

THE ROLE OF ISLAMIC SYMBOL IN ADVERTISING AMONG HIJABERS AND NON-HIJABERS USING ELM FRAMEWORK

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effect of Islamic symbol i.e. halal logo and hijaber talent in advertising from the perspective of hijabers and non hijabers. The framework of this study is Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM). By using experimental design and fictitious brands, this study looks into the likelihood to try of a new product among hijabers and non hijabers by controlling the high involvement and low involvement message strategy of the ad. While there is no difference of likelihood to try between hijabers and non hijabers in high involvement or central route message situation, hijabers show higher likelihood to try than non hijabers in low involvement or peripheral route context. This result indicates that Islamic symbol serves as peripheral route in advertising processing among hijabers.

Key Words: Islamic symbol, ELM (Elaboration Likelihood Model), Advertising

1. INTRODUCTION

Religious symbols take on a sacredness that gives them a very strong presence and power in many people's daily lives (Zwick & Chelariu, 2006). Wearing religious symbols is an important expression of an individual's religious identity (Kulenovi, 2006). It may reflect the wearer's understanding of the requirements prescribed in their tradition or their belief that wearing this form of dress or these symbols as a mark of their religious commitment helps to enhance their spiritual life. It may also reflect a desire publicly to affirm the identity to which these are linked. This interpretation and affiliation might emerge in information processing among Muslims when they encounter a message carrying this religious symbol.

It is widely accepted that attitudes and behaviors are greatly influenced by religion-rooted aspects of culture (Naseri and Tamam, 2012). A review of published literature on religion and advertising led to the identification of various studies on the influence of religion on advertising.

Traditional analyses of persuasion have sought to identify how source, message, recipient channel and contextual factors affect a person's susceptibility to persuasion (e.g. Hovland, Janis, & Kelley, 1953). Persuasion theories distinguish between two main cognitive (or systematic) and affective (or heuristic) information processing which affect attitudes shaping in different circumstances. Cognitive processing requires effortful decoding of messages while affective processing requires relatively little mental effort (Shavitt, Swan, Lowrey, & Wanke, 1994).

When people are motivated and able to engage in issue-relevant thinking regarding a message, elaboration likelihood is high. Specifically, people will likely: (1) attend to the central arguments present in the appeal; (2) attempt to access relevant associations, images, and experiences from memory; (3) scrutinize and elaborate upon the externally provided message arguments in light of associations available from memory; (4) draw inferences about the merits of the arguments based on their analysis of the data extracted from memory and from the appeal; and (5) derive an over-all evaluation of, or attitude toward, the issue or object recommended in the appeal (Petty and Cacioppo, 1984). Thus, when people are motivated to consider carefully the merits of a buying decision, as in a high-involvement situation, the ELM suggests that they will follow this central route to persuasion in which attitude change results from a conscientious effort to evaluate the merits of the advocated position (Petty and Cacioppo, 1984; Andrews and Shimp, 1990).

When people are not motivated to consider issue-relevant information, as in a low-involvement situation, acceptance or rejection of the promotional appeal is not based upon conscientious consideration of the message arguments. Instead, attitude formation is based upon the issue or object being associated with positive or negative cues that have no intrinsic link to the product, such as source attractiveness. Message recipients then draw simple inferences based upon these various peripheral cues in the persuasion context, which, in turn, affects their judgments of the merits of the promotional message (Petty and Cacioppo, 1984; Andrews and Shimp, 1990). The central and peripheral routes represent points on a continuum ranging from high- to low-elaboration likelihood, and not two mutually exclusive and exhaustive types of persuasion. For example, when the message relevance is neither high or low, the attractiveness and expertise of the source enhance persuasion only when compelling arguments are presented (Petty, Cacioppo, and Schumann, 1983).

