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A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF USING OPINION LEADER IN MARKETING COMMUNICATION: UNDERSTANDING FOOD BLOGGER, FOODIE, AND FOOD EDITOR IN CULINARY BUSINESS IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

The increasing growth of the blog, the virtual community, and social media has directed us to create and use user generated content as our reference in searching for any information. We all become evangelists as we do location tagging, check in, moments upload, pictures sharing, and so on that we think is for our own fun or collection. Culinary places are included in most shared moments that compliment with various qualities of food pictures and comments. In Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, the culinary business is a fast paced changing one, the mixed culture of Jakarta citizens brings a challenge to cater for, thus competition is hard and only the ones with solid concepts can survive.Smith and Zook (2011) explained that social media opens up new channels of communication which gives marketers direct access to customers and opinion formers. Many studies have shown that opinion leaders can significantly influence consumers. Thus, the research wants to examine the use of opinion leaders, specifically in the culinary business. As a result of an actual experience or interaction with your brand, product, or service, your customers have specific information about your business processes and probably an idea or two on how your business might serve them better in the future. Tap into that and your brand advocates will self-identify (Evans and Cothrel, 2014).This phenomenological research is conducted using small sample that consists of marketing communication specialists who have extensive experience in the culinary business, food bloggers, foodies, and food editors based in Jakarta. In the findings, the study will reveal the understanding of the concept of “food blogger,” “foodie”, and “food editor” and also their roles and contribution in presenting the culinary business to consumers. Thus, the study is expected to give insights into how to use opinion leaders and their differences.

Keywords: culinary, foodie, food blogger, food editor, marketing communication, opinion leader.

Background

The variety of cultural and ethnicities in Indonesia has enriched its culinary assets. The huge population has also supported the development of the culinary industry as most of Indonesians celebrate moments with a feast. In 2011, finally, the Indonesian Government included the culinary industry as one of the creative industry’s sub-sectors. The Culinary business has been seen as one of promise and potential in the creative industry sector in Indonesia. The effort has shown its progress as the culinary industry surpassed the fashion sector that previously had been the defending champion in creative industry growth. In 2013, the culinary industry ranked first out of 15 creative economy sub-sectors with the contribution of 208,632.75 billion or 33% into PDB.

In Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, the culinary industry is among other rapidly changing businesses as the cultural heterogeneity of its residents, beside the tight competition, brings the challenge for the business to cater their consumers’ need of culinary outlets. Dining in restaurants has been part of their daily agenda, even a lifestyle.

Along with the development of the blog, the virtual community and social media, friends or those who are called "friends" in the social world are bringing stronger influence than any advertising or marketing campaign. Thus, people are directed to become a media or channel to create content and share through social media. However, the phenomenon has supplied abundant information that causes people to look for the most trusted source in the social media.

Innovation and solid concepts are among the priorities in running the culinary business in Jakarta. Culinary business owners are also applying strategies in promoting their food as well as the concept of ambience. Among other strategies are using well known and trusted opinion leaders that become references in choosing the culinary experience. As people become less dependent on conventional media in seeking culinary references, the business owners tend to choose the food blogger and foodie to promote their menu and restaurants. However, they still face a challenge in choosing the right influencer who exactly represents their target market. Besides, food writers, including food editors, bloggers and foodies, have their own standard and style in writing their reviews.

Problem Statement, Objective and Significances

Many studies have shown that opinion leaders can significantly influence consumers, but this research will use a qualitative approach instead of quantitative approach. The research examines the use of opinion leaders in marketing communication in the culinary business. In this research, the opinion leaders in the culinary business are categorized as food editor, food blogger and foodie. The general objective of this research is to understand the use of opinion leaders in marketing communication in the culinary business. This research will describe the difference of each opinion leader.

For academic interest, this research is expected to drive further research of online marketing communication. Whereas in practice, this research is expected to give insights on different concepts of each opinion leaders, how to make them interested in our business, and how to optimize the use of opinion leaders in implementing the marketing communication strategy, especially in the culinary business.

Literature Review

A new marketing era, long overdue, was heralded in when social media emerged as the real game changer. Social media emerged as a real game changer. Social media put customers back at the center of the organization and gave marketers a new set of tools to listen to them and to encourage them to engage with the brand. A golden opportunity has emerged as organizations realize the possibilities of engaging with customers in new ways so they can become partners driving the business forward (Smith and Zook, 2011).

Smith and Zook (2011) explained that social media opens up new channels of communication that gives marketers direct access to customers and opinion formers. Web 2.0, and soon Web 3.0, facilitates a dialogue; some call it a ‘trialogue’ (Earls, 2002), as opinion formers and customers and the brand owners engage in conversations. Some of these conversations are within the brand’s official online space, and some occur way beyond the brand’s space and are just amongst customers without any corporate influence.

As a result of an actual experience or interaction with your brand, product, or service, your customers have specific information about your business processes and probably an idea or two on how your business might serve them better in the future. Tap into that and your brand advocates will self-identify (Evans & Cothrel, 2014).

Scoble and Israel (2006) describe that culture is clearly playing a role in how blogging develops. It can be national, ethnic, corporate, or departmental. Where people are encouraged to speak their mind, and those in power trust the people they oversee, blogging flourishes.

Research Design

This is a qualitative study conducted through a phenomenological analysis method. Max Van Manen said that phenomenology asks for the very nature of a phenomenon, for that which makes a "something" what it is and without which it could not be what it is (Patton, 2002:482). This study was conducted in Jakarta, Indonesia. Data collection was done by in-depth interview, observation and literature study. Informants in this research are Hans Danial (Food Blogger), Linda Noviana (Feature/Food Editor), David Mario (Foodie), and Wita Wibisono (Marketing Communication Specialist in Culinary Business).

Findings and Discussions

Food Editor, Food Blogger and Foodie

The Food editor is known with the characteristics below:

- Currently, a food editor is not limited to printed but also online media.
- The Food editor is doing a review for publication of coverage results as well as paid review as related to their expertise, they are asked to review a restaurant to be used in the promotion material.
- The Food editor has a good sense in food and is qualified in writing.
- The Food editor often interviews the restaurant owners when reviewing a restaurant in order to complete the news report.

The Food blogger is known with the characteristics below:

- The review is more casual, less formal and subjective. It is purely based on the writer's experiences, different to the food editor who is applying media writing standard (5W+1H).
- A Picture often becomes the main menu instead of the text. Meanwhile, for the food editor, a picture is used as a supplement.
- The Food blogger was recently invited to a similar event that was conducted for the media, however their writing style is not too detailed and more descriptive of the restaurant ambience.

Meanwhile, for the food editor the detail of ingredients, cooking steps and other uniqueness of the restaurant are the meat of their writing.

- The Food blogger usually starts writing due to their gourmet hobby, therefore many of them do not understand the food processing and restaurant concept. This may harm the restaurant as the review can be wrong and misunderstand the brand of the restaurant.
- The Food blogger is perceived not to be the right person to cover an event conducted by a restaurant, since although they have many followers or the blogs reach high readership or hits, the blog's readers/audiences does not represent the target market of the restaurant.
- The Food blogger can be a profession although in Indonesia they are not well paid yet.
- The Food blogger does not rely on food tasting invitation, they are continually seeking new experiences in food, especially new places.

The foodie is known with the characteristics below:

- A food enthusiast, gourmet hobby or culinary tourism.
- The foodie usually shares through their social networks, not a blog.
- The foodie writes testimony in application or culinary websites based on their experience.

Culinary Business in Jakarta

Danhi (2003) explained that there are six main elements that are critical in determining the culinary identity of a country. These elements are geography, history, ethnic diversity, culinary etiquette, prevailing flavors and recipes (Harrington, 2005). Based on those elements, it is a little bit difficult to say the culinary identity of Indonesia as its food differs from one ethnic group to other ethnic groups, from one region to other regions. When it comes to Jakarta, the capital city, which is a melting pot, it is even more difficult to define. We can find any kind of foods in Jakarta. Based on the menu offered, we can find restaurants that keep local identity and taste in Jakarta yet we also find easily the international fast food brands, international franchises and local restaurants that offer Asian and Western cuisine. Those menus are available from street food to the fine dining restaurants.

Today the culinary market is crowded, even over crowded. The market is filled with a lot of players that come from various backgrounds and not all of them have careful preparation. "Natural selection" applies in the culinary business as the players change rapidly. Those who are still standing have learnt their lesson hard to understand that customers can easily switch their options. Jakartans love something that is becoming a trend. It may happen that one day a restaurant is fully booked, but in the other day the restaurant owners have to face the reality that the crowd has gone as they find a new brighter one.

The development of the culinary business is dominated by those who are offering Western and Asian cuisines (mostly are Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Thai), both with the original taste and adjusted to the Indonesian people's taste. Only few culinary business owners are interested to develop their business with full Indonesian menu because although considered as nice and flavored, its visual presentation is perceived to be less interesting. In the era of social media, the interesting visual presentation is considered to be more than important.

Generally, the restaurant business in Indonesia is currently focusing on the visual presentation. Many types of interesting concepts are offered, such as eye-catching restaurant ambience that attracts people to come to the restaurant, although we have to admit that it is not easy to find the restaurant which has both beautiful ambience and good food in one package. However, the good news is Jakartans do not consider it as a big deal because eating can be a part of other activities such as meeting, hanging out or just spending their leisure time, therefore the place or ambience can be the main factor to be considered.

Opinion Leader and The Use of Media

Every opinion leader in the culinary business has different perspectives with their own styles. The food editor has the target for their media coverage, whether daily, weekly, or monthly. On the other hand, the food blogger and foodie are not tied with a formal deadline but they consistently share or post their new culinary experiences. Consistency is required to maintain loyalty in order to gain trust from their readers or audiences to be the reliable culinary influencers.

Among the food lovers, the food blogger and foodie are already pretty much known. They have many followers in their social media accounts, such as Instagram. Their culinary post often gets a lot of likes and netizens loves their existence. It's may they have an extensive network, they could be their friends, friends of friends, neighbors, acquaintances, and so on, but the important thing is they appear individually, different to the food editor who represents a media company. Food editors are rarely known by netizens, but the Public Relations or Marketing Communication of the restaurant must be aware and trust them pretty well through their media.

The food blogger and foodie make their own media. Advancement of information and communication technology has supported them. The plus point is they become more up to date. With their blog, food bloggers write and share their thoughts. They also maximize the use of other social network to link to their central blog. Food bloggers tend to call themselves as food and travel blogger, as usually they are doing both travel and culinary tourism in their destination. The food blogger has been categorized further into the cooking blogger, baker blogger, and restaurant and lifestyle blogger. Meanwhile, the food editors are not always writing about food, since most of them are working for a feature desk, thus they are called a feature editor. The feature editor usually covers culinary, fashion, lifestyle events, etc.

Naturally, bloggers with perspicacity and a clear voice have emerged and have obtained a following. Some of these have become a new breed of citizen journalist who wields as much power as any major newspaper columnist (Harden &Heyman, 2009). In Indonesia, “food blogger” (why have you used quotation marks?) cannot be regarded as a promising profession even though some people are making it a full time career like a food editor. It is because the appreciation (or payment) for the food blogger in Indonesia cannot be compared with the food bloggers in other countries like in Singapore. They need greater effort to get more remuneration from the restaurant, endorser, or advertiser, such as making more followers and reviews. On the other hand, the food editor or feature editor has been a dream position among the young journalists because they are always associated with party, travel and hanging out in fancy places.

To be a foodie, a person does not need to be a professional food writer and photographer. The requirement to be the foodie is the passion about food and social media as information platform. Foodie usually refers to the food blogger when hunting a restaurant, but sometimes they also improvise when finding food or a restaurant that may not have been covered by the media or food bloggers. The foodie is sharing without any pay. According to an informant, he shares the information voluntary to get his own satisfactions, such as becoming the first person to try the food, people read and like his posting, and is happy when people finally try what he ate and agree with his point.

Uniqueness and novelty are primary considerations for every opinion leaders to share. In their reviews, the important things that they consider to share are among others the recommended food or beverages, taste, price, location, ambience, and basically everything about the restaurant. Sometimes the food blogger and foodie also write their personal comment. They have the freedom of expression in “their own media”. Whereas, food editors are more subject to check and balance and adjust their writing with the character of the media where they work. Most food editors tend to only write positive things about the restaurant and this become one of the reasons why the restaurant prefers to invite them instead of the others.

For the food blogger and foodie, their photo and writing are equally important for their post. They said the delicious food should be supported with the tempting picture and it would be vain as well if the delicious food with a tempting picture is not supported with thorough information about the restaurant, including the location, price and taste. Therefore, the foodie and food blogger never stop to learn to create an extraordinary photo and review. Their strong social network among the foodie and food blogger make them learning from each other how to taste, describe the food, take a photo shoot, and also build a good relationship with the restaurant. On the other hand, they also compete to make the first review and become popular. Meanwhile, for food editor, the quality of writing becomes the first priority. Although a good picture is complimentary for the whole article, the headline and content are more important for them.

It is a little bit difficult to differentiate the food blogger and foodie. A lot of food bloggers in Jakarta share their post like foodies. They are not waiting for any invitation to an event or request to review a restaurant. Instagram is the social media platform that is being used frequently by the food blogger to share the visual presentation of the food. The instagram post, then, serves as a teaser for their post in the blogs.

The Use of Opinion Leader

Use bloggers sparingly but feed their appetite for the juicy news item. Bloggers in your industry are perfect for "leaking" new product news in advance of an official press release date. Bloggers are highly competitive, and will race to be the first to post a good story (Harden &Heyman, 2009).

The objective of the culinary business in using opinion leaders is to promote the restaurant, not only the food and beverage but also the whole selling points that may attract people to come. Some informants admit that to introduce a new restaurant or new menu, many restaurants invite food bloggers for tasting, or hire them exclusively to write about the restaurant.

Restaurants may hire influencers to bring a crowd to come, but when a restaurant is in trouble, the use of opinion leaders should be avoided. It is wiser to be quiet and regain the quality back than to work on confrontation that may spread the complaints widely. There are risks with relying on bloggers—they have no editorial review board, and some enjoy leaning toward the anarchistic side—but their impact with key communities cannot be denied (Harden &Heyman, 2009).

Many food bloggers have a writing capacity similar to the food editor, however according to an informant, they are not equal, especially when we are talking about credibility. Inviting a food editor to cover the restaurant is safer as they never review the taste, it is different with the food blogger who mostly comments on the taste. This is harmful if the food blogger does not understand about food tastes and only relies on their own taste. The food editor never mentions the price as well, different to the food blogger who states the food price, and it has to be a consideration that the blogger has less experience about the restaurant concept and the quality of ingredients used in the restaurant.

Currently, young people are active in social media and they share consistently, including about food. That is where Foodie appears as a term. They have been considered by the culinary business owners as foodie can share anything, the good and the bad, based on their limited understanding that may bring the restaurant into a trouble. Moreover if the foodie does not approach the management directly, it is difficult for the restaurant management to identify them as it is common that people come to a restaurant asking for a wi fi password as well as taking pictures of the menu book and the food.

Culinary business owners prefers to use food editors as they usually have a deep knowledge of food and restaurant, do research before writing and fit with the standard of the media company they represent. They also provide inputs to the restaurant owners and state the complaints (if any) directly to the management, not by spreading it through the social media.

On the other hand, currently, restaurants are also developing the content of events. They are not conducting only food tasting and press conferences but also cooking classes aiming to provide deeper and educative information by sharing the knowledge of ingredients, cooking steps and how to present the food. It also aims to encourage the food bloggers to learn about cooking to enrich their skill in reviewing the food.

Conclusion

In Jakarta, a lot of new restaurants open, but many restaurants are closed too. It may be caused by lack attention to their food taste. Good taste for the food and beverages is still bthe durable selling point for the restaurant, not only the decor concept. Culinary business owners should not only use the opinion leaders but also monitor the conversation between them and their audiences in order to avoid or minimize bad word of mouth.

Relationships with the food bloggers are now considered to be as important as the media relations, especially due to the impact generated by their post in a short time. Building a relationship with food bloggers is also expected to be a strategy to minimize negative posts. In selecting the food bloggers as the opinion leaders, their track record is not only assessed by the hits of the blog page or the number of followers in social media, the content relevancy compared to the demography of the website viewers/readers is considered to be more important.

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DEFINING INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS: VIEWS FROM THAI MARKETERS

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Abstract

The current research aims to empirically examine how Thai marketers view the IMC concept and practices. Self-administered questionnaires were mailed to collect data from 529 Thai marketers in all marketing companies listed in two business directories. One hundred and twenty-two completed questionnaires were received by the cut-off date, and used for statistical analysis. The results from exploratory factor analysis present 14 different explanations of IMC regarding opinions from Thai marketers. First, they view IMC as the combination of various marketing communications tools and media. Second, Thai marketers are concerned with the organizational issues in practising IMC. Third, when thinking of IMC, the evaluation issue remains among the top benefits from doing IMC. Fourth, Thai marketers believe that IMC would help to have more controls over their marketing communications. Fifth, negatively perceived, they would say that IMC practices mean more work needed. Sixth, maximized impact is another IMC benefit that Thai marketers define. Seventh, with IMC, they could be able to manage marketing communications better. Eighth, advertising agencies are Thai marketers' best business partners to work on IMC. Ninth, they also think of other marketing communications suppliers as outside experts that they need. Tenth, coordination and support from all related parties is another concern. Eleventh, the marketers still allow independence among their IMC relationship with partners. Twelfth,

more communications budget is another point that Thai marketers concern toward IMC practices; nevertheless, more creativity is believed to be a benefit from IMC. And, thirteenth, various types of marketing communications are repeatedly mentioned.

Keywords : IMC, Thai marketer, marketing communications, integrated marketing

Background

Previously, research on integrated marketing communications, recognized as IMC, had generated disputes among scholars and researchers. Such academic challenges, yet, have been progressed and IMC has been developed as a strategic device created for more effective brand communication. IMC, as an integration of all marketing communications efforts to maximize companies' marketing communication program, has gradually grown since its first emergence in the 1980s and has gained considerable attention among academics and practitioners around the world. The IMC notion has been proved and widely accepted by scholars and practitioners in that it helps strengthen brand equity in the long-term period, and helps organizations communicate more efficiently with their target audiences. The IMC concept not only has lessened the boundary between traditional communication tools, but it has also changed the marketing communication form and traditional communication pattern via advertising. Evolving from a *one voice, one sound* perspective, and from a message consistency idea, IMC has recently been developed into a strategic customer-oriented notion, with a measurement method to gauge the effectiveness of an organization's marketing communication plan (Kliatchko, 2005). The IMC perspective, therefore, should have not been considered as only an error of marketing communication norm (Nowak & Phelps, 1994). Instead, it should be regarded as a useful communication tool to achieve organization's ultimate goals.

Despite its widespread recognition and implementation, some practitioners have still misunderstood the IMC perspective, while some have found difficulties in its utilization. Consequently, practitioners in the communication area, for example, advertising agencies, public communications, and marketing communications, should understand the IMC concept because it is a foundation for delivering and executing communication programmes, which eventually leads to companies' profits. This study, thus, aims at defining and conceptualizing IMC characteristics from Thai marketers' viewpoints so that IMC practitioners can have a better understanding about the IMC concept, and then can appropriately apply it to fit their target audiences aligning with their companies' goals.

IMC Conceptualized

Due to the continuous economic and social changes, as well as the technological advancement, especially in information technology in the late 1980s to early 1990s (Klitatchko, 2009), along with demassification or media fragmentation, integrated marketing communications or IMC was driven to play a great role in marketing communications (Duncan & Everett, 1993). Only traditional advertising or public relations were not effective enough for such competitive market conditions. Consumer behavior change was also another factor driving IMC notion, for instance, zapping, active information seeking from the Internet and social media, and consumer-generated content. These behaviors indicated that consumers, now, have more power over choosing products and services offered in the marketplace.

According to D. Schultz and Kitchen (2000), there were four reasons causing changes in marketing communication--digitalization, information technology, intellectual property, and communication systems. Meanwhile, Kliatchko (2005) pointed that IMC was derived from the evolution of marketing communication caused by at least three changes--market change, media and communication change, and consumer change. Mass marketing and product-centered marketing concept widely used in during 1950-1969 was then replaced with the customer-centric concept focusing on database exploitation and interactive communication as IMC implication. IMC has been the key to the 21st century-marketing at the heart of dynamic marketplace up until now.

The underpinning of changing marketplace emphasizes on customers rather than products because customers can access information, can buy products or services anytime they want, and can decide which product or brand has value for them. IMC, then, has been developed to offer a company competitive edge, improve selling points with added value to customers, and deliver satisfaction over a company's competitors. Thus, it is necessary for practitioners in communication field to study consumer behavior and collect consumer data to understand what each target group actually wants, and which communications tool they should use to reach their target efficiently and consistently (D. Schultz & H. Schultz, 1998).

IMC, described as customer-oriented notion, has been prevalent across the U.S., European and Asian countries and it has become a philosophy of integration covering every aspect of business. However, despite its development and expansion, academics still have disagreements over its whole concept; for example, Cornelissen and Lock (2000) argued that IMC is just a management fashion or *pop management* more than a theoretical concept, whilst practitioners still lack some grounded understanding with regard to its concept and implementation.

IMC as a Concept and a Process

Though it is considered as a new emerging concept, IMC has gained widespread attention among scholars and practitioners since its inception in 1980s. Still, scholars studied IMC pertaining to their own different point of views and suspicions, especially, IMC definition or its meaning. IMC definition has been a controversial issue among scholars and practitioners; they are still unsure or cannot give a clear explanation what IMC really is (Wolter, 1993). This issue is very critical because an organization can maximize advantages of IMC when every department shares common understanding about what IMC is and has direction to execute their IMC program.

IMC, was named as a *new form of advertising, orchestration, whole egg*, or even *unboundedly communication*. Some also said it is a *one-stop shopping* notion (Novelli, 1989), while some called it as *360 degree marketing* meaning that brand message should be wherever the target audiences are (Shimp, 2000), or *relationship-oriented marketing, holistic branding*, and *one-on-one marketing.* Nevertheless, defining IMC depends upon perspectives of those who define it (D. Schultz, 1993). It is, still, rather difficult to determine specific definition of IMC because it is both concept and process counting on its integration level (Duncan & Everett, 1993).

IMC definition was first mentioned in Caywood, D. Schultz, and Wang (1991)'s research study sponsored by the American Association of Advertising Agencies (4As). The 4As defined IMC as a marketing communication concept focusing on values and benefits of a combination across communication tools, for instance, advertising, public relations, direct marketing, sales promotion, for clarity, consistency, and for greatest communication impact. In line with this definition, D. Schultz (1993) further explained that IMC is a process of development and implementation of communication programmes applied for specific target audiences. The IMC objective is to create a direct impact to the selected target's behaviors. Every brand touchpoint should be exercised to communicate with its customers or target audiences by determining and designing a communication program to suit each target group.

Kitchen, Brignell, and Jones (2004) further concluded that from D. Schultz's (1993) above explanation, IMC is no longer an inside-out, but outside-in marketing instead, driven by potential buyers. Furthermore, they also indicated that IMC is an effort to integrate and combine communication mix by exploiting one tool's strength to compensate another tool's weakness. IMC, then, is not only a communication process, but it is also a process involved with brand management and overall strategic marketing communication management.

Similarly, IMC was explicated by Duncan and Moriarty (1997) as a strategic process for brand message management to create, maintain, and develop relationship between brand and customers. Later, Duncan (2005) pointed out the parallel clarification that IMC is a process for planning, operating, and controlling brand messages, which build relationship with customers and its keystone is communication. It is an ongoing process with no beginning and no end. Organizations should do more than just deliver consistent messages, or *one voice, one look*, but the integration has to occur in every area that can contact with customers, such as, customer service, product capacity, packaging, even a company itself, otherwise, the sent messages would be futile.

Duncan (2005) also developed an IMC model indicating that it is a continuous process initiating brand relationships and when that relationships are strong, it will in turn, lead to brand equity, sales, and profits. Companies, however, at the meantime, should evaluate the impact of brand messages, for example, advertising, sales promotion, direct marketing, product packaging, customer service, and sponsorship. Also, they should adjust their marketing communications plan by evaluating consumers' attitudes and responses to effectively determine brand communication.

In addition, Kliatchko (2005) proposed that IMC is both concept and process of strategic management focusing on customers and communication channels for long-term achievements. In terms of concept, IMC is a notion requiring holistic and strategic thinking regarding brand communication. In terms of process, IMC is engaged with many stages involving development, interdependence, and cooperation, for instance, database building and management, developing and planning brand messages across different communication channels. Due to progress in marketing communication and digital expansion, Kliatchko (2008) later proposed a new definition for IMC, as a business process aiming at customers, with strategically managing stakeholders, content, communication channels, and communication outcomes. According to Klitchko, IMC compositions or pillars were divided into four distinct areas which are, (a) stakeholders including external, internal, and prospect targets, (b) contents, concerning demographics and psychographics, (c) channels including every customer touchpoint, and (d) results, gauging from behavior response, that is, buying behavior, prospect's behavior, and outcome, for example, sales incentives from company's profits.

Although IMC definitions have been studied substantially, those developed definitions have reflected progress and growth of IMC in both depth and breadth. These definitions also reveal certain characteristics of IMC and whatever IMC is called, it has drawn attention and interest of scholars and practitioners, including those working in this industry (Kliatchko, 2005).

Characteristics of IMC

Nowak and Phelps (1994) combined three conceptual frameworks regarding IMC. First is one voice marketing communications, implying that the integration builds clear and consistent brand image, brand position, brand message, and core brand value across all kinds of communication tools. The second concept is integrated communication, which is building brand image and creating consumer's response from communication device, such as, advertising. The last concept is coordinated marketing communication, combining integration and coordination of communication tools to make brand awareness and brand image simultaneously, leading to targets' behavioral response (Klitachko, 2005). Whereas Hartley and Pickton (1999) argued that IMC is not a new concept, yet, a need to integrate marketing communication tool is.

From the above definitions and explanations, IMC was defined in various ways. Nonetheless, theses definitions reflect five distinct characteristics of IMC according to Shimp (2000). The first characteristic of IMC is starting with the customer or prospect. As the main objective for the IMC process is to create an impact on consumer behavior via communication, the process should start with target audiences or prospects. By looking from customers needs or *outside-in*, marketers can identify communication techniques, channels and messages, consistent with different customers' needs (Shimp, 2000). The second feature of IMC is using any forms of relevant contact or touchpoint. Because another purpose of IMC is to reach target audiences efficiently and effectively, brand manager and advertising agency should work together to use any forms of marketing communications tool to communicate with the targets in every touchpoint. Certain tools might be more suitable than others, so IMC practitioners should select the most appropriate tools and channels regarding the communications objective at that time.

Third, speaking with a single voice, every sent message across any communication tool and channel should be in the same direction and be in harmony. Consistent messages will strengthen brand image leading to customers' behavioral responses. Single voice can be initiated by selecting the right positioning statement, which represents the standing point or brand position that a company wants to be in the consumers' mind (Shimp, 2000). The fourth characteristic of IMC is building relationships. It is essential for a brand to build relationships with customers because successful brand-customer relationships would lead to repeated buying behavior, brand loyalty, and brand equity. The last characteristic of IMC is affecting behavior, meaning that IMC should do more than creating brand awareness or positive attitude towards the brand. A successful IMC program should create behavioral response (Shimp, 2000).

These mentioned five characteristics are parallel with D. Schultz (1993)'s conclusion about IMC key features. First, it is outside-in planning. Marketers, advertising or IMC practitioners should consider their consumers before planning a communication program. Understanding customers' needs is primarily requisite, then using the acquired consumer data to design and select communication method to serve customers' needs. Second, it is the customer-oriented database. A consumer database helps practitioners understand and predict consumer behavior as well as helping to reach the right targets. The third is brand contacts. Using various communications tools together will produce more impact than using only one tool. Next, zero-based planning is about communication planning and budgeting by starting from communication objectives without considering previous or last-year plan and budget. Yet, current market environment and brand current situation should be mainly considered since companies should adjust their communication plan to fit with the target market and consumer behavior. Fifth, one voice is to combine any communication forms to in line with each other. Since one communication tool differs from others, it is a must to strategically plan a communications program with clear and consistent messages of brand position and brand concept, so as to build up strong brand and corporate image in consumers' mind. Lastly, cross-functional coordination means that every department in a company including external agency is required to plan and control every step of brand relationship in order to create and maintain good relationship with their customers and stakeholders.

Reid (2005) also concluded another five prominent explanations with regard to IMC characterization. The first one is that IMC is a two-way interaction between an organization and its stakeholders. Second, communication tools should be selected regarding a company resources and should be suitable for its target audiences. Third, to build strong brand image and relationship with stakeholders, it is compulsory to strategically combine and maximize different communication tools in accordance with brand position. The fourth explanation is accurate evaluation of consumer data. Using the precise data from an evaluation can help a company identify the effectiveness of IMC implementation. Finally, strong teamwork within a company and among IMC practitioners has also been mentioned repetitively in IMC concepts and definitions.

IMC Implemented

IMC is an active marketing communications strategy suitable for competitive market environments. IMC, therefore, has been widely studied and supported among scholars and broadly implemented by small and large companies across the world. Most recent research has indicated that IMC can generate several advantages for companies (Eagle, Kitchen, Hyde, Fourie, & Padisetti, 1999; Kitchen & D. Schultz, 2000; D. Schultz, 1998). It helps build up companies' competitive edge, boost up selling point, and enhance customer satisfaction (Kitchen & D. Schultz, 2000). Naik and Roman (2003) also suggested that IMC helps create brand equity via synergy and it helps organizations to communicate with their customers more efficiently and effectively. Such strong brand equity would eventually lead to higher financial profits. Likewise, Madhavaram, Badrinarayanan, and McDonald (2005) stated that an IMC program will heighten brand equity via brand equity contacts. Low's (2000) study also demonstrated that there is a connection between IMC and marketing performance. The higher level of integration, the more sales volume, market share, and profits. Whereas Smith (2002) explained that IMC implementation can create competitive edge, activate sales profits, and cost effective. Madhavaram et al. (2005) conducted a survey research to examine IMC as a vital brand strategy. The findings showed that for practitioners, 1) the IMC concept is extensively accepted, 2) IMC covers many levels in organizations, and 3) IMC becomes an important part of brand strategic management.

The reasons that many organizations applied IMC program are because IMC reduces media waste while improving better integration, message impact, and creativity, generating more effective communication plan, and more importantly, defining better target audiences (Kliatchko, 2005). Furthermore, IMC plays a great role in intangible business--creating relationship with customers and stakeholders for positive perception and attitude towards the brand (Reid, 2005).

However, the IMC concept has not been implemented comprehensively. Some practitioners admitted that there are some difficulties in implementing an IMC program. They also mentioned that it is rather complicated in applying an IMC program in their companies or agencies because of constant obstacles. One of the most serious obstacles is that most managers do not understand the IMC process; they still think that IMC is about creating similar messages. The second obstacle is integration itself is too complex to verify in terms of cost-effectiveness. Lacking creativity in combining branding into sales promotion also hinders IMC implementation. The fourth barrier is a failure in compensation systems (Duncan, 2005).

Moriarty (1994) stated that the biggest IMC barrier is lacking cross-functional skill, while Shimp (2000) further pointed out that shortage of skillful communication personnel and organizational structure, both vertical and horizontal, for example, independent working style, low internal communication, rigid organizational culture, hinder IMC process. However, Brown (1993), argued that difficulties in implementing IMC derived from its unclear definition, complexity of its practice, and problems concerned with organizational culture. Percy (1997) also clarified IMC barriers into four aspects; organizational structure, different understanding about IMC concept, compensation system, and changing market trend.

The current marketplace is dynamic and very competitive so it is inevitable for companies to adjust their communications plan so as to serve customers' needs. Therefore, IMC, concentrating on market orientation, is an excellent alternative for overall strategic brand management. Although, there are both advantages and barriers in implementing IMC, this customer-centric approach is still broadly accepted and continually developed among scholars and practitioners. IMC, not a management fad, but is a new paradigm in marketing communications area, and still has room for improvement by scholars and practitioners, so that it can be useful both in theory and in practice.

Method

To examine how Thai marketers currently think and define IMC, self-administered, mailed questionnaires were used as an instrument to collect survey data in this research. Questions were borrowed and adapted from previous studies in the IMC areas (i.e., Anantachart, Leelahabooneim, & Nakwilai, 2008; Caywood et al., 1991; Duncan, & Everett, 1993; Beard, 1997; Phelps & Johnson, 1996; Reid, 2005). There were 45 five-pointed, Likert-typed scales (ranging from strongly disagree [1] to strongly agree [5]) in total dealing with general opinion and perception on the concept of IMC, perceived satisfactions on IMC practices, and perceived barriers to IMC practices.

Since Thailand is not an English-speaking country, the researchers first translated all questions in the questionnaires into Thai language. Then, two Thai advertising professors who completed their graduate degrees in the U.S. checked for the correctness of the translation.

Two comprehensive business source books (Marittanaporn, 2012; Shrestha, 2012) were used as frameworks to draw the samples. After removing redundant names, the population was 529 marketing managers in local and international companies operating their businesses in Thailand. The survey procedures were as follows: (1) a package composed of a cover letter, a questionnaire, and a postage-paid envelope was mailed; (2) a follow-up letter was sent and two phone calls were made to the non-returned samples after waiting for four weeks. By the cut-off date, 122 marketers returned the questionnaires and all were usable while 16 were undelivered. This resulted in a 23.8% response rate.

Findings

Demographically, 63 (55%) were marketing managers or directors who were responsible for their companies' marketing communications programs. Fifteen respondents (13%) were top management in their companies. More than three of fourth of the respondents have spent time with their current companies between one and ten years, with an average of nine years. Most of their educational levels were graduate degrees (69%) and undergraduate degrees (28%). Sixty-one percent of the sample considered themselves devoting *25 to 74%* of their time to the areas of marketing communications while 25 percent devoted *more than 74%*.

The 45 key questions which were measured in this study were composed of general opinion and perception on the concept of IMC (22 items), perceived satisfactions on IMC practices (13 items), and perceived barriers to IMC practices (10 items). The reliability coefficient for the scales was .80. Exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation was run to group how Thai marketers look and define IMC. As shown in Table 1, the results indicate fourteen patterns of perceived definition based on the combined opinions on the IMC concept. Eigenvalue of each pattern found is greater than 1.00 while the total percentage of variances explained by those 14 patterns is 72.7.

Table 1

Thai marketers' patterns of perception on IMC

Defining IMC	No. of items	Eigenvalues	% of variances
1. IMC as the combination of various marketing communications tools and media	6	9.31	20.68
2. Concern with organizational issues in practicing IMC	5	4.30	9.55
3. IMC evaluation issues	3	2.76	6.13
4. Control over marketing communications tools	5	2.35	5.23
5. More work needed	3	1.89	4.19
6. Maximized communication impact	4	1.75	3.89
7. Better managing marketing communications	3	1.57	3.48
8. Working closely with advertising agencies	3	1.47	3.28
9. Thinking of other marketing communications suppliers	2	1.39	3.09
10. Coordination and support from all related parties	4	1.35	2.99
11. Independence among IMC partners	2	1.27	2.83
12. Concern with communication budget	2	1.23	2.73
13. More creativity	1	1.05	2.34
14. Importance of below-the-line communications	2	1.02	2.26

First and most important among the patterns found, Thai marketers mostly agree that IMC is basically *the combination of various marketing communications tools and media*. Six items are loaded under this dimension. Interestingly, the items received the highest mean scores are that IMC would force their staff to have more knowledge on various marketing communications tools and new media (M = 4.40), that the IMC concept is useful for their work (M = 4.39), and that IMC would make them rethink about strategy and creativity among marketing communications tools, and attempt to make the tools work consistently (M = 4.36), respectively. Another interesting statement that well describes this dimension is that IMC practices result in innovative media and methods to better reach consumers (M = 4.30).

The second pattern deals with *the organizational issues in practicing IMC*. Overall, all items present both positive and negative concern with how their organizations would practice IMC. Positively, Thai marketers do not think that practicing IMC would be against their corporate culture (M = 1.85) and make advertising agencies have too much control on their companies' marketing communications activities (M = 2.11). On the other hand, the samples think that their companies would still lack of staff with enough IMC knowledge, and that most of advertising agencies are still not knowledgeable on new and various marketing communications tools (Ms= 2.97, equally).

Third, when thinking of IMC, *the evaluation issue* remains among the top benefits from doing IMC. The results show that Thai marketers agree that IMC program would increase the impact of marketing communications tools, provide companies with competitive advantages, and help companies to evaluate their marketing communications more effectively (Ms = 4.50, 4.17, and 4.03, respectively).

Next, Thai marketers believe that IMC would help them have *more controls over their marketing communications*. In detail, an IMC program should enable their companies to maintain more control over their marketing communications (M = 4.14), eliminate the miscommunication or lack of communication that might occur when several agencies are used (M = 3.52), better control marketing communications budget (M = 3.50), and reduce the cost for various tools utilized (M = 3.40). For the fifth pattern, Thai marketers would say that IMC practices mean *more work needed*. Elaborately, they tend to present that when companies use various marketing communications tools together, that means more control, new skills, and more staff are needed (Ms = 2.47, 2.57, and 2.76, respectively).

Four items are incorporated into the next dimension, named, *maximized communications impact*. Under this one, Thai marketers believe that their advertising, public relations, sales promotion, and other communications tools used together could communicate clear and consistent messages to reach their targets (M = 4.07). In addition, they regularly review their IMC plan (M = 3.98), include customer relationship management as a part of their brand communications objectives (M = 3.92), and attempt to maximize the use of each communications tool (M = 3.77). Seventh, with IMC, they could be able to *better manage marketing communications*. It could be explained from the following opinions. Thai marketers describe that, by practicing IMC, they have more power over implementations of marketing communications tools, reduce waste of media usage among non-targets, and centralize all responsibilities resulting in less staff (Ms = 3.79, 3.72, and 3.07, respectively).

Next, *working closely with advertising agencies* is another pattern shown. Since advertising agencies have been the key players for IMC since its inauguration, they are still expected to be the best business partners with Thai marketers in the future as well. As demonstrated, the samples wish to work more coordinately with the agencies (M = 3.73), expect them to solve problems quickly (M = 3.50), and give more strategic responsibility to the agencies (M = 3.43). Besides, they also *think of other marketing communications* *suppliers* as outside experts that they need. That is, Thai marketers expect to use more services from other types of marketing communications agencies who understand the IMC concept well.

Coordination and support from all related parties is another IMC dimension found. That is, IMC should receive attention from top management (M = 4.57). Moreover, IMC would help increase cross-functional coordination between departments (M = 3.88), and initiate more meetings with various communications agencies (M = 3.07). However, the marketers still allow *independence among their IMC partners* as long as all marketing communications tools work properly and deliver the consistent messages to reach the targets (M = 4.28).

The twelfth pattern deals with concern with communication budget. Negatively, Thai marketers explain that practicing IMC would increase their marketing communications budgets as various tools should be utilized (M = 2.64). Nevertheless, *more creativity* is believed to be a benefit from IMC implementation as new ideas and innovative media will be developed from the agency partners (M = 3.20). The last IMC dimension stresses *the importance of below-the-line communications*. As one of the IMC focuses is on building the equity for a brand, various marketing communications tools beyond advertising would be helpful to develop and maintain the brand value for different stages of brand life cycle.

Discussion

While the customer-centric notion has become common among marketing practices nowadays, businesses attempt to differentiate themselves from competitors by using various strategies and tactics. Integrated marketing communications (IMC) is one of the practices driven by the consumer-focused ideas. Emerging in the 1990s, IMC has generally been recognized as a concept and a process, focusing on unified messages and communications across all channels around customers and other stakeholder groups.

Currently, IMC has been prevailed and used across the U.S. where this marketing strategy was initiated. With its benefits, both marketers and advertising practitioners support the IMC concept by implementing the IMC principle in their organizations. Not only in the U.S. and Western countries, the IMC concept has also been implemented across Asia, including Thailand. From its first days until the present, research studies show that the IMC concept has been widely and well developed among Thai practitioners. A seminal work by Anantachart (2003) indicated that IMC was implemented at the early stages among Thai marketers and advertising practitioners while later study by Anantachart and Chaihanchanchai (2014) demonstrated that IMC in Thailand has been moved to the third level of the integration, according to D. Schultz and H. Schultz (1998)'s framework.

Since the progress has been shown regarding the practices of IMC among Thai practitioners, it would be interesting to learn more about how they look and define IMC from their points of view. The results from exploratory factor analysis present fourteen different explanations of IMC regarding opinions from Thai marketers. They nowadays have broader consumer-oriented mindset and receive more understanding of the IMC concept, which is a critical step toward more IMC development in the future (Eagle & Kitchen, 2000)

First and most importantly, they view IMC as the combination of various marketing communications tools and media. Second, Thai marketers concern much with the organizational issues in practicing IMC. Third, when thinking of IMC, the evaluation issue remains among the top benefits from doing IMC. Next, Thai marketers believe that IMC would help to have more controls over their marketing communications. Then, negatively perceived, they would say that IMC practices mean more work needed. Sixth, maximized impact is another IMC benefit that Thai marketers define. Seventh, with IMC, they could be able to manage marketing communications better.

Next, advertising agencies are Thai marketers' best business partners to work on IMC. However, what the marketers are most concerned about, regarding how advertising agencies work, is the IMC knowledge that the agencies would have, in order to run their integrated brand communications programs successfully. Such issues were previously reported in Beard's (1996) study. Besides, they also think of other marketing communications suppliers as outside experts that they need. Coordination and support from all related parties is another concern. However, the marketers still allow independence among their IMC relationship with partners. Twelfth, more communications budget is another point that Thai marketers concern toward IMC practices; nevertheless, more creativity is believed to be a benefit from IMC. Last, various types of marketing communications are repeatedly mentioned

Overall, the findings narrow down the opinions of Thai marketers as to what IMC practices should be related to. It should help academics build a more clear and precise view on IMC.

Practically, although Western researchers have long understood the IMC concept and practices, this study was among the first attempts to survey and monitor how marketers in Thailand, a Southeast Asian country, define the concept. The results showed positive, empirical information that IMC was widely accepted among the two key parties of Thai businesses. This would benefit practitioners in Thailand and foreign investors who plan to participate in the Thai marketplace. To learn how overall businesses think about the way they utilize marketing communications tools would be a *must* to survive and grow in the current competitive time frame. In addition, marketing communications agencies could utilize such findings as an initial outlook for how they adjust themselves to serve changing needs of their current and prospective partners and client companies.

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CULTURAL IDENTITY IN COMMUNICATION/MEDIA EDUCATION: CASE STUDIES OF THAILAND'S CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY AND UAE'S ZAYED UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

Do communication/media programs in Asian higher education reflect their host countries' cultural identity and norms? To what extent are such programs in leading universities in the region 'Asian' in their orientation and academic offerings as opposed to being transplants of western programs or hybrid models? Do they reflect in their corporate statements a preoccupation with the role of media education in the service of national agendas for nation building and socio-economic development? Does curriculum include courses relevant to the country's society, culture, media law & ethics, etc.? Is the national language of the land the designated language of instruction or is English used and why? Do programs have national advisory bodies of practitioners to advise them of national trends/priorities? Do they offer internships in national media organizations? Do national faculty constitute the backbone of teaching staff of academic programs in communication & media?To answer some of these questions, the researcher presents unique perspectives on communication and media education from West Asia (United Arab Emirates) and South Asia (Thailand) as examples. According to Watson (1989) 'Thailand has developed an unusual blend of traditional and modern approaches to its provision of higher education without seriously compromising cultural values.' The UAE emphasizes the need to develop a distinct learning environment to

‘produce qualified and globally competitive cadres and to contribute to the achievement of the knowledge society and sustainable development of the country’ (MOHESR, 2014). In addition to national perspectives, the paper presents two cases of leading media education programs in tertiary institutions as examples of these perspectives in action. Chulalongkorn University in Thailand and Zayed University in the UAE were selected because they are both leading national public universities in their respective countries. Initial findings point to differences and similarities in the application of the concept of cultural identity to both contexts.This is a comparative, cross-cultural study of communication/media education in Asia that focuses on one of the conference’s themes: ‘Cultural Identity and Norms in Mass Communication in Asia.

Keywords: Cultural Identities, Media Communication, Asia

Background

This is a comparative, cross-cultural study of communication/media education in Asia that focuses on one of the conference’s themes: ‘Cultural Identity and Norms in Mass Communication in Asia.’

Culture refers to ‘the customs, practices, languages, values and world views that define social groups such as those based on nationality, ethnicity, region or common interests (The Social Report, 2010). Cultural Identity is ‘The definition of groups or individuals (by themselves or others) in terms of cultural or subcultural categories (including ethnicity, nationality, language, religion, and gender)’ (Dictionary of Media and Communication, 2011). Cultural norms are ‘behavior patterns that are typical of specific groups. Such behaviors are learned from parents, teachers, peers, and many others whose values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors take place in the context of their own organizational culture’ (North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, no date).

There is a clear need to conduct cross national studies of public relations education and other related fields in Asia to assess similarities and differences, enhance the body of knowledge and build comprehensive curricula that are more multi-cultural and holistic (Sriramesh, 2009).

The researcher presents perspectives on communication and media education from West Asia (United Arab Emirates) and South Asia (Thailand) as examples. According to Watson (1989) 'Thailand has developed an unusual blend of traditional and modern approaches to its provision of higher education without seriously compromising cultural values.' Tantivejakul (2014) dates the evolution of public relations in Thailand to the period following the 1932 Siamese Revolution, which led to constitutional monarchy.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) emphasizes the need to develop a distinct learning environment to 'produce qualified and globally competitive cadres and to contribute to the achievement of the knowledge society and sustainable development of the country' (MOHESR, 2014). The country's first academic program in mass communication was established in 1980 at the country's first public university, the United Arab Emirates University (Overview, 2014).

In addition to national perspectives, the paper presents two cases of leading media education programs in tertiary institutions as examples of these perspectives in action. Chulalongkorn University in Thailand and Zayed University in the UAE were selected because they are both leading national public universities in their respective countries.

This paper attempts to explore whether communication/media programs in Asian higher education reflect their host countries' cultural identity and norms or not. It seeks to ascertain to what extent are such programs in leading universities in the region 'Asian' in their orientation and academic offerings as opposed to being transplants of western programs or hybrid models. For example, do vision and/or mission statements of such programs exhibit a preoccupation with the role of media education in the service of national agendas for nation building and socio-economic development? Another area for exploration is whether their curricula include courses relevant to the country's society, culture, media law & ethics, etc. and whether they reveal a conscious effort to reflect Asia's rich multiculturalism. One way to assess the identity question is through which language(s) is/are officially used in instruction and scholarship (Lin, A. and Martin, P., 2005). Another related question is the academy's connection with the local job market and its needs and trends. One way to achieve this is by forming national advisory bodies of practitioners to advise academic programs of national trends and priorities (Worth, 2008, Limburg, 2009). An additional option is to offer internships or work experiences in national media organizations (Limburg, 2009). Finally, a critical question related to identity is the source of faculty who research and deliver the body of knowledge to students. It is perhaps normal to expect that national faculty are more in touch with identity and cultural norms than foreign faculty.

Methodology

To answer the following research questions, the researcher has chosen the mixed methods approach which Creswell (2003) describes as 'one in which the researcher tends to base knowledge claims on pragmatic grounds (e.g., consequence-oriented, problem-centered, and pluralistic).' It employs strategies of inquiry that involve collecting data either simultaneously or sequentially to best understand research problems. The data collection also involves gathering both numerical information (e.g., on instruments) as well as textual information (e.g., interviews) so that the final information represents both quantitative and qualitative components.

Specifically, the researcher used the following methods that are suited to this research:

a. Structured close-ended interview conducted with academic administrators in both universities.
b. Text and document analysis of online information describing the academic program, including the vision/mission statements, curriculum, syllabi, course descriptions, academic policies, program learning outcomes, etc.

Research Questions and Evidence Sought

Q1: Do communication/media programs in the two universities reflect their host countries' cultural identity and norms? To what extent are these programs 'Asian' in their orientation and academic offerings as opposed to being transplants of western programs or hybrid models?

To answer this question, vision and/or mission statements and/or goals of these programs will be reviewed to ascertain whether they manifest a preoccupation with the role of media education in the service of national agendas for nation building and socio-economic development.

Q2: Does curriculum in the two universities include courses relevant to the country's society, culture, media law & ethics, etc.? Is the curriculum multicultural and inclusive of each country's diverse ethnic, religious and racial groups?

To answer this question, a review of the curricula of the two programs will be carried out to determine whether they include courses whose content deals mainly with society, culture, media law & ethics of the two host nations and whether there is evidence that the curricula reflect multiculturalism and diversity.

Q3: Is the national language of the land the designated language of instruction in the two universities or is English used and why? Do national faculties constitute the backbone of teaching staff of academic programs in these two universities?

To answer this question, the researcher will seek to identify the official language(s) of instruction and the full-time faculty profile in both programs.

Q4: Do these programs have national advisory bodies of practitioners to advise them of national trends/priorities?

To answer this question, a determination will be made as to whether both programs have formal and active national advisory bodies or similar.

Q5: Do these programs offer internships in national media organizations?

To answer this question, a determination will be made as to whether both programs offer or require formal and supervised work experiences with or without academic credit.

Q6: Other than graduating highly qualified students who join the workforce, how does each of these two programs contribute to their respective countries' national agendas for nation building and socio-economic development through research, professional contributions and other avenues?

To answer this question, the researcher will rely on responses from senior academic administrators representing both programs as well as other available resources in English.

Findings

A background of the two programs is provided in the paper's appendix. It includes information about the academic calendar, admission policies, number of faculty staff and students, undergraduate and graduate programs of study, academic administrators, etc.

This section also includes below answers to the research questions presented earlier.

Research Question # 1:

Do communication/media programs in the two universities reflect their host countries' cultural identity and norms? To what extent are these programs 'Asian' in their orientation and academic offerings as opposed to being transplants of western programs or hybrid models?

‘On one hand, our program reflects Thai cultural identity and norms. On the other hand, we hope that our program can bring Thailand towards a society of multiculturalism and political pluralism. Hence, we are also critical of commonly perceived norms and embrace the changing socio-cultural climate’ (Sinthuphan, Personal Communication, 2014).

The CCMS is part of Zayed University (ZU), a national federal university established initially to prepare Emirati women for successful careers in the public and private sectors as well as in Emirati society. Men were admitted in 2008 at the Dubai campus. As the third national university, ZU has both a national and global aspiration for academic excellence. Today, the CCMS reflects the UAE’s cultural identity and norms through its mission of providing bilingual education to its Emirati students, its curriculum and delivery of courses which provide knowledge about the UAE and which focus on communication and media issues in the country. Students’ work in courses and during the internship is the best embodiment of the UAE’s cultural identity and norms (Creedon, 2015).

The vision of Chulalongkorn University (CU) is for the university to be a “Pillar of the Kingdom” and this has positioned CU to be a ‘world-class national university.’

The FCA’s vision is the following:

‘To be the architect of a global public research university through excellence, innovation and public service’ (Our Vision, 2014).

FCA’s mission statement says:

- Improve the quality of teaching and promote the potential of faculty, staff and students to get the system to produce quality graduates on par with college graduates in the world.

- Promote the quality of the research findings published internationally {which should} be applied in response to the study and knowledge of the science of communication and lead to improved performance in professional communication.
- Promote the knowledge gained from research published in academic journals internationally and has led to recommendations to the agencies or organizations that wish to be applied, whether the government, state or other communities in social media organizations that are interested in developing their potential.
- Promote the academic and professional communication used. To publish and sustain the invaluable art and culture of Thailand (Mission, 2014).

CCMS' vision statement is as follows:

'The College of Communication and Media Sciences at Zayed University shall be nationally recognized as a premier provider of bilingual education, scholarship and outreach in the discipline of communication and its professional fields of study (ACEJMC Self-Study Report, 2014).

CCMS's mission is to graduate students who:

- Understand the role of mass communication in Islamic and global cultures;
- Master written, oral and visual skills in English and Arabic;
- Use digital media technologies thoughtfully and appropriately;
- Value truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- Think critically, be innovative and engage in dialogue;
- Contribute to the body of knowledge in mass communication in this region;
- Assist in the future development of the UAE and the global community (ACEJMC Self-Study Report, 2014).

Research Question # 2:

Does the curriculum in the two universities include courses relevant to the country's society, culture, media law & ethics, etc.? Is the curriculum multicultural and inclusive of each country's diverse ethnic, religious and racial groups?

'As a national public university, our curriculum is conceived with Thai and ASEAN context in mind with an increasing international perspectives. Due to diverse background of our staff, we do not follow any particular model or any particular country' (Sinthuphan, Personal Communication,2014).

In Thailand, public relations in the first period – beginning period – started with the government's establishment of the Publicity Department with the aim to promote democracy and to disseminate information to public along with establishing 'Thai' identity through nationalistic propaganda campaign. The government's efforts flourished as PR campaigns were widely adopted by state agencies and enterprises during the 'growth' period. Public information approaches were used to support national development plans. Thai PR education further grew with US influences. The third and fourth periods were the 'booming' period of PR practice in private corporations and the 'globalization' period where PR is used, together with other marketing communication tools, for support of corporate reputation, marketing public relations and corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities. Understanding of Thai culture and values has proved to be a crucial factor for successful PR practice (Tantivejakul, 2014).

As for the CCMS, it was founded with a Western perspective of higher education curriculum to build on the strengths of other academic programs in the country as well as remedy their weaknesses. The planners of the first program benchmarked against similar successful programs in the U.S. and reflecting the standards of the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (Creedon, 2015).

Unable to research in Thai, the researcher had to contend with courses in the International Program (in English). However, Sinthuphan states that FCA 'is obliged' to include courses about Thailand in its curriculum (Sinthuphan, Personal Communication, 2014). Examples of courses with specific reference to Thailand and Thai cultural norms in their title and/or in the course descriptions are:

2800209	Thai Culture
2800211	Thai Cultures for Communication
2800205	Introduction to Mass Media
2800451	Seminar in Communication and Current Social Issues
2800454	Seminar in Communication and Ethical and Legal Issues
2800484	Management of Image, Identity and Reputation
0201151	Our Environment
2800107	Literary Studies for Communication Arts
2400104	Politics and Government of Thailand

In 1998, Ekachai and Komolsevin (1998) noted that Thai media faculties in public and private universities 'uniformly agreed … that courses in interpersonal communication, intercultural/international communication, marketing communication, and new media technology should be added to the curriculum to help better prepare future practitioners to work in the global communication era.' These courses now appear in the FCA's current curriculum.

Although most courses in the CCMS' curriculum have a national focus, the following courses are good examples of courses relevant to the country's society and culture:

COL 130	Arabic Concepts
COL 255	Emirates Studies

COL 135	Islamic Civilization I
COM 200	Communication, Media and Society
HSS 201	History of the United Arab Emirates
COM 237	Interpersonal and Intercultural Communication
COM 240	Communication and Media Ethics
COM 372	Communicating Tourism, Destinations and Heritage
HSS 381	Legacy of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al Nahyan
HSS 401	Political History of the U.A.E.
COM 440	Communication and Media Law
COM 525	Tourism in the U.A.E. and MENA Region

Research Question # 3:

Is the national language of the land the designated language of instruction in the two universities or is English used and why? Do national faculty constitute the backbone of teaching staff of academic programs in these two universities?

Thai is the language of Instruction in the FCA's Thai program with a few courses taught in English. However, students are required to study English as a second language in every semester and read materials in English. Thai graduate programs are also taught in Thai, but students will have to read materials in English. Moreover, the international graduate program uses English as a language of instruction and research. As for the FCA's 48 full-time faculty, they are all Thai with diverse cultural heritages (Sinthuphan, Personal Communication, 2014).

On the other hand, English is the official language of instruction in CCMS but the college also requires its students to study 12 credit hours of media instruction in Arabic, plus other Arabic courses required by the university. The College is seen as a model for bi-lingual education at ZU as the university is increasing its Arabic language commitment. Further, the focus on major courses in English is seen as preparing students for employment in non-national, as well as national organizations and companies. The CCMS (30 full-time) faculty composition is international. The CCMS currently employs only one UAE national as a part-time faculty in Dubai. Also, while not a faculty member, the College has an Emirati as its Academic Advisor (Creedon, 2015).

Research Question # 4:

Do these programs have national advisory bodies of practitioners to advise them of national trends/priorities?

Whilethe FCA does not have a national advisory body, it maintains links with practitioners and the industries through its memberships in professional associations and collaborations (Sinthuphan, Personal Communication, 2014).

The CCMS has a National Advisory Council (NAC) that meets in Dubai. Twice a year the board members assist in assessing student e-portfolios, provide guidance for needs to be addressed in the industry, and to be updated about programs in the College (Creedon, 2015).

Research Question # 5:

Do these programs offer internships in national media organizations?

Both programs offer a professional internship course for their students. Both are major required courses.

Research Question # 6:

Other than graduating highly qualified students who join the workforce, how does each of these two programs contribute to their respective countries' national agendas for nation building and socio-economic development through research, professional contributions and other avenues?

We offer training, advice, knowledge transfer, and support for the Community and Professionals. Each of our staff is engaged in a community project of his/her interest (Sinthuphan, Personal Communication, 2014).

Regarding faculty research contributions, it is fair to say that most research output is concerned with Thai and ASEAN issues. 'However, our research is increasingly directed towards international outlook. Our graduate students all have to do research' (Sinthuphan, Personal Communication, 2014).

The FCA has a mission 'to develop a body of research that can provide a useful solution to socio-cultural issues in Thailand and in International community. For the next 5 years, our research activities will be focused on 4 research clusters: media policy and regulations, communication and the ASEAN community, strategic communications and creative media research' (Communication Research for Social Reform, 2014).

The CCMS faculty contribute regularly to professional and outreach activities. For example, several faculty staff are members of professional associations. Some are involved in training media professionals. Others provide expert advice to national organizations in areas such as social media, organizational communication, public campaigns, etc. These include regional associations such as the Middle East Public Relations Association (MEPRA) and international associations such as the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication (ASJMC), the International Association of Mass Communication Research (IAMCR), and the International Advertising Association (IAA).

Faculty staff and students from the CCMS chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) in Abu Dhabi have been active in scholastic media outreach. The CCMS SPJ chapter has worked with the Canadian International School in Abu Dhabi giving workshops on journalism and established a relationship with the Abu Dhabi American Community School. Outreach to several other schools, as well as CNN, is involved in annual J-Day events (Creedon, 2015).

Many CCMS faculty staff publish research and produce creative media products with a UAE focus, as well as about the interplay between the UAE and the rest of the world since the UAE is a regional and global hub for trade, commerce, logistics and tourism. They also address regional and global issues related to their discipline. Graduate students are active in learning research skills and producing related outcome. The graduate specialization in tourism is designed to prepare Emiratis to become professional leaders who respond to the dynamic and changing national tourism industry at the local and international levels (Creedon, 2015).

Discussion

From the preceding answers to the research questions, as well as the information gathered about the two programs, many similarities and a few differences emerge about the two programs as they relate to the focus of this study:

- Both programs are housed in leading Thai and UAE national universities with a similar mission calling for national prominence and a global standing. Their vision and mission statements exhibit an emphasis on excellence in teaching, scholarship and public service.
- The FCA's mission clearly articulates the value of published research to the benefit of the Thai public and private sectors to improve their performance. The FCA's mission also specifically refers to 'publishing and sustaining the invaluable art and culture of Thailand.' CCMS's mission includes a general reference to 'assisting in the future development of the UAE and the global community.'

- The curricula of the two English-language programs offered by FCA and CCMS show many similarities in their pedagogy and course offering. However, the researcher's inability to access the FCA's Thai program renders any conclusions incomplete. It is clear that while CCMS' curriculum was based on a western perspective (mostly North American) with adjustments for the UAE context, the FCA's curriculum was conceived with the Thai and ASEAN context in mind with increasing international perspectives. Finally, both programs equally offer required and elective courses that deal in whole or in part with their national context, including issues of identity and cultural norms.
- In the important question of which language is used for instruction, the two programs differ. Thai is the language of Instruction in the FCA's Thai program with a few courses taught in English whereas English is the language of instruction in CCMS' undergraduate and graduate programs with a few courses in Arabic. In both Thailand and the UAE there are universities that teach in the national language and others that teach in English. In the UAE and perhaps in Thailand as well, the rationale for using English in higher education is the need for bilingual graduates who can work in a global business environment. Clearly, from a cultural standpoint, the FCA's use of Thai in its main program is more consistent with the preservation and development of Thai identity and cultural norms.
- Equally important from the standpoint of identity and cultural norms is the identity of the faculty. The FCA's faculty in the Thai program are Thai nationals but the FCA also employs non-Thai faculty staff who teach in the English-language program. The situation is reversed in CCMS where all except one part-time faculty are non-Emirati. While there are several reasons for the lack of Emirati nationals with advanced media degrees and/or academic teaching experience, it is worth mentioning that Emirati

nationals in 2010 accounted for less than 20% of the total population of the UAE whereas more than 95.9% of Thailand's population is ethnic Thai. As previously argued, the national faculty of any nation are by default more in touch with their country's identity and cultural norms than foreign faculty who may present clear advantages in other areas and are more suited to teaching in English, for example.

- When it comes to having a national advisory body to advise an academic program about national trends and expectations in the workplace and offer advice and support, CCMS has a formal National Advisory Council (NAC). It is composed of prominent leaders from the print media, the broadcast media, multimedia, social media and tourism with regular meetings and active participation in the assessment of the quality of learning and placement of interns. The FCA, on the other hand, does not have a formal national advisory body, but it maintains links with practitioners and the industries through its memberships in professional association and collaborations.
- As stated earlier, both programs offer a professional internship course for their students and both are major required courses in their program. This is a positive finding since work experiences away from campus provide students with opportunities to connect their academic learning to real-world experience and discover the culture of work in all sectors; public, private and non-profit.
- Finally, both programs require and expect their faculty to be active scholars in areas of interest to their respective countries/disciplines as well as provide service to the profession and to the community. While this paper's goal does not include evaluating the research and service productivity of the FCA and CCMS faculty, there is clear evidence from reviewed documents and program reviews (e.g., ACEJMC) that both programs are contributing positively to Thai and Emirati socio-economic development, including in the area of identity and cultural norms.

Study Limitations & Recommendations

a. The researcher's lack of proficiency in Thai language has limited his access to English resources only. Other Thai language resources would have certainly enriched the study.

b. Very few comparative, cross-cultural studies of communication/media education in Asia focus on the topic 'Cultural Identity and Norms in Mass Communication.' Therefore, this can be viewed as an exploratory study in an area that will attract scholarly attention in the future.

c. It would be very beneficial if communication and media programs in Asian universities would share their academic 'best practices' on the Internet. This would be especially useful for programs in less developed Asian nations.

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CORPORATE IDENTITY PILLARS IN A MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT-LINKED COMPANY'S (GLC) CORPORATE BRAND: UPPER MANAGEMENT VIEWS

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Abstract

Corporate identity of the government-linked companies: Government linked company play an important role in economic development, especially in developing nations. However, experience of many countries demonstrates that GLCs are usually less efficient than non-GLCs as measured by their economic performance.Since the Malaysian government had introduced the GLC transformation programme in 2004 to improve GLC's performance, it is, therefore, imperative to investigate GLC's corporate identity from the managerial perspective.The purpose of this study is to investigate upper management perception on the elements of corporate identity pillars in managing CIMB corporate brand.This study focuses on the elements of corporate identity pillars namely the subjective pillars and physical infrastructure of corporate identity. The management perception on corporate identity is derived from the in-depth interviews with the upper management and their strategy in communicating identity through annual reports and photographs. The upper management corporate identity conception process starts with *the identity pillars* (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006; Balmer, 2002; Balmer and Soenen, 1997; Birkigt and Stadler, 1986), where *the subjective pillars* and *physical infrastructures* of a particular corporate identity are considered. Two subjective pillars were frequently discussed in the literature namely *corporate culture* (Van Riel and Balmer, 1997;) and *corporate personality* (Balmer, 1995).

Two physical infrastructures were frequently discussed in the literature namely the *organizational structure* and *brand structure* (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006). This information is very useful and acts as a basis that helps the organisation to understand the context in which the whole strategy is built.This study employed qualitative, case study method where the Chief Executive Officer and the Vice President of Corporate Communication were interviewed. Organisational documents (six years annual reports and photographies) were also used to triangulate the data. Result confirmed that the GLC's upper management perceptions on the elements of corporate identity pillars were parallel to the literature. We also introduced newly emerging factor, the role of government, in influencing corporate identity process. The study of corporate identity elements from the perception of management in Asia, particularly in Malaysia is limited. Therefore, this study filled the gap and enriched the data on the understanding of corporate identity elements in Malaysia. We chose to study government link in Malaysia because government linked company play an important role in economic development, especially in developing nations. Since the government had introduced the GLC transformation programme to improve GLC's performance, it is, therefore, imperative to investigate GLC's corporate identity from the managerial perspective.

Keywords: Corporate indentity, Malaysia, GLC, corporate branding.

Background

Discussions on the Conception of Corporate Identity

Corporate identity has been widely discussed by researchers from corporate communication, marketing and strategic management (Otubunjo, 2013; He, 2012; Balmer et al., 2009; He, 2008; Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006), it is, therefore, evolving and not universally consistent. It can inspire confidence in external target groups (Van Riel, 1995);

aid customer's learning (Allesandri, 2001); increase credibility (Glodberg and Hartwick, 1990); increase employee identification (Fanning, 1990), increase psychological attachment (O'Reilly and Chatman, 1986), and create intragroup cohesion (Kramer, 1991).

The corporate identity conceptions can be identified through a detailed description of identity elements during a systematically planned and implemented process of creating and maintaining favourable images and, consequently, a favourable reputation of the company (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006; Einwiller and Will, 2001). However, despite the attention given over the past 20 years, the actual definition of corporate identity is highly contentious and many have opted not to define the term precisely (Melewar and Jenkins, 2002). A general criticism of corporate identity conception described in the literature, is that theoretically it its very complex and ambiguous (van Riel, 1995; Pratt and Foreman, 2000); instruments are inconsistent and not totally applicable across countries (Aaker and Schmitt, 1997; Aaker *et*.al, 2001; Rojas-Mendez *et.al*, 2004); the approach taken by the practitioner is generally process-oriented (Balmer, 1998) and concerned with tangible and easy to manage identity elements (Balmer and Soenen, 1999; Allesandri, 2001); the approach taken by academics on the other hand is more towards structure, tending to address a greater number of the mix components (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006), focus on intangibles, and define the concepts in the higher level of abstraction (Allesandri, 2001); and also the problem of multiple and inconsistent identities (Meijs, 2002). Balmer (1994) stresses the need for managers to tailor corporate identity to the specific requirements of the organisation and to the internal and external dynamics.

It is also unfortunate to discover scarcity of systematic, empirical studies of corporate identity development especially within Asia. A study by Han and Schmitt (1997) revealed that a corporate identity is of differential importance in the United State (US) and East Asia.

Managers of corporate identity must be sensitive to unique factors because strong sales in Asia can be partially attributed to an appreciation of these factors. Therefore, this study aims to answer the question of how upper management perceived the corporate identity elements in a government-linked company.

Corporate Image of The Government-Linked Companies (GLCs) in Malaysia

Generally, a government-linked company plays an important role in economic development, especially in developing nations. However, experience of many countries demonstrates that GLCs are usually less efficient than non-GLCs as measured by their economic performance. In countries where the participation of GLCs is high, their typical low efficiency can hinder economic growth (Is sham et al, 2008 as cited in Abu Bakar, 2003). In a study to identify why government ownership results in poor performance, Razak, Ahmad and Joher (2011) summarised three main causes. First, the government is guided by social philanthropy, which may not be in line with profitability. Secondly, government is not deemed as the ultimate owner but merely an agent of the citizens, and as such, GLCs may also take the interest of bureaucrats who respond to various interest groups such as trade unions as part of their agenda. Lastly, government-controlled companies may respond to the signals of the government to enhance social welfare or other non-profit considerations, which may not be related to profits or value maximization. Cheng, Tan, and Cheng (2013) added that "…the major problem appears to be homegrown: a dominant party in continuous rule for over half a century, displaying all the symptoms of a long period in government – arrogance, complacence and corruption". Lau and Tong's (2008) study on 15 Malaysia's GLCs over a six year period however revealed a significant positive relationship between the degree of government ownership and firm value. Contrary to the adverse public perception of GLCs in Malaysia, government intervention improves firm value.

As this study focuses on the understanding of corporate identity in GLC, understanding what constitute the pillars of corporate identity is very important, as image and reputation are the results of excellent identity strategy. The different elements of corporate identity pillars are, therefore, discussed next.

Corporate Identity Pillars

Early steps in the orientation of corporate identity involves setting up, or identifying the pillars that act as basis for a particular organisation. This study refers to this as 'corporate identity pillars'. Melewar and Karaosmanoglu (2006) highlight the elements of culture, structure, background, and industry identity that served as foundations and background of corporate identity. On the same vein, Balmer (2002) mentions corporate structure and Balmer and Soenen (2002) use the analogy of 'the soul' and 'the body' (Table 1).

Table 1

Identity Pillars

	AUTHOR	Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006	Balmer, 2002	Balmer and Soenen, 1997	Birkigt and Stadler, 1986
Identity Pillars		Culture, structure, Background, Industry identity	Culture Structure	The soul, The body	Corporate personality

There are two broad ways in viewing brand identity orientation: the subjective foundation and the physical infrastructure. The subjective foundation sees identity orientation as embedded in the organisation's core values and beliefs; whereas the physical infrastructure understands it in terms of fundamental components of organizational structure and branding structure (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006). Table 2 describes this conceptual framework.

Table 2

Conceptual Framework of Identity Pillars

Conceptual Area	**Concept**	**Conceptual Definition**	**Measurement**
Identity Pillars (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006; Balmer, 2002)	Identity Pillars	A strategic analysis of subjective foundations and physical infrastructures during a systematically planned process of brand building (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006)	Identification and description of the subjective foundations and physical infrastructure that are strategically analysed to understand the foundation of a corporate brand.
	Subjective Foundations	Factors within the company (mission, vision, values, culture, personality) that lay foundation to a corporate brand.	Identification and description of the subjective foundations that act as foundation for a corporate brand

	Physical Infrastructure	Structure in the company that organises a corporate brand (organisational structure and branding structure)	Identification and description of the physical infrastructure that organises a corporate brand.

The Subjective Foundations

The subjective factors that allow brand identity to be constructed, communicated, and managed include variables such as corporate culture, personality, mission, vision, leadership and values (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006; Balmer, 2002; Bridson and Evans, 2004). De Chernatony (2001) similarly examines vision, culture, and brand objectives before looking at external factors.

Due to unique cultural facets in Asian countries, Firestones (2006) argues that corporate culture is a key indicator in building and protecting corporate reputation. Literature reviews suggest corporate culture as consisting of philosophy, mission, values, principles, guidelines, history, national culture, the founder of the company and subculture (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu,2006; Schmidt, 1995; Gotsi and Wilson, 2001). Schein (1995) sees culture as the consensus within a company about how activities should be accomplished and is conceived as a result of a group's shared experience and learning with respect to matters of external adaptation and internal integration.

Proposition 1a: The element of value acts as a foundation in the development of corporate identity

Urde's (2003) model on branding uses the subjective factors of *mission, brand vision, and organizational values*. A company's mission and vision is believed to influence the corporate brand building process (Urde, 2003; Knox and Bickerton, 2003; Aaker, 1996) in which the specific goal for the brand are created within the scope of a general corporate mission/values (Urde, 2003; de Chernatony, 2001). Byars and Neil (1987) argue that a company's stated philosophy and mission are instrumental in establishing the kind of relationship it will have with employees, customers, shareholders, suppliers, government, and the public at large.

Proposition 1b: The element of mission and vision act as foundation in the development of corporate identity

An Organisation's *corporatepersonality* is another important factor that should be considered. It is a key element that gives distinctiveness to business identity and also related to attitude and belief of organisational internal stakeholders (Olin, 1978). Corporate personality is concerned with the question of who we are and it is the mixture of corporate, professional, regional, and other sub cultures in the organisation (Balmer, 2001). One possible way to describe a company is by the use of personality and character attributes (Aaker and Fournier, 1995; Chun and Davies, 2001). Anchoring corporate identity on personality attributes means that an organisation can be personalised by its members by ascribing personal traits to it (He, 2012).

Proposition 1c: The element of corporate personality acts as a foundation in the development of corporate identity

Table 3. summarises the conceptual framework for the subjective foundations of corporate identity pillars.

Table 3

Subjective Foundations of Corporate Identity Pillars

Conceptual Area	Concept	Conceptual Definition	Measurement
Subjective Foundations in the Identity Pillars	Company Vision and Mission	The overall goal for the company (de Chernatony, 2001)	Description of whether the overall goal of the company is considered in the identity perception, if considered at all
	Corporate Culture	A shared system of beliefs and values (Vella and Melewar, 2008)	Description of whether the organisation's shared system of beliefs and values are considered in the identity perception, if considered at all.
	Personality Attributes	Adjective description of an organisation (He, 2012) to achieve a competitive position	Identification and description of attributes and self-presentation used to define the corporate brand

The Physical Infrastructure

Research found that different organisations take different approaches to corporate identity concept and its relation to corporate structure (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006; Stuart 1999; Balmer, 2002). This study terms these factors as 'physical infrastructures' and uses Melewar and Karaosmanoglu's (2006) discussion that suggest corporate structure as made up of brand structure and organizational structure.

