



Indian Journal of Arts

Musical power and its effect on consumer decision making

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Article History

Received: 16 February 2018

Accepted: 02 April 2018

Published: April 2018

Citation

Syazwani Mahsal Khan, Norsiah Abdul Hamid, Sabrina Mohd Rashid. Musical power and its effect on consumer decision making. *Indian journal of arts*, 2018, 8, 63-67

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General Note



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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to discuss a study which aimed to explore how musical power in advertising can affect decision making of young consumers toward advertised products and services. The method used for this study is an in-depth interview with three groups of experts which are advertisers, musicians and academicians. Participants for this approach is based on snowball sampling. This study applies Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) to view the process of decision making made by the young consumers. This study uses the thematic analysis to analyse the interview data. Findings show that musical power in advertising can influence the decision making mood in choosing a product.

Keywords: Music, Consumer decision making, Advertising, Behaviour

1. INTRODUCTION

Advertising is used to provide stronger emotional and behavioural connections to consumers over time (Wood & Poltrack, 2015). For marketers, music in advertising is one of the important components in advertising to show to the target audience the liveliness of a product or service. Claude Levi-Strauss as cited in Storr (2015) stated that "Since music is the only language with the contradictory attributes of being at once intelligible and untranslatable, the musical creator is being comparable to the gods, and music itself the supreme mystery of the science of man". For consumers, music that links with advertised brands has the power to induce questions in life relating to individual freedom and a more critical stands towards market (Abolhasani, Oakes & Oakes 2017). The issue is publics incline to skip watching the advertisement, be it on television or social media especially in YouTube (Teixeira, 2014). Thus, there is a need to look into music's affect toward consumers and also on how young consumer makes decision. These will be useful for advertisers and marketers to engage with their target audience.

Music can act as communicative tool and it is always popular to be known as universal language (Cross, 2014; Storr, 2015). Music and words combination will bring better relevance in audio visual media advertising (Martín-Santana, Reinares-Lara, & Muela-Molina, 2015). Hence, the current study is motivated to explore whether musical power in advertising can affect decision making of young consumers toward advertised products and services.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Musical Power

Musical power has the ability to induce current mood within the consumers mind (Saarikallio & Erkkilä, 2007). Music in advertisement can be powerful to target audience. Besides that, power also has been used in advertising area. The power of advertisements can affect consumers' emotion (Friestad & Thorson, 1986; Kemp, Bui, & Chapa, 2012; Williams, 2000). The power of advertising can give impact on implicit memory than explicit (Williams, 2000). Lacoste-Badie and Droulers (2014) claim that target audience can better recall advertising and recognize the action that been shown in television better than other commercial in which they do not show the action in advertisement about a particular products. Di Muro and Murray (2012) state that target audience make products choice based on their level of arousal and the valence of their current affective state. For example, Zeeshan and Obaid (2013) state that playing positive music would increase shopping in stores and give positive effects to consumers in a social environment.

The effects of social environment on individual are essential because naturally, the individual behaviour is conducted in the existence of others (Yechiam, Druyan, & Ert, 2008). For example, Anderson et al. (2012) states that the sense of power shapes individuals behaviour. Generally, power can go as far as to riskier decision (Maner, Gailliot, Butz, & Peruche, 2007). People in low power behave accordance to the situation whilst people in high power acted in accordance of their motivation (Hiemer & Abele, 2012). Back to the music in advertising, Abolhasani, Oakes and Oakes (2017) states that music is not purely regarded as an instrumental product that may impact the intent to purchase advertised products but is normally, reflected as a sacred products in its own right. As such, it helps the consumer to make decision to buy the product which suits their identity and behavior.

Consumer Decision Making

Consumer decision making models were built in 1960's and 1970's era (Erasmus, Boshoff, & Rousseau, 2001). These models are widely used in marketing research, consumer behaviour research and theory research. Consumer decision making is a knowledge to understand consumers thinking, feeling, and choices from alternatives like products and services to satisfy their desire and needs (Jisana, 2014; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007).

Decision making can be known as one of the central important process including the higher cognitive function at the brain which bring a preferred action to be chosen among a set of alternative of given criteria (Wang, Wang, Patel, & Patel, 2006). Decision making process is a way to make an ideal, satisfied and good choice. Sometimes in making a strong decision, it stimulates human emotions as well. Researchers often use the term of 'emotional intelligence' as it can leads to a good decision making process when human being know how to utilize intuition and emotions (Rausch, Hess, & Bacigalupo, 2011). Gorn (1982), tested an experiment whether the choice of the pen could be affected between in decision making context and non decision making context. The result then showed that consumers are in decision making mode when they exposed with commercial advertisement with the information that could be easily affected.

Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM)

The theory of Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) was introduced by (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). This theory is used to explain two paths toward persuasion and the change of attitude (Petty, Kasmer, Haugvedt, & Cacioppo, 1987). The central route requires a deep

focus on elaboration of the information and opinions obtained. Otherwise, peripheral route require a simple association, experiences, and inferences to catalyse the attitude change(Petty et al., 1987). Rollins and Bhutada (2014) explained that consumers process the content information and non-information content in advertising through the central and peripheral routes of persuasion. Information processing is part of decision making which play a role of individual decision process ranging from problem recognition till the solution (Cravens, 1970). Young consumers always making choice based on the things they like. Chad (1996) and Zeeshan and Obaid (2013) found that music has the ability to influence young consumers in making purchase decision up to 33 per cent. This clearly shows how music can motivates them to process information in the television advertisements that can leads to consumer decision making.