This study aims to investigate the different impact of Islamic religious cues in advertising among hijabers and non hijabers. In relation with Petty and Cacioppo (1984), the advertising using Islamic symbol without detail product information serves as low involvement message processing ad. The high involvement message processing ad would be the common advertising with a lot of details of information which will serve as the control. It is expected that hijabers tend to evaluate low involvement ad using Islamic symbol with less detail product information higher than non hijabers.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Religious Symbolism

The role of religion in a culture is to transform magic from a direct manipulation of natural an unnatural (or at least misunderstood or mystical) forces into a symbolic activity. The realm of the supernatural becomes accessible only through the mediation of symbols. In an effort to influence the spiritual powers, actions are addressed to spirits, souls, and/or gods/goddesses using concrete instrumentalities that mean something above and beyond their real-world potencies (Weber, 1922). Such symbols become entrenched and unalterable within a religious tradition and fall under the protection of supernatural forces. Therefore, as a peripheral cue, a religious symbol should be more powerful than a secular cue, and is worth testing in the ELM framework because of its special nature.

Muslims consider Islam to be a complete way of life. Indeed, one of the characteristics that distinguish Muslims from followers of some other faiths is that the influence of religion is very clear in every aspect of the Muslim's life (Rice & Al-Mossawi, 2002). Shari'a the Islamic comprehensive code of conducts governs the duties, morals and behavior of all Muslims, individually, and collectively in all areas of life, including marketing and commerce (Luqmani et al.1989). It completely describes the values that Muslims should hold, such as truth, justice, honesty, social obligations, collective responsibility and the roles of men and women (Al-Olayan & Karande, 2000).It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the whole characteristics of Islamic values. But we refer to some of which needs more attention in advertising industry. According to Islamic social philosophy all spiritual, social, political, and economic spheres of life form an indivisible unity that must be thoroughly influenced by Islamic values. This principle informs such concepts as "Islamic law" and the "Islamic state" and accounts for Islam's strong emphasis on social life and social duties (Fam et al., 2004).

The Islamic law, Shari'a, which sets all that one should do, derives from four main resources of Islamic teaching. These resources are Qur'an (Muslims' holy book which is God's wording), Sunnah (the divinely inspired conduct of the Prophet Mohammad), Aghl (reasoning), and Ijma (consensus of opinion) (Al-Olayan & Karande, 2000). These four main sources might have not addressed many of modern phenomena such as marketing and advertising explicitly, but its comprehensive value system explicates should and shouldn't which consequently influences advertising content, execution and evaluation. In an attempt to relate basic Islamic values to advertising implications Rice and Al-Mousawi (2002) elucidated some Islamic values and their advertising implication. Some of these values which Muslims should follow are truth, honesty, politeness and social and collective obligations and responsibilities. Muslims should keep away from falsehood and deception everywhere in general and in trade and financial dealings with others in specific. They should not tell a lie and should avoid exaggeration. Therefore Muslims may process exaggerated messages in advertising as lie which intends to mislead (Rice & Al-Mossawi, 2002). Islam has a set of orders which is defined as lawful (halal) and prohibited (haram) behaviors. This religious code of conduct not only designates the allowed range of

behavior but also provides a system of values to evaluate behaviors of other members of the group

As a result, advertisements which portray some of these prohibited elements would be perceived offensive among Muslims (Michell & Al-Mossawi, 1995). Global advertising which intentionally or unintentionally overlooked these implications caused a great deal of controversies. According to Fam et al (2004), Muslims found the advertising of gender/sex related products, social/political groups, and health and care products most offensive relative to the other two religions of Buddhism, and Christianity. Moreover, the religiously devout respondents were more likely to find advertising of gender/sex related products, health and care products, and addictive products more offensive than the less devout follower (Fam et al., 2004).