Brand structure, or brand architecture is defined as portfolio and allocation thinking applied to a corporation's brand structure (Douglas *et al.*, 2001; Uggla, 2005). The trend in managing brand structure is due to global consumer tastes and an urge to increase marketing spends effectiveness (Aaker and Joachimstahler, 2000). Brand structure as a corporation, and not product, is explained by Olins (1989) as monolithic identity, an all-embracing corporate brand. Saunder (1994) uses the term 'corporate-dominant' brand architecture to explain brand structure based on a visibility for the organisation and the corporation as a global driver of brand value. Factors that affect brand architecture in a specific company includes administrative heritage, expansion strategy, commonality among product lines, and consistency on corporate brand management (Douglas *et al.*, 2001).

Proposition 1d: The element of brand structure serves as a physical infrastructure of corporate identity

Organisational structure is associated with the organizational hierarchy, lines of communication and reporting responsibilities (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006). Consistent with Cornellissen and Harris (2001) the study promoted the importance of the degree of centralization and decentralization, in terms of both geography and across products.

Proposition 1e: The element of organisation structure serves as a physical infrastructure of corporate identity

Table 4 summarises the conceptual framework for the physical infrastructure of corporate identity pillars.

Table 4

Physical Infrastructure of Corporate Identity Pillars

Conceptual Area	Concept	Conceptual Definition	Measurement
Physical Infrastructure in the Identity Pillars	Brand Structure	Portfolio and allocation thinking applied to a corporation's brand structure (Douglas *et al.*, 2001) to differentiate from competitors	Identification and description of how brand structure of a company is determined and managed
	Organisational Structure	Organisational hierarchy, lines of communication, and reporting responsibilities (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006)	Description of how different hierarchical structure approach the concept of corporate identity

Methodology

This study employs an exploratory theory-building single case study research design within the qualitative-inductive research tradition. Due to the complexity of the subject matter studied, this topic can only be covered by selected individuals, a smaller number of instances examined intensely. The topic cannot be covered by a large number of instances at a more superficial level. To improve the transferability, this study provides thick description (Getz, in Bryman 2002) of corporate identity conception by upper managements in a GLC in Malaysia. The study is interested in gaining access to cultural categories and assumptions according to which one culture construes the world (McCracken, 1988). Findings from this study also can be used to support or challenge existing theory (Yin, 2003).

This study follows deductive approach in which it starts with relevant concepts from the literature but at the same time it is open to emerging concepts. Deductive approach to discovery is based on assumption that there are “laws” or principles that can be applied to phenomenon (Diesing, 1972). According to Boyatzi (1998, p.31), the application of the model to a set of information through hypothesis testing or through searching for consistencies and anomalies can derived an insight to a particular study.

This study chooses the case study approach. According to Yin (1984), case study approach refers to a group of methods, which emphasizes qualitative analysis. As the unit of analysis is related to the ressearch question (Yin, 2003), the main unit of analysis for this study is *upper management conception of corporate identity elements in GLCs.* The embedded subunit is the *upper management perception on the identity pillars of corporate identity.*

A purposive sampling has been followed, since the goal is to find illustrative cases of firms that successfully and deliberately manage their corporate identity. As the respondents of this study are the CEO and the Vice President of Corporate Communication, getting access was not an easy task and requires time. These informants are selected because they had served GLC for more than twenty years and therefore fulfilled the criteria of being knowledgeable enough to serve as a guide and interpreter of the setting’s unfamiliar language and culture (Fontana and Frey, 2005).

This GLC, called as GLC A in this study, is a leading universal banking franchise that offers a full range of financial products and services covering consumer banking, corporate and investment banking, Islamic banking, asset management, wealth management, insurance and takaful and private banking.

The body of information was obtained through two in-depth interviews with the top management; a review of 6 Chairman messages and 6 CEO reviews from six years of annual reports year 2006 to 2012 from the GLC’s annual reports; websites; media reports; and photography. The author thus was able to familiarise herself with the company's past in order to understand the company's present identity.

As unstructured interviews require the researcher to understand the interviewees' language and further, it's meaning in the specific cultural context of the research setting (Fife, 2005), the researcher did some homework by getting more information on the background of the respondents. The structure in the interview is loosely guided by a list of questions called an *aide memoire* or agenda (Mcann and Clark, 2005).

Three general strategies for analysing the case study data as proposed by Yin (2003) are relying on theoretical propositions, rival explanations or case descriptions. The analyses of data in this study involve few steps. First, the complete interviews are read and re-read to get a sense of the whole and to establish a close familiarity with the data. Summary reports of each interview are written according to the key themes. The analyses focus on meaning, instead of language.

This study uses thematic analysis to develop code (Boyatzi, 199). A similar approach is also found in Miller and Crabtree's (1992) "editing style of analysis" and Strauss and Corbin (1990) "axial coding" in clustering categories identified by others.Yin (2011) recommends using a pattern-matching logic, which has been used in this study.

Results

The findings show that all the interviewees agreed that elements in identity pillars are significant in the corporate identity management. It is made up of subjective foundations of goals and values elements; and also of the physical structure of brand and organizational structure.

Subjective Foundations

- **History**

One interviewee elaborates how the element of history is taken into account in the initial development of corporate identity values and structure. The organisation's unique **history** and **structure** has contributed to the development of existing identity. The role of history and the setting of value proposition as the initial step are described below:

"Let me maybe give you a bit of history. In 2006 these group of brands were born and the reason that culminated in this 2006 September birth was the aggressive expansion of Bank A, which is the old GLC A. The old GLC A went ahead and acquired Bank B, and then went acquired Bank C. And then these 3 banks put together had a new value proposition which was not only was it an investment bank, not only was it a commercial and consumer bank, but it was a universal banking group." (Vice President, Corporate Communication)

This historical brand development was also carefully explained in its annual report to communicate to stakeholders the journey towards becoming the south East Asia leading brand.

- **Mission and Vision**

The elements of mission and vision have always been consistent throughout their branding and rebranding efforts. One interviewee elaborates on the statement of mission and vision in view of a benchmarking exercise for success:

So I think in terms of the development of GLC A brand the first objective of our course is to strengthen our brand in our core operating country, but also to make sure that we drive for a very strong agenda that is brand to be known as a regional franchise."(Vice President, Corporate Communication)

The element of mission and vision in GLC A have always consistent throughout the years with its ambition 'To be south East Asia's most valued universal bank' in which their yardstick for success was to be "most valued" by customers, shareholders and employees. This has resulted in other consistent philosophies, which are to create value for customers, by enabling their people, and to speak and act with integrity.

- **Values**

Both interviewees highlight the element of values as the third foundation in corporate identity. They agreed that the values that are preached in GLC A are forward banking, courage, and high standard of innovation, hard work and integrity. The focus on integrity is strongly emphasized and is included in the governance framework pattern. The management also makes it very clear across the bank that GLC A is very performance driven. Those values are described below:

> *"These three banks were put together with a new value proposition which not only was it an investment bank, not only was it a commercial and consumer bank, but it was a universal banking group. And upon the creation of this universal banking group there was a need to create a new brand and this is when GLC A was born. GLC A core values are forward banking, it is based on anticipation, and it is based on innovation."*

Both interviewees also agreed that one of the forces for the hard driving culture is the ability to reward performance. There is always a performance driven award, which can be quite huge, and they preached the culture whereby 'you perform and we will pay'. Another important force in shaping positive work culture in GLC A is the management support. One interviewee emphasizes the importance of identity audit and engaging staffs in the value creation process. The decision on the value creation process is done professionally involving proper audit that takes into account the perception of internal stakeholders, and proper discussions with external consultants.

- **Personality**

Both interviewees promote certain attributes and self-presentation of GLC A to resemble the strong quality of the Group's identity:

"... Courage, high standard of innovation, (and) integrity in banking... Red for friendly, approachable consumer banking."

Physical Structure

- **Brand Structure**

Both interviewees highlight that brand structure has been crafted in the early management of corporate identity. When they launched GLC A brand in 2006, they put forward the brand tagline and values associated with it. They also use the brand's design and corporate colours as positioning strategy.

"And upon the creation of this new universal banking group, there was a need to create a new brand and that is when GLC A *was born."*

Another interviewee elaborates that when they launched the GLC A brand in 2006; they carefully crafted the brand and put forward aspects of brand such as the brand tagline, values, and corporate colours. As more banks were merged and bought in a series of extensive expansion, GLC A proceeded to re-brand the banks into a common identity, using the GLC A brand name in all of its acquisition

They also followed strategic corporate communication practices promoted by many scholars by conducting stages of brand audit among internal and external public prior to rebranding exercise. The Group's brand architecture across the region also is communicated in the GLC A annual reports as united and consistent in their commitment to creating value, concentrating offerings in order to best serve the needs of different customers. Nowadays all the diffferent brands in the Group's brand are consistently using the Group's logomark and corporate colour, red.

- **Organisation Structure**

One interviewee highlights the diverse nature of the organisation structure has influenced their identity strategy:

> *"Our business is very large. It not only covers in Malaysia but also covers other key countries ... so in terms of external stakeholder engagement, it is very holistic."*

He also elaborates on how the group undergone intensive expansion since its inception with the series of mergers and acquisition. Along the process, it brought along more business opportunities and strengthens its brand. They ensured that every acquisitions and mergers made was followed by clear structure and rebranding exercises for consistency. One interviewee feels that having linkages with the Middle East and north Asia is good for the south East Asia's business players. This was one of the reasons for their presence there. However, he continues that the priority is still in south East Asia.

- **Government Link**

Both interviewees also validate the new element of government link as significantly shape the Group's organisation structure. GLCs' close relationship with the government, which give them special advantages in terms of accessing funds and wider business opportunities and growth is a bonus factor for business. One interviewee confirms that GLC A being a GLC in financial services has advantages over other private organizations in the same service. In the years of financial crisis, people prefer to do business with banks that are stable. Being a GLC, GLC A's strong mix of shareholders has made it seen as a strong bank with good and solid standing. A large amount of foreign holding, and GLC related holdings have given GLC A the best of both worlds. The CEO also highlights the issue of GLCTP initiatives for GLCs in Malaysia. He thinks that it is normal for the government to steps into business. GLCs in Malaysia had suffered and the government had taken initiative to assist, and such approach continues.

To conclude, the four elements of history, vision and mission, values, and personality as subjective foundations; and the three elements of brand structure, organizational structure, and government link are seen as significant elements as infrastructures in GLC A. Figure 1 provides a big picture on the elements of identity pillars.

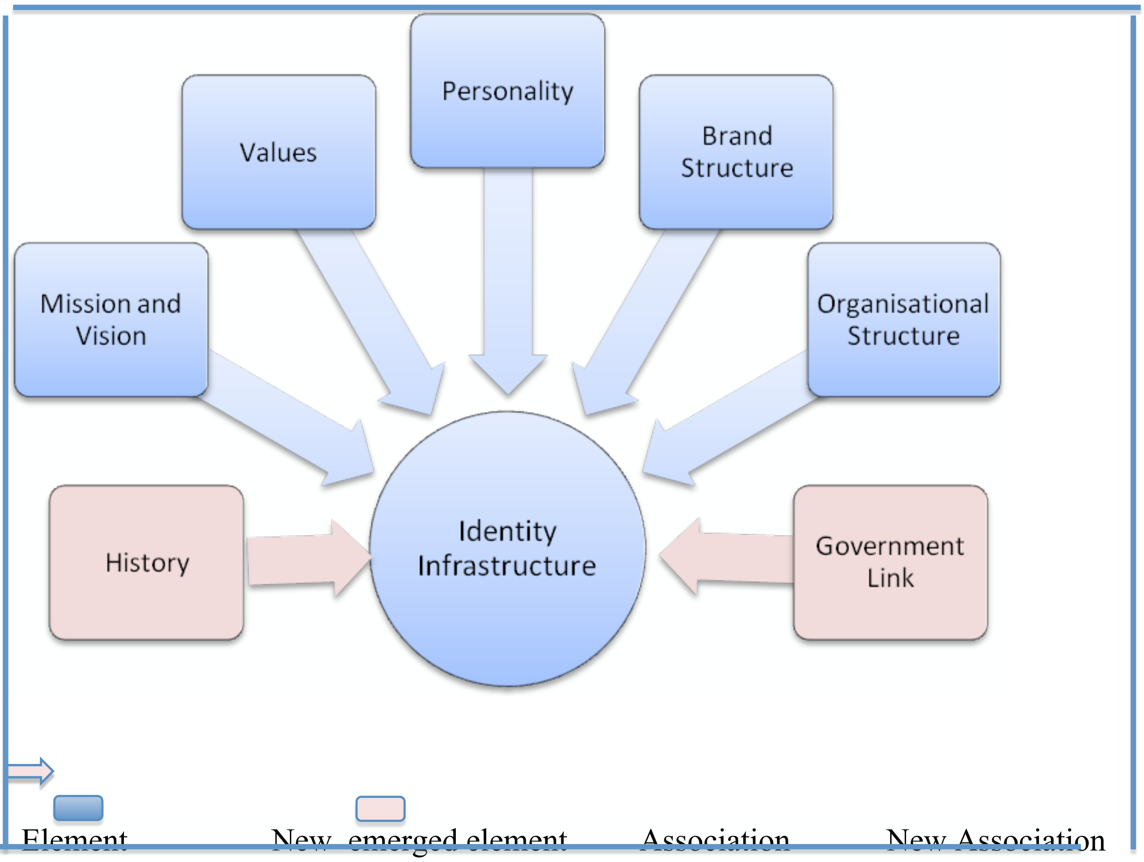

Figure 1. Second-order Construct (Element) in the Corporate Identity Pillars (Identity Infrastructure) in GLC A

Conclusion

It was found that the management perception on corporate identity elements is up-to-date and parallel to that of western literature, despite the different nature of practices in their respective organisation. The elements confirmed as identity pillars were the mission and vision, values, personality and history. The elements that set the identity physical structure were the brand structure, organisational structure and government link. Those infrastructures are the basis that enable identity strategy to be formulated. The focus of this study is on government-linked companies, which make corporate identity interpretation and management more challenging due to the involvement of the government as the major shareholder, and the different mind-set that they had.

The uniqueness of this research is obtained through the detailed analysis of the elements of identity infrastructures, identity strategy, and identity expression as perceived by the upper management in selected GLCs in Malaysia with the development of the newly revised model as a result from empirical findings.

This research contributes to knowledge by expanding the understanding of the elements of corporate identity by combining the elements of underlying infrastructure that shape corporate identity, the elements in identity strategy, and the elements in identity expression from the perspective of the government-linked company, and in the Malaysia context specifically, an Eastern context generally. The researcher also looks at different angles from those explored in previous research by focusing on highest management perspectives (The CEO, the Chairman, the Vice President, the General Manager), rather than the middle, or lower level manager). This research also allows the researcher comfortably to raise the sensitive issues related to government, as the respondents are the VVIPs and the best people to give comments.

Government regulations have been considered as significant in the perception of corporate identity (van Riel and Balmer, 1997, page 342). Kennedy (1997) also includes government regulations as one of the environmental forces as extraneous influences in her model. One interesting finding about government role in GLCs in Malaysia is that different types of GLCs related to government differently. It has been identified that barriers to efficient 'leadership strategy' are the management's lack of knowledge and positive attitude towards corporate communication.

Another important element discussed in the interview was on the increase in CSR activities for image building purposes. The phenomenon of CSR is not something new and has been especially visible in the banking industry (McDonald and Rundle-Thiele, 2008).

As for managerial implications, people managing the corporate identity of a government-linked company, as well as managing fully private companies should always understand that there are no standard, universal rules that govern the management of corporate identity. Managerial processes are very much influenced by factor and conditions in the environment of an organisation. Managers should prepare young talents in the organisation to be communication strategists, to prepare an identity audit, to come out with diagnosis and symptoms of the problematic identity to be presented, and to conduct training to instill awareness of the importance of corporate identity to an organisation.

Finally, a possible extension would be to look at the perception of elements from the point of view of middle managers, as well as from the external stakeholdesr; and to see whether different levels of internal and external stakeholders approach the topic differently. Since this study looks at the elements of corporate identity, studying the management, and the implementation of the elements could be advantageous.

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CURRENT STATUS OF CONSUMER RESEARCH IN THAI FILM INDUSTRY

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Abstract

"Current Status of Consumer Research in Thai Film Industry" is a qualitative research that aims (1) to study how stakeholders in Thai film industry conduct consumer research, and (2) to analyze the methodology of previous consumer about the audience of Thai film. The data was gathered through in-depth interview with different stakeholders in Thai film industry, and through content analysis of 14 done by researchers in higher education and post-graduate students regarding Thai film industry. The research found that: Stakeholders in Thai Film Industry are still lacking a clear understanding about consumer research, in terms of its value and methodology. Each stakeholder does not see consumer research as a part of their responsibility, and largely rely on the assumption derived from their previous experience in the industry. There is also an obvious lack of collaboration between stakeholders and companies within the industry. The data is still restricted for a usage within each stakeholder and within individual Film companies. This has resulted in fragmented knowledge about Thai film consumer. In terms of an analysis of existing research conducted within Thai higher education institutions, the research found a significant lack of diversity in research methodology in terms of research approach, data-gathering methods, focuses of the study and research variables. All research focuses on similar sample groups, demographic profiling and

audience categorization patterns. As a result, the knowledge about consumer in Thai film industry is limited to an understanding about a particular group of film consumers, namely 18-35 years old living in Bangkok Metropolitan area. This leads to a lack of understanding about a wider range of consumer. In comparison with consumer research in US film industry; this research concludes that consumer research in Thai film industry is still in its infancy. Consumer research in Thai film industry should explore new focus of study such as consumer psychology or examine other sample groups with different demographic profiling or a specific segment of film consumer.

Keywords: Thai film, consumer, qualitative research, movie industry

Background

Since, 2010, Thailand has embarked on a strategic plan to shift its National Economic and Social development to the knowledge and creativity-based production economy. One of the critical factors in enhancing this economic development is by promoting research and development strategy, as well as innovation for commercialization. TheThai film industry undoubtedly plays an important part in the development of Thai creative economy. According to Oxford Economics Report, in 2011, the Thai film industry contributed as much as 20.8 billion baht to the Thai economy. This figure is accounted for ten percent of the Thai Entertainment industry's gross domestic product (GDP) (Oxford Economics, 2011). As a consumer product, it is important to understand the behavior and the needs of Thai film consumers. This research aims to study the current status of research about Thai film consumers. It aims to identify the methodologies and research variables used in consumer research within and about the Thai film industry.

Review of Literature

This research employs three theoretical concepts as its research framework. They are 1) Methodology in Film Consumer Research, 2) Audience Categorization, and 3) Consumer Research Data-Restriction.

Methodology in Film Consumer Research

The first generation of audience research was started off by a luxury theatre owner in New York, Adolph Zukor. According to Zukor and Kramer (1953), he studied audience behavior in his theatre by using a simple observation. He would take a seat in his own theatre on the sixth row from the front and turn around to observe the audience reactions (Zukor & Kramer, 1953). At this time audience research was simply about knowing what the audience wanted. Zukor and Kramer's (1953) method can be considered as the first qualitative research on film audience. The research objective was to capture audience emotions and feelings in order to develop a better approach toward film selection; moreover, the better approach could be used to develop a better film experience, a higher theatre popularity or a more profitable theatre business (Ohmer, 1999).

In contrast, while Zukor and Kramer (1953) focused on audience impression; more contemporary researchers are trying to achieve more efficient data by cross analyzing audience impression and with audience status. By doing so, researchers can categorize audiences into socio-economic status groups (Ohmer, 1999). For instance, in 1940, the Audience Research Institute (ARI) did thousands of research surveys for ten film studios. At this point, ARI recorded the first empirical research in Hollywood. The founder of ARI: George Gallop allows the film industry to be able observe the public interest in such a manner that every research is being supported by science which can guarantee the truth (Ohmer, 1999). In addition, throughout 1940s, Hollywood film studios under the integrated studio system were fighting over film producing allowance. ARI settled the situation with a solid scientific measurement of each studio audience impression; it gave film studios reasons why they should have control in which films and why not (Ohmer, 1999).

Regardless of how audience research can be objective, Ohmer (1999) claimed that in order to understand deeply the spectatorship of the film consumer as an audience, it is important to understand how ARI constructed, interpreted and deployed their studies.

The Audience Research Institute was founded in March 1940, by George Gallup who once based his profession in political polls and studies. He started off ARI by signing a contact with RKO Radio pictures; it was one-year agreement stated that ARI would be doing market research for RKO. The period was right after RKO suffered bankruptcy in January 1940. The contact led to further business relationship and connection for another decade. Anyway, ARI conducted over a thousand studies and reports throughout the year which included almost every film that RKO produced in that period (Ohmer, 1999). ARI often found out that some films of RKO would be a total loss according to their studies. Therefore, many planned films were not produced. Gallop was also hired directly from RKO president George Schaefer to scientifically study public tastes, and interests (New York Times, 1940).

Handel (1950) mentioned in her literature that to understand public wants, it is essential first to understand where the consumers are. Before 1940, producers were looking for audience information through unreliable sources; for example, exhibitors reports, fan letter, and articles in business newspapers. These sources often determined producer decision toward allowance of film production process (Handel, 1950). Nevertheless, as Roste (1941) referred, in 1940, Gallup explained that such procedures were inaccurate and unreliable because this information did not reflect the consumers who could be considered as major film-goers; indeed it only secured feedback from those who would like to complement. For instance, almost 90 percent of letters that were sent to film studios often came from females who were younger than twenty-one years of age. Nevertheless, exhibitor’s reports mostly came from the impression of theatre owner and not the consumers who visited the theatre (Roste, 1941). It must be noted that Gallup's comment was made nine years before Handel wrote her literature in 1950.

To support the previous paragraph about the contradiction between Gallup (1940) and Handel (1950) on public taste; this research examines how Gallup studied the American public taste in his time.

When Gallup was doing political polls and studies, he had government offices and documents as his sources. However, when he started doing film research, there was no audience profile source as valuable as what he had in political polls. Hollywood kept records such as financial reports; for example, ticket prices, net profits, and theatre grosses. Technically, this information was useless for audience study. Therefore, before Gallup joined with RKO during the beginning of 1936, Gallup and his national staff literally embedded film research into political polls (Ohmer, 1999). With David Ogilvy's help on research construction, Gallup was able to provid ARI with demographic information on the film-goers or people who went to theatre regularly. In 1940, the data was complete and it became the general basis of American public taste (Ohmer, 1999).

Later in 1941, ARI found the first evidence that the majority of box office consumers or audiences were teenagers. According to ARI surveys, one-third of all tickets were bought by consumers who were younger than twenty years old. This led RKO to the realization that they had been focusing on the wrong audience segment. Later on, RKO put greater emphasis on producing films that would appeal to teenagers. For instance, in 1942, results from research recommended RKO to launch *Syncopation* with a plot that aims to entertain. Nevertheless, RKO shifted their attention to develop more actors and actresses who were younger than twenty-five years old in order to attract the fan base (Ohmer, 1999).

In addition to the development of adolescent viewpoints, RKO also looked deeper into gender to support the common belief that women liked romantic films and men liked action films. However, ARI did not consult RKO to produce different films for different gender, but ARI and Ogilvy suggested that data needed to be represented; concluding that gender as a single variable would not be significant (Ohmer, 1999).

Another demographic variable that was introduced by ARI was income. ARI found that those people who were earning less than fifteen dollars a week were responsible for twenty-five percent of all box office earnings. Hence, those people who earned twenty-five to thirty-five dollars a week consisted about twenty-two percent of all box office earnings while middle-income groups and high-income groups accounted for thirty-eight and fifteen percent, respectively. Therefore, it could be concluded that the major purchase of movie tickets came from those who earned less than fifty dollars per week (Ohmer, 1999). Based on ARI assumptions, film studios wanted to reach the maximum possible amount of people. If studios relied directly on the data then they could target the majority classes by optimizing their films to match the major preference. However, according to Ohmer (1999), Ogilvy argued that refreshing studio production lines would lead to slight improvement; ARI demographic data suggested that among current film-goers, however, there was no room for the minority in any visible data. In contrast, Ogilvy was suggesting that an enlargement could not be done without available space or channels. Hence, film studios should first enlarge their distributing channels and then utilise them to target the minority not the majority (Ohmer, 1999).

Audience Categorization

Audience information was being served to reach different sectors of audience and most importantly to determine the studio's next move in production. In terms of commercial purposes, each theatrical exhibition was expected to serve an increased audience. Moreover, audience information was part of the system in the early age. Arguably, in the early age of cinema, audience information focused on how to capture audiences despite audience preference and demographic. The result of such action lead to audience and theatre categorization.

According to Maltby (1999), from 1929 to 1933, Hollywood studios were categorizing audience into three major compared categories which were:

1. Class and mass.
2. Sophisticated and unsophisticated
3. Broadway and main-street.

The process of classifying audience led to the process of classifying theatre. Studios concluded that films should be served accurately and consistently. Different audiences required different product categories. In 1932, the coverage of audience classification and relationship were summarized in the article of Variety which reviewed the film called The Greeks Had a Word for Them; Rush (1932) mentioned:

> *Likewise it's one of those peculiar stories, nearly always by a woman, in which the not-too-good heroine has her cake and it too, and for the femme trade that formula is generally and almost fool proof. Exploitation is emphasizing the Chanel clothes. With of the dialog may be a bit polish for the proletariat, but the basic human humor of the situations of these three lilies of the field in rivalry, inbattle and in comradeship will register universally. The men won't care for it much but clapand matron will adore its flashy sophistication certainly in the key towns, even if the whole thing may prove a bit high for the neighborhoods and rural spots (p.15).*

Nevertheless, there was a clear boundary between each category of audience. The undifferentiated and unified audience was found when the audience classification method was adopted by the developing production industry. The method became inaccurate and somewhat lacked ability to serve the public tastes or audience preferences. The apparent proof of the situation was the film: *It Happened One Night* which was unexpectedly successful in 1934 when there were both economic and industrial crises. The studio captured the undifferentiated audience which was not part of the plan. Relatively, the studio was looking to claim a higher social status audience through this film. American studios were going down hill; many studios and exhibitioners were choosing their audience or somewhat called ‘block booking’. Throughout 1930s, the Motion Picture Association of America or MPPDA were regulating to demolish block booking. MPPDA called in producers and distributors upon defend. Therefore, producer, distributer, and exhibitioner were forced to show their film without any specific selection or audience classification. Anyhow, later in the year of 1934, a film called *Crime without Passion* was launched and one of the distributing producer suggested that the film should not be shown in small communities, as in less than 4,000 people. The producer could not make the effort only to lose their expected revenue just because they need to please everyone which they obviously could not (Maltby, 1999).

Consumer Research Data-Restriction

During the mid-1940s, audience research hit its peak; it became a function for managerial levels of film studios. For instance, the producers were limiting their survey data to certain people. This data was so valuable that sometimes only executive levels of film studios were allowed to acquire it; different studios maintaineddifferent policies for such authority, the trend was implanted into the Hollywood studio system (Ohmer, 1999).

Audience research turned into a battleground for those who could not get their hands on the data. For example, actors wanted to know what the audiences thought about their performance, and writers wanted to understand audience impression of their written scripts. In July 1947, Bornemann(1947) attacked the authority system and commented that audience research was restricting the film industry and eliminating the possible development. Gallup’s empirical research influenced producers to avoid any form of risk and stick to what their studies had shown. Moreover, the fact that producers only made films that would sell and limited the variety of art was the result of surveys. Film is supposed to be an art and ‘not industrial products(Bornemann, 1947). Nevertheless, according Ohmer(1999), scriptwriters became puppets; writers in many studios were restricted to write upon the wants of their producers. Writers were required to write and develop a script to match the public wants or the survey results.

Nevertheless, actors were scared of walking into the producer office because producers were choosing actors based on the selling types that surveys indicated for them. Actors were not judged by their performances, but styles that would match the audience preferences (Ohmer, 1999).

Research Methodology

In order to obtain the data, this research employs two research methods which are in-depth interview with stakeholders and document analysis of previous research.

In-Depth Interviews With Stakeholders in The Thai Film Industry

To answer the first research question “How do different stakeholders in theThai film industry conduct consumer research?” the researcher conducted in-depth interviews with personnel from different parties of the stakeholders in Thai film industry. Unstructured interview questions were used as a research tool to capture three aspects which are research methodology, audience categorization, research data-restriction.

Sampling Method

Firstly, the researcher identifies stakeholder characteristics by referring to Donald & Preston’s (1995) normative aspect of stakeholder theory; which mainly explains that a person who has benefit toward the organization is a stakeholder. On the other hand, an organization’s interest in a person does not make the person become a stakeholder. Moreover, Donaldson & Preston's(1995) normative justifications aspect is also concerned with the characteristics of stakeholders. For instance, stakeholders are picked by their relationship with the corporation. These relationships are considered as having intrinsic value and it is axiomatic(Dolnaldson & Preston, 1995). In a way, it is a purposive sampling method. Therefore, the researcher first identifies stakeholder organizations and categorizes them into four different parties, namely the producer, the investor, the distributor, and the exhibitor.

The researcher then called all the companies which were listed purposefully. However, many of them declined to participate for particular reasons. Some could not be reached. Moreover, through the calls, the researcher found that GMM Thai Hub and Kantana contributes to both roles: producer and investor. similarly the owner and executive producer of Local Color, even though, the company is mainly a production company; however, he has direct experience with distribution system, as an executive producer.

1. Producer
    - 1.1 Preyavun Sirisuptawee – GMM Thai Hub Promotion Director
    - 1.2 Peerada Tupsaifar – Kantana Educational Practitioner
2. Investor
    - 1.1 Preyavun Sirisuptawee – GMM Thai Hub Promotion Director
    - 1.2 Peerada Tupsaifar – Kantana Educational practitioner
3. Distributor
    - 3.1 Pawas Sawatchaiyamet – owner and executive producer of Local Color Film
4. Exhibitor
    - 4.1 Thongchai Piriyaboonyanon – Public Relation and Marketing Manager of Major Hollywood
    - 4.2 Ithikorn Thepsiri – Programming Manager of Major Hollywood

4.3 Chalisa Poolvoraluck – Cinema Manager

Research Variables

Unstructured interview guideline constructs with three dimensions of questions to measure or capture three variables of this research. Three dimensions are research methodology, research data-restriction, and audience categorization.

First dimension – research methodology

Questions within this dimension aim to capture stakeholders' perspectives and knowledge about consumer research methodology which is conducted in their field of Thai film industry. This methodology concerns research question, research scope, research sample, and research tools.

Second dimension – research data restriction

For this dimension, this research follows Ohmer's (1999) suggestion that consumer research data is restricted to certain organizational personnel. For instance, executives and producers have full access to research data; while actors and writers could not acquire this data. Therefore, this research focuses on capturing similar aspects as Ohmer (1999) did. In other words, to understand which department or personnel of the Thai film industry has access to their consumer research data.

Third dimension – audience categorization

Within this part, the major consideration is toward how audiences are being grouped and named by the Thai film industry according to research data. For example, Maltby (1999) explained that Hollywood categorized their audiences into three group which are class and mass, sophisticated and unsophisticated, and broadway and mainstreet.

Content Analysis of Previous Research

To answer the second research question "What is the body of knowledge in consumer research done by stakeholders and higher educational institutions?" the researcher decided to search for past consumer research that was conducted in Thai universities by post-graduate students, or researchers.

Sampling Method

Chosen universities must have a communication-related department; for instance, Srinakharinwirot University, Mahidol University, Thammasat University, and Chulalongkorn University. The following are keywords used for searching through the university library's search engine: film, consumer, research, audience research, film consumer, film audience. The researcher managed to pick out fourteen research projects following this process.

Analysis Method

After the eleven researches were gathered; firstly, the researcher summarized all the research and listed them into table format (see Table 1). Secondly, the researcher looked for the similar components of all the projects which are:

1. Research approach discusses how past research were conducted with different research approaches, research methods, and research tools.
2. Research sample discusses how past research was conducted with different ways of picking their samples; for instance, sampling method, sample size, and specification of samples.
3. Focuses of the studies discusses how past research share similarities and differences through different aspects which are research variables, focuses of research, and its relationship.
4. Demographic profiling discusses how past research either report their research data through demographic variables, or group their samples according to samples' attitudes.

Lastly, the researcher looked for relevant points of the researches' components to discuss; and sought for patterns in the divided components.

Research Findings

Stakeholders' Insight

A Lack of Understanding About Consumer Research Within The Thai Film Industry

The Thai film industry stakeholders have a misconception in consumer research. This is deduced from personal observation through the interview, for example, opinions of the interviewee on such topic. At one point in the interviews, all interviewed stakeholders had claimed the nonexistence of consumer research in their positions.

For instance, Sawatchaiyamet (2014) quickly stated that producers had paid little attention to consumer research data; nevertheless, Sirisuptawee (2014) mentioned since the beginning of the interview that there is no consumer research in the company. However, after such information was recorded, the researcher directed the interview toward asking about any form of research; some stakeholders shared information about their 'research'. GMM Thai Hub's promotional director first emphasized research that the company studied toward understandings in film characters then Sirisuptawee(2014) explained that sometimes the company conducted a focus group inside the company by letting the employees score two versions of film trailers.

Moreover, the same stakeholder explained that once in a while, she would employ the same research method, but the samples were real consumers who they found at movie theatres. From the context of interview, it is assumed that Sirisuptawee(2014) did not take it for granted that the conducted focus group is methodology-sounded consumer research. It possibly showed a lack of understanding in consumer research, whether or not the conducted research is consumer research.

A Lack of Methodologically Sounded Consumer Research

There is evidence showing that Thai film industrial stakeholders have inaccurate knowledge about the definition and implementation of consumer research. Sirisuptawee (2014) firstly claimed that there was no consumer research in her company; however, later, she explained about the focus group. This suggests that there is a misconception on which studies could be described as consumer research, and which studies could be described as informal research.

Similarly, when Piriyaboonyanon(2014) was asked about the research methodology and research sample, the interviewee claimed that Major Hollywood's IT department would process the member cards system every month to provide the company with top-consuming demographics. It is assumed that Piriyaboonyanon(2014) considered that as consumer research. Yet, he did not mention any methodology-sounded research method.

Moreover, Poolvoraluck (2014), cinema major of Major Hollywood mentioned that in a practical manner of Major Hollywod's business operation. The company relied heavily in personal experience. Similarly, Sirisuptawee (2014) and Piriyaboonyanon(2014) stated from their experience that the major group of audience is teenagers.

A Lack of Responsible Unit And Collaboration Within The Industry

Poolvoraluck (2014) stated that outsourcing for consumer research is out of hand and believe that consumer research is expensive. In addition, the gathered research showed that some consumer research done by post-graduate students contained small group of samples. On the other hand, Tupsaifar (2014) explained the difference as when she claimed that Kantana's consumer research was conducting by outsources. The two different statements from two stakeholders showed that consumer research in Thai film industry might not have a proper arrangement, unlike Hollywood which all research were conducted in one place

Audience Research Institute (Ohmer, 1999). Therefore, since the research data was coming from different sources, the stakeholders believed that consumer research is technically not their responsibility and it should be conducted in a different sector. This can be seen from Sawatchaiyamet (2014)'s statement regarding the jobs of producers and distributors. Hence, Poolvoralcuk (2014) stated that, for small Thai companies, consumer research seems to be quite out of their hands due to availability of the data. As Poolvoralcuk (2014) further claims, Thai people have been working based on their experience, and it obviously got them to certain points. She concluded that it could be the working ethic of some Thai industries.

Analysis of Previous Research

The researcher managed to gather different consumer research that was conducted by researchers in higher education or post graduate students. First, theseprojects were summarized and analyzed using an analysis form. Then, the researcher looked for the components that all research shares, such as *research approach, research sample, focuses of the study, demographic profiling*. These components were used for further discussion by looking for patterns of exiting consumer research about Thai film Industry (see Table 1).

Research Approach and Data-Gathering Method

In terms of research approach, previous research about Thai film consumers usually employed quantitative research approaches, qualitative research approaches, and mixed-method research approaches respectively.

In terms of data-gathering methods, the research in quantitative approaches usually employed questionnaire surveys; while the research in qualitative approach employed methods such as focus groups, in-depth interviews, interview textual analysis and document analysis. For the mixed research approach research, both in-depth interview and questionnaire survey are used.

In terms of data-gathering tools, the quantitative research used only questionnaires. However, the qualitative research used diverse research tools such as open-ended questions, interview sheet, record sheet, and structured interview questions. Relatively, the mixed approach research both employed guideline questions in combination with questionnaires (see Table 2). There is a pattern that can be seen here. The research projects that employed two or more research toolscontain two sides under their topic - these are consumer side, and film industry side.

Research 4 and *research 5* both studied communication strategy of the film industry first before relating it to consumers. They both used in-depth interview to study the industry side then used survey to study the consumer side. In addition, *research 6* studied violence in Thai and Hollywood films by using interview textual analysis, then followed with in-depth interview and focus groups to study the consumer's attitude towards the mentioned topic. Moreover, *research 7* employed document analysis to study the pattern of multiplex expansion in Thailand, then used in-depth interview to interview consumers regarding the topic.

Moreover, in terms of focus of the research, it could be summarized that there are two main focusing areas which are film as a product, and the service given from the Thai film industry. However, the gathered research ranged from the year of 2002 to 2013, the Thai film industry seemingly developed through the time, and gathered research did not show evidence of extreme change in terms of research variables in the two areas of Thai film industry that were studied.

Sample Size, Sample Group, and Sampling Method

In terms of sample size, quantitative research is ranging from 200 to 420 samples. For quantitative research, the research covered the sampling area as the first step of various sampling methods which are: purposive sampling method; stratified sampling method and cluster sampling method. In addition, to specifically narrow the samples down, these sampling methods were employed: simple random sampling method; quota sampling method; convenience sampling method and accidental sampling method.

On the other hand, qualitative research's sample size ranges from 18 to 32 samples. In contrast, for qualitative research, the research chose the sampling area as the first step of sampling method by only purposive sampling method. Similarly, then several methods were used to specify the samples; namely, snowball sampling method, and volunteer sampling method. However, there is a difference in purpose of using snowball sampling method and volunteer sampling method. Volunteer sampling method allows a qualitative research to acquire fixed amount of samples, but snowball sampling is being used increase the amount of samples after the first sampling method. Nevertheless, in terms of specification of the samples, there are two major types which are research in the Bangkok area and research in Thailand (see Table 4).

In terms of research sampling method, gathered quantitative research theoretically picked out their samples as it can be seen that the gathered research's sampling methods and steps are similar. These researches possibly followed the past researches' sampling method to maintain a proper research manner. Therefore, it also led to similar sample size.

Most of the gathered research picked samples which were limited to those who were living or consuming Thai films in the Bangkok area. Meanwhile, the suburban area was left out because it was not the designated area of research, and suburban areas possibly contribute minor role of the entire population.

As mentioned about characteristics in sampling method of gathered research, and research sampling area, it led to similar patterns of sample. For instance, 18-35 years old consumers who was living in Bangkok. In a way, it is a confirmation that the researcher targeted the right audience group, however, it could emphasize that the minor consumers were left out.

Demographic Profiling and Audience Categorization

There are two ways of profiling samples' demographic as showed through the gathered research. Firstly, report through the demographic of the research samples. There are various demographic variables which were used to be reported as dependent variable: gender, age, educational level, career, and personal income. In terms of dependent variable which correlated with number input, these were often asked through choices of range. For example, under 18 years old, 19-25 years old, 26-30 years old, and above 30 years old. Educational level and gender required respondents to choose answers from multiple choice questions.

Secondly, there is research which grouped and reported their samples based on their attitude regarding the research topic (see Table 5). For example, Research 1 mentioned their samples as consumers who prefer 3D movies when both 2D and 3D movies are available, consumers who prefer 3D movies more than 2D. Research 2 grouped the samples into three groups based on level of interest toward social film; high interest, medium interest, and low interest. Nevertheless, Research 3 categorized their samples based on their level of relationship toward the preferred media.

As mentioned before in the research sample, profiling the samples by their demographic gave rise to a confirmation of correct target group. Hence, as gathered research was following past research sampling protocols, the demographic profile of gathered research is overlapping. On the other hand, with the same demographic profiling styles, some researchers managed to categorize the samples by their attitude, this action gave the research a new function in terms of reporting the research data. Audience categorization allowed the researcher to report the findings by sample category, and not only by sample's demographic. For example, *research 2* reported that 'university students who studied in a film-related department’ had a medium interest in pro-social film. While, *research 4* reported that ‘samples aged from 18-35 years old’ paid most attention in film trailers as they searched for information.

Table 1

Summary of Previous Research

Research topic	Quan.	Qual.	Research Method	Consumer Attitude	Info. Search	Media Habit	Satisf action	Audience Categorziation	Source
Research1:"Consumer Behavior on 2-D and 3D Movies"	X		Survey	X				X	Chulalongkorn University
Research 2: "Perception, Attitude and Awareness of Movie-Goers about social problems in Pro-social films"		X	Focus Group	X				X	Chulalongkorn University
Research 3: "Factor Influencing The Independent Film Viewing"		X	In-depth Int.	X				X	Chulalongkorn University
Research 4: "Marketing Communication Strategy and Consumer Behavior on GTH Movies"	X	X	In-depth int., Survey	X	X				Chulalongkorn University
Research 5: "Marketing Communication Factors Influencing Thai Movie Viewing Behavior"	X	X	In-depth int., Survey	X			X		Chulalongkorn University
Research 6: "Narration of Attitudes Regarding Violence in Thai and Hollywood Films"		X	Interview textual analysis, in-depth int., focus group	X					Chulalongkorn University
Research 7:"The Impact of Multiplex Theater Expansion on Provincial Film Distribution System in Thailand"		X	Document analysis, in-depth int.	X			X		Chulalongkorn University
Research 8: "Bangkok Movie Goers Attitude toward Domestic Film Production"	X		Survey	X			X		Chulalongkorn University
Research 9: "Customer Response Toward Customer Experience Management of SF Cinema City"	X		Survey				X		Chulalongkorn University
Research 10: "Media Habit, Information Need and Film Viewer's Behaviors of Independent Films"		X	In-depth int.		X	X			Chulalongkorn University
Research 11: "Factors Related to The Decision to View Thai Animated Film Khankluay 2"	X		Survey				X		Chulalongkorn University
Research 12: "The Comparison of Factors Influencing the Audience's in Film Choosing at Major Cineplex and Entertainment Golden Village(EGV), Bangkok	X		Survey				X		Srinakharinwirot University
Research 13: "Factors Influencing Consumers Behavior in Viewing Thai and Hollywood Movie in Bangkok Metropolitan Area"	X		Survey	X	X		X		Srinakharinwirot University
Research 14: "Marketing Factors Affecting Movie-Watching Behavior of Consumers At Major Hollywood Theatres In Bangkok Metropolitan and Perimeter Areas	X		Survey				X		Srinakharinwirot University

Table 2

Research approach and data-gathering of gathered research

Research topic	Research Approach	Research Method	Research Tool
Research1:“Consumer Behavior on 2-D and 3D Movies”	Quantitative	Survey	Questionnaire
Research 2: “Perception, Attitude and Awareness of Movie-Goers about social problems in Pro-social films”	Qualitative	Focus Group	Open-ended questions
Research 3: “Factor Influencing The Independent Film Viewing”	Qualitative	In-depth Int.	Open-ended questions
Research 4: “Marketing Communication Strategy and Consumer Behavior on GTH Movies”	Mixed	In-depth int., Survey	Guideline questions, Questionnaire
Research 5: “Marketing Communication Factors Influencing Thai Movie Viewing Behavior”	Mixed	In-depth int., Survey	Guideline questions, Questionnaire
Research 6: “Narration of Attitudes Regarding Violence in Thai and Hollywood Films”	Qualitative	Interview textual analysis, in-depth int., focus group	Open-ended questions
Research 7:“The Impact of Multiplex Theater Expansion on Provincial Film Distribution System in Thailand”	Qualitative	Document analysis, in-depth int.	Interview sheet, record sheet
Research 8: “Bangkok Movie Goers Attitude toward Domestic Film Production”	Quantitative	Survey	Questionnaire
Research 9: “Customer Response Toward Customer Experience Management of SF Cinema City”	Quantitative	Survey	Questionnaire
Research 10: “Media Habit, Information Need and Film Viewer’s Behaviors of Independent Films”	Qualitative	In-depth int.	Structured interview questions
Research 11: “Factors Related to The Decision to View Thai Animated Film Khankluay 2”	Quantitative	Survey	Questionnaire
Research 12: “The Comparison of Factors Influencing the Audience’s in Film Choosing at Major Cineplex and Entertainment Golden Village(EGV), Bangkok	Quantitative	Survey	Questionnaire
Research 13: “Factors Influencing Consumers Behavior in Viewing Thai and Hollywood Movie in Bangkok Metropolitan Area”	Quantitative	Survey	Questionnaire
Research 14: “Marketing Factors Affecting Movie-Watching Behavior of Consumers At Major Hollywood Theatres In Bangkok Metropolitan and Perimeter Areas	Quantitative	Survey	Questionnaire

Research topic	Research Variables	Focus of the research	Discussion & Relationship
Research1:"Consumer Behavior on 2-D and 3D Movies"	Consumer Attitude	Film technology	Consumer attitude toward 3D screening technology.
Research 2: "Perception, Attitude and Awareness of Movie-Goers about social problems in Pro-social films"	Consumer Attitude, Media Habit	Film content	Consumer attitude toward film with pro-social film content
Research 3: "Factor Influencing The Independent Film Viewing"	Consumer Attitude	Film Category/ scale	Consumer attitude toward independent film viewing.
Research 4: "Marketing Communication Strategy and Consumer Behavior on GTH Movies"	Consumer Attitude, Information Search	Films as products from particular companies	Consumer attitude and information search behavior toward GTH films.
Research 5: "Marketing Communication Factors Influencing Thai Movie Viewing Behavior"	Consumer Attitude, Level of Satisfaction	Film companies' marketing communication strategy	Consumer attitude and satisfaction toward advertisement/ communication of Thai film industry.
Research 6: "Narration of Attitudes Regarding Violence in Thai and Hollywood Films"	Consumer Attitude	Film content	Consumer attitude toward violence film content in Thai film industry
Research 7:"The Impact of Multiplex Theater Expansion on Provincial Film Distribution System in Thailand"	Consumer Attitude, Level of Satisfaction, Information search	Film industrial service	Consumer attitude and consumer satisfaction toward film service providers in Thailand.
Research 8: "Bangkok Movie Goers Attitude toward Domestic Film Production"	Consumer Attitude, Level of Satisfaction	Aspects related to film production	Consumer attitude and consumer satisfaction toward film production aspects/technical values.
Research 9: "Customer Response Toward Customer Experience Management of SF Cinema City"	Level of Satisfaction	Film exhibitor services	Consumer satisfaction toward SF Cinema City's service.
Research 10: "Media Habit, Information Need and Film Viewer's Behaviors of Independent Films"	Information search, media habit	Film category/ scale	Independent film viewers' information searching behavior, and media consumption habit.
Research 11: "Factors Related to The Decision to View Thai Animated Film Khankluay 2"	Level of satisfaction	Single film	Consumer's satisfaction after watching "Khankluay 2"
Research 12: "The Comparison of Factors Influencing the Audience's in Film Choosing at Major Cineplex and Entertainment Golden Village(EGV), Bangkok	Level of Satisfaction	Film industrial service	Consumer satisfaction toward watching films at Major Cineplex and EGV
Research 13: "Factors Influencing Consumers Behavior in Viewing Thai and Hollywood Movie in Bangkok Metropolitan Area"	Consumer Attitude, Information Search, Level of Satisfaction	Film region	Consumer attitude, information search and level of satisfaction toward Thai film.
Research 14: "Marketing Factors Affecting Movie-Watching Behavior of Consumers At Major Hollywood Theatres In Bangkok Metropolitan and Perimeter Areas	Level of Satisfaction	Film industrial service	Consumer satisfaction toward watching film at Major Hollywood.

Table 4

Research sample of gathered research

Research topic	Demographic Report	Audience Categorization
Research1:"Consumer Behavior on 2-D and 3D Movies"	Gender, age, educational level, career, personal income	1. Consumers who prefer 3D movies when both 2D and 3D movies are available 2. Consumer who prefer 3D movies more than 2D
Research 2: "Perception, Attitude and Awareness of Movie-Goers about social problems in Pro-social films"		Categorized samples by Level of interest in pro-social films: high interest, medium interest, and low interest.
Research 3: "Factor Influencing The Independent Film Viewing"		Categorized samples by consumer media preferences and their relationship with the media
Research 4: "Marketing Communication Strategy and Consumer Behavior on GTH Movies"	Age: 15-35 years old/ teenagers	
Research 5: "Marketing Communication Factors Influencing Thai Movie Viewing Behavior"	Gender, age, educational level, career, personal income	
Research 6: "Narration of Attitudes Regarding Violence in Thai and Hollywood Films"	Gender	
Research 7:"The Impact of Multiplex Theater Expansion on Provincial Film Distribution System in Thailand"	Gender, age, educational level, career, personal income	
Research 8: "Bangkok Movie Goers Attitude toward Domestic Film Production"	Gender, age, educational level, career, personal income	
Research 9: "Customer Response Toward Customer Experience Management of SF Cinema City"	Gender, age, educational level, career, personal income	
Research 10: "Media Habit, Information Need and Film Viewer's Behaviors of Independent Films"	Gender, age, educational level, career	
Research 11: "Factors Related to The Decision to View Thai Animated Film Khankluay 2"	Gender, age, educational level, career, personal income	
Research 12: "The Comparison of Factors Influencing the Audience's in Film Choosing at Major Cineplex and Entertainment Golden Village(EGV), Bangkok	Gender, age, educational level, career, personal income, marital status, movie theatres that consumer went to.	
Research 13: "Factors Influencing Consumers Behavior in Viewing Thai and Hollywood Movie in Bangkok Metropolitan Area"	Gender, age, educational level, career, personal income, marital status.	
Research 14: "Marketing Factors Affecting Movie-Watching Behavior of Consumers At Major Hollywood Theatres In Bangkok Metropolitan and Perimeter Areas	Gender, age, educational level, career, personal income, marital status.	

Conclusion

"Current Status of Consumer Research in Thai Film Industry" is a qualitative research project which employed in-depth interview as a research tool, and analyzed past research.

There are two key informants of this research: in-depth interview with Thai film industry stakeholders, and gathered documents regarding past research conducted by researchers from higher education institutes, or post-graduate students; the research data allows this research to answer two designated research questions; which are:

1. How do different stakeholders in the Thai film industry conduct consumer research?
2. What is the methodology employed in consumer research done by stakeholders in the Thai film industry and researchers in Thai higher educational institutions?

Firstly, to answer the first research question, the researcher interviewed six different stakeholders in the Thai film industry, by using in-depth interview methods. The goal was to capture three different variables which are research methodology, audience categorization, and research-data restriction. However, apart from reporting through variable, the researcher also discussed four relevant points as the result of analysis which is stakeholders' knowledge in consumer research, informal research, outsourcing for consumer research, and Thai working ethic and personal experience.The result has shown that in term of research methodology, stakeholders upheld different positions; for instance, Kantana hired outsource and they had no evidence of research methodology in hand; while, GTH from time to time conducted a focus group with employees inside the company, and also with the audiences. In term of audience categorization, stakeholders mentioned that teenagers are their target group, and it is the major target audience for the Thai film industry. Relatively, in terms of research-data restriction, as the researcher called the companies which were deliberately picked, this emphasized that in spite of denials many companies in Thai film industry restricted their research data from outsiders. However, some of the stakeholders who participated in the interviews explained that research-data is only being used by the executives.

Secondly, to answer the second research question, the researcher gathered fourteen different research projects which were conducted by researchers in higher education, or post-graduate students. The analysis of gathered research followed the three steps:

1. The researcher summarized all the research and listed t hem into table format (see Table 1).
2. The researcher looked for the similar components of all the researches which are research approach, research sample, focus of the study and research variable, and demographic profiling.
3. The researcher looked for relevant points for reporting the components.

Thirdly, in terms of focus of the study and research variables, the similarity of the gathered research has shown that consumer attitude, level of satisfaction, information search, and media habit are respectively the similar research variable. The focus of the study is aimed at many elements of film industry, for example, film industrial service and film content. If the focus of the study could be broader, it could be summarized as focus on film content, focus on film industrial service, and focus on marketing communication of film industry.

Lastly, demographic profiling, there are two styles of profiling samples' as it showed in gathered research which are report by the demographic of research samples, and report by samples' attitude regarding certain topics. In terms of demographic data-collection, for the quantitative research, it could be implanted with the research method. However, for the qualitative research, the research usually specified the samples and mostly obtained demographic information before the interviews or focus group happened.

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IS ENTERTAINMENT THE KEY? CREATIVITY AND EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT AS FACTORS TO BUYING BEHAVIOR

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Abstract

Globe Tattoo, one of the leading sub-brands of Globe Telecom in the Philippines, used Branded Entertainment as an advertising tool to increase its earnings as one of the players in the Philippine telecommunication industry. Using a quasi-experiment that involved 100 residents in Guiginto Town in Bulacan Province in the Philippines, the paper assessed the influence of the creativity and emotional engagement –characteristics of branded entertainment- of a Globe Tattoo TV commercial entitled “Defy Expectation” to the buying behavior of the residents of the town. Using One-Way ANOVA, the researchers have found that there exist significant differences on the relationship between the Globe Tattoo’s recent three-minuter commercial’s creativity and emotional engagement to the buying behavior of its perceived target market. This study also discovered that in the Philippines, if TV commercial creativity and emotional engagement are combined, no significant effect to buying behavior happened. The paper recommends that creative advertising in the Philippines must include cultural dynamics as one of the variables for successful brand engagement to happen.

Keywords: creatiivity, emotional engagement, buying behavior

Background

Branded Entertainment gives a product the opportunity to talk to its target audience using appeals that go beyond traditional selling. As a form of brand reinforcement, it is not simply concerned about product placement. Since it highlights the fun and the essential in more than 30 seconds, this off-shoot of content marketing has become a trend in the advertising world. From Martin Scorsese's short film for Chanel to Lego's production of a children's magazine to IBM's creation of a computer game, branded entertainment is considered a breath of fresh air, a departure from the traditional brand marketing and advertising strategies.

It is a reflection of the advertiser's brand personality. It argues that the brand has something more to offer more than its agenda to sell. It wants to emotionally reach out, to be engaging. Kohlepp (2012) argued that this type of approach has given the advertising landscape a new dimension to reach out- to be more fun and to be more real. He furthered that since there are a lot of advertising clutters; brands have to be innovative in its war towards standing out. It is a way to distinguish one from the others in order to create not just brand awareness and brand attitude but also to sustain recall. Furthermore, he explains that it is a way to outshine the competitors. After all, branded entertainment is perceived to have an effect on the development of an enduring "direct-to-consumer" relationship (Rose, 2014).

Argenti (2006), too, argued for its effectiveness. He claimed that since there is no direct product information in the ad that is being given to its audience, it sells softly. He seems to impress the point that the effect of branded entertainment rests on the reiteration of the value and content of the commercial and not on the amount of exposure of the brand. Parekh (2010) seemed to agree and asserted that it has impact on viewers, especially since branded entertainment can be a better source than traditional advertising videos in terms of content, story line, and emotional connection. The effect of the perceived good combination rests on how the products are placed and woven into the content by making emotional connection with the consumers (Hudson and Hudson, 2006). There is, therefore, a claim that branded entertainment combines the goodness of advertising and entertaining an audience.

Branded entertainment, also referred to as advertainment (Chiţu and Tecău, 2010), is a form of communication that is designed to overcome the tendency, especially among television viewers, to change channels or mute the audio during standard advertising commercials. With the element of foregrounding in this advertising form, a brand can soften its ultimate intention to sell products by interleaving them into a coherent advertising textual material. Armed with a good story and a creative way of telling such story, advertainment does not force an audience to a marketing call to action by being unobtrusive in terms of visual appearance. The same tendency to become unobtrusive has been earlier found by Terkelsen (2005) among US marketers who claims that branded entertainment has become a top of mind choice because it helps in engaging the target audience in unobtrusive ways. This effect, too, has been found by Savage (2005) in research conducted into Taiwan's branded entertainment tourism ad by Saatchi & Saatchi. Highlighting creativity and emotional engagement, the ad successfully focused on locating the country in Asia while creating a sense of attractiveness amongst the destinations in the State. In the Philippines, there seems to be growing movement to use branded entertainment to create brand awareness and loyalty. Guerrero (2005) claims that the creative agencies and TV networks have noted that the Filipino audiences are no longer satisfied with products being shoved down their throats via traditional tri-media commercials. Moreover, there seems to be an increase in the adherence to humorous advertisements in the Philippines as this becomes a cultural entry point for the product to penetrate the target. This appears to be a support to Marquez' (2001) claims that some TV Ads in the Philippines do not communicate as they focus more on selling a product that totally goes against the consumer's field of experience. Creativity, therefore, has seemed to be packaged in the Western sense, disregarding the Filipino indigenous experience.

Creativity in Branded Entertainment

Creativity is a forceful characteristic of advertising. In the past, indicators of creativity include uniqueness (MacInnis, et al. 1991), meaningful information (Coade, 1997), relevance (Heckler and Childers, 1992; Matherly and Goldsmith, 1987), novelty, meaningfulness, and acceptability (Marra, 1998; Jewler and Drewniany, 1998; Ang and Low, 2002). Of course, such indicators must be in tune with context so that it can penetrate well. Moreover, creativity also entails unexpectedness- a value that highlights freshness and meaningfulness that are relevant to the target audience. Pieters and his colleagues (2002) supported that it is in the unexpectedness of an ad that creative works can draw and hold audience attention. El-Murad and West (2004 in Till and Back, 2005) added that creativity is a central figure in the advertising process. This means that the more creative an advertisement is; the better is the degree of acceptance of the product being marketed. The literature argues that creativity entails being divergent while maintaining a sense of novelty and newness, aesthetic representation, and a stand-out difference. Interestingly, Goldenberg and Mazursky (2008) added that creativity allows increased motivation to attend to the message in order to enhance buying behaviour. Creativity, therefore, helps in creating a positive impact of likelihood- as evidenced by a desire to view the commercial over and over again.

Emotional Engagement

Emotional engagement is a positive mental state that arises from cognitive assessment of a communicative source. Bagozzi, Gopinath, and Nyer (1999) noted that this feeling is triggered by unexpected events or happenings. Such occurrence leads to happiness, surprise, serenity, or satisfaction (Royo- Vela, 2005; Kohlepp, 2012). Interestingly, Dobele and his colleagues (2007:10) have highlighted that emotional engagement is "generated when something is unexpected because of amazement and astonishment." Sagayadevan and Jeyaraj (2012) argued that emotional engagements are affective reactions that connect individuals to certain activities. Literature provides that this variable influences other outcomes such as learning (Handelsman, Briggs, Sullivan, & Towler, 2005), knowledge (McLean, 2001), other emotions such as enjoyment (Pekrun, Goetz, Titz, & Perry, 2002; Pekrun, Goetz, Frenzel, Barchfeld and Perry, 2011) and even buying behaviour (Karbasivar and Yarahmadi, 2011).

Buying Behavior as Outcome of Branded Entertainment

Consumer buying behaviour refers to the purchases made either by engaging in a great deal of evaluation or impulse (Burnett, 2008; Karbasivar and Yarahmadi, 2011). It is a routine affair in which an individual, because of satisfaction with a product, repurchases a brand. Because of strong reinforcement from a source such as a television ad, buyers are able to commit to decisions such as purchase (Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2009) as triggered by informational reinforcement and product satisfaction.

Literature would argue that gender paves the way for buying behaviour. Ditmar et al. (1995) demonstrated that buying behaviour among women is strongly triggered by emotional reasons such as sentimental values of products while men's buying behaviour is generated by preference to function and finance. The same sentiments have been reinforced over time as consumers' buying behaviour is related to gender (Giraud, 2011; Tinne, 2011) and age (Mai, et al. 2003).

Context of Current Research, Theory and Hypotheses

Globe Telecom is a leading telecommunications company in the Philippines. One of its products from its Globe Handyphone division, Globe Tattoo, is supposed to be designed to fit the lifestyle of its owners. Aimed at a young Filipino generation, this prepaid broadband product offers trendy packaging and offers additional functionalities like an internet stick for file storage. Based on Globe Telecom's data, Globe Tattoo has 715, 000 subscribers who have embraced the digital life. Velasco (2013) also has mentioned that Globe Tattoo's primary target market is anyone who is part of the Philippine A and B social class. To further strengthen its claim to broadband users in the Philippines, Globe Tattoo has recently released a three-minute commercial that shows Filipinos and Filipinas who have shown "greatness" in their digital lives when they have defied expectations (tattoo.globe.com.ph).

This research anchors its claims on the assertions of the Elaboration Likelihood Model Theory (ELM Theory). ELM Theory, as developed by Richard Petty and John Cacioppo in 1986, is a dual process theory of how attitudes are formed and changed by certain enabling variables. The ELM is based on the idea that attitudes, mixed with persuasion, guide decisions and other behaviours. The model features two routes of persuasive influence: central and peripheral. The key variable in this process is involvement- that extent to which an individual is willing and able to 'think' about the advocated position of the source. When people are motivated and able to think about the content of the message, elaboration is high. Elaboration involves cognitive processes such as evaluation, recall, critical judgment, and inferential judgment. Moreover, if elaboration is high, the central persuasive route is likely to occur. Conversely, the peripheral route is the likely result of low elaboration. Simply put, the ELM Theory explains that persuasion depends on low and high elaborations of a source.

In this study, the researchers wanted to know whether the variables such as creativity and emotional engagement are effective persuasive tools and elaborators of the Globe Tattoo branded entertainment ad to elicit central effect into one's buying behaviour. If the ad is perceived as effective, it is assumed that it would lead to high buying behaviour. Therefore, the researchers wanted to answer the question: How do Creativity and Emotional Engagement - Characteristics of the Globe Tattoo TV Branded Entertainment - Influence the Buying Behaviour of Globe Tattoo consumers?

In this study, perceptions before and after exposure to the three-minute “Defy Expectations” ad was used to identify if creativity in branded entertainment is a factor to be considered in buying Globe Tattoo products. Residents were asked if the commercial is considered new, unique, different, relevant, and aesthetically pleasant.

H1. The more creative the Tattoo TV commercial is; the better is the influence to buying behaviour of Globe Tattoo consumers.

In this study, the researchers wanted to identify the subjective knowledge of a select group of individuals on their emotional engagement about Globe Tattoo via its commercial. The research assessed feelings of happiness, satisfaction, surprise, calmness, and a sense of encouragement that are perceived to be indicators of emotional engagement.

H2. The more emotionally engaging the Tattoo TV commercial is; the better is the influence to buying behaviour of Globe Tattoo consumers.

In this study, the respondents’ perceived buying behaviours included purchase intention, actual purchase, and repurchases. Moreover, the respondents’ socio-economic profiles such as age, gender, educational attainment, and monthly incomes were also considered as mediators for buying behaviour.

H3. The more creative and emotionally engaging the Tattoo TV commercial is; the better is its influence to the buying behaviour of Globe Tattoo consumers.

H4.There is difference on the perceived combination of creativity and emotional engagement and buying behaviour of the consumers when grouped according to demographic profile.

Methods

Sample and Locale

This research has been conducted in Guiguinto Town, Bulacan Province, the Philippines. One hundred randomly selected residents took part in the study. As a study limitation, this research study has only used one subdivision as a locale for its experiment.

Instrumentation

The instrument used was in a survey format. The questionnaire contained concepts either from previous research or were created by the researchers. The instrument was divided intp three sections. The first part wanted to identify the socio-economic demographics of the respondents. The second part, consisting of five questions, assessed the respondents' notions on the TV commercial's creativity. The last statement assessed buying behaviour. The third part, consisting of five questions, measured the emotional engagement felt and buying behaviour of the respondents. A five-point Likert scale was used in sections two and three. 150 questionnaires were fielded but only 100 took part in the actual survey. Reliability of the questionnaire was established using Cronbach Alpha coeeficient. Content validity was established using previous studies. Construct validity was achieved using pre-testing and expert substantiation.

Data Analysis Method

SPSS software was used in identifying the descriptive statistics, data error check, and demographic analysis. Moreover, One-Way ANOVA was used to determine whether there were any significant differences between the means of the variables under study.

Results and Discussion

Descriptive Statistics For Socio-Economic Profiling

This study assessed the subjective knowledge of residents of Guiginto town, Bulacan, Philippines on the creativity and emotional engagement of a branded entertainment "Defy Expectations" commercial of Globe Tattoo. Out of the one hundred respondents, fifty two are female and forty eight are male. Majority of the respondents belong to the 18 to 28 years old age group. Most of the respondents are college graduates. More than half of them earn between P20, 001 - P30, 000 pesos per month.

Table 1

Creativity and its Influence to Buying Behaviour

Statements	Mean
The Globe Tattoo commercial's concept is novel.	4.27
I find the Globe tattoo commercial unique because it does not directly state the product.	4.26
The commercial is different from the ones I see on television.	4.25
The commercial is aesthetically pleasing because it does not hard sell.	4.34
Since I find the commercial creative, I will buy the product it endorses.	4.26

The table above shows the perceived creativity and its influence on buying behaviour of Globe Tattoo products. As indicated above, the respondents strongly agreed that the TVC is novel, unique, different, and aesthetically pleasing. Moreover, they also noted that because they find the commercial creative, they strongly agreed that they will buy the products of Globe Tattoo. These findings support the claims of Smith, et al. (2007) that if TVCs are perceived as new and refreshing, it would create a positive tendency for buying behaviour. Results of this paper run parallel with the findings of Ang and Low (2000) that indicated the impact of the creativity of advertising forms to purchase behaviors. Using novelty, creativity is achieved. The branded entertainment becomes even better if there is uniqueness, meaning, and aesthetic representation in the ad (Kover, et al., 1995; Jewler and Drewniany, 1998; El-Murad and West, 2004; Till and Back, 2005).

Table 2

Emotional Engagement and its influence to Buying Behaviour

Statements	**Mean**
I always feel happy whenever I see the Globe Tattoo commercial.	4.26
I always feel satisfied whenever I see the Globe Tattoo commercial.	3.98
I always feel surprised whenever I see the Globe Tattoo commercial.	4.01
I always feel cool whenever I see the Globe Tattoo commercial.	4.19
The emotions that I felt when I was watching the ad led me to buy the Globe Tattoo product.	4.42

The table above shows that the respondents have shown positive emotional engagement with the Globe Tattoo commercial. The majority of them strongly agreed that they were happy with the commercial. When asked if they were satisfied, surprised, and if they felt cool with the TVC, they also agreed to the statements. Interestingly, they strongly agreed that they were encouraged more into buying Globe Tattoo after seeing the commercial. These findings run parallel with the claims that if a branded entertainment is positively reinforcing emotions, it will lead to purchase (Dobele, et al. 2007; Burnett, 2008). Furthermore, this study also supports the claims of Royo-Vela(2005) that Branded Entertainment is considered to be emotionally engaging because of the external signs such as happiness, surprise, serenity/calm or satisfaction that are triggered by the ads. In this current study, the Globe Tattoo advertainment has triggered a sense of positive emotions from the viewers. The agreement that was seen on the results of this study further showed that branded entertainment has the capacity to engage audiences, if done appropriately. The results of this study also supports the claims that such advertising forms do create amazement and happiness from the audience (Kohlepp, 2012).

Table 3

Relations among the Creativity and Emotional Engagement to Buying Behaviour

Variables	Computed-value	P-Value
Creativity and Buying Behaviour	0.816	.000
Emotional Engagement and Buying Behaviour	0.671	.000
Creativity and Emotional Engagement combined and Buying Behaviour	0.178	.079

**significant at 0.05*

Table 3 shows the relations among creativity, emotional engagement and buying behaviour of the respondents. There is high correlation between creativity and buying behaviour. It also states that emotional engagement and buying behaviour has moderate correlation. These relationships are significant. On the other hand, when creativity and emotional engagement are combined, it led to low correlation to buying behaviour. The relationship is not significant. This study, however, contradicted Burnett (2008) who claimed that if the brand is able to combine creativity and positive emotion, it would eventually lead to purchase intention and repurchasing. In this study, there seems to be adherence to the notion that novelty and feelings of satisfaction are not good combinations of ingredients of advertainment to attain purchase.

Table 4

Significant Differences on the perceived Creativity and Emotional Engagement when grouped according to profile

Variables	Computed-value	P-Value
Gender	30.27	0.00
Age	0.78	.505
Educational Attainment	1.65	.168
Monthly Income	0.25	.910

**significant at 0.05*

The table above shows the differences on the perceived creativity and emotional engagement when grouped according to profile. At 0.05 level of significance, the P-value of the t-test on the difference of the perception when grouped according to gender is 0.00. There is, therefore, a significant difference on the perceived creativity and emotional engagement when grouped according to gender. However, the P-values of the results of ANOVA in terms of age (0.505), educational attainment (0.168) and monthly income (0.910) are all greater than the level of significance. Null hypotheses are all accepted. There is no significant difference on the perceived creativity and emotional engagement when grouped according to age, educational attainment and monthly income. This study also supports Tinne (2011) in her point that gender has an influence on the buying behaviour of the consumers. In both her study and the results of this current one, females were seen to have better emotional engagement and clearer notions of creativity than the males.

Table 5

Significant differences on the perceived buying behaviour when grouped according to profile

Variables	Computed-value	P-Value
Gender	30.27	0.00

Age	1.84	.144
Educational Attainment	2.15	.08
Monthly Income	.97	.426

**significant at 0.05*

Table 5 shows the differences on the perceived buying behaviour of the respondents, when grouped according to profile. At 0.05 level of significance, the P-value of the result of t-test on the difference of the perception when grouped according to gender is 0.00 that is less than the significant level. There is a significant difference on the perceived buying behaviour when grouped according to gender. However, the P-values of the results of ANOVA for age (0.144), educational attainment (0.08) and monthly income (0.426) are all greater than the level of significance. Thus, there is no significant difference on the perceived buying behaviour when grouped according to age, educational attainment and monthly income.

When it comes to the point of whether combining perceived creativity and emotional engagement would lead to buying behaviour, this paper argues otherwise. Perhaps this result adheres to the way Filipinos look at their ads. Maggay (1999) claimed that the way Filipinos react to creativity, particularly that of Western forms, stems from its culture. She stated that Filipinos have "surface westernization that lends a certain facility to interactions with outsiders that misleads outsiders into thinking that they could operate significantly within the culture without having to cross substantial cultural and linguistic barriers" (p.34). Being an open culture, it is mentioned that the Filipino stretches a positive attitude towards anything that is drenched with positive emotion and beauty.

Filipinos everyday exposure to media forms also account for the results of this study. Since the Globe Tattoo advertainment can be found in YouTube, such exposure to the information, opinion, and facts in Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook, and other online tools, may mean that the Filipino youth would develop a set of positive perceptions on the TVC. Furthermore, the Filipino youth, where the majority of the respondents belong to, is not a passive on-line lurker. The AIJC report claim that the youth “share experiences, express thoughts, write blogs, and provide comments” on posts that concern them and their immediate surroundings.

Implications and Recommendations

This study revealed that the more creative the branded entertainment is, the higher is the influence to the buying behaviour of Globe Tattoo consumer. Moreover, this study showed that creativity is found in the Globe Tattoo commercial thus there would be higher chance that the consumers would be persuaded to purchase the Globe Tattoo. It also indicated that the more emotionally engaging the branded entertainment is, the higher is the influence to the buying behaviour of Globe Tattoo consumers. It claimed that since emotional engagement is found in the Globe Tattoo commercial, there would be higher chance that the consumers would be persuaded to purchase Globe Tattoo. However, the elements of creativity and emotional engagement, when combined, do not result to a better influence to buying behaviour of Globe Tattoo consumers.

Since the study primarily focuses on any changes in behaviour and attitude towards the buying behaviour among Globe Tattoo’s target audience, the researches recommend that advertisers should consider branded entertainment as an advertising tool. In addition, the researchers recommend that producing a branded entertainment must be emotionally engaging and creatively executed in order to build a connection between the brand and the consumers. The researchers would like to recommend further that Globe Tattoo should consider their target audience’s gender since this paper indicated that its one of the mediators of advertainments’ success. Furthermore, despite the fact that Globe has fixed its target market upon social AB class, this research study has clearly substantiated that Globe needs to also include those from the C and D social classes. This would, however, take in a different form of creativity and a different set of emotional engagement.

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POWERFUL OR LIMITED?EFFECTS OF FRAMING AND FEAR APPEAL ON INDIVIDUALS' INTERPRETATION AND ATTITUDE

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Abstract

The initial assumption about media effects is that the media have direct and powerful effect on audiences' attitudes and behaviors. However, such an assumption has been challenged by later empirical studies. This study, therefore, is aimed to investigate the effects of message framing and fear appeal in an advertising context on individuals' attitudes. A 2x2 factorial experimental design was conducted with 60 undergraduate students. The results reveal that message framing does not produce any significant difference in individuals' attitudes after exposure to the print advertisement. Nevertheless, the dependent variable studied is more affected by no-fear appeal message than high-level-fear appeal ones. Combining both independent variables had no interaction effect on individuals' attitudes. The implication for this study is then discussed.