Musical Power Leads to Consumer Decision Making

Music is always an after-thought in creative process which its power could bring effectiveness to advertising. Binet, Müllensiefen, and Edwards (2013) make up an experiment which is choosing different television advertisement for the same orange juice brand and paired with music that congruent and incongruent with the brand profile. Finally, the result indicated that advertisement with music more effective than advertisement without it. In addition, advertisement that congruent with music is sixteen per cent more effective than advertisement without music.

Besides that, music advertising in television may provide long term memory encoding and engagement. Pynta, Seixas, Nield, Hier, and Millward (2014) have reviewed and analysed, that audience engage in watching television programme, will enable them to enhance neural signs of the brain on the television programme. Hence, according to Zander (2006) advertising with music television which can be suited with the product will attracts attention, stimulate emotions and convey implicit and explicit of the information in the advertisement. Much of the advertisers trust that music is very helpful at the level of selling products in a very effective way.

In addition, musical power can stimulate the decision making of young consumer to buy products and services. Music can be linked with a narrative image and visual where its power can induce human's brain to response (Juslin & Västfjäll, 2008; Vuoskoski & Eerola, 2013). Ahmad Sharabati, Salim Khraim, and Atta Khateeb (2014) state that advertisement in television influences consumer, to look into information quality, reliability, adequacy and product price in order to make a decision. For young adults, their brains of frontal cortex will more energetic in managing field information in working memory (Zatorre, 2003) when exposed to music. They are most influential to product and service advertisement. Past researches has shown that music is the first cue for decision making then only consumer will look at the product or service that is in the advertisement.

3. METHODOLOGY

This research will be conducted in qualitative method because it requires an in-depth interpretation. This method will rely on text image data, such as focuses on interpretation of subjective meanings, description of social context and privileging of standard knowledge (Creswell, 2014; Fossey, Harvey, McDermott, & Davidson, 2002).

Nine informants were chosen to represent three groups, which is advertisers, musicians and academicians through snowball sampling. This group contains adequate knowledge understanding of music advertising and consumer decision making conceptualization. Findings from the interview bring insightful information about the affect of musical power to the consumer making decision. This study used the thematic analysis in order to analyse the data that were gained from the interview. Javadi and Zarea (2016) stated that the thematic analysis can assist in both reflecting and clarifying the reality. So it is flexible in nature (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and easy to be understood by the readers.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

From this study, there are two themes are merged. The creativity of music and video, and music as semiotic or sign for the advertised products and services.

Creativity of Music and Video

Informant 2 talks about the creativity in order to make the music in advertisements as a whole powerful.

"I think, Sometimes it does, it can give effects. Because it's not only just music, but its teamwork, it must blend together the whole concept, the visual concept the music concept, the idea,... That they want. So from there, then the youngsters can have choice to make regarding products" (Informant 2).

Informant 4 also states the same view as informant 2 did. Informant 4 gives an example about how musical power works for the consumer to decide, she says ;

" Music that is unique that's in subway advertisement, "ta bleh lupa," if like that, then people will be like... uiyo! That's Power this stuff. So straight away they feel the intention to try the menu there, they already target to eat there (making decision). So they will start to explore the food taste in subway"(Informant 4).

Semiotics or Sign

Informant 7 and Informant 5 stressed that music is very powerful where it can be as really as iconic in the advertisements. For example, Informant 7 says,

" music can act as a sign in the ad. It can become really iconic, for example, some ad use some new music that can keep in mind that they just composed new song for the jingle. Like Calpis, that's the new song, you know. Never been heard at anywhere is new song, Calpis is very catchy,... very catchy where it is already become the iconic of that yogurt drink Calpis. Main thing is about catchiness that can become the iconic of a certain brand of the products. Because, listener got so many times to entangled by music" (Informant 7).

This is same as informant 5 says that:

"Semiotic,.. how music can be the sign for something like products, So music is a tune, so that's how this tune can be the sign for consumer to respond. So the sign is via the perception of hearing.... So music.. it is iconic, and it does help consumer to decide if only they are in the mood to own the product because of the music and the product in the advertisements" (Informant 5).

Based on the experts view, music is very powerful in terms of affecting human decision making moods and also could play a role as an added value in advertisement. Juslin and Västfjäll, (2008) and Vuoskoski and Eerola, (2013) claimed that music can encourage human mind to response the audio visual advertisements. Hence, music can affect decision making mood where it can leads the audience to think and buy the products or services in advertisements. As stated in the theory of (ELM) Keng, Tran, Liao, Yao, and K. Hsu (2014) stressed that consumers which in central routes are highly persuaded when exposed to electronic advertisement with high degree of involvement, motivation and ability to acquire desired knowledge and information. Hence, the musical power will makes the consumers engage in careful evaluation of a message arguments in order to make decision regarding products or services in accordance to their wants and needs.

5. CONCLUSION

This finding is hoped to provide insight on the musical power effect towards consumer decision making. The finding from this research may provide contribution in two areas which is advertising and music psychology. For future study, it best to conduct a study of music and consumer identity related brands. This future study will show in more details of a person's psychology or behavior with music and the brands that they like.

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