In addition to further consideration of Islamic values, some advertisers utilized Islamic elements to produce a favorable feeling among Muslims. For example some advertisement utilized Qur'anic words to enhance the influence of the ad and make it more appealing to Muslim consumers. Examples are the words "Bismillah" (in the name of God; a phrase used by Muslims before beginning any action) or "Allahuakbar" (literally, God is greater) (Rice & Al-Mossawi, 2002). Luqmani et al.(1989) provide an example of a manufacturer of water pumps that uses a verse from the Qur'an in advertising: "We made every living thing from water." In another example a distributor of Royal Regina honey capsules in Saudi Arabia successfully ran a contest that included a question on how many times bees are mentioned in the Qur'an, along with questions and information about the product (Luqmani et al., 1989). All these studies enlightened the importance of utilizing Islamic elements and symbols properly not only to decrease the negative perception of Muslims to advertisement but also to generate positive attitude toward advertisement. Embedding Islamic symbols such as hijab for spokesperson in advertisements might enhance the information processing due to the familiarity it produces with its target audiences. This probable effect of Islamic symbol of hijab is what Elaboration Likelihood Model coined as positive effect of peripheral cues.

Elaboration Likelihood Model

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) is one of the most widely used psychological theories to account for how advertising information is processed. Since first formulated in 1979 in the field of psychology and applied to consumer behavior study in 1983, the ELM has been the subject of numerous studies, and it has been used in wide-ranging areas of persuasive communication from marketing to health communication (SanJose-Cabezudo et al., 2009). The ELM developed by Petty and Cacioppo (1986), views persuasion primarily as a cognitive event, meaning that the targets of persuasive messages use mental processes of motivation and reasoning (or a lack there of) to accept or reject persuasive messages.

The ELM provides an integrative framework for understanding the antecedents and consequences of attitude change and specifies the various processes by which source; message, recipient, channel, and context variables have an impact on attitudes (Petty et al., 2009). A key postulate in the ELM is that attitude change can result from relatively thoughtful (central route)

or non-thoughtful (peripheral route) processes. ELM's explanation to this different effect relies on various elaborations of messages among respondents. ELM posits that the impact of messages cues like attractiveness or favorability of spokesperson changes according to receiver's elaboration. This ability to elucidate inconsistent findings from different studies put the ELM as a pioneer and most influential theory in persuasion research (O'Keefe, 2002).

According to Petty and Cacioppo (1981), high involvement situation will generate central route to persuasion scheme while low involvement setting will lead to peripheral route to persuasion. In the context of high involvement message, there is no difference between hijabers and non hijabers as both deem specific product features essential in a product. On the other hand, in low involvement message situation, hijabers will evaluate advertising with Islamic symbol more favorably than non hijabers.

Based on the above background, below are the hypotheses for this study.

Hypothesis 1: High involvement message strategy generates indifference likelihood to try among non hijabers than hijabers

Hypothesis 2: Low involvement message strategy using Islamic symbol generates higher likelihood to try among hijabers than non hijabers

Furthermore, this study is a 2 (high involvement or low involvement message strategy) x 2 (hijabers or non hijabers) factorial design with hijabers or non hijabers as between subject factor. The fictitious brands are used as stimulus while the product used is based on the pretest study which will be described next. The reason behind the use of fictitious brand name was to ensure neutrality and to avoid bias from the existing brand image and brand stature/market position.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

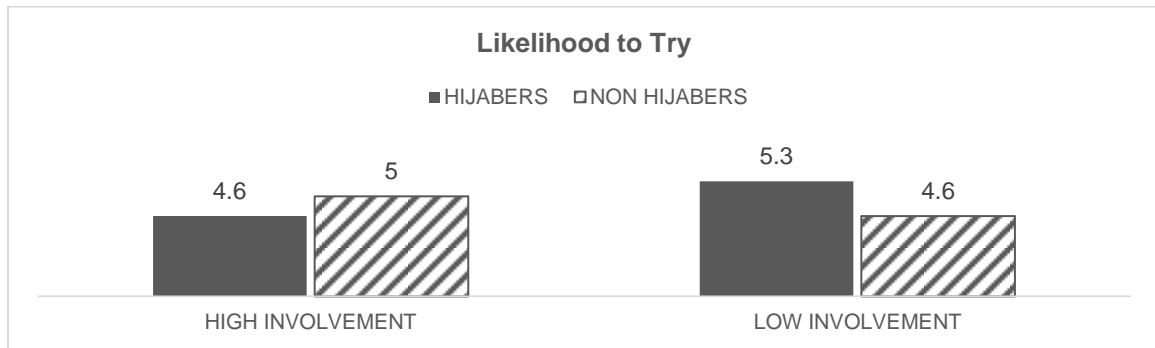
The participants of the main study are essentially female hijabers and non hijabers. Online survey was utilized for the data collection process because of its convenience and efficient nature compared to traditional offline method. Total 144 participants took part in the study. However, only 123 participants have been considered in the result analysis due to eligibility according to the criteria. Broadly in terms of hijab status, they are 60 hijabers and 63 non hijabers. The data collection started from October 12th and ended on November 12th 2017. The use of online platform helps the data collection a lot easier.

