David G. Taylor, David Strutton, and Kenneth Thompson (2012). This study involves two different types of advertisement; one for low involvement product (mineral water) and one of high involvement product (mobile phone service provider). The result of this study shows that product category involvement increases consumer self-expressiveness. The regression output provides indication that there is a direct positive linear relationship between product category involvement and self-expressiveness. The findings of this study would be beneficial for managers in advertising industry especially in online advertising industry. It provides the marketing manager with helpful information to formulate online advertisement that aims to go viral by maximizing the use of digital media. It helps the marketer to better understand the consumer motives behind their decision to share advertisement. This could be useful in designing the appropriate promotion strategy.

KEYWORDS

Intention to Share, Online Advertisement, Self-Expressiveness, Viral Advertising

1. INTRODUCTION

Advertising is about delivering the right message to the right audience at the right time by filling the gap between the sender and receiver (Fletcher, 2010). As marketing communication tools, there are many aspects that advertising can cover (Fletcher, 2010). Even though the most fundamental use of advertisements is to sell, advertisements also serve different purposes, such as building brand awareness through informative content and giving consumers a reason to purchase through persuasive content (Fletcher, 2010).

Not every advertisement ‘goes viral’. There are still a limited number of advertisements that have achieved that level of success (Fletcher, 2010). There are different aspects that influence the effectiveness of advertisements. The most important aspects of motivation are the brand, message content, and emotional value (Kemp, Bui & Chapa, 2012; Phelps, Lewis, Mobilio, Perry & Raman, 2004), and product category involvement (Te’eni-Harari, Leman-Wilzig & Lampert, 2009).

Before the emergence of the Internet, marketers would use traditional media such as television, radio, outdoor billboards, and print to promote their products and services. Those media are considered to be above-the-line advertising, which are paid and mass media type. These media are one-way communication. Nowadays, the advancement of technology has influenced how companies
advertise, shifting the focus from traditional advertising to online advertising. The Internet has allowed advertising to expand the communication network and leverage social media to reach the target market.

Viral marketing has been used for around 20 years. Nowadays, there are many multinational companies which try to implement viral marketing as part of their marketing communication strategies in different industries (Schulze, Scholer & Skiera, 2014). Viral marketing employs word-of-mouth (WOM) advertising to pass along ideas or information through social network sites, email, or links (Kulp, 2007).

In the digital era, a company usually launches their advertisement either on their own websites or on social media websites. The most common ways for consumers to receive the message is through Facebook and YouTube. Then consumers share it with their friends. The prevalence of this sharing act is what causes a video to become viral. Consequently, viral advertising can be defined as voluntary distribution of information from one person to another using digital or electronic means (Petrescu, 2012).

An example of viral advertising in the digital world is the Evian water ‘Roller Babies’ advertisement. A lot of people have seen and shared the advertisement and made it viral. Its viewership on YouTube has reached over 79 million views internationally. Another example on a smaller scale is ‘Ada Apa Dengan Cinta’, a 2014 Indonesian LINE advertisement. When the campaign was launched, many people watched and shared this mini drama advertisement on their social media accounts. The viewership count on YouTube has reached approximately 5 million views.

Word-of-mouth (WOM) is a powerful and important tool that directly impacts brand reputation. The digital era has sped up the effectiveness of communication delivery and increases the power of word-of-mouth (Taylor, Strutton & Thompson, 2012). Social media popularity gives consumers the opportunity to use WOM on such platforms. This is known as electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). eWOM allows consumers to transfer a message to numerous other consumers at the same time (Taylor, Strutton & Thompson, 2012). Starting from a small group of consumers, an advertising message could be forwarded to a larger group of consumers in the blink of an eye.

A previous study has suggested that self-expression affects what is called social transmission (Berger & Milkman, 2011). The consumers would most likely share advertising content with others because they find it entertaining or informative. Sharing those particular ads will give the impression that they know interesting and/or valuable information (Berger & Milkman, 2011). In other words, consumers are triggered to share advertising message to express their self-concept and portray positive images about themselves.

