



Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts

**CREATIVE STRATEGY IN ADVERTISING OF
UNDERGARMENT IN MALAYSIA**

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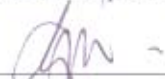
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Abstract

This study focused on creative advertising campaigns for undergarment in the context of Malaysia. The research will be emphasis on the visual communication through the integration of ideas and technology. The validation will be a final phase on measuring the effectiveness of the campaign.

Abstrak

Kajian ini fokus kepada kempen pengiklanan kreatif untuk pakaian dalaman terhadap golongan sasaran. Perkembangan idea ditekankan menerusi integrasi visual dan konsep dalam konteks Malaysia. Keberkesanan kempen pengiklanan kreatif ini dinilai menerusi validasi.

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Chapter 1

1.1 Research Background

Undergarments are grouped as controversial products like condoms, cigarettes, female hygiene products, sex-related products, alcohol-based product, and pharmaceutical goods. Academic research in advertising literature analyzing controversial advertising is found in studies describing the products as: "unmentionables", "socially sensitive products", "decent products", and "acceptable advertising" (Wilson & West 1981). This paper is to research towards promotion strategy for undergarments product with the most appropriate method and also help to give impetus on creating more creative ideas to advertise others sensitive products.

Malaysia is a multi-cultural country with different ethnic groups like Malay, Chinese, Indians, and other Bumiputera living side by side. In Malaysia, Muslim Malays is the dominant ethnic group and for the Muslim culture, both Muslim men and women must cover their torso and upper legs at all times and women must dress conservatively in public. Wearing only undergarments in public place are considered an intermediate form between being socially acceptable dressed and being nude. In terms of Malaysia's culture, this is known as scantily clad and very inappropriate to wearing with only lingerie. In case of this product, it would not be the nature of product that will make it controversial like alcohols and cigarettes but the manner in which the product is advertised.

In addition, most of the Malaysians felt that undergarment advertisement with half naked figure may become a criminal intention. The existence of such advertising restrictions on undergarment products can become a major obstacle for a company on the degree of standardization their marketing program in global marketplace. These problems should be solve so can be more spaces for expanding creativity in advertising.

Before engaging into mass communication in Malaysia, strategy promotions for undergarment products need utmost care and research to get the most appropriate method that can be acceptable by all of the Malaysian in terms of achieve the highest result of promoting.

1.2 Objective

- To identify Malaysians based on advertisement of undergarment clothes
- To analyze data from feedback on user perception toward undergarment advertisements
- To propose advertising strategy for undergarment product
- To validate the reaction of target audiences towards the proposed advertisement of undergarment

1.3 Problem Statement

- **Strategy Promotion**

There are many existing advertisements for undergarment which are too direct to show up half nude figure that are restricted by Malaysia culture.

- **Bareness Advertisements become Criminal Intention**

Some parents feel that advertisements with model wearing only underwear are not suitable for young children. In addition, most of the Malaysians felt that bareness lingerie advertisements may become a criminal intention.

- **Restriction of Advertising**

Existing nudity advertisements have becomes obstacles for lingerie products' company to promote undergarments in Malaysia through any types of public media that under government jurisdiction.

1.4 Scope of Study

The research will only focus on strategy promotion of undergarment in Malaysia. Respondent's perception and opinion towards strategy promotion of undergarment will be collect by both quantitative and qualitative methods. Data will collect from volunteers in Malaysia with different background, different religions and races. Target audiences for this research are both male and female between 20 to 40 years old who are the largest consumers to different species of undergarments.

1.5 Research Limitation

There is less resource for study regarding to strategy promotion of undergarment in Malaysia. On the basic of undergarments were grouped as controversial product, there had less references books about this title. For Television Commercial (TVC), there a lack of sample video and TVC product regards to undergarment brand in Malaysia. The research will be focus on Malaysians only due to duration time duration and geographical limitation.

Chapter 2

2.1 Literature Review

2.1.1 Promotion strategy

A successful promotion strategy can help a company build great communications with its target market for the purpose of persuading and influencing a consumer decision. Farshid Movaghar Moghaddam and Amir Foroughi stated that “Promotion is one of the marketing mix that many researchers assessed its relationship with a market share to find whether sound promotion would increase sales and profit. Promotion is relatively effective to the campaigns of competitors.” (2012).

2.1.2 Undergarments

Due to different perception from different culture, some products may be considered as controversial or some members of the community may see the public promotion of them as offence. Studies on the advertising of these products have discussed them in terms of: “unmentionables”, “socially sensitive products”, and “decent products” (Wilson & West 1981). Such products can include cigarettes, alcohol, condoms, female hygiene products, female undergarments, male undergarments, sexual diseases (e.g. STD’s, AIDS), and pharmaceutical goods (Shao & Hill 1994).