Keywords: media effects, framing, fear appeal, interpretation, attitude

Background

Effects of media on individuals or audiences have been an essential issue for academics in the communication field since 1930s. The initial assumption about media effects is that the media have a direct and powerful effect on audiences' attitudes and behaviors. However, such an assumption has been challenged by empirical research studies conducted later. An adequate amount of research findings provoked controversial explanation that the media have only limited effect on people's attitude and behavior. The media appear to reinforce people's already existing attitudes rather than producing the new ones (Hovland, Lumsdaine, & Sheffield, 1949)

Message framing is one technique that the media put their efforts into to influence audiences' attitude. By selecting and stressing certain messages and ways to describe the information or story, the media outlets can create frames that can have a major impact on individuals' attitudes (Shen, 2004). The media choose images and words that have the power to influence how audiences interpret and evaluate issues expecting that the chosen frame will guide the audiences' attitude the way the media want (Tewksbury & Scheufele, 2013). Scholars, therefore, have paid a great deal of attention to the framing effect, considered as one of the most applied research issues conducted in the communication field. Message framing has become a helpful tool for social marketing, public relations, and advertising. Recent results, however, showed that there are other factors that could enhance or reduce the framing effect, such as individual differences, cultures, values as well as forms of news presentations.

While message framing has received considerable attention from academics and marketing communication practitioners, fear appeal, on the other hand, is also another well-accepted technique that can influence and persuade people. It is utilized prevalently, especially by advertising and social marketing practitioners, such as, for anti-smoking, anti-drug use, anti-drinking and driving campaigns, and life insurance products. Fear appeal is usually manipulated in two different messages (one strong, one weak) and its outcomes normally fall into two aspects: acceptance of the message's recommendations or rejection of the message. By increasing the likelihood of adopting the desired attitude and appropriate behavior, fear appeal messages are effective both in advertising and social marketing.

According to Terblanche-Smit and Terblanche (2009)'s work, respondents' attitudes toward the advertisements were more positive after exposure to medium-leveled fear and high-leveled fear than low-leveled fear appeals with regard to using condoms to prevent HIV/AIDS. Many previous studies indicated that fear appeal or threatening messages will lead to a desired behavioral change.

However, from the previous research findings, only one aforementioned technique has been used, either message framing or fear appeal and most research on message framing was studied in terms of political issues. This study, therefore, extends the investigation of message framing together with fear appeal in an advertising context; to examine whether the media still has its power on individuals apart from politically-related issues by testing a number of hypotheses on the main and interactive effects of message framing and fear appeal.

Theoretical Background

Message Framing and Its Effects

Research on framing issues have produced substantial findings and heightened interests in media effect. Message framing concept was first mentioned in Tversky and Kahneman's work in 1981 that individuals have a different opinion and preference depending on the different framed message. Though it was originally from the psychological and sociological fields, message framing has been employed in other various fields including communication because of a belief in its powerful effect (Gorp, 2007).

According to Gamson and Modigliani (1987), a frame is a process by which media elites select information, arguments, symbols, metaphors, and pictures to characterize that story or issue. While Entman (1993) explained that message framing is a selection of certain aspects of perceived reality and makes that aspect outstanding to audiences. Framing is, therefore, the central organizing idea conveying issues and events. Similarly, Shen (2004) suggests that framing is a process by which media define and construct issues or events. The media select and highlight certain facts while excluding other information leading to a big impact on public opinion and audiences' attitude and interpretation of that issue. Framing effect, therefore, occurs when media emphasize certain aspects or attributes which in turn direct individuals to focus on that highlighted issue while they are processing the input information. From previous studies, message framing has an influence on individuals' perception and understanding of that issue and can lead to attitude change or public opinion change on vague or controversial issues (Entman, 1993). Thus, framed messages can be important determinants and predictors of public opinion towards issues and events, such as, welfare, affirmative action, and AIDS policy (Nelson & Kinder, 1996; Sotirovic, 2000).

One reason that message framing can have an impact on individuals is because it reacts with attitude and schema in the individuals' memory. That is, when message framing has a relation to individuals' pre-existing attitude, that framed message or that issue is prominent and accessible. After being activated, the schema will affect individuals' interpretation and evaluation of that issue or event. The more it is activated (exposure to media stimuli, for example), the more accessible to the memory about that issue and faster information processing and evaluation is (Smith, 1998).

Message framing, hence, is a connection between familiar issues and pre-existing attitude, belief, and value. The more consistency of framed a message with individuals' pre-existing attitude, the more effect it produces. Such an explanation, for example, can be found in Shen's (2004) study. According to his findings, news frame had the most impact when activating the participants' pre-existing attitudes. That is, when those with ethical schemas read news article about stem cell in ethical frame, they also interpreted that stem cell in ethical terms and did not support federal funding for stem cell research institutions. While those with benefit schemas exposed to the benefit frame interpreted it in terms of benefit and supported the federal funding. Similarly, those with economic schemas seeing a news article about oil drilling interpreted it in economic terms and supported the drilling. However, after reading the news article framed in terms of the environment, those with environmental schemas interpreted as the frame presented and did not support the drilling. Parallel to McLeod and Detenber (1999)'s work, their results concluded that attributes in news article with regard to anti-social protest issue had an effect on perceptions of the protesters, policemen, public opinion, even the credibility of the news presentation itself. The willingness to act aggressively was affected by their pre-existing attitude that they want to do so intensified by the news presentation and their evaluation on the protest situation.

Attitude, therefore, is important because it is interrelated to individuals' behavior. Attitude is a component of affection directly related to cognitive structure. Although attitude is covert, some attitude theorists believed that attitude is a predisposition to response to something overtly and eventually leads to behavior (Lutz, 1991). Message framing, consequently, is a construct at both the macro level (i.e., it is created by the media selecting and presenting certain information so that it is consistent with audiences' schemas), and at the micro level (i.e., individuals use the information and news presentation from the media while they are processing the information to construct their meaning and understanding) (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

Media can determine and present frames in various ways and styles, such as, positive and negative frames which yield different consequences. It is believed that a negative frame can produce more effect than its counterpart if individuals have high-level involvement in that issue (Dardis & Shen, 2008; Maheswaran, & Meyers-Levy, 1990). Frames can also be determined by consequence--gain and loss frames. However, Levin, Schneider and Gaeth (1998) categorized framing effect in terms of its operational definition, consequences, and fundamental process into three effects. *Risky choice framing* is framing effect that has an impact on personal risk, while *attribute framing* is when people evaluate the attributes presented in positive frame as good attributes. Lastly, *goal framing* is consequence presented in that frame. If the frame is positive, it focuses on benefits. But if the frame is negative, it aims at negative outcome or loss of that performing behavior. Also, there are another five different ways that media can frame issues or events: (a) conflict, (b), personalization, (c) values, (d) consequemces, and (e) responsibility (Shen, 2004). This study will explore the effect of consequence framing of plastic surgery. The framed message is presented in terms of positive consequence (medical advancement) and negative consequence (unexpected outcome).

However, recent research has found that message framing does not have a uniform effect and its effect can be reduced by other factors, including individual difference, culture, norms, and personal value, personal involvement, educational background, and self-efficacy (Shen, 2004; Smith, 1996; Tewksubury & Scheufle, 2013; Zhang & Buda, 1999). Furthermore, scholars recently have pointed out that news presentation, presentation style, and source credibility also have an effect on individuals' interpretation of the framed message. Chong and Druckman (2007) also indicted that weak message framing could create boomerang effect or the unintended consequences of an attempt to persuade resulting in an opposing position instead.

Fear Appeal and Its Implications

Fear appeal is also an area that academics have paid great attention to in the light of communication context because of its powerful effect on persuasion to attitude change. In addition, marketing communications practitioners often prefer emotional appeals to informative appeals because emotion can create affective responses more than cognitive responses (Moore, Harris, & Chen, 1995). Types of emotion presented in advertising can attract audiences or consumers' attention which in turn make them remember the advertising content, leading to attitudes towards that advertisement or brand. According to previous research, negative emotional appeal could draw audiences' attention and made them remember the advertising better, comparing to positive emotional appeal, for example, the result of Lazarus's study in 1991 demonstrating that using fear appeal as a negative emotional appeal was more effective in persuasion, especially fear for the consequence that could happen to themselves, and the participants remembered the advertising more precisely.

Negative emotional appeal has also been used in commercial marketing, for instance, to make consumers feel like they have to buy this product; otherwise, it will be against social norms or they will not be socially accepted. Meanwhile, negative emotional appeal is applied in social marketing areas, for example, to encourage people to comply with rules or perform appropriate behaviors by making them fear of legal punishment, risky health concern, illegal behaviors (Lazarus, 1991). Earlier research findings have indicated that emotional response played a great role in persuasion and can create both positive and negative effects, simultaneously. In some case, negative feelings (e.g., fear) can generate positive effect on attitude and behavior (Zeitlin & Westwood, 1986).

Persuasive fear appeal technique is used to create an unbalanced emotion which in turn creates dissonance in individuals' mind. To restore the balance, people find one way or another to remove the uncomfortable or uneasy emotion, for example, adjusting their behavior as suggested. Persuasive fear appeal has two distinct categories. One is fear for psychical threat; the other is fear for social threat, for example, social rejection (Laroche, Toffoli, Xhang, & Pons, 2001). According to Ferguson and Allen (2013), persuasion with fact-related health information led their participants of every age's fear of smoking. Their result also found that teenagers are afraid of social rejection if they smoke.

Fear is related to biological and physical arousals derived from cognitive and affective systems aiming at the potential threat. This condition leads people to perform certain behaviors in order to reduce that threat and fear (Lynch, de Bruin, Cassimjee, & Wagner, 2009). Fear is a primary human instinct casing certain behaviors. Thus, when people are aroused by fear, they will be under tension and pressure and try to find a solution to decrease the strained condition. Fear, on the other hand, can protect people from threat. Consequently, public relations and advertising practitioners have applied fear appeal technique to attract audiences or consumers' attention resulting in attitude and behavior change. Presenting negative consequence from illegal or destructive behavior, the public relations and advertising practitioners expect that the threat presented would make their target fear and then change their attitudes and behaviors as suggested in the public relations media or advertising materials (Witte, 1992).

Briefly, fear is an emotional response and it has an influence on individuals' behaviors as people perceive threat or danger from external stimulus leading to emotional response, which in turn causing perceived tension followed by instrumental rehearsal or following solution s or suggestions. If that solution can relieve the fear and tension, it is considered as being helpful or it will create an incomplete or unusual consequence, for example, avoidance, negligence or denial to the threat. Response to persuasive fear appeal, nonetheless, depending on individuals' perception on level of threat and their evaluation whether that threat has much or little effect on them. The more people perceive high threat to their physical and personal life, the more they will follow the advised guidance (LaTour & Zahra, 1989) as explained in the fear drive model in Figure 1.

S = Stimulus
R = Response

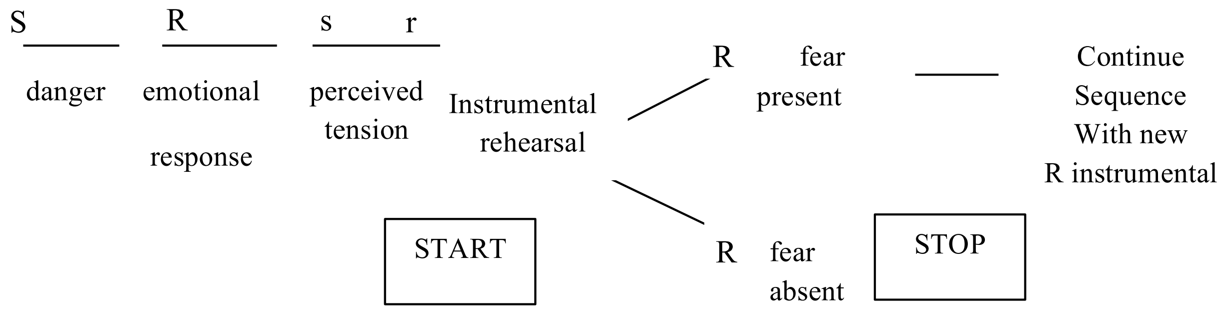

Figure 1. The fear drive model

Source: Leventhal, H. (1970). Theory in the study of fear communications. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (5th ed.). New York: Academic Press.

Fear appeal, consequently, has been widely used in communication, for example, in commercial marketing, for political support (such as, anti-communism), or in social marketing area (such as, anti-smoking campaigsn, anti-drug use campaigns) as it is believed that fear will cause tension and distress leading to defensive mechanism. In line with Wakefeld, Flay, Nichter, and Giovino (2003)'s work, fear appeal was found to change risky behavior pertaining to health, for instance, smoking. Consistent with previous research, Terblanche-Smit and Terblanche (2010)'s study result showed that participants' attitudes towards HIV/AIDS advertisement was more positive when moderate and high levels of fear appeal were used. The participants were also more likely to perform more safely sexual behavior.

However, scholars have explained the relationship between fear and persuasion indicating two characteristics. The first characteristic is the consequence involved with message acceptance and following suggested solutions signifying linear relationship. The second one is the relationship between consequence and message rejection, for example, defense, avoidance or denial indicating curvilinear relationship between the intensity of fear used in persuasion and attitude change (Witte & Allen, 2000).

Fear appeal used for persuasion has divided into three levels--low, moderate, and high. Despite numerous studies in this issue, the results yielded inconsistently. Some demonstrated the positive relationship between fear appeal and persuasion. Some showed the counterpart outcomes. Schneider, Coutts, and Gruman's (2012) work, in line with Janis' (1967) research, and Quinn, Meenaghan, and Brannick's (1992) studies indicated that if the level of fear appeal exceeded the critical point, the fear appeal would be too high, and it could cause message avoidance or rejection, known as the boomerang effect. Meanwhile, from Lennon, Rentfro and O' Leary's (2010) research, the cause of boomerang effect was due to low level of fear appeal used in their study.

Scholars, accordingly, have developed methods and techniques to improve fear appeal effectiveness for persuasion. For example, Tay, Ozanne, and Santiono (2000) suggested that, for the maximum benefits of fear appeal implementation, this technique should be applied with the right target group because of their cultural difference, including race, value, and other demographic factors. Furthermore, recent research with regard to fear appeal has focused on individuals' perceived efficacy. It is discovered that message with high level of fear, but with low perceived efficacy, would produce the least effectiveness because it aroused defense mechanism. Alternatively, persuasive fear message would be most effective when using with high perceived efficacy (Witte & Allen, 2000). Nevertheless, to gauge its effect on persuasion, scholars often measure fear appeal in terms of attitude toward an object, issue, or event, intention to change undesired behavior, or behavior change.

In summary, the literature review suggests that individuals' attitudes can be influenced by the way information is presented or framed. This study, thus attempts to examine message framing whether or not it has an effect on individuals' attitude, and to investigate fear appeal whether high level of fear appeal used in the advertising context would produce any effect on individuals' attitude.

Hypotheses

The above discussion of the literature leads to the formulation of the following hypotheses:

H1: Message framing of plastic surgery in either medical advancement or unexpected outcome would have a main effect on individuals' attitudes.

H2: Fear appeal with high level would have a main effect on individuals' attitudes.

H3: Message framing of plastic surgery in either medical advancement or unexpected outcome and fear appeal with high level would have an interaction effect on individuals' attitudes

Method

Subjects and Design

Sixty undergraduate students, who enrolled in a communication course at a public university in Bangkok, participated in this study. The respondents were instructed to complete a one-paged survey questionnaire under the guise of a separate research project one week prior to the experiment.

Demographically, 90 percent of the participants were female and 10 percent were male. Twenty-four respondents were aged between 19-20 years (40 percent) and 36 were between were 20-21 years (60 percent). The respondents exposed to different levels of treatment effects within a controlled laboratory environment. A random order of experiment packages was assigned to the subjects with one of the four experimental conditions in a 2x2 factorial design consisting of message framing factor (medical advancement/unexpected outcome) and fear appeal factor (high/no). All the respondents were received an extra credit for their participation.

Procedure

The respondents were told that a new beauty service is launching its new communication campaign with regard to plastic surgery and that the organization needs to analyze the quality of the print advertisement. This issue was selected because of the potential relevance with the subjects. The respondents were randomly assigned to one of the four treatment groups that differed in terms of the treatments. After the general instructions, the respondents were first asked to write down their thoughts or ideas that were on their minds regarding plastic surgery in order to trigger their schemas. Then, the respondents were instructed to read the provided treatment and then complete a one-page questionnaire on their reactions to the plastic surgery after exposure to the treatment. At the end of the experiment, the instruments were collected and the participants were debriefed and thanked for their participation. The session took about thirty minutes.

Stimulus Materials

<u>Print advertisement</u> Print advertisement used in the study was carefully designed in terms of plastic surgery. This issue has gained considerable public attention as plastic surgery has been widespread and more common in Asia. The plastic surgery issue was framed in terms of consequences--medical advancement and unexpected outcome consequence--to increase the relevance of the issue to the respondents. The print advertisement in this study

consisted of advertising copy and picture. In the medical advancement condition, the headline and the advertising copy were positively presented highly focusing on the medical advancement, innovation in plastic surgery. Meanwhile, in the unexpected outcome condition, the headline and the advertising copy said the negative tone of the advertising context emphasizing on the unexpected negative outcome from the surgery. The fear appeal was also manipulated into two levels--high level and no fear--via pictures. With the high-level fear appeal, the picture showed an unshaped and rotten nose after the surgery. Meanwhile, with no fear appeal, the picture displayed a trustworthy medical team with a well-equipped with state-of-the-art-treatment room.

Measures The questionnaire was comprised of three sections. Part A gathered demographic details including only sex and age of the participants while part B contained one open-ended question asking the respondents to write down their idea or opinion with regard to plastic surgery. This question was to trigger the respondents' plastic surgery schema, so that they could retrieve some information about plastic surgery from their memory before completing the questionnaire. Because the dependent variable in this study was individuals' attitude towards plastic surgery, the participants were required to rate on ten five-pointed scales, ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). Questions 4, 5, and 8 were recoded. All 10 items measured their attitudes towards the plastic surgery after exposure to the print advertisement. For example, "you agree with those who did plastic surgery for the purpose of beauty," and "you agree that the cosmetic outcome after plastic surgery is worthy." The scales were internally consistent with Cronbach's alpha of .76 computed.

In addition, questions 11 and 12 were designed to check the manipulation of the treatments. Only these two questions were changed to be consistent with each of the four different treatments.

Results

Manipulation Check

In order to check the manipulation of the framed message and fear appeal, participants were asked to rate the print advertisement on two five-pointed Likert scales. From separate one sample *t*-tests, the results showed that the mean scores for medical advancement and unexpected outcome are greater than the test value (3.0) significantly (*M*s = 3.63 and 4.10 respectively, $p < .05$). For high-level fear manipulation, subjects found picture presented in the print advertisement was more fearful ($M = 4.43$, $p < .05$) than the test value (3.0). For no fear manipulation, subjects also found picture showed in the print advertisement had fear level ($M = 1.50$, $p < .05$) lower than the test value (3.0). The results, therefore, indicated that the manipulation check met the basic requirement.

Individuals' Attitudes

One week prior to the main experiment, the researcher measured participants' attitudes toward plastic surgery and found that the mean score was equal to 2.89. Then, the similar ten items were used to measure participants' attitudes toward plastic surgery after exposure to the print advertisement in the actual experiment. The findings demonstrated that the mean score of participants 'attitudes after exposure to the print advertisement was equal 2.77. Statistically, there was no significant difference between both values.

To test the hypotheses, a multiple analysis of variance was conducted for the main and interaction effects of message framing and fear appeal. From Table 1, the main effect of message framing (H1) was not significant ($F = .040$, $p > .05$) between those exposed to the medical advancement ($M = 2.78$) and those exposed to the unexpected outcome frame ($M = 2.79$).

Yet, for Hypothesis 2, fear appeal with high level had less effect on individuals' attitudes than no fear appeal. The results showed a significant difference between those who exposed to the high-leveled fear appeal (*M* = 2.58) and those exposed with no fear print advertisement (*M* = 2.97).

To test the third hypothesis, two-way ANOVA test was conducted to test the interaction effect of message framing and fear appeal on attitude. The result presented in Table 1 showed that the interaction effect was not significant ($F = .141$, $p > .05$). In sum, the results provided support only for H2, but did not support H1 and H3.

Table 1

The interaction effect of message framing and fear appeal on attitude towards plastic surgery

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	*F*	***p***
Frame	.01	1	.01	.03	.88
Fear	2.25	1	2.25	8.66	.01
Frame x Fear	.09	1	.09	.31	.59
Error	14.03	54	.26		
Total	466.03	58			

Discussion

Results of the experiment showed that message framing did not have a significant impact on audiences' attitudes. This result is not consistent with previous research findings regarding framing effects (Shen, 2004). According to the current attempt to apply message framing in an advertising context in this study, it is found that the result does not create any different attitude despite using two different frames--positive and negative. People do not change their attitudes so easily because of the media stimuli, like a framed message. It could be because framing does take time to form attitude change towards an object or issue, especially in political and controversial issues. In this study, message framing in the advertising context, was only a short-term exposure to the print advertisement, and it may be more effectively exercised in news article context, not in print advertisement.

Yet, it is still parallel to recent research indicating that message framing does not have a uniform impact on all individuals. There are other factors involved, for example, individual difference, culture, personal value, norms (Smith, 1996; Tewksubury & Scheufle, 2013; Zhang & Buda, 1999).

For fear appeal, the result demonstrated that no fear appeal could create more positive attitude towards plastic surgery than high level of fear appeal. Such case could be because in the advertising context, especially for beauty products or hedonistic-based products, fear appeal may arouse consumers to avoid or go against the negative feelings while using positive emotional appeal or informative appeal may be more efficient. Therefore, it is advised that applying fear appeal technique in the advertising context should be carefully chosen because different level of fear appeal could produce different result (Witte & Allen, 2000), especially in a product with emotion involved. A high level of fear appeal, on the other hand, might be better used in other communication context where individuals have high involvement, for example, health-concerned issues.

For the interaction effect of message framing and fear appeal, it is posited here that they may have an effect on individuals' attitudes. Still, the finding indicated that using both message framing and fear appeal in the print advertisement did not have any effect on audiences' attitude implying that only one communication technique should be applied for better communication effectiveness or the sent message might be confusing and create unintended outcome.

Taken together, the above findings indicate that the impact of message framing and high-level fear appeal may not be as powerful as has been assumed, at least in the current advertising context. Individuals may be selective in processing and interpreting messages with regard to their pre-existing attitudes. Instead, people might have a need for more cognition when they are highly involved with that issue. Therefore, this study explicates that to persuade or to make people change their attitudes, advertising and public relations practitioners should be aware of other factors and carefully choose communication techniques for persuasion effectiveness. Furthermore, it does take time to change audiences' attitudes; appropriate amount of repetition is required for attitude change.

Future Research

Because this study was conducted in a laboratory environment and it was a cross-sectional study, future study could be conducted in a longitudinal setting to investigate the long-term effect of message framing or fear appeal. It is also suggested that researchers should consider external validity by testing message framing and fear appeal effects in more naturalistic environments than the laboratory experiment situation. Future research should extend the study of media framing and fear appeal by using other influencing factors (e.g., personal involvement) or exploring other factors (e.g., personal value) to see whether it will lead to different responses on framed messages. Similarly, fear appeal can be investigated with personal involvement to check which level of fear appeal is more appropriately used under which condition.

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PRELIMINARY STUDY OF INTERGENERATIONAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE IN THAI ORGANIZATIONS

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Abstract

This paper is a part of a dissertation entitled 'Intergenerational Communication Competence in Thai Organizations', its main purpose being to investigate the key characteristics of intergenerational communication competence in Thai organizations. At the pilot stage, this exploratory study is aimed preliminarily to examine 1) communication-related work values of the three different age groups (30 years and below, 35 to 45 years, and 50 years and above), 2) perceptions of the three generations toward one another, and 3) communication expectations of the three generations when having to communicate with one another in Thai organizations. Multi-method was employed. Data was collected by conducting: 1) self-administered questionnaires (n=36) from the three generations in three large organizations, from public, state enterprise and private sectors; and 2) in-depth interviews with executives and employees from the three generations (n=6) in the three organizations.

The results showed that:

1. Respondents from all age groups, especially the 30-and-below group, strongly agreed that '*recognition, compliment and encouragement can provide great work motivation*'. The work-related values most and least held by each age group were

different; however, the 35-to-45 age group's values were more similar to the 50-and-above. Moreover, at 0.05 level of significance, the following work-related values held by the youngest generational cohort were statistically different from the two older age groups: '*If another organization offers me a better deal, I am ready to move on to the new job*.'; '*I believe that competitions and challenges can provide great motivation.*'; and '*Whenever I cannot access the internet system or use communication technologies, I am normally frustrated.*'

2. Compared to the two older age groups, the degree of perceptions of the youngest age group toward themselves and other generational cohorts were relatively high; while the degree of perceptions of the 35-to-45 and the 50-and-above age groups toward the 30-and-below were relatively low.

3. The 30-and-below age group expected the 50-and-above to '*be able to create work atmosphere (e.g., serious and success-oriented, or fun and relax) to suit a certain situation.*', and '*be able to appropriately exploit online media/ new media (e.g., e-mail, chat, line) to build relationship with colleague(s) from different generations.*'; while both the 50-and-above and the 35-to-45 age groups expected the 30-and-below to '*listen to different opinions of colleague(s) from other generations, and be flexible to combine the organizational work practices and the individual ideas appropriately.*'; and '*be aware and accept generational differences in terms of work-related values, working practices and communicative behaviors.*' Moreover, the oldest group expected the youngest group to '*dare to express opinions, which are opposite to ideas of colleague(s) from different generations, while being aware of when and to whom it can be done directly or indirectly.*' In addition, the 35-to-45 age group expected the oldest one to '*be able to efficiently communicate in various communicative activities (e.g., giving orders*

and instructions, coordinating, information sharing), in face-to-face communication setting.' and to '*express concerns and thoughtfulness toward both the organizational goals and individual goals (goals of colleague(s) from different generations).*'.

Keywords: intergenerational communication competence, organizational communication, work-related value, perception, communication expectation

Background

Communication across generations at workplaces had been viewed as a normal situation in people's life until the early 1990s, when globalization[i] was highly accelerated by advanced information and communication technologies (ICTs). The accelerated globalization has tremendously and rapidly caused major changes in many countries around the world at all levels, for instance, politics, economics, society and culture, as well as communication-related organizational behaviors. According to observations of nearly 60 percent of HRM managers/practitioners at large companies across the world, studies of communication scholars, as well as HR consultancies and research institutes in several regions, tensions and conflicts in communication-related dynamics, e.g. information sharing, mentoring, feedback giving, knowledge transferring, and problem solving and decision making as a team, in the 21st century workplaces grew from generational differences (Burke, 2004; PricewaterhouseCooper, 2013).

A term 'generation' is defined as an identifiable group of people that shares birth years, age, social class, location, and significant life events at their critical developmental stages (Mannheim, 1952; Kupperschmidt, 2000). From the sociologists' perspective, a generational cohort has been influenced by a shared set of noteworthy experiences, or generational markers, which has impact on all members of the generation (Zemke et al. 2000). It is believed that their similarities in terms of mindset or cognitive elements, *e.g., work values, attitudes, preferences, expectations, perceptions,* and behaviors are shaped from the same historical, economic, and social experiences. As a result, a generational group has its own unique combination of experiences, expertise, perspective and expectations. (Smola & Sutton, 2002; Zemke et al., 2000). Moreover, members in a particular generation tend to exhibit a shared mindset, and continue to exhibit the characteristics of that mindset as they grow up through life (Codrington, 2011).

Challenges of managing generational differences are said to prominently arise in today's multi-generational organizations. In fact, a multi-generational workforce is believed to bring about many benefits such as productivity, creativity and innovation, talent attraction, reduced turnover and increased competitive advantage. However, unless a multi-generational workforce is managed properly, the existence of different generations at work can give rise to intergenerational tension (Cindy Tan, 2012). The lack of appropriate and effective intergenerational communication, which are the key outcomes of communication competence (Jablin, 1994; Spitzberg and Cupach, 1984), and the inefficient management to bridge the communication gap between generations led to critical consequences, e.g. employees' dissatisfaction, lack of organizational commitment and unhealthy organizational communication climate. Consequently, these negative outcomes caused many organizations, globally and locally, to struggle with high annual turnover of potential and competitive newcomers[ii], high employee replacement costs year after year, and lack of highly efficient young leaders to replace the retiring executive positions.

At today's workplaces, there are at least three generations working together in organizations, which mostly are Generation Babyboomers or Gen B; Generation X or Gen X; and Generation Y or Gen Y.[iii] While employees from the older generations (mostly Gen B) are delaying retirement, younger cohorts of Gen Y are also entering the workforce. Interestingly, intergenerational tension among generations is said to be the most acute for generations with the widest age gap, e.g.,, *Gen Y employees versus the Gen B* (e.g. Twenge, 2010; Murphy et al, 2010; Gursoy et al, 2008; Cindy Tan, 2012). The studies also indicated that the communication disconnect in workplaces was caused by the difference of 3 cognitive factors as follows: work-related values, generational stereotype, and communicative behaviors that were not congruent with one another's communication expectations (e.g. Twenge, 2010; Twenge et al, 2008; Gursoy, Karadag and Chi, 2008; McCann and Keaton, 2013; Myers and Sadaghiani, 2010; Murphy et al, 2010).

Like most other countries, many large organizations in Thailand are also encountering a dilemma of generational diversity. Even though there were plenty of suggestions given by HR consultancies regarding how to manage a multigenerational workplace, the ideas or implications may not be applicable to organizational settings in Thailand because they were mostly based on findings in the western context, in which the respondents in the same generation (shared birth years) might have a different set of cognitive factors (e.g. worldview, values, attitudes) due to a different a set of significant life events and cultural factors they experienced in their location/country (Codrington, 2011).

The main purpose of this study, therefore, is to preliminarily identify key components of intergenerational communication competence in Thai organizations. In pursuing the main purpose, the three communication-related cognitive factors which mainly caused the generational gap: *work-related values, perceptions and communication expectations of each generational cohort and toward each other* are to be examined.

The research rationale is organized in the following fashion. Firstly, I review Thai cultural and organizational characteristics to provide an understanding of the nature of Thai working culture and norms. Secondly, from both Western and Thai context, I review the three cognitive factors of each generational cohort: 1) communication-related work values (so called ‘work-related values’ in this paper); 2) perceptions and 3) communication expectations toward one another. Thirdly, I review the literature on communication competence to provide a brief theoretical and conceptual foundation for this study, as well as its relationship with the three cognitive factors. Finally, the research question that guided this study is presented and the study is discussed.

Literature Review

Overview of Thai Cultural and Organizational Characteristic.

According to the study of Komin (1991), values embedded in Thai culture can be grouped in nine clusters. Most of the cognitive system is around the concept of face-saving, gratitude, reciprocity and mutual relationship, and harmony (smooth interpersonal relationship and flexibility adjustment to situation). According to Hofstede’s Dimensions of Culture Framework (2010)[iv], the Thai national culture found among Thai employees in his study is characterized by: **1) collectivismor low individualism:** socially-oriented, needs of the group superseding individual aspirations, interpersonal harmony and group orientation are upheld for the sake of cordial relationships. Accordingly, Thais believe in ‘kreng jai’ - an extreme reluctance to impose on anyone or disturb another’s personal equilibrium by refusing requests, accepting assistance, showing disagreement, giving direct criticism, challenging knowledge or authority, or confronting in a conflict situation. Sriussadaporn-Charoenngam and Jablin (1999) found that Thai communicatively competent employees are expected to know how to communicate so as to avoid conflict with others, for example, by not discussing things without regard to the person being referred to, recognizing the inappropriateness of responding negatively to colleague’s opinions, and being able to control expression of emotions; **2) low masculinity:** indirect, relational-oriented, situation-centered, face-saving, conflict avoiding. According to Sriussadaporn-Charoenngam and Jablin (1999), a successful, modest Thai subordinates often expresses a lower opinion than is probably deserved of her or his own ability, knowledge, skill, successes, etc. Besides, even though supervisors or senior employees encourage their younger colleagues to be straightforward, they also expect the younger to know how and when to communicate to avoid conflict and interpersonal problems with their supervisors; **3) high power distance:** status and hierarchy-focused, taking seriously addressing people according to their status. Sriussadaporn-Charoenngam and Jablin (1999) commented that social differences in Thai culture also have a lot to do with age differences. For example, younger people are taught to respect their elders. Their overall study indicated that Thai organizational members perceived communication competence in terms of knowledge of normative communication behaviors, especially with respect to how to communicate with persons in different organizational roles and/or status; **4) high uncertainty avoidance:** in Thai culture, social order and correct behavior are emphasized. They are able to tolerate a higher level of uncertainty. The influence of 'face-saving' and maintaining harmony values, Thai employees prefer to avoid uncertainty by controlling everything in order to eliminate or avoid the unexpected; **5) pragmatism:** due to the beliefs in cosmic forces and '*bun wassana - kum*' (results of good and bad karma), most people in Thai culture may not have a need of explanation in everything, as they believe that it is impossible to understand fully the complexity of life; and **6) indulgence:** due to 'fun-oriented' value, Thai employees tend to be relaxed rather than control their desires and impulses.

Nevertheless, according to many studies, it seems that the globalization created by advanced ICTs has tremendously affected the economy across the world, and has strongly encouraged countries around the globe to put their efforts to increase their competitive advantages. Therefore, many countries including those economic hubs in Southeast Asian region, like Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand, have put 'human capital policy' as their national agenda. As a result, values of people in these countries are changing to align with the ideal characteristics written in the national human resource development plan. Furthermore, from the findings in various related studies as well as my observation, regardless of cultural or generational differences, communication characteristics of employees at today workplaces were influenced by advanced ICTs and globalization. Interestingly, through high exposure to ICT and digital media, their identity, mindset and communicative behaviors, especially of those in Gen X and Y, were shaped and socialized to be much more like those in the western context (aka, neo-westernization) (NESDB, 2011). Thus, the culture mostly held by the younger generations like late Gen X and Gen Y tends to be characterized by: higher individualism, lower power distance, higher masculinity, lower uncertainty reduction, lower pragmatism and higher indulgence.

Communication Work-Related Values, Perceptions and Communication Expectations

Work values are core conceptions of the desirable that function as guiding principles individuals select actions, evaluate people, events and situations, and explain their action and evaluations at work setting. (derived from Kluckkohn and Strodtbeck, 1961; Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992). **Perception** is the (active) process of assessing information in an individual's surroundings. It involves becoming aware of one's environment in a way that is unique to the individual and is strongly influence by communication. Workplace age stereotypes, *or generational stereotype*s, are the beliefs and expectations about a worker based on his or her age. They not occur in isolation and tend to reflect widespread societal stereotypes of people of different ages (McCann and Keaton, 2013). **Communication expectation** is defined as a state of believing that some communicative behaviors are going to happen or should be a certain way during an interaction in a certain situation. In work settings, apart from outward appearance like gender and age, role relationship (e.g., superior-subordinate, coworkers) strongly influences communication expectations one would have toward others.

From the documentary study, at least six dimensions of work-related values of the older and the younger generations were found. These dimensions of work-related values are associated with the way individuals (older and younger generations) perceive themselves, others, and relationships (superior-subordinate and coworkers) and affect content of communication in organizational dynamics, e.g. motivating, information sharing, opinion expressing, mentoring, feedback giving, as well as leadership styles**.** Also, each dimension is associated with a certain expectation individuals have toward their colleagues from different generations. The six dimensions of work-related values, as well as their association with perceptions and expectations toward other age group, are summarized and shown in appendix A, table 1 and table 2 respectively.

Communication Competence and Its Relationship With The Three Cognitive Factors

During the past three decades, most theories of communication competence, simply defined by Spitzberg (1988, p.68) as "the ability to interact well - *with accuracy, clarity, comprehensibility, coherence, expertise, effectiveness and appropriateness* -with others", have been developed in several contexts, e.g. interpersonal, group, organizational, and intercultural. In Thailand, since 1999, Sriussadaporn (Aka, Sriussadaporn-Charoenngam) and her colleagues have conceptualized communication competence in these contexts, based on Thai culture. As for the intergenerational context, in fact, if considering from the studied cognitive elements: value, perception and communication expectation, intergenerational communication can be identified as another type of intercultural communication. Nevertheless, there has been no specific conceptualization of intergenerational communication competence, clearly studied either on western or Thai perspectives yet.

According to Jablin et al (1994), when speaking of communication competence, the term '*knowledg*e' refers to 'strategic communication', which is knowledge of personal, interpersonal, group, organizational realities, what things 'mean' in the interaction and organization; while '*adaptive communication performances*' refers to 'tactical communication', which represents the skills one has available to use as instruments to accomplish personal, group, and organizational goals. As for term '*a situational ability*' refers to context-bound attribute of communication competence. Another useful framework was proposed by Spitzberg & Cupach (1984) and is known as 'the component model of competence'. The model is comprised of three specific dimensions. Apart from strategic communication knowledge and tactical communication skill, motivation or '*an individual's approach or avoidance orientation in various social situations*' is included.

From the above definitions and basic model, in order to develop 'intergenerational communication competence' in workplace setting, the three components: motivation, strategic communication knowledge, and tactical communication skill should be studied from a social cognitive perspective.

Motivation: Previous intergenerational studies (e.g. McCann and Keaton, 2013; Blauth, McDaniel, Perrin and Perrin, 2012; Crumpacker and Crumpacker, 2007) indicated that values, perceptions, and expectations as well as attitudes, preferences, self-efficacy of an individual are associated with motivation to communication. For instance, due to different sets of values of two individuals, they may evaluate the others distortedly. And if the two individuals have negative generational stereotypes (perception) toward each other, their communication style tended to be non-accommodating, or even avoidant (McCann and Keaton, 2013). In addition, the same studies showed that unless one perceived that s/he was competent to communicate in a certain context or via a certain means (e.g., new media), s/he would exhibit more avoidant in communication. **Strategic communication knowledge:** According to Sriussadaporn-Charoenngam and Jablin (1999), strategic communication knowledge has been frequently studied from a social cognitive perspective, through examinations of individual differences among organizational members. In particular, researchers operationalize competence in terms of an individual's *cognitive complexity, perspective taking, empathy, persuasive ability and self-monitoring.* It can be implied that, to develop intergenerational abilities, an individual needs to gain more knowledge about the other party's values and perceptions toward each other in various situations. Also, the knowledge of communication expectations serves as a guideline for an individual to act appropriately when having interaction with colleagues from different age groups in a certain situation. **Tactical communication skill:** As mentioned earlier that key communication skills that organizational members see as important in superior-subordinate and old-timers-newcomers team relationships are: information seeking and sharing, motivating, instructing/coaching, feedback giving and receiving, advising and listening. Thus, if an individual is usually aware of the three cognitive factors, s/he will be able to adapt their communication approach appropriately and effectively.

In light of the issues mentioned in the previous three parts, this preliminary study poses the following research question: What are characteristics of work-related values, perceptions and communication expectations each age group in Thai organizations hold and have toward one another?

Methodology

Research Population and Sampling

This research population was Thai large organizations (more than 200 employees) from public, state enterprise and private sectors, which have been established for more than 30 years. At this pilot stage, data were collected from three voluntary organizations in all sectors including a department of Finance Ministry, a telecommunication organization, and a commercial bank.

Respondents

Quantitative data was collected from 36 employees of the three sampling organizations. Using Thai's historical markers and concept of cusper generation[v] as criteria, the respondents were classified into three age groups: 30-and-below, 35-to-45, and 50-and-above. To acquire further understanding for discussion, qualitative data was gathered by in-depth interviewing with another 6 organizational members from the three age groups.

Scale Development and Pilot Test of Questionnaires

Items in a questionnaire were generated to reflect the three bodies of literature, one concerned with the six dimensions of work-related values proposed in the table 1, another with impact of intergenerational communication to communication-related outcomes (which is not presented in this paper), and the other with communication expectations which are related to both the proposed six dimensions of work-related values and the two dimensions of Thai organizational communication competence (strategic communication knowledge and tactical communication skills) based on the study of Sriussadaporn-Charoenngam and Jablin (1999).

As for research tool development and testing, a developed questionnaire was presented to 5 experts (2 PhDs and Assistant Professors in communication, 1 Associate Professor in communication, 1 PhD and high-level HRD executive, and 1 Associate Professor in Statistics) for content validity test. After that, 10 copies of the edited version were distributed to 10 samples in 5 large organizations from all sectors for reliability test.

Procedure

Within each organization, questionnaires were distributed to 12 persons: 4 individuals who were in 50-and-above age group, 4 individuals who were in 35-to-45 age group, and 30-and-below individuals who were in 50-and-above age group.

The questionnaires were divided into 4 major sections. **The first section** contains 2 parts. The first part sought demographic information: gender, age, highest level of education, division/department in which they worked, organizational tenure, job tenure, position/nature of job, and media use behaviors; and the second part contains 34 randomly ordered items, and sought personal work-related values. **The second section** consisted of 2 parts. Respondents were asked to think of a colleague (superior, subordinate, or coworker) whose age was 15-20 years older/younger than them, who was working or had worked with them. Those responding to the 30-and-below form were asked to think of a colleague who was 15-20 years older; those responding to the 50-and-above form were asked to think of a colleague who was 15-20 years younger than them; while those responding to the 35-to-45 form were asked to think of 2 colleagues, one was 15-20 years older than them, and the other was 15-20 years younger than them. The first part sought demographic data of the person(s) each respondent was thinking of. The second part contains 34 randomly ordered items, and sought the respondent's perception toward the targeted-person(s)' work-related values. **(In full-scale questionnaire, the third section sought impact of intergenerational communication to the organizational communication-related outcomes, but it is not discussed in this paper).** The fourth part comprised 35 items, describing expected communicative behaviors/skills and forms of knowledge expected to be associated with those who have intergenerational communication competence.

Across all questionnaire subjects were asked to indicate on 4-point, Likert-type scales (4 = strongly agree, 1 = strongly disagree).

Data Analysis

At this pilot stage, due to small sample size, only frequency distributions, percentages, means and standard deviations were examined for each item, allowing the researcher to rank the means score of the items in each part. Afterward, those items which the means were maximum and greater than 3.2 (of 4.0), and/or minimum and lower than 1.8 (of 4.0) would be isolated for further analysis.

Results and Discussion

Demographic Data And Media-Use Behaviors at Workplace

Most of the respondents in this study were female in 35-to-45 group (27.8%), female in 50-and-above group (25%), and male in 30-and-below group (19%) respectively. Two-thirds (66.6%) graduated with a bachelor's degree, 8 of the respondents (22%) had a master's degree. Most of the respondents in the 35-to-45, and 50-and-above groups (79%) had been working in their current organization for more than 15 years; while almost all respondents in the 30-and-below group (91.6%) had been in their organization for less than 5 years.

As for channels of communication exploited at workplace, almost all respondents (91.6%) from every age group reported that they communicated with their colleagues in face-to-face setting at all times (constantly). Media they mostly used in work activities were e-mail (at all times) and mobile phone (3 to 5 times /day) respectively. Regarding the use of chat application (e.g., LINE or Facebook chat) for work purpose, the respondents across all age groups reported differently. Some never used it; while some used it all the time.

- **Work-related values:**

Respondents from all age groups, especially the 30-and-below group, strongly agreed that '*recognition, compliment and encouragement can provide great work motivation.*'.

Means and S.D. of the youngest, the middle, and the oldest groups were as follows: $\bar{x}$ = 3.64, S.D.= 0.50; $\bar{x}$ =3.50, S.D.= 0.67; $\bar{x}$ =3.25, S.D.= 1.05. Specifically, work-related values held the most and the least by each age group were as shown in the following table:

Table 3

Perceptions toward their personal work-related values of each age group.

	Perceptions toward Their personal work-related values	Res	
#	*Age group: 30-and-below (n=11)*	$\bar{x}$	S.D.
12	**<u>The highest 3</u>** I believe that recognitions and compliments are good motives at work.	3.67	.50
10	I believe that self-actualization and self-development in terms of having greater work knowledge and skills are indicators of career success.	3.45	.52
9	I believe that competition and challenges can provide great motivation.	3.40	.70
28	**<u>The lowest 2</u>** I am normally willing to take action, even though I do not know or I am not informed of the reason (s) behind.	1.56	.53
25	I think that feedback during or after work procedure is not necessary.	1.75	.87
#	Age group: 35-to-45 (n=11)	$\bar{x}$	S.D.
6	**<u>The highest three</u>** I usually give full cooperation to the organization in every project for the sake of the organization's advancement and success.	3.55	.52
12	I believe that recognitions and compliments are good motives at work.	3.50	.67

7	I would like to grow together (side-by-side) in my current organization, and rarely have an idea to leave my job.	3.42	.67
25	**The lowest one** I think that feedback during or after work procedure is not necessary.	1.56	.53
#	Age group: 50-and-above (n=11)	$\bar{x}$	S.D.
10	**The highest three** I believe that self-actualization and self-development in terms of having greater work knowledge and skills are indicators of career success.	3.42	.51
12	I believe that recognitions and compliments are good motives at work.	3.25	1.05
15	I usually adhere to and follow rules and regulations, which have been held firmly for a long time, to keep/maintain the organization′s identity and norms.	3.09	.70
25	**The lowest one** I think that feedback during or after work procedure is not necessary.	1.44	.73

Moreover, at 0.05 level of significance, the following work-related values held by the youngest generational cohort were statistically different from the two older age groups: '*If another organization offers me a better deal, I am ready to move on to the new job.*'; '*I believe that competitions and challenges can provide great motivation.*'; and '*Whenever I cannot access the internet system or use communication technology, I am normally frustrated.*'

Discussion: In general, the results in with respect to work-related values were in accordance with the previous studies (see table 1 and 2 in appendix A). Also, as remarked earlier that comparing with the older employees, work-related values of the younger generation tended to be higher individualism, lower power distance, higher masculinity, lower uncertainty reduction, lower pragmatism and higher indulgence.

Recognitions and compliments are highly valued: As Thai culture is characterized by 'low masculinity', non-competitive, relational-oriented, face-saving, conflict avoiding expression, it was not surprising to find that, across all age groups, the respondents believed that 'recognitions and compliments' are good motives at work. Moreover, due to great pressure in today's highly competitive work environment, recognitions and compliments from colleagues can be also considered as 'encouragement' to move toward one's goals. However, it was interesting to see that, paradoxically, while the youngest age group valued 'recognitions and compliments' the most, they were also highly agreed 'competition and challenges' are motivating. Myers and Sadaghiani (2010) discussed that while Gen Y demonstrated that they felt not threatened by challenging tasks, rather, they had fun to tackle with the problems as long as they did not have to stick with any norms, their need for affirmation derives from the constant flow of supportive messages they had received from parents, teachers, and coaches throughout their childhood. Moreover, the findings corresponded with comments from some executives in this study. They suggested that to make the young generation commit themselves to the organization, the superior should 'win their heart' first, by showing confidence in the young and providing them platforms to demonstrate their abilities; yet, still having to be in close relationship with them to give them advice for their professional and personal development.

Everyone needs feedback: Respondents across age group quite strongly disagreed with the following statement '*I think that feedback during or after work procedure is not necessary.*' The result reflected Thai cultural characteristic of 'high uncertainty avoidance' - the influence of 'face-saving' and maintain harmony values, Thai employees prefer to avoid uncertainty by controlling everything in order to eliminate or avoid the unexpected. In addition, as mentioned earlier, the findings from face-to-face interview revealed that the younger employees preferred open communication and to be in close relationship with their superiors, so they could ask for advice and opinion anytime. This can also explain the result why the 30-and-below group strongly disagreed with '*I am normally willing to take action, even though I do not know or I am not informed of the reason (s) behind.*'

- **Perceptions toward one another**

Compared with the two older age groups, the degree of perceptions of the youngest group toward themselves and the other generational cohorts were relatively high; while degree of perceptions of the 35-to-45 and, especially the 50-and-above groups toward the 30-and-below were relatively lower. Also, the findings showed that the older age groups perceived a 'wider gap' in their relationship with the young; while the young felt not. For example, while the youngest group highly agreed that both the 50-and-above group and themselves '*usually give full cooperation to the organization in every project for the sake of the organization's advancement and success'* ($\bar{x}$ =3.40, S.D.=0.52; $\bar{x}$ =3.36, S.D.=0.92), the oldest perceived that the degree of cooperation given by the youngest was just at moderate level ($\bar{x}$=2.70, S.D.=0.98).

Discussion: The result was similar to comments from senior worker that, the young generation had higher level of self-esteem than the old-timers because today's parents brought up their kids very closely. However, some parents overly praised or gave too many compliments to their children to a degree that made them over-confident when they grew up. In addition, Greenfield (1998, cited in Myers and Sadaghiani, 2010) proposed that this confidence has been buoyed by an educational system with inflated grades and standardized tests, in which many Millennials are expert in performing well.

War of definition: With respect to the 'wider' gap perceived by the old-timers, in my observation, the gap among these generational cohorts may come from 'different definition' one gives to a certain set of behaviors. For example, the findings elicited from face-to-face interview with the youngest group indicated that 'giving full cooperation' was 'to do their best and to the utmost during working hours'; yet, if the given task had not been accomplished, they were willing to get it done at home, and e-mail to their boss later by the given deadline. In contrast, from the views of the older executives and employees, they expected the young to express 'cooperation' by 'staying back at workplace together with their older workers until the job was done.'

- **Communication expectations toward one another**

The results indicated that the older generation, especially the 50-and-above group, expected from the youngest group more than the youngest expected from them. The top two communication expectations each age group had toward each other were as follows:

The 30-and-below toward the 50-and-above: '*be able to create work atmosphere (e.g., serious and success-oriented, or fun and relax) to suit a certain situation.*' ($\bar{x}$ =3.27, S.D.=0.65); and '*be able to appropriately exploit online media/ new media (e.g., e-mail, chat, line) to build relationship with colleague(s) from different generations.*' ($\bar{x}$ =3.00, S.D.=0.87).

The 50-and-above toward the 30-and-below: '*dare to express opinions, which are opposite to ideas of colleague (s) from different generations, yet, knows to whom, when and how to express them directly or indirectly.*'($\bar{x}$ =3.30, S.D.=0.67); '*listen to different opinions of colleague(s) from other generations, and be flexible to combine the organizational work practices and the individual ideas appropriately.*' ($\bar{x}$ =3.20, S.D.=0.79); and '*be aware and* *accept generational differences in terms of work-related values, working practices and communicative behaviors.*’ ($\bar{x}$=3.20, S.D.=0.63).

The 35-to-45 toward the 50-and-above and the 30-and-below: They expected the oldest to ‘*be able to efficiently communicate in various communicative activities (e.g., giving orders and instructions, coordinating, information sharing), in face-to-face communication setting.*’ ($\bar{x}$=3.20, S.D.=0.41); and to ‘*express concerns and thoughtfulness toward both the organizational goals and individual goals (goals of colleague(s) from different generations).*’ ($\bar{x}$=3.11, S.D.=0.32); while they expected the youngest to ‘*listen to different opinions of colleague(s) from other generations, and be flexible to combine the organizational work practices and the individual ideas appropriately.*’ ($\bar{x}$=3.125, S.D. = 0.64); ‘*be aware and accept generational differences in terms of work-related values, working practices and communicative behaviors.*’ ($\bar{x}$=3.11, S.D.=0.33); and ‘*have knowledge and understandings about generational differences in terms of work-related values, working practices and communicative behaviors*’($\bar{x}$=3.11, S.D.=0.33).

The communicative behavior the 35-to-45 and 50-and-above groups least expected from the young was: ‘*proposes new ideas or work practices, which are different from the existing ones, for job effectiveness, believing that it is not necessary to always keep the old.*’ ($\bar{x}$=2.22, S.D. = 0.83; $\bar{x}$=2.20, S.D.=0.91 respectively).

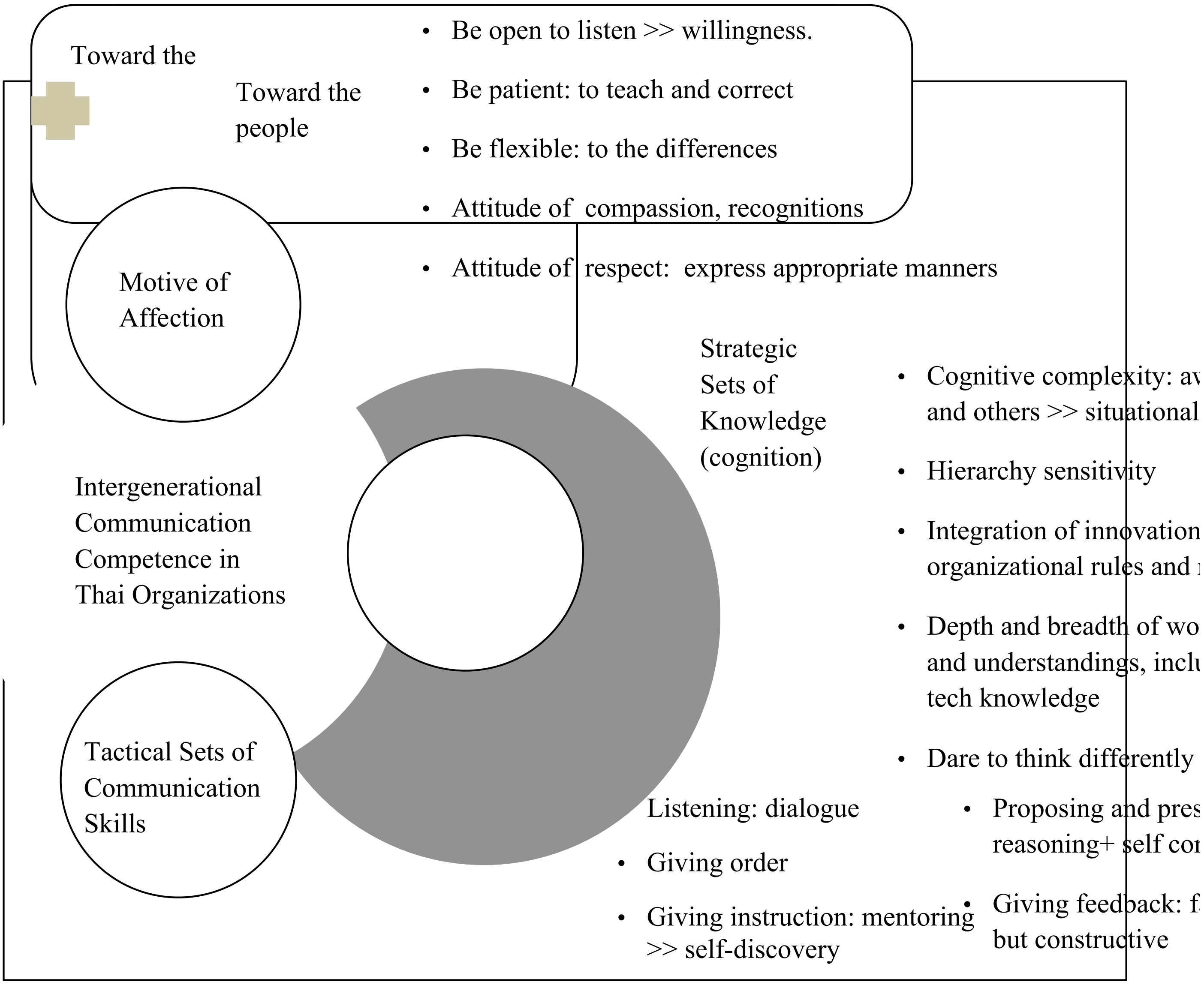
Discussion: The results in this part were in accordance with the findings in the study of Sriussadaporn-Charoenngam and Jablin (1999). Nevertheless, it can be clearly seen that, even though difference in terms of role and status (hierarchy) was still regarded, the older workers were more open to the younger’s opinions and willing to adjust their mindset to understand the 30-and-below age group. Findings from the face-to-face interview showed that the seniors appreciated new and creative ideas of the new generation; however, they expected the young not to be overly confident, rather, they should to listen and learn from the old-timers' experiences. Moreover, with the view corresponding to Thai cultural characteristics of collectivism and high uncertainty avoidance, the young should understand that some existing rules and regulations of the organization can never be cancelled, so they should be included and considered when proposing any new ideas.

With respect to the expectations of the 30-and-below and 35-to-45 age groups toward the 50-and-above, the findings corresponded with comments given by Sriussadaporn-Charoenngam and Jablin (1999) that, the senior workers should not only know how to exercise their power to influence others, but also be thoughtful and kind enough to their subordinates. As mentioned earlier that the 30-and-below and 35-to-45 groups, which mostly are at operational level, have been working under great pressure in today's highly competitive work environment. It was not surprising that why they expected their seniors or superiors to express thoughtfulness and concerns toward both the organizational goals and individual goals; and, to create fun and relaxing work atmosphere to suit a particular situation. Also, their expectation was in line with previous studies that the young generation highly valued work-life balance (e.g., Cogin, 2011; Twenge, 2010; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010; Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Gursoy et al, 2008; etc.)

Interestingly, the findings also indicated that the youngest group expected the oldest group to *be able to appropriately exploit online media/ new media (e.g., e-mail, chat, line) to build relationship with colleague(s) from different generations.* It was surprising that findings from face-to-fact interviews also supported this statement. Young workers reported that they did not understand why their boss often sent both work and non-work messages to them via chat application after midnight. But, when asking the seniors, they reported that they viewed chat application as a mailbox, rather than interactive media. Thus, they did not expect immediate responses from their recipients. If the issues were urgent, they would rather give their subordinate a call. In addition, they were normally free to think about many things at night time. So they left messages that popped up in the mind via chat application then.

From the overall findings, I would like to propose a preliminary model of intergenerational communication competence and its key components as below:

Preliminary conceptualization of intergenerational communication competence:



Limitiations

In considering the results of this pilot study, several limitations, including constraints associated with the sample and the sample size, should be kept in mind. In search of key characteristics of intergenerational communicatively competent employees, data should be specifically gathered, both by questionnaire and face-to-face interview, from respondents who are in superior-subordinate, or coworker-coworker relationships. But, if doing so, due to Thai cultural norms associated with deference and conflict avoidance, the respondents may feel that it was inappropriate to strongly agree or disagree with some of the statements presented in the questionnaire items, or to share their view about their colleagues, especially on a negative side, directly. With respect to sample size, the results can be altered due to different demographic factors of the respondents, as well as organizational culture.

APPENDIX A

Table 1

Six dimensions of communication-related work values found from the documentary study, in association with Hofstede's Dimensions of Culture (2010) and Minkov's (2011) (References in Thai language are not stated here)

Dimensions	Communication Characteri	
	The older generation	
1) <u>Prioritization</u>: Work-oriented VS Personal life-oriented Association with Minkov's Framework (2011): Industry VS Indulgence *Content of talk = e.g., information sharing, mentoring, decision making	Work-oriented • Work is important for life. So they were willing to continue working even after contractual working hours • Tended to encourage their subordinates or the younger colleagues to work hard, rather than having a work-life balance • Content of talk* and leadership styles: task-oriented	 • Work is spend ti family a importa • Tended life bala annual l • Content relations
<u>References</u>: e.g., Cogin (2011); Twenge (2010); Myers & Sadaghiani (2010); Meriac, Woehr & Cennamo & Gardner (2008); Gursoy et al (2008); Glass (2007); SHRM (2004); Smola & Sutton Launglaror & Thasnanapark (nd)		
2) <u>Goal settings</u>: Organizational-	Organizational-oriented	

oriented VS Personal-oriented Association with Hofstede's Framework: Collectivism VS Individualism	• Instilled others to identify their vision and goal with the organization. • Encouraged their colleagues including the younger employees to express loyalty, and give cooperation and supports to the organization.	• Tended • Their co depende enhance abilities • Especial intent to opportu
References: e.g., Twenge (2010); Sadaghiani & Myers (2009); Gursoy et al (2008); Cennamo & (2010)		
3) Indicatives of success: Heuristic-concerned VS Materialistic-concerned	Heuristic-concerned	
Association with Hofstede's Framework (2010): Femininity VS Masculinity; Long VS Short term orientation	• Had greater focus on knowledge, skills and experiences gaining through work procedure. • Valued recognition (praise, encouragement), especially in public settings. • Delayed gratification was fine with them.	• Had gre • Valued e.g., hig promoti • Recogni advance desirabl
References: e.g., Cogin (2011); Twenge (2010); Cennamo & Gardner (2008); Glass (2007); Sm (2010)		

Table 1 (cont.)

Six dimensions of communication-related work values found from the documentary study, in association with Hofstede's Dimensions of Culture (2010) and Minkov's (2011)

Dimensions	Communication Charac	
	The older generation	
4) Working patterns: Institutionalized VS Personalized Association with Hofstede's and Minkov's Frameworks: High VS Low Uncertainty Avoidance; Monumentalism VS Flexumilism	**Institutionalized** • Attached to organization's identity, culture and norms. They ensured the work quality by having things done according to the norms. • Did not want to take any risk by violating the tradition.	• F f t 1. c f t n
References: e.g., PricewaterhouseCooper (2013); Myers & Sadaghiani (2010); Twenge (2010); G Murphy et al (2010)		
5) Formality, seniority and courtesy in communication: High VS Low	High formality, seniority and courtesy	Lo

Association with Hofstede's Framework (2010): High VS Low Power Distance; Femininity VS Masculinity	• Had stronger sense of hierarchy and formality as they respected and obeyed authority. • The way they addressed and expressed communicative behaviors toward others was courteous according to the person's status and position. • Quarterly or annual feedback from supervisors was enough for them. • Gave opinion only upon request. When their opinions contradicted to supervisors or senior workers, they would not argue in a direct or aggressive manner.	• H v d • E i r f a • F f t • In r c t d p
References: e.g., Myers & Sadaghiani (2010); Deloitte (2009); SHRM (2009); Gursoy et al (2008 Marston (2007); Martin (2005)		
6) Communication technology exposure and level of dependency: Low VS High Association with Hofstede's Framework: Collectivism VS Individualism	Low comm tech exposure and low level of dependency	High comm and high leve

	• Viewed ICTs and new media as another means of communication. • Preferred face-to-face meeting and traditional media, i.e. telephone, fax and memo	• Demonstrated a higher aptitu depended and used new medi situations. • Used new media to communi during working hours.
References: e.g., Deloitte (2009); Pew Research Center (2007); Glass (2007)		

Table 2

The six dimensions of communication-related work values, perceptions and communication expectations towards each other.

Dimensions	Perceptions toward other's communicative behaviors		Expectation
	The olders towards the youngers	The youngers towards the olders	The olders towards the youngers

1) Prioritization	Work-oriented prioritization	Personal life-oriented	Work-oriented prioritization
	• Did not work hard nor demonstrate dedication as when they were newcomers.	• Did not understand their mindset of work-life balance.	• Express their work dedicatio more.
References:	Twenge (2010); Myers & Sadaghiani (2010); Gursoy et al (2008); Glass (2007); SHRM (2004); McCann & Keaton (2013)		Twenge (2010); Gursoy et al (20
2) Goal settings	Organizational-oriented	Personal-oriented	Organizational oriented
	• Were self-absorbed, focused on one's desire and benefits, rather than the organization's. • Viewed the organization as a stepping stone to enhance their skills and career opportunities.	• Did not listen to, and ignored their proposal or request.	• Express their good intention to cooperate and support th organizational goals, not just their own.
References:	Myers & Sadaghiani (2010); Gursoy et al (2008); Glass (2007); McCann & Keaton (2013)		Myers & Sadag
3) Indicatives of success	Heuristic-concerned	Materialistic-concerned	Heuristic-conc

	• Were not patient to wait for their turn of promotion • Expected credibility, prompt promotion and high salary despite their young age and lack of experience.	• Attached to the concept of 'paying their dues*'aand 'seniority-based promotion', which are resisted by the younger workers *Pay one's dues = one has to work hard to demonstrate their worth before s/he is given significant tasks	• Be more open advice, attenti listen to and patiently learn the experience senior workers that they coul able to functio properly when are promoted.
References:	Twenge (2010); Deloitte (2009); Gursoy et al (2008)		Deloitte (2009); (2000)
4) Working patterns	Institutionalized	Personalized	Institutionali

	• Needed monitoring from mentors or supervisors to ensure work performance and achievement. • Did not know how to dress to work properly	• Attempted to exercise concertive control over them by encouraging them to attach with and follow the organizational group norms to ensure work quality. • Were not open to new working patterns, especially by exploiting ICTs.	• Be more open learn thorough from the existi work patterns effective work performance • Dress properly
References:	PricewaterhouseCooper (2013); McCann & Keaton (2013); Gursoy et al (2008); Glass (2007)		Gursoy et al (20
5) Formality, seniority and courtesy in communication	High formality, seniority and courtesy	Low formality, seniority and courtesy	High formali seniority an courtesy

	• Neither kept a proper distance nor expressed appropriate manners in relationships with senior workers or supervisors. • Dared to express their opinion and were creative; however, sometimes lack knowledge and experiences, yet, were overconfident.	• Were distant, too formal in communication styles, thus, made them feel that they were not supported, and not trusted.	• Be not overconfident expressing opinions. • Be courteous a well-behaved working with s workers or tho higher authori
References:	PricewaterhouseCooper (2013); Myers and Sadaghiani (2010); Gursoy et al (2008)		Myers and Sada Zemke et al (20
• Communication technology exposure and level of dependency	Low comm tech exposure and low level of dependency	High comm tech exposure and high level of dependency	Low comm te exposure and low level dependency

	• Attached and addicted to social network, and highly depended on ICTs. • Preferred and chose to communicate any issues via ICTs with no concern if the recipients could understand or act accordingly. • Less adept at face-to-face communication and deciphering non-verbal cues	• Were resistant, not willing to use ICTs in work procedure	• Learn how to communicate properly via o communicatio channels, e.g. to-face, teleph e-mail. • Learn when ar how to communicate appropriately a effectively.
References:	PricewaterhouseCooper (2013); Gursoy et al (2008); Glass (2007); McCann & Keaton (2013); Murphy et al (2010)		Pricewaterhouse (2008); Glass (2

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COMMITMENT BALANCE: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR CROSS-CULTURAL RESEARCH

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Abstract

This paper proposes a new concept of 'commitment balance' as worthy of study within organisations' relational exchanges. The purpose of the paper is to share thinking and empirical data from a research study within the context of higher education, with the aim of seeking opportunities for future cross-cultural research to further examine commitment balance within education and other sectors. The study shares outcomes from quantitative analysis of undergraduate students' reports of commitment balance within the context of their experiences of study within U.K. Universities. The study provides an empirically-informed definition of commitment balance and identifies the importance of a focus for commitment balance. The research shows that the focus of institution rather than academic staff seems to resonate more strongly within undergraduate students' reports of commitment balance. Thus the construct 'commitment balance between students and institution' is considered to be worthy of future research. It is hoped that this paper will precipitate Asian/Australian/ U.K. future research collaborations both within the context of higher education and other consumer-focused contexts.

Keywords: commitment balance, cross cultural, UK

Background

Commitment is identified by a variety of scholars (e.g. Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Fullerton, 2011) as a central concept within organisations' interactions across their relational networks. Earlier work (e.g. Morgan and Hunt, 1994) identified commitment as a single latent variable, but recent years have seen increasing complexity within commitment's conceptualization. Allen and Meyer's (1990) work within the context of organizational commitment, provides the seminal underpinning for the multi-dimensional approach, pursued by a variety of authors including Fullerton (2005, 2011), Gustafsson (2005) and Tsai and Huang (2008).

Commitment within the context of marketing relationships is seen as a concept experienced towards a relational partner but Gundlach et al.'s (1995) work highlights the importance of mutuality. This study develops these ideas further, contributing an original concept, 'commitment balance' to scholarship, arguing that unbalanced commitment produces tension and insecurity whichever the direction of that imbalance. Initial evidence is presented regarding the nature and evidence of commitment balance within the context of U.K. higher education. The future aim is to develop these ideas further within a cross-cultural context.

Conceptual Underpinning

Many authors, from the seminal work of Morgan and Hunt (1994) to more recent studies such as that by Wong and Wong (2012), based their work on the definition of commitment originally developed by Moorman, Zaltman and Deshpande (1992:316), 'Commitment to the relationship is defined as an enduring desire to maintain a valued relationship'. Morgan and Hunt (1994) in turn develop their own definition of commitment, drawing from Moorman et al.'s (1992) work, seeing commitment as:

> *An exchange partner believing that an ongoing relationship with another is so important as to warrant maximum efforts at maintaining it: that is, the committed*

party believes the relationship is worth working on to ensure that it endures indefinitely.

Morgan and Hunt (1994:23).

Clearly this definition has an aspirational feel to it. Indefinite relationships, if 'indefinite' is considered to be unending, are few and far between outside the context of personal relationships. This work draws from Morgan and Hunt (1994), Moorman et al. (1992) and Allen and Meyer (1990) in order to define commitment as follows:

Commitment can be seen as ongoing connection, based on a desire, need or obligation to maintain that connection and a preparedness to invest in perpetuating that connection.

At the heart of this definition is the notion of 'connection' which Morgan with Vivek and Beatty (writing some years after his seminal work with Hunt), see as part of 'engagement' (Vivek et al., 2012), but this study posits as central to commitment. The notion of enduring desire is drawn from Moorman et al. (1992); the addition of need and obligation alongside desire comes from Allen and Meyer's (1990) work and the ongoing nature of commitment and the effort (investment) required to maintain the connection is drawn from Morgan and Hunt (1994).

Commitment then, as a sense of ongoing connection, is central to relational exchanges. This work drawing from Gundlach et al.'s (1995) idea of mutuality, proposes that balance of commitment is worthy of consideration and research.

This study argues that in circumstances in which a relational partner feels that they are more or less committed towards a partner than the partner is committed towards them, the sense of unbalance, whichever its direction, produces tensions and insecurity. Therefore the critical notion of a balance of commitment between relational partners may be central to understanding the dynamics of commitment.

This research argues that there is the opportunity to study notions of what might be articulated as ‘felt’ and ‘perceived’ commitment. That is, a consideration of the balance between the commitment a relational partner feels towards the focus of their commitment and the perceptions of the commitment which is reciprocated towards them from the relational partner. For example applying this in the context of higher education, ‘felt’ commitment would comprise the commitment students feel towards, for example, the institution and its staff, ‘perceived’ commitment comprises students’ perceptions of the commitment directed towards them by say the institution and its staff.

Thus a student’s ‘felt’ commitment can be defined as,

> *a student’s feelings of ongoing connection with an institution or academics based upon a desire, need or obligation to maintain that connection and a preparedness to invest in perpetuating that connection.*

A student’s ‘perceived commitment’ is defined as,

> *a student’s perceptions of an institution or academics’ desire to continue a connection with that student based upon a desire, need or obligation to do so and evidence of investment in perpetuating that connection.*

These definitions draw on Allen and Meyer’s (1990) seminal ideas of commitment embracing dimensions related to desire, need or obligation, further built upon within work of more recent authors applying commitment within the context of consumer marketing. Fullerton (2005 and 2011) explicitly presents commitment as a series of constructs related to desire, need or obligation. Gustafsson et al. (2005) use the desire and need dimensions of commitment within their study of the commitment within the telecoms sector.

The notion of balance between ‘felt’ and ‘perceived’ commitment is critical as demonstrated in figure 1.0. When balance of high levels of ‘felt’ and ‘perceived’ commitment is present, a state of ‘forged’ commitment is achieved, representing feelings of ongoing connections between relational partners. At the other extreme, a state of ‘disconnected’ represents low levels of both ‘felt’ and ‘perceived’ commitment, that is, a situation of balance, but absence or low levels of commitment which results in disconnection between relational partners.

The less balanced quartiles comprise ‘exposed’ and ‘burdened’ commitment. In the context of H.E. exposed commitment represents a situation of a student having high levels of ‘felt’ commitment towards the institution and academics but undermined by low levels of ‘perceived’ reciprocal commitment from these partners. Such a state, whilst representing high levels of commitment from the student, is problematic because in order to achieve a sense of balance, unless perceived commitment dramatically increases, the student’s response may be to reduce their ‘felt’ commitment towards the University and/or staff.

Equally, ‘burdened’ commitment represents a state of high levels of ‘perceived’ commitment but low levels of ‘felt’ commitment. Whilst the optimistic view might be that within the context of H.E., students would seek to achieve balance by enhancing their ‘felt’ commitment, an alternative perspective might be that, as in personal relationships, overly high levels of ‘perceived’ commitment might result in student flight from the relationship.

Thus the notion of mutuality or balance of commitment is central and whilst institutions and academics seek to encourage commitment from students, they must in adopting such a strategy, be prepared to demonstrate high levels of reciprocal commitment to their students.

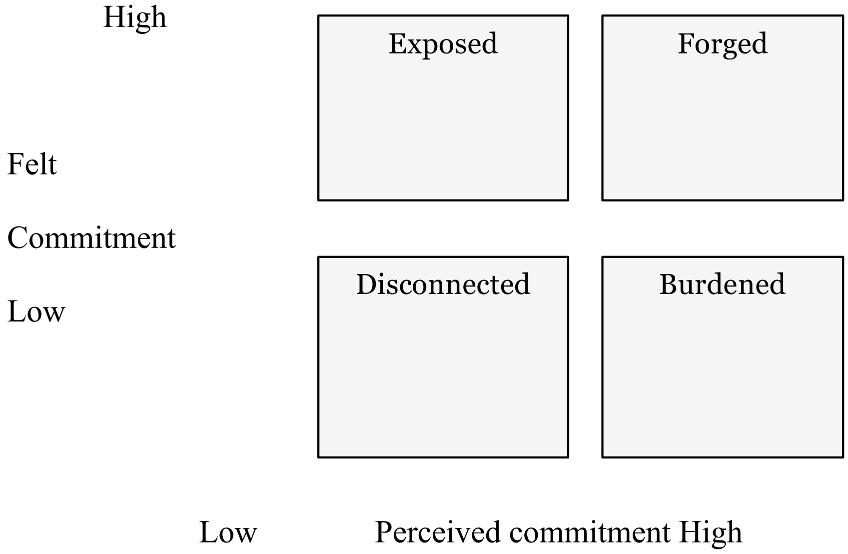

Figure 1. 'Felt' vs. 'perceived' commitment.