This study is a replication of a study conducted by Taylor, Strutton and Thompson (2012). In that study, the researchers investigated the antecedents of factors influencing viral advertising. This study suggests that consumers would be more motivated to share online video advertising that matches their identity and expresses their self-concept.

Furthermore, this study will also investigate self-brand congruity, entertainment value and product category involvement as important factors in influencing consumers’ motivation to share online video advertising.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Electronic Word-of-Mouth

There has been plenty of research regarding word-of-mouth. It is a social activity (Zhang, Feick & Mittal, 2014) existing as a cause of social concern toward information credibility including online advertising content (Logan, Bright & Gangadharbatla, 2012). Zhang, Feick and Mittal (2014) have
defined word-of-mouth (WOM) as consumer thoughts and concerns regarding a particular product or service that they have consumed, which was then communicated to another consumer using informal communication.

Electronic WOM can be defined as any types of communication that is created by customers (be it actual or potential) that are readily available and accessible via the Internet (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh & Gremler, 2004). Through such communication, a consumer tries to express and persuade others to focus on the brand of their choice. Moreover, customers who share WOM will share not only positive thoughts but also negative experiences about a product or brand (Petrescu, 2012).

Another study by Gelb and Sundaram (2002) refers to eWOM as “word of mouse”. They define e-WOM as all types of positive and negative testimonials from consumers regarding a product or company (Petrescu, 2012; Daugherty & Hoffman, 2014). eWOM testimonial has the potential to become viral (Petrescu, 2012) as the information can travel quickly (Daugherty & Hoffman, 2014).

Generally, the information and opinions given on internet-based forums are honest, thoughtful, passionate (McDaniel & Gates, 2015) and less tailored communications (Gelb & Sundaram, 2002). Moreover, eWOM gives information seekers the opportunity to get information from strangers and experts in addition to information from their personal social network (Gelb & Sundaram, 2002; Petrescu, 2012). eWOM also provides the information seekers with affordable research costs and provides easy access to all kind of information (Daugherty & Hoffman, 2014).

Both WOM and eWOM are very powerful persuasive tools that can be very effective in raising consumer awareness. Moreover, it is even considered more powerful than advertising. However, advertising can evoke consumers to engage in eWOM (Buttle, 1998).

### 2.2. Self-Identity Theory

According to Stryker’s identity theory, self-identity symbolizes an individual’s internal self, which is associated with the self-interaction and role of that individual within their social contexts (Turner, 2012). Gecas and Burke (1995) define identity as a value devoted to one’s self that was influenced by the self and society or social agents such as peers and family (Delamater, Myers & Collett, 2014; Petrescu, 2012). It shapes an individual’s attitudes, values, beliefs, and actions with knowledge and skills though social interaction (Petrescu, 2012).

Oyeserman (2009), and Akerlof and Kranton (2000) suggest that the primary motivation for consumer attitude and behavior is identity (Bhattacharjee, Berger & Menon, 2014). Through the observation of one’s self-behavior and the social response, an individual is positioning himself or herself in the society, while building and structuring identities (Delamater, Myers & Collett, 2014).

As stated by Burke and Rietzes (1981), Marcus and Wurf (1987), and Roger (1947), the self will be most motivated to perform a consistent action that will reinforce, confirm, or reaffirm the identities that they wanted to claim (Chernev, Hamilton & Gal, 2001) for themselves (Delamater et al., 2014). The action referred to in this study is sharing advertising video content to their friends. This statement was also supported by Bodner and Prelec (2003) who stated that the desire to display self-identity cues for their own self leads the self to behave in a way that would express their inner states (Chernev, Hamilton & Gal, 2001).

‘Self-identity’ refers to the acknowledgment of the real self along with all the qualities that can be possessed by an individual (Benoit, 1997). Schau and Gilly (2003) claim that a consumer may build their self-identity by the way they present who they are as a person, and by the way they communicate with other people around them (Wallace et al., 2014).

