



## THE IMPACT OF TRADITIONAL CULTURAL HUMOR THEMES, CREATIVITY, AND EMOTIONAL APPEAL ON PURCHASING DECISIONS

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### Abstract

The virtual world of advertising has become a conservative escalation of modern humans to exchange information, describe the nature of information and also create a vehicle to inspire potential consumers. The use of humor has become commonplace in advertising, but knowledge about the impact of humor on traditional cultural expressions is still very scarce, so it does not mean that using humor will automatically impact consumer purchasing decisions. This study intends to examine and analyze the effects of traditional cultural humorous advertising themes, creativity and emotional appeal on purchasing decisions. This type of research uses a conclusive design with a single cross-sectional. The sampling method was chosen randomly with certain considerations. Questionnaires were distributed to 190 respondents who were YouTube users in West Java. SEM analysis was used for data processing. The findings empirically visualized the theme of traditional cultural expressions having a positive effect on emotional appeal, the dimension of acting capability, with indicators: the potential to bring a play to life is the most dominant indicator influencing the effect of themes of traditional cultural expressions; Creativity, has a positive effect on emotional appeal with an easy-to-understand indicator

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is the most dominant influence on creativity, then the theme of traditional cultural expressions has a positive effect on purchasing decisions, with a sense of security indicator being the highest priority on emotional appeal; and Creativity has a positive effect on purchase decisions with the Brand Choice indicator being a determining indicator in purchasing decisions.

**Keywords:** Humor Themes, Traditional Cultural Expressions, Creativity, Emotional Appeal, Purchasing Decisions

### Introduction

The Internet performs a multi-faceted marketing function, as a mechanism for building demand, making transactions, entering orders, providing customer service, and being a multi-purpose advertising medium. It is important to recognize that the proper role of the Internet as an advertising medium is in a state of flux. New technologies are constantly emerging, and marketers are constantly experimenting with various uses of online communication. One form of Internet advertising that is growing rapidly is the humorous video advertisement of traditional cultural expressions via YouTube, which is carried out by Indoeskrim products. The humorous video ad combines all the elements of Jayus in the world, namely colossal legendary soap operas of the 90s, complete with royal settings, action scenes, super-dramatic dialogue, and giant eagle transportation. Settings with traditional cultural expressions are combined with modern products such as smartphones (iPhones with gold carvings as big as cutting boards), GPS (able to dialog "You are on the fastest route despite the usual traffic"), and freezers

filled with ice cream. The odd and surprising creative sensation displayed by the supporting role in the advertising scene generates a humorous response against the background of the theme of traditional cultural expressions so that it becomes an attraction and becomes viral and even trends on Instagram social media in Indonesia and abroad.

The impact of the most successful themes of cultural humor, creativity, and attractiveness on purchasing decisions is still a matter of debate among academics and advertising practitioners alike. Over the centuries the theory of humor has been developed and researched, and its impact on humans but there is no final understanding, humor is universal (Apte, 1985) (Nevo & Yin, 2001). Humor is very effective in attracting attention and creating brand awareness (Madden & Weinberger, 1984). Humor in advertising can be a very effective tool for achieving many marketing communication goals. To be easily accepted by viewers, messages must be creative, interesting, and entertaining. Viewers respond to humor based on several factors that influence it, namely demographics, psychographics, culture, and behavior (Ford et al., 2011).

The theme of humor that is chosen can determine the attractiveness and effectiveness of the ad. Humor can come from various sources, for example social, cultural, technological, gender, and others. Humor-themed advertisements can lead to positive attitudes towards brands and can increase purchase intention (Eisend, 2011). However, the research results (Yunita et al., 2017); (Weinberger & Campbell, 1990); (Elpere et al., 2004) show that humorous advertisements that have high scores are not always effective and have an impact on purchasing behavior. Although several studies have been conducted, research is still rare and there is no final understanding of the theme of humor advertising based on the theme of traditional cultural expressions. This study aims to determine the magnitude of the influence of the theme of humorous advertisements against the background of traditional cultural expressions, creativity, and attractiveness of advertising on purchasing decisions.

#### Literature Review

The humorous theme of traditional cultural expressions is believed to be able to attract audiences to pay attention to advertisements in the hope of generating feelings of pleasure, amusement, liking, and impact on the purchase decisions of advertised products. Endorsers play an important role in brand equity as a competitive and differentiating element to make it easier for consumers to remember the brands of the products offered, according to their target market, which can create brand

awareness and willingness to buy. This view emphasizes that an advertisement must present a very persuasive and strong sales message. Humor is one form of culture that is universal, culture is an order of life that develops and is shared by a group of people and is passed down from one generation to another. Culture is made up of many complex elements, including beliefs, politics, customs, language, tools, clothing, buildings, and works of art.

