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PRESS

Influence of Endorser Credibility on Consumers' Attitude Toward Advertising and Soap Brand

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Abstract—**Consumers' easy access to digital media in the era of Industry Revolution 4.0 has contributed towards increased product advertising by companies in the medium. To increase advertising effect, marketers appoint celebrities to endorse advertised product as they are perceived to be credible endorsers that could help to promote products effectively. Credibility as what is needed and in accordance with beauty soap products marketed in Indonesia. So this study investigates the influence endorser credibility has over Indonesian consumers' attitude toward advertising and attitude toward selected beauty soap brands. Analyses of PLS-SEM results from online survey participated by 405 consumers in Java island found that of the all endorser credibility's attributes investigated, expertise, trustworthiness, attractiveness, and similarity show significant direct influences on consumers' attitudes toward advertising. While for consumes' attitude toward beauty soap brands only two show significant direct influence is endorser attractiveness and trustworthiness, for endorser's expertise and similarity were found to show no significance on consumers' attitude toward brand The findings imply that for Indonesian consumers, the endorsers can be important influencers on their attitude toward advertising beauty soap; in particular, the credibility of endorser's attractiveness and credibility endorser trustworthiness, show significant influence over consumers' attitudes toward beauty soap brand. The findings also imply the importance for advertisers to continue using endorsers in beauty soap advertisements in Indonesia.**

Keywords: *endorser credibility, attractiveness, similarity, trustworthiness, expertise, attitude toward advertising, attitude toward brand*

I. INTRODUCTION

The use of media by the public at large has been active even before Industry Revolution 4.0 takes place and now its use is rampant, particularly digital media. It is observed that people have easy access to digital tools and gadgets; and it has become a norm for people to link themselves to digital media for various of reasons, to find information, to interact or to connect with other people or industry. The popularity and significance of digital media has been one of the reasons for why advertisers are using it to advertise and promote products. Celebrity endorser is one of the supporting factors in informing advertising messages to the public so as to create a positive attitude towards advertising and towards the brand being promoted.

In marketing, advertising serves as a part of the promotional mixes that contributes towards business communication strategy. Companies advertise as way to communicate their product's and brand's superiority to customers or target markets. This advertisement refers to how the communication act is structured. Communication theory by Lasswell as 'Who', 'Says What', 'In Which Channel', 'To Whom' and 'With What Effect' [1]. It is believed that consumer's knowledge, perception, interest and actions regarding products and brands can change according to effectiveness of the product's advertising. This include beauty soap products.

The convergence of media channels through the digitalization of communication creates the relationship among target markets as the segments are interconnected to product brands [2]. The trend shows that the media is moving towards media 4.0 on which advertisers view that an effective and efficient media interaction is through the internet. Today, television and online media (especially YouTube) are observed to be popular amongst consumers [3]. In Indonesia, the growth of YouTube users in Indonesia has increased from year to year and has reached 600% in 2015, three times more than other countries in the Asia Pacific. Youtube became the third social media content that was frequently visited by Indonesian people in 2016 after Facebook and Instagram. In addition, the total YouTube visitors in Indonesia has amounted to 14.5 million based on the survey results conducted by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) and the Indonesian Polling (http://www.apjii.or.id/survei2016, accessed 29 September 2017). This makes advertising using youtube media an interesting topic to study because of the rapid increase number of people accessing the YouTube medium. In particular, when the product is beauty soap product and that the advertisement uses a model or endorser to endorse the beauty soap product and brand. As [4] explains, using the right endorser can strengthen the transfer of meaning, perception and audience's support on attitude toward brand. The literature acknowledged on the importance of appointing endorser(s) in an advertisement as it can induce favouritism amongst consumers particularly those that portray positive endorser characters such as ones that are considered credible, memorable, interesting, funny and bright are applied [5]. This study to investigate whether endorser credibility, has a significant relationship with consumer's attitudes towards advertising and brand.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Previous literature has identified various characteristics on endorser credibility which are believed to have influences over a message's persuasion. Amongst the 17 characteristics identified, they include trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, professionalism, beautiful, expressive, competent, similarity, persuasiveness, relevance, objectivity, confidence, honesty, qualification, respect and likeability. There are three common characteristics found mentioned in many studies, namely, expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. [6] for instance have found that endorser credibility is indeed composed by the three attributes, i.e. expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness. On the other hand, [7] suggested four common characteristics which is made by the three (expertise, trustworthiness, attractiveness) and additional similarity to the set.