There are numbers of strategy that the self performs to verify their self-identity (Delamater, Myers & Collett, 2014). The first strategy that the self could do is engage in selective interaction. The second strategy that the self could do is try to express their identity signals that provoke the identity. Lastly, they could perform actions that enhance the self-identity.
2.3. Self-Enhancement

Individuals verify their self-identity by performing an action that would enhance their self-identity. As discussed by Delamater, Myers & Collett (2014), the main objective of such behavior (enhancement) is to build a self-image that reflects the self from other people’s perspective. This public image that is created must be consistent with their self-perception. Moreover, Delamater, Myers & Collett (2014) also suggest that self-enhancement is a controlled self-presentation within a social interaction that could happen either consciously or unconsciously. It is demonstrated in any kind of behavior we possess, the way we speak, the way we dress, and our facial expression. The self’s behaviors are continuously influenced by what other people expect from the self (Delamater, Myers & Collett, 2014).

‘Enhancement’ is described as the effort to improve what is expected to be perceived by the public (Clow & Baack, 2014). Fundamentally, self-enhancement is an action that claims a successful association to the self. Some researchers describe it as a perception of mastery, over-confidence, and unrealistically positive self-evaluation (Benoit, 1997; Hepper, Gramzow & Sedikides, 2010). Self-enhancement refers to presenting the quality possessed by the self and the identity of the self to others (Benoit, 1997). Self-enhancement is focused on achieving, increasing, and controlling positive self-presentation (Hepper, Gramzow & Sedikides, 2010).

2.3.1. Self-Expressiveness

‘Self-expressiveness’ is expressed to claim a positive self-branding. Its presentation is demonstrated through a series of different strategies including non-verbal gestures, associating self with positive connections, acts of doing favorable things, opinion conformity, giving compliments and self-enhancement (Benoit, 1997).

Expressiveness is one motivator for a consumer to engage in eWOM communication. A representative advertising content that is parallel with the consumer’s identity would be most likely to be forwarded (Taylor, Strutton & Thompson, 2012; Ho & Dempsey, 2010). To enable themselves to express their identity, consumers would transfer their self-concept using tools that could reflect who they are. The consumer would transfer the self-concept including social interactions using products, brands, and possessions (Hogg, 2000; Kleine, Kleine & Allen, 1995) such as social media. As a message that has been forwarded or identity has been transferred, a positive response will be extracted as a result from self-concept enhancement (Hogg, 2000).

The digital world such as social media is a perfect place where consumers can express their most desired self-concept and develop a sense of membership (Livsey, 2013). Positive self-presentation content is most likely to be shared in order to enhance sender identity throughout the network (Burger & Milkman, 2011). Consistently, a consumer’s sense of self determines the effectiveness of advertising messages to be forwarded (Teixeira, 2012).

H1: The self-expressiveness of an eWOM message has a direct positive effect on the likelihood that the message will be shared with others.

2.4. Self-Brand Congruity

Every brand carries a symbolic meaning interconnected with a consumer’s self-concept. There are a few major factors that show how customers can be deeply connected with a brand. These factors are ‘brand-self connection’ and ‘brand prominence’ (Keller, 2008; Park, MacInnes, Preister, Eisingerich & Lacocibucci, 2010).

This study will focus on the first factor which is the one Keller (2008) refers to as brand-self connection. Keller (2008) also suggested that when a brand has positioned itself positively and specifically to consumers, they will develop a mindset of how attached they feel. This state of mind which customers create can be expressed through a statement like “I adore this brand,” “this brand
means a lot to me,” “this brand is not just a product to me” or “supposing this brand went away, I would most definitely miss it.”

Therefore, brand is an important asset for a business. The higher the liking a consumer has toward a brand, the greater the opportunity they will pass along positive words about the brand.

**H2a:** The level of perceived congruity between the self and the brand has direct positive effects on the likelihood that the message will be shared.