4. RESULT

Likelihood to try the advertised product with low involvement message strategy using Islamic symbol among hijabers is 5.00 (out of 7 point scale) or higher than non hijabers 4.57. On the other hand, high involvement message strategy ad gains higher likelihood to try among non

hijabers (5.35 versus 4.62). The descriptive statistic result is as expected by the hypothesis of this study. Below is the graphic which presents the difference among hijabers and non hijabers in terms of likelihood to try the new product being advertised.

Graphic 1 Descriptive Statistics



Moreover ANOVA test is obtained to see the effect of each manipulation (hijab status and message strategy) to the dependent measure of the study i.e. likelihood to try the advertised product. Below table shows the ANOVA test result.

Table 1 ANOVA

	Source	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Main effect	Hijab status (A)	1	1.354	0.858	0.355
	Message strategy (B)	1	2.478	1.570	0.211
Interaction effect	A X B	1	20.801	13.181	0.000

None of independent variable produce significant effect to the dependent measure on their own. Hijab status alone as well as message strategy on its own do not generate significant effect towards the dependent variable (hijab status, $p = 0.355$, and message strategy, $p = 0.211$).

However when looking at the interaction effect between hijab status and message strategy, the effect is apparently significant ($p = 0.000$). It means that hijab status and message strategy on their own could not generate the difference in likelihood to try the advertised product but if they are both combined, it will eventually create significant effect.

It is stated in hypothesis 1 that for high involvement ad, hijabers and non hijabers will elicit indifference in terms of likelihood to try. Based on descriptive statistic result, non hijabers generate average likelihood to try of 5.00 while hijabers elicit 4.62. These descriptive statistic

results need to be looked further by using inferential statistics to see whether the difference is significant.

By using compare means t test, it is found that the difference between hijabers and non hijabers on likelihood to try the advertised product in high involvement ad is not significant at 95% level ($t=1.682$, $df=121$). This result indicates that high involvement message strategy works for both hijabers and non hijabers. It will be a useful insight for products which don't use Islamic symbol positioning strategy to continue aim for both hijabers and non hijabers. Below is the table for t test of hypothesis 1.

Table 2 T Test for Hypothesis 1

Design	Description	t Value	df	Sig	Standard Error
Hijab Status	High Involvement	1.682	121	0.095	0.22655

This result is in line with the participants' perception toward relevant product features. There is no significant difference between hijabers and non hijabers on the importance of relevant product information. Also this result is consistent with prior finding first posited by Petty and Cacioppo (1981) and all school of thoughts supporting Elaboration Likelihood Model. The presence of detail relevant product features prompt consumers to take central route to persuasion. For this study in particular, both hijabers and non hijabers are persuaded by product relevant information.

It is predicted that for low involvement message strategy using Islamic symbol, hijabers will elicit higher likelihood to try compared to non hijabers. Based on descriptive statistic result, average likelihood to try among hijabers is 5.35 while non hijabers is 4.56. These descriptive statistic results need to be looked further by using inferential statistics to see whether the difference is significant.