A. Expertise

Expertise is defined as the perceived ability of an endorser or the extent in which a communicator is perceived to be a source of valid assertions [8]. An endorser's expertise can influence people's perceptions in regards to the product's quality [4]. It is common for celebrities to be appointed as endorsers in advertisement as they are considered a good communicator for the products that are advertised and that they are considered valid source of assertions made. The literature has identified at least ten attributes in regards to endorser's expertise, namely, trust, expert, qualified, persuasive, measure, believed, attractive, skill, experience and knowledge, and competent. For this study, only four attributes of endorser's expertise; namely, knowledge, experience, qualified and expert as suggested by [7] will be used to represent it.

B. Trustworthiness

One of the main factors that effective advertisement has is trustworthiness [9]. The trust paradigm in communication is the understanding degree of confidence in, and level of acceptance of the speaker and the message [10,7]. The literature on trustworthiness of credible endorser describes it as honesty, integrity and believability of the communicator of message in the ads [11]. Trust can be gained based on honesty, integrity, and trustworthiness of the source [4]. Literature found on endorser's trustworthiness identified fifteen attributes, namely, honesty, sincerity, truthfulness, reliable, dependable, objectivity, believability, integrity, nonverbal, friendliness, credibility, expertise, trustworthy, earnest, convincing and unquestionable.

C. Attractiveness

All cultures place a premium on physical attractiveness [4]. This is why attractive communicators are mostly preferred, liked and believed by people; and thus, why they are believed to have positive impact on products over unattractive ones [12]. Attractive endorsers have a more positive impact on the products they endorsed more than fewer unattractive endorsers [13]. In addition, endorser's attractiveness may retain or even increase advertising

effectiveness for experienced users [7]. In beauty-related contexts, one study found that a normal appearance actually strengthened peer-endorser credibility as a whole [14]. It is important to note though that attractiveness does not mean simply physical attractiveness, but includes any number of virtuous characteristics that consumers might perceive in a celebrity endorser. For example, intellectual skills, personality properties, lifestyles, or athletic prowess [4].

Literature works regarding endorser's attractiveness identified fifteen attributes in past studies, namely, they are: stylish, sexy, classy, elegant, beauty, attractive, similarity, familiarity, physical look, credible, trustful, athletic, personality, good looking, and likeability.

D. Similarity

Although attractiveness refers to all attributes that make an endorser attractive to audience members (e.g. physical look, personality properties, attractive lifestyle, etc.) [11], it is also has been likened to other attributes that include perceived familiarity, likeability, and similarity of the source to the receiver. Familiarity refers to how much information the audience has about the source. Likeability, on the other hand, refers to physical habits or behaviour. Similarity is understood as the perceived similarity of the source to the recipient (e.g. similarity in terms of demographic or ideological aspects). Prior research shows that people often consider people who are similar to themselves to be more likable than people who are dissimilar, as cited [7]. Similarity is a supposed resemblance between the source and the receiver of the message [5]. The similarity is a supposed resemblance between an endorser celebrity as a source and a consumer as receiver of the message; it can be measured if both of have similar needs, goals interest and lifestyle (Ohanian, 1990).The endorser's physical attractiveness is assumed to have an influence on the target's acceptance of the advertising, particularly due to the phenomenon of identification. The effectiveness of the message depends on the endorser's similarity, likeable-ness, and familiarity [15].

E. Attitude Toward Advertising (AAD)

Company (advertiser) use advertisements to influence consumers' attitude to buy their products. Attitude towards the ad (AAD) is defined as "a predisposition to respond in a favourable or unfavourable manner to a particular advertising stimulus during a particular exposure occasion" [16,17]. According to [18], the definition of attitude toward advertising (AAD) is comprised solely as individual's evaluative or effective response to the commercial stimulus and does not refer to their cognitive or behavioral responses. Attitude toward advertising reflects exposure to a particular advertisement, not consumers' attitude towards advertising in general or even their attitude towards the ad stimulus of interest at another point in time [16]. At times, one's attitude towards an object can affect the consumer's attitude towards another object with which it is associated [19]. [20] study identified eight items to measure attitude towards advertising. Namely, they are: like, is good, convincing, objective, satisfying, attentive, unusual, and sensual.