According to Sirgy (1985) and Taylor, Strutton and Thompson (2012), ‘self-brand congruity can be described as “the match between the brand’s value-expressive attributes (product/user images) and the consumer’s self-concept’.

Chernev, Hamilton, & Gal (2001) argue that brand is an instrument of expressing self-identity. This indicates that there is a correlation between a consumer’s self and brand image (Taylor, Strutton & Thompson, 2012). Consumers have the tendency to accept a brand that is similarly positioned as their self-concept (Bhattacharjee, Berger & Menon, 2014).

Consumer self-concept will become congruent with a brand at the point where the customers have strong feelings toward a brand. A previous study has suggested that self-brand congruity plays a positive role in consumer attitude (Ibrahim & Najjar, 2008). By using a particular brand, the consumers are trying to signal to the audience who they are and how they represent themselves (Chernev, Hamilton & Gal, 2011).

**H2b:** The level of perceived congruity between the self and the brand has direct positive effects on the self-expressiveness of the message.

### 2.5. Entertainment Value

According to Taylor, Strutton and Thompson (2012), ‘entertainment value’ is when online advertising brings joy, amusement and pleasure to the viewers. Consumers on digital platforms expect to receive content which offers entertainment. This shows that entertainment value in online advertising affects consumer attitudes. It may also positively affect brand attitude (Logan, Bright & Gangadharbatla, 2012).

In this study, the researchers define entertainment value as any form of message delivery that touches a consumer’s emotions. The emotion definition that researchers refer to on this study varies from one individual to another. For example, some people feel entertained when they watch comedy movies, while others may feel entertained when they watch horror, thriller, drama or action movies.

It was suggested that advertising content incorporates the use of entertainment such as music, humor, surprise, anger and other approaches that trigger emotions (Lantos & Graton, 2012; Berger & Milkman, 2011; Usman, 2013; Phelps, Lewis, Mobilio, Perry & Raman, 2004) and will give added value to advertisements and influence the likelihood to share. These factors can encourage the viewers by amusing them within a certain period (Usman, 2013).

**H3a:** The entertainment value of the message has direct positive effects on the likelihood to share the message.

Moreover, entertainment was shown to positively affect consumer’s social identity (Dobele, Lindgreen, Beverland, Vanhamme & Wijk, 2007; Soares & Pinho, 2014). An advertisement with a strong emotional sensation may enhance the possibility of the message being forwarded. Consumers are motivated to pass along the information or messages they have if the message brings joy, entertainment, or is highly emotional, consisting of hedonic and utilitarian value, matching their self-concept and if they feel that it will entertain others who receive the message (Petrescu, 2012; Soares & Pinho, 2014).
**H3b:** The entertainment value of the message has direct positive effects on the self-expressiveness of the message.

### 2.6. Product Category Involvement

Flynn and Goldsmith (1993) defined ‘involvement’ as a construct that reflects the variation in a consumer’s importance and enthusiasm toward a product category (Bloch, Commuri & Arnold, 2009).

Other related studies (Brisoux & Cheron, 1990; Celsi & Olson, 1988; Leclerc & Little, 1997; Te’eni-Harari, Leman-Wilzig & Lampert, 2009) suggest that product involvement can significantly affect consumer preference, attitude, perception, and decision regarding a product within the same product category.

In this study, product category involvement is defined as the personal connection between the self and the product that associates the self to the degree of information needed to make a decision. Furthermore, product category involvement is also linked with WOM. It was suggested that consumers who have a higher involvement level would be most likely to share the product information to others (Taylor, Strutton & Thompson, 2012).

**H4a:** The level of involvement in the product category has direct positive effects on the likelihood that the message will be shared with others.

Xue (2008) also suggested that consumers would not consider thinking or giving attention to a message that delivers an irrelevant message to their self-concept. The greater match between consumer and product, the more the likely a consumer will be willing to consume and purchase the particular product.