Culture is described as a complex that is rich in meanings, beliefs, actions, norms, and common values in society (Schwartz, 2006). Humor is funny that can make the heart ridiculous or amused for those who hear or see it. One form of the theme of humor is based on traditional cultural expressions, namely any form, visible or invisible, where traditional knowledge and culture are expressed, appear, or manifest, including oral expressions, for example, stories, effects, legends, poetry, puzzles and other forms of narration include: words, symbols, names, and symbols. Traditional cultural expressions in the form of motion, such as drama, ceremony, and ritual.

While the visible forms of traditional cultural expressions include the production of art, design drawings, paintings, crafts, music, and architecture carried out by individuals or groups which are characteristics of an identity and heritage of a community and are maintained, developed by that community or by individuals who has the responsibility to do so following the

laws and customary practices in the community (Purba, 2012). Humor is a concept that can be viewed from various points of view (multifarious) and is influenced by various factors (Gulas, 1992). Humor can be said to be any form of stimulation that tends to spontaneously provoke laughter or a smile. Humor can also provide wise insights while appearing entertaining. Other forms of humor can take the form of satire or laughter-like criticism. Humor can be used as a means of persuasion to facilitate the entry of the flow of information or messages to be conveyed as something serious and formal (Zillmann et al., 1980) but because viewers are busy with the theme of humor presented, they pay less attention and distract from the content message of the brand you want to convey. Based on the ambiguous results regarding the effect of the appeal of humor on purchasing decisions and still unsolved, it is necessary to investigate further.

In this study, the dimensions used in the theme of humor based on traditional cultural expressions refer to the theory (Shimp, 2003), namely: Advertising actors, can be played by celebrities and non-celebrities, with indicators: characteristics of the advertising actors, the style of the advertisement actors, the appearance advertisement; The ability to dialogue, with indicators: the ability to dialogue attractively, the language used is easy to understand and remember, the ability to convey knowledge about products; Acting ability, with indicators: role

psychology; Spontaneity, the ability to bring stories to life.

Advertising messages must be creative to get consumers' attention and achieve goals such as enhancing brand image and motivating consumers to purchase products or services. Creative strategies are the result of the translation of various information about products or services, and the target market into a certain position in communication which can then be used to formulate the objectives of advertising media (Kasali R., 1995). Creative advertisements are advertisements that can always remind and connect creative concepts with their products, as well as being able to differentiate from competitors' products. Advertising creativity is very important if a company is going to promote products that have "parity", namely products that are more or less the same as other products in similar categories, the same in terms of benefits, content, price, and even almost the same packaging (Madjadikara, 2004). In terms of creative planning, advertising messages are not only related to the content but in terms of approach and message visualization plays a very important role. The results of the study (Murad & Rafsanjani, 2016) state that advertising creativity has a positive effect on purchasing decisions.

The measurement of advertising creativity is adopted from Handoko (2006) with the following indicators:

1. Original, namely advertisements that are unusual, different, new;

2. Unexpected, namely an ad that will amaze the audience;
3. Easy to understand, namely advertisements that can influence emotions and invite the audience's curiosity, which is expected to lead to a buying decision.

Thus, effective advertising is usually creative, which connects the product maker with the target market, so advertising creativity is seen as attractive information that is needed and sought by consumers when making decisions for purchases.

At present, the use of emotional advertising appeal is widely used to shape the image and values of the product brand being offered. The attractiveness of the ad is how much the ad can attract the attention of the audience. According to Morissan (2010) the basis of emotional attraction consists of personal feelings including safety, security, fear, love, affection, happiness, joy, nostalgia, pride, self-actualization, and comfort. Meanwhile, social-emotional feelings include recognition of status, respect, involvement, affiliation, rejection, acceptance, and approval.

Emotional attraction is exploring positive emotions (such as humor, love, pride, pleasure, and the like) and negative emotions (such as guilt, fear, tension, anxiety, and sadness). Emotional attractiveness is related to the psychological need of consumers to buy a product brand, being more important than knowledge of the attributes and variants of the product. According to

Assauri (2018), the factors of an emotional purchase motive are buyers wanting to look different from others, feeling proud, achieving social status, and avoiding danger. The results of the study (Behboudi et al., 2014) state that emotional attractiveness is very influential on purchasing decisions. In this study, emotional attractiveness is measured by pride, security, recognition, and social status (Morrisan, 2010). A purchase decision is a person's decision where one of several alternative options exists. Purchasing decisions are actions taken by consumers in choosing or not to buy a product based on various factors that influence consumers in determining the purchase of a product or service. Some of the considerations include quality factors, price, advertising, distribution channels, and product acceptance in the eyes of the public. The definition of a purchasing decision based on Kotler & Keller (2016) is a collection of some decisions, with dimensions: product choice, brand choice, dealer choice, purchase amount, purchase timing, and payment method.