F. Attitude Toward Brand (AB)

Attitude towards brand mainly refers to consumer's own perceptions regarding a brand, and is argued to be a reliable predictor of consumer's behaviour towards brands [21]. According to [21], negative information in regards to appointed celebrity who endorse a product brand in an advertisement that become public knowledge may result in a decline in consumer's attitude towards the endorsed brand but only when individuals have no deep knowledge of the brand or the celebrity. If a celebrity is involved in any kind of controversy, this negative information affects the customers' intentions and their perception of the brand [6]. According to [22], Attitude towards the brand is a relatively enduring, one dimensional summary evaluation of the brand that presumably energizes behaviour. For example, attitude towards the brand is not the same thing as feelings elicited by the brand. Feelings are transitory, whereas attitudes are relatively enduring. A study conducted by [6] analyses the differences in the effectiveness of celebrities in different style advertisements as well as the impact of source credibility. This study uses experimental magazines to examine nine fictional ads for three products with an unreal brand and with three visual styles in advertising (using a celebrity, with demonstrations, and product brands). Findings suggest that the ad styles that produce the greatest effectiveness differ by product; celebrities do not increase effectiveness, but when the respondents recognize celebrities, effectiveness increases; and credibility affects affective and conative action. The five measurements from this study are; "It is a brand that I like, It is a brand that is easily associated with the product it refers to, I have a favourable opinion to the brand, my opinion of the brand is positive".

G. Framework

Figure 1 displays the framework of this study. As can be seen, there are altogether six variables to be studied. The independent variables are made of four endorser's characteristics, namely, expertise, attractiveness, trustworthiness and similarity that are hypothesized to have direct relationships with the two dependent variables, namely, consumer's attitude toward brand (Aad) and consumer's atttitude toward brand (AAB).

H. Methodology

The scope for this study covers only beauty soap products in Indonesia that are advertised in the media while the respondents are Indonesian consumers in Java Island who are exposed to the advertisements of beauty soap product brands. The reason to use Java Island is because the island houses an approximately 60-70% of Indonesia's population. This research uses a quantitative approach using online survey. Screening questions are used to ensure only those qualified consumers participated in the study. Questionnaire items were taken and adapted from past studies. For instance, to measure endorser's trustworthiness; four items from [7], namely, honesty, truthfulness, earnest, and trustworthy were used while for measuring endorser's

attractiveness; another four items namely, attractive, sexy, stylish, and good looking from [7] were applied. This study uses snowballing technique, a type of non-probability sampling (or non-random sampling) mainly because according to [23], this technique allowed information to be gathered from special or specific targets or groups of people on some rational basis, and subsequent respondents are then obtained from information provided by first respondents. This technique is relevant to the study as the sample first chosen can be assumed as the representative of the population. For data analysis, PLS- SEM was applied. The choice is due to the variation of analysis allowed for testing of hypotheses. For researchers using PLS –SEM, the number of samples can be formulated according to the study's multivariate analyses (including multiple regression analysis) where the minimal sample size required to perform PLS-SEM should be 10 times the maximum number of arrows heading to a point of the endogenous latent variable [24].

III. RESULTS

Of the totaled 405 respondents that participated in the study, most of them were women (68.6%), aged 21-30 years old (41.7%), and working with most (26.4%) earning between 2,500,000 - 5,000,000 IDR. Majority were entrepreneurs (54.3%).

From data analyzed, it was found that the main lodings for all the question items (indicators) explained were more than 0.5 for all the latent variables. The minimum value of main loading is 0.730, and the maximum value is 0.929. To test for validity, the average variance extracted (AVE) value needs to be at least 0.5. The study found that all the AVE values to be greater than 0.5, showing that the convergent validity is fully confirmed. Meanwhile, the composite reliability values are shown to be larger than 0.7, which indicates the high levels of internal reliability among latent variables. The minimum value of composite reliability is 0.766, and the maximum value is 0.945. The coefficient of determination R^2 value for direct effect of endorser credibility (ECE, ECT, ECA, ECS) on attitude toward brand (AB) shows a value of 0.368, and endorser credibility (ECE, ECT, ECA, ECS) on attitude toward advertising (AAD) shows a value of 0.476, which is a moderate fit according to [25].

A. Test Results

Direct effect is created when a direct of two other related constructs are in a path coefficient model. Direct effect represents a relationship between an exogenous and endogenous latent variable. [24] Stated that the t-value and p value for one-tailed test must be greater than 1.645 at 0.05 significance level.