Methodology

A quantitative methodology using online survey method to generate data from a population of undergraduate students studying at post-1992 English universities was adopted (see also Cownie, 2014). Previous studies which have included a similar research population, that is with a focus on newer universities within the U.K., include those by Chapleo (2011), Bennett and Ali-Choudhury (2009), Bennett and Kane (2010), Floyd and Dimmock (2011).

The study commenced with a pilot conducted at one university. This pilot was considered to be successful, generating 300 responses and thus permitting the use of exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis in order to aid construct development and definition.

Whereas normal practice would be to draw indicators from previously validated scales, commitment balance is a new concept and so validated indicators were not available to measure the construct. The pilot commenced by identifying a single construct, commitment balance between students, institution and academy, with eleven potential indicators, developed from the conceptual underpinnings of commitment balance and indicators used by a variety of scholars (Hansen et al., 2003; Allen and Meyer, 1990; Fullerton, 2005; Gruen et al., 2000; Harrison-Walker, 2001; Sharma et al., 2005). Table 1 presents the indicators which were subject to exploratory factor analysis. Each indicator was evaluated on a 1-7 scale where 1 was strongly disagree and 7 was strongly agree. Principal components analysis and direct oblimin rotation demonstrated that a single construct was not sufficient for the study of commitment balance in the context of H.E. Thus two constructs were developed, each with a different focus of the balance of commitment. Commitment balance between students and institution was represented by four indicators which comprised a reliable scale with Cronbach Alpha 0.800. Commitment balance between students and academy, also represented by four indicators generated a Cronbach Alpha of 0.798. Thus both scales were considered to be reliable on the basis of Cohen et al.'s (2011:676) advice that scales should demonstrate a Cronbach Alpha of 0.700 or over.

Table 1

Indicator development

Indicator	**Adapted from.**
I feel that the University is as committed to me as I am to the University.	Sharma et al., 2005; Harrison-Walker, 2001; Allen and Meyer, 1990; Fullerton, 2005.
I feel that my tutors and I are not equally committed to each other ®.	Sharma et al., 2005; Harrison-Walker, 2001; Allen and Meyer, 1990; Fullerton, 2005.

My tutors and I are equally as committed towards my achievement.	Sharma et al., 2005; Harrison-Walker, 2001; Allen and Meyer, 1990; Fullerton, 2005.
I am equally as proud to study at this University as the university is proud to have me as a student here.	Harrison-Walker, 2001.
Students and staff do not feel an equal 'sense of duty' to work hard ®.	Gruen et al., 2000; Sharma et al., 2005.
My tutors and I do not have an equal sense of moral obligation towards each other ®.	Allen and Meyer, 1990.
I have a different level of emotional attachment to my tutors than that which they have towards me ®.	Fullerton, 2005; Gruen et al. 2000.
My tutors are as proud to associate themselves with their students as we are to associate with our tutors.	Harrison-Walker, 2001.
My University and its students need each other equally.	Allen and Meyer, 1990.
This University depends upon its students as much as its students depend upon the University.	Allen and Meyer, 1990.

® Reversed indicator.

Confirmatory factor analysis on pilot data supported the development of two constructs as appropriate representations of the over-arching idea of commitment balance within higher education.

Thus the pilot provided an important analytical opportunity within the overall study. Once the two constructs were defined and confirmed, the research tool was adapted for the final data collection using the indicators highlighted in Table 2. An additional 1174 students responded to the questionnaire. A decision was made to focus analysis on the 1129 respondents who had fully completed the research tool (both at pilot and roll-out stage), using listwise deletion (Byrne, 2010; Blunch, 2011) and the assumption that the data is missing completely at random (M.C.A.R.) (Bryne, 2010:356).

Table 2

Indicators used within final study

Construct.	**Indicators.**	**Scale Reliability.**
Commitment balance between students and institution.	My University and its students need each other equally. I feel that the University is as committed to me as I am to the University. Students are equally as proud to study at this University as the University is as proud to have me as a student here. This University depends upon its students as much as its students depend upon the University.	0.800

Commitment balance between students and academy	My tutors and I are equally as committed to each other. I have the same level of emotional attachment to my tutors as they have towards me. My tutors and I have an equal sense of moral obligation towards each other. My tutors and I are equally committed towards my achievement.	0.798

Findings

Students' responses to questions concerning commitment balance showed a marked difference to responses to other constructs within the broader research study (but not reported on in this paper). In comparison to other constructs, in which responses were highly skewed (e.g. measuring normative commitment), responses to commitment balance demonstrated a more normal distribution. This is positive from an analytical perspective as it reduces problems of kurtosis (Byrne, 2010) should the emerging constructs be included within structural equation modeling, and in turn enhances the chances of the discovery of relationships with other constructs within a conceptual framework as the distribution of responses is not skewed.

Table 3 demonstrates that on a scale of 1-7 (where 1 is strongly disagree and 7 is strongly agree), modes demonstrated moderate agreement to the questions associated with commitment balance towards institution, but general neutrality associated with commitment balance towards academy. All four indicators associated with commitment balance between student and institution generated agreement from the majority of respondents, however only one of the indicators related to commitment balance between students and academy generated majority agreement. Indeed the average reported disagreement was only 22% across the four indicators, thus we can see that many students were neutral regarding questions which sought to measure the construct commitment balance between students and academy.

Table 3

Responses to commitment balance constructs

Commitment Balance focus	Modes (x4 indicators)*	% agreeing with statements	Mean % agree	% disagreeing with statements	Mean % disagree
Commitment balance between student and institution	5,5,4,5	75,56,55,71	64	10,24,17,10	15
Commitment balance between student and academy	4,4,4,5	40,35,44,58	44	25,22,19,23	22

*where 1 is strongly disagree and 7 is strongly agree.

Analysis

Empirical work to date corroborates thoughts that commitment balance is a useful and valid concept for research. The indicators provided reliable scales for the measurement of commitment balance (Cronbach Alpha 0.800 and 0.798), and contributed to an empirically informed definition of commitment balance (in the context of H.E.) as:

Commitment balance is the extent to which students perceive that their 'felt commitment' is equally matched by the reciprocal 'perceived commitment' emanating from the relational partner, be that institution or academy. Commitment mutuality is not directional, that is it is an assessment of the balance or imbalance of 'felt commitment' and 'perceived commitment' but low levels of commitment balance do not give an indication of the direction of any imbalance.

Initial ideas relating to the concept of commitment balance resulted as an outcome of exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, in the production of two constructs each with different foci. However data suggests that within the context of H.E. only one construct resonates within students' reports of commitment within H.E. Commitment balance between students and institution emerges as a robust construct which generates agreement from the majority of students who participated in this research and can be defined as:

The extent to which students perceive that their 'felt commitment' is equally matched by the reciprocal 'perceived commitment' emanating from the institution. Commitment balance comprises equal feelings of commitment towards and from the institution, together with a sense of equal need, pride and dependency in and between students and their institution.

Thus this descriptive analysis suggests that commitment balance is a robust idea, but that the focus of balance between specifically defined relational partners is an important part of its operationalization in research.

Opportunities For a Cross-Cultural Perspective

Moving forward, this paper seeks opportunities for the study of the concept of commitment balance within a cross-cultural context. Studies of commitment are largely U.K. or U.S. based (e.g. Harrison-Walker, 2001; Fullerton, 2005, Fullerton, 2011, Brown et al., 2005; Lacey et al., 2007). However there are recent examples of organizational commitment being studied within an Asian context such as Farooq et al.'s (2014) study of the impact of corporate social responsibility on organizational commitment in South Asia, Sun et al.'s (2013) study of organizational commitment within the Chinese workplace and Tsai and Huang's (2008) examination of organizational commitment in Taiwan. There seem to be few examples of commitment being studied from a marketing communication perspective within Asia and no examples of scholarship examining commitment from an education or marketing communications' perspective across cultural-boundaries. It would be good to see such research endeavor and this paper seeks to establish some confidence that work within this new area of 'commitment balance' would be worthy of collaborative, cross-cultural research endeavor.

A variety of opportunities exist. First the opportunity to examine concepts of commitment balance within the context of higher education within Asian and Australian contexts, alongside further analysis within U.K. higher education. Second, the opportunity to take ideas of commitment balance out of the context of higher education and examine these within the consumer context again within U.K., Asian and Australian environments.

In particular suggestions for future work examining commitment balance within higher educatio would first seek to examine whether commitment balance between students and institution was indeed more strongly reported than commitment balance between students and academy within Asian andAustralia contexts.

Secondly a multi-dimensional approach to commitment balance between students and institution could be examined in a quantitative manner, again using exploratory factor analysis to underpin the study. This might examine the relative evidence of affective commitment balance between students and institution, normative commitment balance between students and institution and calculative commitment balance between students and institution. The work could examine whether overall commitment balance was an aggregate of these forms and if so whether for example, high levels of imbalance in one direction, e.g. affective commitment, could be compensated for by imbalance in other dimensions.

Future research could examine the relative levels of 'felt' and 'perceived' commitment alongside commitment balance, in order to populate the matrix in figure 1. Structural equation modeling could be used to examine the relationship between exposed, forged and burdened commitment balance and outcomes of commitment such as advocacy, co-operation and loyalty highlighted within scholarship (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2001; Rojas-Mendez et al., 2009; Gustafsson et al., 2005; Fullerton, 2005; Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Hansen et al., 2003; Bendapudi and Berry, 1997).

Such ideas can also be explored within a broader consumer context again, usefully across cultural boundaries. Expressions of interest within either contexts of future study within Asia and Australia are very much welcomed and should be directed to the author on fjcownie@bournemouth.ac.uk.

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CSR AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT: PERSPECTIVES FROM THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore Corporate Social Responsibility and the relationship between corporations and stakeholders from various industries in the United Arab Emirates. Ethical stakeholder engagement entails a consistent, two-way dialogue where an organization understands stakeholders' needs and wants. This understanding sets the foundation of a strong relationship between the companies and different audiences such as: NGOs, community, employees, influencers, investors or international groups. In order to distinguish the nature of this relationship and how stakeholder engagement is constructed, eight in-depth face-to-face interviews with CSR managers were conducted. The participants were from the United Arab Emirates (Dubai and Abu Dhabi), from different sectors (law, real estate, logistics, banking, tourism, environment, etc.) and held different titles from "Global Corporate Responsibility" to "Head of Sustainability". Findings indicate that CSR managers are practising CSR with an emphasis on mutual engagement with their stakeholders, in particular the government, NGOs, and their employees.

Keywords : CSR, stakeholder, engagement, UEA

Background

The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) continues to evolve worldwide in the academic world as well as in the professional realm. Recently, the term CSR is not always the preferred label as organizations adopt terms such as “sustainability” and “corporate responsibility.” Regardless of the terminology used for this corporate activity, stakeholder engagement is perceived as an important aspect of a company’s corporate social responsibility. However, there are many perspectives with regards to stakeholder engagement. Researchers mainly agree that CSR has to engage various stakeholders but some researchers argue that CSR has to move away from one-way communication to stakeholder engagement, more like a dialogue.

As stakeholder engagement is contextual and companies operate within a cultural socio-economic and legal context, this research focuses on CSR in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), a rich Gulf country in Southwest Asia. The paper addresses the unique CSR issues of the Middle East, but in particular the UAE, by describing existing CSR practices of stakeholder engagement. Stakeholders typically include: stockholders, employees, suppliers, customers, government, competitors, community, activists and others (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). These stakeholders vary based on certain industry or countries. In particular, stakeholder engagement in the UAE should reflect some of the cultural, economical, political, and environmental issues that are unique to this country.

The literature review is organized as follows. First, corporate social responsibility and its relationship to stakeholder engagement is reviewed. Then, the paper reviews the few research articles and report outlining how CSR functions within the UAE context.

Literature Review

As there is no universally accepted definition of CSR, this paper will adopt Carroll and Bucholtz (2006) four-part definition of corporate social responsibility, ‘‘The social responsibility of business encompasses the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary (philanthropic) expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time (2006, p. 35).''

As a business concept, CSR emphasized the importance of shareholders but then changed the focus from shareholders to stakeholders (Donaldson & Preston 1995). More recently with the financial crisis, companies have to incorporate the different perspectives and concerns from various stakeholders instead of focusing only on the economic value of the company. Economic benefits are not enough as CSR seeks to increase the social value of an organization while having a minimal impact (Retolaza, Ruiz, San-Jose 2009).

Donaldson & Preston's 91995) Stakeholder Theory officially shifted the focus from shareholders to stakeholders in CSR. However, this business approach views stakeholders as external parties, meaning they need to be managed by the companies. More recent researchers argue that stakeholders should not be managed but engaged like in a dialogue (Reynolds & Yuthas, 2007).

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement has become a hot topic of discussion as it relates to Corporate Social Responsibility. Greenwood (2007) defines stakeholder engagement as "practices that the organisation undertakes to involve stakeholders in a positive manner in organizational activities." (p. 318). This definition is relatively broad and does not address how and in what type of practices the organizations engage.

Ethical stakeholder engagement should go beyond risk management, where a particular event might destroy the organisation, its reputation or the networks of relationships it has with stakeholders. Instead, stakeholder engagement should be seen as consistent, two-way dialogue where understanding stakeholders' needs and wants set the foundation of a strong relationship between the companies and different audience.

There are various ways by which CSR can engage stakeholders, although it is mainly done through CSR reporting. Sloan (2009) suggests a few ways of identifying ways to engage stakeholders, such as policy commitments, engagement activities, and performance outcomes. Organizations need to move away from one-way communication such as CSR reporting, and focus more on different ways to engage. Researchers call for more dialogue with stakeholders (Burchell & Cook, 2008; Reynolds & Yuthas, 2007).). McNamee & Gergen (1999) argue that by engaging in dialogue, ethical obligations and responsibilities between companies and stakeholders are being co-constructed.

Burchell & Cook (2008) propose a model of creating effective dialogue, especially looking at dialogue between NGO and companies. Using data from a three-year research project, they propose the following guidelines on how to create dialogue:

1. Selective engagement: NGOs want to engage in dialog with companies who are genuine and not greenwashing or just doing good. These companies' CSR policies need to be aligned with their business goals. They need to believe that engaging in dialog will result in social change.
2. Creating new forms of interactions: NGO and companies need to go into dialogue with open minds which is not easy and not always the case.
3. Placing dialog in a broader context: NGO and companies need to understand and/or agree to see if entering into a dialog affects other activities each are engaged in.
4. Sharing information and asymmetrical learning: be careful with imbalances. Information sharing is important and should not be one sided.
5. Managing and identifying expectations: Manage all expectations of outcomes, don't shoot too high.

These guidelines would benefit, both companies and NGOs and could determine the type of relationship developed by these two entities.

CSR in the UAE

There are very few empirical studies on the practice of CSR in the Middle East, the Gulf Region and the UAE. Although CSR is present in the Middle East it is not widespread and its application is certainly varied. As stated previously, stakeholder engagement is contextual as companies operate within a specific cultural context. As this research takes place in an Arabic context, stakeholder engagement in the Middle East cannot be the same as in the West where most of the research on CSR comes from.

In the UAE, stakeholder engagement is adapted to the political, economical and cultural environment. For example, certain stakeholders are not allowed in many Arab states such as collective bargaining, trade unions and lobbyists (Ararat, 2006). Similarly, NGO and charities in the UAE are not clearly defined and do not have an official legal status. For example, Red Crescent Society (Islamic version of Red Cross) is a state run organization. Other private charities are run by member of the ruling families which makes it hard to draw the line of what is a Non-Governmental Organization (Selvik, 2013).

Traditionally, CSR is primarily considered external to business and about philanthropy in the Arab world and the UAE in particular. Research done in the UAE to date highlights a mixture of Islamic and capitalist practices (Ronnergard, 2011; Selvik, 2013). CSR is strongly influenced by the Islamic religion. Ronnegard (2011) notes that companies in the UAE started to engage in CSR activities primarily through corporate philanthropy by making donations to local charities. Philanthropy is a major part of the religion so often CSR is perceived as the same as philanthropy (Katsioloudes & Brodtkorb, 2007). Managers often regard the modern concept of CSR to be a corporate form of Zakat, the charitable percentage of wealth that Muslims are expected to give. As a result there is little strategic alignment between their philanthropy projects and business objectives. A 2009 survey done by the Dubai Chamber of Commerce revealed that only 17% of the 334 organizations indicated that

CSR was central to their business strategy (Rettab, Ben Brik, Mellahi, 2009). Companies don't do CSR to enhance stakeholder goodwill or to legitimize their existence but rather due to religious pressure.

Also as a result of the Islamic perspective is that CSR reporting is not widespread either due to not "bragging" as it is not well perceived to promote or discuss donations, seen as vulgar as society see that one is obligated to donate and you don't want to be seen as self gain. In fact, a survey done in 2007 revealed that 62% of UAE companies do not report publicly on its CSR activities and performance (Katsioloudes & Brodtkorb, 2007).

Although, the UAE is an Islamic country, multi-nationalism and a Western presence through multinational corporations are prevalent. As in other parts of the world, through globalization pressure, CSR was introduced by multinationals or lead by multinationals. These international companies challenged the way business was done. In the UAE, traditionally, the government takes care of society; or in the case of the UAE, the ruling family. However, with more companies engaging in CSR, there is a redistribution of responsibilities between private and public organizations (Sevik, 2013). Recently, state-dominated companies (private companies owned by members of the UAE ruling families) along with multinationals are leading CSR initiatives.

There are challenges as international companies that have their own CSR policies have to adapt to the UAE's lack of policy approach to CSR. In the 2009 Dubai Chamber of Commerce survey, over 90% of the 334 organizations revealed that they had not adopted CSR policies and practices (Rettab, Ben Brik, Mellahi, 2009). Katsioloudes & Brodtkorb (2007) also found that UAE companies do not know where to begin formulating CSR policies and practices that would satisfy international standards.

Methods

Sample

The primary method of data collection is a qualitative approach using face-to-face personal interviews. In order to distinguish the nature of this relationship and how stakeholder engagement is constructed, in-depth interviews with CSR managers were conducted. The purposive sample was comprised of CSR managers from various industries. Sampling aimed to identify individuals who have a leading role in CSR in their organization. Recruitment was effected first through personal contacts and supplemented by referrals from the participants. The researcher contacted several CSR managers from Dubai and Abu Dhabi, in industries such as tourism, banking, real estate, law, logistics, and government. Of the 8 participants, all were holding senior positions in their organization.

Data collection

Interviews took place in the work environment of participants, in either their office or a meeting room and lasted about one hour. A semi-structured interview technique was used. Interviews allowed for a wide range of topics to be introduced by participants, with an emphasis on stories about their lived experiences of working in a corporate environment and being ‘in charge’ of CSR. The interviews explored a number of broad themes: general information about the participant, information about their job, potential interests, claims, motivation and issues of interest to their organization, and stakeholder engagement.

Ethical procedures were followed in gaining consent for data collection and use and in the storage of data. All interviews were conducted in English, recorded, and transcribed. Each interview was analyzed separately using a hermeneutic approach where themes were identified and checked across the whole interview for confirmation. This ideographic analysis was then used to establish the themes.

Findings

Who are the CSR managers?

While this project is about Corporate Social Responsibility, most participants do not talk about CSR or hold CSR in their titles. In fact, most titles remove "*social*" or uses "*sustainability*". Here are some examples of the participants positions' titles:

Regional & UAE head of Corporate Sustainability – Bank

Senior Manager - Corporate Sustainability - Bank

Head of Sustainability – Retail

Director, Global Corporate Responsibility – Logistics

Community Engagement Manager – Legal

In fact, only one person was called a CSR Manager and she was from a government organization. Even during the interviews, participants avoided using the term CSR but preferred "*sustainability*" or "*corporate responsibility.*" One participant was very adamant about not being part of CSR. In fact, making the change from CSR to CR was the first decision she made when she started in her position.

> Take the S out of it and then call it Corporate Responsibility, take the emphasis away from being social and focus more on making it part of the business and make sure the business is run in a sustainable way. This has been the biggest challenge and continues to being the biggest challenge – Logistics

These CSR managers come from a variety of educational background, from Engineering to Business and Administration. However, passion and personal commitment to sustainability are all part of these participants.

> I feel lucky to be working in this field. I can't imagine doing anything else. It took me a long time. It wasn't around when I was younger but this is what I meant to be doing. It spreads into my life – Bank

> I knew I wanted to do this as a kid. In 5th grade, I even sold my bike to go work for Greenpeace – Retail

Certain qualities typically associated with CSR were also used to describe themselves, such as honest, transparent, and accountable.

UAE Culture and CSR

Although CSR is a global phenomenon, it is implemented with local flavor. Participants are either individuals who have brought their experience from abroad or individuals who were sent abroad to bring back their knowledge to the UAE.

> I knew that (the bank) was doing a great job worldwide with CSR and I wanted to bring their best practices to the UAE. I studied the global standards, global mechanism, global guidelines and principles. I learned from colleagues from South America and Europe. I wanted to bring communication tools. However I struggle to transfer that to the local organizations and Emiratis. I feel that the locals should go back and forth between local and multinationals to transfer the knowledge, to update your information. - Bank

Similar to what the literature indicated, CSR in the UAE is strongly influenced by multinationals. As the participant notes, transferring the knowledge back to the UAE can be rather difficult as people or organizations resist. Some organizations and/or individuals are not ready to adopt different ideas.

> I started to understand what CSR was so my organization paid for me to go to the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership. But (the Bank) was not ready for it. They paid for it but weren't ready to implement it - Bank

As mentioned in the literature review, there are certain unique cultural elements that make CSR unique in the UAE, such as Zakat and the lack of NGOs. In all the interviews, Zaqat or philanthropy was mentioned indicating that it is still widely present in the UAE. However, participants are aware that it is not how they would like to implement CSR in their organization.

> We’ve been struggling to explain what is CSR because they mainly think of charity, so it’s been a struggle at the beginning… it’s going to take a while for people to understand what CSR it. The main reason is that the higher management needs to be aware of that. They need to give us direction. We finally reached the stage where higher management is very aware and they created a video to introduce CSR to the entity - Government

> They were giving checks to special needs school. But what is strategic about that - Bank

Another influence from the Islamic culture of the UAE is how CSR is communicated. One cannot be perceived as bragging. It is not culturally acceptable to brag.

> We make it very clear that we separate CSR and marketing. We are separate. We want to be recognized but we don’t want to serve them. We don’t want marketing mileage. There is a backlash globally with green washing. We would rather have others talk about us than us talking about ourselves.

In the legal context, as stated in the literature review, NGOs do not really have a legal status in the UAE. As of 2014, there is no legislation regulating or recognizing NGOs.

> The government is the US is not as paternalistic as it is here and they don’t have the same patronage. The government here takes care of everything so why do you need NGOs? That’s the mentality. Everything is taking care of: health, education, why would you need an NGO. That’s why NGO exists, because there are gaps in the services that the government is able to provide. So the concept is still coming up in the UAE - Legal

It was easier for respondents to talk about NGOs that exist abroad or international NGOs that have local representation. Some respondents indicated doubt about working with local NGOs, either because of lack of trust or being too much about publicity. Organizations tend to be aware of the risks associated sometimes with certain stakeholders or with certain CSR projects. One participant admitted to avoid working with Human Rights Watch as it has antagonized the UAE government.

> There's always risk and there are projects we can't take on because it may antagonize our clients or governments and we are guest in the country in which we operate. We have to respect them. I call them political risks. There are precarious bonds that we have to consider - Legal

> I don't want to get involved with an NGO that is government. In the Middle East, lines are blurred. If an NGO is headed by a royal family member, (the bank) stays away from it. Some companies love it. It's a way for them to get publicity – Bank

CSR and Stakeholders

The CSR projects mentioned through the interviews are those who create value and those who are supported by the government. However, CSR projects tend to be rooted in stakeholder engagement.

> We have a global strategy. Our local people do stakeholder engagement to find out what is material to our people and what is material to our community. Through good stakeholder engagement and mapping and to understand what is important to our business. Projects come through good stakeholder engagement. Logistics

In the UAE, the government is one of the most important stakeholders. Many projects emanate from the government's priorities.

> Also our partnership with government. For example, we work with the Ministry of Transport. Because of that I was able to test out the car sharing program, Park and Ride, shuttle buses, etc. Some work, some don't; but we still go with it because it's

> government. It’s a government initiative and it helps employees so it’s part of our responsibility - Bank

For example, one area that is important in the Middle East and the UAE in particular is youth development, and youth employment. The government has created a specific employment program called Emiratization. Creating employment opportunities is a critical priority for the UAE government but also one of the main challenges.

> We focus on female law students. The entire aim of this project is to improve these Arab law students’ skills so they are more employable by international law firms who expect high level of work ethics, of language fluency, etc. and I’ve seen the results as we just hired 2 law students. And these are 2 students who went through one of our volunteering project. That’s impact. We did something – Legal

> Now we are looking at SME. We have commercial banking but there is mass unemployment in the region. Many Emiratis want to work in government. However the Government wants Emiratis to join the private sector. We see SME as a priority because countries thrive with SME - Bank

For some, public-private Partnerships are also important as most Emiratis work for the government and refuse to enter the private sector. Overall, participants were adamant at obtaining strong governmental buy-in to the concepts of CSR. Government understands that CSR can positively contribute to their society.

Stakeholder Engagement

Engagement with stakeholders is reflected by participation in multi-stakeholder initiatives, collecting information about stakeholders, consultation and dialogue with them. Organizations tend to communicate with stakeholders through direct and indirect communication, such as one-on-one meetings, newsletters, through conferences, through PR and media and on social media.

In order to mitigate risks, many companies work with stakeholders. There are always risks, at different level, and different levels of influence between the company and the stakeholder. Companies have to try to manage the stakeholder and what is material to each of them.

> Risks are enormous especially regulatory risks with NGOs. Laundering money is done through NGOs. So we need to be aware of it and take steps to avoid this. Another risk is that the NGO is not efficient. They lose track or lose the money. We need to hold them accountable and give money a little at a time. Also when something goes wrong. For example, with SOS Village, in one of the villages there was an accusation of molestation. And that is one you're involved. So how responsible are you when you support an NGO - Retail

> Risk management is part of the strategy. If we didn't respond to the risk we wouldn't be here today – Bank

There is an understanding that organizations need to behave ethically, whether the company itself or its stakeholders. Companies need to understand what stakeholders want and what their expectations are so they know that if they financed a project that goes against the stakeholders. Vice versa, it's also important for companies to establish a relationship with stakeholders so they can adapt their strategy to the feedback they receive.

> We cannot support a customer that is involved in deforestation or destroys wetland. We won't fund utilities that can contribute to climate change. We have a lot of money. Our parameters are capable of making changes can make certain changes – Bank

> NGOs are suspicious of multinationals. They watch them and they hold them accountable. They've caught (the bank) a couple of time. They pointed out to us where we dropped the ball. Occasionally we need NGOs to tell that to (the bank)… We know if we do something wrong, we'll be caught.

The best way to establish an ethical relationship between stakeholders is through that two-way dialogue. However, only one participant described an attempt at creating dialogue by hosting stakeholder engagement sessions.

> Some of our stakeholders don't understand what sustainability means. We have to be honest about that. And there are stakeholders with whom you work a lot to improved things. But we don't have anything structured. Its informal So we are trying to create a proper way of doing it and managing it so it becomes effective and we get the best out of it. We can actually use what they tell us not only to perform better in terms of sustainability but we can pass on to the rest of (the bank) so we can tell them that these things are important and how we can be mindful of that because we are on the steep trajectory of expanding

Conclusion

This exploratory study determined that CSR and stakeholder engagement is at its infancy in the UAE. There are difference in terms of how companies implement CSR and but they are all thriving to make it more sustainable and an integral part of their organization. There is an international influence that have led managers to see CSR not as a communication function but part of strategic planning.

In the UAE, the main stakeholder is government as obviously it dictates regulations. With more regulation, companies tend to think of sustainability more. The issue of environment is becoming more important as some regulations are introduced, such as "green building." As the government is looking to bring in regulations on the environment, companies are becoming more aware of environmental issues. As the government starts other regulations in areas such as workplace and marketplace, companies will start focusing on these soon.

Similarly, in companies, the drive for CSR comes from the leaders who want to position their organization in a particular way. In general, company leadership is driving the change in the UAE rather than customers, employees or the community.

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ETHNOCENTRISM, INTERETHNICINTERACTION, AND INTERETHNIC BRIDGING SOCIAL CAPITAL AMONG LOCAL STUDENTS

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Abstract

Ethnocentrism is identical to outright racism and certainly encourages the negative manifestations of ethnic discrimination. Ethnocentric attitude is a barrier for effective interactions among ethnic groups and diminishes the trust among community members, as it prevents them from effective interaction and communication with people of different ethnic groups. Therefore, developing bridging social capital in heterogeneous societies is a challenging issue. By considering ethnic diversity in Malaysia and its impact on bridging social capital, we can examine the issue of *interethnic* bridging social capital (IBSC). This study aims to determine the impact of ethnocentrism on IBSC through mediating of offline interethnic interaction among Malay, Chinese and Indian students. A sample of 343 undergraduate students at two Malaysian public universities participated in the survey through non-random quota sampling. A self-administered questionnaire was employed as a research instrument. The data were analyzed through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM). For testing mediation effects, a bootstrap re-sampling method was utilized to generate the significance of the paths.The results indicated that the respondents perceive low level of ethnocentrism and the level of respondents' interethnic bridging social capital is low to moderate. The findings reveal that almost one-half of the respondents had daily interaction with students and peers of other ethnics. The data indicated that the average respondents' offline interethnic interaction in this study was moderate to low

level. Indeed, this study has confirmed that not only ethnocentrism can effect directly and negatively on IBSC, but also its impact can be partially mediated through offline interethnic interactions as well. So, all hypotheses of this study were supported.The first conclusion is that a glaring failure to develop bridging forms of social capital across ethnic communities supports the notion that ethnocentrism is a barrier against the successful development of the main elements of social capital, which are trust and reciprocity. Students' distorted perceptions of others lead to mistakes and non-friendly interaction based on feelings and imaginary "facts" shaped by their own biases. The results clearly indicate that the level of interethnic bridging social capital among Malaysian university students is not good enough. It is both insufficient and inefficient. More is required to be done to improve the situation and to minimize the possibility of conflict and negative behavior. The pattern in the findings reflects that the students are not significantly ethnically integrated in their time at university, and the multiethnic universities studied have not succeeded in encouraging them to mingle on a regular basis.Thus, this study has a great role in developing the research framework for future research by introducing and highlighting the key factors in interethnic bridging social capital. Multicultural universities should have a good understanding of students' interethnic interaction in campus, and keep it in view, not neglecting the issue.

Keywords: etnocentrism, interethnicinteraction, interethnic, social capital

Background

The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) continues to evolve worldwide in the academic world as well as in the professional realm. Recently, the term CSR is not always the preferred label as organizations adopt terms such as "sustainability" and "corporate responsibility." Regardless of the terminology used for this corporate activity, stakeholder engagement is perceived as an important aspect of a company's corporate social responsibility. However, there are many perspectives with regards to stakeholder engagement. Researchers mainly agree that CSR has to engage various stakeholders but some researchers argue that CSR has to move away from one-way communication to stakeholder engagement, more like a dialogue.

As stakeholder engagement is contextual and companies operate within a cultural socio-economic and legal context, this research focuses on CSR in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), a rich Gulf country in Southwest Asia. The paper addresses the unique CSR issues of the Middle East, but in particular the UAE, by describing existing CSR practices of stakeholder engagement. Stakeholders typically include: stockholders, employees, suppliers, customers, government, competitors, community, activists and others (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). These stakeholders vary based on certain industry or countries. In particular, stakeholder engagement in the UAE should reflect some of the cultural, economical, political, and environmental issues that are unique to this country.

The literature review is organized as follows. First, corporate social responsibility and its relationship to stakeholder engagement is reviewed. Then, the paper reviews the few research articles and report outlining how CSR functions within the UAE context.

Literature Review

As there is no universally accepted definition of CSR, this paper will adopt Carroll and Bucholtz (2006) four-part definition of corporate social responsibility, ‘‘The social responsibility of business encompasses the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary (philanthropic) expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time (2006, p. 35).’’

As a business concept, CSR emphasized the importance of shareholders but then changed the focus from shareholders to stakeholders (Donaldson & Preston 1995). More recently with the financial crisis, companies have to incorporate the different perspectives and concerns from various stakeholders instead of focusing only on the economic value of the company. Economic benefits are not enough as CSR seeks to increase the social value of an organization while having a minimal impact (Retolaza, Ruiz, San-Jose 2009).

Donaldson & Preston's 91995) Stakeholder Theory officially shifted the focus from shareholders to stakeholders in CSR. However, this business approach views stakeholders as external parties, meaning they need to be managed by the companies. More recent researchers argue that stakeholders should not be managed but engaged like in a dialogue (Reynolds & Yuthas, 2007).

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement has become a hot topic of discussion as it relates to Corporate Social Responsibility. Greenwood (2007) defines stakeholder engagement as "practices that the organisation undertakes to involve stakeholders in a positive manner in organizational activities." (p. 318). This definition is relatively broad and does not address how and in what type of practices the organizations engage.

Ethical stakeholder engagement should go beyond risk management, where a particular event might destroy the organisation, its reputation or the networks of relationships it has with stakeholders. Instead, stakeholder engagement should be seen as consistent, two-way dialogue where understanding stakeholders' needs and wants set the foundation of a strong relationship between the companies and different audience.

There are various ways by which CSR can engage stakeholders, although it is mainly done through CSR reporting. Sloan (2009) suggests a few ways of identifying ways to engage stakeholders, such as policy commitments, engagement activities, and performance outcomes. Organizations need to move away from one-way communication such as CSR reporting, and focus more on different ways to engage. Researchers call for more dialogue with stakeholders (Burchell & Cook, 2008; Reynolds & Yuthas, 2007).). McNamee &

Gergen (1999) argue that by engaging in dialogue, ethical obligations and responsibilities between companies and stakeholders are being co-constructed.

Burchell & Cook (2008) propose a model of creating effective dialogue, especially looking at dialogue between NGO and companies. Using data from a three-year research project, they propose the following guidelines on how to create dialogue:

1. Selective engagement: NGOs want to engage in dialog with companies who are genuine and not greenwashing or just doing good. These companies' CSR policies need to be aligned with their business goals. They need to believe that engaging in dialog will result in social change.
2. Creating new forms of interactions: NGO and companies need to go into dialogue with open minds which is not easy and not always the case.
3. Placing dialog in a broader context: NGO and companies need to understand and/or agree to see if entering into a dialog affects other activities each are engaged in
4. Sharing information and asymmetrical learning: be careful with imbalances. Information sharing is important and should not be one sided.
5. Managing and identifying expectations: Manage all expectations of outcomes, don't shoot too high.

These guidelines would benefit, both companies and NGOs and could determine the type of relationship developed by these two entities.

CSR in the UAE

There are very few empirical studies on the practice of CSR in the Middle East, the Gulf Region and the UAE. Although CSR is present in the Middle East it is not widespread and its application is certainly varied. As stated previously, stakeholder engagement is contextual as companies operate within a specific cultural context. As this research takes place in an Arabic context, stakeholder engagement in the Middle East cannot be the same as in the West where most of the research on CSR comes from.

In the UAE, stakeholder engagement is adapted to the political, economical and cultural environment. For example, certain stakeholders are not allowed in many Arab states such as collective bargaining, trade unions and lobbyists (Ararat, 2006). Similarly, NGO and charities in the UAE are not clearly defined and do not have an official legal status. For example, Red Crescent Society (Islamic version of Red Cross) is a state run organization. Other private charities are run by member of the ruling families which makes it hard to draw the line of what is a Non-Governmental Organization (Selvik, 2013).

Traditionally, CSR is primarily considered external to business and about philanthropy in the Arab world and the UAE in particular. Research done in the UAE to date highlights a mixture of Islamic and capitalist practices (Ronnergard, 2011; Selvik, 2013). CSR is strongly influenced by the Islamic religion. Ronnegard (2011) notes that companies in the UAE started to engage in CSR activities primarily through corporate philanthropy by making donations to local charities. Philanthropy is a major part of the religion so often CSR is perceived as the same as philanthropy (Katsioloudes & Brodtkorb, 2007). Managers often regard the modern concept of CSR to be a corporate form of Zakat, the charitable percentage of wealth that Muslims are expected to give. As a result there is little strategic alignment between their philanthropy projects and business objectives. A 2009 survey done by the Dubai Chamber of Commerce revealed that only 17% of the 334 organizations indicated that CSR was central to their business strategy (Rettab, Ben Brik, Mellahi, 2009). Companies don't do CSR to enhance stakeholder goodwill or to legitimize their existence but rather due to religious pressure.

Also as a result of the Islamic perspective is that CSR reporting is not widespread either due to not "bragging" as it is not well perceived to promote or discuss donations, seen as vulgar as society see that one is obligated to donate and you don't want to be seen as self gain. In fact, a survey done in 2007 revealed that 62% of UAE companies do not report publicly on its CSR activities and performance (Katsioloudes & Brodtkorb, 2007).

Although, the UAE is an Islamic country, multi-nationalism and a Western presence through multinational corporations are prevalent. As in other parts of the world, through globalization pressure, CSR was introduced by multinationals or lead by multinationals. These international companies challenged the way business was done. In the UAE, traditionally, the government takes care of society; or in the case of the UAE, the ruling family. However, with more companies engaging in CSR, there is a redistribution of responsibilities between private and public organizations (Sevik, 2013). Recently, state-dominated companies (private companies owned by members of the UAE ruling families) along with multinationals are leading CSR initiatives.

There are challenges as international companies that have their own CSR policies have to adapt to the UAE's lack of policy approach to CSR. In the 2009 Dubai Chamber of Commerce survey, over 90% of the 334 organizations revealed that they had not adopted CSR policies and practices (Rettab, Ben Brik, Mellahi, 2009). Katsioloudes & Brodtkorb (2007) also found that UAE companies do not know where to begin formulating CSR policies and practices that would satisfy international standards.

Methods

Sample

The primary method of data collection is a qualitative approach using face-to-face personal interviews. In order to distinguish the nature of this relationship and how stakeholder engagement is constructed, in-depth interviews with CSR managers were conducted. The purposive sample was comprised of CSR managers from various industries. Sampling aimed to identify individuals who have a leading role in CSR in their organization.

Recruitment was effected first through personal contacts and supplemented by referrals from the participants. The researcher contacted several CSR managers from Dubai and Abu Dhabi, in industries such as tourism, banking, real estate, law, logistics, and government. Of the 8 participants, all were holding senior positions in their organization.

Data Collection

Interviews took place in the work environment of participants, in either their office or a meeting room and lasted about one hour. A semi-structured interview technique was used. Interviews allowed for a wide range of topics to be introduced by participants, with an emphasis on stories about their lived experiences of working in a corporate environment and being 'in charge' of CSR. The interviews explored a number of broad themes: general information about the participant, information about their job, potential interests, claims, motivation and issues of interest to their organization, and stakeholder engagement.

Ethical procedures were followed in gaining consent for data collection and use and in the storage of data. All interviews were conducted in English, recorded, and transcribed. Each interview was analyzed separately using a hermeneutic approach where themes were identified and checked across the whole interview for confirmation. This ideographic analysis was then used to establish the themes.

Findings

Who are the CSR managers?

While this project is about Corporate Social Responsibility, most participants do not talk about CSR or hold CSR in their titles. In fact, most titles remove "*social*" or uses "*sustainability*". Here are some examples of the participants positions' titles:

Regional & UAE head of Corporate Sustainability - Bank

Senior Manager - Corporate Sustainability - Bank

Head of Sustainability - Retail

Director, Global Corporate Responsibility - Logistics

Community Engagement Manager - Legal

In fact, only one person was called a CSR Manager and she was from a government organization. Even during the interviews, participants avoided using the term CSR but preferred "*sustainability*" or "*corporate responsibility.*" One participant was very adamant about not being part of CSR. In fact, making the change from CSR to CR was the first decision she made when she started in her position.

Take the S out of it and then call it Corporate Responsibility, take the emphasis away from being social and focus more on making it part of the business and make sure the business is run in a sustainable way. This has been the biggest challenge and continues to being the biggest challenge - Logistics

These CSR managers come from a variety of educational background, from Engineering to Business and Administration. However, passion and personal commitment to sustainability are all part of these participants.

I feel lucky to be working in this field. I can't imagine doing anything else. It took me a long time. It wasn't around when I was younger but this is what I meant to be doing. It spreads into my life - Bank

I knew I wanted to do this as a kid. In 5th grade, I even sold my bike to go work for Greenpeace - Retail

Certain qualities typically associated with CSR were also used to describe themselves, such as honest, transparent, and accountable.

UAE Culture and CSR

Although CSR is a global phenomenon, it is implemented with local flavor. Participants are either individuals who have brought their experience from abroad or individuals who were sent abroad to bring back their knowledge to the UAE.

I knew that (the bank) was doing a great job worldwide with CSR and I wanted to bring their best practices to the UAE. I studied the global standards, global mechanism, global guidelines and principles. I learned from colleagues from South America and Europe. I wanted to bring communication tools. However I struggle to transfer that to the local organizations and Emiratis. I feel that the locals should go back and forth between local and multinationals to transfer the knowledge, to update your information. - Bank

Similar to what the literature indicated, CSR in the UAE is strongly influenced by multinationals. As the participant notes, transferring the knowledge back to the UAE can be rather difficult as people or organizations resist. Some organizations and/or individuals are not ready to adopt different ideas.

I started to understand what CSR was so my organization paid for me to go to the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership. But (the Bank) was not ready for it. They paid for it but weren't ready to implement it - Bank

As mentioned in the literature review, there are certain unique cultural elements that make CSR unique in the UAE, such as Zakat and the lack of NGOs. In all the interviews, Zaqat or philanthropy was mentioned indicating that it is still widely present in the UAE. However, participants are aware that it is not how they would like to implement CSR in their organization.

We've been struggling to explain what is CSR because they mainly think of charity, so it's been a struggle at the beginning... it's going to take a while for people to understand what CSR it. The main reason is that the higher management needs to be aware of that. They need to give us direction. We finally reached the stage where higher management is very aware and they created a video to introduce CSR to the entity - Government

They were giving checks to special needs school. But what is strategic about that - Bank

Another influence from the Islamic culture of the UAE is how CSR is communicated. One cannot be perceived as bragging. It is not culturally acceptable to brag.

We make it very clear that we separate CSR and marketing. We are separate. We want to be recognized but we don't want to serve them. We don't want marketing mileage. There is a backlash globally with green washing. We would rather have others talk about us than us talking about ourselves. In the legal context, as stated in the literature review, NGOs do not really have a legal status in the UAE. As of 2014, there is no legislation regulating or recognizing NGOs.

The government is the US is not as paternalistic as it is here and they don't have the same patronage. The government here takes care of everything so why do you need NGOs? That's the mentality. Everything is taking care of: health, education, why would you need an NGO. That's why NGO exists, because there are gaps in the services that the government is able to provide. So the concept is still coming up in the UAE - Legal

It was easier for respondents to talk about NGOs that exist abroad or international NGOs that have local representation. Some respondents indicated doubt about working with local NGOs, either because of lack of trust or being too much about publicity. Organizations tend to be aware of the risks associated sometimes with certain stakeholders or with certain CSR projects. One participant admitted to avoid working with Human Rights Watch as it has antagonized the UAE government.

There's always risk and there are projects we can't take on because it may antagonize our clients or governments and we are guest in the country in which we operate. We have to respect them. I call them political risks. There are precarious bonds that we have to consider - Legal

I don’t want to get involved with an NGO that is government. In the Middle East, lines are blurred. If an NGO is headed by a royal family member, (the bank) stays away from it. Some companies love it. It’s a way for them to get publicity - Bank

CSR and Stakeholders

The CSR projects mentioned through the interviews are those who create value and those who are supported by the government. However, CSR projects tend to be rooted in stakeholder engagement.

We have a global strategy. Our local people do stakeholder engagement to find out what is material to our people and what is material to our community. Through good stakeholder engagement and mapping and to understand what is important to our business. Projects come through good stakeholder engagement. Logistics

In the UAE, the government is one of the most important stakeholders. Many projects emanate from the government’s priorities.

Also our partnership with government. For example, we work with the Ministry of Transport. Because of that I was able to test out the car sharing program, Park and Ride, shuttle buses, etc. Some work, some don’t; but we still go with it because it’s government. It’s a government initiative and it helps employees so it’s part of our responsibility – Bank

For example, one area that is important in the Middle East and the UAE in particular is youth development, and youth employment. The government has created a specific employment program called Emiratization. Creating employment opportunities is a critical priority for the UAE government but also one of the main challenges.

We focus on female law students. The entire aim of this project is to improve these Arab law students’ skills so they are more employable by international law firms who expect high level of work ethics, of language fluency, etc. and I’ve seen the results as we just hired 2 law students. And these are 2 students who went through one of our volunteering project. That's impact. We did something - Legal

Now we are looking at SME. We have commercial banking but there is mass unemployment in the region. Many Emiratis want to work in government. However the Government wants Emiratis to join the private sector. We see SME as a priority because countries thrive with SME - Bank

For some, public-private Partnerships are also important as most Emiratis work for the government and refuse to enter the private sector. Overall, participants were adamant at obtaining strong governmental buy-in to the concepts of CSR. Government understands that CSR can positively contribute to their society.

Stakeholder Engagement

Engagement with stakeholders is reflected by participation in multi-stakeholder initiatives, collecting information about stakeholders, consultation and dialogue with them. Organizations tend to communicate with stakeholders through direct and indirect communication, such as one-on-one meetings, newsletters, through conferences, through PR and media and on social media.

In order to mitigate risks, many companies work with stakeholders. There are always risks, at different level, and different levels of influence between the company and the stakeholder. Companies have to try to manage the stakeholder and what is material to each of them.

Risks are enormous especially regulatory risks with NGOs. Laundering money is done through NGOs. So we need to be aware of it and take steps to avoid this. Another risk is that the NGO is not efficient. They lose track or lose the money. We need to hold them accountable and give money a little at a time. Also when something goes wrong. For example, with SOS Village, in one of the villages there was an accusation of molestation.

And that is one you’re involved. So how responsible are you when you support an NGO - Retail

Risk management is part of the strategy. If we didn’t respond to the risk we wouldn’t be here today - Bank

There is an understanding that organizations need to behave ethically, whether the company itself or its stakeholders. Companies need to understand what stakeholders want and what their expectations are so they know that if they financed a project that goes against the stakeholders. Vice versa, it’s also important for companies to establish a relationship with stakeholders so they can adapt their strategy to the feedback they receive.

We cannot support a customer that is involved in deforestation or destroys wetland. We won’t fund utilities that can contribute to climate change. We have a lot of money. Our parameters are capable of making changes can make certain changes - Bank

NGOs are suspicious of multinationals. They watch them and they hold them accountable. They’ve caught (the bank) a couple of time. They pointed out to us where we dropped the ball. Occasionally we need NGOs to tell that to (the bank)... We know if we do something wrong, we’ll be caught.

The best way to establish an ethical relationship between stakeholders is through that two-way dialogue. However, only one participant described an attempt at creating dialogue by hosting stakeholder engagement sessions.

Some of our stakeholders don’t understand what sustainability means. We have to be honest about that. And there are stakeholders with whom you work a lot to improved things. But we don’t have anything structured. Its informal So we are trying to create a proper way of doing it and managing it so it becomes effective and we get the best out of it. We can actually use what they tell us not only to perform better in terms of sustainability but we can pass on to the rest of (the bank) so we can tell them that these things are important and how we can be mindful of that because we are on the steep trajectory of expanding

Conclusion

This exploratory study determined that CSR and stakeholder engagement is at its infancy in the UAE. There are difference in terms of how companies implement CSR and but they are all thriving to make it more sustainable and an integral part of their organization. There is an international influence that have led managers to see CSR not as a communication function but part of strategic planning.

In the UAE, the main stakeholder is government as obviously it dictates regulations. With more regulation, companies tend to think of sustainability more. The issue of environment is becoming more important as some regulations are introduced, such as “green building.” As the government is looking to bring in regulations on the environment, companies are becoming more aware of environmental issues. As the government starts other regulations in areas such as workplace and marketplace, companies will start focusing on these soon.

Similarly, in companies, the drive for CSR comes from the leaders who want to position their organization in a particular way. In general, company leadership is driving the change in the UAE rather than customers, employees or the community.

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THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN SHAPING CONSUMPTION HABITS AMONG VIETNAMESE URBAN CONSUMERS

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Abstract

The open door policies and the rise time of media have made Vietnam quickly in the transition phase to a consumer society. In contemporary Vietnam, the media is importantly visible in people's daily life by providing a wide range of contents from local media to global media. Product promotion on all kinds of media is widely perceived by Vietnamese consumers in cities. The media creates 'cool' factors about the products consumers feel they need, leading people especially the active groups (the young, urban and middle-class) into living a consumerist lifestyle together with social changes in all aspects of a modern society.To explore the uses of media in relation to the urban consumers in Vietnam, this paper sought to examine how participants perceived the symbolic meanings of products through advertisements, films or other media in Vietnam, and to what extent they used media as a source of reference for consumption practices. The study is based on 16 in-depth interviews in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. The findings, which emerged, were primarily focused on the concept of modern and Western lifestyle widely manipulated on media, and the rise of celebrity endorsement. Especially, products from European and American orgin promoted on media visualize 'modernity, freedom and a very rich popular imagery' easily sway the consumers onto the path of consumerism. Characterized by high power distance influence, Vietnamese consumers develop powerful emotions toward media celebrities as their idealized self-images. While Hollywood celebrity endorsements more influence on the mature consumers, Korean stars create the waves, quick and short-term influence on the adaptation and imitation of the new consumption practices in Vietnamese markets. The paper offers some pratical implications for professionals of marketing to consider the certain elements of promotion context while operating in Vietnam.

Keywords : media,shaping consumption,habits, vietnamese

Background

Media has a certain role in promoting the culture of consumption (Campbell 1987; Wernick 1991) which involves advertising images in magazines, newspapers, and television. The dominance of advertising and promotional messages may be viewed as culture itself (Wernick 1991. Vietnam opened up to a global flow of information and influence in the 1990s. Most enterprises focus on this elite group by creating advertisements which constantly underscore the pursuit of modernity, as ‘‘more attention is paid to the differences between the segments of old thinking and new thinking’’ (Nguyen Thi Tuyet Mai et al 2003, p. 15). Products of European and American origin in particular and easily sway consumers onto the path of consumerism.

The younger generation of urban consumers in Vietnam reposition themselves in ‘‘evolving social orders brought about by colonization, war, independence, communism, and a market economy’’ (Belanger et al 2012, p. 2). They care more about their individual needs and material life and use consumption as a marker of identity. Media under the loose control of the state (Hayton 2010) rather than of the market as they do in Western democracies, act as the promotional role (Wernick 1991; Featherstone 1991) in creating the aspiration and desire amongst young urban people to come to the Western market, and seek products to satisfy their desires.

The research aims to identify how the younger Vietnamese urban consumers *''Thanh niên''* (aged between 18 and 35) use media as a source of reference for consumption habits. It is important to gain greater detailed insight into this group as they are most exposed to and influenced by media and economic changes that have taken place since the Economic Renovation. ;'

Research methodology

The media has sped up the transnational flow of images of modernity (Featherstone 1991). Popular culture and narratives are central in the formation of identity in the time of "imagined community". The urban consumers play an active role toward lifestyle (Bourdieu 1984; Featherstone 1991). The transnational experience has an important role in defining brand choices and associations. To understand the complex path the brands can offer to reconstruct the consumption habits of Vietnamese urban consumers, the interview addressed the dual examination of local everyday life and transnational media, with the focus on understanding the pattern of brand consuming and media consumption.

Participants were asked questions about brands and media consumption during both the qualitative research and during follow-up emails. The findings, which emerged, were primarily focused on the concept of modern and Western lifestyle widely manipulated on media, and the rise of celebrity endorsement

Key findings and discussion

Advertising

Promotional messages flooding the media create associations between products and desirable outcomes. Money is poured into advertising and promotional media programmes to secure a top place on the prime time TV game shows, prominent pages of glossy magazines and the most-accessed websites and networks. Media (advertising) exploits by attaching desire images, and meanings to the products in a "multiplicity of associative relations" (Featherstone 1991, p. 15). It seeds and propagates these associations in the mind of consumers, in which they become fascinated with the projected images to purchase items and experiences.

"I am aware I am overly influenced by the media, but I have to admit the message and images dissolve in my mind without being conscious of it. One good example is a story about Heineken. It happened eight or nine years ago when there were a huge number of commercials about this beer on TV. I don't know when exactly it became the special brand at the top of my mind, and then I started to drink beer. Then as now, whenever I ordered a drink, I would say 'Ken please' (a slang or shortened word for Heineken among Vietnamese 'Guru').

(25, Female, HCM City, Interview)

Advertising cultivates and transfers symbolic meanings between a product brand and the cultural world to the consumers (McCracken 1989). It provides the necessary interpretation to endorse the materialistic messages frequently found in popular culture. In Vietnam, mass media stimulates consumer interest in new products by evoking the modern, Western lifestyle as a very rich popular image.

While eating KFC, and watching sexy Adam Levine on TV, I looked at my fat body. I decided to go on a diet to be able to wear Victoria's Secret, and become the type of thin Cosmo woman he likes.

(25, Female, Hanoi, Interview)

As the instruments of meaning transfer (McCracken 1989), media stimulates the culturally constituted world of objects, persons, and contexts that already contain and give voice to these meanings. Because consumers turn to goods not only to serve certain functions and to satisfy, but also for the bundles of meanings in which they exist (Belk 1988). A female professional who prefers to put on a quite luxury makeup searched for an appealing brand, which evoked memories, admiration for royal family and giving an edge to her character formed in English literature.

> *The stories about the royal family in the UK were deeply embedded in my mind during childhood through books, novels and films...This made me fall in love with Burberry, a classic brand, as a symbol of the UK.*
>
> (33, Female, HCM City, Interview)

Vietnamese consumers are becoming "self-image buyers". After the economic renovation in Vietnam in 1986, economic growth created new spaces for consumerism and development in the advertising landscape.

What media tells us about has deep significance in the construction and maintenance of personal identities and works as a reference for our choice, ideas to craft our identity and consumption patterns. "Global pop culture reflects the changing relationship between popular youth culture and media in Vietnam" (Nguyen Bich Thuan and Thomas 2004, p. 136) where popular narratives and cultural icons are helping to shape consumer tastes and values. The circulation of words and images plays a significant part in the constant negotiation of face work, which comprises popular culture.

> *There are four reasons making me like the Ken commercials and to become loyal to Ken and a new drinker of beer: the music is amazingly cool; the content of the commercial is funny and civilised, not callous; there is a series of commercials with*

several different stories - not a kind of boring repetition of stories; it reflects the current lifestyle of modern people, with a bit of reality, and clumsy.

(30, Female, HCM City, Interview)

Themes of modernity are for and about the young and product advertisements constantly underscore this pursuit of youth and pleasure (Dutton 2012, p. 30). Hung remembered he was very slim ten years ago, which made him feel he was not attractive enough to girls. It was after watching the Total Gym commercial in a TV show he explained that "*Looking at the muscles of the guy in the advert*, *I just wanted to buy it immediately*" (32, Male, HCM City, Interview).

The important role of the media and the advertising industry interacted and interplayed by Western advertising agencies, popular culture and global brands cannot be ignored, as this leads Vietnamese consumers to new concepts and to adapt to the projected consumer culture, after a decade of suffering from lack of product availability. Western advertising agencies and Western brands entered Vietnam right after the government opened the border and instituted new market policies, and created the concept of bringing modernity and cosmopolitan lifestyle to lure consumers into the new consumer culture through coded messages conveyed in the media.

Marketers create symbolic meaning for a product or brand and inject it into a ‘culturally constituted world’ - products acquire a stable meaning, and consumers accept the meaning ‘provided’ for them (McCracken 1989), and so choose products and brands that suit their identity or values (Holt 2002). Promotional content in the media (words and text) seeds the symbolic meanings desired by Vietnamese consumers. They become gradually aware of the meaning, and are inspired to purchase and experience these products or brands

(McCracken 1989). This marketing approach came to the Vietnamese market at the right time, with the right messages.

A lot of people I know hate watching adverts. My husband often switches the channels when product placements appear. However, I am the opposite. I prefer to watch Western TV channels, by this I mean Western models, plots and brands. There will always be something you can learn about style, habits or new products, and in a very interesting way.

(26, Female, Hanoi, Interview)

The product placements are widely inserted in all the prime time shows, a reality of television in Vietnam. The advertising creates and offers a certain kind of image for the products and as a reference for the buyers to attach to their desired personality in communities. That is why many domestic brands make an absolutely Western TV commercial, which causes the consumer to be confused about the country of origin, as they prefer Western brands and images.

X-men is a perfect example. First I thought it's a foreign brand from Europe or somewhere. It's an advertisement with a Western model, Western way of advertising and a perfect TV advert. Then later I found out it's a domestic product, but I still have a positive connotation of the product.

(32, Male, HCM City, Interview)

Vietnamese urban consumers, in particular, are enamoured by new ideas that they have not experienced. Although cultural interpretations of modern life are vastly different from their living situation, it appeals to young people and is widely promoted by media.

Celebrity Endorsement

Celebrities have been defined by some as ‘cultural intermediaries’ (Featherstone 1991) and are defined as the influential (McCracken 1989), involved in the circulation of symbolic forms. They shape product values, which are connected with consumers through media. Celebrity endorsement appears in most promotional messages for most type of products. It would include individuals from the ‘world of sport, politics, business, art and the military’ (McCracken 1989, p. 319). Using celebrity is likely to positively affect consumers’ brand attitudes and purchase intentions. Celebrities in films are common and a popular reference for young people in terms of fashion, cosmetics and style. In Vietnam, Korean and Hong Kong films give them more inspiration for cosmetics and fashion while Hollywood films create certain lifestyles and inspire them with famous worldwide brands. The group born in the 1970s and the 1980s favour Hollywood films, while the young born in 1990s tend to spend more time watching Korean films than Western ones.

We are living in a celebrity-mediated social world, thus celebrities within the media have a significant influence upon consumers’ consumption practices. Celebrities are idolised by young consumers who try to imitate them in terms of fashion, or tastes, or style. As the opinion leaders (Weimann 1991), the celebrities' messages shape consumers in the construction of identity. Huong (25, Female, HCM City, Interview) admired Thanh Loc as a famous and modest star whose personality influenced her and inspired her to modestly present her quiet luxury style in a friendly way.

> *"I like the way Lady Gaga appears and presents herself whenever she is in the public or in front of the camera. People must look at her and be curious about everything she puts on. The news is always active after that. She properly puts a lot of effort in making herself uniquely interesting."* (21, Female, Hanoi, Interview)

Prominently influential, celebrities bring inspiration and information to consumers to construct and cultivate their identity. What the celebrities consume garners the attention of consumers who in turn make use of cultural symbols (celebrities) which are easily recognisable and can reinforce positive qualities of products according to their country of origin. In addition, the image of a celebrity associated with products would make the brand more prestigious and desirable. Hung likes to watch Hong Kong films, all the time paying attention to what actor Kevin Cheng dresses like, as he uses this as the reference for his own style. After all, he wants to be 'elegant, fashionable and stylish'.

I do not know the exact brands he wears but I try to wear the same style. If I knew the exact the name of his brands, I would try them.

(32, male, HCM City, Interview)

The younger generations often develop powerful emotions toward media celebrities even though they do not have any face-to-face interaction with them. Young admirers consider celebrity idols as their idealised self-images. Admirers want to develop or refine their own personality traits so that they are similar to those of their idols (Weimann 1991).

I regularly pay attention to Rihanna, Miley and Selona in their clips and in the Billboard chart as the references for my style. My friends do the same. The fashion of having a tattoo as their Western idols do is popular among youth in Hanoi or Ho Chi Minh City.

(26, Female, Hanoi, Interview)

When the celebrity’s character, personality and lifestyle satisfy the need and desired images of the consumers, they want to consume the brands of their icon and put effort into following their icon or being similar to them.

Ryan Reynold is the ambassador for my style – sense of humour, lady killer and smart. I knew him first in the Proposal and Green Lantern. His choice of perfume will influence me. I am switching to Hugo Boss, which Ryan uses.

(32, Male, HCM City, Interview)

While Hollywood stars have more influence on mature consumers, Korean stars create waves, and have a quick and short-term influence on the adaptation and imitation of the new consumption practices in Vietnamese markets. Films and TV shows give them great inspiration for consuming brands.

Korean Dramas

Korean films recently replaced Chinese films in Vietnam. There are one hundred fan groups for Korean actors and actresses in Vietnam. They dress Korean, eat Korean food, and use Korean things out of a desire to follow their idols. The root cause of the significant influence of Korean stars upon Vietnamese consumers is that while young people strive to be more 'global' they also regard Korea as being more culturally similar. Not all aspects of Western lifestyle and Western celebrity personalities are easily adaptable to the Vietnamese context or preferred by Vietnamese youth. Thus, an understanding of social life in contemporary Vietnamese society calls for the reinterpretation of both traditional and new consumer culture (Canclini 2001).

According to Ha Thi Hong Van (2010), relations between Vietnam and Korea developed quickly over the period 2000-2008. Vietnam imported materials from Korea for the textile and garment industry, as well as leather, iron, machinery, transportation equipment, gasoline, chemical products, electronics and electricity products. Enjoying Korean television dramas, the new generation of consumers are eagerly adopting and emulating the Korean lifestyle ranging from fashion, food and consumption patterns and even plastic surgery. Young Hanoi couples can sometimes be seen dressed in 'couple T-shirts' as is the vogue in Korea and in Korean drama (Drummond 2012). The wave of Hallyu (Korean wave) among Vietnamese youth affects their choice of consumption in fashion, mobile phone, cosmetics and food.

Around 10 to 20 years ago, it was impossible to find a product made in Korea in Vietnamese markets; however, after a series of advertisements with a famous Korean artist, the shampoo brand "Double Rich" became popular. Vietnamese consumers tend to buy Korean products to feel intimacy with their favourite Korean dramas. "Ohui" products are widely promoted in all beauty salons in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. For the younger generation, the role of Korean celebrities is growing and shaping their consumption, and even behaviour.

> *For example, the new habit of buying a dreamcatcher is now popular among people younger than 22. Before the Korean film the Heirs and the wave of Korean culture in Asia in 2013, including Vietnam, nobody knew that the dreamcatcher originated in America. However, the main actor gave a dreamcatcher in the film as a symbol. Young people and fans of Korean films in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City rushed to buy dreamcatchers, creating a small growing market for producers of these items*.
>
> (25, female, HCM City, Interview)

The influential in Korea films brings the desired personality, wealth, success and romance, and one dominant aspect is somehow similar to Vietnamese tradition.

> *"Korean characters in films are absolutely Asian beautiful, romantic, Mr Perfect or Ms Perfect, and still realise and retain the Confucian traditions similar to Vietnamese culture. That's why whatever brand they project appears very positive to the consumers who are their fans"*

(22, Male, Hanoi, Interview).

McCracken’s model of celebrity endorsement is based on the concept of meanings. Each spokesperson provides a set of characters. The meaning transfer includes three subsequent stages. For example, some Vietnamese comedians are perceived as friendly, associated with normal products, such as when presenting a brand of instant noodles.

Discussion

On the one hand, the media plays a role as the propaganda vehicle of the government to promote Asian values, as well as to keep their monopoly of power. On the other hand, the media within the loose control of the state and under the pressure of economic development create resources for the younger generation of urban consumers to adapt new practices of consumption from developed countries (Shultz 2012; Pham and Richards 2014).

As Ger et al stated: “the transnational companies are likely to win by understanding and responding to the global/local cultural forces and tensions, rather than imposing a global uniformity” (2012, p. 40). Vietnamese consumers embrace the rise of Western lifestyle and Western brands, but interpret them through the lens of their traditional values. The study identifies how the meanings of Western brands manifest in the complex web of market, state and media in the context of Vietnam. Marketers should try to appraise and comprehend the local history, beliefs, expectations and norms to successfully approach local consumers. Thus, companies which find ways to reflect various possible resolutions of the alluring globalism-authentic localism tension through their positioning and differentiation strategies are likely to win the hearts and minds of consumers (Penaloza et al 2012; Ger et al 2012).

To grow long-term value and consumer loyalty, marketers should focus on building brand literacy by innovative research and communication strategies. Thus, those companies trying to establish a presence in the Vietnamese market should employ adaptive strategies which recognise the specific nature of Vietnamese embracing modernity while negotiating with their traditions and norms. Global brands should be aware that products promoted bearing the mark of ‘foreignness’, especially Western origin, will likely be appealing to Vietnamese consumers.

Vietnamese consumers demand promotional communication that matches their own cultural priorities and even filter brand messages through the lens of local value and ideology such as Ho Chi Minh Ideology and socialism values. Consumers in Vietnam do not easily assimilate to the code and values of Western brands, but would be able to manipulate these codes to express their extended self (Belk 1988). The understanding of brand literacy among Vietnamese consumers can be applied in targeting consumers in advertising. For example, Western brand advertisements created for Vietnamese consumers such as Heineken’s advertisements plays up difference, exoticism, and the Western origins of the brand.

The role of advertising is important in winning new markets such as Vietnam. Advertising on mass media stimulates Vietnamese consumers’ interest in new products by introducing new consumption habits and evoking Western lifestyle. The media content (Wernick 1991) and celebrity endorsement (McCracken 1989) easily promote brand associations among the younger generation in Vietnam. Marketers should consider the ways of retaining the relevant core message of the promotional campaign in reaching out to the Vietnamese market.

The messages of Western style product promotion create modernity and images of youth pursuits, which Vietnamese consumers want to achieve when consuming a product of European or American origin. While a Korean celebrity would have enough power to push the marketing of a brand in the short-term and during the time of the peak in their career and Korean culture shares certain similarities with Vietnamese consumers. For example, using an iPhone 5 can make a person have the feeling of having a higher social status while experiencing a Samsung Galaxy, used by several actors and actress in Korean films, brings the gratification of romance. As mentioned in the introduction, the main reason for consuming Korean products among urban youth born in the late 1980s or in the 1990s is to get closer to the image of their favourite idols, which is explored in the role of the media. For Western brands, consumers can rank cosmetics and fashion in terms of quality or symbolic meanings, but for Korean products, they are all at the same level and it seems there is one common brand for all things made in Korea "*it's Korean stuff. That's all people care about*". Korean products are more used for emotional or romantic gratification.

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FROM CSR TO USR: REPOSITIONING PUBLIC RELATIONS' ROLE IN UNIVERSITY SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY PRACTICES IN THAILAND

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Abstract

Whereas corporate social responsibility (CSR) has captured the interest and imagination of scholars and professionals in the business world since the beginning of the new millennium, CSR in Thailand is still in the early stage of development. The concept was introduced to Thailand, as a Western influence, through the efforts of multinational companies in the past decade. Yet, the imported models of CSR has neither translated well into the Thai context nor generated real consensus among business leaders. Too often, much of the existing literature on CSR in Thailand has focus on business organization perspectives.Given the stressed condition of Thailand in this 21st century and the increasing needs of society in terms of educating highly qualified graduates and responsible citizens, giving students the opportunity to develop their own full abilities with a sense of social responsibility, it is now essential that universities should recognize their own responsibilities not only as providing skills and knowledge, but also contributing to the formation of citizens endowed with ethical principles, committed to building peace, and defending human rights and democratic values. All these have highlighted the significance of social responsibility of the university which can be termed as "**USR – University Social Responsibility,"** and its increased call for the authentic development of human sustainability.USR has recently begun to receive attention to Thai universities and turned to play a vital role in the university teaching and educating system. Despite the fact that the value of responsibility has strongly been rooted in Thai traditional beliefs, there is very little Thai influence on current USR initiatives. This research paper recognizes the need for culturally sensitive, homegrown approaches to demonstrate USR value in the Thai way. The paper places USR in the context of sustainable development and sufficiency economy advocated for the past three decades by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, and then uses holistic relationship management framework with the alternative voice of Thai values to explicate the growing involvement of Thai universities in USR practices.The paper makes further argument that USR concepts and practices in Thailand have not yet been adopted on a large scale. It is also questionable if the involvement of those universities practicing USR is merely as an after-process activity trying to increase images and leverage positive exposure in the media. To such extent, it is found that while public relations educators and practitioners elsewhere recognize the significant role of public relations practitioners in helping universities to be more socially responsible, public relations profession in Thailand has been devalued merely as publicist, media relations specialists and marketing support staff. The paper seeks to consider these concerns by proposing the repositioning of public relations' role in USR practice. It argues that the value of public relations to the universities is the capacity to maintain holistic relationships, to stress ethical behavior in all stakeholder transactions and interactions towards the authentic development of human sustainability.

Keywords: CSR, USR, Thailand, PR

Background

Whereas corporate social responsibility (CSR) has captured the interest and imagination of scholars and professionals in the business world since the beginning of the new millennium, CSR in Thailand is still in the early stage of development (Prayukvong & Olsen, 2009). Despite the fact that the "social responsibility" practices have long been prevalent in the Thai society in the form of religious practices of Buddhism (Thai CSR, 2010), the western development of the term and concept of CSR has just evolved in Thailand after the World Trade Organization Ministerial Meeting in 1999 (Prayukvong & Olsen, 2009), and has developed further through the efforts of multinational companies and many large business corporations in the form of business strategies campaigns and activities (Asian Development Bank Institute, 2007).

For the past several years, CSR practices have become prevalent not only among multinational companies but also among other Thai-owned companies. To the extent that multinational companies and Thai-owned companies have tried to implement CSR programs based on the Western CSR concept that theoretically refers to their commitment to take full responsibility on economic, legal, ethical, philanthropic, and social responsibilities (Caroll, 1991), their practices are concentrated in a few concerns. Previous research found that different business owners and practitioners understand and practise CSR in different ways (Rajanakorn, 2012). Thus far, the CSR concept has failed to help create the real sustainable society, and CSR practice has not yet delivered on its promise. The primary concerns among those who practise CSR during the decade-long dialogue have focused mainly on philanthropic, volunteering, and cause-related marketing activities. Many Thai business companies have seen the benefits of CSR approaches in terms of short-term donations that impact positively on the company's image. To achieve CSR, tools and activities are basically the main attention. Therefore, the CSR practice in Thailand has often been perceived as a reflection of window dressing activities to support a marketing goal rather than a reflection of corporate authentic integrity to implement socially oriented principles, strategies and long-term commitments for all stakeholders.

Previous surveys reveal that although there has been an increasing CSR awareness in Thai business and Thai society, limited knowledge and practice of CSR remains as Thai companies rank low in their level of understanding about the true value of CSR (Prayukvong & Olsen, 2009). The global CSR survey by the consultancy Grant Thornton shows that "only 11% of Thai companies donate to charities and 4% participate in communities activities compared with the global averages of 65% and 55% in charity and community participation, respectively (Kesaprakorn, 2008; Rajanakorn, 2012). The additional survey conducted by the Thaipat Institute and the Foundation for Thailand Rural Reconstruction Movement (2009) reveals that 30.46 percent of 4,350 businesses respondents in Bangkok who earlier had denied their awareness of CSR, changed their answers after seeing a list of CSR activities (Yodprudikan, 2010). Many of them revealed that they had engaged in several CSR activities such as good governance, ethical business conduct, product liability, donations and volunteerism, without being aware that this wide range of activities was considered as part of CSR. Another survey done by CSR Asia Center found that many Thai companies had CSR policies but only occasionally put these policies into concrete pratice (Prachyakorn, 2010; Rajanakorn, 2012).

CSR has become a catchphrase among the Thai businesses. However, many organizations and companies show diverse interpretations, perspectives and adaptations, even among the most growing companies in the country. Only a few corporate executives are able to provide a clear and specific definition. It shows that there is ittle consensus on the definition, value and framework of CSR in Thailand. In addition, CSR practices of big business corporations in Thailand still generate considerable doubt in the public eye, and on the part of development agencies or NGOs as to whether they are sincere, sustainable attempts to benefit society or if they are public relations or social marketing tools to increase corporate images and leverage positive exposure in the media (Prayukvong & Olsen, 2009).

In the mean time, several working groups such as government and public organizations have tried to develop and promote CSR policies and implementation corresponding to the international initiatives from the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), the United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI), the International Finance Corporation's (IFC) Performance Standards, the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and the new revision of ISO 26000. These international organizations put their efforts to encourage all businesses and companies to understand the values of CSR not in terms of CSR business viability, but in terms of connecting to stakeholder values and demands and society in an environmentally sustainable way (Prayukvong & Olsen, 2009). The key CSR aspects encouraged by these international initiatives are: 1) the triple bottom line of people (society), planet (environment) and profit (economy); 2) the ethical and moral dimension of the firm towards its internal and external stakeholders; and 3) a healthy and sustainable society.

Among those several working groups that show their CSR expression in the organization values, vision and mission statements are the National Corporate Governance Committee (NCGC), the Ministry of Social Welfare and Human Security, the Office of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET). Other organizations supporting CSR among Thai organizations and corporations include Thai Bank Association (TBA), Thai Industrial Standard Institute (TISI), Thailand Volunteer Services (TVS), Corporate Social Responsibility Institute (CSRI), Thaipat Institute, CSR Promotion Center, and National Center for Giving and Volunteering (NCGV), under the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) and Institute of Directors (IOD) (Prayukvong & Olsen, 2009). However, the imported models of CSR applied by those organizations have not yet translated well into the Thai context or generated real consensus among Thai organizations. This is multifaceted by the fact of different countries' ideologies ranging from individualist cultures (that values short-term orientation which is more characteristics of the US) to communitarian cultures (that values long-term orientation and the need of community which is more common of the Eastern countries and the European Union) (Lodge, 1990; Shawyun, Al-Karni, Al-Shehri, & Al-Hamali, 2012). Cross cultural differences and traditional value differences in how organizations and their CSR activities are regulated could lead to how each organization defines its own version of CSR that could range from strategic CSR, altruistic CSR or coerced CSR (Husted & De Jesus Salzar, 2006).