**H4b:** The level of involvement in the product category has direct positive effects on the self-expressiveness of the message.

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Research Design

This study is a descriptive study that was conducted using a convenience sampling method. The survey was distributed to university students aged 18-25 years old who reside in Jakarta, Indonesia. These students were chosen because they are considered to be the most prolific Internet users in recent years. The measurements in the questionnaire were adopted from the measurements utilized by Taylor et al., 2012.

For the purpose of this study, the researchers have used two types of advertisements to give more variation in the product category involvement. The first advertisement was a ‘Simpati’ (mobile phone service provider) advertisement. This advertisement represents a high involvement product. The second advertising was an Aqua (a mineral water brand) advertisement, which represents a low involvement product category. There were 112 respondents who participated in the survey. Fifty-seven respondents were shown the first advertisement (Simpati) and the other 55 respondents were shown the second advertisement (Aqua).

#### 3.2. Data Collection

The survey was distributed using both offline and online methods. The online survey was developed using the Google Form application. To distribute the survey, the survey link was distributed through LINE, WhatsApp, Facebook and e-mail to all potential respondents. To make sure that the respondents
watched the advertising before completing the survey, the researchers also added two filter questions; asking the respondents about the brand and the advertising that they were supposed to watch in advance. The offline data collection method was conducted in the form of a self-administered questionnaire. The respondents who were willing to participate were asked to watch the advertisement prior to completing the survey.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Reliability and Validity
The researcher has conducted reliability and validity analysis to test whether the survey results are consistent and valid. Cronbach’s Alpha in SPSS ver.21 was used to measure the reliability and Confirmatory Factor Analysis was used to measure the validity.

The result shows that all variables have a Cronbach’s Alpha value of more than 0.60, which indicates that all variables are reliable and can be used for further analysis.

Furthermore, the results also show that all variables had a KMO value greater than 0.50, which also indicates that the variables are valid and are acceptable to be used in the full-scale survey.

4.2. Descriptive Analysis
The majority of the respondents (73.2% or 82 people) regularly used cellular phones as the main medium to access the Internet, while 54.5% (61 people) used laptop computers.

Seventy-four respondents (66.1%) received online video advertisements from a friend and 46 respondents (41.1%) have experienced sharing online video advertisements with their friends through social media platforms. Facebook is the most frequent medium to share and receive online video advertising.

4.3. Hypothesis Testing
To test the hypothesis, this study used simple linear regression analysis. As shown in Table 1, R-squared values for all hypotheses were relatively high. The significant value also showed that direct linear regressions existed. Moreover, the beta values all show that there are positive relationships between the dependent variables and the independent variables.

The findings show that all hypotheses are supported based on the data gathered from respondents who watched the Simpati advertising.

Different findings were gained from respondents who answered the survey based on the Aqua advertisement. The R-squared values for H1, H2a, H3a, and H4a were relatively low (0.223, 0.213, 0.166 and 0.124 respectively). Table 1 shows the summary of regression analyses.

The significant values for H1, h2a, H3a and H4a are above 0.05, which suggests that the linear relationships do not exist and the hypotheses are rejected.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Beta</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1</td>
<td>0.058</td>
<td>0.077</td>
<td>0.238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2a</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>0.099</td>
<td>0.217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2b</td>
<td>0.508</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.695</td>
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<tr>
<td>H3a</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>0.116</td>
<td>0.265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3b</td>
<td>0.332</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4a</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.746</td>
<td>0.049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4b</td>
<td>0.157</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.437</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On the other hand, H2b, H3b, and H4b are shown to have R-squared values that are relatively high. The significant values for these hypotheses are below 0.05, which mean that H2b, H3b, and H4b are accepted.

4.4. Independent Sample T-Test

Based on the T-test analysis output, the five tests show that there is equal variance assumed for all test variables since all five variables tested have Sig value > 0.05. There are four tested variables (self-expressiveness, self-brand congruity, entertainment value, and likelihood to share). The findings show that there is no significant difference in the mean value of the two categories (Simpati and Aqua). Only one tested variable was shown to be significantly different in the mean value of the two categories, which is the product category involvement.