Judging from the results of calculations using the PLS program to see the effect of endorser credibility and consumers' attitudes towards advertising all have positive values. Table 1 displays the results obtained from the testing of hypotheses. The results show that the t value (6.537) and

p-value (0.000) for the effect of endorser credibility's attractiveness on consumer's attitude toward advertising. For endorser's credibility expertise effect on consumer's attitude toward advertising, the t value is 2.121 with p-value of 0.034. The endorser credibility's similarity effect on consumer's attitude toward advertising shows a t value of 4.183 and a p-value of 0.000; while endorser credibility's trustworthiness shows a t value of 2.980 and a p value of 0.003. These results indicate that all dimensions of endorser's credibility show significant and positive influences over consumer's attitude toward brand.

As for the effect of the four endorser's characteristics on consumer's attitude toward brand, the results show that only endorser credibility variables that do not have positive values, namely; expertise and similarity. Endorser's credibility attractiveness has a positive effect on consumer's attitude toward brand (t value = 7.328; p value = 0.000) similar to trustworthiness (t value= 3.676; p value = 0.000).

IV. DISCUSSION

The results show that the four characteristics of endorser's credibility, namely, expertise, trustworthiness, attractiveness, and similarity are positively significant with consumer attitudes towards advertising. These are in line with past studies; for instance, [26] where the study found that celebrity's attractiveness and similarity influence audience's attitudes toward advertising positively; or that as in study [7] whereby consumer's attitude towards advertising is found to be influenced by the four characteristics of peer-endorser (non-celebrity) credibility, namely attractiveness, trustworthiness, expertise, and similarity. A person's attitude towards advertising is reflected in their thoughts and feelings about advertising. So, the more interesting the source, and similarity source more, the easier someone changes attitudes toward advertising.

The results also show that only two out of of four characteristics of endorser credibility, namely, attractiveness and trustworthiness that have significant influences over consumer's attitude towards the brand of beauty soap advertised. This indicates that soap advertisements in Indonesia depend on relevant endorser credibility factors; in this case, their physical attractiveness and level of trustworthiness which are found to be favored by consumers when they deliver advertising messages pertaining to the product brand; these are thus influencing positively on consumer's attitude towards the advertised beauty soap brands. This is in line with previous studies like [27,7].

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study found that for beauty soap products and brands, aspects of endorser's credibility must be a focus of interest when companies are strategizing to get consumer's attention, interest, desire and action. While the four characteristics can influence attitude toward advertising, these not necessarily are true in the case of getting their positive attitude toward brand. Beauty soap products are fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), so that in determining

attitudes towards brand, it is possible that consumers do not see the role played by expertise and similarity of the endorser. Attraction toward the advertisements shown rather than the brand may be due to the fact that beauty soap advertisements usually display the company's brand in a limited visual composition in an advertisement; thus, the advertising beauty soap is more dominated by the role that endorser plays in the advertisement as well as the advertising messages that the endorser endorsed.

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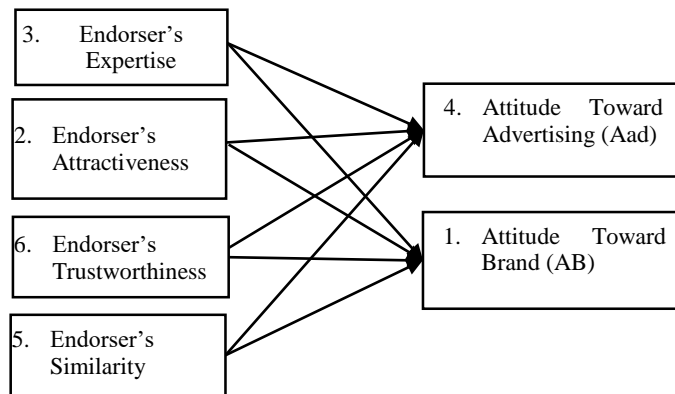
APPENDIX

Fig. 1. Framework of This Study

TABLE 1. RESULT OF DIRECT EFFECTS

Path	beta- value	Standard Error	t- value
ECA -> AAD	0.302	0.046	6.537
ECA -> AB	0.371	0.051	7.328
ECE -> AAD	0.144	0.068	2.121
ECE -> AB	0.071	0.070	1.018
ECS -> AAD	0.207	0.050	4.183
ECS -> AB	0.005	0.054	0.087
ECT -> AAD	0.200	0.067	2.980
ECT -> AB	0.252	0.069	3.676

Legend: ECA = endorser's credibility (attractiveness); ECE = endorser's credibility (expertise); ECS = endorser's credibility (similarity); ECT = endorser's credibility (trustworthiness); AAD = attitude toward advertising; AAB = attitude toward brand