Taking CSR practices in Thailand another step further, from the infant development stage to the maturity stage of development, there is a need for Thai companies and organizations to understand the true value of CSR and its multifarious aspects, then learn how other organizations implement and improve their CSR practices, share and exchange their good practices, develop a sustainable CSR implementation plan, and finally manage the experiential learning and knowledge (Prayukvong & Olsen, 2009).

CSR, Academic Services and USR: A Move Towards the Knowledge Society

While the fundamentals and principles of CSR are still widely debated in the business communities, several working groups and supporting organizations, some of the same issues can also be questioned of the operations of a university as an academic organization (Anderson & Cook, 2012). Given the stressed condition of Thailand in the 21st century (i.e., distressing social, economic and political conditions, mass expansion of higher education, commercialization of higher education, internationalization, student access and student mobility, and impact of digital economy), there are increasing needs of society in terms of educating highly qualified graduates and responsible citizens, giving students the opportunity to develop their own full abilities with a sense of social responsibility. It is now essential that universities should recognize their own responsibilities not only as providing skills and knowledge, but also contributing to the formation of citizens endowed with ethical principles, committed to building peace, and defending human rights and democratic values. All these have highlighted the significance of social responsibility of the university and its increased call for the authentic development of human sustainability.

At the dawn of the 21st century, the new social order of knowledge society has highlighted the importance of the university, as an academic organization with multiple missions, and the increased obligation to be a good corporate citizen. The multiple missions of all Thai universities include 1) teaching and producing its graduates and postgraduates; 2) researching and creating the new knowledge; 3) delivering academic services utilizing its expertise and calibrating the strategy of knowledge application for social problems; 4) preserving and enriching art and culture, as well as 5) transferring and developing new technology. The execution of all these missions requires knowledge and scholarship which are the expertise of the university. All these missions are officially stipulated in the charges of both public and private universities. Despite the mission statement, universities are more active in some missions, while less active in others depending on the expertise and readiness of the university, and the resources and supports received from external bodies and individuals. In general, teaching and research are the two most focused missions of the university, while others are also maintained but with varied degrees (Srisa-an, 2015).

"University's academic services to the society" is an addition to the two original key missions of teaching and research. The concept started in the United State and later has been widely adopted as another main mission by numerous universities around the world. Academic servicesrefersto *"the fact that the university is in the position on which the communities could rely, or is an academic reference point, or performs any functions which impact the development of learning and knowledge of the communities, as well as improving the strength of the community, the nation and other countries"* (Shawyun, Al-Karni, Al-Shehri, and Al-Hamali, 2012). The mission of academic services to society gives rise to a variety of terms such as social services and community services.

In most cases, it could be seen that Thai universities provide academic services in a one-way giver-taker relationship in which the services are delivered by the university and received by the people in the community. Occasionally, they are organized collaboratively by the university and the community. Academic services provided by Thai universities have come in a variety of activities, such as knowledge dissemination through academic seminar, advice and consultancy, testing and experimentation, demonstration and joint projects. Each university offers these services in quite a number of formats and in varied degrees depending on two main factors, which are 1) the expertise and readiness of the university, and 2) the current needs of the society. Most of what the universities in Thailand practise as university's academic services are within the requirements and standards of quality management and assurance. Most of the universities will work within the confines of these standards and criteria to fulfill or meet the minimum criteria (Shawyun, Al-Karni, Al-Shehri, and Al-Hamali, 2012; Srisa-an, 2015).

Turning towards the new social order, there is an alternative interpretation of traditional academic services to society towards the more popular term, the so-called **University Social Responsibility or USR.** The term waslaunched in 2008 with the definition of USR, modified from CSR concept, as *"an ethical approach to develop a sense of civic citizenship and socially responsible students, academic staff and faculty members in other to promote social, ecological, environmental, technical and economical engagement for a long lasting and sustainable local and global community"* (Aurilla Bechina Arnzten, 2009). The concept is now spreading throughout universities around the world. USR has become a central topic of positive discussion among organizations relating to higher education (Sawasdikosol, 2009). In addition, USR has been cited as one of the most important factors in driving for the development and reform of the university education system.

Despite the fact that the value of responsibility has strongly been rooted in Thai traditional beliefs, there is very little Thai influence on current USR initiatives. The operations of a university must respond to local needs, taking into consideration the benefit for each locality. It should also think about how to produce a workforce to serve as a driving force for national development. On top of that, there is the need for universities to communicate more with the public, so that they will be better known and their role will receive greater recognition. Since USR is still a very new concept to Thailand and directed exclusively toward institutions of higher education, not enough work has yet been done relating to specific USR concepts and practice in the country. In addition, it is found thatuniversities in Thailand have been practicing USR on a piece-meal basis as envisioned through their visions and mission statements.

In reality, not many Thai universities know what and how envisioned outcomes and contributions of USR can be systematically applied and implemented in the university's prioritization for sustainability. The following section recognizes the need for culturally sensitive, homegrown approaches to demonstrate USR value in the Thai way. The paper places USR in the context of sustainable development and sufficiency economy advocated for the past several decades by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, and then uses holistic relationship management framework with the alternative voice of Thai values to explicate the growing involvement of Thai universities in USR practices.

Holistic Framework: From Glocalization Perspective to Sufficiency Economy

In this section, the paper applies the glocalization perspective as a lens to see today society as the combination of different, but interrelated and interconnected, narratives. To create a better understanding in building local strengths or intensive growth for globalization, Robertson (1995) suggested a more accurate term called "glocalization," originated in Japan as a popular business strategy (p. 28). Khondker (2004) added that while globalization as a framework is naturally biased in favor of macro-macro relationship, “glocalization” as a concept arose to help alleviate the conceptual difficulties of macro-micro relationship. He further concluded that the main propositions of glocalization are: 1) Diversity is the essence of social life; 2) Globalization does not erase all differences; 3) Autonomy of history and culture give a sense of uniqueness to the experiences of groups of people whether we define them as cultures, societies or nations; 4) Glocalization is the notion that removes the fear from many that globalization is like a tidal wave erasing all the differences; and 5) Glocalization does not promise a world free from conflicts and tensions but a more historically grounded understanding of the complicated—yet pragmatic view of the world

In short, the true meaning of glocalization appreciates the significance of cultures, and the construction of diverse localities through global flows of ideas and information (Eade, 1996, p. 4). The glocalization concept can lead to strengthening of local and national identities (Featherstong, 1996; Robertson, 1992, 1995) by bringing together people around a common purpose with shared values that transcend cultural and national boundaries (Culberston, Jeffers, Stone & Terrell, 1993; Kruckeberg & Starck, 1998). Viewed through the lens of glocalization, public relations practitioners are challenged to balance local and global expertise. To this extent, glocal public relations practice should move toward the development of holistic relationships from which the new approach, such as dialogic, diplomatic and collaborative public relations, has emerged (Hayes, 2007).

In the glocalization perspective, a holistic worldview is taking place. It is one that perceives the human being as an organic whole, embedded in the socio-cultural sphere, embedded in turn in the wholeness of the environmental biosphere. Recently, the notion of “holistic approach” has been received high attention among Asian scholars in general and Thai scholars in particular. The recent introduction of an holistic approach based on contemporary Buddhist principles, has great influence on Thai national development.

According to the 11th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2012-2016) based on the philosophy of sufficiency economy, universities are the source of knowledge that produces high quality manpower for the nation's sustainability while creating life-long learning society. A significant shift in the national development planning has taken place from a growth-oriented approach to the new model of holistic people-centered development. In order to ensure a more balanced development, priority was given to broad-based participation, and to actively engaging civil society, the private sector and academia, in the formulation the national development plan. Underling this holistic framework is the view that "strong community" or "civil society" is a foundation unity operating in a social system in connection with environment constituencies.

Socio-Cultural Exploration

It is important to understand that Thailand is a very open country with diverse traditions, values, way of living, and culture; mainly because Thai people often welcome outsiders and like to look outwards (Phongpaichit & Baker, 1998). In spite of its openness to external forces, Thailand has also been known as a country with highly-preserved local cultures. Unlike the East Asian nations, Thailand is a quasi-democratic country where the structure of the state reflects the economic, politic, and social changes. Girling (1996) found that the analysis of Thai society involves many different, yet related, factors such as the assertion of state power, the rise of the business, the money politics, and the emergence of the middle class and the civil society.

The consequence of economic downfall, although causing Thailand a great pain, is waking up the nation to the truth that its past development has been marked by "compartmentalized thinking," which focuses on a few parts rather than a whole. In the reforming paradigm, the nation requires the holistic framework that leads to more participative and collaborative community. In other words, the holisticframework is an initiative concept for a collective decision, followed by collective action that was aimed at the good of all. Relationships formed in a holistic framework draw attention to three units of analysis: macro-social, individual, and psycho-centered levels. As a consequence, the holistic framework facilitates a broader sense of “public relationships” in which a public becomes a society of citizens or a civil society (Mathews, 2000).

In consistency with the holistic framework discussed earlier, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej has suggested that Thailand needs to learn how to become self-sufficient before heading toward success in the global arena. In a Buddhist country like Thailand, holistic development would be good to the point of sufficiency. His Majesty, then, has developed the philosophy of the Sufficiency Economy to lead Thai people to a balanced way of life and to be the main sustainable development theory for the country. Sufficiency Economy, in his context, is a way of life that sees the world in the pattern of relationship-building process operating within existing social and cultural structures in a given community. In responding to the King’s ideas, many Thai sectors have joined hands in promoting the philosophy of Sufficiency Economy, as a holistic framework to build a civil and sustainable society.

Sufficiency Economy as Thai Holistic Framework: The Explication Of Buddhist Teaching

Many Western scholars, who have been interested in Thai culture and society, consider that the complex nature of the Thai community is essentially attributed to Buddhist values (Kapur-Fic, 1998). They suggest that “if one wants to understand the value orientation of the Thais, it is enough to study the precepts of Buddhism” (p. 504).

From the Buddhist standpoint, the glocalization worldview, the holistic framework and the Sufficiency Economy philosophy are all based upon a “Middle Path” way of thinking, the interplay between society at the local level and the market in the global context.

In Buddhist teachings, the *Middle Path*, is the noble way composed of *Eight-fold Path*: 1) proper understanding, 2) proper thought, 3) proper speech, 4) proper action, 5) proper livelihood, 6) proper effort, 7) proper mindfulness, and 8) proper concentration. Beyond the *Eight-fold Path* are two more paths: 1) proper insight and 2) proper liberation. These paths depend on and lead to one another. It is a training method to be used for eliminating clinging, craving and attachment to self (Kapur-Fic, 1998). To develop more generally defined phases for the daily practices, Phra Payutto (1995) incorporates the *Eight-fold Path* to the *Threefold Training*, the three major principles of the Buddhist teachings which starts with ethical and moral behavior and speech, continues on to mental training or concentration, and then reaches the final level of developing insight or wisdom to the point of overcoming ignorance, craving, and attachment.

By highlighting the Sufficiency Economy philosophy through the lens of the Buddhist *Middle Path*, the philosophy allows the nation to modernize without resisting globalization, but provides a means to counteract negative outcomes from rapid economic and cultural transitions. In short, the Sufficiency Economy philosophy and its expected outcomes are best summarized, by His Majesty himself;

> "Sufficiency Economy is a philosophy that guides the livelihood and behavior of people at all levels, from the family to the community to the country, on matters concerning national development and administration. It calls for a 'middle path' to be observed, especially in pursuing economic development in keeping with the world of globalization. At the same time we must build up the spiritual foundation of all people in the nation, especially state officials, scholars, and business people at all levels, so they are conscious of moral integrity and honesty and they strive for the appropriate wisdom to live life with forbearance, diligence, self-awareness, intelligence, and attentiveness. In this way we can hope to maintain balance and be

ready to cope with rapid physical, social, environmental, and cultural changes from the outside world.” (UN ESCAP, 2006).

Holistic Relationship Framework: Repositioning Public Relations Practice in Thailand

In this section, the paper makes further argument that throughout the past several decades USR concepts and practices in Thailand have not yet been adopted on a large scale. It is also questionable if the involvement of those universities practicing USR is merely as an cosmetic activity trying to increase their image and leverage positive exposure in the media. To such extent, it is found that while public relations educators and practitioners elsewhere recognize the significant role of public relations practitioners in helping universities to be more socially responsible, public relations profession in Thailand has been devalued merely as publicists, media relations specialists and marketing support staff. The paper seeks to consider these concerns by proposing the repositioning of public relations’ role in USR practice. It argues that the value of public relations to the universities is the capacity to maintain holistic relationships, to stress ethical behavior in all stakeholder transactions and interactions towards the authentic development of human sustainability.

Albeit that the body of knowledge of public relations has been around for three decades; the practice remained fragmented and existing literature lacks reasonable representation of multicultural experiences. The growing body of knowledge has been ethnocentric, focused on the U.S., to a lesser extent Europe and largely based around management and business thinking (Hayes, 2007, p. 3).Vercic, Ruler, Buischi and Flodin (2001) reflected that twentieth century public relations had been dominated by U.S. scholars and practitioners. The two American-based practitioner organizations--Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), and International Association of Business Communicators (IABC)--each had more members than the International Public Relations Association (IPRA). Major textbooks from both the practitioner and academic press were originated in the U.S.

The global marketplace for public relations services was served primarily by U.S. agencies (p. 374). Only until 1998, the European Association of Public Relations Education and Research (rather changed its name to European Public Relations Education and Research Association−EUPRERA) mandated a task force to produce the European Public Relations Body of Knowledge−EBOK. Yet, the educators and practitioners around the world are being hampered by the lack of an established body of knowledge about public relations practices in different parts of the world (Sriramesh & Vercic, 2001).

As the public relations profession has become a global enterprise, it seems insufficient merely to translate American textbooks for use in other parts of the world, particularly the newly emerging countries, or to undertake country by country studies without reference to other contextual aspects, such as national character, historical background, economy, environment, technology and culture (Hayes, 2007). The demanding increase in multicultural communication puts public relations educators and practitioners at the forefront of managing the relationships among people of varied nations and cultures (Sriramesh & Vercic, 2001). Throughout the world today there is evidence that effective public relations practice requires multicultural knowledge, skill and intellect. In addition, public relations practice and commitment should dedicate to creating stronger ties and sustainable relationships between people and the larger communities to which they belong and depend.

This has stressed the need for a new paradigm with a new mindset that reframes public relations beyond the rationalist model of management and communication focusing on the narrowly defined corporate self-interests, to develop more of a relational, dialogic, collaborative, and ethic-based approach to help organizations, their stakeholders, and society adapt, resolve conflicts, create greater understanding and build sustainable relationship and long-term partnerships to solve multicultural issues (Hayes, 2007).

Recently, emerging terms in public relations literature are mutually beneficial relationships, community, integrating diversity, social responsibility, accountability, collaboration, and sustainability. These terms take on increased significance due to business, organization, and university leaders' desires to reach increasingly fragmented segments of consumers and stakeholders in the global market. Despite the relatively recent emergences of these new terms, acceptance seems to be widespread in both academic and professional areas. Sriramesh (2002) suggested that public relations education would need to stand on two principal pillars: a comprehensive body of knowledge and a pool of qualified educators who can impart, and contribute to the building of, this body of knowledge (p. 55). The question remains to be answered is whether the current public relations education system is adequately equipped to train future public relations professionals to practice effectively in the increasingly multicultural environment in which organizations are forced to operate.

Holistic Relationship Framework and Public Relations' Role In USR Practice

As contemporary public relations scholars begin to shift their unit of analysis to socio-cultural relationship processes, it is hoped that understanding the Buddhist-based Sufficiency Economy philosophy as Thai holistic framework will shed light on public relations' role in USR practices in Thailand. The repositioning of public relations as holistic relationship management will brings with it an opportunity to shape the way a university think about public relations profession, and they can come to recognize the true values of public relations for USR as a whole. In addition, the holistic relationship framework of public relations can help provide a good explanation to the new interpretation of USR as University-Social Engagement. This new interpretation will embrace the social engagement philosophy that based on 4 key principles: 1) university-social organization partnership, 2) mutual Benefit, 3) knowledge sharing & scholarship and 4) measurable social impact. For institutionalization the University-Social Engagement mission, there are two interrelated approaches—1) internal engagement and 2) external engagement (Srisa-an, 2015). Explicitly, university engagement "*implies purposive, respectful and productive interaction between both internal (academics, students and administrative staff) and external stakeholders (industry, government agencies, NGOs and communities) for the establishment of mutually beneficial partnerships. This will involve working together with shared understanding to develop shared solutions, through shared governance and shared assets, with the ultimate aim of gaining shared advantages for all stakeholders* (Kaur Gill, 2014).

This section demonstrates how holistic relationship management framework, conceptually developed from the Buddhist-based Sufficiency Economy philosophy can contribute to public relations' role in USR practices in Thailand. The paper proposes a conceptual holistic USR model [Figure 1] that build upon the work of Gass (2008), Israel (1998), Lasker (2001) and Holland (2004), who have attempted to identify the necessary dimensions of university-community partnerships, and the work of Shawyun, Al-Karni, Al-Shehri, and Al-Hamali (2012), who have established a strategic USR management framework.

Government/ Regulatory

NGO

Issue/Opportunity
(Mutually Defined)

Public Relations (5 Cs)
(Catalyst/Invitation to Partnership)

- Community of Choice
- Consciousness
- Communication

1. Connection

a. Collaboration

(Involvement, Empowerment, Participation, Interaction, Engagement, Organizing, Collaboration, Nurturing)

Internal Stakeholders (University)

- People Responsibilities
- Governance Processes Responsibilities
- Primary Educational Processes Responsibilities
- Support Educational Processes Responsibilities

Threefold-Training Dimensions

Physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being of internal stakeholders and collaborative external stakeholders

(Trust, Respect, Communication, Mutual Understanding of Assets and Deficits)

External Stakeholders (Community)

- Primary External People Responsibilities
- Secondary External People Responsibilities
- Primary External Processes Responsibilities
- Secondary External Processes Responsibilities

Partnership Agreement
Goals and Mission, Governance,
Activity Plan, Resources,
Partnership Assessment
Sustainability Plan

Operating the Partnership
Roles and Norms, Activity
Implementation, Conflict
Resolution, Shared Credit and
Dissemination, Activity Assessment

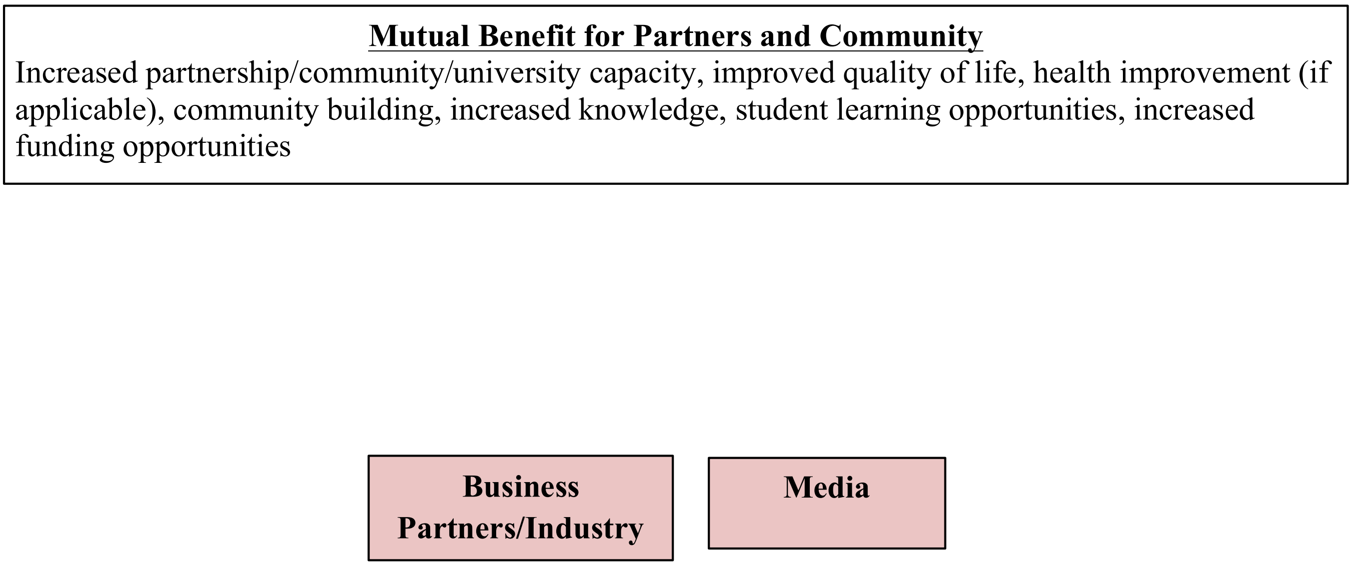

Figure 1. Holistic University Social Responsibility Model

Holistic Relationships Management

Based on the adoption of the Buddhist-based Sufficiency Economy philosophy, this research paper develops an holistic USR model (see Figure 1) to illustrate how public relations plays an important role in the holistic USR practice. The main emphasis is to advocate physical, mental, and spiritual well-being for their collaborative communities. The holistic relationship management scheme focuses on educating and building community cohesion and stakeholder relationships around the central theme of healthy and sustainable lifestyles for individuals and societies. The role of public relations not only shares information but also provides practical tools and techniques for their stakeholders to implement into their organization that enable Buddhist-based Sufficiency Economy values to penetrate into various situations. These values include: authenticity, transparency, honesty, integrity, professionalism and love for mankind and the environment.

Threefold-Training Dimensions

The USR model creates an holistic relationship management system that advocates physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being of internal stakeholders and collaborative external stakeholders. The USR philosophy is about building relationships, based on Thai social values, between university and community.

Collaborative Management System

Under the holistic relationship management scheme, there are three potential channels in which the new collaborative management system is implemented: 1) collaborative share values, such as trust, meaning, community, and ownership, 2) community business ecology, and 3) sustainable market. The collaborative management aims to put together the new structure and new consciousness for an alternative collaborative scheme. This new scheme aims to mobilize the university to work collaboratively with the communities.

This new collaborative management system values the community empowerment and stakeholder relationships. Unlike the mainstream business management, itbrings forth the Buddhist teaching to their business plan by introducing a so-called "The Collaborative Happiness," which believes that *"if people begin their days with good outlooks, the deeds that followed would be righteous, thus leading people to happiness and well-being. People who are happy generally want to make others happy too, which in turn, makes them happier."*

Public Relations' Role in Holistic USR Practice

The holistic USR model suggests two integral approaches: the hard approach and the soft approach. The hard approach develops the physical well-beings of the organization. The soft approach develops the mental well-being and the spiritual well-being of the organization. The model illustrates that the physical well-beings are determined by health and safety (i.e., productivity, quality, and efficiency), economic status (i.e., finance profits, funding, sales, service, and product excellence), and good environmental conditions (i.e., air, water, food, and earth).Mental well-being includes interaction, mutual learning, participation, involvement, corporate culture and values, vision and mission, and employee fulfillment.

Spiritual well-being includes collaborative alliances, partnership, social responsibility and social accountability.

As the hard approach is mainly practised by marketers and those from hard-corefunctions, the soft approach is more related to social practitioners, such as public relations and communication practitioners. Public relations' role in holistic relationship management process can be encapsulated under the following "5Cs": Community of Choice, Consciousness, Communication, Connection, and Collaboration.

Community (Stakeholder) of Choice

The holistic USR facilitates community of choice, in which the stakeholders remain members because they want to be, not because they have to be. In such case, public relations must prove its worth to the internal community as much as the internal community must prove their worth to their external community. Within the social integration system, there are different types of communities/stakeholders. Members of these communities are often looking for personal growth, self-development, and opportunity to serve others. Public relations should play the role of facilitator to help members in each community feel valued and accepted.

Communication

The holistic USR recognises that a good communication system cannot be separated from the more fundamental question of a good society and a good life. Laszlo explains that communication unfolds on multiple levels: 1) communication with oneself means caring for and developing one's consciousness and personality, 2) communication with one's family, community, and work/profession; and 3) communication with one's society. The holistic USR implies that the communication process should be seen as the value-transferred process, rather than one of simply sending messages to the stakeholders. In the value-transferred process, public relations should take into consideration that every content and message should be developed in contact with specific target audience or specific stakeholder linkage, and in relevant to their needs and want with the aspirations of their local culture, values, and traditions.

Connection

One of the great myths of the rationalist paradigm of management and communication has been the skin-enclosed separation of individuals from each other and the disjunction of their interests from the interests of others. Many organizations which followed such worldview appeared to be self-contained, self-centered, pursuing their own interests, harmonized at best with the interests of others through the workings of the market. In the Buddhist teaching, the essential principles embrace the understanding of complexity, plurality, interrelatedness, and interdependence. The holistic USR reflects that individuals and communities are constituted of one another and their relationships are, at one and the same time, mutually supportive and tensed. In the holistic USR, public relations' roles are: 1) to promote social capital, such as environmental concerns, basic wisdom of local communities, and the knowledge of civic groups, 2) to empower local communities, grassroots organizations, activists, and civil societies, and 3) to establish glocal business, social and cultural networks.

Collaboration

Collaboration requires a great deal of win-win positive relationships. The holistic USR enhances communities of strong relationships that value serial reciprocity, or collaboration. Collaboration requires a strong community and values where fairness is maintained about who gets from and gives to the community. Collaboration as authentic relationship is at the heart of the Buddhist way of living, one that calls for individuals to live in accordance with the principles of respect for others and the active pursuit of loving-kindness, mutual support, and shared values. The authentic relationship should go beyond the understanding of a relationship as a transaction market (you get what you give) toward the understanding of a relationship as collaboration (you will get if you give). Public relations should learn how to facilitate the collaborative/authentic relationships with their stakeholders.

Consciousness

The full potentials of public relations unfold when the practitioners understand the strands of holistic relationships through which they communicate, connect, and collaborate with their stakeholders. A high level of public relations calls for a high level of consciousness that enables people to make use of the strands of holistic relationships that bind them to each other, to their community, society and environment. Consciousness of these holistic relations lifts human thinking from the outdated ego-centered level to the urgently needed community, society, ecology, and global-centered dimension.

Conclusion

The major challenge of this research paper is the repositioning of public relations' role in holistic USR that is well-adjusted to the Thai context and the articulation of how the new approach can be brought forward to other universities and the society as a whole. The review of glocalization perspectives, Asian values, Buddhist-based Sufficiency Economy philosophy, Thai values, and holistic relationship management raises interesting heuristic issues for public relations practice in Thailand.

The repositioning of public relations as holistic relationship management has gone beyond the conventional public relations approach that focuses on the self-centered conversation and information-centered communication. The concept abides by the new context of relationship management that incorporates 5Cs: 1) Community (Stakeholder) of Choices; 2) Value-transferred Communication Process that values mutual caring, loving families, strong communities, cultural vibrant and healthy environment; 3) Connection; 4) Collaborative relationship; and 5) Consciousness.

This research paper reflects a call for a repositioning of public relations practice in Thailand, in which public relations should not only be considered as a tool of university, but in its broader, more human applications. It is an approach of establishing an idea in the minds of the public that a product, service, and organization is not only worthwhile, but that it is somehow more than just a product, service, and organization, that it is something essentially important to their lives. It is ultimately the most difficult kind of public relations in the world, but also by far the cheapest, and without doubt the most effective.

The position taken in this research paper attempts to change the paradigm of public relations to a non-Western approach. Will this new public relations mindset sustain itself and live up to its promise? Only time will tell. However, it is hoped that this paper will, more or less, encourage Thai scholars and leading professionals to continue to refine their thinking on several key challenges.

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SHALL WE ASK THEM FIRST? EXAMINING REFERENCE GROUP INFLUENCES ON YOUNG ADULT CONSUMERS' PRODUCT AND BRAND DECISIONS

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Abstract

This research study aims to examine the influences of three types of reference groups on consumer's product and brand decisions. Quantitatively, self-administered questionnaires were used to collect survey data from 400 undergraduate students who are studying in public and private institutions in Bangkok Metropolitan Areas, Thailand. Three product categories were tested and selected to represent a) publicly-consumed, luxurious product (handbags), b) publicly-consumed, necessary product (mobile phones), and c) privately-consumed, luxurious product (perfumes). As a result, informational influence is found to be the most outperformed approach shown to impact on all product and brand selections. Meanwhile, normative influence shows less impact on young adults since they are likely to be an influencer rather than being influenced by others. However, value-expressive influence presents non-significant evidence to explain its power on consumer product and brand decisions. Therefore, this research supports Deutsch and Gerard's (1955) original work with the non-U.S. samples that there should be only two types of reference group influences.

Keywords : customer product, brand decisions, group influences

Background

Many research studies have given much attention to "reference group" in the late 1980s as it is one of the biggest factors that influences consumers' thoughts, attitudes, and behavior (Bearden & Etzel, 1982; Bearden, Netemeyer, & Teel, 1989; Brinberg & Plimpton, 1986; Childers & Rao, 1992). A widely known research from Park and Lessig (1977) defines that there are three types of reference group influences; normative, informational, and value-expressive. Even though many studies have agreed on this matter there have still been controversial issues on their value-expressive dimension on consumers (Bearden & Etzel, 1982; Bearden et al., 1989; Brinberg & Plimpton, 1986; Burnkrant & Cousineau, 1975; Tudor & Carley, 1998). Later research studies either support Park and Lessig's research or oppose it by employing only the other two types of reference group influences, following the original work by Deutsch and Gerard (1955).

As there are many businesses growing and competing in the market place, consumers can choose and compare the products and brands that match with their needs and wants. In consequence, consumers nowadays would behave differently from the past, especially young adult consumers who tend to switch from one brand to another. This results in the declining of brand loyalty (Rick, 2013). However, Taylor and Cosenza's (2002) research found that the young adult consumers often establish the brand preference between the ages of 15 to 25, depending on product categories. Therefore, it is crucial for marketers to understand the behavior of young adults as it can be seen as a long-term investment for businesses. Hence, this research aims to examine the influences of three types of reference groups on consumer's product and brand decisions.

Literature Review

Reference Group Influences

Many past research studies have given attention to how reference groups influence the individual. Even though many researchers have distinguished the definition of reference groups in their own ways, there are some similarities among those meanings. Park and Lessig (1977) state that a reference group is a person or group that has significant effect on the individual's evaluation while Bearden and Etzel (1982) define a reference group as a person or group that significantly influences an individual's behavior. Stafford (1966) summarizes that a reference group is a group that person actually belongs, wishes to belong, or wishes not to belong as it is a personal source of values, norms, and perspectives.

The types of reference group influence were originally proposed by Deutsch and Gerard (1955) who proposed that there are only two types of reference group influences which are a) normative influence or utilitarian influence, which is a desire to conform the group's expectation and b) informational influence which is an acceptance of the obtained information from others (Tudor & Carley, 1998). However, Park and Lessig (1977) then proposed the third type of influence which is value-expressive influence where it is fragmented from normative influence. Value-expressive influence is an influence in which an individual mainly focuses on the self-image concept to comply with the expectation of others (Kelman, 1961). While Park and Lessig's (1977) findings are widely accepted among researchers, few studies have re-examined Park and Lessig's work and have failed to confirm it (Bearden & Etzel, 1982; Bearden et al., 1989; Brinberg & Plimpton, 1986; Burnkrant & Cousineau, 1975; Tudor & Carley, 1998). Later research studies either support Park and Lessig's research or oppose it by employing only the other two types of reference group influences, following the original work by Deutsch and Gerard (1955).

As cited in Piron (2000), Bourne (1957) investigates that the impact of reference group on product and brand decisions are a function of two forms of conspicuousness, which are exclusivity and visibility (Piron, 2000). For exclusivity, it is the factor that can affect a product decision, in which it must be luxurious and possessed by only a few people. For visibility, it relates to the product that is usually consumed or used either publicly, where other people can see one using the product, or privately, where no one can see that individual is using the product. When combining these concepts by Bourne (1957, as cited in Bearden & Etzel, 1982) between the relationship of reference group influence and product conspicuousness, it creates four different conditions: (1) publicly consumed luxuries (PUL), (2) publicly consumed necessities (PUN), (3) privately consumed luxuries (PRL), and (4) privately consumed necessities (PRN). First, publicly consumed luxury (PUL) is a product that is consumed in the public arena and it is not commonly owned or used. Second, privately consumed luxury (PRL) is a product that is consumed out of the public arena and is not commonly owned or used. Third, publicly consumed necessity (PUN) is a product that is consumed in the public arena and virtually everyone owns it. Last, privately consumed necessity (PRN) is a product that is consumed out of the public arena and virtually everyone owns it.

Branding and Consumer Behavior

There are various branding definitions given by many researchers through perspectives of marketers and consumers. This shows that branding issues have been still gaining attention among various sectors. Therefore, it can be seen that brand is the core value of business. Kotler (1991) defines that brand is a name, symbol, design, or combination of them that identifies the good and service which is used to differentiate itself from competitors. Later, Wood (2000) adds that brand should be defined to cover an intangible product as well while Mootee (2013) also agrees that a brand is an intangible asset that lives in people’s hearts and minds.

Similarly, when mentioning brands, people often refer to a name or a logo but a brand includes the whole system in building the concept of differentiation that enhances the value of products or services. This branding concept can be summarized by Kapferer (2008) into a unique set of attributes including both tangible and intangible that can only be developed through a long-term consistency. Keller (1993) states that the component that builds up a brand is called "brand identity" in the perspective of the marketers, or "brand image" in the perspective of the consumers. Moreover, Kapferer (2008) adds that on the sender's side, it is to identify the brand's meaning, objective, and its self-image as an image of the brand. Hence, the identity that is created by the sender later builds up an image before projecting the image to the public with the brand message that can be sent through communication, product, people, or places. On the other hand, brand image is on the receiver's side (consumer) where image in this context refers to the way that receiver (consumer) decodes the signal from the product, service, or communication that is sent through the brand by the sender (marketer).

Therefore, understanding how consumers behave would be a must for businesses. Consumer behavior is a process of consumer buying behavior that links from pre-purchase to post-purchase whereas the relationship of cognitive, affective, and conative of consumer would have an effect on consumer purchasing behavior. Solomon (2013) defines consumer behavior as a study of process that involves individual or groups who select, purchase, use or disposed of products, services, ideas, or experiences in order to satisfy needs and desires. Consumer behavior covers all the stages of consumer consumption process, which includes pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase.

While marketers play a major role in creating and shaping consumer perception toward their product or brand, it is fundamental to know how consumers perceive and comprehend things around them. As mentioned by Solomon (2013), perception is a process when people select, organize, and interpret the sensation from the sensory receptors (eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and skin). Whereas Hudson (2007) defines that perception is an overall mind-picture of the world, which is shaped by information that people send and receive. Since people choose to expose, attend, and interpret in different ways, it can be considered as a concept of bias and distortion.

While consumer perception plays active role in consumer behavior, the term "attitude" is often used in ordinary days through different contexts. However, attitude has a deeper meaning in the context of psychology, which is one of the key aspects that connect other aspects together within the consumer behavior field. Based on the definition of attitude (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975, as cited in Lutz, 1991), attitude is a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner with respect to a given object. Lutz (1991) concludes that attitudes are unobserved internal actions and no one can see it. Even though attitude is a covert behavior, it is often used as a guide to predict the consumer behavior, since many theorists believe that attitudes can lead to action or behavior and it can explain the cause of action.

Based on Lutz (1991), there are two perspectives in terms of theoretical orientations of attitude; tripartite view and unidimensional view. First, attitudes are made up of cognition, affect, and conation whereas each attitude is consists of greater or lesser degree. However, this model is no longer used as Lutz (1991) specifies that attitude is unidimensional that it belongs in only the affective part. For beliefs (cognition) is viewed as an antecedent of attitude while intention to buy and behavior (conation) are viewed as the consequences of attitude. There are several attitude models that are widely accepted by academics, which can be used to explain individual's relationship on cognitive, affective, and conative. In other words, attitude is the key in explaining individual's cognitive and conative parts. Fishbein (1963, as cited in Lutz, 1991) has developed many theories and one of the most popular models is the multiattribute attitude model, which is related with the relationship between attitudes and cognitions. However, the multiattribute attitude model is mainly explains belief and attitude, which cannot accurately measure the behavior. Fishbein (1963, as cited in Assael, 1998), then, made an attempt to better explain the link between attitude and behavior by developing from the multiattribute attitude model, which result as a theory of reasoned action (Assael, 1998). Theory of reasoned action has connected belief, attitude, intention, and actual behavior while focusing on person's intention to perform (or not to perform). The behavior is determining the action as person is expected to act based on intention.

Apart from the needs and wants of the consumers, marketers are eager to know how a consumer chooses to buy products or brands in order to develop a guideline to create effective marketing strategies. Decision making is a process of selecting products, brands, or ideas from several choices. There is a process for consumer decision, which consists of five stages, including problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase, and outcomes. The five steps can be used to describe the behavior processes from the consumer recognizing a problem until the post-purchase step of the brand (Engel, Kollat, & Blackwell, 1973; Solomon, 2013). Nevertheless, Assael (1998) mentions that consumer decision making is not a uniform process. There are distinctions between decision making versus habit, high-involvement versus low-involvement, and how situation influences consumer purchasing decisions. The four types of consumer purchasing decisions are based on the two dimensions; the extent of decision making and degree of involvement in the purchase. Apart from the four types of consumer purchasing decisions, Schiffman and Kanuk (2010) clarify that there are levels of consumer decision making since consumer faces a problem. It can be distinct by the search of information and the process of brand evaluation in order to cope with encountered problems.

Methodology

This study utilizes a quantitative research method by using a survey (a cross-sectional study) to measure the participants' attitudes to product and brand purchase decisions and how they are influenced by their reference groups. It focuses on 400 young adults with the age range of 17 to 24 years old studying in universities around the Bangkok Metropolitan Area, Thailand. Purposive sampling method was used to select the targets from top five public and private universities based on the highest number of undergraduate students. From the 10 universities, 40 students were quota selected from each university. Then, screening questions were asked to select only those who were using the three product categories (handbag, perfume, and mobile phone) that represent the three product dimensions studied.

The product categories that were used in the research are selected from the pretesting questionnaire in order to study how reference group influence on the target's product and brand decisions. In the pre-test survey, all definitions of the three dimensions of product consumptions were given which there are publicly consumed luxuries (PUL), privately consumed luxuries (PRL), and publicly consumed necessities (PUN). The fourth type which is privately consumed necessities was not included in the current study as the previous research showed insignificant results (Bearden & Etzel, 1982). As a result, a handbag is selected to represent publicly consumed luxuries products whereas perfume is chosen to represent privately consumed luxury products. Last, a mobile phone is chosen to represent publicly consumed necessity products.

For selection of brands in this study, the researchers let the respondents think of the name of brand they were currently using most for each product category studied. With this method, it should help facilitate the logic of thinking by each respondent when they answer the questions since there are too many brands in the marketplaces for each product category investigated.

Measures of The Variables

The three types of reference group influences on product decision was measured based on 17 four-pointed Likert scales developed by Bearden et al. (1989) (i.e., 8 questions for normative influence, 4 questions for informational influence) and Park and Lessig (1977) (i.e., 5 questions for value-expressive influence). For the influences of reference groups on brand decision, 14 four-pointed Likert scales developed by Park and Lessig (1977) was used That is, 4 questions were for normative influence, 5 questions were for informational influence, and 5 questions were for value-expressive influence.

After all data was collected, it is coded and analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics, using *t*- tests, *F*-tests, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The significance level is set at .05.

Findings

According to all 400 samples that were collected from the research survey, there are 202 young adult women (50.5 percent) and 198 young adult men (49.5 percent) whereas majority age of 234 samples are 20 - 22 years old (58.5 percent). Moreover, 164 samples (41.2 percent) received monthly allowance ranging from 5,001 to 10,000 Thai Baht. In terms of educational background, 303 samples (75.8 percent) are studying in Thai programs while the rest 97 samples (24.2 percent) are studying in international programs. Among them, 282 samples (71.2 percent) are in non-science fields while 114 samples (28.8 percent) are in science fields.

Reference Group Influences on Consumer's Product And Brand Decisions

F-test was first employed to compare types of reference group influences on different product types (handbag, perfume, and mobile phone). From the post-hoc analysis, the results in Table 1 show that normative influence has an effect on consumer's decision on the publicly-consumed necessity product (mobile phone) more than the privately-consumed luxury product (perfume) ($p< .05$). Moreover, informational influence is found to impact on the consumer's decision toward the publicly-consumed necessity product (mobile phone) more than the publicly-consumed luxury product (handbag) and the privately-consumed necessity product (perfume) ($p< .05$). However, value-expressive influence does not show any significant result.

Table 1

Types of Influences on Product Decision

Influences	***F***	***p***	**Post-hoc Analysis** ***(Handbag, Perfume, Phone)***
Normative Influence	3.05	.048	Phone > Perfume
Informational Influence	14.92	.00	Phone > Handbag, Perfume
Value-expressive Influence	1.23	.29	
Grand Total	6.31	.00	**Phone > Handbag, Perfume**

Next, the findings from Table 2 present the comparison for types of reference group influences on different brand decision (handbag, perfume, and mobile phone). It is found that informational influence turns out to be the only type of influence that produce significant result. The publicly-consumed necessity product (mobile phone) is still the most effective product category that is affected by informational influence, followed by the publicly-consumed luxury product (handbag), and then the privately-consumed necessity product (perfume) ($p< .05$).

Table 2

Types of Influences on Brand Decision

Influences	*F*	*p*	Post-hoc Analysis (Handbag, Perfume, Phone)
Normative Influence	2.77	.06	
Informational Influence	68.21	.00	Phone > Handbag > Perfume
Value-expressive Influence	1.24	.29	
Grand Total	14.46	.00	**Phone > Handbag, Perfume**

Differences Between Product and Brand Types

Aside from the types of reference group influence on product and brand decisions, *F*-test is also used to measure and compare the three types of reference group influence toward each type of product. Table 3 demonstrates that the publicly-consumed luxury product (handbag) and the privately-consumed luxury product (perfume) had the same results, as the informational and value-expressive influences have more impact on consumer's product decision than normative influence (p <.05). For publicly-consumed necessity product (mobile phone), it is seen orderly to be affected by informational influence, followed by value-expressive influence, and normative influence, respectively (p <.05).

Table 3

Comparison for the Product Types

Product	*F*	*p*	Post-hoc Analysis (Types of Influence)
Handbag	47.56	.00	Informational, Value-expressive > Normative
Perfume	35.91	.00	Informational, Value-expressive > Normative
Phone	50.82	.00	Informational > Value-expressive > Normative

Grand Total	128.10	.00	**Informational, Value-expressive > Normative**

In terms of brand comparison, it is found that types of brand also show the same significant results ($p < .05$). But when involving with brands, informational influence became the most effective approach toward all brand studied (see Table 4). For the publicly-consumed necessity product (handbag brands), informational and value-expressive influences are shown to have more impact on consumer's brand decision than normative influence. Meanwhile, informational influence has the highest effect on the publicly-consumed necessity product (mobile phone brands) and the privately consumed luxury product (perfume brands), followed by value-expressive and normative influences, respectively.

Table 4

Comparison for the Brand Types

Brand	***F***	***p***	**Post-hoc Analysis** ***(Types of Influence)***
Handbag	29.67	.00	Informational, Value-expressive > Normative
Perfume	34.44	.00	Informational > Value-expressive >Normative
Phone	92.38	.00	Informational > Value-expressive > Normative
Grand Total	108.45	.00	**Informational > Value-expressive > Normative**

Differences Between Product and Brand Decisions

In this part, paired samples *t*-tests were employed to compare between consumer's product and brand decisions toward each type of product and types of reference group influence. The publicly-consumed necessity product (mobile phone) is found to be affected by informational influence on brand decision more than product decision (p <.05) while normative influence is also likely to mostly influence on individual's brand decision than product decision (p< .047) (see Table 5). Moreover, informational influence is the only type of influence in privately-consumed luxury product (perfume). As a result, the individual is more likely to be influenced by informational influence toward brand decision more than product decision (p< .05). Nevertheless, none of the result in the publicly-consumed luxury product (handbag) is shown to be affected by the three types of influence on product and brand decisions.

Table 5

Product vs Brand Decisions

Product	**Types of Influence**	**Product** ***(M)***	**Brand** ***(M)***	***t***	***p***
Perfume	Informational Influence	2.43	2.58	-4.29	.00
Phone	Normative Influence	2.22	2.29	-1.99	.047
Phone	Informational Influence	2.70	2.98	-8.11	.00

Discussion

This research explores the three types of reference group influences on individual's product and brand purchase decisions. Based on Nelson, Story, Larson, Sztainer and Lytle (2008), the study focuses on young adults with the age range from 17 to 24 years old. The data was collected from 400 students living in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area since these groups of people are financially supported by their parents and spend most of the time with friends in the university. It implies that these groups of target have the purchasing potential and are likely to be susceptible to peer influences.

Based on the research results, informational influence is more likely to impact on consumer's decision on the publicly-consumed necessity product (mobile phone) more than the publicly-consumed luxury product (handbag), and the privately-consumed luxury product (perfume) because mobile phones are comparable in terms of the specification and functional attributes. Besides, consumers often consult peers whenever one has lack of experience of product usage as it is a publicly-consumed necessity product. Normative influence is another type of influence that has an effect on product decision mainly on publicly-consumed necessity product (mobile phone). However, in this case, having or not having a publicly-consumed necessity or mobile phone does not result as a punishment but ones need to conform to own the product in order to show one's equipped and stay connected with the group. Moreover, a mobile phone serves as a main source of internet access while owning a mobile phone in this context symbolizes being well-educated persons who own technological assets with an affordable income to purchase a smartphone (Smith, 2011). Whereas value-expressive influence has failed to influence on consumer's product selection on all three types of product including handbag (PUL), perfume (PRL), and mobile phone (PUN), many studies have seen value-expressive influence as another component of normative influence (Bearden et al., 1989; Brinberg & Plimpton, 1986; Burnkrant & Cousineau, 1975; Grimm, Agrawal, & Richardson, 1999).

On the other hand, the most and the only type of influence that is shown to effect the consumer's brand decision is the informational influence. Among the three types of product dimensions, informational influence is mainly influencing publicly-consumed necessity product (mobile phones), followed by publicly-consumed luxury product (handbags), and then privately-consumed luxury product (perfume), respectively. Keller (1993) supports that consumer knowledge of brand determines how one perceived about the brand. As a result, this leads to several influencing factors that effect on brand purchase decision that consumer tends to seek for information about brand from various sources to reduce their risk of purchasing the brand (Laja, 2014).

Product versus Brand Types: For the types of product, it is likely that informational and value-expressive influences have effects on publicly-consumed luxury product (handbags) more than normative influence does. Since the product is consumed in the public and while it has a degree of luxury, this tends to drive attention among peer influences (Childers & Rao, 1992). Makgosa and Mohube (2007) findings also coincide that young adults tend to conform the expectation of their peers while seeking for information from them regardless of luxury or necessity. Meanwhile, value-expressive influence is another approach that is shown to have an effect on consumer's decision on the type of product. Whereas McFerran, Aquino, and Tracy (2014) findings show that one consumes a luxury product in the public while at the same time gaining pleasure and enhancing self-esteem from owning the product which represents social status, wealth, and exclusiveness.

The consumer's decision on privately-consumed luxury products (perfume) is mainly influenced by value-expressive influence and informational influence more than normative influence. Since the product is not consumed in public, one usually seeks for social gratification and personal achievement with the pleasure of owning or using the product (Tovikkai & Jirawattananukool, 2010). In the meantime, informational influence also plays a role in influencing an individual on decision making due to its luxurious-based nature and high-involvement type of product. As a consequence, one must find information about the product before purchasing it.

The consumer's decision on publicly-consumed necessity product (mobile phones) is found to be most influenced by an informational approach. The reason behind this is because the product is being consumed in the public and it is a necessary product that one needs to own it. Then, one needs information in order to make a careful judgment on the product by seeking for more recommendations from people around them as a useful reference to reduce the social risk (Yi, Yuan, & Kumah, 2013). Moreover, experienced internet users often search for more product information from many websites online (Ward & Lee, 2000).

The consumer's decision on the types of brands containing publicly-consumed necessity products (mobile phone), publicly-consumed luxury products (handbag), and privately-consumed luxury products (perfume) presented with similar results. Based on the findings, the publicly-consumed luxury product (handbag) is shown to be influenced by informational and value-expressive approaches more than a normative approach since the product is luxurious and being consumed conspicuously. Publicly-consumed necessity products (mobile phone) and privately-consumed luxury products (perfume) are also shown to be affected by informational influence, followed by value-expressive and normative influences, respectively. Based on the results, it can be seen that informational influence has the highest influence on consumer's brand decision, since brand names are represented as consumers' gathering for direct information, especially on the internet (Ward & Lee, 2000). Moorthy, Ratchford, and Talukdar (1997) findings also support that when there is a relative uncertainty about brands which mean consumers are uncertainty about which brand is the best, it leads to an increasing of information search.

Product versus Brand Decisions: In terms of consumer's product and brand decisions of publicly-consumed necessity products (mobile phone), informational and normative influences are shown to have effects on consumer's decision. This is because the consumer seeks information in terms of product image and quality to reduce their uncertainty of product and brand (Naing & Chaipoopirutana, 2014). Although, the privately-consumed luxury product (perfume) is shown to be impacted upon by informational influence more on brand decisions than on product decisions, but the publicly-consumed luxury product (handbag) has no effect on any types of influence due to variety of brands among the respondents (Naing & Chaipoopirutana, 2014). In addition, value-expressive influence does not show any significant result between product and brand decisions whereas there are many research studies that have similar results and have gone back to support Deutsch and Gerard's (1955) work that there are only two types of influence which are normative influence and informational influence (Bearden et al., 1989; Brinberg & Plimpton, 1986; Burnkrant & Cousineau, 1975).

Practical Implications

From the topic of reference group influences explored among young adult consumers, informational influence is considered as the most effective one as it has an effect on an individual's product and brand decisions for the product being conspicuously consumed, while in another case is that the product is of a luxury-based nature (see Figure 1). Complexly, while an informational approach has an effect on product decision for public necessity (mobile phone), it also has an effect on brand decision as well. Therefore, it is crucial for marketers to be informative by using various techniques to attract consumer since the product and brand is conspicuously consumed. Hence, the young adult targets tend to seek information from their family, peers, experts, and reviewing websites about the product or brand in order to reduce performance risk, physical risk, psychological risk, and social risk.

For public luxury (handbag) products decisions are shown to be influenced mostly by an informational influence and value-expressive influence while brand decisionsare shown with the similar results. Hence, this can be implied that marketers should provide enough information in order to ensure the quality and strengthen the brand image of the product and brand so that consumers can perceive the value from owning or using it. Moreover, marketers should promote self-fulfillment based on a value-expressive approach in order to enhance on a self-uplifting emotional feeling since it is luxurious-based type of product which is consumed in the public. Therefore, it is very important toward one's self on how others perceive them.

Lastly, value-expressive influence and informational influence are shown to be effective on product decision in private luxury (perfume) as it is privately consumed and others do not perceive that one is using it. However, owning the private luxury product or brand can fulfill an individual's self-esteem which an individual tends to seek pleasure when consuming it. On the other hand, marketers should ensure that consumers can access information available through various channels whenever they want.

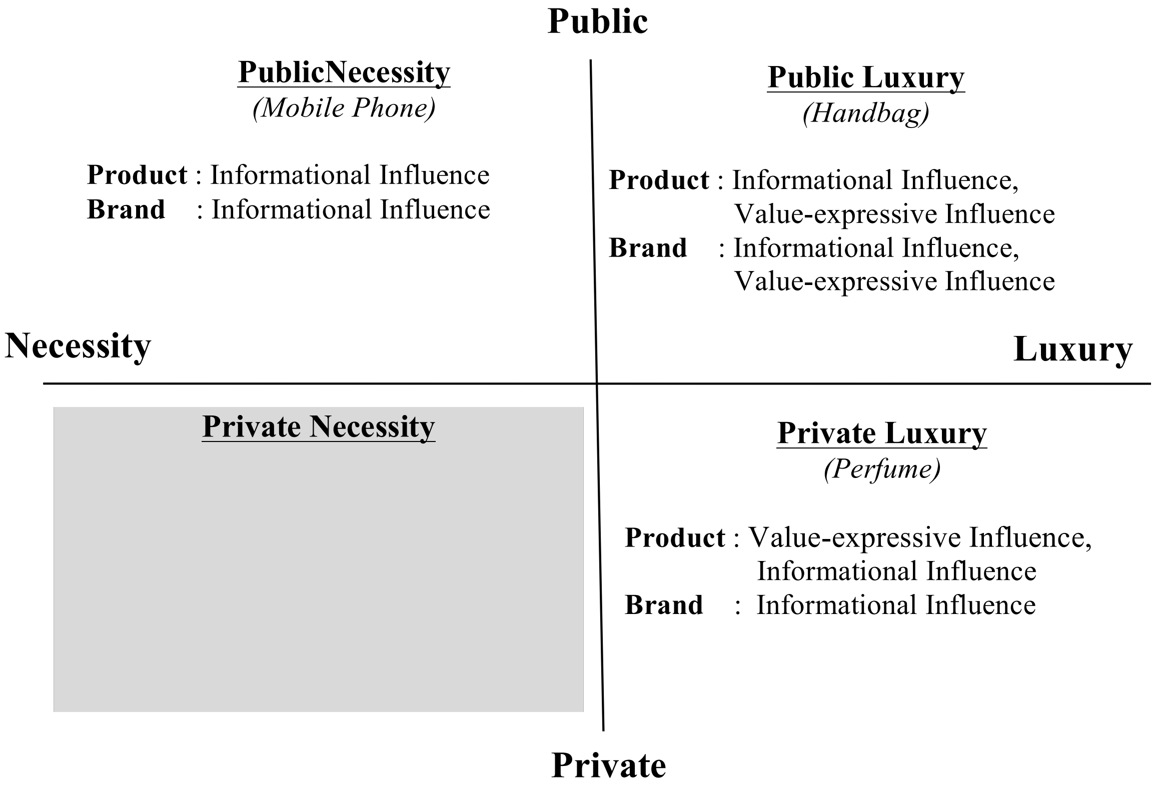

Figure 1. Public-Private and Luxury-Necessity Dimensions

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'JAPAN COOL' AND THE COMMODIFICATION OF CUTE: SELLING JAPANESE NATIONAL IDENTITY AND INTERNATIONAL IMAGE

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Abstract

In this paper, I will explore the dimensions of *Kawaii* as a core value of all aspects of Japanesesociety and how this Japanese 'Culture of Cute' has been embedded, commodified, exported and adopted to become a transnational culture and international image of Japan. This qualitative analysis will focus on: 1/ Kawaii as a peculiar Japanese aesthetic, 2/ Kawaii's central role in promotingimmaturity as key to Japanese national identity, and 3/ Kawaii as a regionalized and globalized culture that increasingly has become part of policy and diplomacy, communication and entertainment and product creation, advertising and marketing to such an extent that it is modifying and defining social tastes, trends and behavior in Japan, Asia and beyond.The aesthetic of *Kawaii* centers on "Baby Schema"; a set of features commonly seen in young animals: a large head relative to the body size, a high and protruding forehead, large eyes, and so forth (Nittono et al., 2012). As replicated in various*Kawaii* art forms such as manga and anime, the attributes of this 'Baby Schema' are designed to elicit behavioral responses rooted in passivity, child-like innocence, superficial playfulness and pseudo- nurturing. Cute culture is designed to promote and celebrate theBurriko (little girl) Syndrome among women and the "Peter Pan Syndrome" among men as an officially sanctioned policy of the Japanese national identity in the face of zero

population growth and an aging population that fears an uncertain future and thus finds comfort in being frozen in a perpetual child-like state. Adulthood becomes less scary if your sex toy is pink and decorated with Hello Kitty, your girlfriend is perpetually Lolita-like or your phone strap is Doraemon (popular among Japanese men).Japan'ssuccess in redefiningits post-World War II national identity and international image as peaceful, harmonious and cute has in turnbecome a rebranded fetishist cultural commodity exported to other Asian countries and ultimately the world,causing a rupture in a global market of heroes, icons, and fantasies long dominated by the [macho] cultural industries of the United States (Allison, A., 2002).. Therefore, archetypical American fare: aBruce Willis GI-Joeaction hero fighting terrorists, for example, or a Superman superhero fighting aliens and bad guys are being surplanted by such Cute Culture iconsasdivaKyaryPamyuPamyu promoting *Kawaii* J-Pop, cosplay and fantasy fashion and Pokemon fighting adorable pocket monsters.This analysis will examine the shifting complexities surrounding the global reach of Japan 'Cool'-Cute culture by discussing the opinions of ardent supporters and virulent detractors both in Japan and around the world.

Keywords: *Kawaii*, Culture of Cute, commodification, transnational culture, Japanese aesthetic, Japanese national identity and international image

Background

The traditional façade of Japanese society is of a culture ruled by regimental uniformity and patriarchal values, where freedom of individual expression is a luxury: perhaps best exemplified by the figure of the "salaryman" (Hammond 1999) and of woman reduced to a subservient role, either as a housewife and mother or pre-marriage twentysomething "OL" ("office lady," a uniformed corporate secretary/beverage server). The contrasting image to this is that of the Japanese Culture of Cute (*Kawaii*), with its focus on perpetual youth and freedom and apparent lack of seriousness, rigidity, rules or conformity. On the surface, *kawaii* and the traditional image of Japanese culture would appear to be at polar opposites and kawaii seen as some sort of rebellious reaction to the stifling conformity of old Japan. However, the seeming modernity and non-conformity of kawaii is pure artifice. The word "cute" can only partly capture nuances of what *kawaii* actually means. The word is semantically rich and cannot be easily defined. Thus, it also incorporates other associated meanings - 'dear', 'lovely', 'pretty', 'charming', 'pet', 'attractive', 'tiny', and 'helpless' etc. *Kawaii* is also related to *kawaisô* (可哀相) which stands for 'poor' and 'pitiable'; and it is related to *kawaigaru* (可愛がる) which stands for 'to love' and 'to be affectionate'. All these words express human sentiments linked to power relations. These power relations combine weakness, submissiveness or humility with domination, control and influence. All these aspects are associated with authority, harmony and hierarchy. Thus, the grounding for the popularity of *kawaii* culture can be traced to the cornerstones of the Japanese culture and society itself (McVeigh 2000).

This concept of kawaii is an integral aesthetic construct of Japan's conscious re-invention of a pure "Japaneseness" designed to differentiate its culture from all other non-Japanese cultures in the face of globalization and an American cultural imperialism that dates back, first to Japan's re-emergence and modernization policies of the late 19th century and again to the post-World War II period. As far back as 1891, Oscar Wilde wrote that Japanese people are the deliberate self-conscious creation of certain individual artists, and thus the whole of Japan is a pure invention.

Therefore, the figure of the stiffly traditional "salaryman" and playful images of kawaii which at first would seem to be incongruous, in fact blend seamlessly together in modern Japanese society. Salarymen, otherwise indistinguishable with their gray suits and cigarettes buy novelty cell phone straps adorned with plastic charms of their favorite cute characters: Thunder Bunny, Cookie Monster, Doraemon the robot cat. Cute is everywhere. They're soaking in it (Roach 1999/2011).

The most obvious appeal of cute to the Japanese is, in large part, the appeal of childhood. "There seems to be this feeling of always wanting to be at that level, of never wanting to move on, to grow up and leave it behind," says Yuuko Yamaguchi, assistant general manager of Sanrio's character-design department (the creators of Hello Kitty). Japan is collectively a society with a 12 year old's mentality and for many there is a strong resistance to grow out of this prepubescent stage. As adults, Japanese people are expected to conform to strict social norms and expectations. Therefore to cope with the harsh realities of adulthood, many Japanese people seek the comfort of cuteness (Nakata 2014).

*Figure 1.*http://onehallyu.com/topic/5903-do-you-ever-fantasize-with-anime-characters/ *Figuure 2* http://www.kawaiistudyjapan.com/?tag=kawaii-anatomy

Cuteness is a function of the resemblance of many elements of kawaii to human infants, to whom we're programmed to respond sympathetically because of their helplessness. Given that Japan has one of the world's lowest birth rates (and one of the highest ages of marriage) it suffers from a surplus of unused parenting instincts. Enter Hello Kitty. "Hello Kitty needs protection," explains Merry White, a sociologist at Boston University who has followed the kawaii phenomenon since the 1960s. Childless adults get obsessed with Hello Kitty as a substitute for offspring. "She's not only adorable and round, she's also mouthless and can't speak for herself" (Garger 2007).

Even more powerful than the need to nurture is the pervasive desire by the Japanese to be nurtured. This deep nostalgia for childhood permeating Japan is not surprising, given that Japanese adulthood is, perhaps more so than in most cultures, a time of onerous responsibility and pressure to conform (Roach 1999/2011). Japanese child-rearing practices, which juxtapose great freedom early on with fierce discipline once school age is reached, also breed fondness for early life. The dramatic switchover helps explain why acting childish (in addition to looking childish) is a key component of Japanese cute

At the pinnacle of Kawaii Inc. is Sanrio, the firm responsible for Hello Kitty, whose likeness appears on more than 20,000 products. While it may just be marketing spin, Sanrio envisions its flagship character as a kind of cute-therapist for the emotionally exhausted masses (Garger 2007).

Unlike any other modern cultural phenomena, cute reaches across gender and generation. The Japanese are born into cute and raised with cute. They grow up to save money with cute (Miffy the bunny on Asahi Bank ATM cards), to pray with cute (Hello Kittycharm bags at Shinto shrines), to have sex with cute (prophylactics decorated with Monkichi the monkey, a condom stretched over his body, entreating, "Would you protect me?") (Roach 1999/2011).

Figure 3. https://uk.answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20091227091453AAv7cni

Japanese ball players who hit a homerun are rewarded with a plush stuffed animal when they cross home plate. Affluent urban women spend millions of Yen on a Kansai Yamamoto couture line called Super Hello Kitty. Teenage boys and girls tattoo themselves with cute characters: Badtz-Maru, the Sanrio company's mischievous crown-headed penguin for boys, and the iconic Hello Kitty for girls.

Figure 4. http://favim.com/image/129761/

Institutionalized Cute

Each of Japan's 47 prefectures features its own adorable mascot, as do official organizations like the government television station, the Tokyo police and the Japanese Defense Forces.

Figure 5. http://muza-chan.net/japan/index.php/blog/japanese-mascots-pipo-kun

An image of Peopo (People's Police), the mascot of the Tokyo Metropolitan Police

Such characters have long been used in Japan to win hearts and minds and to soften the image of authority. This could only happen in a country that is so open to immaturity," said Rika Kayama, a psychiatrist and author. "Authorities here feel it's easier and less threatening to use characters to get the public to accept them, rather than explain the facts" (New York Times 2007).

Prince Pickles, a perky cartoon character with saucer-round eyes, big dimples and tiny, boot-clad feet, poses in front of tanks, rappels from helicopters and shakes hands with smiling Iraqis (New York Times 2007).

Figure 6. http://www.japanprobe.com/2007/02/18/prince-pickles-the-cuddly-mascot-of-japans-self-defense-forces/

As Japan sheds its postwar pacifism and gears up to take a higher military profile in the world, it is enlisting cadres of cute characters and adorable mascots to put a gentle, harmless sheen on its deployments. "Prince Pickles is our image character because he's very endearing, which is what Japan's military stands for," said Shotaro Yanagi, a Defense Agency official (New York Times 2007). Prince Pickles masks the real motives of Japan's leaders, to increase nationalism and flex military muscles abroad. The Defense Agency was upgraded to a full ministry in January 2007 and there are moves to expand military operations with Japan's top ally, the United States. The Japanese government uses cute culture to distract

Japanese society and create harmony, but also a culture of avoidance so people don't notice societal problems.

(AP Photo/Koji Sasahara)

*Figure 7.*A worker controls traffic beside pink bunny traffic barrier near a construction site in Tokyo, Tuesday, July 9, 2013.

The Meaning of Kawaii

The word 'kawaii' is spoken alone or in a sentence, always as a core sentiment unto itself. The Japanese teen magazine *CREA* called *kawaii*"the most widely used, widely loved, habitual word in modern living Japanese" (Roach 1999/2011). Mary Roach, a Salon columnist who writes on popular science and culture described various emotive expressions of the word, 'kawaii' while observing shoppers at the Tokyo train station in a small shop devoted almost entirely to a penguin named Pingu, a superstar of cute:

"Kawaiiiiiiii! The sound came from a girl of perhaps 14, a plaintive, drawn-out keening, equal parts joy ("Look how cute!") and desire ("I want him!"). Minutes later, I

heard it again, from a twentysomething OL (office lady). This time it was more of a low groan, as though the longing to possess was causing a tangible ache."

In keeping with the general aspect of nurturing, kawaii refers to small children, babies and small animals, who are seen as being helpless and needing care and protection. In a culture that values youth, both men and woman are attracted to anything youthful, but more specifically to anything having the child-like characteristics of innocence, purity and helplessness.

Kawaii in Japan, more than merely cuddling cute things is all about 'becoming' the cute object itself by acting infantile. Being cute means behaving childlike which involves acts of self-mutilation: posing with pigeon toes, pulling wide eyed innocent expressions, acting stupid, and essentially denying the existence of the wealth of insights, feelings, and humour that maturity brings with it. In cute culture young people become popular according to their apparent weakness, dependence and inability rather than their strengths and capabilities (Kinsella 1995).

Women want to appear as young girls, naïve and needing protection as long as possible, largely because Japanese men, especially middle-aged men are attracted to young girls. A good example of this attraction is the popular phenomenon of bands like AKB48, a Japanese idol (アイドル *aidoru*-Japanese pronunciation of the English word) girl group comprising 140 girls aged from their early teens to their mid-20s who perform in teams.

Figure 8. http://www.tofugu.com/2013/02/26/the-things-i-do-not-miss-about-japan/

While AKB48 is the most popular, it is just one of numerous idol singing groups: young manufactured stars/starlets who are promoted as being particularly cute role models that everyone loves. Idols must have a perfect public image, be good examples to young people, be adored for their sweetness and innocence,fallen in love with and have a frenzied following (Craig 2000).

Kawaii and the Lolita Complex in Otaku Culture

The irony is that while it is imperative that idols maintain pure public images, they're popularity, especially with middle-aged men makes them a key part of 'Lolicon' (Lolita Complex) in Otaku culture, a major sub-culture of kawaii, some social critics and government officials see as a darker, unsavory side of kawaii dominating Japanese culture with its focus on an erotic fixation on young girls, particularly those below the age of consent, whether real or in anime and manga. The term *otaku,* while generally meaning anyone obsessed with anime and manga, and a somewhat more negative and pejorative version of the English words 'geek' and 'nerd' tend to focus particularly on socially inept males attracted to prepubescent girls. In response to this trend, Tokyo's governor from 1999-

2013, Shintaro Ishihara introduced Bill 156 to regulate sexual depictions of young girls in manga and anime. Although the bill passed in the Japanese parliament, it has been strongly opposed by the manga and anime industry, not to mention *otaku* males, resulting in the law not being stringently enforced. Therefore, this legislation has not been successful in curbing the Lolicon trend in otaku culture. From its inception, the whole concept and aesthetic of kawaii has always had a very strong gender bias towards young females, which serves to fuel the lolicon trend in otaku culture. Female children also are primary users of the word, *kawaii*, which supports the notion that they are acquiring *kawaii* as an index of female gender identity (Asano-Cavanagh 2012).

Burdelski and Mitsuhashi (2010) observe that by the age of five, boys are no longer expected to think of themselves as *kawaii*. The Japanese patriarchal mindset encourages boys to distinguish girls as *kawaii,* while seeing themselves and other boys as *kakkoii* 'cool'. Therefore, the consumption of kawaii images by boys and men falls into two categories: those that are cool, boyish and perhaps tough (but still cute), like Badtz-Maru with which they can identify, and those that are prepubescent and feminine like idol groups or other Lolicon heroines, either real or cartoon, that they can admire and desire.

Responding to Bill 156, Fujimoto Yukari (2011) commented that manga and anime are "not always about the representation of objects of desire that exist in reality, nor about compelling parties to realize their desires in reality." In other words, Lolicon largely exists as ideal fantasy images, often erotic, but always existing in an unreal, fantasy world. There is little evidence that its overwhelming popularity has led to widespread, increased sexually criminal exploitation of female minors in the real world. However, critics such as Naitō Chizuko (2010) have called Japan a "loliconized society" (*rorikonka suru shakai*), where *lolicon* has come to represent "societal desire in a broader sense".

Figure 9. http://forum.nationstates.net/viewtopic.php?f=23&t=174408&p=7504931

Japan has a history of positioning the young girl at the center of consumer and media culture. (Galbraith 2011). Ōtsuka Eiji (1989) argues that the young girl, or "*shōjo*," has become a dominant image in the media, representing consumptive pleasure suspended from productive functions. *Shōjo* [young girls] excel in cuteness, *yōjo* [little girls] in innocence, and both have come to signify an idealized Eros in Japanese culture. The tendency to attribute this quality to females at ever-younger ages can be seen as the inevitable consequence of the spontaneous drive in consumer society to market an unproductive Eros as a new universal - a new commodity (Eiji and Nakamori 1989). John Whittier Treat (1993) comments:

"Magazines, radio, above all television: in whatever direction one turns, the barely (andthus ambiguously) pubescent woman is there both to promote products and purchase them, toexcite the consumer and herself be thrilled by the flurry of goods and services that circulate liketoys around her".

Mass media in Japan communicates through images of young girls (*shōjo*), and comfort-seeking consumers positioned as infantilized and feminized subjects (Hartley 1998).

Figure 10. http://virtualneko.com/kawaii-neko-grunge-neko-sl/

This trend goes as far back as the 1970s, when "*otaku*" males investing in hobbies rather than relationships, turned to the fictional girls (the *shōjo*) of manga and anime (Honda 2005). Itō Kimio (1992) described this as a move towards a "culture of distance," an avoidance of direct physical engagement in favour of visualizing and controlling fantasy objects. In other words, some men could not keep up with the rapid changes in Japanese femininity, particularly in emerging independence and less subservient female roles away from those of the past, and so disengaged from real adult women and retreated into a boyish fantasy world in which, through the images of young girls they perpetuate their own eternal youth and romantic fantasies. Sharon Kinsella (2006) suggests that the *shōjo* possesses her own power, and male viewers *identify* with her to negotiate an ambiguous gender role. Kinsella discusses the *shoji* as a concept scripted by and for men and central to those transitioning from the traditional role of the Japanese patriarchal male to one that has become more feminized and infantilized by this fantasy consumption.

Figure 10. http://de.ffxivpro.com/forum/topic/43593/no-one-does-sexist-like-the-japanese/

A popular indicator of the empowered *shōjo* and the infantilized Japanese *otaku* maleis seen in the popularity and proliferation of the "Maid Café", a growing and integral part of otaku Lolicon culture. Maid cafes first appeared in 2001 in Tokyo's Akihabara district, the centre of everything related to otaku. The waitresses in these small coffee shops dress in French maid costumes and engage in various bizarre rituals that portray customers as masters and husbands, but also children. These coffee shops developed out of *cosplay* (anime and manga costume play)cafes, popular at the end of the 1990s. Cosplay cafes featured hostesses costumed as various characters from anime and manga franchises, but due to popular demand, such costumes soon disappeared in favour of the French maid outfit (Ronen 2007).

The *shōjo* maidisthe new, kawaii version of the traditional Geisha, with her own set of skills and talents, language and personality designed to entertain, but also in many cases to lightly ridicule and emasculate Japanese male customers through comic sarcasm and game play. At maid cafes, waitresses not only dress in a French maid uniform, but also act the part. They address their customers as "master" ("*go-shujin sama"*), greet them with "welcome back home" ("*o-kaeri nasai*") instead of the traditional "*irasshaimase*" when they enter the restaurant and indulge them with additional services, far beyond what is expected from a waitress in a regular restaurant. Depending on the shop, maids are expected to spoon-feed their customers like babies, put sugar in their drinks or cut their food. They must also hold long conversations with the customers, or play party games with them (Hotta 2005).

Figure 11. http://www.midweek.com/hawaii-food-dining/food-fun-ohana-sundays-at-shirokiya/ Photo from Jo McGarry

Also, the maid act employed by maid cafe waitresses often includes feigning helplessness and asking for a male customer's help when some task requiring physical strength or assertism is attempted. Inclusion in the "kawaii" culture not only places maids and maid cafes into familiar territory for the average Japanese, but also reinforces norms of male and female positions within society (Ronen 2007).

The growing obsession of otaku males with the maid café experience has led to the development of maid café-themed products for the lonely male. As the maids are not actually sexually available and in fact always maintain a discreet distance from their customers, customers can fantasize about their favourite maid with such kawaii/lolicon trinkets as a cellphone charm, mouse wrist rest or a pillow that looks like a maid's lower half.

Figure 12. http://inventorspot.com/articles/japanese_maid_cafe_girl_sexy_plush_ball_chain_charm_30460

Kawaii Aesthetics and Japanese Self-Image

The old cultural residue of traditional Japanese female subservience to men is being supplanted by a subtle, but new independence bringing empowerment, increased social responsibility and pressure, which sometimes results in alienation from men. This new empowerment has ironically led women to adopt the characteristics of the *shōjo* to retain or recapture their "girlishness" and appear attractive to men. These little girl characteristics have been the driving force behind kawaii and have thus informed its aesthetic make-up and personality since its inception in the 1970s.

