

The Determinants of Consumers' Attitude Towards Advertising

LES DÉTERMINANTS DE L'ATTITUDE DES CONSOMMATEURS ENVERS LA PUBLICITÉ

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Abstract: The advertising industry is a lucrative business in Malaysia. However, government intervention in the industry has to certain extent regulated the content of the advertisement messages. This in turn has impacted the formation of consumers' attitude towards advertising. As such, it is crucial to identify the determinants of their attitude. The aim of this research is to investigate the determinants of consumers' attitude towards advertising among tertiary students in a private higher education institution in Malaysia. A total of 263 undergraduate business students from a private university in Malaysia participated in this research. The outcome shows that credibility, informative, hedonic/ pleasure and good for economy positively relates to consumers' attitude towards advertising.

Keywords: attitude towards advertising; credibility; informative; hedonic/pleasure; good for economy.

Résumé: La publicité est une industrie lucrative en Malaisie. Toutefois, l'intervention gouvernementale dans l'industrie a réglementé le contenu des messages publicitaires dans une certaine mesure. Cela a affecté la formation de l'attitude des consommateurs envers la publicité. Il est donc crucial d'identifier les déterminants de leur attitude. L'objectif de cette recherche est d'étudier les déterminants de l'attitude des consommateurs envers la publicité auprès des étudiants dans un établissement d'enseignement supérieur privé en Malaisie. Un total de 263 étudiants de premier cycle d'une université privée en Malaisie ont participé à cette recherche. Le résultat montre

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que l'attitude des consommateurs est plutôt positive envers une publicité crédible, informative, hédonique et favorable pour l'économie.

Mots-clés: attitude envers la publicité, crédibilité, informatif, hédonique/plaisir, favorable pour l'économie

1. INTRODUCTION

The advertising industry worldwide is experiencing tremendous changes. Munusamy and Wong (2007) argue that advertising has become one of the important elements in our modern life. Government intervention in the advertising industry to a certain extent has regulated the content of the advertisement message, and subsequently this created certain impacts on the formation of consumers' attitude towards advertising (Calfee & Ringold, 1998; Pollay & Mittal, 1993; Rotzoll, Haefner & Sandage, 1986; Wills & Ryans, 1982). The purpose of this research, therefore, is to evaluate the determinants of consumers' attitude towards advertising.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Advertising Industry in Malaysia

The advertising industry is a lucrative business in Malaysia. According to the Nielsen Media Research, the total advertising expenditure in Malaysia reached RM2.39 billion in the first half of the year 2007, and the industry continues to show steady growth with a 9% increase from the RM2.2 billion for the same period in year 2006 (The Report Malaysia, 2008). In addition, advertising expenditure has increased by 76% since year 2000, with cinema, radio and point-of-sale advertising experiencing triple-digit growth over this period (The Report Malaysia, 2008). Traditionally big advertising spenders in Malaysia include telecommunication and fast-moving consumer goods companies (The Report Malaysia, 2008). Table 1 illustrates the total advertising expenditure for all media in Malaysia for the year 2007 and 2008. However the industry is highly regulated by the Malaysian Communication & Multimedia Content Code (MCMCC, retrieved on 15 May 2009). Due to the heavy regulated nature of this business, it is crucial to evaluate the determinants of consumers' attitude towards advertising to discover what the antecedents that would affect consumers' preference are.

Table 1: Total Advertising Expenditure (All Media) In the Year 2007 And 2008

MEDIA	2007		2008		Growth vs 2007
	ADEX (RM'000)	MARKET Share	ADEX (RM'000)	MARKET Share	
Newspapers	3,065,289	56.1%	3,320,832	53.9%	8.3%
Terrestrial TV1	1,799,079	32.9%	2,161,195	35.1%	20.1%
Radio	241,088	4.4%	291,518	4.7%	20.9%
Magazines	166,164	3.0%	156,117	2.5%	-6.0%
Outdoor2	108,162	2.0%	95,892	1.6%	-11.3%
Point Of Sale	57,855	1.1%	73,935	1.2%	27.8%
Internet3	N/A	N/A	32,110	0.5%	-
Cinema	26,267	0.5%	27,398	0.5%	4.3%
Total	5,463,904	100.0%	6,158,995	100.0%	12.7%

Source: Nielsen Media Research (NMR) Index Report 2008

2.2 Consumers' Attitude towards Advertising

Fishbein (1967, p.53) defines attitude as "a learned predisposition of human beings". As part of a learned predisposition human behaviour, Kotler (2000) further elaborates attitude as an individual personal evaluation, emotional feeling attached and action tendency toward some objects or ideas. In relations to the advertising industry, Bauer and Greyser (1968) take the view of attitude towards advertising as the audience behaviour towards the advertising. Audience behaviour towards the advertising can be indicated through consumers' favourable or unfavourable response towards a particular advertisement (MacKenzie and Lutz, 1989). According to Mehta (2000), consumers' attitude towards advertising is one of the influential indicators of advertising effectiveness because consumer's cognitive ability towards the advertising are reflected in their thoughts and feelings and subsequently will influence their attitude towards advertising (Mackenzie and Lutz, 1989).

