ADVERTISING SKEPTICISM AND MEDIA CREDIBILITY

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Abstract

Advertising remains as preference strategy for marketer to communicate a product, although it is costly. Various media are available in performing advertising, starting from traditional one up to digital media. Television has been primary advertising media since long back. And since the advent of computer and Internet technology, advertising using media such as Internet and Facebook is common. Although advertising through television is more expensive than the last two (2) media, advertising on television is yet salable. On the other hand, it's suspected viewers often do not pay attention to advertising, neither even believe in advertising. Thus the goals of this study were two folds. The first goal was to evaluate the influence of advertising skepticism and media credibility on advertising avoidance. Our second goal was to compare the influence of advertising skepticism and media credibility on advertising avoidance on different media. Questionnaire was deployed in collecting data. Due to the nature of research variables, data collected was analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling. Result showed that overall advertising skepticism and media credibility influence advertising avoidance. The effect is different across media (television, Facebook and Internet). Unexpectedly result shown on this study, i.e. the correlation between media credibility and advertising skepticism is strong and positive.

Keywords: *advertising, skepticism, avoidance, credibility, media, Internet, Facebook, television*

JEL Classification: *M37*

1   Introduction

Advertising is recognized as being the most important integrated marketing communication media since long back. Advertisement is generally accepted as

powerful tool to enhance sale. Previous researches showed that advertising enhance sale through appeals used in the advertisement (Lin, 2011) and positive experience (Keng et al., 2011; Kozinets, 2010), which further affect attitude (Keng et al., 2011; Kozinets, 2010), intention (Acquisti & Spiekermann, 2011; MacKenzie et al., 1986) and finally decision to buy and consume (Sharma, 2013; Sonkusare, 2013). No wonder the company's management is willing to allocate a large budget to fund advertising. Global spending on advertisement media according to Gallo (2017) is expected to reach $2.1 trillion in 2019.

Therefore advertising plays as rhetorical strategies designed to persuade an audience over to a particular way of thinking about persuasion. Advertising should communicate a true meaning and benefit of a product. Advertisement exposure is intended to activate information about the product, including the product-related social identity and its associated focal attribute. But instead, advertisement frequently works like magic to blind consumers, deceptive if it creates, increases or exploits a false belief about product/service performance (Russo, et al., 1981).

Due to some reason, information provided on advertising frequently is incomplete even though irrelevant to the attributes of the product being presented (Russo et al., 1981) and frequently the claims are not acceptable (Obermiller, et al., 2005) or even tricky (Russo et al., 1981). The advertiser likely creates the aspirational advertisement in the hope that the consumer would be interested to purchase and consume the product being advertised. This phenomenon is most probable occurs with advertising practice in Indonesia. Frankly speaking, advertiser in Indonesia is freely to claim irrelevant information related to product advertised. No one ever advertiser is reprimanded due to advertisement content. Therefore it is common to watch an advertisement promote a health product for instance that can solve all health problems. Or another example, in plain view, advertised on many media, an advertising of instant noodle claims its high nutritious, although almost all adult people in Indonesia will agree that instant noodle is harm for health. Due to this fact, the advertisement result is often happen in contrary. Consumer is skeptic towards advertising (Prendergast, Liu and Poon, 2009; Thakor and Goneau-Lessard, 2009). Advertising skepticism is consumer's tendency to distrust and doubt advertising claims (Thakor and Goneau-Lessard, 2009; Obermiller and Spangenberg, 1998).

Advertising skepticism relates not only to advertising content, but also to the medium by which the message is being communicated (such as Prendergast et al., 2009; Marshall and Na, 2003; Diaz, 2002; Gilbert, 1999). Each medium has its own image and personality. Marshall and Na (2003) showed that an advertising on Internet has less credibility than the same message presented in a print medium. As a result of skepticism, consumer frequently avoids the advertising. It is

common to find someone shifting from one channel to another channel when commercial advertising being played during the program on television. Or scroll down without pay any attention when browsing on Internet or Facebook to avoid a commercial advertising. Moreover, the influence of Internet and Facebook is yet diverse (Jensen, 2008).

Up to this date, it is difficult to find a reference on consumer skepticism towards an advertising on Indonesian case. This study will enrich consumer skepticism towards on advertising and media credibility from different culture. The main issue in our knowledge of advertising study in Indonesia is the relationship of advertising skepticism, avoidance and media credibility. We argue that advertising avoidance come up from advertising skepticism and media credibility. Therefore the objective of the study were:

1. To evaluate consumer's skepticism towards advertising and media credibility on advertising avoidance
2. To compare the influence of consumer's skepticism towards advertising and media credibility on advertising avoidance on different media.

2   Data and Methods

Research variables consist of advertising skepticism, media credibility and advertising avoidance. Those three variables are latent in nature so thus questionnaire was deployed as research instrument. Survey was performed to collect data. Participant of survey was student in Gunadarma University on second, third and fourth year. Questionnaire distribution was in two (2) forms. First, questionnaire was distributed through email accompanied with a request to participate, the goal of survey and instruction to fill in the questionnaire. Secondly, questionnaire was administered directly to respondent by gathering them in the same room after class. Participant was informed that there was no correct or wrong answer but true answer. The information provided to avoid student to compare their answer. Questionnaire in closed form, consist of 7 ordinal scales, was developed to measure advertisement skepticism and media credibility. The statements loaded on questionnaire were adopted based on several references.

To measure advertising avoidance on media, we adopted Ketelaar, et al. (2015). In developing questionnaire for media credibility, Kiousis (2001) was adopted. And advertising skepticism was developed based on Prendergast, et al. (2009). Television, Internet and Facebook are advertising medium considered on this study. The idea to choose these three media is to include to the study the advertising medium from traditional one (television) to digital era (Internet and Facebook). Television is yet prefer media communication for advertiser although

it costs very expensive. Internet and Facebook are two communication media that used by almost all Indonesian both as advertiser and viewer. Facebook is very popular as social media for almost all Indonesian.