The kawaii aesthetic emerged in 1974 when Japanese teenage girls rejected traditional forms of Japanese writing and began using an informal and cute style of writing. This new writing style led the equally new word *kawaii*, itself to go through a 'cute' transformation from a traditionally rigid Japanese letterform 可愛い to this かわいい a rounder, less formal style. This new style was more westernized than traditional Japanese, using a left-to-right format as well as many English words and slang. The writing was decorated with things like hearts, happy faces, animal cartoons and multiple exclamation marks. There were also many slang words created during this time by using childish pronunciations of regular words. Girls, when speaking would obscure their words to sound like children learning how to speak. This included also talking about oneself in the third person. This new cute writing known as *maru-ji, koneko-ji* or *manga-ji* (*kitten or childish writing)* and childish speaking known as *burikko-Ji (fake child)* was not well received by most adults and was even banned in some schools, being seen as a rebellion against traditional Japanese culture (Kinsella 1995).

*Figure 13.*http://www.tofugu.com/2012/08/09/japan-why-so-kawaii/

The emergence of *childish writing* and speaking coincided with a sudden craze of young adult females acting *kawaii*. What *is* certain is that the childlike behavior was also completely contrived. Therefore, the baby talk, the pastel and lace, and the obsession for *kawaii* trinkets was calculated. But, over time it has become so completely ingrained in Japanese female behavior that it has become difficult to discern the fakery. With the strong undercurrent of *lolicon* in some key aspects of kawaii, it's not surprising that Japanese teenage girls and young women are not entirely innocent, even if trying to appear so. For example, a common expression, the saccharine *nyan nyan suru* ニャンニャンする or "to meow" is a *burikko* euphemism for "to flirt" or even "to have sex." Besides the wide-eyed, innocent expressions, pouting, puffed out cheeks and childlike *(kitten)* poses (fists held to chin, cheeks or head, for instance), another trademark of a burikko is exclaiming Hazukashii! (恥ずかしい) or "I'm so embarrassed!" even though it's clear they're not (tofugu 2015).

Figure 14. http://www.tofugu.com/2012/08/09/japan-why-so-kawaii/, http://naokiss2013.blog.fc2.com/blog-date-201205.html

The physical attributes of the *Kawaii* aesthetic center on "Baby Schema"; a set of features commonly seen in young animals and children: a large head relative to the body size, a high and protruding forehead, large eyes, and so forth (Nittono et al. 2012). In particular, the attribute of large eyes, is due to the proliferation of manga, whose characters almost always have oversized eyes. The origin of this key characteristic is the influence of "Bambi" and "Snow White" on Osamu Tezuka, the Father of Manga. In fact, until Disney's animated movies flooded into the country during the Allied Occupation (1945-1951), the Japanese depicted themselves with stereotypical Asian features, often with smaller than life eyes in *ukiyo-e* (浮世絵) woodblock prints and *e-maki* (絵巻) scroll paintings (tofugu 2015).

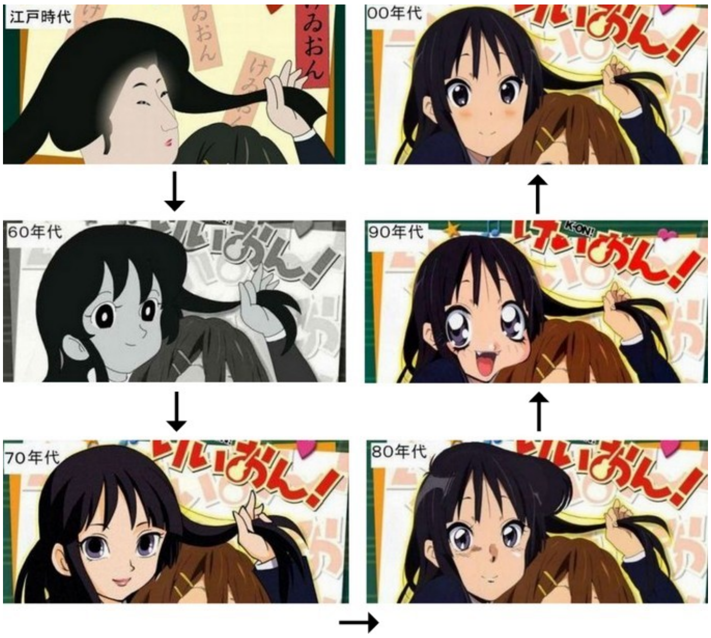


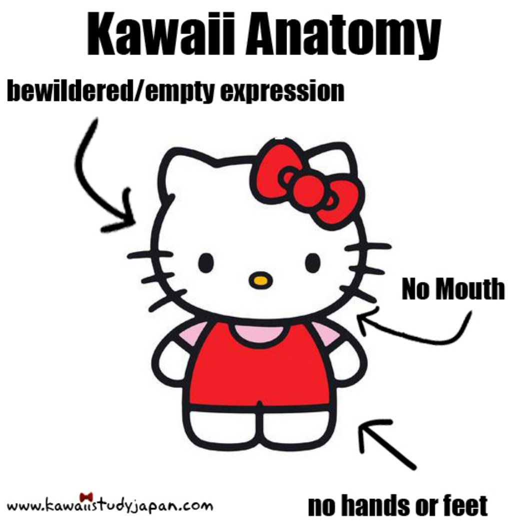
Figure 15. http://www.tofugu.com/2012/08/09/japan-why-so-kawaii/

Evolution of the female face from woodblock print to the big eyes of manga and anime

The recent fashion trend called “Big Eyes” contact lenses is an attempt to emulate in real-life the look of female anime and manga cartoon faces, as part of an overall trend called “living Doll”.

Figure 16. http://blogs.wsj.com/japanrealtime/2013/07/23/5-things-you-didnt-know-about-kawaii/

The common baby-schema characteristics of kawaii cartoon characters and toys that include large heads and small, soft-looking bodies with an air of helplessness are intended to provide relief from adulthood, but at the same time create a pseudo-adult responsibility of nurturing and protection in a country suffering from zero population growth and a rapidly aging population. Kinsella (1995) points out that the essential anatomy for a cute cartoon character to be considered kawaii is small, soft, infantile, mammalian, round, without bodily appendages (arms), without bodily orifices (mouths), non-sexual, mute, insecure, helpless or bewildered. This description is supplemented by Yano (2006) who suggests that many characters are animals or quasi-animals who must be cared for or trained. This is particularly important because as living, breathing, active things, they exist somewhere in between being human but not quite human, controllable but not too controllable, allowing us to project our own selves onto them (Yano 2006).



These exaggerated features are clearly seen in various kawaii merchandise characteristics including the soft and cuddly *Tarepanda* (たれぱんだ), for instance, who is so helpless he can't even walk! Tarepanda only manages to gets around by rolling over and over at the top speed of 2.75 miles/hour.

Figure 17. http://www.quazoo.com/q/Tarepanda

The ability to project oneself onto cute characters suggests in part the reason for their success. This feeling is created by not just a human/animal hybrid character but especially by giving the characters a blank expression. This key element of the *kawaii* aesthetic can be seen in characters such as *Hello Kitty*, who has small expressionless eyes and no visible mouth. Despite this lack of detail or perhaps because of it, the viewer feels the kawaii character can 'respond' personally by being a blank slate onto which the viewer can project their own personalities and emotions. Therefore, the kawaii character not only exists to be cared for and nurtured but also serves as a surrogate for self-nurturing in a perpetual child-like state.

Figure 19. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ana-garcia/hello-kitty-is-how-old_b_6072916.html

It is also important for older people to keep in touch with youth culture. A fifty-year-old woman with a Hello Kitty key ring is showing that she still belongs. And men have to sign up to it, too, if they want to appeal to women (Cwiertka and Smits 2011).

Perhaps no other kawaii character best exemplifies 'baby schema' than Hello Kitty.

"Hello Kitty is not normally given a mouth because without it, it is easier for fans to project their feelings onto the character, and they can be happy or sad together with Hello Kitty."

– Sanrio, the Japanese company that owns the trademark

Hello Kitty was initially developed in 1974 by Japanese novelty company Sanrio Co. Ltd. to decorate writing paper aimed at girls caught up in the *kitten writing* craze at that time. The character was then used to adorn petty merchandise like coin purses and pencil boxes, all targeted primarily at small girls.

Figure 20. http://hellokittybio.weebly.com/first-merchandise.html

However, after Hello Kitty became hugely popular, Sanrio extended the brand to a variety of other products and after 50 years, she now features prominently on the Sanrio website, has dozens of stores and cafes in Japan and around the world, her own touring global show as well as licensing deals with companies as diverse as Mac Cosmetics, Fender Guitars and Mercedes Benz.

http://www.hawaiikawaii.net/2012/hello-kitty-cafe-in-seoul/

Figure 21. Hello Kitty Café, Hongdae, Korea

http://www.makeuptutorialforyou.com/mac-makeup-hello-kitty/

Figure 22. Hello Kitty Mac Cosmetics

http://www.thecarconnection.com/news/1050720_customize-your-smart-car-with-hello-kitty-graphics

Figure 23. Hello Kitty Mercedes Benz Smart Car

Japan "Cool" and The Internationalization of Cute

With the celebration of her 50th anniversary in 2014 with a landmark exhibition put on by Sanrio at Santa Monica Airport in Los Angeles, Hello Kitty confirmed her status as the original and most widely recognized face of kawaii around the world. Over the last decade, Hello Kitty has been joined by a host of other kawaii cultural artifacts spreading the Japanese government's 'Cool Japan' brand across the globe.

"Cool" may be the official buzzword attached to Japanese pop culture by the national government, but if the chants of the 20,000 strong audience who turned out for the Kawaii!! Matsuri two-day festival held on April 20-21 [2013] are to be believed, the word *kawaii* still dominates (Samuel 2013). A brief glance at the April 2013 festival lineup headlined by the current International Ambassador of Kawaii, musician Kyary Pamyu Pamyu went far beyond a teen-oriented notion of cute to present a range of events that ran from cosplay (costume play) shows featuring video-game characters to fashion shows by credible brands and boutiques, followed by performances by idol acts that would ordinarily be confined to otaku-central in the Akihabara district of Tokyo.

Kyary has been the catalyst for a renewed interest in Japanese pop culture abroad since her first single "Ponponpon" and its video became a viral hit internationally in 2011. The YouTube clip has since chalked up a staggering 47 million views. Originally a street-fashion icon and blogger, Kyary has moved on to be the face and voice of the kawaii generation, and was officially titled as such by the mayor of Tokyo's Shibuya Ward in 2012 (Samuel 2013). When interviewed in 2013 by Thomas Samuel for the Japan Times, Kyary said:

As someone living and breathing kawaii culture and music, and whose style grew out of walking the streets of Harajuku [the kawaii fashion district]*, I just want to reveal that culture to the world. Now that I have a platform to do so, I want to help make the concept of kawaii into a bridge between Japan and the world.*

http://www.totes4tikes.com/2014/internationalization-and-innovation-of-kawaii/

Figure 24. Lady Gaga and Kyary Pamyu Pamyu

Kyary is representative of Japan's conscious efforts to spread its soft power 'Cool Japan' brand globally. The concept of 'soft power'- the ability to indirectly influence behavior orinterests through cultural or ideological means - became popular after the publication of David McGray's article titled ¤Japan's Gross National Cool¤ (2002). ¤Cool Japan¤ linked to the concept of soft power has been embraced by Japanese scholars and policy-makers, and has joined the nation's mainstream discourse (Lam 2007 cited by Garvizu 2014) becoming central to the government's use of 'cute' to achieve its international objectives. In 2007, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) proposed sending cartoon artists abroad as cultural ambassadors, and the government created an executive panel to advise on ways to market Japanese kawaii and otaku culture to foreign audiences. It was argued that international interest in Japanese kawaii culture would translate into positive acceptance of Japanese foreign policy.

*"The more positive images pop into a person's mind, the easier it becomes for Japan to get its views across,"*Japan's foreign minister, Tarō Asō said in a speech in 2007 to student animators at Tokyo's Digital Hollywood University, whom he called the*"people involved with bringing Japanese culture to the world"*(New York Times 2007).

The 'cute' offensive seems to have worked immediately. During Japan's mission to Iraq, the military decorated water trucks with a figure from a globally popular Japanese soccer cartoon, variably known as Captain Tsubasa in Japanese, Flash Kicker in the United States and Captain Majed in Arab countries.

Figure 24. http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/shiryo/hakusyo/05_hakusho/ODA2005/html/honbun/hp200000000.htm

"Everybody loved it," said Aki Tsuda of the Foreign Ministry's aid department. *"Cultural diplomacy could be one of the most effective tools of Japanese diplomacy,"* said Hiro Katsumata, a research fellow at the Institute of Defense and Strategic Studies in Singapore (New York Times 2007). The international consumption of Japanese anime, manga and other aspects of 'Cool' kawaii culture by a younger generation of fans, who will eventually fill leadership roles in their own countries, is expected to greatly benefit Japan's image abroad in the future.

In an address to the Japanese parliament in 2005, then Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi announced a policy of promoting businesses that capitalized on pop cultural content such as anime as a response to the already high level of interest in Japanese animation that began as far back as *Astro Boy* broadcasts in the United States in 1963. By the early 2000s, anime had become a mainstay globally with Hayano Miyazaki's *Spirited Away* surpassing $10 million in gross box receipts in the US alone by September 2003 (Cannon 2012) and winning the Academy Award for best animated picture in 2003. In 2005, Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs also conducted a program bringing cultural journalists from around Asia to

Japan in order to formally introduce them to Japanese pop culture and in particular, anime and manga that already enjoyed a high level of popularity throughout Asia. The purpose of this 11-day media event was to make this key aspect of ‘Cool Japan’ more widely known in the reporters’ respective countries in response to the popularity of Japanese pop culture which was already an ongoing trend, in vogue among Asian youth (MOFA 2005a as cited in Canon 2012).

Outside of Asia, no less a celebrity than Lady Gaga has been a major promoter of Kawaii culture. In fact, Hatsune Miku, a massively popular Japanese “digital” pop star, was her opening act for the first leg of her ARTPOP Ball tour in 2014. Miku is a personification of a highly sophisticated voice synthesizer program. She’s a bubbly, Manga-styled 16-year-old with long blue hair who is projected as a hologram in live shows and a future trend in Lolicon otaku culture, wherein the fantasy girls will be able to jump from the virtual world of manga, anime and video games to literally the center of the real world (Internationalization 2014).

Figure 25. http://www.c-k-jpopnews.fr/2014/04/18/hatsune-miku-participera-au-artpop-tour-de-lady-gaga/\

http://www.totes4tikes.com/2014/internationalization-and-innovation-of-kawaii/

Figure 26. Hatsune Miku appearing “Live” in Lady Gaga’s ARTPOP Ball tour, 2014

What makes Japan successful in its marketing of games, comics, and cartoons is not simply technological or business prowess, but what some call the ‘expressive strength’ (*hyo¯genryoku*) of Japanese creators. According to some, the stories, images, and ideas generated by these products constitute an ‘international common culture’ in which Japan’s contribution is both significant and historically unprecedented (Allison 2003). Intertwining intimacy and commodification has been at the center of the “Play” industry in Japan, but also a more general trend in what is called character merchandising or the selling of cuteness. Since the late 1970s, there has been a successful international marketing of cute character creations: the blue robotic cat, Doraemon; Sanrio’s femmy white cat, Hello Kitty; the droopy, cuddly panda, Tarepanda; the yellow electric-charged Pikachu (The Cultural Politics 2015), not to mention the growing popularity of what is still a niche market with cult status, yet globally widespread: adult kawaii, including cosplay and Lolicon staples like idol groups, maid cafes, “living dolls” and *shōjo* anime and manga with an erotic edge.

http://www.bangkok.com/magazine/maid-cafe.htm

Figure 27. Maid café in Bangkok

International anime/manga and cosplay conventions, where global 'otaku' fans dress as their favourite anime and manga characters are hugely popular. For example, there are literally hundreds of anime/manga and cosplay conventions throughout the year in Asia, Europe and the US with "one of North America's largest celebrations of anime and East Asian popular culture" (Animecons 2015), OTAKON in Las Vegas and the traveling 2015 Wizard World Comic Con in New Orleans, both on January 16-18, 2015.

Figure 28. http://wwno.org/post/photo-gallery-2015-new-orleans-comic-con

Conclusion

The global reach of kawaii and the official commodification of its cultural artifacts through “Cool Japan” has been successful in promoting the “soft power” image of Japan. Cute/cool provides global currency in a market trade of youth culture that spans continents and oceans. At a time when Japan’s political regime faces fierce global and domestic critics, when its economic ascendancy faces challenges from that other East Asian giant—China—as well as the overall global downturn, and when its self-defense force questions its possible role in international disputes, retreat into the easy comforts of soft power cute/cool sounds like a welcome respite (Yano 2009).

Asking “Is Japan too cute?” some critics in Japan and abroad have expressed concern over the country’s image, as it relies on the exportation of frilly youth culture. There is concern that the new cultural capital in youth-oriented, feminized cuteness trivializes Japan as infantile and superficial (Yano 2009).

Given the insular, protective nature of Japanese culture that resists change and external influences combined with institutionalized immaturity resulting from the national obsession with all things kawaii, Japan increasingly faces the challenge of being taken seriously.

If the Japan of old was epitomized by sober, warrior-infused masculinity accompanied by gracious kimono-clad women in an atmosphere of high aestheticism, then this newly promoted Japan may be epitomized by pink-clad girls, animated fantasies, and winking Kitty logos. In the process, the masculinized image of Japan at work (including wartime sacrifices, high-yieldproductivity, and nose-to-the-grindstone education) has given way to that of feminized Japan at play. In fact, it is not only *Japan at play*, but *Japan as play*, that loads the message (Yano 2009).

Such assumptions, often dismissive or reductionist, evince an underlying uneasiness with kawaii, its manner of production, its emotional appeal, its Japanese origin (Brown 2011).

But, while the light-hearted commodities of kawaii have spread across the world as cultural ambassadors of the image of the new Japan, it should not be assumed that the Japanese lack substance and are superficial. The root of the apparent frivolous nature of kawaii culture is actually quite serious and fundamentally at the core of modern Japanese society: the overriding sense of dependence and the need to care for and be cared for, exemplified by the term *amae* (甘え) coined by the Japanese psycho-analyst Doi Takeo (Doi 1992 cited by ElDidechabo, 2011). According to Doi (1992) the concept of *amae* means "to depend and presume upon another's love or bask in another's indulgence".*Amae* plays a fundamental roll in the *collectivist society* of Japan where individualism is discouraged and people defer to group power (Garcia, 2011). Kawaii behavior and the cute commodities that have institutionalized kawaii support the concept of *Amae* and help in the process of creating harmonious interconnections inside the family, in the companies and between friends. Japanese do not usually confront each other and it is rare to see Japanese people arguing. Therefore *amae,* underpinned by all the trappings of kawaii is calculated to keep the harmony and peace in Japanese society. As modern and pervasive as kawaii may be, it is in the end a tool to provide sanctuary within the status quo in a Japan under pressure both internally and externally in a globalized world.

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THE FACETS MODEL OF EFFECTS AND ISLAM IN INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION: THE CASE OF GUBUGKLAKAH IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

This study examined the integrated marketing communication (IMC) campaign of a tourism village (Desa Wisata) named Gubugklakah (later DWG) in Malang, Eastern Java, Indonesia. In 2010, a group of students from Gadjah Mada University had the idea of turning Gubugklakah into a tourism village because of its natural resources and strategic location as it is on the alternative path to the active volcano, mount Bromo. The village was promoted by way of the Kuliah Kerja Nyata (KKN) program that is a three-year project that works by sending out a group of 30 students from various departments each year for about one and a half months there to mingle, work in teams with the local youth, and promote the village as a tourism village. In 2012, the main project by the students was complete but the villagers continued with the tourism campaign on their own. In only two years until 2014, they successfully obtained a turnover of 500 million rupiah each month as there was an increasing demand from tourists to visit their village. Before that, most of the villagers worked as farmers and they did not make any profit from their natural resources other than farming. In view of this, the newly established Gubugklakah is chosen for this qualitative case study, by examining how an IMC campaign had effectively been conducted to promote the village to be successful in just a few years guided by the facets model of effects. With the growing number of Muslim travelers globally, the importance of Islamic tourism that is travelling which is not contrary with Islamic law in terms of being harmful to tourists and the larger society (Laderlah, Rahman, Awang, & Man, 2011) in this case study is apparent. This study also examined DWG from the Islamic perspective. The findings suggest that four marketing communication tools were used in accordance with the six facets model of effects: perception, affective, cognition, association, persuasion and behaviour and that DWG is a Muslim friendly tourism village. This study contributes to current knowledge by bridging the gap between theory and practice and by examining a successful IMC campaign using the facets model of effects and from the Islamic perspective.

Keywords: integrated marketing communication, facets model of effects, Gubugklakah, tourism village, Islamic tourism

Background

An integrated marketing communication (IMC) campaign by a successful tourism village is the focus of this research study. The once idyllic village where farming was its mainstay elevated its economic wellbeing by promoting its attractions and those nearby to tourists while preserving its local identity. The balance is admirable and the success story inspiring.

Background

"Integrated marketing communication identifies the dynamics of today's marketplace and teaches us how easy it is to prosper under the new rules of communication." (Fizdale and Leo Burnett as cited in Semenik, 2002, p. 25) New rules here refers to the re-orientation from the previous traditional communication strategies that were premised on mass communication and focusing on generalized messages to large segmented audiences into contemporary strategies that utilize personal, customer-oriented and technology-driven approaches (Fill, 2013, p. 294).

Based on this definition of IMC, the purpose of this study is to examine an IMC campaign using the facets model of effects (Moriarty, Mitchell, & Wells, 2012). The IMC campaign is for the tourism village named Gubugklakah in East Java, Indonesia. The reason for the choice of this tourism village as a case study is because the people of Gubugklakah have carried out one of the more successful tourism IMC campaigns in Indonesia that has been generating a lot of income. This village has many potential natural resources such as apple fields, waterfalls, rivers, a jungle, and many more that were not been uncovered until 2010.

In the middle of 2010, some students from Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) arrived in Gubugklakah. The students and the villagers ran a three-year project and turned Gubugklakah into a tourism village. Most of the villagers previously worked as farmers and did not make any income from their natural resources other than through farming. But when the village became a tourism village, they began promoting the tourist attraction sites in and surrounding their village and made a lot of profit for the local community. Gubugklakah also won awards in Indonesia in its capacity as a tourism village. In view of these reasons, Gubugklakah was selected for this case study.

KKN-PPM UGM

Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) is proof of the independence of the Republic of Indonesia (LPPM Universitas Gadjah Mada, 2013). As a "university of struggle", UGM is determined to always serve the interests of the society.

According to LPPM Universitas Gadjah Mada (2013), since 1951 UGM students were sent outside of Java to teach in high school. This activity was referred to as the Student Deployment Force. Unfortunately, the activity was halted in 1962 due to the financial crisis. Service learning activities were then initiated by Prof. Koesnadi Hardjasoemantri, SH, a legal expert from UGM in 1971. From then on, the service learning activities had been retained as a mandatory activity for UGM students until present.

Also, on the basis of the historical considerations of the birth of UGM and the service learning activities, UGM believes it has a moral obligation to maintain the image and quality of the service learning activities (LPPM Universitas Gadjah Mada, 2013).

According to LPPM Universitas Gadjah Mada (2013), the learning activities were premised on the empowerment paradigm, and renamed as KKN PPM (Learning for Community Empowerment). The basic principles of KKN PPM are: the integration aspect of tri dharma college, empathy-participatory, interdisciplinary, comprehensive-complementary, wide range dimension, and Realistic-Pragmatic and environmental development. The principles of implementation of KKN-PPM are: co-creation, co-financing/co-funding, flexibility, sustainability, research-based community service and continual improvement.

In 2011, as a student of UGM, the principal researcher also joined the KKN-PPM team, continuing the main project of the tourism village of Gubugklakah in Malang, East Java in Indonesia with many sub-projects in the second year. The project in 2011 had 15 students from various departments and faculties such as the Faculty of Economics, Business and Finance, Faculty of Psychology, Faculty of Industry and Animal Science, Faculty of Agricultural Science, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Medical and Nursing, Faculty of Math and Sciences, the Electric and Instrumental Department, and from the Faculty of Cultural Sciences which are the Korean Language Department and Archeology Department (LPPM Universitas Gadjah Mada, 2013).

Gubugklakah

The tourism Village of Gubugklakah abbreviated as DWG is located in the Eastern part of Poncokusumo, approximately 23 kilometers from the city of Malang, East Java in Indonesia. It lies at the foot of an active volcano, Mount Bromo.

This tourism village has a beautiful view and characteristic mountain breeze making the place cool. The name Gubugklakah is a combination of Gubug meaning 'house' and Klakah meaning 'bamboo tree'. So, Gubugklakah is a dwelling made of split bamboo. It is a symbol of the poverty that the population suffered earlier.

In the last four years, the development of tourism in Gubugklakah has continued to show strong growth as many tourists have visited Mount Bromo, Semeru, or Tengger. In addition to traveling to the mountain, tourists often stayed at homestays in Gubugklakah. Here visitors participate in the various activities organised by the villagers.

As a tourism village, the village has several destinations located in Gubugklakah itself. The sites named agro tourism Apples, Amprong river rafting, and Coban Pelangi (rainbow waterfalls). And in tour packages offered, it also includes tourist destinations such as Mount Bromo, Ranu (Lake) kumbolo and Ranu (Lake) pani (nGalam.web.id, 2015).

Gubugklakah village is the first village at which tourists stop when they head to Bromo. The Village Tourism Organization (Ladesta) Gubugklakah was formed, later known as the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) Gubugklakah. On 20 August 2010, Gubugklakah was known by many tourists as a tourism village. Many attempts have been made by Pokdarwis to empower people to have homestays, and employ local people to be Bromo travel guides in the apple picking activity, to pick up people from the station to other tourist sites, and coordinate travelling by transportation services. After the founding of Pokdarwis, the economy of the Gubugklakah community improved.

On 27 September 2014, the tourism village Gubugklakah was awarded the third prize of the national top 10 tourism village award in 2014 in Indonesia. The award was received by Purnomo Anshori, the chairman of DWG, and was given by the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy (Menparekraf) Mari Elka Pangestu. The award was given in Banjar Hall Pakraman Jasri, Karangasem, Bali in Indonesia.

Soonafter, on 21 October, 2014, Gubugklakah won the first prize in the Travel Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) championship held in the District Pokdarwis Kete Kesu, North Toraja Regency, in South Sulawesi in Indonesia.

Rural Tourism

Rural tourism is the demand for tourism facilities in rural areas (Park & Yoon, 2009). In Korea, rural tourism offers farmers opportunities to diversify and generate income. The Korean tourist is demanding rural tourism facilities and this supplemented by a large Government investment in the industry making studying rural tourism in Korea of great importance according to the writers. Rural tourism is an excellent way of rejuvenating the rural economy in Korea.

Research Questions:

- What are the marketing communication tools that have been used to promote Gubugklakah?
- What are the objectives of the IMC campaign for Gubugklakah?
- Which facet(s) of the facets model of effects have been used to guide the IMC objectives?
- How effective is the IMC campaign in relation to the facets model of effects?
- How is Gubugklakah a Muslim-friendly tourism village?

Objectives of the Study:

- To determine the marketing communication tool(s) that has/have been used to promote Gubugklakah.
- To determine the objective(s) of the IMC campaign for Gubugklakah.
- To determine the facet(s) of the facets model of effects that has/have been used to guide the IMC objective(s) in Gubugklakah.

- To determine the effectiveness of the IMC campaign in relation the facet(s) model of effects.
- To examine Gubugklakah as a Muslim-friendly tourism village.

Methodology

'Case studies are useful if you want to capture the complexity of a phenomenon, including its intricacies and its context.' (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 109) A case study is distinguished from ethnography and grounded-theory research by its need for a theoretical perspective from the outset (Yin, 2003, 2009). The facets model of effects was chosen as the theoretical framework for this research study. It is a single case study that attempts to examine the integrated marketing communication campaign of a successful tourism village.

Qualitative Research

The case study is a qualitative research study. This method basically involves several methods of data collection such as interviews, focus group discussions and ethnography (Silverman, 2005). This study comprised the collecting and examination of documents and the conducting and examination of interviews.

Interviews

The purpose of interviews is to get into somebody's head and enter into his or her perspective. In-depth interviews differ in form. Interviews can be more structured and directed. They are a type of research where perceptions are interesting as they present external reality. Interviews that seek knowledge from marketing managers could be an example of this form of interview(Carson, Gilmore, Perry, & Gronhaug, 2001).

Interviews were carried out with the marketing manager of Desa Wisata Gubugklakah and the marketing manager of two travel agencies that were involved in the Gubugklakah campaign.

Content Analysis

Content analysis is beneficial in making sense of the history and development of a company in terms of the promotions and products (Carson, et al., 2001). In this research study, content analysis was conducted on materials collected on DWG and KKN UGM.

Documentary Analysis

Secondary data information came from the official website of DWG, the official page of DWG on Facebook, and several television programs and a video on YouTube and the official website of LPPM UGM.

Previous Research Studies

A study by Wang, Wu & Yuan (2009) was with the purpose of exploring the role of IMC on the visitors' selection of a heritage destination. A survey was conducted in a popular heritage township in Taiwan. The results from the 197 questionnaires indicated that the communication tools for message delivery can be placed under three headings "public relations (PR)", "advertisements", and "direct sale and promotion". The results were that visitors aged 30 years and younger, who received higher education, would have a better opportunity than those aged 50 and older to take pleasure in heritage tourism. The results of this study suggested that public relations as a type of communication affects people who are middle-aged and living in Taiwan. Advertisements affect younger people with lower monthly income. When compared to public relations and advertising, direct sales & promotion more effectively impacted those who are younger than 50 years old and living in Taiwan. However, the study focused on visitors to find out the role of IMC in their choice of a heritage destination while in this study, the focus was on the marketers or the tourism village itself.

Another research study on tourism was conducted by Kulluvaara & Tornberg (2003). It was a case study of IceHotel to investigate how the IMC strategy and marketing communication tools were used. This study shows that the marketing communication tools focused on public relations and product placement or positioning. The hotel used ice as a product in promoting the hotel through the internet to a global audience. The communication objectives were to create and maintain awareness, interest, desire, and action in all target groups, especially where the trend is favourable, and by implementing a consistent message throughout the different campaigns that were aimed at dissimilar target groups. The Icehotel built a strong brand identity and image through their choice of collaborators that had comparable brand images.

Another study by Park and Yoon (2009) looked at segmenting and profiling the motivations of tourists for attaining a better comprehension of rural tourism in Korea. A survey was carried out and a factor analysis found four different segments: family togetherness seeker, passive tourist, want-it-all seeker, and learning and excitement seeker.

Giles, Bosworth, & Willett (2013) conducted research by analysing marketing communication from the Cornish and Northumbrian tourism and regional development agencies. The Interaction Model of Communication and principles underpinning integrated marketing communications (IMC) were used in the study. Place promotion is the employment of promotion to market geographic places (Gold & Ward, 1994). The study found that place branding must consider all audience members. The image conveyed through marketing communication messages must match the aspirations of the concerned places concerned. Ideally, the marketing communication images should be congruent to the local identities that '…can penetrate peoples' deeper consciousness.' (Giles, et al., 2013, p. 8) Hence, local support of marketing communication messages is essential in their success.

Another study (Bulearca & Bulearca, 2011) critically analysed Romania's "Land of choice" IMC campaign by focusing on brand building. It was structured on Lee and Park's four dimensions framework and the IMC campaign was examined in accordance with message relevance or integration, databased-centred communications, relationship marketing efforts and an analysis of Romanian nation-brand in related to Dinnie's Nation Brand Equity (NBEQ) model.

From the previous literature, it appears that there is the need to examine a case study of a successful IMC campaign by a tourism village that has managed to contribute to the local community in several beneficial ways. The facets model of effects will be employed to gauge the IMC campaign objectives and effectiveness (Moriarty, et al., 2012).

IMC

> IMC can represent both a strategic and tactical approach to the planned management of an organization's communications. IMC requires that organizations coordinate their various strategies, resources and messages to enable a meaningful engagement with audiences. The main purposes (of IMC) are to develop a clear positioning and encourage stakeholder relationships that are of mutual value.(Fill, 2013, p. 304)

The key points are that IMC comprises a strategic and tactical approach to the management of an organization's communications, that the strategies, resources and messages are to be coordinated for an important engagement with audiences and that relationships ought to be established with an obvious positioning for the product determined.

Marketing Mix

A complete IMC plan touches all aspects of the marketing mix that comprises the four Ps: product, price, place and promotion. In order for the IMC plan to present a unified message, all elements of the marketing mix have to be combined (Clow & Black, 2014). IMC is the practice of managing all marketing communication messages as well as the messages from the marketing mix (Moriarty, Mitchell, & Wells, 2014). The key principle of IMC is that it sends a consistent message about the brand.

Product

The focal point of the four Ps is the product (goods, services, ideas) of which the key elements of its success are the design, performance and quality (Moriarty, et al., 2014). A well-performing product sends a positive message that motivates repurchase and a recommendation to others. Product management is the most apparent effect of promotion in the marketing mix (Semenik, 2002). The “product” area of the marketing mix is brand management in a firm. Effective communication by way of promotion provides a brand with a considerable competitive advantage.

Price

Consumers look further than the product and its features when making their purchasing (Semenik, 2002). They weigh price against product features. Pricing can communicate the message of prestige or otherwise for a brand (Moriarty, et al., 2012). The handling of price in marketing communication conveys a message that puts the price or value proposition into perspective (Moriarty, et al., 2014).

Place

The effect of promotion on distribution or place of the marketing mix is mainly to secure distribution with the trade (Semenik, 2002). Promotional tactics can also affect consumer’s access to a brand in retail outlets by encouraging store traffic.

Promotion

Promotion is the most visible part of the marketing strategy since advertising and other promotional activities are the primary ways of communicating with tourists as the target market (Heath & Wall, 1991).

Promotion comprises advertising, public relations, sales promotion, direct marketing, events and sponsorships, point of sale, digital media, the communication aspects of packaging, personal sales and new forms of online and place-based communication that have recently cropped up (Moriarty, et al., 2014)

Advertising

Middleton and Clarke (2001) define advertising in the tourism industry as a classic communication tool used by marketing managers in marketing campaigns to build awareness, understanding, interest and motivation in the target audience. Furthermore, advertising types are found in television, the press, radio, in the form of outdoors and tourist boards and other travel guides and brochures. Other than traditional media, there are also interactive media forms for advertising.

Interactive media are forms that encourage users to participate in or respond personally to the message (Moriarty, et al., 2014). The media format of e-mail and Twitter, allows organizations to instigate communication with consumers, customers, and other stakeholders. Organizations have the goal of engagement beyond exposure when using interactive media. The Internet advertising strategy could include search advertisements with social media. There are also banner, display and pop-up advertisements representing Internet advertising.

Sales Promotion

Sales promotionis the use of incentives to produce a specific and short-term response in consumers whether business or household consumers. Free samples, coupons, premiums, sweepstakes and contests, rebates, and price discounts are some of the key methods of sales promotion used with consumers (Semenik, 2002).

Direct Marketing

According to Semenik (2002), direct marketingis an interactive marketing system that utilises one or more advertising media to achieve a measurable response and/or transaction at any location without the use of an intermediary.

Public Relations

Public relations (PR) focuses on communication that can foster goodwill between a firm and its publics (Semenik, 2002). These publics comprise customers, stockholders, suppliers, employees, government entities, citizen action groups, and the general public.

Facets Model of Effects

The theoretical framework used in this study is the facets model of effects (Moriarty, et al., 2012). Moriarty, Mitchell and Wells (2012) propose a six-factor model that is beneficial together in setting IMC or advertising objectives and evaluating the effectiveness of IMC or advertising.

An effective advertisement creates six types of consumer responses: (1) see/hear, (2) feel, (3) think/understand, (4) connect, (5) believe, and (6) act/do. The six facets-polished surfaces are like those of a diamond which collectively make up a unique consumer response to an advertising message. This model can also be applied to IMC where each marketing communication tool is conjured to garner desired consumer responses in accordance with the facets of the model.

The Perception Facet: See/Hear

Perception is the process which takes place whereby we receive information through our five senses and provide meaning to it (Moriarty, et al., 2012). For an advertisement to be effective, it must be noticed first. Factors driving a perception response are exposure, selection and attention, interest, relevance, curiosity, awareness, and recognition.

The Emotional or Affective Facet: Feel

Affective responses reflect our feelings about something. The affective facet fuels wants, touches the emotions, creates a mood, generates liking, and draws out feelings (Moriarty, et al., 2012). Marketing communication in general seeks to wrap a positive feeling around a brand and a purchase decision. Factors that drive an affective response are wants and desires, excitement, feelings, liking, and resonance.

The Cognition Facet: Think/Understand

Cognition refers to how consumers look for and react to information, and how they learn and comprehend something (Moriarty, et al., 2012). It is a rational reaction to a message. It is regarded by some as a left-brain approach, based on the left-right brain ways of thinking that evolve from brain hemisphere research studies. Factors that drive a cognitive response are: need, cognitive, learning, comprehension, differentiation, and recall.

The Association Facet: Connect

Association is the primary tool used in brand communication that uses the method of communicating through symbolism (Moriarty, et al., 2012). It is the process of learning to make symbolic connections between a brand and desirable characteristics and qualities, together with people, situation, and lifestyles that prompt the brand's image and personality. Factors that drive an associative response are: symbolism, conditioned learning, and transformation.

The Persuasion Facet: Believe

Persuasion is the mindful aim on the part of the source to influence or encourage the receiver of a message to believe or do something (Moriarty, et al., 2012). Persuasive communication that comprises creating or changing attitudes and creating conviction are important goals of most marketing communication tools. Attitude is a state of mind, a tendency, inclination, or mental readiness to respond to a situation. Factors that drive a persuasive response are: motivation, influence, involvement, engagement, conviction, preference and intention, loyalty, believability and credibility.

The Behaviour Facet: Act/Do

The behaviour facet involves different types of action in addition to trying or buying the product (Moriarty, et al., 2012). The goal is to get people to act in various ways by trying or buying a brand, visiting a store, returning an inquiry card, calling a toll-free number, joining an organization, donating to a good cause, or clicking on website. Factors that drive a behavioural response are: mental rehearsal, trial, buying, contacting, advocating and referrals, and prevention.

Islamic Tourism or Muslim Friendly Tourism

The Muslim tourist expenditure in 2011 was USD 126 billion and in 2012, USD 130 billion. In 2020, the Muslim tourist expenditure is expected to be USD192 billion representing 13.4% of the global tourism expenditure (CrescentRating, 2012). With the growing expenditure by Muslim travelers, they have become the most important market segmentation for Islamic tourism.

'Tourism of many sorts is thus compatible with Islam and encouraged by its teachings. At the same time, the religion demands adherence to stipulations about conduct, dress, food and prayer.' (Zamani-Farahani & Henderson, 2010, p. 80)

According to Laderlah, Rahman, Awang, and Man (2011), Islamic tourism is flexible, rationale, simple and balanced. Islamic tourism is flexible because it allows many purposes of travelling such as for shopping, medical reasons, sports, visits, and religious reasons. The most important aspect of Islamic tourism is that the intention of travelling is not opposing Islamic law such as sex tourism, alcoholism, prostitution, and suicide. These are detrimental to the tourist and society.

For the writers, Islam encourages Muslims to visit places in the world that people can enjoy with their friends or family members. This includes visiting historical places and relatives. Islam is all for peace and with this in mind, it persuades people to seek harmonization by appreciating the beauty of Allah's creations. This activity may increase the faith (iman) of Muslims simply by being grateful to Allah SWT, as the Creator of the universe.

Islam is a simple religion because it eases the burden on humans, for example, in terms of the obligatory, that Muslims have to perform their prayers when travelling but there is some flexibility for them as they are able to shorten and combine prayers.

Finally, tourism in Islam is balanced for dual life, which is in the world now and in the Hereafter. Travelling may strengthen the relationship among humans (habl min an-nas) and with Allah SWT. In other words, tourism can influence our happiness in the world and in the Hereafter simultaneously.

Since the demand for Islamic tourism has increased, marketers in the tourism sector need to set the strategy right, according to Fazal Bahardeen (2014), CEO of Crescentrating Singapore:

> For organizations, services, facilities looking into target Muslim travel market they have to get the basic rights first and develop Muslim friendly leisure packages, in terms of the basics for Muslim-friendly services in the place for visitors is they have to offer several important things, which is Halal food services, shalat (prayer) facilities/information (kiblat), water usage friendly washrooms, Ramadhan (fasting) services during sahur and iftar and other facilities. No non-halal activities (alcohol free environment), recreational facilities and services, and it is important to have them across the whole value chain which is transport terminal, hotels, villas, homestays, apartments, camping parks, leisure (attraction, shopping, nature & adventure), business, healthcare (facilities), and live event venues.

IMC in DWG Campaign and DWG as a Muslim-Friendly Tourism

IMC Objectives

The IMC objectives for this campaign are:

1. to create awareness of the products offered by DWG;
2. to inform audience members of DWG products.

Product, Price, Place And Promotion Or Marketing Communication In Gubugklakah Campaign

Product

According to the marketing manager of Gubugklakah, the products offered by DWG are their trip packages.

At the beginning, they offered the standard open trip to three destinations which was only to Mount Bromo, Coban Pelangi (Rainbow waterfalls) and the agro apple field in their village. These trip packages included the transportation service from any pick-up places in downtown Malang to their village, hardtop to Bromo, two nights in a homestay and three meals per day. An open trip means that they can go on a trip with other people who also want to join the trip and do not have enough people to complete the minimum requirement of eight people for one trip package.

> *Tour package kita itu sebenarnya kita menawarkan banyak sih. Jadi dulu kita itu destinasi utamanya itu kan Bromo. Sebagai icon pertama untuk penjualan. Setelah itu dilanjutkan lagi kita ingin untuk, mereka itu menghabiskan uang di desa kita, akhirnya kita bikinkan untuk bromo-agro apel sama air terjun coban pelangi. Yang kedua itu kita bikinkan itu sekarang itu rafting sama bromo sama agro apel, pack yang ketiga itu tubing, bromo sama agro apel, tubing itu yang pake ban dalem itu tapi telusuri sungai.*

The translation is:

> Our tour packages are actually quite many, we have many things to offer. In the past, it was only Bromo, which was the key destination to attract the visitors. Bromo is like our first icon in promotion. But then after a while we realize that we want the visitors

to spend their money in our village, so that the economy in our village can be raised. After that we made an 'agro apples' attraction (people can pick apples in our orchard) and then with our own rainbow waterfalls. The third package is the tubing, Bromo and agro-apple. Tubing is when one uses tubes as boats and then sail along the river with that.

At first, Gubugklakah attempted to attract visitors by offering them to go to Bromo as the main destination since it is a famous site for tourism. But then the crew of Gubugklakah realized that they wanted the visitors to spend more time and money in their village so that the economy of the village can improve. After that they started to explore more of the tourist attractions that they have in their village and make other trip packages to offer, such as rafting in the river, outdoor activities, and camping. The most recently introduced attraction is called tubing, it is similar with rafting but they use tubes instead to go along the rivers.

"Iya gitu. Trus ada lagi out bond, rafting. Camping ground itu semua sekarang sudah ada."

When translated, he said, "Yes, like that. And then we have the other one, outbound, rafting. We also have camping ground, we have everything now."

"Bukan, kita campingnya di desa kita sekarang, Jadi kita baru kerjasama dengan perhutani itu kita ada lahan untuk dibuka camping ground sama tubing itu."

The translation is, "No, we have our own camping ground in our village. So we just make an agreement with the regional forest department about this, about one spot in the forest to become our camping ground. And then with that tubing also."

The homestay concept of lodging provides visitors with the opportunity to stay in the homes of villagers and experience how the villagers live their daily life. The visitors could eat local food and mingle with the villagers' families. The homestay concept is an attempt to encourage visitors to feel Gubugklakah as their second home. The crew developed this concept so that the tourism business can be sustainable, and that the visitors have a personal attachment with the village making them wanting to go back again to DWG. At the end of 2014, there were 65 registered homestays that were ready to service any visitors with their family-hospitality.

> *Sekarang homestay nya ada 65 yang sudah terdaftar. Kalau dulu kan saya punya homestay cuma 8. Waktu KKN pertama kan ada berapa dua.. berapa dua, delapan belas apa berapa itu, tapi yang lainnya udah gak mau kan akhirnya. Jadi tinggal 8. Setelah itu tahun 2012 itu dah booming, mulai nambah lagi dari 8, 16, ke 24, 24 tambah lagi 30, trus nambah lagi sampai 50 , dan terakhir jadi 65. Dan itu pun yang minta makin banyak untuk warga.*

The translation is:

> Now we have 65 homestays that are registered in our organization. At first we only had eight homestays. When the KKN team was here it was only around 18 right, but then one by one also refused to continue becoming a homestay. So it was only eight homestays left. So after that, in 2012 suddenly we got booming and then it rose from eight to 16, to 24, 24 and then adding 30 more, and then becoming 50, and then the last for now is 65 homestays. And still they will count for more as the demand from our people to make their homes as homestays is still rising.

Price

In pricing, the manager stated that the travel agents will sell the packages at the price of Rp.450.000 or USD45 to Rp.600.000 or USD60 for their standard open trip of eight people minimum for one package.

"Harga trip kita mulai dari harga, yang harga public nya itu sebenernya 450."

The translation is:

“Our packaging trip that is actually for the public is Rp.450.000.”

“Iya, pack bromo, agro apel sama air terjun. Perorang.”

The translation is:

“Yes, that is the basic one for Bromo, agro-apple and rainbow waterfalls. Per person.”

“Minimal pack nya, minimal packnya lapan orang. Jadi itu untuk lapan orang, itu minimal per pack seperti itu. Kalau pack keluarga kita 2.500.000. Maksimal enam orang itu.”

The translation is,

“Minimum of pack is for eight persons. So that is for eight persons. That is the minimum. But for a family package we have the price of Rp.2.500.000, that is for a maximum of six persons.”

They also have a special price for one family of six people at Rp.2.500.000 (250 USD). The manager stated that basically for pricing, they would like to make the price as low as possible so that everyone from anywhere can join their trip packages and visit their village. They also want to attract more of the lower budget group who will spend more of their money in their village and help the economy of the local community.

Jadi intinya paket kita itu kita jual semurah mungkin, kita nargetinnya bukan dari kalangan atas, tapi kalangan menengah kebawah, soalnya kalangan menengah ke bawah itu sangat menguntungkan bagi masyarakat, kata mas heri dan temen-temen. Jadi kalau kalangan menengah ke bawah itu carinya pasti homestay yang pertama, yang kedua mereka itu carinya toko, mereka nggak mungkin: “mas, ada indomaret *nggak?" Nggak mungkin mereka. Mas, tokonya dimana? Beli bakso paling enak dimana mas? Jadi anak-anak kita itu bakso dorong, bakso apa itu, seperti itu.*

The translation is:

> So the main thing is we want to sell our package tour as cheaply as possible, because our target audience is not the upper class people. We are targeting the middle and lower budget group of people because they will bring benefit to our society. That is what is said by Heri and friends. Because those group of people will definitely choose to stay in homestays rather than hotels, that is the first thing, and then they will search for our own grocery shop, it is impossible for them to ask, "Do you know where is the nearest indomaret here?" it is impossible. They must ask where is the grocery shop near here which means in our village and then where is the place that sells the most delicious bakso here? And then we answer there is a bakso dorong over there, and other bakso over there, like that.

Regarding the price of the trip packages for foreign people, the crew does not want to make it more expensive than for local visitors. But they had to differ on this initial intent as unfortunately the entry ticket to Mount Bromo has a different price for foreign people due to the tax, so they had to raise the price so as to cover the entry ticket itself. But for their packages, the price is the same. For foreign people who come from South-East Asia and who look similar to Indonesians, the entry price to Mount Bromo is the same as local visitors.

> *Kalau orang asing ga ada bedanya kita, kecuali penambahan di tiket aja. Gak, kalau orang asing, kita mahalnya di tiket bromonya, karena tiket bromonya, kan kalau, kalau local jadi penambahan taxnya sekitar 250.000, itu jadi taxnya itu 670.000 kalo nggak salah.Hooh, tapi untuk tamu dari asia tenggara kayak dari*

malaysia atau apa itu, itu tetep harganya 365. tapi kalau asing dari eropa, australi itu udah beda.

The translation is:

For foreigners we don't make any differences, it will be different only in ticket to Bromo. That's it. No, for foreigners, why it is expensive is because the ticket to Bromo. Because we can be adding tax up to Rp. 250.000, so the tax makes the price Rp. 670.000 if I'm not mistaken.Yes, but for visitors from South East Asia like Malaysia, or other countries, the price is still the same. But for foreign people from Europe, Australia of course it will be different.

Place/Distribution

In terms of place and distribution, at first, they used Bromo as their icon for their trip packages, and then DWG explored more of the village's natural resources. Now they are more focused on their own village and are trying to offer more of what they have in their village. That is including the jungle, camping ground, apple garden, river, waterfalls, animal farm, and many more attractions.

A recent deal with the regional forest department to make a camping ground in their village's jungle means taking responsibility of preserving the ecosystem at the same time. In the future, the manager said that the DWG crew wants to expand their trip packages to include other tourism sites such as Ijen which is another famous mountain near their village.

Kalau rencananya si banyak, karena banyak obyek wisata yang belum kita explore, itu pertama. Yang kedua kita sudah mulai mengembangkan sayap itu bikin tur yang nggak 1 destinasi, nggak bromo gubugklakah nggak, tapi ke batu juga, jadi ke batu dulu trus nginepnya di gubugklakah trus besoknya baru ke bromo, agro apel sama air terjun. Terus sekarang yang lagi banyak ngetren itu ke ijen-bromo. Jadi kita paket 2 hari 1 malam itu kita paket ke bromo, selanjutnya dilanjutkan paket ke ijen.

The translation is:

> We have a lot of plans for the future. Because there are a lot of tourist attractions that have not been explored by us. And then second is we are trying to spread our wings wider so we made a tour not only to one destination, not only Bromo and Gubugklakah but also including Batu, so the tour will be to Batu, and then stay in our homestay in Gubugklakah and then go to Bromo the next day, then to agro-apple and then the waterfalls. And then actually the most famous destination now is to go to Ijen and Bromo. So it will be a two-day and one-night package, after Bromo we go to Ijen.

Promotion

Product Differentiation & Positioning

In terms of promotion, DWG also competes with other tourism villages which offer the same destinations with them such as a trip to Bromo and other attractions in their village. But the manager said what makes them different from other tourism villages is their crew of 34 people who are mostly young and local villagers who are hospitable.

The positioning of Gubugklakah is family and home.

They want the visitors to regard DWG as their second home so they will visit it again and again in the future. They are focusing more in terms of service, more so in terms of hospitality, so that the visitors will be satisfied not only with the tourist attraction sites, but also with the villagers and local people.

> *Sesuatu yang paling beda disini itu adalah satu asset kami yang paling berharga ya, itu rasa kekeluargaan daripada homestay, yang kedua adalah anak-anaknya, pemudanya yang bikin beda, karena apa, disini notabenenya kan anak-anak usia di*

bawah 20, dibawah 25 sama yang paling berkesan itu adalah semangat mereka untuk, punya cita-cita untuk mengenalkan apa desanya sampai penjuru dunia itu punya semangatnya.Yang terakhir adalah rata-rata mereka adalah s1. Tau nggak s1? Mereka itu SD, jadi ada sebagian anak-anak kampung yang nggak sekolah. Tapi mereka apa punya semangat yang tinggi, jadi mereka itu, yang paling berharga adalah crew kami. Seperti itu.

The translation is:

Actually, what makes us different is our precious asset, which is the harmony and kindness of our people, our service, our homestays, and then the second one is our members, our staff, the young generation of this village, what makes them different is that most of them actually are young, under 20, under 25 but they have full of spirit and dreams, that they want to promote their village to the whole world. That is their spirit. And then the last one is they actually didn't finish their education, some of them didn't even go to school. But they have the highest spirit, so that is what I think as the most precious thing of our crew like that.

"Alhamdulillah, cukup luar biasa ya, karena dari anak-anak kita itu sekarang sudah ada 32 yang aktif, guide bromo, guide local rumah, homestay, semua, jadi project sudah bisa aktif tersendirilah."

The translation is:

"Alhamdulillah, it has been amazing. Because for our group now there are active members of 32 people. They are guides in Bromo, in homestays, in every place that is included in the package. Every project has been run by each member in charge."

Internet Advertising & Interactive Media Usage

Since the formation of DWG, this tourism village has been focusing mostly on internet advertising and interactive media. At first, it was a difficult challenge for the DWG members since the signal of any communication and the internet is poor due their location in the mountain range. To solve this they used modems, and right after they got their internet, they conducted a campaign mostly with social media such as Facebook. They also have their own website and other applications like Blackberry Messenger and formed *whatsapp* groups to reach more people to share and offer their trip packages.

> *Promosi setan namanya. Iya, jadi kenapa dinamakan promosi setan, karena satu anak itu kita suruh bikin Facebook itu minimal 3 Facebook. Yang 1 Facebook pribadi, yang 2 itu Facebook untuk pemasaran. Jadi hampir 24 anak itu punya 3 Facebook. Jadi setelah itu, dari Facebook kita itu anak-anak KKN desa wisata itu, kita nge-share sebuah promosi kan harga, nah setelah itu dari 24 anak ini setiap kali pelatihan, kan pelatihannya tiap hari tuh. Kita suruh nge-share, jadi untuk kita bagi semuanya untuk satu anak ini diwajibkan setidaknya menjadi 1000 teman tapi di luar kabupaten malang. Misalnya Jakarta, bandung, Surabaya, semuanya kan. Yang penting sasarannya travelnya. Nah disitu baru, hasilnya itu sekitar setengah tahun lah diajari dapat tamu, sampai travel-travel masuk.*

The translation is:

> Yes, we called it devil's promotion. Why we call it devil's promotion, because we ask each of staff to create Facebook accounts minimum three Facebook accounts. One is his/her own Facebook account and then the other two are for marketing. And then almost of our 24 members have three Facebook accounts. So after that, from those Facebook accounts and of course with the help of the KKN team, all of us share the promotion of our tourism village as a DWG packaging tour. We share the price and all, and then in every training which is every day, we ask them to keep

sharing the promotion, and then all of them have to make friends in each of their Facebook accounts at least 1,000 friends especially those who live outside Malang. Their friends have to be from all over area in the country, like Jakarta, Bandung, Surabaya. First, we targeted to make friends with the travel agents on Facebook. After that, the good result came after six months, finally there are so many travel agents who have become our friends and made deals with us until they send visitors to our village.

According to the manager, the promotion of Gubugklakah had to be shared with as many people as possible through social media called devil's promotion. The aim was for a wide reach to as many travel agents as possible and prospective visitors to the tourism village. Previously, their target was to make friends with the travel agents on Facebook. The result came after six months, finally there are so many travel agents in the country who have become a DWG friend and made agreements with them until they sent visitors to their village.

It is obligatory for their 24 members to have at least three Facebook accounts. Through the Facebook accounts and with the help of the KKN team, all of them shared the promotion of the tourism village as a DWG packaging tour to others. Photographs, videos, and information of the trip packages were shared.

Everyday every member will have to keep sharing the promotion, and also make at least 1,000 friends on each of their Facebook pages especially those are who live outside Malang. Their friends have to be from all over the country, like Jakarta, Bandung, Surabaya, and other places.

"Ada, ada instagram, pathnya, semualah."

The translation is:

"There is, we have instagram, path, pretty much every type of social media."

Ya, sekarang sudah semuanya, Facebook, web, instagram, bbm, semua...

The translation is:

"Yes, now we have everything, like Facebook, website, bbm group, everything."

With the contracts signed with many travel agents to promote their trip packages, they can simply share photos of their previous trips to attract many potential visitors. They will also inform their schedule for the following open trips on their official page on Facebook, instagram and the like.

Kalau awalnya dulu cuma nge-share aja, kalau sekarang cuma hasil trip kemaren kita masukin ke website, hasil trip kemaren kita masukkan ke Facebook. Kalau nggak gitu ya, temen-temen kan dari travel agent kan sudah gabung dengan Facebook kita kan, jadi kalau mereka buka open trip, kita tinggal nge-share aja, mereka juga nge-share hampir setiap hari lah, ke Facebook saya, ke Facebooknya desa wisata. Itu selalu kita share lah, akhirnya mereka dapat peserta banyak itu.

The translation is:

The first time we were only sharing our promotion of our tour package. But now it is simpler. We just share our photos of our last trip on Facebook. If not like that, our travel agent friends who have been friends with us on Facebook, they are the ones who will upload everything and we can just share it on our Facebook. When they offer their open trip, we will share it too. This happens almost every day, whether it's on my Facebook, or on Gubugklakah official Facebook. So it is all about sharing the posts and the result is that we got so many visitors from there.

The interviews with the travel agents supported the first interviewee (with the marketing manager of DWG) that they have been promoting DWG mostly on the internet using a website and social media.

> "Selama ini pemasaran/promosi pure hanya melalui internet. Via sosmed dan website berbayar di www.bandarwisata.com."

The translation is:

> "This whole time our campaign/promotion is done with the internet, using social media and paid website on www.bandarwisata.com." (interviewee 2)

Sales Promotion

DWG also uses sales promotion in their campaign. Based on the interview, the manager said that they offer a special price or exclusive package for the family pack with six persons for the price of Rp.2.500.000 or USD250, it is cheaper than the standard open trip for minimum of eight persons. It is intended to attract more families to join their trip package.

> "*Minimal pack nya, minimal packnya 8 orang. Jadi itu untuk 8 orang, itu minimal per pack seperti itu. Kalau pack keluarga kita 2.500.000.* "

The translation is:

> "Minimum of pack is for 8 persons. So that is for 8 persons. That is the minimum. But for a family package we have the price of Rp.2.500.000."

> *"Satu keluarga?"*

The translation is:

> "One family?"

> *"Maksimal 6 orang itu."*

The translation is:

"Yes, that is for the maximum of six persons."

"Oh gitu, oh beda."

The translation is:

"Oh I see, so it is different."

"Beda, itu jadi paket eksklusif itu istilahnya."

The translation is:

"Yes, different, it is like our exclusive package."

Since the crew members of Gubugklakah are targeting more visitors from Asia to come to their village, they also offer the same price of the package with local tourists especially for South East Asian tourists.

"Hooh, tapi untuk tamu dari asia tenggara kayak dari malaysia atau apa itu, itu tetep harganya 365."

The translation is:

"Yes, but only for visitors from South East Asia like Malaysia, or other countries, the price is still the same."

"Hooh, tapi kalau asing dari eropa, australi itu udah beda."

The translation is:

"Yes, but for foreigners from Europe, Australia of course it will be different."

"Kalau tiket bromonya kan jarang ketauan kita jadi harganya sama."

The translationis:

"For tickets to Bromo, they thought they were also local so the price is the same*."*

The interview with the travel agents also supported interviewee 1 (the marketing manager of DWG) that they have been promoting DWG with sales promotion and offering discounts on the trip package.

"*Pernahkah menawarkan diskon untuk paket wisatanya?"*

"Ya, pernah."

The translation is:

"Have you (travel agent, interviewee 3) ever sole a trip package?"

"Yes, we have."

Direct Marketing

In terms of promotion, DWG also uses direct marketing to promote their village through travel agents. The manager said that they were also focusing on making contracts with many travel agents from all over Indonesia. So they are the ones who will promote DWG to potential audiences with their own method of selling directly to them.

Each travel agent has an obligation to send visitors to the village each month. Until now they have made contracts with 27 travel agents from Jakarta, Bandung, Malang and other places to sell their packages on their own. The result is that the travel agent will send up to 150 people per month to their village.

> *Oohh...travel agent kita banyak, dari Jakarta sudah ada 16. Bandung ada 3. Kalau dari Malang sendiri lumayan banyaklah, kurang lebih itu dari Malang ada 10-an. Hampir 27 travel yang sudah kerja sama dengan kita. Tapi kalau yang dari Jakarta sama bandung sudah taken contract. Jadi bandung sama Jakarta itu, kita nggak boleh nge-share harga dasar kita nggak boleh. Jadi kita juga untuk di marketing, di web manapun nggak boleh memajangkan harga.*

The translation is:

Ooh...we collaborate with many travel agents. From Jakarta, there are 16 travel agents, from Bandung there are three. From Malang itself, there are quite many. There are more or less ten travel agents. So altogether there are about 27 travel agents that have made agreements with us. But for the travel agent from Jakarta, we cannot share our basic price, so for our marketing on websites as well we can't share our basic price.

"*Hooh, disamping itu juga kita sudah bikin contract, mereka juga setiap minggu dan setiap bulan itu harus ada trip satu kali ke desa kita.*"

The translation is:

"Yes, and in return, as stated in the contract, they have to have sold each week and each month at least one trip package to our village."

Jadi mereka udah diwajibkan bikin open trip setiap bulan itu ke desa kita. Alhamdulillah dari seperti itu , hampir setiap minggu mereka kirim peserta.jadi ada yang 8 orang, 10 orang ada yang sampai 60, Ada yang 100, bahkan ada diatas 100 juga, 150 orang, seperti itu.

The translation is:

"So they have the obligation to make an open trip each month to our village. Alhamdulillah from that, each week they send visitors to come to our village, sometimes it is eight people, ten people, or there were times they sent groups of 60 people, or even 100 people or more, like 150 people, like that."

Public Relations

DWG also uses public relations to make and shape the good image of their village in their campaign. The KKN team maintains the promotion and development of the good image of DWG. The regional tourism department of their area also supports and encourages them to join the competition in the tourism village championship so it forms a good image of their village. As a result they made it into the newspaper and travel programs on national television channels as the winner of the tourism village competition. It is also because of their achievements at the national regional level including the income earned.

> *"Kemarin sudah masuk MNC TELEVISION , masuk TELEVISIONRI. Kalau mau lihat, di YouTube, di plesir ada. Kemarin kita masuk acara plesir yang di MNC TELEVISION."*

The translation is:

> "It was on air on MNC TELEVISION, also in one program on TELEVISIONRI. If you want to see please look up on YouTube. We were in the Plesir program on MNC TELEVISION."

> *Itu yang pertama itu kita disuruh daftar dari dinas pariwasata. Tapi semua modal dari kita sendiri. Trus di majapahit travel fair kita dapat stand terbaik itu 1 jawa timur. Itu kalo itu kerjasama dengan dinas pariwisata, tapi kita disuruh sama bapak bupati, trus untuk yang terakhir itu kemarin itu Alhamdulillah juara 3 untuk lomba desa wisata tingkat Nasional, dan yang terakhir kita juara 1 untuk lomba, apa lomba kelembagaan atau lembaga desa wisata, kopdarwisnya itupun juara 1 tingkat Nasional juga.*

The translation is:

> The first time is actually people from the tourism department who encouraged us to join the championship. But all of the funding is actually from ourselves. And then in

the majapahit travel fair we got the best stand, 1st place for east java regional. That is from the tourism department, and it was the head of our region that encouraged us to join. And then the last one is alhamdulillah we were the 3rd place winner for the tourism village championship at the national regional level. And then we also got 1st place winner in the same championship for the best organization in the tourism village, that is also at the national regional level.

Iya, sampai masuk Koran apa itu, kita juga nggak menyangka itu. Karena apa kan uang masuk keluar masuk itu, setiap laporan akhir bulan, kita kumpul semuanya, laporan sama temen-temen, kita hitung : heh kita ini orang gila apa ya, masak anak-anak notabene kerjanya s1 ini, bisa ngumpulkan 528 juta sambil ketawa-ketawa.Oh yang bener? Iya bener ini ditotal semuanya.

The translation is:

Yes, one newspaper made an article about it. We didn't expect that too actually. Because usually the money just comes in and goes out, and then at the end of the month, we make the report right, so we were all gathering to make a report, each of us made a report and then we calculated the amount that we earned together: 'Hey, are we crazy, how come we made income with such money, up to 528 million like this,' as we laughed. Oh really? Yeah, it has all been calculated and that is the total amount.

The Facet(S) Model of Effects in Gubugklakah Campaign

The facets model of effects (Moriarty, et al., 2012) was examined in the DWG campaign. Effective advertising and IMC usually has six types of consumer responses and when all facets work together, it can create effective responses to a brand message. An effective message has a diamond-like quality that represents how the message effects work together to create the desired consumer responses.

In this case study, DWG used all of the facets and created an effective message to the target audience for their IMC campaign. Details of each facet used are as follows:

Perception

The first facet model of effect that was used by DWG is perception. For an advertisement to be effective, it must get noticed. It has to be seen or heard (Moriarty, et al., 2012). In the case of DWG, they had exposed their promotion mostly using interactive media and some traditional media.

This included having groups on *whatsapp, bbm* and the like. They uploaded their advertising video on YoutTube, they shared it through their Facebook pages, and also through the travel agents' Faceboook pages, and they shared photographs of their previous trips to other people. By doing this, they shared the many attractions they have in their village to many audiences.

DWG has also been featured in several episodes of travel programs on national television channels and in local newspapers. It is intended to attract potential visitors who are interested in travel and adventure. It is to make aware of the tourist attractions in DWG to audience members.

Many people were also aware of the tourism village by the awards that were won making their village known in the tourism business in the country. Interviewee 2 as the travel agent who has been in contract with DWG for almost two years also stated that by uploading the photographs of the village (DWG), it is quite effective to let the target audience know about DWG.

"*Dengan mengupload foto-foto di DWG dirasa sudah cukup efektif mengenalkan potensi DWG ke konsumen.*"

The translation is:

> “By uploading the photographs of the village (DWG) I think it is quite effective enough to let the target audience know about DWG.”

Emotional/Affective

The second facet of the facet model of effects that has been used by DWG is emotion or affective. By way of this facet, DWG makes visitors feel close to their village. They promote their village by sharing the photographs of their natural resources to create excitement in the audience members who look at them.

Most of the visitors came to DWG because they have already seen other people’s trips to DWG. The photographs or videos, would create a desire for the prospective customer. They will be attracted to DWG and feel like they want to come to the village. Comments, posts, and feedback from the previous group of visitors who were at DWG mostly express their satisfaction and that they want to return to DWG.

Cognition

The fourth facet model of effect that has been used in the DWG IMC campaign is cognition. In this facet, advertisements have made audience members want to know more about DWG before they make the decision to join the trip or not. They will also receive more information about the trips on the DWG official Facebook page or on the website. Details of the trip packages including all of the destination and services are also told to audience members. Photographs of previous trips make learning about the product easier. So they will make a decision after that whether to join the open trip or not, which trip package is better. It is all in the receiver’s decision, however, usually after that they will contact DWG to make sure that everything is as they offer in their advertisement.

“Ya, mereka datang, sebenernya mereka nggak tau apa potensi desa kita nggak tau. Setelah kita cerita, nah waktu masuk basecamp baru mereka keget sudah.”

The translation is:

“Yes, they came, they actually didn’t know anything about the potential of our village, after we told them everything then they just know it. And then when they came to our basecamp, they got shocked you know.”

Association

The fourth facet model of effect that has been used by DWG is association (Moriarty, et al., 2012). There are symbols used when the DWG crew promotes their village to people. The first one is Bromo and the second one is the agro apple.

The receiver of the IMC messages will associate DWG with these two symbols as the location of DWG is located in Malang, which is famous for its apples. In fact, DWG is one of the biggest producers of agro apples. This is also why they have the agro apples attraction and apple calligraphy as a special souvenir. In addition, through their advertisements, the crew of DWG often promotes the trip to Bromo as the key attraction. Therefore, people will always associate DWG with Bromo even though it is in a different place.

“Kan kita punya apel kaligrafi sebagai oleh-oleh khas kita.”

The translation is:

And then we also had our apple calligraphy that is our own unique souvenirs from our village.

Kalau souvenir khas ini sekarang dari ibu-ibu PKK yang banyak. Tapi cuma makanan, jadi kayak apa olahan kripik ya, dari apel, namanya sarang apel. Yang paling terkenal disini tu, jadi sarang apel itu apel yang di goreng, dikasih manisan, jadinya kayak sarang apa ya, sarang burung gitu.

The translation is:

> For souvenirs, the mothers from our village are the ones working on them. We focus more on food, like chips of many types. Of course there are chips from apple, and then there is a type food made from apple but they are not chips, it is called nest of apple. It has become the most famous one, so it is like from apple, that has been fried and then added sweets to it and the shape is like a nest, like the nest of a bird.

Persuasion

The fifth facet from the facets model of effects that has been used in the DWG campaign is persuasion. In this facet, photographs of the previous trips by DWG have created motivation so that people want to come to their village. DWG also shared testimonials in the form of comments and posts from previous visitors who have come to DWG. This has made the receiver have more motivation to come to DWG. They will try to join the trip just to see how it is like. After they join the trip, many of them like the village and its attractions.

This can be seen from their comments and feedback. Many feel satisfied with the trip as they regard the village as credible in terms of offering good services, and this has created customer loyalty. The manager said many visitors have visited DWG more than once. At first they will come alone, but after two or three months they come again with their families, relatives or their friends. It shows that the visitors have become loyal to this village and have started to recommend DWG to other people.

> *"Ada, sampai 3x kebanyakan, kalau pengunjung habis ikut dari open trip, ada yang datang sendiri, bawa keluarganya, trus datang lagi bawa temennya, seperti itu."*

The translation is:

> "There are visitors who join up to three times. Usually they join the open trip alone just to see how is it like and then after they are satisfied with it, they will come again with their families and friends, like that."

"Alhamdulillah sampai saat ini mereka seneng lah, nggak ada, nggak pernah, apa itu pun terbentuk dari apa ya, kalo bukti nyata nya sih dari wisatawan yang datang ke desa kami. Mulai terakhir, satu bulan kemarin itu hampir 1000 orang ke desa kami."

The translation is:

"Alhamdulillah, until now they have been happy and satisfied, there is no complaint or anything, the real proof is of course you can ask from our visitors. Recently, in the last month, there were almost 1,000 people who came to our village."

Interviewee 2 also stated that it is not hard to promote DWG since the village has many natural resources.

Mengenalkan DWG ke konsumen tidaklah sulit karena DWG sendiri potensi alamnya luar biasa. Berada di jalur utama Bromo dan wisata-wisata lainnya membuat siapa saja pasti tertarik untuk datang ke sana.

The translation is:

It is not hard to promote DWG to the customer because DWG has great natural resources as it lies in the main path to Mount Bromo and other tourist destinations. This should be enough to attract anyone to come there.

Behaviour

The last facet of the facets model of effects that was used in the DWG campaign is behaviour. This facet shows that the promotion of Gubugklakah had created certain behaviour from the audience.

Upon seeing DWG in the form of photographs and videos, it made people want to take action in response. The actions will be searching on and reading more about DWG on the internet and social media. Then, they will contact the marketing manager. He is the one who is in charge of the booking and scheduling of the trips. After contacting, they are more convinced in coming and reserving the trip for the next schedule.

People working on broadcasting and television programs would research more on DWG before they invite people from the village to feature in their television programs.

> *"Jadi promosi kita, hooh, promosi kita rata-rata itu kayak orang-orang dari televisi itu dari MNC, kemarin ada dari rajawali tv, itu mereka apa mencari di website, mereka datang kesini, dapat info datang kesini, sudah gitu."*

The translation is:

> "So our promotion, yes, our promotion I mean for example the television crew came from MNC television and then like rajawali television, they are the ones who find out more about us. They were browsing about us on the website and then they came here. They got the information and then they came here. That's it."

The DWG crew had been getting a lot of visitors from their travel agents, underlining the successful behavioural facet of their IMC campaign.

> *"Aduh, cukup banyak si, Yang kemarin itu dari 8 travel agent, Yang besok dari 4 travel agent, trus yang minggu sebelumnya ada dari 7 travel agent , seperti itu."*

The translation is:

> It is quite many actually. We had visitors from eight travel agents who came just a couple days ago, and then tomorrow we will have visitors coming from four travel agencies, and then last week we had visitors from seven travel agencies, like that.

> *Banyak, yang paling sering itu habis ikut trip itu kan mereka hanya cari tau dulu, setelah itu, sebulan 2 bulan kemudian itu mereka telfon, ke ibu homestay atau yang punya homestay, mau datang kesini katanya. Tapi homestaynya biasanya laporan ke kita, karena mereka kan sudah terikat sama undang-undang desa, jadi seluruh,*

kalau yang mau menginap harus di beritau ke kelembagaan kita untuk menjaga apa, conditional desa kita biar tidak ada kerusakan harga atau apa, seperti itu.

The translation is:

> Yes, quite many, usually after they join the open trip, they just trying to find out how is the trip like, after that, like two months after that they will call the homestay people, saying that they want to come again, of course the homestay usually reports this to us, because they all have been in contract with the rules of the village. So any homestay has to report whenever they get visitors just to keep the village's condition. So the price will not be changed and all.

Supporting what the manager said, interviewee 2 stated that as travel agents they have sold around 30-60 packages in one month.

"*Dalam 1 bulan, terjual 30-60 pax*."

The translation is:

"In one month, 30-60 packages have been sold."

Gubugklakah as a Potential Muslim-Friendly Tourist Destination

The ethnicity of the people in Gubugklakah is Tengger. The Tengger people believe in Hinduism. But the people in Gubugklakah, are mostly Muslim. So they are the Muslim Tengger. This village has many mosques and Islamic schools. They also have gatherings for women and men separately every week to learn and recite the Qur'an and tour several Islamic heritage sites. With these, DWG has the potential to become a Muslim-friendly tourism village.