2.1.3 Restrictions

At government level, there are laws meant to safeguard consumers against deceptive and misleading advertisement. (Pardun, 2009) Malaysia is a multi-culture country though Islam is nationalized as the main religion. Due to multi-cultural and religious in South East Asia, restrictions and acceptances of advertisement in most of the country are very different from the West.

The Malaysian Code of Advertising Practice which is administered by the Advertising Standards Authority Malaysia (ASA) was established as a common guideline for advertising activities in Malaysia. The Advertising Standards Authority Malaysia (ASA) stipulates that “Advertisements must project the Malaysian culture and identity, reflect the multi-racial character of the population and advocate the philosophy of RUKUN NEGARA.” (2008)

Most of the regulations in the advertising code were set up based on Islamic values. On the basis of Advertising Code’s decent dress code, upper cloths of female models must be covered until the neckline, the length of the skirt worn should be below the knees, the arms may be exposed up to the edge of the shoulder but armpits cannot be exposed (Waller & Kim, 2000).

The Communications and Multimedia Content Forum of Malaysia had adopted The Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Content Code (2001) for this purpose: “the statutory duty sets out the guidelines and procedures for good practice and standards of content disseminated to audiences by service providers in

the communications and multimedia industry in Malaysia.” According to The Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Content Code, below are some unacceptable product and services in advertisement topic: “(g) Clothing which is printed with word(s) or symbol(s) that has an inappropriate message; and (i) Scenes which are sexually explicit or impolite” (Forum, 2001)

In terms of Malaysian culture, wearing only undergarments in public place are known as scantily clad and being nude. This is considered lewd and very inappropriate to wear only lingerie in public area. These codes protect religious and cultural sensitivity in Malaysia but also affect undergarments’ advertisements on the mass media which is hampered by the stricter regulations.

Marketers must be aware of religious and cultural differences between South East Asia and other Western countries when entering the market. These environmental factors differentiate the domestic market from international markets and must be included when planning a product’s marketing strategy (Cateora, 1990).

In order to avoid marketing activities which may cause harm upon local culture values, a company must first analyze the perceptions of media and advertising restrictions in Malaysia before standardizing the marketing program in global markets.

2.1.4 Protect children:

Most of the Malaysians felt that undergarment advertisement with almost naked figure may become a criminal intention. Parent groups want to protect their kids from questionable media and advertisers. (Pardun, 2009) There was a proverb in Chinese that “*Three years need to learn to be good, Three days need to learn to be bad.*” Kids are naive before they learn something improper.

Although there are not be certain that all of the children will being bad after they meet a sexy advertisement, Malaysian culture makes parents not be at ease to let their children being contact with any types of those advertisements or video scene. This is why the Broadcasters shall classifications the programs into U, PG-14, PG-18, and 18 & above.

Chapter 3

3.1 Methodology

To determine the public perception towards the proposed advertisement of undergarment in Malaysia, a personal survey was undertaken. The questionnaire was divided into three sections to collect data more efficiently. There were 100 respondents from different backgrounds with different religions and races took parts in this research. 70 respondents among them answered the questionnaire via internet survey applications and 30 respondents answered through printed handouts.

In the questionnaire, Section A contained respondents' demographics; Section B contained general research about the perception of respondents based on their acceptance towards current undergarments' advertisement in Malaysia; and Section C consisted recommendations to advertise undergarments product in Malaysia. A five-point Likert scale where 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree was used in both Section B and Section C. There were also open-ended questions in the questionnaire to convey respondents' personal opinions.

3.2 Observation

Undergarments' advertisement can be found at private television channel such as TV3, NTV7 and 8TV and Astro. However, there are almost never had undergarment advertisement showing on government-run Television Malaysia such RTM.

There are posters and banners posting at shopping complex and anywhere selling undergarment but only in store that run by private company like Parkson, The Store and Pacific. There are seldom or never found undergarment been advertise by billboard and ambient media which are under government's control.