Prior to questionnaire distribution, validity and reliability tests were performed. For validity and reliability tests, questionnaire was distributed to 30 respondents who were also Gunadarma University student on fourth year. Data collected further analyzed in order to test research model. Considering the nature of data, structural equation modeling (SEM) was deployed to analyze data.

3   Result and Discussion

Of the study respondents, 327 participants completed and returned the questionnaire. Due to incomplete data, we excluded 21 records. The total number of data collected is sufficient to analyze using SEM. For this purpose we make use of Lisrel application. Analysis was started by validation proposed model that presented on Figure 1. Decision is based on goodness of fit statistics. Path diagram of validated model is shown on Figure 2.

Among indexes, Root Mean Square Error Approximation (RMSEA) is a meaningful measure of goodness of fit. RMSEA indicates the close fit of model in relation with degrees of freedom. Value 0.05 or below is very close, 0.08 and below still acceptable, but never used 0.1 and above (Browne and Cuddeck, 1993). As shown on Table 1, RMSEA value is 0.0806. It is evident that data collected is fit to model proposed (Figure 1). We also based our conclusion on other three indexes (Normed Fit Index (NFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Incremental Fit Index (IF)). The value of those three indexes is range from 0 up to 1. Value close to 1 is a very good fit. As shown on Table 3, those three indexes have values above 0.9. This evident support the conclusion that data is fit to model proposed.

Of particular interest, the influence of advertising skepticism and media credibility on advertising avoidance is different across media. It shows that consumer perceived advertising on those three media differently. The consumer behavior in responding to advertising playing on those three media will be different. Therefore also of interest is to find out the relationship among advertising skepticism, media credibility and advertising avoidance on each media.

To continue with this analysis, we based on Table 2. As shown on Table 3, correlation score between advertising skepticism and advertising avoidance is different among media. The strongest correlation is shown on television. Contrary, the weakest correlation is shown on Internet media. The correlation between advertising skepticism and avoidance on those media is positive. It implies the stronger the skepticism the stronger is the avoidance toward the advertising. Facebook

comes between television and Internet. This result has further strengthened our hypothesis that advertising skepticism influence advertising avoidance.

Generally television viewers in Indonesia avoid the advertising during watching a program. Many people move from one channel to another to avoid advertising. Other viewers perform another activity during advertising being playing. Based on this fact, we may conclude that television viewers in Indonesia are skeptic towards advertising.

The correlation between media credibility and advertising avoidance is very weak on those three media. This result implies that the avoidance of advertising does not depend on the media. Consumer avoids an advertising whether on television, Facebook or Internet.

Interestingly the correlation between media credibility and advertising skepticism is similar on those three media. Further analysis shows that the correlation is strong, that is above 0.5. Unexpectedly, the stronger media credibility the more skepticism consumer toward advertising played on the media. It is needed further research to verify this result. To perform further research, more media can be considered added to the study. The number of respondent is also maybe considered to increase so thus more opinion will be catch. Our surprising continuous with the factor loading between advertising skepticism and avoidance as shown on Table 3. Although the loading is very small, but the sign is negative. It means when the advertising skepticism raise the advertising avoidance is lower. Logically this result is untrue. Therefore it require to further research by adding more media and more respondents.

4   Conclusion

Various media are available in performing advertising, starting from traditional one up to digital media. Television has been primary advertising media since long back. And since the advent of computer and Internet technology, advertising using media such as Internet and Facebook is common. Although advertising through television is more expensive than the last two media, advertising on television is yet salable. On the other hand, it's suspected viewers often do not pay attention to advertising, neither even believe in advertising. The goals of this study were two folds. The first goal was to evaluate the influence of advertising skepticism and media credibility on advertising avoidance. Our second goal was to compare the influence of advertising skepticism and media credibility on advertising avoidance on different media. Result showed that overall advertising skepticism and media credibility influence advertising avoidance. The effect is different across media (television, Facebook and Internet). Unexpectedly result

shown on this study, i.e. the correlation between media credibility and advertising skepticism is strong and positive.

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Appendix

Figure 1 **Research model**
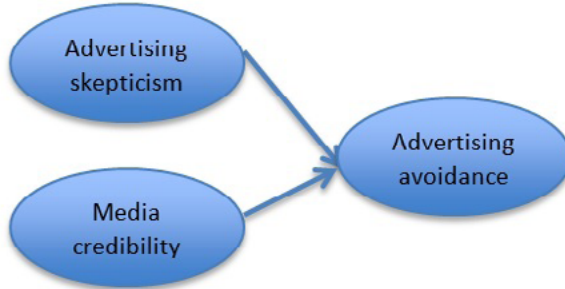
Source: Own research.

Table 1 **Global goodness of fit statistic**

No	Index	Value
	Chi Square (p-value)	1273.378 (0.0000)
	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation	0.0806
	Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.9
	Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.931
	Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	0.931

Source: Own research.

Table 2 **Correlation between variable within group**

No	Variable	Advertising avoidance			Media credibility		
		Television	Facebook	Internet	Television	Facebook	Internet
1.	Advertising skepticism	0.130	0.117	0.049	0.530	0.530	0.530
2.	Media credibility	0.027	0.056	0.097			

Table 3 **Factor loading between latent variable within group (standardize solution)**

No	Variable		Advertising avoidance		
			Television	Facebook	Internet
3.	Advertising skepticism		-0.058	-0.008	-0.003
4.	Media credibility		0.161	0.121	0.098

Source: Own research.

Figure 2 **Diagram path of validated model**

Source: Own research.