Kalau tur religi itu sudah bagiannya pak Muhsin, jadi pak muhsin itu biasanya tur religi, kayak kemarin habis dari apa itu, jadi tur religi, jadi ibu-ibu jamaah pengajian *itu tur religi dari Surabaya, trus ke masjid, ke sunan-sunan. Ni besok kita ada tur religi ke wali lima ini.*

The translation is:

For the religious tour, that is Mr. Muhsin's job. He is in charge for that. So usually he arranges the religious tours. Recently, they went on one of the religious tours. So it is the mothers of our village people who usually make a trip, they go to Surabaya, to the mosques, to sunan-sunan. And then the most recent tour that we will be going to is wali lima soon.

If DWG wanted to target new target audiences which are Muslim tourists from all over the world, this means they have to get the basics right and develop Muslim friendly leisure packages. In terms of the basic things that they need, they are already offering halal food services in homestays since most of the villagers are Muslim, they have a lot of shalat (prayer) facilities/information (kiblat) in the homestay, they use water conserving washrooms, they can also provide Ramadhan (fasting) services during sahur and iftar and facilities, and they already make a prohibition of non-halal activities such as an alcohol free environment and are not allowing non-muhrim to stay in one room in the homestays. They also have many recreational facilities and services.

To conclude, DWG basically has all of the basic facilities across the whole value chain which are transport terminal, homestays, camping parks, leisure (attraction, shopping, nature & adventure). So what they need to do is to develop more of the packages and make a campaign on them.

Conclusion

First, based from the findings, the IMC objectives of DWG campaign are to be able to reach the target audiences, to create awareness of the product offered by DWG, which is the trip packages, and to create effectiveness in the campaign. In addition to that, in order to measure the effectiveness, this study is conducted to find out whether the IMC was effective.

There was a good blend of the marketing mix and marketing communication tools in the IMC campaign. It was found that four marketing communication tools were used in the IMC campaign. They were advertising, sales promotion, direct marketing and public relations. The most effectively used marketing communication tool and media in the DWG campaign was internet advertising and interactive media. They used social media such as Facebook, twitter, path, and instagram. They also have their official website, account in YouTube.and active using the whatsapp and bbm groups to communicate effectively with prospective and current customers.

There was a six facet model of effects used to guide the IMC campaign by DWG. From their campaign, it can be seen that they used the perception, emotional/affective, cognition, association, persuasion and behaviour facets. It means that they perfectly used this model of effects to guide the IMC objectives. This is how they met the IMC objectives of the campaign. By using the four marketing communication tools and six facets model of effects, in four years, DWG had successfully increased their income from a minus to a turnover of 120-200 million rupiah each month in the ordinary month, and 300-528 million rupiah in the peak season of tourism during the holidays.

It can also be seen that in terms of the basic need for a Muslim-friendly destination, DWG has the potential for this, because they already have all of the basic needs for Muslim tourists. They just need to promote their Islamic tourism trip packages.

Finally, DWG has able to make a successful IMC campaign in the tourism sector and should be an inspiration to other villages.

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A MAURITIAN'S QUALITATIVE BRAND COMMUNICATION RESEARCH JOURNEY IN THE UK: A CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Qualitative approaches to cross-cultural marketing communication research are usually recommended when the researcher lacks familiarity with the foreign environment under investigation (Malhotra et al. 1996, Burton 2009). Many qualitative researchers have shared their rich personal experiences of performing cross-cultural research in different cultural settings which have contributed to rich insights in the field of qualitative cross-cultural marketing-related research that is growing in importance in this postmodern era of increasing cross-culturality (Liamputtong 2010, Wang 2012). In this paper, the perspective of a Mauritian qualitative researcher considering himself as a "product of cross-cultural identity" (Liamputtong 2010, p. ix) and originating from a "polyethnic island state" (Erisksen 1994, p. 549) is offered. The fieldwork involved in-depth qualitative interviewing of a sample population of elderly White British females living with arthritis as part of a study on charity brand communication. Discussion in this paper focusses on some specific cross-cultural issues relating to context familiarity, researcher-participant rapport and cultural representation. This paper is likely to be of particular interest to qualitative researchers of Asian and other cultural backgrounds envisaging cross-cultural marketing communication research for the first time in a British context. It is also argued that the issues raised might also be of relevance to cross-cultural qualitative research involving in-depth interviewing in an Asian context.

Keywords : brand communication, cross-cultural communication, branding, global communication

Background

This paper provides draws upon the personal account of a Mauritian researcher conducting qualitative research among a White elderly female audience in the UK. In this postmodern era of qualitative research, it is nowadays acknowledged that the experience of qualitative researchers with different cultural backgrounds would provide different voices to issues related to qualitative methodologies in different cultural contexts. Therefore, I felt that the perspective of a novice qualitative researcher from a cross-cultural background would contribute to the body of literature in discussing issues relating to brand communication research from a cross-cultural perspective. There are several definitions and intrepretations of the term *cross-cultural* in marketing research (Malhotra et al. 1996) but in this paper, I will use the term *cross-cultural research* as a situation where the researcher is conducting research in a cultural context that is different from his own. Therefore, I will share my experience as a researcher from the island of Mauritius conducting qualitative research in a British context for the first time.

Context of study

I arrived for the first time in the UK in June 2010 after being recruited as a postgraduate researcher to conduct a study related to charity brand communication in the UK commisioned by a national healthcare charity in the UK invoved with helping people living with arthritis. An increasing number of charities have been involved in branding initiatives during recent years (Stride 2006) and many have realised the importance of branding as a means to "communicating value and meaning" (Hankinson 2001, p. 231). Several high-profile charities in the UK embarked on branding strategies in the 1990s with the result of improving their brand image in the country (Bennett and Gabriel 2003) and attracting more funding from donors (Hankinson 2001). The aim of this research project was to understanding the different ways beneficiaries related to the charity through a brand relationship lens. The project started during a period where the organisation was facing several challenges, especially with regards to income generation. Several managerial measures were taken to face these difficulties, and top management stressed the importance to communicate effectively. There was a felt need of raising the awareness of the charity and its services in the country, and ensuring that its identity and image were aligned. There was also a concern about new entrants in the sector providing similar services which could become potential threats in the future, since they were smaller charities with more focused service delivery. Understanding how branding could be beneficial to the charity in these times of uncertainty and change was felt to be of crucial importance.

The main theoretical framework that guided this study was the consumer-brand relationship typology developed by (Fournier 1998) who attempted to provide a "framework for characterizing and better understanding the types of relationships consumers form with brands" (p.343). Her study investigated consumer-brand relationships "at the level of felt experiences" (Fournier 1998, p.347) and consequently a typology of brand relationship was proposed consisting of fifteen relationship types: arranged marriages, casual friendships/buddies, marriages of convenience, committed partnerships, best friendships, compartmentalized friendships, kinships, rebounds/avoidance-driven relationships, childhood friendships, courtships, dependencies, flings, enmities, secret affairs, and enslavements. The brand relationship metaphor lies on the assumption that people perceive the relationship that they have with brands as analogous to that formed with human beings (Fournier 1998). These interpersonal relationship metaphors are an extension of the brand personality metaphor previously used in the branding literature: "if brands have personalities we can treat them as people; if they are people then we can have relationships with them" (Patterson and O'Malley

2006, p.10). This notion of brand personality has also been explored in the non-profit context and several studies have demonstrated that people ascribe personality traits to charities (Venable et al. 2003, Sargeant et al. 2008a, Voeth and Herbst 2008, Hou et al. 2009). Therefore, this study was aimed at exploring the extent to which interpersonal relationship metaphors could be used to gain a deeper understanding of the nature of relationships formed between the charity brand and its beneficiaries. The brand relationship lens would emphasize the "life worlds of consumers rather than measuring the mere brand-consumer transactions" (Heding et al. 2009, p.176).

Researcher Background

The background of the researcher is an important aspect that influences the way qualitiative research is conducted and interpreted (Cooper and White 2011) and is even more salient when research is being conducted in a cross-cultural context. I was born in 1976 in a "polyethnic island state" (Erisksen 1994, p. 549) which has historically consisted of a mixed population originating from India, Africa, China and Europe (Fregel et al. 2014). The island of Mauritius was a former French and British colony and English and French are still the main administrative languages used. I was raised in the multicultural town of Rose-Hill in a family of three children. My father was a primary school teacher who laid a lot of emphasis on the learning of both English and French from an early age apart from our mother tongue Creole. I learned English since primary school and have always spoken English with a slight French accent, which I consider as a major part of my cultural identity. I consider myself as a "product of cross-cultural identity" (Liamputtong 2010, p. ix) due to the fact that culturally I have been influenced by different cultures prevailing on the island.

Research journey

This study was approached from a social constructionist perspective under the main tenet that "all meaningful accounts of the real world are mediated by the social contexts in which such accounts are constructed" (Pfohl 2008, p.645). This implies that the meaning that people have of their life worlds are influenced by the social relationships that they have, hence "the individual's cultural milieu and group affiliations provide them with lenses through which they view relationships, themselves, and others and endow them meaning" (Koro-Ljunberg 2008, p.434). The strategy of inquiry that I used was that of an interpretive *bricoleur* (Denzin and Lincoln 2003) where specific data collection techniques were modified as research progressed on the field and were adapted to the context of the study. An inductive approach was mainly adopted for this study, which allowed for a co-creation of meaning to happen through the researcher-participant interaction (Kvale 1996). Emphasis was placed on giving voice to participants, who were considered as what Gioia et al. (2013) referred to as "knowledge agents" (p. 17) or people who "know what they are trying to do and can explain their thoughts, intentions and actions" (p.17). Such an inductive approach also allowed me to encouraged participants to use interpersonal metaphors to express themselves, and sometimes the researcher used such metaphors in discussions hence adopting both the 'researcher metaphor' and 'consumer metaphor' approaches (Avis et al. 2012). After experimenting with several interview techniques, I decided to favour the use of in-depth dramaturgical interviews due to its "very fluid and flexible format for conducted research interviews" (Berg 2007, p. 116) based on a conversational model of interviewing (Kvale 1996). In this paper, I will be sharing my reflections on the experience of interviewing White British women from different parts of the UK. There were various issues encountered during the data collection process but I will focus my discussion here on context familiarity, researcher-participant rapport and cultural representation.

Context Familiarity

In her account of her research journey among Somali immigrants in an urban American city, Oikonomidoy (2009) mentioned the value of social interactions in "extra-research spaces" at the exploratory phase of the reseach process. Australian-born female researcher Gresham (2012) also emphasized on this aspect in her study among Saudi female students in Australia. I also realised the importance of such extra-research social interactions in the exploratory phase in order to initiate interest and potentially meet people that would fit the required participant profile. In my particular case, I decided that I had to attend regional branch meetings not only to recruit participants, but also to get a feel of the social and cultural milieu of the people who were members of the charity's regional branches. Branch visits also allowed me to discuss informally with different people at grassroots level. I felt that being direclty involved in the community life of the participants allowed me to better understand the social and culural context of the participants. The observations made during those activities were invaluable and added more depth to my understanding of the issue. I also noted that such participation was also a way for me to break stereotypes on both sides. For instance, may of the events I attended was mostly consisted of an elderly White population and I felt that there was at times a reticence from some people to engage with me because they were not just used to have an Asian young-looking guy attending such events. However, I made an extra effort to interact with a maximum number of people and through this I manage to convince a few of them to participate in the research by scheduling an interview with them at an ulterior date. I believe that when conducting research in a different cultural context, the researcher need to make an extra effort to interact in a casual manner with potential respondents in what Oikonomidoy (2009) described as "extra-research spaces". For instance, I initiated contact with people during the branch meetings coffee breaks or by hanging out after the meeting or helping with cleaning tasks. I also participated in a charity walk where I chatted with the walkers and even helped them in taking their pictures. Therefore, when planning a qualitative research mission in a different country, the researcher should plan for spending time in non-research related social interactions to familiarise with the research context and subsequently build rapport with participants. This would allow for a better understanding of the social context, a better way to build rapport with potential participants and also an opportunity to recruit participants with diverse demographic and psychographic profiles.

Researcher-Participant Rapport

Developing rapport has been acknowledged as a sensible issue in qualitative research and researchers need to "initiate a rapport-building process from their first encounter with a participant in order to build a research relationship that will allow the researcher to access the person's story" (Dickson-Swift et al. 2007, p.331). This becomes even more salient when the researcher is from a different cultural background. I felt that it was important for me to develop a connection with the participant first before probing into the main themes to be discussed. I personally used various tactics to facilitate my rapport with the target audience. Firstly, I needed to emphasize on the fact that I was a visiting scholar from Mauritius so I could benefit from all the positives associations that potential participants would have about the island and its people. I also used one of my nicknames 'Teo' to make it easier for the target audience to related to me since my real Arabic name 'Tauheed' might not only be unfamiliar to them but also might give rise to undesirable associations. I also think that my Mauritian accent contributed in building rapport with the respondents since I found out that participants tended to like the accent I was using as illustrated in the quote below:

> I love they way he says "foreigners," so French. English people find a French accent quite attractive. I don't think the French find it the same way for us.

I feel that in some cases, participants volunteered to be interviewed because they were also interested to know more about my cultural background. The fact that I was from Mauritius contributed in facilitating in connecting with some of the participants.

I also realised quickly that the most important aspect of the research was to be able to initiate a conversation with the participant and to adapt accordingly. As far as possible, I tried to conduct face-to-face interviews in the houses of the participants. However on a few cases, interviews were conducted at the location that was chosen by the respondent. One interview was conducted in a pub, one in a museum café, and one in a bookshop café. I realised that given the age range of the participants, some of them might be reticent to have a 'stranger' in their house so when I initiate contact with them, I did not impose that the interview needed to take place in their houses. I gave them the option to choose the place of interview – a place where *they* would feel comfortable. Locations were selected in mutual consultation whereby participants were told to choose a place where recordings could be made without too much ambient sound. When on location, both parties looked for a quiet spot so as not to be disturbed during the interview. In some cases, I had to consider Skype interviews as a substitute to face-to-face interviews. This was a particularly interesting experience and was a good substitute for face-to-face interviews. In some cases, participants even moved the camera around to show me their natural environment. It was another way of getting into the intimate surrounding of the participant without physically being there. However, this is more likely to happen if time has been devoted to build a connection with the participant prior to the actual interview.

Cultural Representation

The notion of cultural representation was also another theme that emerged from my cross-cultural reflection on data collection. The term representation is used here as the creation of meaning through the use of language and visual symbols (Hall 1997). Language would include the use of words and metaphors by respondents since I purposely encouraged them to do so given my research approach. Metaphors and metaphoric transfer have been used extensively in marketing theory (Hunt and Menon 1995) and it has acknowledged that this has helped in communicating complex issues (O'Malley and Tynan 1999). I encouraged participants to use interpersonal metaphors to express themselves, and sometimes I used such metaphors in discussions with participants hence adopting both the researcher metaphor and consumer metaphor approaches (Avis et al. 2012). Metaphors were proposed as a heuristic to facilitate understanding and explanation of relationship dimensions identified (Avis et al. 2012) based on insights gathered from the perspective of beneficiaries. However, there could be issues in the use and interpretation of metaphors and metaphoric transfer in a cross-cultural context where the researcher might have a different interpretation of the same metaphor used due to differences in cultural background. In his critique of the use of interpersonal relationship metaphor in brand research, Bengtsson (2003) argued that "to say one loves objects, activities, and ideas, is relatively widespread in the American society and is distinct from the way the word 'love' is used in many other cultures where the concept has a more restricted applicability" (p. 156). I came across this situation during my research journey whereby I found that words such as *love* or *hate* could be used and interpreted by my participanyts in a way that was different from my own interpretation. Therefore the use of such metaphors in marketing research could give rise to interpretation issues not only when used in different cultural contexts but also when a researcher from a different cultural context would be using a word or a metaphoric expression with someone from a different cultural context or vice-versa.

Other issues identified in relation to use of language are those relating to accent and transciption. While Choi (2012) noted that scant attention has been given to translation issues as well as the relationship between translator and researcher, I found that there has not been enough attention given in the literature to accent and transcription problems. Before I came to the UK, I thought that most people spoke English with the Received Pronounciation (RP) – an accent that I have been exposed to by some of my English teachers or by certain British news channels via satellite broadcast and the Internet. The RP accent is one that is "probably the most widely studied and most frequently described variety of spoken English in the world" (British Library 2014). However, the reality was that only a minority of people in the UK spoke with this kind of accent - only 2% of the population according to recent studies (British Library 2014). I also found that there were several accents which I needed to familiarise myself with, especially accents from the Northern part of the country. To minimise isssues of language and accent, I decided to hire a native English speaker to transcribe the interviews. However, I found that even as a native English speaker, she also had certain difficulties in understanding some terms used. Therefore, I found myself having to hire another transcriber that would be familiar with all the British accents that were in use at that time. Therefore Asian and non-British researchers who might have learned English as a foreign language with an RP accent need to bear in mind that the accent landscape in the UK is extremely diverse and that they might encounter issues with accent familiarity and transcription. This situation could also apply to other countries and therefore a detailed study of the language and accent landscape of the country where the qualitative investigation will take place is recommended.

Conclusion

This paper was an account of my first-time experience as a qualitative researcher in a British context interviewing a sample of White British females. I focussed my discussion on issues related to context familiarity, cultural representation and researcher-participant rapport from a cross-cultural perspective. In this paper, I used the term cross-cultural research as as a situation where the researcher is conducting research in a cultural context that is different from his own. I felt that by sharing my experience as a someone having a cross-cultural identity among a homogenous White British sample population might provide some new insights that could help other novice researchers from Asia envisaging qualitative researcher in the UK or in another country of their own. I have stressed on the need to devote time in familiarising in the participant's environment through engaging in social activities prior to conducting the actual interviews. I have also raised concerns about the use of brand interpersonal relationship metaphors in cross-cultural contexts and also pointed out the difficulties that a non-Native speaker might encounter with different accents from native English speakers. I also shared a few tactics that I personally used to develop a stronger rapport with my respondents, which included the use of an appropriate nickname, the emphasis on my Mauritian cultural background and my willingness to adapt to the respondents' interaction needs.

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CORPORATE MEDIA AND FEMALE REPRESENTATION: ANALYSIS OF FEMALE CHARACTERIZATION IN DRAMAS OF PAKISTAN

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Abstract

It is well known that literary conventions are established by virtue of the customs, values and traditions of a society. The manner in which an author handles the characters is entwined with those precepts; the points of view imputed arise from them and only in exceptional cases do they differ from them. (Lizarraga, 2005: 1). Media is the most pervasive and most powerful of all the sources of gender Stereotypes. They communicate messages about set roles that are far from subtle. Females and males are presented for the most part, in stereotyped ways, and usually with deviations from the stereotypes depicted negatively (Basow, 1992, p. 157).Women representation in electronic media has significant impact in shaping social perceptions about her true roles and in giving her an opportunity of making phenomenal contribution in the social capital. Women have always been portrayed in electronic media in roles which establish her as a passive, weak, dependent and oppressed segment of society by limiting her abilities. The study aims to investigate patterns of women representation in Pakistani Dramas with special reference to Hum TV's "Zindagi Gulzar Hai"'. 15 Face to face qualitative interview were conducted with an aim to gain rich data in the shape of participants narratives to explore the phenomenon. The interviews were crafted to investigate media portrayal trends on women in Pakistani perspective; its impact on overall viewership in general and on unmarried successful male in particular who is prime decision maker in creation of a balanced family institution. The sampling method was a mix of purposive and convenience sampling..The findings suggests that women representation in Pakistani electronic media is still stereotypical; female has been portrayed as housewife, nurse, personal assistant and labor instead of portraying her in strong realistic characters like army officer, air force officer, sports lady, doctor and women entrepreneur roles. Most of the respondent confirmed that entertainment media has always been portraying male as dominant part of society and female as dependent, weak and oppressed.Even if she has been given education, she is again made to realize that education is for better match not to play any significant role in society. Secondly, women has been treated by media as commercial commodity and she is utilized in media as sex symbol, source of attraction and for product of male satisfaction. It has been observed that foreign funding is received to portray women in minimum clothes in film and drama. Civil society is raising voice about this representation of foreign culture which is nowhere inline with social, moral, religious and ethical values of Sub-continent's society. Since corporate media is backed by big corporations who want to inculcate foreign culture to sell their commodities to the consumer of third world. A woman in Pakistani drama is much different from common women who wears simple dress and struggles to support her family.The study has been concluded with theoretical and practical implications for media owners, drama producers, media planners and advertising agencies. The study also suggests Strategies for women empowerment through media representation to make her embrace more challenging roles in society.

Keywords : Electronic media, media representation, media and gender, women in media, women representation

Background

Until the eighteenth century, Western women had neither the time nor the opportunity to write or to publish what they wrote. As Virginia Woolf has pointed out, "financial independence and freedom to think without interruptions are essential prerequisites before a woman can take up writing as a profession."ina

The need to have a tradition and to see oneself as extending it is expressed by Karen Malpede, a contemporary American woman playwright, "I've been creating for myself a tradition into which I could fit and which I can hold on in the years to come. A tradition which hopefully my own work may help to extend."io

Beauty is a socially constructed reality and the symbols which serve as means of judgment about Feminist beauty are universally established.

This study is aimed at exploring the inspirational idea behind the portrayal of a female character in the selected television drama of HUM TV "Zindagi Gulzar Hai". Taking the drama as a whole, certain common characteristics are found in terms of theme, structure, and characterization. The recurrent themes are women's struggle for self-realization, self-definition and autonomy, women's quest for identity. The researcher has been inspired from the writers' characterization in the drama in which she has tried to give heroic stature to a girl who is not very beautiful in appearance but whose personality has been made attractive by instilling self-reliance, educational excellence, high integrity and minimum interest in opposite sex.

The researcher is of the view that TV Drama has been utilized to change social behavior of a male segment by making them choose a girl with ordinary appearance but with extra-ordinary caliber and character. The study will establish the role of media in empowering women by changing social preferences and addressing social problems where an ordinary looking girl often faces lack of attention and die without marriage. Semi-Structured Interviews of the play writer, Media professionals and young unmarried professionals were conducted.

Philosophical Assumptions

“Ontological stance: What is the nature of reality? The Ontological position argues that reality is not an objective phenomenon and that there are multiple realities. Human beings are diverse in their understanding of the world. Every individual perceives the world in a different perspective so the nature of reality differs from person to person. Within the given ontological framework, this study aims at describing and explaining the phenomenon of female portrayal in the electronic media in order to change the characteristics of idealizing women, shifting it from beauty to character in the context of the chosen content for analysis. Epistemological Stance: The knowledge claim of how do we acquire knowledge of the world and reality? The researcher’s epistemological stance falls into social constructionism, which contends that all knowledge produced is local, provisional and situation specific (Bryman and Bell, 2008), which has consequences for the research findings, as findings of the research may vary according to the context in which data is collected and analyzed (Madill et al., 2000).

Literature of Women Representation in Media

Characteristics of Female Representation in Drama/film

Discourses and systems of representations formulate places from where either gender can position them and from which they can speak. Media representation produces meanings by way of which individuals can make sense of their experience and know about themselves. Such symbolism gives rise to system for our realization of self. Representation as a cultural process produces individual as well as collective identities. Through this symbolic system we get to know possible answers to the questions: who am I? What could I be? Who do I want to be? (ibid: 14) Woodward (1997) has defined representation and identity as key concepts which help us, as social subjects, to understand the relationship between ourselves and the community, class, gender and sexuality. Media according to Stuart Hall may serve as powerful ideological tool. (Griffin, 2004, p. 361)Different form of entertainment media teaches us suitable actions as well as social behaviours. Such societal form of education and entertainment is a vital cultural power. According to the Beijing Platform for action (BPFA) is concerned to be the most comprehensive agenda for women's empowerment. The BPFA's section J is dedicated to women and the Media. One of the two strategic objectives of this section was based upon the promotion of balanced and non-stereotypical image of women in media.

According to Ingham (2007) who writes about the importance of family life, greater number of female characters in TV drama is focused in the domestic setting. Women's world has been depicted to be confined to passive aspirations including getting married and giving birth to children as women's contribution in family setting is highly valued. The female has been portrayed to be more comfortable in indoor lifestyle whereas she has not been positioned as product of outside world. Another aspect which has been seen dominantly in TV dramas is the marital status of women. It's an important component of any plot of drama which revolves around a girl's voyage from being unmarried to becoming married.

Women's Under-Representation

Underrepresentation is an effective strategy used by media to distort reality. Basow (1992) explains that it is a feature of prime time television, in which there are three times as many white men as women, or kids programming in which male exceeds female by two to one, or newscasts, which give chance to 16% of female newscasters whereas it has 10 times more stories about men than about women. ("Study Reports Sex Bias,"t1989). Trowler (1988) has reported that according to available statistics, the role of women has been portrayed through advertising as being more of a family and home based entity instead of her diverse participation in overall walks of life. Women have been given seven times more representation in hygienic products advertisements; 75% of the product using women as model was related to bathroom and kitchen, 56% of women in advertisements were shown as domestic housewives and only eighteen different occupations were shown in female in contrast to 43% of men.

There is a dire need to study areas where women have been placed in leading representation in media, generally in the context of underdeveloped countries and particularly in the Pakistani media which is also the focus of this study. Most of the available literature is speaking about negative representation of female in media, some says that they has been portrayed as weak, sensitive, passive, and motherly, in labour roles, oppressed and sexually exploited or exposed, but there are certain traditions which need to be unveiled to bring-forth positive media representation of female in Pakistan. This is the gap which this study is going to fill by reporting about a drama in which a female has been given symbolic representation as leading character and a role model.

Women's portrayal as Weak and passive

"There is no chance of the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved. It is not possible for a bird to fly on one wing."h-Swami Vivekananda

Weak Women Means Weak Social, Cultural and Symbolic Capital

Pierre Bourdieu (1984), a French sociologist has defined capital as "set of actually usable resources and powers"ewhich individuals use in their pursuit of their goals and objectives. Capital has been further divided into four major categories 1) economic, 2) social, 3) cultural and symbolic, out of these one is of our interest. Gender discrimination means that women will have less economic capital than men; similar is the case for other forms of capital. This approach has a collective impact on the overall capital of a nation so one must acknowledge that those nations who empower all genders possess more capital in relation to nations operating with gender based discrimination.

Beauty or Character of Women in the Pakistani Perspective

Focus and target of TV Drama in Pakistan has been the Pakistan's youth. Representation of women as beauty products, propagation of irrelevant cross gender interaction and domestication are the visible themes in the media of today. Idealism about Beauty standards are portrayed on mainstream media through TV commercials, TV shows and movies. Youth is constantly bombarded with images and stories which persuade a common viewer to a cultivated reality about the ideal ways to be considered modern in the society.

The media in general and TV in particular have a major effect in shaping the image of women in society. Young women are given an image of being weak and dependent whereas the male is portrayed as strong, tough and assertive. The basic role of women is to please men. The media has played tremendous role in shaping social realities and making people understand the meanings of different social concepts and constructs. Likewise, our concepts about gender and gender preferences, about what are traits of a women and what are characteristics of men, about the roles of men and women in public and private spheres, sexuality, beauty and parenthood.

The media has defined things which are natural, acceptable, normal, possible and desirable for us. Our concept about beauty is also determined by the media. What are the traits of beauty in Women is something we come to know from the media. In the early eighties, Pakistani women were inspired from Anjuman and criterion of female beauty for male was based upon heavy weight women with Punjabi cultural dress.

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Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the given study has been based upon two relevant theories. These two theories are supporting the objectives and research questions of the study. Individual significance of the two theories is given below:

Gerbner's Cultivation Theory

As our study is based upon the analysis of women's representation in TV Drama serial so Cultivation Theory is going to offer suitable framework to build our study. Cultivation Theory suggests that television is appropriate medium for shaping, or "cultivating"uviewer's concept about a social reality. The overall effect of massive television viewing by the viewer after a certain period of consistent viewership, starts shaping the viewer's perception of social reality which later on is accepted as culture when socially accepted. Gerbner argues that "the mass media cultivate attitudes and values which are already present in a culture: the media maintain and propagate these values amongst members of a culture, thus binding it together". Cultivation research examines at the mass media as a socializing agent and studies the believability on the part of viewer about the reality the more they watch it. The theory support our study as Drama viewing too has impact on set of values an individual or society is carrying. The theory also guides us to focus on either heavy viewers or light viewers to get desired results so researcher shall base his sample under the light of cultivation theory. The theory also provides a road-map for methodology to have effective results so the theory also provides direction about methodological interventions.

Bandura's Social Learning Theory

Bandura's social learning theory is second theory which can provide strong theoretical foundation for building a conceptual framework. Being effectively tested in advertising to emphasize a certain behavior of gaining prominence. The theory can help the study in understanding the impact of female character "under study" on viewers. The theory encompasses observation, attention and motivation which are core factors in qualitative research so it is going to be quite supportive in building our conceptual framework and themes apart from guidance in methodological and sampling techniques.

How The Selected Theory Can Contribute In Answering The Research Questions And Objectives.

The selected theories are very relevant to my inquiry as both of these theories are related to understanding the effect of TV on construction of social reality. I have clearly-defined my objectives for this research and in the light of objectives, research questions have been developed so these two theories are going to play significant role in answering my research questions. A considerable body of research has been conducted in developed countries with reference to construction of positive image of women through media portrayal but this has yet to be studied in Pakistani perspective. Subsequently, the research will focus on low viewer and high viewer alike to understand the varying impact of media content on the audience. We still do not have a clear understanding of the extent to which the Drama "Zindagi Gulzar Hai"ahas influenced the criterion of beauty in Pakistani society. Therefore, the aim of the research is:

- To understand the power of media in facilitating women's acceptance in leading roles in social fabric
- The rationale of examining the change in social reality of female beauty traits in a Pakistani drama's context is to explore the power of media in social transformation, though it has been done in developed countries there is room to examine it in Pakistani context. Drawing on the theoretical framework of cultivation and social reality theories, this study embraces the social, cultural and historical context that investigates the effect of cultivated communication on the behavior of viewer.
- To explore the concept of women's empowerment and its reinforcement through women's media representation.

The rationale for examining the relationship between women's representation and its impact on media is to examine how a positive portrayal of female can have positive impact about people perceptions about women. The research aims to study the role of media representation in cultivating the social behaviors and social realities and categorically examine the effect of strategic communication on preferences of viewer.

Methodology

Approach

Considering philosophical and methodological perspectives, an interpretive approach was incorporated to discover contextual factors contributing towards women's representation in media. The inception of qualitative research design gave the researcher an opportunity to analyze the phenomenon of women's representation in media from historical, critical and societal point of view. Furthermore, a qualitative research design helped researcher to identify factors which have constrained media in improving women representation in media from stereotypical to modern trends, and practices.

Face to face qualitative interviews were conducted with an aim to gain rich data in the shape of participants narratives to explore the phenomenon. The interviews were crafted to investigate media portrayal trends on women in the Pakistani perspective; its impact on overall viewership in general and on unmarried successful males in particular who are prime decision makers in the creation of a balanced family institution. The sampling method was a mix of purposive and convenience sampling. The sample was divided in three categories to achieve maximum insight with different perspectives; first category included unmarried successful professionals. The second category included people from media background especially from entertainment media and thirdly experts on entertainment media were interviewed to endorse the overall sketch of women empowerment through media representation.

Keeping in view the multifaceted nature of the phenomenon and to achieve maximum transparency in the investigation of phenomenon, this sampling technique was selected because it was a customized approach and suitable for the overall research design. Through an extensive literature review, an interview guide was prepared which conforms the perceptions of both formal and informal patterns. The interviews covered the historical context of female representation in the media, its impacts on social capital and prevailing trends in Pakistani entertainment media about women's representation. The importance of media representation for women's empowerment was also debated during the interviews. The format of the interview was from general to specific which gave a comprehensive account of the phenomenon as well as the interviewee being given freedom to express their views without using too structured a format. Most of the interviews were conducted in Urdu but few respondents were more comfortable with English language so that was also taken care of. A total of 9 interviews are conducted with both male and female participants. Data confidentiality and personal anonymity aspects were briefly discussed with the respondents. All the interviews were audio recorded with the consent of interviewee who were assured that the recordings will be transcribed and sent for member checking. Thematic analysis was incorporated to explore emerging themes and organize data for qualitative analysis.

Analysis

Data analysis was carried out in four systematic stages in our study. In the first phase, a framework matrix in MS excel was formed with rows representing cases and columns representing key themes emerged. The data generated was simply copy pasted in raw form. In the second stage, the data were summarized according to each cell. With every new theme emergence, new sub columns were created. The process of mapping and interpretation was carried-out in the third stage when similar cases were grouped together so that researcher could compare the relevance of sub themes and similarities of characteristics among same cases. In the final stage, the results were written in narrative form, including quotations drawn directly from the framework matrix to augment the argument. All these stages were carried our repeatedly till the desired meaning from the data is extracted by the researcher. Pseudonyms were assigned for confidentiality and anonymity, while presenting the data.

Limitations

The authors are aware that it's a small sample (12), covering small geographical area (Lahore). Despite all efforts to achieve objective interpretation of data as well as robust analysis of acquired findings, the research team is aware about many difficult associated in adopting social constructionist approach.

Findings

Demographic profile

Years in media

Age group

Marital status/Gender

TV Watching per week

Preferred channel for Drama

Preferred Themes in Drama R1 7 29 Single/Male 10 hours Hum TV Social problems R2 6 27 Single/Male 14 hours HUM/GEO Social Issues/Romance R3 12 33 Married/Female 16 hours HUM Social Issues/Soap Opera R4 9 35 Married/Female 8 hours HUM/GEO Social Issues R5 8 29 Single/Male 14 Hours HUM/GEO Social Issues/Soap Opera R6 8 34 Single/Male 12 Hours HUM Social Issues R7 10 38 Married/Male 18 hours HUM/GEO/ARY Social Issues R8 34 63 Married/Male 24 Hours HUM/GEO Social Issues/ Love Triangle

Analysis of the demographic information gathered during the interviews reflects the probability of respondents to be the right sample in order to consider the findings reliable and relevant. As evident from the table, almost all the respondents were from the media field which enhances their likelihood in analyzing the role of media in women's empowerment. The demographic profile of the respondents shows that almost all the people have been in media for at least 6 years or more and their age group reflects the representation of sample is based upon all age groups starting from young people (the primary one), mature people as well as highly experienced celebrities.

All the respondents were directly or indirectly sensitized by the Dramas and their power to shape up perception about women so their feedback gave strong ground to extract a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge. The participants are a mix of single and married as well as male/female. Drama watching habits were quiet extensively observed in the respondents and their interest was also mostly common that they liked social issues so women are most prominent ingredient of our social recipe. Hum TV was quiet commonly viewed by most of the respondents and they also have seen the drama under study "Zindagi Gulzar Hai"aso desired responses were achieved.

Findings: Media watching habits According to Mr. Sohaib:

> "As I'm mostly busy with my job, but the drama's in which I am interested or which is being so popular somehow I manage to watch them in repeat or in any way I keep myself updated with the story". (R1)

Mr. Sohiab has endorsed the finding that it's not the matter of their routine, today's viewer can reach-out to any source to watch popular TV Drama.

The same discussion was continued by Mr. Osama in this way:

> "If you talk about dramas, I can't watch any drama regularly but I bring DVDs and watch some of them" (R2) One of the females, Miss. Noren, responded in this way

Actually it depends on my routine. If I'm too busy I stick to 2 or 3 dramas but it depends which is the most important for me is the script and the cast too, if that is good or the writer is good I'll go for it, And I even go on the internet and watch it if I don't have time to watch on television, well I like humaira ahmed's writing so I like to watch her dramas. (R4)

Keeping in view the response from the participants, it has been observed that if any drama is gaining popularity among public, all types of viewers spare time to watch that drama as per their convenience. They also use multiple sources to watch drama which can be Website of TV, YouTube or any other source where drama is readily available. These findings give indication towards a shift in viewership approach from conventional media watching sources to reliance on easily accessible new media according to his/her own comfort. It also gives good analysis for drama industry that they should not sell their drama to big TV channels who have requirements for huge budget productions instead they should only focus on making quality dramas, viewers will follow them anywhere. Secondly, it also guides advertisers to include leading drama websites and other online sources while their media planning to tap the consumer instead of sticking to conventional approach of advertising on TV.

Perspectives on Media & Gender

As per the response of Mr. Sohaib, media and gender has the following relationship: "I think our media is portraying women very stereotypically, and if a women have been very successful the media shows her as if she has used wrong or illegal way for this or maybe she got this success just for the revenge whatever but character of women is still not shown positively by our media but eventually it is vanishing and now women are given leading characters in the dramas. (R1)

Talking about the confinement of established trends in Media with reference to female as gender, Miss Maham raised these points:

> Media should also realize it and show something besides these issues like love romance and friendship, marriages; media should show that there is a big outer world for you that this is not the life but a part of our life. (R4)

> The roles of women are very confined, like if you have portrayed her positively she is shown as if she is too innocent that she is depending on others and she can’t do anything and if she is portrayed as empowered she is shown as if she is the ultimate one she don’t need to listen to anyone, she can take decisions herself (R4)

Mr. Ali has compared the International Media and Gender with our national media in these words:

> America has made its image through movies they also show their culture as we do, I think this is the major tool through which you can bring change in our society (R5)

Mr. Ahmad Hammad added this view to the findings:

> There was a time in 2001 when you couldn’t differentiate between the Indian and Pakistani dramas as their women get up late night at 2 with all that makeup and Jewellery even our dramas got exposure in the Pedller theater of Iran the production lightning post production everything was appreciated, but from last 5 to 6 years the practice of revival of our dramas is being practiced by using those same techniques of 80's but not contents which were so mature (R7)

The study has brought some very interesting data about the relationship between Media and gender. Most of the respondents confirmed that entertainment media has always been portraying the male as the dominant part of society and the female as dependent, weak and oppressed. Even if they has been given education, women are again made to realize that education is for a better match not to play any significant role in society. Secondly, women have been treated by media as a commercial commodity and they are utilized in media as sex symbols, sources of attraction and as objects of male satisfaction.

Our dramas, films and adverts have shown women in three ways which establishes that a women needs support. In the social, religious and cultural perspective of Pakistani society, there has been a shift in TV drama content with regard to male and female physical interaction. Nowadays, our dramas are giving as much freedom to actors as there used to be in Indian movies. Now males can freely touch females which was not a practice in last decade. This has created some contradiction between society and the media portrayal. Now that element of family entertainment is missing due to such frank physical interactions which are not acceptable for Pakistani society. This finding draws the attention of the Censor Board to intervene so that coherence between media and society can be achieved.

Corporate media and Women's Representation

Indian dramas are not portraying its real civilization.

According to Mr. Osama,

> "Are Indian media representing their real culture? That's the same that exists here. Things have not so bad here as well but yeah may be there is a class which is involved in it but mostly things are not like as they are being represented amongst us! (R2)

How media has portrayed women was narrated by Miss Noren in these words:

> "I think it is the most difficult question! Mostly they are portrayed more towards glamour, and the element of negativity still exists, like women are being portrayed as evil mother in law, prostitute, starting up a controversy in household, the cunning housewife who is always creating problems in house as compared to positive image of a women (R3)

Mr. Amir gave critical overview of female representation in media as under:

> "Women is an object of bad entertainment and a thing to use. (R6)

One of the participants gave very interesting information about the portrayal of women in third world media. It has been observed that foreign funding is received to portray women in minimum clothes in film and drama of India. Indian civil society is raising its voice about this representation of foreign culture which is nowhere in line with social, moral, religious and ethical values of Indian society. Corporate media is backed by big corporations who want to inculcate foreign culture to sell their commodities to the consumer of third world. A woman in an Indian drama is very different from common women who wears simple dress and struggles to support her family.

Women's Empowerment Through Media Representation

According to Miss Noren:

> I think definitely, like "Zindagi Gulzaar Hai" is a very good effort in that way in which the struggle of women is shown and the concept of women's empowerment is seen and these kind of dramas can have a positive impact on our society, it would defiantly change the stereotypical thinking about women, they will change the perceptions of people towards choosing intelligence over physical appearance and is very helpful for the women's movement as well. (R3)

Mr. Sohaib focused on the given facts:

> Such representation of women in media is creating space. Previously women were not allowed to go out for studies but I guess only the elite class was in favour of sending their daughters abroad for studies but now, through media, our society has changed. Now they think women's education is much important as she can also get a good place in society through education. (R1)

Media representation means the portrayal of the female in the media content. Media representation is identified as a core contributor in empowering women in any society. Media can play vital role in earning women a respectable place in society as constructive as well as active member of society instead of showing her as object of men's satisfaction. Media representation of women in multiple roles; which are already being played by women in real world can make a lot of difference.

Content Producer's Role in Women Media Representation

According to Miss Noreen:

“I read an interesting quote somewhere which stated that "Art may imitate life but life imitates TV" so what society or people watch on TV automatically has an impact on them, in short it imitates them. (R3)

If the story or situation of drama matches with the life of any housewife she acts according to it (R4)

I think media is playing its role in changing, like if I see in my family, people refer that yea this is reality which was also shown on media in that drama, so this issue is somewhere in subconscious of people. Our society and when they are on your media it becomes more authentic and people say yes this is our society! (R4)

What role writers are playing, producers are playing and directors are playing in a deteriorating social fabric. Writers should adopt a balanced approach in drama which includes positive and negative aspects. Cultivation Theory suggests that television is an appropriate medium for shaping, or “cultivating”uviewers’ concepts about a social reality. Beauty is the social phenomenon under investigation in this particular study and the role of media is analyzed in shaping this social reality. How beauty is perceived in any society largely depends on the representation of characteristics of beauty in the media. We had state media in which drama was state subsidized. The writer was focusing on substance not commercialization. Producer too was focusing on substance. Privatization of media has taken away all substance and reality is substituted by glamorization. Due to economic pressures, writers too are embracing commercialization. Media had entertainment plus education role too. Actors too have started writing and producing dramas which has furthered the commercialization. Writers are selling their scripts without any worry and allowing producers to pay for what they have written. Writers award rights of editing to the producer.

Media’s Influence on the Male’s Preference about Life partner

Sketch of life partner is that she should not be very pretty but should have a beautiful soul and should work with me (R1)

“I think people are not going for the conventional ways which were few years ago which were pretty face to marry but there is an awakening among people. They now think to marry a partner who is educated and has a strong character and is not a door mat as I said that a lot depends on your upbringing and social conditions as well and yes your economic background also have influence in decision making (R3)

Yes absolutely media have a strong impact on the way people think and perceive things, and their perception about women comes from the images that are projected in media, if we show strong female characters then off course they think this is better than just a pretty face (R3)

“Unmarried youngster! Yes obviously I’m really conscious about my life too. I also need a companion too but what matter is character like you can talk to everyone but you need time understand them and these drama let us understand those characters. we are too busy in our work that we don’t have time to think over it but we need a support to create our ideal and I think these dramas help us in it”t(R5)

So far if you talk about representation of women in our dramas, yes there is a change. Like in "zindagi gulzaar ha" the girl was portrayed as a hard working in studies so it is the point which shows that our women’s are playing their role equally (R2)

Like if you see as we were talking about "zindagi gulzar" kashaf role is very strong and her mother Samina Perzada is also really strong as she is separated from her husband. She is working hard for her girls instead of sitting home and crying. She stood up and went out for job only for her daughters so I think these kinds of dramas portray women strongly. (R3)

The young male has been found to be very mature about his decision of life partner. Though, they prefer beauty and modernism for developing relationships with university fellow, colleagues or relatives, they have very serious considerations while selecting a life-partner. Male youngsters have varying approaches towards selecting life partners; some of the prominent themes include family background, educational excellence, professional support, richness, caring, Submissiveness and beautiful appearance. Good looks have short-term temptation but the male is following traditional parameters in evaluating a female for life partner. Media has vital role in shaping male's preferences about his life-partner because every form of media communication has an underlying message which directly influences the viewer's perception. The strength of media effect depends on the quality of production, direction and the selection of performers. If the recipe is good the entertainment media is going to influence the social behaviour of the viewer. The theme of the drama Zindagi Gulzar hai has been appreciated by all segments of society given the fact that this kind of communication can bring positive change in the glamour oriented approach to more rationale and realistic approach.

Discussion

Despite all the developments in the world, the representation of the female in media is still a matter of real debate as it has not been able to get rid of stereotypical images which are associated with women. She still has been portrayed as weak, dependent, victim of oppression and aggression. Just like any other profession, women are under-represented in media jobs. They are not shown to be securing high offices in Dram/Films but they are most of the time serving as care-givers or dependent on males. Media has been found to be misrepresenting the actual proportion of men and women in the population. This systematic distortion tempts us to believe that there are more men than women and, moreover, that men are the cultural standard.

Gallagher (1995) Narrates that one of the ten obstacles in women's progress is the communication media which is really a critical area of concern and only media can pave way for women's equality to become a socially acceptable reality not as a whole but at least partially. The media creates spaces in which social, political and culture issues are discussed, debated and presented. They have vital roles in making any issue significant for the viewer and guides people about treatment and management of certain issues. The media is doing much more than just emancipation of information to masses through news and entertainment based programming; they are actually producing and disseminating most of the resources, information, ideas, assumptions, way of thinking, frameworks, values, beliefs, narratives, which audiences actively utilizes to develop understanding about the world and mutual relationships. This power of the media is the right tool to create desired social realities for women's representation. This assumption provides the framework for addressing strong stereotyping about women in under-developed countries and to support women acquiring a leading as well as respectable place in the mind of society. This space is key in achieving behavioral change in any society which in turn results in social change. An individual behavioral change is like a first rain drop, the rest will follow till the dust of stereotypical mentality about women is cleaned with purity of the idea of equal media representation for women. media = resources + spaces

Women empowerment in the Pakistani context has been confused with Westernization. We have developed a negative perception about women's empowerment. Supporters of male domination have hijacked women's empowerment by linking it with westernization. They have created a negative perception that modernization of women is a western concept and Pakistani women should not adopt it. We have not accepted women in leading roles in society as it is in contrast to male domination. Media could play significant role in this regard through portrayal of women in leading roles but again the media is a commercial venture which portrays women as an oppressed and weak component of society or as source of sensual satisfaction. Drama Writers too have suffered from commercialization and their role has also been affected. Writers are asked to write formula based dramas which reflect love triangles, family conflicts and women as passive or an oppressed segment of society. They are not allowed to write revolutionary, simple, social issues based stories as these are not going to serve the agenda of the corporate sector. Producers too are not ready to invest in dramas which are based upon themes of social transformation, instead they are willing to invest in corporate sponsored stories. The media wants to propagate negativity which has serious effect on women's representation. If a girl is raped in a hostel, the media will highlight it a lot but it will not highlight the large number of girls residing safely in hostels. Such negative media representations have served as barriers in women's empowerment. This type of representation has kept fears alive for women and their families. The media should create hope for women. The media has its agenda, society has a different agenda and corporate sector has its own agenda; unless a coherence in these three factors'eagenda is achieved, media cannot play constructive role in women's empowerment. Though we claim that women should be empowered how far has the media played its role in facilitating those characteristics which are considered to be key contributors towards women's empowerment? I.e. better education, better health, equal opportunity and better security.

Conclusion

The study gives interesting and unique information which is quite significant for the existing knowledge about women's representation in entertainment media of Pakistan. Under the light of literature, it can be concluded that women's portrayal in the media is still stereotypical as they have been depicted as weak, dependent, passive and oppressed, whereas if we study the real-life women of today in the Pakistani perspective; she is playing an active role in all walks of life. She is getting healthy representation both in public and private sector. Women have been given opportunities by armed forces, sports departments and in the National/provincial assembly but we seldom have come across any drama serial in which women is shown in such leading roles.

The study has also analyzed how much a male's preferences about choice of life-partner been governed by media. It has been observed that male priorities about life partner are beyond the scope of media portrayal but his choice is mostly driven by his future endeavors. Some marry rich girls to attain social security whereas other marry professional girl who can contribute in his household income. The media has not played much role in shifting the approach of male preference about life partner and he's after the beauty of character. A male wants more supportive, loyal and mature girl instead of solely beauty.

Implications

Media Literacy

Media literacy is very important to facilitate women's empowerment. A fully-fledged campaign about media literacy is recommended to be launched. Make people aware of the fact that media can change the society. The campaign should tell people about the factors which sets the agenda of the media as well as forces who controls the media. A media consumer should be aware of the parameters to analyse media content. This awareness is vital for getting desired results from media content.

Increase Media Coverage of Social Based Agenda

The study recommends that social based agenda coverage on media should be increased. The overall programming of media should include child rights, women's rights, moral problems, male problems, ethical problems, education problems, security problems and culture problems.

Pakistani TV dramas are losing family viewership

This finding draws attention of Censor Board to intervene so that coherence between media and society can be achieved.

Portray Women in Leading Roles

Media representation of women in multiple roles which are already being played by women in the real world can make a lot of difference towards the diverse social contribution of the female in society. She can be shown as army officer, air-force pilot, sports celebrity, entrepreneur and banker in dramas to facilitate her acceptance as constructive and active member of society.

TV Production Houses

It also gives good analysis for the drama industry that they should not sell their drama to big channels instead they should only focus on making quality dramas, viewer will follow them anywhere.

Advertising Agencies

Secondly, it also guides advertisers to include leading drama websites and other online sources while their media planning to tap the consumer as sticking to conventional approach of advertising on TV won’t pay.

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INCORPORATING THE VALUE OF LOCAL WISDOM IN THE CSR MODEL: A CASE STUDY IN AQUA DANONE IN KLATEN REGION, CENTRAL JAVA PROVINCE, INDONESIA

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Abstract

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), is a strategic corporate initiative that has received an increased amount of attention in the business world. CSR is intended to encourage the business to be more ethical in their activities so as not to influence or have a bad impact on society and environment.Indonesia, where the communities are based on ethnic and various tribes cannot be circumvented. A reputable company must be able to understand the local wisdom of the community so that CSR programs can provide more benefits to company and local communities (Hudayana, 2011). CSR practitioners should be sensitive to the needs and sound knowledge of the local which will be a positive support to the social development of society and improve trustworthiness of the business. Local wisdom consists of universal moral message, for example principle of justice, alignments toward the weak, sustainable environment that promote appropriate technology, renewable energy which has a aim toward the collective social welfare rather than individual (Hudayana, 2011). This paper aims to identify the CSR model by incorporating local wisdom in "Aqua Danone Indonesia" which was implemented in Klaten Region, Central Java Province. AQUA Danone Group is awarded MDG Awards (IMA) on 2012 in Indonesia because of their support to MDG

(Millenium Development Goals) in Indonesia. Program Water Access, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and the clean water access and Hygiene is awarded 2nd winner for Access for Clean Water Service. This paper used qualitative approach, and the strategy of inquiry is case study employed through in depth interviews with the local community and working managers who deal with CSR issues and strategy on day-to-day basis. Secondary data are in the form of information about CSR program from sustainable reports downloaded from the company's website, mass media news downloaded from the internet and other literature study. At the end of this study researchers hope to be able to incorporating the value of local wisdom in the CSR Model.

Keywords: CSR, Stakeholders, Local Wisdom

Background

Corporate social responsibility (CSR), a strategic corporate initiative that has received an increased amount of attention. It provides more benefits to an organization than simply reducing costs by recycling and giving back to the community. Corporate social responsibility is aimed to encourage the business to be more ethical in their actions so as not to influence or have a bad impact on society and the environment, so that eventually the business will be able to survive on an ongoing basis to obtain the economic benefits for which it has been established. According to Shiramesh (2007), CSR is needed for corporations to go beyond their economic and legal obligations, and act responsibly towards multiple stakeholders including society at large. We have seen that many corporations in the world have failed to gain public confidence and trustworthiness because of their dishonorable conduct.

The collapses of reputable companies such as "Enron" and "Merryl Linch" caused the loss of investors and thousands of employees. In Indonesia, the devastating mud from the volcano of the Sidoarjo area in East Java kindled by the exploration of “Lapindo Brantas” (Bakrie Group) has had a huge impact on the people and national economic situation. This shows how important the role of conductning the business with more responsibility towards stakeholders.CSR should be a package that could also give maximum impact to the community by encouraging people to become more empowered. CSR needs two main pillars: business partnerships and community development, to provide welfare to the people of Indonesia.

In Indonesia, the obligation for companies to do CSR activities listed in act no 40 of 2007 article 74 of the Limited Liability Company. CSR activities are implemented to preserve the sustainability of the natural environment directly or through collaboration with other stakeholders. CSR activities are usually in the form of environment campaign, supporting education and training, forestation, establish of green open spaces and parks, saving natural resources that are used in factories or stores, the application of recycling and reuse of products. Hudayana (2011) proposes that CSR practitioners are often not sensitive to the local community. Hudayana found that CSR initiatives should be strengthening the local wisdom of the community where the company operates. CSR initiatives and programs can be obtained from the local wisdom that characterizes the local community. CSR practitioners should be sensitive to the needs and have knowledge of the local wisdom which will be a positive support to the social development of society and improve trustworthiness of the business.

According to Kayuni and Tambulasi (2012), CSR efforts will also heavily depend on the culture of the community. Many o CSR programs are not in accordance with the needs of the community since there is lack of base line of data of the community and the lack of corporate will to do such a need assesment including socio-culture aspects (Rudito& Famiola, 2013). The local characteristic as well as local wisdom is a social capital that can be improved and can develop the sustainability of a program (Afitri, 2011). CSR practitioners should understaand the problem of socio and culture of community before undertaking the CSR Program (Almaeshi, 2006: 2; Pimpa et al, 2014; Kapelus, 2002, Prayogo ,2013; Mostardeiro & Duarte (2007)

Problem Statement

Based on the background of the problem, it is can be seen that business can't be ignored. The larger issues such as sustainable development, human rights, social justice and community development are important in order to gain competitive advantage. CSR is the vital issue in Indonesia since the Law no 40 of 2007 has been issued. CSR is still perceived as a charity or donations as well as a public relations tool to build an image of a company. There is still a lack of perception that CSR activities will burden the financial health of the company. Even though there are so many corporations in Indonesia conducting CSR initiatives, there are still lackof understanding towards local wisdom (Hudayana, 2011)

There also a lack of support from the community towards CSR Programs since in the past CSR practitioners did not have concerns about the roots of the community's problems, or the CSR programs that were conducted by companies sometimes were not appropriate for the local community and the local culture. Besides, the company often used CSR only for *"safe guard*" to defend their existence and business operations (Prayogo, 2013).

In this case, the reseacher will scrutinize one of the CSR initiatives conducted by Aqua Danone. Aqua Danone has conducted a CSR program which gained success, the collaboration between the conservation and water access program, that is Water Access, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH). The CSR concept of Danone has been deeply rooted from the ideas of Antoine Riboud, the former of CEO of Danone.

The CSR of Aqua Danone is deeply rooted from the double commitment of the company. Double commitment is the way to conduct the business which is not only stressing economic perfomance but also showing concerns about social issues. This idea is in accordance with the founder of Aqua, Tirto Utomo, who holds the principle that business should contribute towards the society. This idea is revealed in “Aqua Lestari” which has been developed since 2006 as a sustainable initiative which uses DANONE WAY and ISO 26000 as a SR reference (SR Report Aqua, 2012)

AQUA Group was awarded MDG Awards (IMA) 2012 in Indonesia because of their support to MDG (Millenium Development Goals) in Indonesia. Some programs were also given awards such as: School Supporting Program di Keboncandi, Gondang Wetan Area, Pasuruan Region, East Java became a winner for the education category. Program Water Access, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and the clean water access and Hygiene was awarded 2nd winner for Access for Clean Water Service and School Sanitation Program “Sahabat Mata Air” program in Pasuruan Region, East Java became the nominator of education category (http://www.aqua.com/beranda)[vi]

Danone group also gained first rating in Access to Nutrition Index in 2013. This index made a measurement over 25 companies in the world which related to their commintment to poor nutrition and related disease. ATNI is aimed to support the companies to increase the consumer’s awareness towards nutritious food and drinks awareness thriugh the action such as product formulation, pricing, distributing and examining the effect of the company on the consumer’s preference, and the company’s behavour through their marketing, labelling and promoting healthy diets and active lifestyles[vii] The CSR initiative in Danone comprises 4 pillars, first, the Water Preservation and Environment as an effort of company to keep and preserve both quantity and quality, for environments. 2) Eco Friendly Business Practice as a company commitment to operate in harmony with nature 3) Managing the Product Distribution, a commitment of the company to manage the effect which is caused by the distribution from the factory to the company 4) Incorporating and Empowering the local community to support the social cohesion and local economic climate so it will create a social harmony

Methodology

This paper used qualitative approach, and the strategy of inquiry is case study employed through in depth interviews with the local community and working managers who deal with CSR issues and strategy on a day-to-day basis. Secondary data is in the form of information about CSR programs from sustainable reports downloaded from the company's website, mass media news downloaded from the internet and other literature study. According to Bryman (2012):

Qualitative research is a research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than quantifications in the collection and analysis of data. As research strategy it is broadly inductivist, constructionists, and interpretivist. Qualitative research has become an increasingly popular approach to social research

A Case study is a detailed study over the background of an event. A Case study is the intensive study about an individual, but a case study also can be applied in a small social unit such as family or school (Idrus, 2009)

Literature Review

The Concept of CSR

CSR has become a serious public debate due to the massive impact of large businesses on society. Corporate operational disaters like Union Carbide gas leak in Bhopal in 1984 and BP's oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010), corporate fraud (e.g Enron in 2001 and World Com in 2001), corporate collapse and failure (e.g the failure of the US investment banks such as Lehman Brothers, Merryl Linch and Bear Stearns in 2008) are the key fundamental problems of CSR. Social and moral values infused into business philosophy and business values embedded in society are the key elements of CSR (Sun, et. al, 2010)

The globalization and also the expanding activity of stakeholders as well as the free flow of information give impetus to the business to initiate CSR and make practices more responsible and transparent (Amaladoss &Manohar, 2011). CSR also reflects the socio-economic perspective. CSR is intended to protect and improve the welfare of the people. Business is not only responsible to the stakeholders but also has to be responsible to the society at large (Robbins & Coulture, 2010; Donaldson &Preston, 1995; Freeman, 1984).

According to Daft (2006) CSR is the obligation of management to make a choice and take action which will contribute to the welfare and the society's interest. CSR is an obligation which is beyond their legal and economic to gain long term objective which give benefit to the society.

CSR perspectives engage with the idea that a company is a moral agent. Their commitment to act legally and contribute to the economy along with the improvement of the quality of life of employees and their family and the community also with the whole society. According to Sedyono (2006) CSR is still perceived as an initiative to enhance the reputation and also as a philanthropic activity. CSR development in the 1990s was influenced much by the perspective of sustainable development, continued by the concept of 3P (Profit, People & Planet) from John Elkington with his book "Cannibal with forks, the tripple Bottom Line of Twentieth Century Business" (Fajar, 2010)

World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) defines CSR as a commitment to contribute to the sustainable economic development, to work with the company's employees, employee's family' members, local community members and community in general as the efforts of improving the quality of life. The definition of CSR is extremely diverse, depending on the vision and mission of the corporate that are matched to needs, desires and interests of the community

CSR is a kind of an expectation regarding initiative which is incorporating the protection towards the public health, the safety of the public and the environment. In this concept they define that values and ethnicity will influence the extending business perception which will be influenced by the social activity and the norms of the society. Lingkar Studi CSR Indonesia define CSR as an effort all the entity of business to create a minimum impact and maximize the positive impact towards the stakeholders in a terms of economic, social and environment to achieve the goal of sustainable development (Raharjo, 2011). Some company relate their CSR initiatives with supporting and maintain the conducive climate to the long term successfulness of business and also many of the business which conduct the CSR practice globally, not only goes beyond the community and the country where the company operates.

CSR is derived from business ethics (Hadi, 2014). Ethics is an effort which was born since the collapse of moral values in Greek culture system. Good and bad view can be no longer trusted, so the philosophers are asked to explain the norms of societies. Ethics is critical view towards lesson or moral thoughts (Suseno, 1987)

Business is the relationships between people to people. Business is the interaction which is happened since the lack of need and wants that we can not achieve by ourself. Through the business people can fullfill their needs (Panuju, 1995) The standards of business ethics which can easily to see is honesty dan transparent. In business, people entrust all things such as reputation, his or her family, the future of the employee, and the future of the society The deepest dimensions has its weight and genuine. So the entrust of business is relating to genuine values such as the human’s life and the future of society (Keraf, 1998). Business is an important activity from the society. Business is a modern phenomena that can’t be avoided from the society now-a-days. Business is the activity that is done between people to people, it means that norms or values which is considered as good values and occurs in a society and in life, was carried out within the business activity

They are two ways of how an individu make an ethical decision: fist is prescriptive approaches, provides the tools to make decision, and the second is phychological approach. The psychological approach was developed in psychology which is related in how the process od ethical decision in the individu. Individual differences and cognitif process will create the different process of thinking and will give impact to how the individu think and acting towards the dilema of ethics .

The theories in prescriptive approach can be distinguish upon 3 groups (1) *the consequantialist theory 2) the non- consequantialist theory 3) ethics of virtue* (Trevino &Nelson 2004 : 88). *The consequensialist* stressing on the consequences or the impact of the person's behavior towards ather person. This is also called as *utilitarianism* view. From the *utilitarianism view*, the action can be considered right or wrong as a moral can be seen from the consequences (Trevino &Nelson, 2004). *Non consequantialist* view will judge the action, whether is good or wrong, not from the consequences but they stressed on the principle of action is morally right or not.

Deontology derived from "Deon" which is means "a duty" . Deontology view that an action is considered as right since the action is the duty. *Deontology* based on the ethical decision which is based on what is broad, using the universal priciple such as honesty, commitment, transparency, loyality, openess, the right to security, privacy etc. In the deontology approach, moral principle is tied strongly, not measured by the consequences of the action. In deontology, an action can be considered wrong eventhough it will produce a good result, because it is not approriate to moral principle of the society's own

The counter of deontology is teleology which will measure the action based on the consequences. The action can be considered as right or wrong based on the objective that would be achieved by the action. An action can be considered as good or bad when they can yield the benefit, regardless how to obtain the results, even though someone has to break the rules. The methods is not the parameter, but the results is the parameter (Trevino &Nelson , 2004)

Local Wisdom

Local wisdom is the format of expression. Local wisdom is the accumulation of ethnic cultures, which is, the people do their activities and behave accordingly adjusted to the idea, and at last, their actions generated certain works. See, for example, the beautiful Borobudur and Prambanan temples, vernacular houses, the subak water system in the Balinese rice fields, and the Batik, the worldly known cultural heritage (Meliono, 2011). Culture is the entire of knowledge, attitude, belief, art, norms, law, mores, and other habbit that can be learned by human beings as a part of the member of society (Taylor, 1871 cited in Keesing, 1999).

The culture has 3 formats: an accumulation of ideas, values, rules. Second, culture is a complex of activity and patterned behavior in the society and the third, culture is in the form of artefact. The first form is the ideal form of culture. Culture format is abstract, can't not be touched or portrayed. The location is in the idea of society which the culture is alive. The idea dan man's idea which is live in the society, giving the soul to the society. That is the cultural system. The second form also called as a social system. Social system is consist of the society's activities, how they develop their relations from day to day, from month to month, from year to year, according to the pattern which is based on their norms . The third form is the physical culture or artifact. Artifact is concrete, can be seen, can be touched and can be portrayed.

This also indicates that the local wisdom of the depth of the Indonesian culture is a compilation of ethnic cultures, a process expressed in the lives of a people through learning practices. In another case, the local wisdom is a system of meanings of the communal societies instead of the individuals, and in the later expansion, it is a form of social process rather than an individual one

Local wisdom is a human effort with his cognition to behave and have a certain attitude toward an object or event which is occurs in the certain places. Local wisdom can be found in the form of singing, proverb, slogan, advice and ancient scripture which is embedded in daily lives. Local wisdom reflects in habit of life which has been occurring for a long time. The emergence of local wisdom in the society is the process of trial and error from an empirical knowledge or non-empirical knowledge (Ridwan, 2007)

Local wisdom refers to the knowledge which belongs to the experience of the society and an accumulation of sounds of knowledge which can't be found in local communities and a person which can be seen as knowledge which is inherited from generation to generation. These knowledge is used as a guidelines including to build the relationship with the families, neighbors and all the people that lives in the surroundings. Local wisdom should obey the ancestors and the universe. There are 3 characteristics of local wisdom: first, a variety of knowledge that teach us of ethics and moral. Second, local wisdom teach to love universe, not to destroy and third the source of local wisdom comes from the person who lived before us. Local wisdom emerged in the format of idea, the way of life and social values in the society (Kongprasertamorn, 2007).

Local wisdom is the knowledge and experience which is relate to daily lives, occupations, and the culture which has been inherited from generations to generations (Sumale Sungsri dalam Ardianto, 2011) Local wisdom is a process and the product of human being, which is used to survive. Local wisdom echoed since the effect of development such as pollution, disaster and injustice. Local wisdom is missed now a days because it consists of the noble values which can be developed to the welfare. Local wisdom consists of universal moral message, for example principle of justice, alignments toward the weak, sustainable environment that promote appropriate technology, renewable energy which has an aim towards' the collective social welfare rather than individual (Hudayana, 2011). Local wisdom is an important value in supporting investigation, developing policies and effective use in the enviromental decision making process (Taylor& De Loe, 2012). Ballard, Fernandez-Gimenez & Sturtevart (2008) asserts local knowledge is based on the length of individuals' relationships with their local enviroments. Dawoe, Quaeshi-Sam, Isaac& Oppong (2012) suggest that national development planning and policy should support local wisdom. Knowledge sharing in communities requires the participation of both experienced individuals and newcomers in the communities involved (Ruuska & Vartianen, 2005). In addition, social capital is related to community knowledge. Coleman (1988) explains that social capital can be regarded as a source that may used to achieve & variety of ends; individual or groups of individuals generate this resource deliberately as a processes of accumulation invloving interactions with other people.

Companies will always be involved in the living of communities since they explore local sources, do exploration and production activities and bring in employees from the outside into the community. By implementing CSR programs, companies are giving back the profit through the programs such as Community Development to communities. Companies should learn and have an understanding of local wisdom. Company must give their benefit towards the society (Hudayana, 2011). Moreover, many CSR programs are not in accordance with the local needs since there is no data baseline of local society including socio culture aspects as well as lack of the need assessment (Rudito & Famiola, 2013).

The local characteristics comprise local values or local wisdom can function as social capital to develop and improve the sustainability of CSR itself (Afitri, 2011). CSR practitioners should have a sound understanding of the problems regarding socio and culture before they implement their CSR programs. (Almaeshi, et.al , 2006: 2; Pimpa et al, 2014; Kapelus, 2002, Prayogo (2013); Mostardeiro & Duarte (2007). The CSR programs depends heavily on local issues, cultures and traditions of a society, also historical ones which will influence the variety of CSR programs (Chapple & Moon, 2005; Muthuri, 2012, Frynas, 2009: 180, Zulkifli dan Amran, 2006, Fig, 2005, Kayuni dan Tambulasi, 2012)

Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory is the approach which observes, identifies and explains analitically many elemnts that build the basic of decison making and the actions in conducteing the organizations, including mapping the relationships within the organizations (Weiss, 2009). Stakeholder concept is not new in Indonesia because it is deeply rooted in Indonesia culture as ”gotong-royong” or mutual help (Uriarte, 2008)

Stakeholders are all the parties who have interests, rights and ownership in the organizations. Stakeholders will be influenced by organizational decisions and their actions. The individuals and groups have been influenced by the organizations so it is very important for the organzations to be concerned towards the stakeholders. The management of the organizations should conduct communication in their ethical actions or in economical context (Henriegel, 1999)

Stakeholder model explains that the resposibility to the stakeholders is shown by the obligations towards the parties who have interest in organizations. Stakeholders are the individuals and groups who have interests, rights or ownwership towards the organizations. Stakeholder who have the same interest and obligations can be grouped into one cluster.

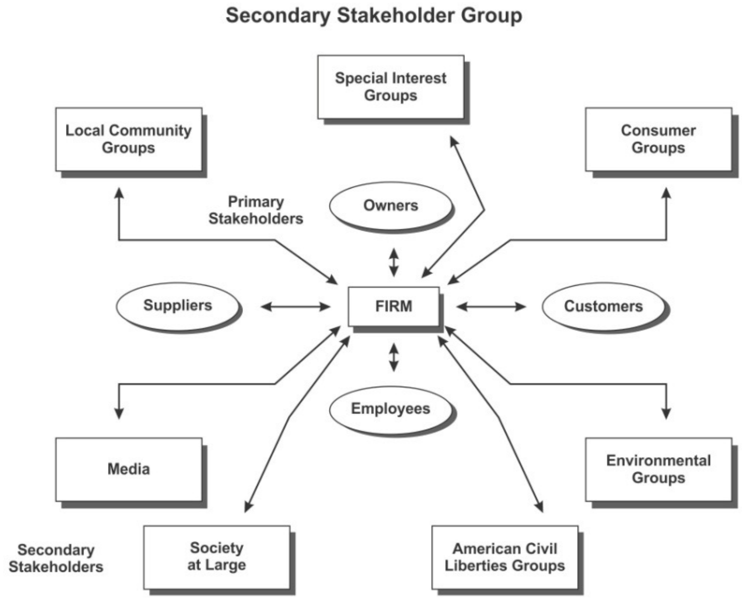

Figure 1. Secondary Stakeholder Group

According to Freedman (1984), who defined the stakeholders, is any group or individual who can affect or are affected by the achievement of the organizations objectives. Stakeholders' theory is an approach that is based on how to observe, identify, and explain analytically on various elements that form the basis of decision making and action in the conduct of business activity, then the mapping of relationships that exists in business activities (Wahyudi et al, 2008)

Findings

Aqua Danone is the biggest bottled water producer in Indonesia. It controls around 40 % percent of Indonesia's bottled market and is run by France's Danone. Aqua Danone which invests around $100 million a year in Indonesia, currently has 17 Aqua plants in the country and hopes to open 10 more in the next few years. Aqua Danone employs CSR through community development in the education, health, facilities and the environment conservation in accordance with the function, objectives, and CSR Dimesions (Profit, People, Planet). The CSR program based on sustainability development, which is doing systematic and long–conducted orientation. In addition, they implement CSR in two ways, which is not only give benefit to the company but also give benefit to the local community. The steps of CSR that is carried out by Aqua Danone:

1. Identification of Problem (Planning Phase)

This process involves community participation which is consists of the multistakeholders of Aqua Danone. They are the local community, the local goverment and the NGO. According to the CSR Manager of Aqua Danone, Mr. Zambani, the planning phase was carried out by using PRA (Participatory Rural Appaisal) and ZOPP. In the planning phase, the local community tried to identify their own problem. In addition, they also tried to search how to solve the problem. As a company that conducted CSR, Aqua Danone classifies the program as being in accordance with their CSR values and vision. According to the CSR Manager of Aqua Danone, the CSR run by Aqua Danone should comply with the main pillar of CSR Danone, that is water conservation and strengthening the local economy. According to the CSR Manager of Aqua Danone, as a multinational corporations (MNC) CSR is undertaken beyond the guidelines of Danone, Danone Way and based on the local needs that may vary from one host country to another. In addition, according to the CSR Manager of Aqua Danone, the CSR program conducted by Danone should be appropriate to the local wisdom of the society, therefore, the CSR can be applied and accepted by the society as he mentions as follows:

Altogether there are 8 villages that have been choosen as beneficieries of CSR. The villages are directly affected by the activity of factory. The CSR Program of Aqua Danone are based on the CSR pillars of Danone, water conservation and strengthening the local econonomy. The implementation of CSR should be based on local culture as well as local wisdom which belongs to the society. Polan Harjo village is a sub urban area where most of the residentsare farmers. They have their own local wisdom value such as gotong royong (mutual help) and also "srawung" (people should blend into society), and also tepa selira *(tolerance). These local wisdoms are a common local wisdom which is held and believed strongly by the Javanese people*

According to Zambani, the CSR of Danone should be in line with the local wisdom, such as building a co-op. Actually the co-op is a manifestation and embodiment of gotong royong (mutual help) values that are employed by the society of Polan Harjo. The local wisdom also functions as a facilitator to help the program succeed. Almost all the CSR programs of Danone involve the local communities, the local goverment and the other stakeholder such as NGO by using the mutual help or gapa apaotong royong activities. It emerged in almost all CSR programs, such as cleaning the Pusur River which is done regularly by communities and Aqua Danone, andwas also embodied when they conducted the activities such as forestation, building the wells and biopori, and also emerge in other CSR programs such as managing waste and environment, conducted the POSYANDUprogram or building a public facilities such as roads and other facilities.

According to Harjono, one of the local community member in Polan Harjo said that the local wisdom such as gotong royong is implemented to solve the community's problems in Polan Harjo, and become the supporting aspect for CSR programs. For example, when the waste bank was founded, the local community gave their support by doing mutual help (gotong royong). Some of them were giving bricks and the rest were giving clay tiles, so they built the building of the waste bank by their own resource. They also use "gotong royong" value to solve some of the community's problem, and also conduction discussion and concensus (musyawarah and mufakat) to solve their own community's problem.