Using compare means t test, it is found that the difference between hijabers and non hijabers on likelihood to try the advertised product is significant at 99% level ($t=-3.452$, $df=121$). It shows that there is a real difference between hijabers and non hijabers in terms of how they see a low involvement message strategy using Islamic symbol, in particular halal logo and hijaber talent in the ad. Below is the table showing t test for the second hypothesis.

Table 3 T Test for Hypothesis 2

Design	Description	t Value	Df	Sig	Standard Error
Hijab Status	Low Involvement	-3.452	121	0.001	0.22667

The above result is a strong indication that Islamic symbol i.e. halal logo and hijaber talent affect the way hijabers and non hijabers in evaluating advertising. According to prior study done by Dotson and Hyatt (2000), religious symbol plays a role as peripheral cues in advertising. While their previous work was conducted in the context of Christianity symbol i.e. cross symbol, this study investigates the similar effect in the context of Islamic symbol. The result shows somewhat similar findings.

As Petty and Cacioppo (1981) have postulated, the peripheral route to persuasion comes into play when consumers focus on non relevant product features such as the spokesperson or the celebrity endorser. So the consumers make decision merely based on non relevant product features. In this study, the Islamic symbols serve as the peripheral route as coined by Pety and Cacioppo (1981).

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The abundance of hijabers in a muslim country like Indonesia lures corporations to try launching a product specifically targeting hijabers. The success story of Wardah is the testament of how focused segmentation strategies benefit the brand owner especially targeting hijabers. Wardah has built a strong brand stature in Indonesia competing strongly with the existing conventional cosmetic brands.

This research tries to shed light on how Islamic symbol helps brand owner in their marketing communication effort. The use of halal logo and hijaber talent in the advertising proves to be useful in increasing the likelihood to try a new product in particular among hijabers. The Islamic symbol thus becomes the short cut or peripheral route in evaluating certain advertising.

Moreover this study also shows that even hijabers also care about the relevant product features. It was shown in the manipulation check that there is no significant difference between hijabers and non hijabers in viewing relevant product features. So it means relevant product features are important for both of them. Hence for brand owners targeting hijabers, it is also recommended to communicate relevant product features on top of Islamic symbol.

This research also indicates that it is not possible to view peripheral cues in a deterministic way. Rather, these results suggest that the perception of a peripheral cue is a function of the specific nature of that cue. That is, the symbolic associations that a particular cue has with different audiences will affect the way that that cue operates. Hijaber talent in the advertisement and halal logo resonate well among hijabers. The nature of the peripheral cue then seems to represent a boundary condition for the ELM.

The use of a sacred object as a peripheral cue requires careful consideration. First, how the sacred object is presented and/or what it is associated with can affect consumer reactions to it. For example, several years ago Nike used the Beatles' song "Revolution" as a peripheral cue

(background music) in an advertisement for athletic shoes. The ad was subject to intense criticism by consumers because of the perceived sacred nature of the song and its alleged co-optation by marketers to sell shoes (Scott, 1993). More recently, Nike again raised consumer ire by having basketball star Dennis Rodman threaten Santa Claus, a perceived sacred figure. Here, the peripheral cue is humor, with the joke centering on asking Santa for athletic shoes. In each case, it seems that the use of sacred symbols stimulates counterarguments by and negative associations for many consumers. In this particular study, the association of Islamic symbol works effectively among hijabers.

Because this study represents a partial replication and does not confirm original results regarding peripheral cues, there is some uncertainty as to what exact characteristics of and relationships between the variables constitute a boundary condition (Monroe, 1992b). To date, there has been little variety in the nature of peripheral cues used in research to test the robustness of the ELM. Future research efforts must be directed at gaining an understanding of the exact nature of peripheral cues and their effects. This will serve to define further the boundaries of this important theoretical model.

Furthermore there is also indication that even non hijabers react favorably toward halal logo as shown in the manipulation check in this study. Future research might try to investigate further whether there is even more precise factor affecting how consumers view Islamic symbol. One might hypothesize that the internalization degree of Islamic principles affects the way consumers evaluate a product.

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