4.5. Additional Analysis

For additional analysis, the researcher sought to determine whether a direct positive relationship would still exist when multiple independent variables are tested against one dependent variable simultaneously. Therefore, multiple linear regressions were used to test the result of this additional analysis.

There are two additional analyses conducted in this study. Each analysis was tested twice using different data (Simpati data and Aqua data).

Additional Analysis 1 (for both data Simpati and Aqua) shows that although product category involvement does not have a direct relationship with self-expressiveness, the other two independent variables (self-brand congruity and entertainment value) are proven to have a positive direct relationship with self-expressiveness.

Additional Analysis 2 shows an interesting result in the Simpati data. The result shows that there is indication that multicollinearity exists. This means that the four independent variables used on this particular regression have a very high degree of intercorrelation.

Additional Analysis 2 for Aqua data shows that the hypothesis was rejected because the significant value is below 0.05, which means that there is no direct relationship between self-expressiveness, self-brand congruity, entertainment value, and product category involvement with likelihood to share online video advertising.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, there are few recommendations for Simpati to improve their online video advertising effectiveness. First, Simpati would need to clearly define and cleverly target their segments. In order to do so, the company needs to invest in marketing research to find more insights into their consumers’ behaviors in relation to forwarding an advertisement. Secondly, the company will need to preserve positive brand association that is aligned with their typical consumers’ self-concept (E.g. Your Everyday Discovery). Besides that, it is advised that the company should use insights derived from marketing research to ensure that the advertising content is fresh and entertaining so that people who watch it would be more likely to share the advertisement. Lastly, the companies marketing high involvement products would need to emphasize the product importance to keep the consumers highly involved and enthusiastic.

With regard to low involvement products, there is no indication that consumers of low involvement product would form brand attitude during the time they are exposed to the advertisement (Gardner, Mitchell & Russo, 1985). This study suggests that self-brand congruity, entertainment value, and the product category do affect consumer self-expressiveness. However, self-expressiveness, self-brand congruity, entertainment value and product category involvement do not affect consumer’s likelihood to share.
This shows that consumers have less attachment to low involvement products. This may explain some aspects in why the consumers do not feel that there is an importance to deliver the message through sharing the advertisement.

Therefore, these findings indicate that it is still open to question as to how to effectively develop a viral advertising campaign for low involvement products. Specifically, Aqua needs to be very aggressive in finding out what are other possible factors that could possibly influence consumers to share the online advertising video.

There are a number of limitations that the researcher encountered during this research. First, this research was conducted in Jakarta, involving people whose aged between 18 and 25 years old. Therefore, the findings may not be applicable for populations in other areas because different respondents may produce a different outcome. It is possible that for this young group of consumers, the product involvement level may differ as age was shown to have influence on level of involvement (Te’eni-Harari & Hornik, 2010). This indicates that the results of this study may not be applicable for markets outside that group. The advertisements used on this study were Indonesian advertisements. Therefore, the result may not reflect the reaction to standardized global advertisements or other types of advertisements that may have different cultural content.

There is a possibility that other variables may influence a consumer’s likelihood to share online video advertisement other than the four variables tested on this study. This means that there is a possible important aspect or area that researchers have not taken into account in this study such as social factors, advertising length, and cultural factors.

Future studies could be conducted involving different age groups to see whether there is any difference in terms of the research findings. Considering the small respondent size used on this research, it is recommended to increase the respondent size. By increasing the respondent size, it is expected that the accuracy of the findings can be improved. In addition to that, this study was using two Indonesia advertisements containing two products with different product involvements. For the future research, it might be interesting to use and compare Indonesia advertisements and foreign advertisements. Future studies could incorporate additional variables such as social factors, advertising length, and cultural factors which may influence the likelihood to share the advertisement.
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