2. Implementing the program : the CSR program involves multistakeholders consists of the local community, local goverment, and also NGO. The CSR activity that conducted by Aqua Danone as listed as below:

- Aqua Danone with the community of Polan Harjo were doing traditional ceremony called “Merti Bumi”. This traditional ceremony is based on local wisdom that belongs to the local community. Merti bumi is the Javanese society’s tradition to express gratitudefor the harvest. Merti bumi is the symbolism of grateful feelings and praying to God. They also express the gratitude of welfare, safety and peace. Merti Bumi consists of shared values, gotong royong (mutual help), aesthethics and high value that embodied Javanese culture
- Organic Farm : Aqua Danone collaborated with the community and a group of farmers, namely *“Tani Mulyo”* in Polan Harjo Village, Klaten Region, Central Java Province. The program exhibits how to cultivate rice fields by organic systems. They undertook organic systems twice in the growing season then expanded their area. They planned that 75% of the area would be covered by the eco-friendly rice fields by 2012. Meanwhile, Aqua Danone also built the factory of organic fertilizer and also a training school as a supporting facility. Meanwhile, “*Tani Mulyo*” 7 hectares of the area was already harvested in the first week of February. This program was aimed to give information to others group that still conventional farming with chemicals and pesticides until now. To promote the concept of organic farming, Aqua Danone preferred to choose individual approaches to the farmers. They also persuaded to join and optimalize the group of farmers which has been formed. Through the group of farmers, they can teach each other and information will be shared among others

3. The ministry of Koperasi and SME officially formalize the establishment of the co-op “Pusur Lestari”.

The coop “Pusur Lestari” is the co-op which is founded by the farmers in Klaten, Central Java Province. That co-op was pioneered since 15 th February 2012 andaimed to help 385 farmers from 36 villages. This co-op is one of the results of CSR “Aqua Danone” which is in accordance with the government program, that is the growing expansion of the economy, the improvement of skilled-labor and being eco-friendly. "Aqua Danone" also facilitate the co-op by giving the farmers that live around Pusung River direct access to the market. By giving the access of their product by "Aqua Danone", therefore the farmers do not need to use middle-men. By giving the market access for farmer's products, now their product can be found in modern retail stores. The co-op has a direct access to one of the modern retail stores, such as Lion Super Indo retail store which operates in Jogjakarta

4. Managing waste and campaign of WASH (Water Access Sanitation & Hygiene)

Waste is one of the main problems of the village. To solve the problem, the local community have empowered themselves to build their capacity to manage waste. Beginning with the comparison study in Yogyakarta, they tried to manage waste by classifying waste, and then tried to create a product from waste. They try to create the waste into a product that has a high economic value. Besides this, they also built "Waste Bank" or Bank Sampah in KarangLo Village and Polan Village. Beside managing waste, they also are making a campaign to keep the river to be clean, and handwash with soap (Cuci Tangan dengan Sabun), managing waste and managing water to drink

- Evaluation and mitigation. Communities are involved in measuring and reducing the negative impacts of development and monitoring . Monitoring means verifying that project activities are implemented according to the plan. Monitoring of programs is done regularly by the community members and others involved in a project work collaborately in developing the evaluation plan, conducting the evaluation and sharing and using the results

Analysis And Discussion

Aqua Danone employed the CSR through community development in education, health, facilities and environment conservation in accordance with the function, objectives, and CSR Dimesions (Profit, People, Planet). The CSR program is based on sustainability development, which is doing sistematically and long –conducted orientation. In addition, they implement the CSR in two ways, which not only gives benefit to the company but also gives benefit to the local community

From the data shown above, it is seen that the local wisdom of society plays an important role in the success of the CSR program conducted by Aqua Danone. The Javanese local wisdom such as gotong royong (mutual help), musyawarah and mufakat (solving problem by discussion and concensus among local community), and other values such as "srawung" (blend into the community) become a tool to facilitate the local community to build their own capacity. Without the strenghth the local wisdom, the community engangement is hard to build. The local wisdom provides social capital to build mutual trust and networking to support the local empowerment. The local wisdom also provide the tools to solves problems of their own.

According to Taylor and De Loe (2012) Local wisdom is an important value in supporting investigation, developing policies and effective use in the enviromental decision making process. Through the CSR program of Aqua Danone, the local community are motivated to engage in their own society, and therefore participate and also be involved actively as the members of the society to share ideas and to solve problems by using the value of local wisdom

The CSR program of Danone is planned by the local community by using participatory principles when the community members, and others involved in a project work collaboratively. Participation becomes an important part in achieving the goals , therefore the people are involved in each process: 1) identification of the problem. Society along with the planners and the authorities identify issues in group discussions, brainstorming, identify opportunities, potentials and constraints 2) the community is involved in planning process and strategies that are based on the results 3) the implementation of development projects4**)** evaluation 5) mitigation, people involved in measuring to reduce the negative impacts of development 6) monitoring. CSR conducted by Aqua Danone also strengthening the existing local knowledge. With the program of Merti Bumi, they tried to maintain the local wisdom traditions that belong to the society. In the other programs such as the building the co-op "Pusur Lestari", they try to embody the local wisdom gotong royong (mutual help) and in every CSR program that they carried out, the local wisdom such as "gotong royong" (mutual help), musyawarah and mufakat (discussion and consensus), "srawung" (blend into the society) functioned as social capital that build the capacity of community to reach the aim. In other words, local wisdom becomes the facilitator or mediator to reach the objective the program, also strgenthening the community engagement. Social capital is a social resource which is belongs to the community. As a resource, social capital gives the strength in some social conditions in community. Social capital refers to the main aspect of social organization, such as trust, norms and networks that will enhance the efficiency of the society

Conclusion

1. CSR Aqua Danone has been applied in many programs such as Water and Forest Conservation System, strengthening the local economy and also adjusted to their strategic stakeholders including local community, local government and NGO

2. In order to manage relationships with stakeholders appropriately, Aqua Danone not only adopts CSR as an integral part of the company's mission, but also effectively communicateswith stakeholders. CSR Aqua Danonealso considers local characteristics based on the social cultures as well as local wisdom employed by the community. The local characteristics such as local wisdom is such that social capital can be developed and can support the sustainability of the CSR. CSR programs are also synergized and in accordance with national and local government programs. CSR programs play an important role in the push to create a balance of economic development and social environments. Local communities as key stakeholders and also the main beneficiaries of the CSR program requires companies to be more responsive and show social and environmental awareness to local conditions.

3. Local wisdom is incorporated in the planning phase, implementing and monitoring of CSR Programs. Local wisdom is manifest widely and becomes as the social capital of the society. Local wisdom also facilitates and supports the community engagement. By using the local wisdom of gotong royong, for example, the CSR can be done succesfully such as when the local community manage a co-op, clean the river, manage waste, conduct hygiene and sanitation campaigns, tree plantation and forestation, building wells and other activities. The company also streghthens the local wisdom by doing a traditional ceremony such as "Merti Bumi". Without the local wisdom the community engagement is hard to form. Therefore the local wisdom is playing as important role as "a glue" for individuals, in the form of norms, trust and network, therefore creating the co-operation which will give benefit and reach the common goal.

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THE EFFECT OF PRODUCT PLACEMENT ADVERTISING STRATEGY (PPAS) ON THAI CONSUMERS: PRODUCT ADOPTION OR BOOMERANG EFFECT?

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Abstract

Product Placement is one of the key advertising strategies that was claimed in its effect on the increasing public awareness and public purchasing behavior. However, some academic claimed that it can lead to the boomerang effect, in which people deny to support products tied-in the programs. This study seeks to investigate the above claims by using posttest-only control group design to examine the effects of Product Placement Advertising Strategy (PPAS). Students from a private university were randomly assigned to the controlled and experimental groups. Those students in the experimental groups then exposed to a television program that usedProduct Placement Advertising Strategy (PPAS). The product placement will be illustrated by a clip from series. The researcher, then, compared its effects with students in a controlled group.Post-tested questionnaires were uses to collect data on the memory, perception, and attitude toward the advertising and the brands. A number of suggestions will be provided on how the products owners, and advertising agencies should concerned in using Production Placement Advertising Strategies (PPAS).

Keywords : product placement, advertising strategy, Thai consumers

Backround

Advertisers and marketers are all trying to convince consumers into being interested, remembering and having a positive attitude toward their brand which leads to the products or services being purchased. It is said that the main reason for a successful business comes from the effectiveness of advertisement production that succeeded in convincing consumers (Assael, 2004).

At the present time, the consumer's level of media literacy has increased, which causes more focused advertisement production because customers aware of types, patterns and tactics using in advertising. Consumers can find out whether the advertisement is reliable or unreliable. Lewis and Slade (2000) explained that if the consumer perceived the incredibility of advertisements, they will have negative attitudes, be suspicious, show resistance and do not trust the product or service as a result. This negative effect that occurs is called the 'Boomerang Effect'.

The same will hold true for the Product Placement Advertising Strategies (PPAS) that are popular among advertisers and marketers (Wells, Moriarty, Burnett & Lwin, 2007; Arens, 2008) fortheir reliability in gaining consumer brand recognition and purchase intention. It is likely to reverse the negative effects to the advertisement and the branded product or service also (Atkinson, 2003).

The Office of Communications or known as Ofcom, which is a government agency responsible for media regulation in the United Kingdom also creates a symbol in order to regulate media that applied product placement strategy and encourage audiences to have high levels of media literacy and be more cautious of receiving information from various types of media. The design is a two overlapping letters P shown in the figure 1.

*Figure 1.*Product placement advertising strategy regulated symbol

Source : Office of Communications. (2014). from http://www.ofcom.org.uk

Due to the weakness and limitations of product placement advertising strategy, there is a risk that the audience will not notice the brand of products or services appearing in movies or TV shows because the advertiser has placed product harmoniously and too naturally. It causes no interest. On the other hand, unrealistically placing product will cause a negative attitude towards the brand of products or services. The next risk factors is the incompatibility between brand and the content in a media. This inconsistence will make the audience react against it. Another risk is the brand owners will never know in advance that the movie or TV show is going to succeed or not. If that program is not successful, the criticism may damage or affect the brand's image. (Wells, Moriarty, Burnett, Lewin, 2007).

Regarding this, the study of the consequence and effectiveness of the product placement advertising strategy in Thailand is conducted. Proving that, if applied, the strategywill be memorized by consumers who will have a positive attitude and accept the products as the objective of the strategy or entailing a negative feedback on products and services in order to take advantage for the communication planning and media planning in the future.

Literature Review

Product Placement

Product Placement is one of the branded entertainments and advertising methods which are emerging into the media such as movies, television shows and music videos. This increases a chance of consumers' openness to the brand and expands availability of advertising beyond the traditional advertising styles (O'Guinn, Allen & Semenik, 2009).

Arens (2008) explained that product placement is a popular advertising strategy for the present time and becomes a regular method of advertising across multiple media types. Both the appearance of the brand logo and exposing the roles of the product. For example, a character drives a car rapidly to escape the bad guys. This method of advertising strategy has been widely popular with confidence in the results in the audience. It brings a debate on the appropriateness of the use of certain strategically placed products such as cigarettes and tobacco.

This strategy has its strengths and weaknesses. The highlight of the strategy is clearly showing the benefits of the product in its natural setting. It also shows the use of the product by the famous actor too. But the weakness is the audience will not notice the brands appearing in movies or TV shows because it is placed too natural to be noticed. On the other hand, if it placed unrealistically, the audience may resist the product. More so if there is an incompatibility between brands and the content of a media. These weaknesses may bring to negative attitude toward the brand.

Research from Atkinson (2003) found that 52 percent of the television audiences are concerned that the product placement advertising will predominate in the media and lower the quality or the entertainment of the show which will not meet the needs of consumers as it should do.

It can be seen that education and research in the modern age is more concerned with disadvantages or precautions of this type of advertising strategy. This research is a chance to extend the study of the product placement advertising strategy on the consumer.

Memory

Burke and Thomas (1988) explain that creating memory is one important goal of the advertisers and marketers. If the consumers can remember the brand of product or service, it shows that consumers will be able to recall or recognize those brands, giving high opportunity that the consumer would purchase the product or service they remembered.

In addition, the research of Mackie and Arlene (1990) has shown that humans will use information retained in memory to help their cognitive processing. The clarity of memory is according to how vivid the information the human can remember. The findings above show the relationship between memory and attitude direction.

Attitude

Attitude refers to the tendency of the human mind towards something, someone or the circumstances. It can be positive, negative or neutral and the processing is individualistic (Allport, 1935).

The main approach used for this study and research on attitudes and attitude is the multicomponent model consisting of three subcomponents (the cognitive component refers to the idea of a human being that reflect the beliefs and knowledge of such things, the affective component refers to the emotional expression of preference, and the behavioral component refers to the experience of the past and the possibility to act on it in the future)

It is unable to measure attitude directly. It must be measured or evaluated by the creating the hypothetical construct, that is the measure of all three subcomponents to reflect the attitude itself (Buhrmester, Hart & William, 2011).

Boomerang Effect

Brehm and Brehm (1981) states that the Boomerang Effect is a condition in which the expression is in contrast to the expected or intended goals. It occurs because of the mental state called Psychological Reactance, that is, when the brain is exposed to one of the options clearly. It will feel restricted to options (Personal Freedom). The mind will find a solution by resisting that option and will be oriented in the opposite direction or in the reverse direction (Dowd, Milne & Wise, 1991).

For example, in the research of Bensley and Wu (1991) when the subject has been watching a lot of alcohol restricted campaigns. Participants will be counterproductive and expressed the desire to drink alcohol in the end. The results were similar to the study of Bushman and Stack (1996), which was conducted with a group of youths, found that the more there were put warning labels in television shows, the more the sample wanted to watch. It is possible that further support on one option clearly in advertising products or services can threaten the rights of the audience and lead to a negative attitude toward that product or service. This greatly increases the chances of having a reverse effect or psychological reactant of the audience more as well (Brehm & Brehm, 1981; Dowd, Milne & Wise, 1991).

The study of theories and researches in all of the above, concluded that in this study the researcher used the product placement advertising strategy as an independent variable to study the memory and attitude toward a product or service as the dependent variable which will reflect the Boomerang Effect of the product placement advertising strategy.

Hypotheses

1. Consumers can memorize a product or service that uses Product Placement Advertising Strategy to high level.
2. The consumer has negative attitude toward products or services that use Product Placement Advertising Strategy

Methodology

Research Design

This study is a quantitative research using posttest-only control group design because doing the pretest may lead to an answering distortion. Data collecting uses a set of questionnaires and analyzes in SPSS program.

The population for this research is civilian in Bangkok which is the main target of marketing and advertising due to their high income and purchasing power. The statistic by department of Local Administration on December of 2013 said there were 5,686,252 civilians in Bangkok.

Sampling for this study is 100 students of the Assumption University which is located in Bangkok, randomly collected as shown in the research procedure.

Research Definition

Product placement: An entry of a branded product or service in to program or any media. It's one of the advertisement strategies to make the consumer aware of the product or service. The amount of the product appearing can be counted by frequency or the length it has been shown.

Memory: The recognition and awareness level of a product or service that appear in a television program. The accuracy of recognizing can be divided into 3 levels; high, average and low.

Attitude: A tendency of human's thought on a product or service that appears on television program which can be positive, negative or neutral. There are 3 subcomponents for measuring and evaluating attitude (Cognitive component is a thought that reflects knowledge and belief of the products, The affective component is an emotion that express the likeliness on the product, and Behavioral component is the past experience on the product and tendency to act on the product in the future).

Boomerang Effect: A state that the consequence came out in opposition to what we expect or predict. This state of mind is called psychological reactance. The measuring of attitude will reflect this boomerang effect. It would said to be a Boomerang Effect If the consumer has a negative attitude toward the product or service that use product placement advertisingstrategy.

Research Model

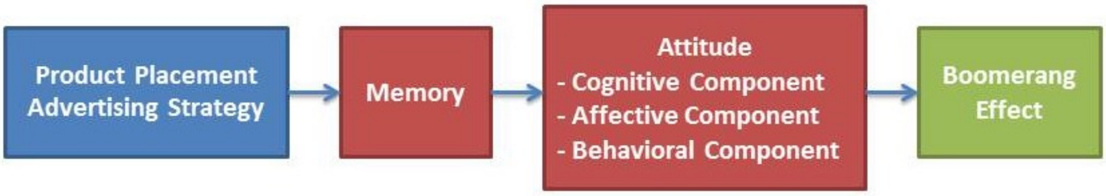

Figure 2. Research Model

Research Instruments

The questionnaires used in this research is composed of of 3 parts.

First is the demographic information which consists of gender, age, faculty and major. For the control group we will have screening questions asking “have participants ever watched Hormones the series season 2?”

Second are the memory questionnaires that ask the participant to recognize the branded product or service they noticed in Hormones the series. This part consists of 12 choices for the participant to choose whether they saw these products in the series. Out of 12 score participants will be categorize according to this criterion. 0-4 means they are have low level of memory, 5-8 are moderate level and 9-12 is for high level. Items consist of mobile phones (Sumsung, Nokia or iPhone), restuarants (Yayoi, Zen or Fuji), drinks (Oishi, Puriku or Ichiton) and bags (Dapper, Levi’s or Lee).

Third, the attitude questionnaires developed by the researcher from the Attitude theory and concept by Allport (1935) and Shimp (2007). Comprisingh cognitive, affection and behavioral components and using a 5-pointed likert scale (5 highly agree to 1 highly disagree).

Item example for each components: Cognitive component out of 6 items (You think that product placement in the series helps you to gain more information about product or service, Presenting a product in a series doesn’t make you know better about those products or services, A product placement in the series makes audiences familiar with those products or services) Affective component out of 10 items (You are bored of those products or services that are shown in the series, You feel that there are too many product placements in the series, You feel that the concealed advertisement make those products or services looking unnatural) Behavioral component out of 10 items (You do not want to try products or services that are placed in the series, You do not have purchasing intention caused by watching a product placement in the series, You will search for more information about the products or services which are seen in the series)

The total score calculated by combining each component scores is divided by the numbers of its items then divided the sum score by 3. If the average score is more than 2.5, it assumes that the participants have positive attitude toward products or services that use the product placement strategy. On the other hand, scoring under 2.5 shows the negative attitude towards product that used product placement strategy. Scoring 2.5 means that they have neutral attitude toward product using this strategy.

Validity and Reliability of Instruments

Validity

The researcher has brought the completed questionnaire to 2 experts (Dr.Thipnapa Huansuriya, lecturer of consumer psychology and psychology of advertisement courses, and Ms.Idsaree Kitnirattisai, marketing manager Thairath TV and Thairath online.) for examining the content validity and wording adequacy. After asking for their consideration and recommendation, the questionnaire has been improved to be clearer and covered all required objectives.

Reliability

The researcher brings the revised questionnaire to do a pre-test with 30 people that similar but is not a real participant in order to simplify the language usage to be understandable. (Cronbach alpha .71 for memory questionnaire and .82 for Attitude questionnaire)

Procedures

The researcher stratifies communication arts students of Assumption University by years and randomly selects participants from each year equally. 100 participants are randomly assigned into experimental group or control group by counting 1 or 2. The experimental group

was exposed to the famous TV series "Hormones the series season 2" (The description of the series as seen in the appendix) in which subtle product placement was used. Immediately after exposure to the series, the participants were asked to fill the questionnaires. The control group was asked to fill the questionnaires without exposure to the intervention. The raw data was recoded, computed and analyzed with SPSS program.

Result

Part 1: General Information

The total participants consists of 103 people (45 males and 58 females) of which 52 participants (50.5 percent) has been assigned in the experimental group and another 51 in the control group (49.5 percent). The age of the participants is in the range between 17 - 23 years, mostly at the age of 20 (24.3 percent), followed by 18 years (22.3 percent) and 19 years (19.4 percent) respectively. All participants study in the faculty of communication arts of which 39 people are from the department of advertising, 32 from the department of public relations, 19 from the department of performance communication and 13 from the department of new media communication (37.9, 31.1, 18.4 and 12.6 percent respectively).

Part 2 Tests of memory toward the products and service that applied PPAS.

Participants' memory score is between 8 - 12, with an average score of 9.99 (N = 103, SD = .12), which is considered to have a high level of remembering.

The Participants in the experimental group have an average score of 10.42 (N = 52, SD = .13), which is considered to have a high level of remembering. And Participants in the control group have an average score of 9.55 (N = 51, SD = .11), which is considered to have a high level of remembering as well.

Researchers compared the differences of remembering product using PPAS between the experimental group and control group by using T-test analysis. The result shows significant differences at the statistical significance level of .05 (t = 4.83, SD = .18).

Part 3 Tests of attitude toward the products and service that applied PPAS.

Participants' attitude score are in the range of 1.47 to 3.18, with an average score of 2.41 (N = 103, SD = .31). This yields a negative attitude towards brand applied PPAS. Participants in the experimental group average score was 2.35 (N = 52, SD = .34). While Participants in the control group had an average score of 2.48 (N = 51, SD = .26). This means both groups have negative attitudes towards product or service using PPAS.

The researchers compared the differences in attitudes toward product and service applied PPAS between the experimental group and the control group by using T-test analysis. The result shows significant differences at the statistical significance level of .05 (t = -2.17, SD = .06).

Discussion

The study on the effect of product placement advertising strategy on Thai consumers: product adoption or boomerang effect? aims to study the effect of PPAS on Thai consumer. To prove that after applied product placement advertising strategy, consumers are going to remember, having a positive attitude and accept products or services as the target of this type of advertising strategy or it would entail negative feedback on products and services instead.

Hypothesis 1:Consumer can memorize product or service that use product placement advertising strategy in high level.

The findings confirm this hypothesis, in term of brand recognition using PPAS both participants in the experimental group and the control group have high level of memorization. this is consistent with Arens (2008) who said that the product placement is to show the brand (Brand appearances) or roles of product which easily reach the consumer recognition. As well as the findings of Wells, Moriarty, Burnett and Lwin (2007) which found that the product placement could be a word or a picture that conveys the brand in order to achieve an exposure through movies or TV shows and make the brand memorable. This remarkable result makes this strategy used widely among marketers and advertisers.

Moreover, the high-level of memory score findings from these experiments may result from placing product prominently in the intervention. Gupta and Lord (1998) described that the product placement has two main forms which are prominent placement showing clearly the product, service or brand. For example, the actor demonstrates how to use the product or speaks about the brand clearly, etc. Another format is subtle placement, in which the product, service or brand exposure is not clear in addition to harmonizing with the media. Such as using as a scene property, etc. Gupta and Lord compared result of these two formats and found that prominent placemen achieved better recognition. Hence, participants in the experimental group and in the control group of the research achieve a high level of memory score.

Memory score T-test analysis between the experimental group and the control group show that the statistical significantly differs at the .05 level. This could explain by the recentcy effect which is a phenomenon which occurs when people can remember and recall information in the footer or information recently received better than the previous one because these data are still in the operating memory (Working memory). This made the experiment group that filling the questionnaire immediately after watching series achieved higher score significantly. This show that time could effects the recognition of product and service using PPAS.

Hypothesis 2: Consumer has negative attitude toward products or service that use product placement advertising strategy

The findings confirm this hypothesis as well, the attitude towards products using PPAS both participants in the experimental group and the control group have a negative attitude towards them. This is consistent with the findings of Atkinson (2003) which found that more than half of TV audiences are concerned about the predominance of advertising in the entertainment media. As a result, consumers may feel bad and have negative attitudes towards those brands. Similarly Dowd, Milne and Wise (1991) said that the over advertising or rights threatening advertisement will bring negative attitude toward those products and services which is called Boomerang Effect phenomenon. It also may lead to audiences to be psychologically reactant as well (Brehm & Brehm, 1981).

Analyzing the differences in attitudes towards products using PPAS between the experiment group and control group, found statistical significantly differences. This can be the result of recentcy effect as well, for the experiment group after exposure to the intervention, the data is still be in the operating memory (Working memory). When the responses were measured through a questionnaire, those phenomena are easily recognized and clarity affects attitude and leads to higher negative attitude level in the experimental group. As Gupta and Lord (1998) found that the negative attitude is an indicator of the expression that contrasts to what advertisers expected or intended. This occurs because of the mental process called psychological reactance which cause the Boomerang Effect in the end.

Limitations and future research

This research aims to study the effects of PPAS on the overview of consumer memory and attitudes toward products or services. The researcher has not classified the variations in advertising forms and tactics. For the future research may be designed to measure the occurrence of an advertising strategy, the layout of each model, such as the difference between prominent placement and subtle placement, etc. In order to gain the results precisely and be used as a guide in advertising planning to suit the audience even more.

Appendix

Intervention description

This experiment using clip from TV soap opera "Hormones the series season 2" as an intervention for the experimental group. This is a story about high school life as a teen in Bangkok. This drama proceeds by demonstrating the problem of each teen in the story. This reflects the various lifestyles of adolescents. The series was produced by the GTH Company, broadcasted on GMM channel between July 26 to October 18, 2014 with over million views on YouTube in each episode.

*Figure 3.*Hormones' the series season 2 poster

The part of the series selected to be an intervention for this research is 5:30 minutes long with 3 scenes included. 3 brands entries their products and service using PPAS in each scene. First, the character picks up a drink of Puriku brand. Second, the character walks in front of Yayoi restaurant. Third, character picks up iPhone while shopping.

Figure 4. The character picks up a Puriku drink

*Figure 5.*The characters walk in front of Yayoi restaurant

*Figure 7.*The character picks up iPhone while shopping

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SOCIAL RESPONSIBLY ACTIVITY DEVELOPMENT AT TAO-NGOY COMMUNITY OF THE THIRD ROYAL FACTORY (TAO-NGOY), SAKOLNAKORN AND COMMUNICATION ARTS CONSORTIUM

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Abstract

The study of corporate communication management in social responsibility activity development at Tao-ngoy community of the Third Royal Factory (Tao-ngoy), Sakolnakorn. This study aims to the volunteer's activities with Communication Art Consortium which includes communication art programs from many universities in Thailand. The objectives are: 1) studying the creation of sustainable partnership alliance in managing social activities; 2) studying social responsibility activity development of organization and partnerships alliance. The conclusion after study the Third Royal Factory (Tao-ngoy) found that using the core competency to plan the social activity which Communication Art Consortium is specialize in photography for communication. The factory has organized the photography contest, exhibition, print media and video media on creative activity and training the drawing of future Tao-ngoy. However, managing the benefit of stakeholders which are communities and children in Tao-ngoy have obtained the knowledge to create the media in this era. Communication Art Consortium has learned the way of community development from the Royal Development Project. And University's student could tell the story through various medias, such as photographs, prints, paintings and video. In this social responsibility activity development has the process as follow: 1) photography contest in which **multi-step flow** is communication model that was used by having students gather information in Tao-ngoy community and capture the content of community through each of their photographs; 2) organizing the photograph exhibition is the way to communicate for **mass media** to show to the public which including posters, printed catalogue which showing exhibition programs and giving information of photographs; 3) creation on new media is the **cross media** which develop from one media to other media which is printed catalogue to video; 4) organizing the activity to communicate the story from photograph to painting in which is **transmedia** that telling the future prospect from a photograph of the children in the community to their future career in a painting. The achievement of this social responsibility activity development has developed over the time. The more time passed by the much more familiarity between partners increases which also increase the intimacy in the work even more. This cause transformation of the media to be even more complicated. As a result, bringing more of the creativity in activity that comes from foundation concepts. Also, it increases recognition from the target group.

*Keywords***:** Social activity, crossmedia, transmedia, community development, volunteering

Background

The Third Royal Factory (Tao-Ngoy) is the organization under the name "Doi Kum Food Product Co.,Ltd."and is under the supervision of the Crown Property Bureau. It was founded on November 11th, 1980 by His Majesty the King for local occupation development, and sustainability income for people in the northeastern province by growing tomatoes and products made from tomato along the Moon River, under the concept "community benefit and continuing business."There are many production lines such as tomatoes, dried vegetables and fruits, rice and frozen fruits. The Third Royal Factory (Tao-Ngoy) is in the area of 21 Rais, which is considered the first tomato processing plant production along Moon River, the area is called “Tomato Belt”because currently there are 23,000 Rais are growing tomatoes.

The representative of the Crown Property Bureau has a plan to publicize to let people who are interested to know about the social development of the factory. The target is the factory’s neighborhood, consisting of 7 villages. The launching of the community volunteer project and strengthening Ban-Yang community, Aumpur Phang, Chaing Mai and Tao-Ngoy community, Aumpur Tao-Ngoy, Sakon Nakhon is by using His Majesty the King’s guidelines which consider the relationship between family, temple and school. This will help people’s life quality especially in economics and social terms. Also it will tighten the relationship and cooperation between the Royal Factory and the communities those are around.

Communication Consortium was founded in 2012. The members include 16 public and private education institutions that teach communication and mass media programs. The main purpose for this is to build the network for quality assurance development such as academic, student activities and teaching. The writer has been working with the community volunteer project as a producer for the Third Royal Factory (Tao-Ngoy) film “Royal Factory for People”in 2013. He has then been working as a coordinator on community a volunteer project between Communication Consortium and the Crown Property Bureau which is involved in planning the activities for volunteers with Ramorn Tanasopon, the head of special representative 1 of the Crown Property Bureau, in 2014. The goal of this project is to study the way for long-term relationships to run the activities for the community and study the development of the organization activities for community and its partners. The conclusion will be used in academic development for cooperative communication and for academic service for society by students and professors at university level.

Objective

This article aims to study the managing of cooperative communication in responsibility activity development for the society around the Third Royal Factory (Tao-Ngoy) and aims to study the activity of working together with Communication Consortium as a volunteer in which the objectives are

- Studying the way to build sustainable relationships
- Studying the development of activity for organization society and partners

Literature Reviews

There are key concepts of communication that are used in this research. First, corporate social responsibility, which will be used to compare with the working model of the Third Royal Factory (Tao-Ngoy). However, there are also the communication management concepts that are used for activity development such as multi-step flow, mass media, cross media and trans media. They aim to create communication development that is adaptable to each activity and the development of relationships between organization and partners that are involved.

The Plans for Volunteers to Develop Tao-Ngoy

"The Volunteer Project to Develop Tao-Ngoy" in 2014 is divided into 4 plans as follow.

1. Improve the Royal Dam by the His Majesty the King. Bringing the knowledge in water management from Pid-Thong-Lung-Phra Foundation and continuing the work of His Majesty the King, also expanding the knowledge of building and maintaining the dam from the Mea-Fah-Luang Foundation that be applied for the best benefit for the Tao-Ngoy community. The things that will be done are repairing the old dam and changing the water management so that the dam can slow down the water and won't destroy the area behind the dam. Also, more water can be kept for household usage.

2. Improve the Utilities in Na-Ngoy-Pon-Pra-Loh School. For infrastructure improvement in Na-Ngoy-Pon-Pra-Loh School that needs to be repaired so it is fit to use. Things that need to be done are repairing cafeteria and kitchen to the standard of Ministry of Public Health.

3. Improve the Utilities in Ban-Na-Ngoy Temple. For public utilities improvement in Ban-Na-Ngoy Temple that need to be repair so it is fit to use. Things that need to be done are repairing the toilets to the standard of Ministry of Public Health.

4. Encouragement in the Study of Science of the King (His Majesty the King Project) Encouraging the students, undergraduates and Toa-Ngoy philosophy leaders to learn, understand and know the projects that were done by His Majesty the King and the Queen and to take the knowledge for their own community development.

The activities are as follows:

1. Encouraging the study in the science of the King by having the students, undergraduates and philosophy leaders from Toa-Ngoy and Ban-Yang to go on a field trip to see His Majesty the King's projects and exchange the successful stories of their own community.

2. Develop young Toa-Ngoy leaders by organizing a seminar to give them the knowledge of the principles in community development of His Majesty the King. Encouraging the new leaders to be proud of their community and seek harmony in their community.

3. A photography contest and the publishing of the photo book for the Third Royal Factory by encouraging students and undergraduates from many institutions to study the principles of community development of His Majesty the King in Sakon-Nakorn province. So they can tell their story in photos.

Communication Consortium has been involved in the plan and proceedings in encouraging the study of science of the King which are:

- Photo Contest

- Photo Exhibition "Science of the King: Royal Factory"

- Producing the video for photo exhibition "Science of the King: Royal Factory"

- Seminar "Draw My Future"

Affiliate in Volunteer to Develop Toa-Ngoy

The activities that are organised have the following partners.

1. Toa-Ngoy Community which includes people from 3 Tumbons: Chanpen, Toa-Ngoy and Beung-Tawai. Tumbon Toa-Ngoy, where the Royal factory is, including 7 villages: Na-Ngoy, Pon-Pra-Loh, Toa-Ngoy, North Toa-Ngoy, South Toa-Ngoy, Ban-Nam-Pung and Kok-Ngoy.

2. There are 4 schools affiliated with the activities: Toa-Ngoy Pattana Seuksa School, Ban-Chan-Pen School, Beung-Tawai School and Na-Ngoy-Pon-Pra-Loh School.

3. Undergraduate institutions are sorted into two groups.

3.1 Communication Consortium which includes 7 institutions: Siam University, Rangsit University, Chaing Mai University, Kasembandit University, Durakij Bandit University, Huachiew Chalermprakiet University and Sripatum University.

3.2 Sakon Nakhon Institution Network includes 2 institutions: Kasetsart University Chalermphrakiat Sakon Nakhon Province Campus and Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University.

Approaches to Build Sustainable Partnerships in Social Activities.

The Volunteering Toa-Ngoy Development has key concepts of management which are related to the affiliate.

1. Core competency which uses the profession of each partner to achieve the tasks. In this project the profession is photography, so the photo contest is planned along with the photo exhibition, printing media and “Draw My Future”seminar.

2. Managing the benefit of the stakeholders. Even though the Third Royal Factory (Tao-Ngoy) was to be trusted and had confidence from the community, the benefit of the partners who involve in the community activities has to be considered to show them clearly their benefits from doing these community activities together.

2.1 The children from Tao-Ngoy are inspired by professors and lecturers and obtain the knowledge to create new media by participating the activities which are the benefits that the community has received. In other words, the participating students will be more confident on sharing their ideas and have the courage to show their ideas and bring the knowledge that was learned to improve their school.

2.2 Communication Consortium obtain the knowledge of taking His Majesty the King’s ideas to develop in the province area. Also it creates a media project with the Third Royal Factory (Tao-Ngoy) by telling the story of Tao-Ngoy community through the photographs, printed media, painting and video. The best benefit that Communication Consortium receives are the opportunities of students and institutions to participate in community service with the national organization which will be use in Quality Assurance that are required to every institution.

Social Activity Development of Organization and Partners

In this social responsibility activity, Volunteering to Improve Tao-Ngoy, the writer collaborates with the leader of special representative 1 from the Crown Property Bureau to plan the activities by create media to be used in the activities for the project. They are planned out step by step and will be evaluated in the end of each activity for improving the future project.

1st Activity: Photo Contest

Objective. Collecting the selected photos to make a photo book “Royal Factory for People”and photo will be shown in the photo exhibition “Science of the King: Royal Factory for People”

Date. 7th-11th June, 2014

Participants. The students from institutions from Communication Consortium and institution from Sakon Nakhon province.

Activity. Taking students for sight seeing and taking photo in The Third Royal Factory (Tao-Ngoy). They will see the local handcraft, way of life, education development center Pupan from High Majesty the King, religious places such as the temple, tourism attractions such as museums and Pupan Palace.

Communication Model. Multi-step flow model is used in this activity by having students to learn from observing the area and research from the village leader and the head of community handcraft so they can tell the story through photos.

Result. The students who participate learn from the real experience and having a portfolio of photos. The institutions from Communication Consortium have the opportunity to participate in a national project with The Third Royal Factory. The photos that were taken will be used in a website, printed media and will create greater confidence in creating media for Communication Consortium.

Picture 1: The student from institutions from Communication Consortium is walking in the community around the Third Royal Factory (Tao-Ngoy) to collecting the information to tell the story through the photo.

Picture 2: The student from institutions from Communication Consortium is walking in the community around the Third Royal Factory (Tao-Ngoy) to collecting the information to tell the story through the photo.

Picture 3: The student from institutions from Communication Consortium is walking in the community around the Third Royal Factory (Tao-Ngoy) to collecting the information to tell the story through the photo.

2nd Activity: Photo Exhibition "Science of the King: Royal Factory for People"at Rattanakosin Exhibition Hall

Objective. Exhibit the selected photographs from a photo contest telling the story about the Third Royal Factory for the public.

Date. 15th-31st October, 2014

Participants. The students from institutions from Communication Consortium and institutions from Sakon Nakhon province.

Activity. This project is extended from the photo contest project but the target is the public. Professional photographers and national artists for visual arts are the judges who select the photographs to be exhibited and select the best photo in each category. The selected photographers are awarded prizes and participate in the seminar by professional photographers and national artists.

Communication Model. This project is a mass media which publicizes the photographs, and the seminar is open to everyone who is interested. There is no fee for entering the exhibition including and the poster and brochure are free.

Result. The students who participate and institutions from Communication Consortium have the opportunity to receive the award and exhibit their work at the national hall.

Development from Previous Project. Having the photographs from photography activity to exhibit so the project is extended to working with partners and to expand the target group that will obtain the information of the Third Royal Factory. The photographs also used in brochure and poster.

Picture 4: The privy is the president to open the exhibition "Science of the King: The Royal Factory for People."

Picture 5: The judges of photo contest "Science of the King: The Royal Factory for People."

Picture 6: Waranun Chutchawantipakorn, national artist in visual art, as a lecturer in the seminar.

3rd Activity: Create new media by producing a video from the brochure.

Objective. Collecting the information of the exhibition "Science of the King: The Royal Factory for People."

Participants. The students from Digital Media Department, Communication Art Faculty, Siam University.

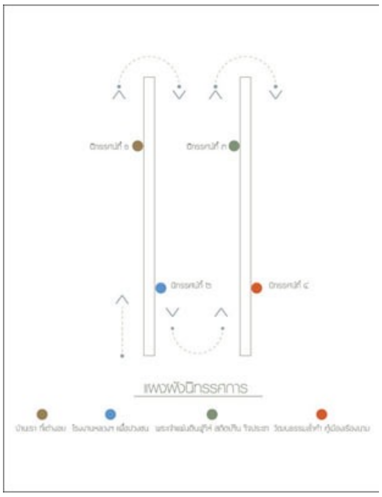
Activity. Recording the event, decorating the exhibition area and editing the video and pictures from the brochure.

Communication Model. It is cross media which the new media derives from the old media which in this case is from the printed brochure to video clip for publicizing in the website.

Result. The students who participate get the credit for the special project class. The website has a variety of contents to put on.

Development from Previous Project. Converting the printed media to video in which the story telling in the video exactly derive from the brochure from first page to last.

Picture 7: Front cover of brochure



Picture 8: Exhibition plan

Picture 9: Example of original brochure design

4th Activity: Youth Camp "Draw my Future"

Objective. The children can create the new media by transmedia.

Participants. Professors from Digital Media, Piangkhwan Kumroon, painting artist, students from schools in Tao-Ngoy area and undergrad students from Faculty of Management Science, Kasetsart University Chalermphrakiat Sakon Nakhon Province Campus.

Activity. Create new media for telling the story from photograph to drawing which has the process as follows.

1. Professor Suriya Chayachareon draws the pictures under the topic "Draw Children's Future"which are inspired by photographs from the writer which has total 8 sets of photographs.

2. Seminar about youth motivation under the topic "Volunteering"and "Love of Homeland"by Pratch Niyomkha and Worratikorn Tongsiri

3. Seminar "Drawing My Future"by having students take a photo and draw his or her own future from the photo. The drawing and the photo will be presented together and the student will write a short description to explain the drawing.

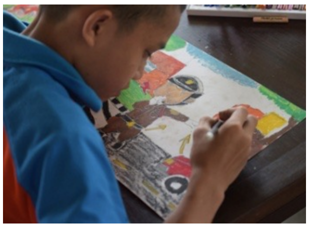
<u>Communication Model.</u> It is transmedia where the story is to be told during a seminar to students in Tao-Ngoy and have them participate by creating the new content.

<u>Result.</u> The students who participate can attend more of the activity from the The Third Royal Factory and feel more confident to volunteer. The Third Royal Factory has the confidence to create a variety of media with Communication Consortium and obtain more knowledge of creating new media.

Picture 10: Example of drawing that was inspired by the photo.

Picture 11: Example of drawing that was inspired by the photo.

Picture 12: Example of drawing that was inspired by the photo.



Picture 13: The students who participate.

Picture 14: "Drawing the Future" project by students who participate.

Picture 15: "Drawing the Future" project by students who participate

Development from Previous Project. The students who participate draw inspiration from the photo that tells the story of Tao-Ngoy Community from which the drawing will be focused on story of their future when everyone grows up and come back to their homeland

Conclusion

The achievement of this social responsibility activity development has developed over the time. The more time has passed by the more familiarity between partners increases, which also increase the intimacy in the work. This causes transformation of the media to be even more complex. As a result, more of the creativity is brought to the activity that comes from foundation concepts. Also, it increases recognition from the target group.

Suggestion

The Crown Property Bureau and the partners' network should take the projects and activities to develop in other areas such as the First Royal Factory (Fang), Chiang Mai, so the results from two places can be comparable and for improvement in the future project.

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FRAMING CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP ACTIVITIES (CSA) AS SPORT NEWS:PROSPECTS AND PROBLEMS FROM THE JOURNALISTIC VIEWPOINT

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Abstract

Today sport goes beyond the competition among athletes. It is a "big business," that involves many stakeholders ranging from sport organizations, to government, business corporations, business associations, the media, and local communities.Corporate Sponsorship Activities (CSA) in sports, especially in the big games, are treated as the kind of activities that show how the corporations can contribute to society. It shows how responsive or responsible the businesses is in being involved in society, especially in the eyes of target audiences. From the business point of view, it can become a valuable investment in terms of financial revenue and the image of the sponsoring corporation if the athletes are successful in terms of the games and photogenic appearances. The success of the key stakeholders in operating the Olympics has led to an attempt to propose Paralympics as the next games at the same Olympic stadiums. Paralympics, on one hand, can give opportunities for people with disabilities to perform at the same level of competition, and to receive the world-class recognition in terms of their talents, their efforts, their views and voices. On the other hand, it is expected that Paralympics should gain the support from the same stakeholders. These will also lead to the social acceptance and the good image of the athletes and their stakeholders. When looking at the issues from the journalist viewpoint, reporting sports news is very challenge in showing balance among views and expectations. It is challenging for the journalists not only to report news, but to frame the news in a way to encourage the publicto

accept the ability of disability, to respect their views and their voices, and to recognize their sponsors who have given opportunity to the athletes with disability and their sport organizations. It is, therefore, challenging for journalists and news organizations to keep balanced in terms of news value, especially of the value of the athletes, and their sponsors. They also need to be accurate in their news coverage, by not making them to be recognized as corporate advertisements. They also need to balance their relationship with public relations teams from the sports sponsoring organizations, and other stakeholders. The above issues lead to the two main objectives of this research; 1) to analyze how corporate sponsorship activities were framed as news in leading Thai newspapers; 2) to understand the journalists' views on issues related to the way corporate sponsorship activities are framed as sports news of leading Thai newspaper.Mixed research methods; content analysis and in-depth interviews, were applied to collect data. It includes the content analysis of leading newspapers in Thailand: Thai Rath, the most popular daily newspaper, Bangkok Post, the most recognizable English language newspaper, and Siam Sport-the most circulated daily sport newspaper. The time frame was from 6 months before the 2012's London Paralympics was started to 6 months after the games were over. Also we used in-depth interviewing techniques to collect data from sports editors, sport journalists, the executive teams of these newspaper, and representatives from Thai Journalism association dealing with ethical issues.Research results indicate that 20.5% of Paralympics-related news are created by corporate sponsors and their sponsorship on Paralympics. The major sponsors are from Alcohol Industry (The Singha Corporation), the department store (The Mall Group), the mobile company (AIS) , a private academic (RBAC), and the green tea beverage (ICHITAN). Results also lead to various implications related to rules of framing news, the process of news selection, and the suggestions for business on events management and media management in report sports news in the future.

Keywords : framing, corporate sponsorship, sport news, journalistic viewpoint

Background

Corporate Sponsorship Activities or CSA is one of the most popular and promotional tools in the business industry worldwide. In the area of sports competition, it has become a global phenomena at all levels; from local to global competitions that a number of multinational corporations have bought "sponsorship rights" from the organizing committees. Most especially, the inspiring model of selling rights for corporation sponsorship activities and Television broadcasting was perhaps recognized after the financial success of the 1996 Summer Olympic in Atlanta. It was claimed that the 197 nations participated in the Games with 5 million spectators and the 3.5 billion worldwide television viewers. (Olympic Games, 1997). Therefore, the power of the games in reaching people can lead to financial challenges for the business sector to invest in sports sector as a part of business activities.

Nowadays it is claimed that sports activities go far beyond sports competitions. Rather, all sports segments are financially supported by big corporations. And sport has become a game of commercial activities, in which a variety of brands seek to sponsor big sport events, sport teams, sport associations, and the famous athletes. The 2010 FIFA World Cup held in South Africa, for example, was sponsored by no fewer than 20 corporate brands (FIFA 2010).The AFF Championship Cup is sponsored by Suzuki (AFF 2014) and The AFC Asian Cup 2015 is supported by Nikon (AFC 2015)

From the previous review, we have seen tremendous amount of corporate sponsorship spending across various sports activities. In 2009, the total amount of spending from foreign companies across the globe has reached US$ 29.2 billion (International Events Group IEG, 2009). In 2014, the sponsorship spending by corporations reached an estimated worldwide expenditure of $53.1 billion (International Events Group IEG, 2014).

Defining Corporate Sponsorship Activities

In this paper, we aim to define the concept of Corporate Sponsorship Activity (CSA) as "an investment, in cash or in kinds, in an activity, person or event, in return for access to the exploitable commercial potential associated with that activity, person or event by the investors or sponsors" (Meenaghan, 1991). It also includes the idea of buying rights of sponsorship from any committees, or signing a short term or a long term agreement to financially support any sports competition, sports equipment, sports association, sports team, as well as athletes. This concept has also been called Corporate Sponsorship (CS).

Cobbs (2011) shows that the value benefit gained is dependent on the particular commercial objective of individual sponsor.In addition, current statistics claim that the world's most powerful brands (e.g., Coca-Cola, Ford, Pepsi, Budweiser, and Adidas) routinely allocate more than $100 million per year towards sponsorship (IEG, 2014). Several global brands, including Nike, Shell, Motorola, and DuPont, consistently have spent as much (or more) on sponsorship than traditional measured media (Jensen & Hsu, 2011). Therefore, these increased investments in sponsorship relate to its effectiveness as a marketing communication tool. Increasing brand awareness, establishing or changing brand image, and building brand equity have been reported as the most frequent reasons for a company to enter into a sponsorship deal (Cornwell et all, 2001).

Apart from the financial concerns, CSA was claimed as the magic tool in shaping the image of the corporation. Especially, it is positively connected to the image of the sports issues. For example, Gwinner & Eaton (1999) has probed the relation that image of the sponsored enterprise is also a central concern to sponsors as the sponsorship relationship is largely predicated on the idea that a corporate brand can borrow the image of a popular entity through its supportive affiliation with that entity.

The Legacy of CSA in the Sport Industry

Based on our literature review, it was shown that the sports industry is becoming more important in local and global contexts. Especially, the sports industry has many distinct attributes that reflect business nature and also the local culture. Thus, this industry provides a very interesting opportunity for business activities and also CSR managers to strategize and make the full use of it.

The concept of CSA has its roots in a multidisciplinary field, such as accountability, and the corporation views toward target audiences. Also this CSA concept is related to the issues of its effects among target audiences, such as brand awareness, brand recognition, and brand loyalty. Currently, the area of study has expanded toward the analysis of sports organizations' role in society. For example, the strong power of the sports industry in terms of their connection with sports fans lead to the focus of the sports industry as a projection of social perspectives, including its symbolism of social perspective, its identification in the community, and its socially responsible initiatives. Walker & Kent (2009), for example, gave an omnipresence of sport as a crucial industry. Their study shows that it has led to the elevation of the overall sports organizations as influential members of the global community.

However, their study reported that sports organizations are facing a persistent issue, in which the consuming public is increasingly aware of the social aspects of corporate policy. One of the causes is perhaps due to the challenges given to recent corporate sponsorship activities, their strategies, and how the corporations deal with journalists. It is, therefore, challenging to see the extent to which the business sector has expanded their focus of sponsorship to particular groups, such as popular sports, famous athletes, or sports for people with disabilities, their organizations, and the members.

Journalist Viewpoint: Challenge in Making the Balance in Framing New Stories of CSAS

Framing is undeniably related to the values of news. According to Robert Entman (1993) faming is "to frame a communicating text or message to promote certain facets of a 'perceived reality' and make them more salient in such a way that endorses a specific problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or a treatment recommendation." So, the media, and the roles of the journalist, more specifically print media, serve as valuable sources of information and powerful modes of communication. This power controls much of what the audience understand the world on a daily basis.

In addition, journalists have the ability to dictate what stories are considered newsworthy and how much prominence and space they are allocated. From framing perspective, researchers have successfully studied the influence of mass media in the formation of public opinion. Within the understanding of the framing and CSA, it becomes apparent that media sources with economic support and influence could have an effect. Roles of journalist's framing therefore need to be well balanced in the relationship with the CSA, and also, most importantly, with the acceptance of the public.

In processing sports news, the journalist has to work and to deal with the editor and also the CSA that has parallel roles in framing the news. This is because sponsorship awareness is positively related to corporate image and also the image of the journalist (Sandler and Shani, 1989). Pope and Voges (1994) has also confirmed this importance of the balancing roles in their *Sponsorship and image: a replication and extension* that (1) the individual's involvement with the product category of the sponsoring organization, (2) the effect of an erroneous belief on the part of a respondent that a corporation is a sponsor, (3) corporate image perceived in the brand name used by the sponsoring organization are involved with CSA activities and the roles of the journalist especially on how the journalist positions him/herself towards the CSA. Journalists arealso responsible for the selection and review process and also for coping with CSA as well.

The challenging issue of reporting sports news, therefore, is in the hands of sport journalists and sports photo journalists. They are acting as middle men who link news from the sports industry to their audience. Based on the blossoming of CSA in the sports industry, journalists may find it difficult in reporting sport news. The values of news has become the essential issuewhen it is represented through news. Ideally, this power of news is about the roles of news coverage in managing audiences' opinions when journalists select any framework to tell the stories and to guide their readers in order to understand and enjoy their news. Based on this concept the frames of the news, therefore, can become an important tool, in which the journalists can encourage the public to accept athletes they report in news.

Practically, the sports competitions, sports associations, or athletes are mainly sponsored by CSA. It is, therefore, very tough for them in balancing the journalistic views on sports competition. For example, what do they think if the CSA is about a special game like Paralympics, the CSA of Paralympics, and how do they seek to balance the news values, the expectation of the audiences, and the CSA stories?

Research Questions

In regard to this, the above issues lead to the two main objectives of this research. It include:

- To analyze how corporate sponsorship activities are framed as news in leading Thai newspapers.
- To understand the views of journalists in framing CSA News in the context of sport among leading Thai newspapers.

Methodology

In order to gain better understanding, mixed methodology is used in the study of research done in Thailand. A quantitative approach with the content analysis methodology is applied to understand how corporate sponsorship activities are framed as news in leading Thai newspapers. A qualitative approach with interview methodology is adopted to ascertain how the journalists' views on issues relates to the way corporate sponsorship activities are framed as sports news in leading Thai newspapers.

1. Content analysis. To make it more practical, this study focuses on the 2012 London Paralympic as a study frame. The time frame is from January to December of 2012.

Population and the Samples

The populations in this study are newspapers that were published in Thailand. The samples of this study are identified by applying the multi-stage sampling technique. These steps are as follows:

1.1 The First Step: Selecting the newspapers.

In order to screen newspapers, our first step is to select the national newspapers that are distributed in the published and online format.

1.2 The Second Step: Selecting the top-hit newspapers. Our second step in screening newspapers is to select the most circulated newspapers in Thailand, in terms of the English daily newspapers, the Thai daily newspapers, and the sport daily newspapers.

According to recent data from the Thai government's Public Relations Department detailed directory of all media in Thailand it was found that the most circulated newspapers of each selected kinds are as follows. (1) Thairath, with approximately 1,000,000 circulation. Thairath is recognized as Thailand's most influential newspaper. (2) The Bangkok Post is the most circulated English newspaper, with approximately 75,000 circulation. (3) Siam Sport, with approximately 30,000 circulation.Combined, these have a 90% market share of all sports newspapers.

1.3 The Third Step: Selecting news of London's Paralympic related issues. During this step, we used a local newspaper database called, IQ-News clip, as our search engine. We also searched news by typing the key words of Paralympics 2012 in Thai, and English.

The result of these screening leads to 294 news articles for our study; 19 from Bangkok Post newspaper; 120 from Thairath newspaper; and 97 from Siam Sport newspaper.

2. The Interviews.

Apart from the content analysis of leading newspapers, we use the interviewing method as our technique to understand views of the journalists toward CSA & Sport News. Our interviewees include the sport editors of The Bangkok Post, Thairath, and Siam Sports.

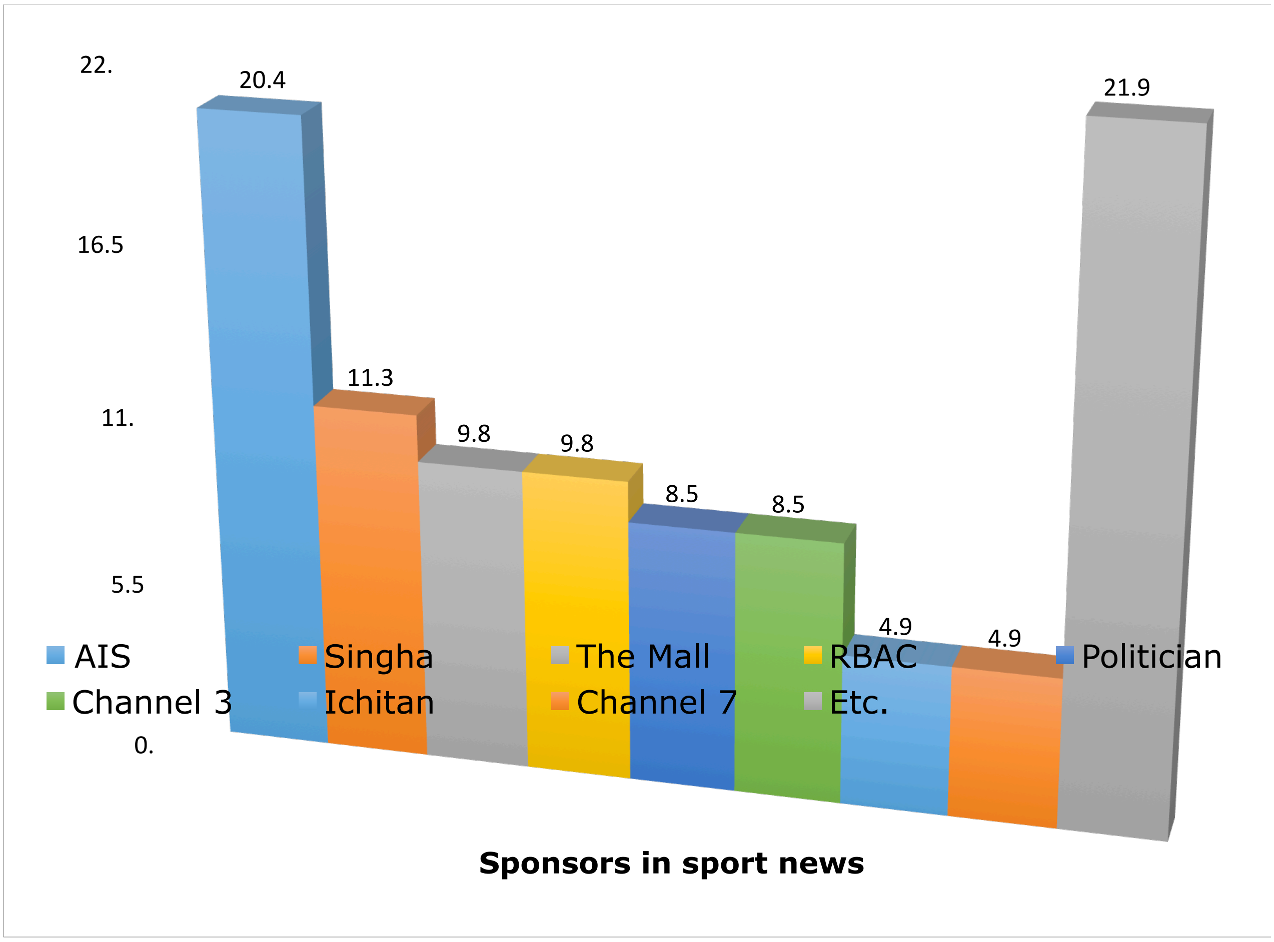
Research Findings

Result No. 1: The frames of CSA in Paralympic news of leading newspaper in Thailand.

The overall frame indicates the business sponsorship that appeared in sports news. The major sponsors are from the mobile company (AIS), (the Alcohol Industry) The Singha Corporation), the department store(The Mall Group), a private academic()RBAC), Mr. Banharn Silpa-archa, former Prime Minister of Thailand (Thai politician), Channel 3 (Television channel), the green tea beverage(ICHITAN), Channel 7 (Television channel) and etc. AIS (the mobile company) appeared in sports news the most with 20.4%, following by those companies previously mentioned consecutively. Noticeably, the proportion under "Etc." cluster is high. Yet, it consists of 12 business sponsorship companies. Those companies each appeared in small proportion.

Table 1

Represents proportion of business sponsorship that appeared in news coverage photo and descriptors



The result from content analysis also indicates that CSA in Paralympics news was physically framed in terms of photo news and descriptors.

1.1 <u>Photo Frames</u>

The CSA frames that are reflected in the photo news can be identified in 4 categories.

- **Thai Athletes as heroes**. The photos show Thai Paralympians as those who are eligible in the world class sport competition.
- **The Endorsement of Non-athletes in supporting Paralympics and Paralympians.** This main focus of this frame shows that the non-athletes have supported the Paralympians, before the competition had started and after the game was over. The major non-athletes are the president of Sport Association and representatives from Thai Government.

- **The Victory Prize from Business Sponsorship.** The main focus of these photos is when the representatives from the business sector and the Paralympians hold the same sign board, indicating the victory prize given by the corporation. This frame is presented after the competition results were announced and after the Paralympians have returned to Thailand.
- **Sport Equipment and Logos of Sponsoring Organization.** The major focus are the athletes' sport equipment used in the competition, such as clothes and wheelchairs. However, the main focus of the picture is not only on the equipment but also the logos of the sponsoring organization.

Table 2

The Photo Frame: Athletes as Hero, the Endorsement of Non-Athletes, The Business Sponsorship, and Sport Equipment with Business Logos.

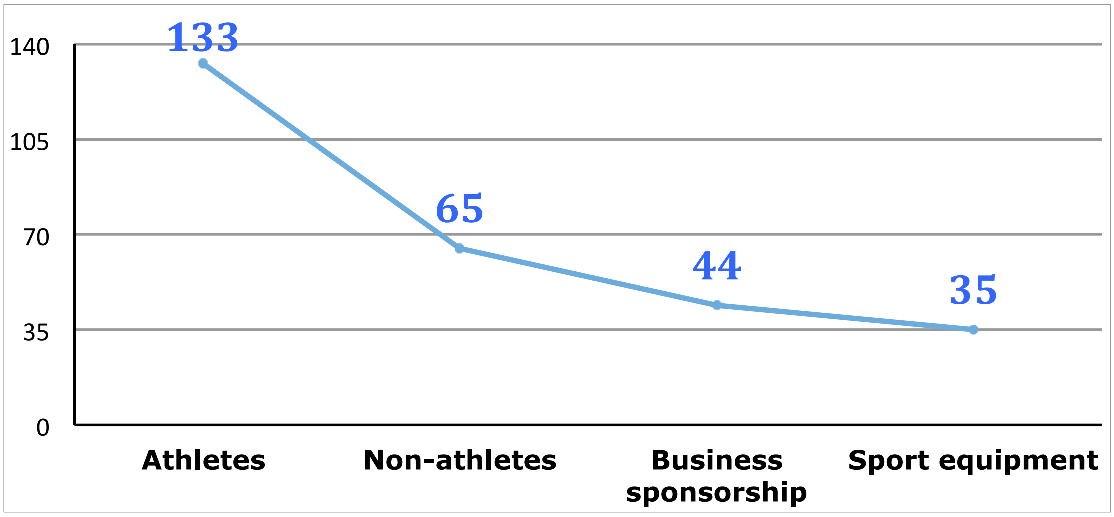


Table 2 indicates 4 categories of photos from all 3 newspapers sports coverage. From the above data, it shows that the most popular photo frame is the Athletes' photos as the heroes and heroines (133 photos: 48%). The second popular frame is The Dedication of Non-athletes (65 photos: 23.5%), following by Business sponsorship (44 photos: 15.9%), and sports equipment with logos of the sponsor (35 photos: 12.6%) respectively.

Table 3

The Photo Frame Categorized by Types of Newspapers.

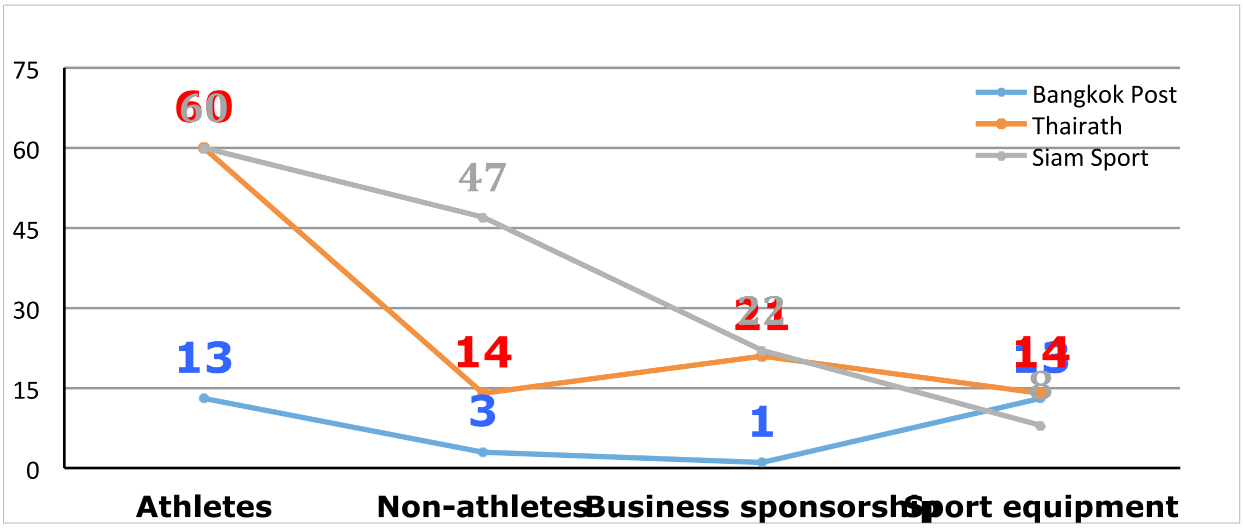


Table 3 shows the 4 categories of Paralympic photos that were published in the leading newspaper in Thailand, Bangkok Post, Thairath, and Siam Sport. From the above data, it shows that Athletes' photos are displayed the most in every newspaper. Siam Sport, the leading sports newspaper covers the Non-athletes' photo as their 2nd ranked with 47 photos (34.3%), whereas Thairath, the leading Thai newspaper, gives their 2nd ranked to Business sponsorship with 21 photos (19.4%). However, Bangkok Post, the leading English newspaper in Thailand covers the photos of non-athletes, and business sponsorship with little amount of their coverage; 3 photos (10%) of Non-athletes and 1 photo (3.4%) of Business sponsorship.

Descriptor Frame

The results of this study indicate that CSA are also framed in newspaper coverage through descriptors as the written text. Descriptors can be categorized under 3 themes; Athletes as a Heroes; The Endorser of Non-athletes; and Business sponsorship.

Table 4

Descriptor Frames: Athletes as Hero, Non-athletes as the Endorsers, and Business Sponsorship

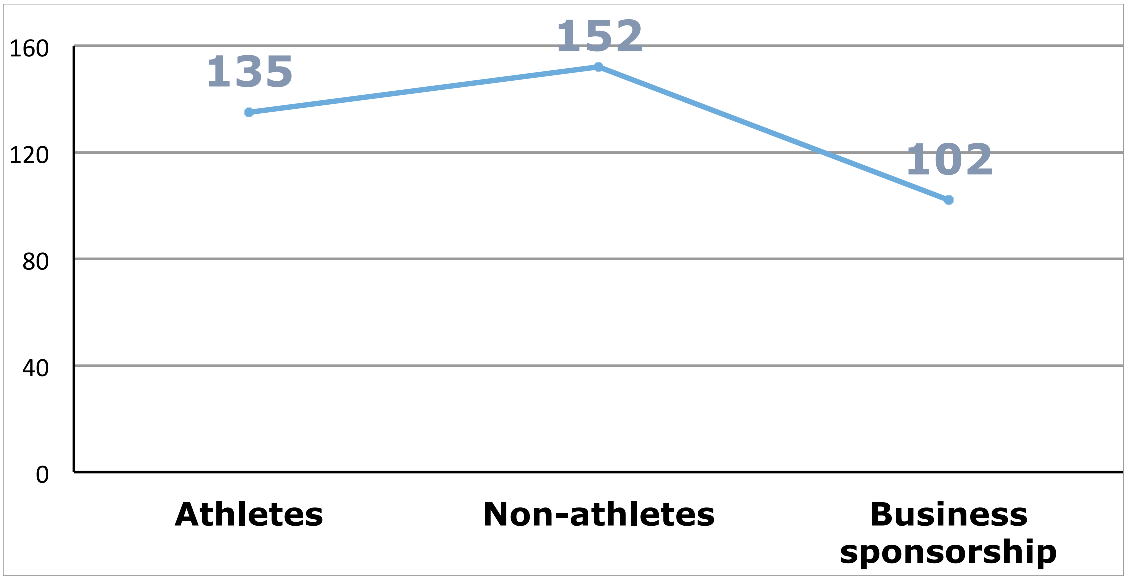


Table 4 indicates 3 categories are represented in the descriptor frame. The most popular frame of descriptors is the Non-athlete as the Endorser. This frame is shown in 152 news (39.1%). The second frame is about Athletes as heroes (135 news: 34.7%), while the third frame is Business Sponsorship (102 news: 26.2%).

Table 5

The Descriptor Frame Categorizing by Types of Newspapers.

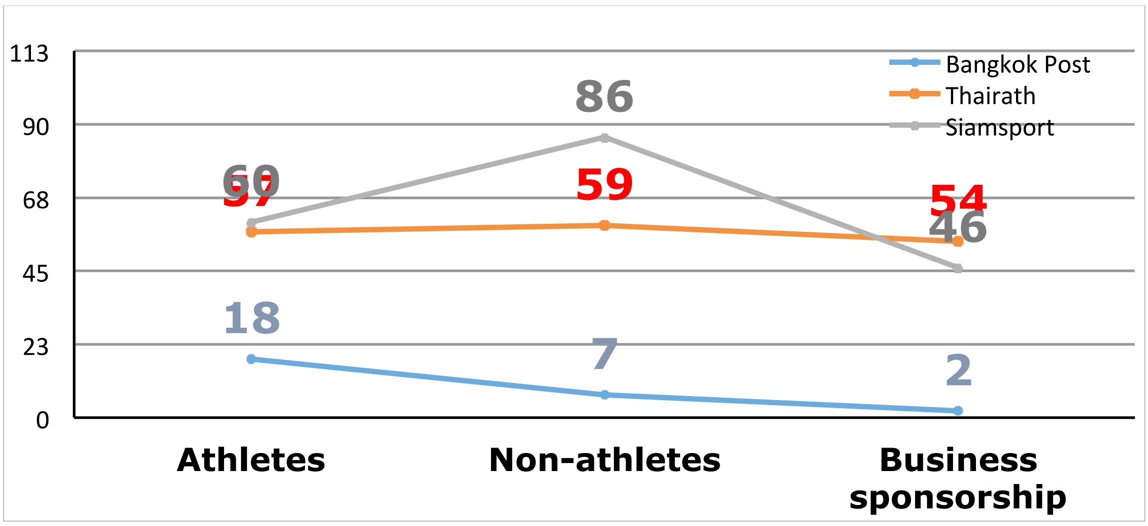


Table 5 indicates 3 categories of descriptors from each newspaper; Bangkok Post, the leading English newspaper in Thailand; Thairath, the leading Thai newspaper; and Siam Sport, the leading sports newspaper. From the above data, it shows that the frame of Non-athletes as endorsers are mainly written in the news coverage of leading Thai newspapers (59 news items: 34.7%), and Siam Sport (86 news items: 44.8%). In contrast, Bangkok Post, highlights on Athletes as heroines (18 news items: 66.7%). However, the frame of Business sponsorship is the least mentioned in all 3 newspapers.

Result No 2: Journalist views of framing CSA News in the context of sport among leading Thai newspapers.

The results of this study indicate that the major concerns from journalists related to CSA in Paralympics are about 3 major factors: <u>The news values; the sports advertisement; and the balancing between news and advertisement.</u>

- <u>The News values</u>

After the interview with 3 newspaper editors, it is found that journalists mainly select CSA news when they have the news values. According to the journalists, it is indicated that they screen the news value based on 3 categories: *Athletes basis; Sport content basis; and Reader basis.*

- *Athletes basis.* The news values are depending on the levels of athlete's popularity. For example, the editor from the leading Sport Newspaper explained that the popularity can be identified if Athletes are well recognized by the public like a superstar or a celebrity. It means the athletes have to attract the journalists' attention and their readers. Also the popularity can be identified if the Athletes' performance is publicly recognized. Here they call this Paralympians as the rising star. They believe that the reproduction of their photos and stories can make the Paralympians become widely known by the public.

However, the popularity can also occur if the athletes, and their team members attempt to make themselves have media coverage

- *Sport content basis*. The editors accepted that the news value that they frame the news stories is based on 3 conditions: *the victory of the Paralympian, the talking point about the preparation of the athletes, and the stories on the strategies for competing.*

"News value comes from...practicing....details about the competition event, the reward for winning the competition and the tactics..." said the Siam Sport newspaper editor.

- *Audience basis.* The editors said that they mainly devote their times in looking for sports trends of the society and public. "In selecting the news, we give priority to the public's attention before what athletes' sponsor wants", said Thairath newspaper editor. When asking editors about the trend of society, they said it is more likely based on the common sense that everybody knows.

- Sports News as a Tie-In Advertisement

Apart from the news value that is prioritized under the responsibility and consideration of editor, the way they frame CSA in sport as News is also related to the business contract the marketing team has dealt with the sponsor. Business matters because newspapers rely on the money from selling its advertising space.

One of the editors said that "Admittedly that newspaper is also a business company that needs to survive in the market competition. From the business perspective, the content attracted the reader and the reader attracted the customer. The reason is because customers choose to buy advertising space from newspapers that can reach their target group".

However, the other editors balancethe above view, with the strict rules between advertisement and news. It means sports advertisement will be covered on the advertising space, which is separated from the news. The organizational structure of the Newspaper Company helps in distinguishing between the news and the advertisement.

“A newspaper as a business company manages under the organizational structure that divides the areas of news division and business division. This organizational structure benefits in clearing the line between the news and the business. When customers want our advertising space, they will contact directly to our business division. Then their advertisement will be placed under the advertising section. It is called sport advertisement” said Siam Sport editor.

The Balancing between news values and sports advertisement

It is seen that CSA is present in the sports news. Even though the news and the business (sport advertisement) are independent under the organizational structure. However, the finding from research question 1 has evidently proved that the sponsors make a certain amount of appearance on both photos and descriptors of sport news.

This study finds framing of CSA in sport news from 2 approaches;

1. The CSA has a news value following sports news selection basis (Athletes basis, Sport content basis and Audience basis). “If the news that relatesto CSA is important, we will write about it. Yet we write because it has news value, not because “who” is in the news or “who” wanst to be in the news” said an editor.

2. The company that organized CSA requests to be covered under news section from a business partnership position. “We give priority to the news value. We balance the CSA news according to news value. We appropriate the size of CSA news with the news value. If the partner wants more, I will advise him to go for the advertisements section” said an editor. “Negotiation with our partnership is important. We have to explain to them that we are carrying news values on our shoulder” said an editor.

Conclusion and Analysis

This study finds that CSA is framed as sports news through photos and descriptors in news coverage. Four categories are found when analyzing the Photo of Paralympic news.

They include Athletes (Hero); Non-athletes (Endorser); Business sponsorship; and Sports equipment. Three categories are found in terms of descriptors. They include Athletes; Non-athletes; and Business sponsorship. The finding also shows the implication of business interests in sport news, as it attracts many business investments. Also journalists' views on framing CSA as sport news can be found in 3 aspects; news values; sport advertisement; and balancing between news values and sports advertisement.

Roles of CSA especially in the sports industry and journalism are keys to define and balance. Even though both CSA and newspapers tried (try??) looking from a business point of view; they have to compete in the market, therefore clear and distinct roles between them is important to maintain. As they are relying on each other in business, news value is the key to their interdependency.

Forbidding journalist or newspapers to cover CSA in sports news might not lead to a solution. Moreover, it may damage both of the businesses. Perhaps providing sponsorship literacy to the sponsored company by asking them to extend their support to marginalized groups, may lead to the better answer.

Despite the line between news values and sport advertisement,CSA in sport news should be covered in newspaper under their code of standard. Sports associations, sports journalist associations and managing teams of the sport industry should make an agreement on the rules to cover CSA in the news. The main purposes are to give priority to the news value and not to turn the CSA in sport news to be advertorial under news sections.

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