Based on theoretical studies, the relationship between the humorous theme of cultural expression, creativity, emotional appeal, and purchasing decisions will be verified through a series of hypotheses developed as follows.

The main goal of marketers is to understand customer concerns to build a strong logical pathway to advertising and branding. Humor ads can increase attention (Duncan, 1979), not only in

television media but also through the internet, and magazines. Humor ads are used as triggers to get attention, emotional appeal, and purchase decisions. Humor ads (Eisend, 2011) lead to a more positive attitude toward advertising, a more positive attitude toward brands, and an increase in purchasing decisions. Research on the impact of using humorous themes of traditional cultural expressions on purchasing decisions has not been carried out, but as a theoretical basis approach is the result of research (Alden, 1993) showing that the prevalence of role mismatch across cultures, suggesting that 69% of humor-themed TV commercials in the US use a mismatched theme. The findings (Speck, 1991) provide a good start as an exploration of the theme of humor, the findings show that no one type of humor has a positive or negative impact universally.

Lacking a corroborating study covering the types of humor, creativity, emotional appeal, and purchasing decisions the following hypothesis is proposed:

H<sub>1</sub>: Humor themes of traditional cultural expressions have a positive effect on emotional attractiveness.

H<sub>2</sub>: Advertising creativity has a positive effect on emotional attractiveness.

H<sub>3</sub>: The attractiveness of emotional advertising has a positive effect on purchasing decisions.

H<sub>4</sub>: Humor themes of traditional cultural expressions have a positive effect on purchasing decisions.

H<sub>5</sub>: Creativity has a positive effect on purchasing decisions.

## Methods

The research method used in this research is a survey method, while the type of research is causal associative (Sugiyono, 2009). In the analysis, this research was conducted by descriptive and verificative approach. The sampling technique was carried out by nonprobability sampling, namely using judgmental sampling. To test the hypothesis, SEM analysis is used with the Maximum Likelihood (ML) method in data processing using the AMOS program. This study uses 19 parameters which mean that it requires a minimum of 190 respondents.

The research instrument used was a questionnaire with a Likert scale, namely: Answers Strongly Disagree (STS) given a value of 1; Answer Disagree (TS) was given a score of 2; Answer Doubtful (R) given a score of 3; Answer Agree (S) is given a value of 4 and Answer Strongly Agree (SS) is given a value of 5.

## Results and Discussion

### *Construct Reliability Test*

Humor Theme of Traditional Cultural Expressions.

The CR value is 0.743 > the recommended minimum CR is 0.70, but the AVE value is 0.536 > the recommended minimum value is 0.50. CR shows that the construct reliability is good, and AVE shows that the construct reliability is good.

Creativity.

The CR value is 0.876 > the recommended minimum CR value is 0.70 and the AVE value and AVE value are 0.565 > the recommended minimum value is 0.50. Thus, both CR and AVE show that the construct reliability is good.

Emotional Appeal.

CR value is 0.835 > the recommended minimum CR is 0.70 and AVE value is 0.572 > the recommended minimum value is 0.50. Thus, both CR and AVE show that the construct reliability is good.

Buying Decision.

The CR value is 0.840 > the recommended minimum CR value is 0.70 and the AVE value is 0.584 > the recommended minimum value is 0.50. Thus, both CR and AVE show that the construct reliability is good.

*Fit Test Model*

Table 1. Chi-square and p-value statistics

Model	NPAR	CMIN	DF	P	CMIN/DF
Default model	46	1.046	146	.000	2.796

The model fit test is done by looking at the Chi-square, GFI, and RMSEA values as shown in the table below.

Based on Table 1 the Chi-square value is 1.046 > p-value 0.000, it can be said that this model is fit.

Based on Table 2 CFI fit index 0.904 > 0.90, it can be said that this model is fit. Likewise, the other Fit Incremental Indices, all of which were above 0.90.

Based on Table 3 the RMSEA value is 0.085 < 0.10, and the model is said to be good.

*Hypothesis Testing*

Hypothesis 1. The theme of traditional cultural expressions has a positive effect on emotional attractiveness. Based on the calculation results, the path coefficient of the theme of traditional cultural expressions on attractiveness is 0.975. The value of C.R (Critical Ratio / t-count) is 7.338, when compared with the t-table value of 1.96, this value is greater or 7.338 > 1.96 which indicates that H0 is rejected, meaning that the theme of traditional cultural expressions has a significant effect on emotional attractiveness.