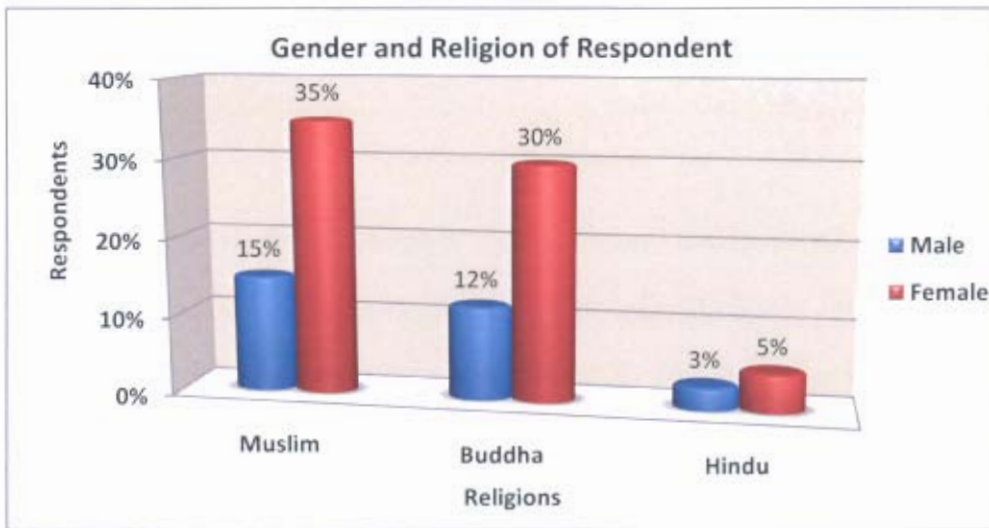
Private company provides huge advertisement and information of undergarments through their published magazine or newspaper. However, magazine and newspaper under government-run had less information can be obtain about undergarments.

Chapter 4

4.1 Finding

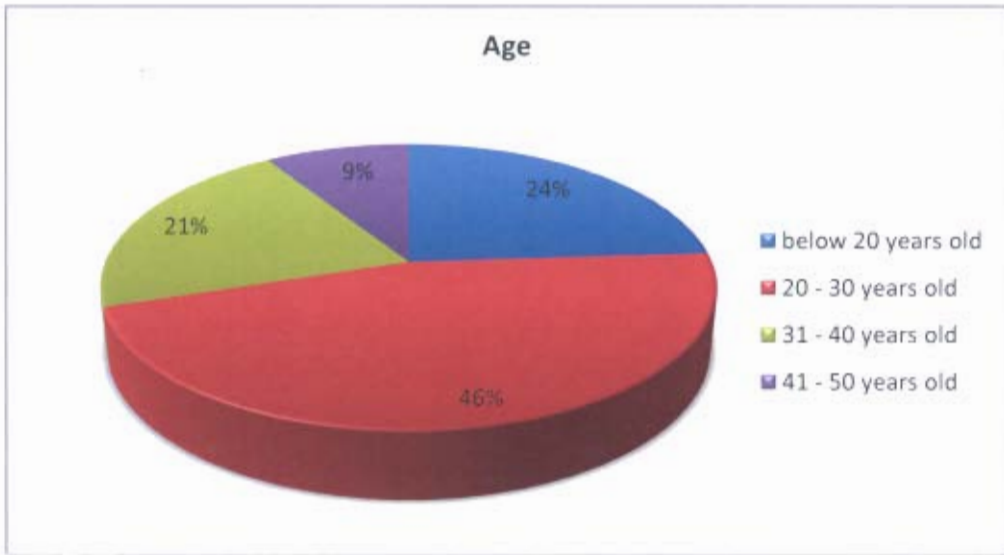
4.1.1 Section A: Demographic

There were 100 respondents who took part in the questionnaire which involved 30% male and 70% female. The data will be analyzed as 1 person = 1% in respondents' demographic profile.