Saturated model	190	.000	0		
Independence model	19	2296.146	172	.000	13.367

Table 2. CFI statistics and other incremental fit indexes

Model	NFI Delta1	RFI rho1	IFI Delta2	TLI rho2	CFI
Default model	.901	.906	.903	.964	.905
Saturated model	1.000		1.000		1.000
Independence model	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Table 3. RMSEA fit index

Model	RMSEA	LO 90	HI 90	PCLOSE
Default model	.085	.079	.101	.000
Independence model	.244	.235	.253	.000

Table 4. Summary of hypothesis testing results

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
Emotional attraction	←	The theme of cultural expression.	.975	.135	7.338	***	par_15
Emotional attraction	←	Creativity	1.039	.187	5.527	***	par_16
Buying decision	←	Emotional attraction.	1.166	.133	8.757	***	par_17
Buying decision	←	The theme of traditional cultural expressions	1.286	.110	8.747	.397	par_21
Buying decision	←	Creativity	.394	.084	4.711	***	par_18

Hypothesis 2: Creativity has a positive effect on emotional attractiveness. Based on the calculation results, the path coefficient from creativity to emotional appeal is 1.039. C.R value 5,527> t-table value 1.96 which indicates H0 is rejected, meaning that creativity has a significant effect on emotional attractiveness.

Hypothesis 3: emotional attractiveness has a positive effect on return decisions. Based on the calculation result, the path coefficient of emotional attractiveness to the purchase decision is 1.166. C.R value 8,757> t-table value of 1.96 which shows that H0 is rejected, meaning that



emotional appeal has a significant effect on the purchase decision.

Hypothesis 4: The theme of traditional cultural expressions has a positive effect on purchasing decisions. Based on the calculation results, the path coefficient of the traditional cultural expression theme to purchase decision is 1.286. Value C.R 8.747 > t-table value 1.96 which indicates  $H_0$  is rejected, meaning that the theme of traditional cultural expressions has a significant effect on purchase decisions.

Hypothesis 5: creativity has a positive effect on purchasing decisions. Based on the calculation results, the path coefficient from creativity to purchasing decisions is 0.394. Value C.R 4.711 > t-table value 1.96 which indicates that  $H_0$  is rejected, meaning that creativity has a significant effect on purchasing decisions.

The total direct and indirect influence of the theme of traditional cultural expressions and creativity, on purchasing decisions through emotional appeal is shown by Squared Multiple Correlations of 0.877 (87.7%) while the remaining 12.3% is the influence of other factors not examined. which allows that future research may include other variables.

#### Conclusions and Future Research

Dimensions of Acting Ability, with indicators: role interpretation; Spontaneity, the ability to animate stories, is the most dominant indicator influencing the theme of traditional

cultural expressions, this indicates that there is a need for a traditional cross-cultural approach that requires companies to understand cross-cultural communication strategies, that cultural factors are very important in the attractiveness of an advertisement.

Creativity in marketing communication must have clear objectives, the results of the study show that easy-to-understand indicators are the most dominant in influencing creativity, advertising creativity is seen as the information needed and sought by consumers when making decisions for purchases. So that to increase purchasing decisions will be more effective if the ad has an appeal that arouses interest, and stimulates interest to create confidence in the superiority of the product which in turn encourages action to use the product offered. This means that creativity in the theme of humor can serve as a matter of argument that must be constructed in a relevant way, especially when consumers are involved in processing detailed information. Therefore, the problem of creativity in presenting traditional cultural humor themes can help consumers as an attraction.

The safety indicator is the dominant indicator affecting emotional attractiveness, the findings illustrate that the sense of security is the highest priority in terms of determining the choice of products to be consumed, the producer should clearly label the contents of the product content and the expiration of product use and how to use it.

The empirical findings that Brand Choice is a determining indicator in purchasing decisions indicate that consumers will evaluate each brand in a group that is recognized in some product attributes so that a brand that has a good image will be the main choice of consumers.

These empirical findings contribute to a theoretical perspective, namely reinforcing the construction of a causal relationship model. The themes of traditional cultural expressions, emotional appeal, and creativity to purchasing decisions.

The research results have several limitations, namely the object of research is only in the West Java region, and the media used is only limited to the internet media, namely YouTube. Then the research results cannot be generalized outside the research object. While cultural expression humor can be used with many types of products, it is more successful with existing products than with new ones. Humor also appears to be more appropriate for low-involvement products and feeling-oriented products.

Subsequent research, for example, research on products that have a high involvement in decision-making by adding other variables that are also relevant and can contribute to purchasing decisions such as understanding, effectiveness, and message quality.

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