Graph 1: Respondents' gender and religion

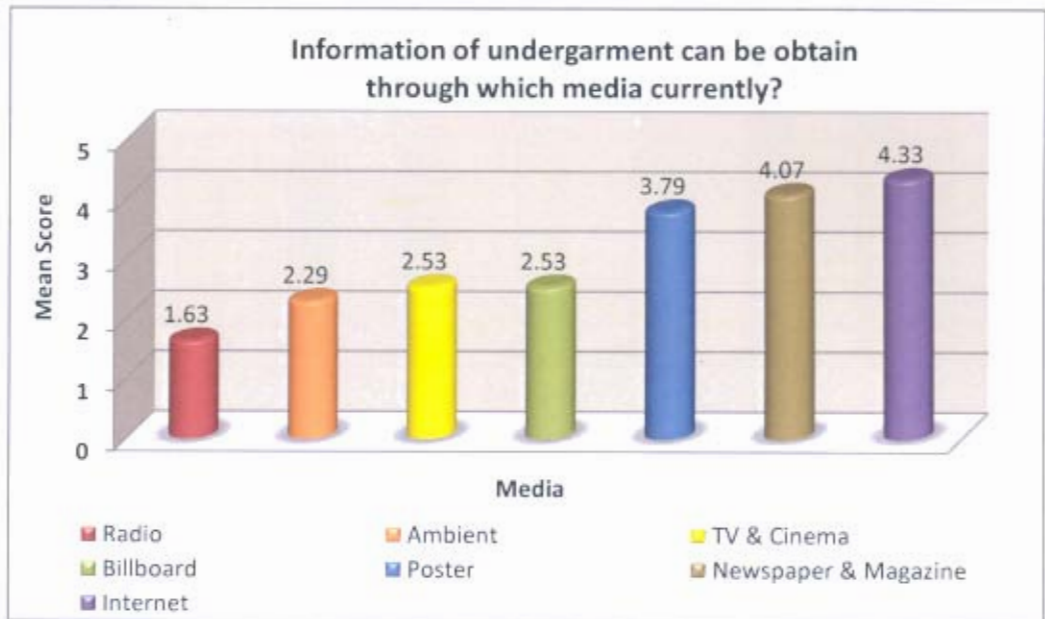
According to the graph above, collected data show that majority of the respondent is Muslim. This research focuses on proposing strategy promotion of undergarment with no offence in any religion especially Muslim. There were 50% of Muslim respondents which included 15% male and 35% female. The second highest religion was Buddha, consisted 12% male and 30% female respondents. The least respondent was Hindu, which only 3% male Hindu and 5% female Hindu were involved.



Pie Chart 1: Respondents' Age

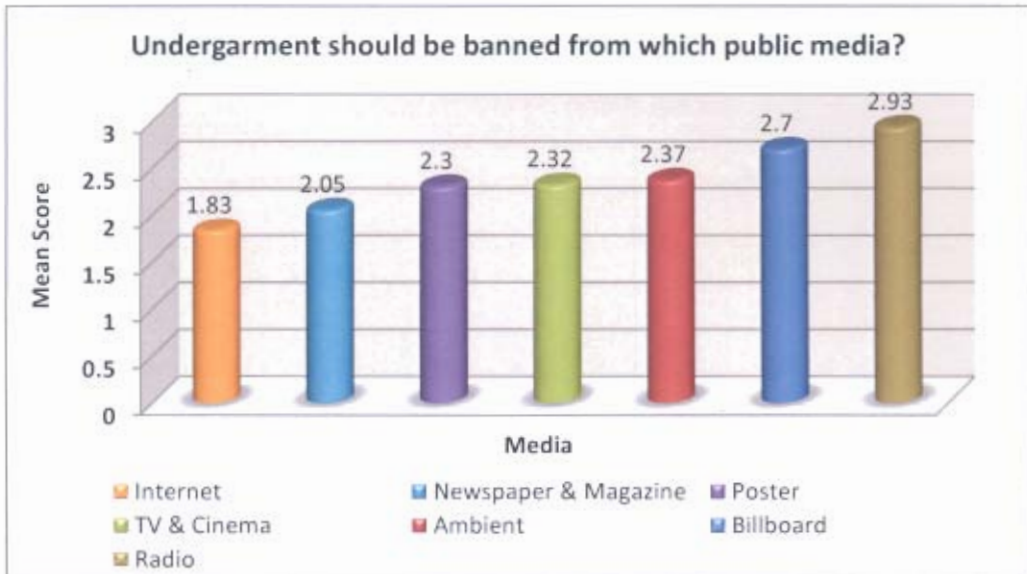
Pie chart above shows the age of the respondents that involved in the questionnaire was majority in the range of 20 to 30 years old that is 46%, followed by teenagers below 20 years old (24%). The third highest age is between 31 to 40 years old that is 21% from the respondent. The minority of the respondent is only 9% from the range of 41 to 50 years old.

4.1.2 Section B: General



Graph 2: Media that can help to obtain information of undergarment currently.

Graph 3 above shows the data from respondent regarding to which media can help them to obtain information of undergarment currently. The rapid growth of technology and less restrictions of website make the Internet media gets the highest mean score in this case (4.33). Respondents agree that there is less limitation for them looking for undergarments' species and branding through the website. On the other hand, limitation of only auditory sense of sound makes radio has the lowest mean score which is only 1.63 for this topic.



Graph 3: Undergarments' advertisement should be banned from which public media?

Graph 4 shows respondents that agree the most to ban or not showing undergarments' advertisement through radio. Radio gets the highest mean score in the Likert scale (2.93), followed by billboard (2.7). This is because religious restrictions and government restrictions maybe are not allowed to show this sensitive product through those media. Internet is the fastest and easiest way to get any type of information instantly so that majority of the respondents are not agreed to ban undergarment advertisement on internet, which 1.83 is the lowest mean score from collected data.