Based on extant literature, determinants such as hedonic, good for economy, product information, values corruption, materialism and consumer benefits consistently indicate strong relationship with consumers' attitude towards advertising (Yang, 2000; Ramaprasad & Thurwanger, 1998; Pollay & Mittal, 1993; Bauer & Greyser, 1968). Credibility, informative, hedonic/pleasure, and good for economy will be tested in this research. All of these factors are adopted from Ramaprasad and Thurwanger (1998) and Bracket and Carr (2001). Table 2 provides the summary of key determinants of consumers' attitude towards advertising that appeared in the extant literature.

Table 2: Summary of the key determinants of consumers' attitude towards advertising

Author	Key dimensions
Korgaonkar, Silverblan and O'Leary (2001)	Seven factors: product information, social role and image, hedonic/ pleasure, value corruption, falsity/ no sense, good for the economy, materialism.
Barrio and Luque (2003)	Six factors: product knowledge, message involvement, attention, comparative advertising intensity, claim believability, advertisement cognition.
Petrovici and Marinov (2005)	Six factors: general attitude, attitude institution, attitude instrument, product information, social role (integration) / image, hedonic/ pleasure.
Tsang, Ho, and Liang (2004)	Five factors: entertainment, informative, irritation, credibility, relevant demographic variables.
Wang, Zhang, Choi, and D' Eredita (2002)	Six factors: entertainment, informative, irritation, credibility, interactivity, demographic.
Tan and Chia (2007)	Six factors: product, hedonic, social, falsity, good for economy, materialism.
Ashill and Yavas (2005)	Three factors: control, believability, economic.
Zhang and Wang (2005)	Five factors: entertainment, informative, irritation, credibility, interactivity.
Petrovici, Marinova, Marinov, and Lee (2007)	Seven factors: product information, social integration/ image, hedonic/ pleasure, good for economy, promotes undesirable values, alienation/ value incongruence, falsity/ misleading.
Wang, Sun, Lei, and Toncar (2009)	Five factors: entertainment, information, credibility, economy, value corruption.
D'Souza and Taghian (2005)	Five factors: favourable, pleasant, convincing, believable, good.

Source: Developed for this study

2.3 Credibility

Adler and Rodman (2000) define credibility as the believability of the addressor and its perception in the listener's mind. In the context of advertising industry, MacKenzie and Lutz (1989) identify advertising credibility as consumers' general perception towards the truthfulness, reliability, trustworthiness and believability of an advertisement. Credibility of an advertisement is affected by various factors, particularly by the company's credibility and the person who brings a message (Goldsmith, Lafferty and Newell, 2000).

In the extant literature related to attitudinal studies of credibility, research indicates that printed advertisements are always more interesting, believable and useful at all times and also less excessive, bothersome, aggravating and offensive than their broadcast counterparts (Haller, 1974; Somasundaran and Light, 1991). However, Newhagen and Nass (1989) argue that advertisement in television is perceived as much more credible if compared to advertisement that appears in the newspaper (Newhagen & Nass, 1989). Lafferty and Goldsmith (1999) affirm that advertising credibility is a key factor that affects the formation of attitude and behaviour. In addition, other studies have concluded that credibility of the advertising message has positive influence on consumers' attitude towards advertising (Tsang, Ho, and Liang, 2004; Haghirian and Madlberger, 2005; Brackett and Carr, 2001).

2.4 Informative

Advertising plays an important and legitimate role in delivering information (Rotzoll, Haefner and Sandage, 1989). Rubin (2002) states that one of the most vital functions of advertising is to provide information. Wang, Sun, Lei, and Toncar (2009) argue that the information-seeking factor acts as a positive predictor for the formation of consumers' attitude towards online advertising. Besides that, Schlosser, Shavitt and Kanfer (1999) affirm that consumers' attitude towards Internet advertising is influenced by informative and the advertisement's utility for building purchasing behavioural decisions. Thus, information is considered as a very valuable incentive in marketing because recipients react very positively to advertisements that transfer incentives (Varshney, 2003). Informative of the advertising is also strongly associated to the advertising when it is transferred via traditional media vehicles (Ducoffe, 1995). Consequently, media users may think that advertising has the ability to provide information to the audience and hence the basic reason for accepting the advertising itself (Bauer and Greyser, 1968). According to Ducoffe (1995), when advertising information is shifted through the traditional media vehicles, the advertising value is substantially related to the informative of the advertising information. Consumers' always want to have quick access to information that they are looking for their current content of use, and it is possible that the information is automatically delivered to the consumers' (Kaasinen, 2003). Studies such as Ramaprasad and Thurwanger (1998); Haghirian and Madlberger (2005); and Ducoffe (1996), lend support that there is a strong and positive relationship between informative and consumers' attitude towards advertising.

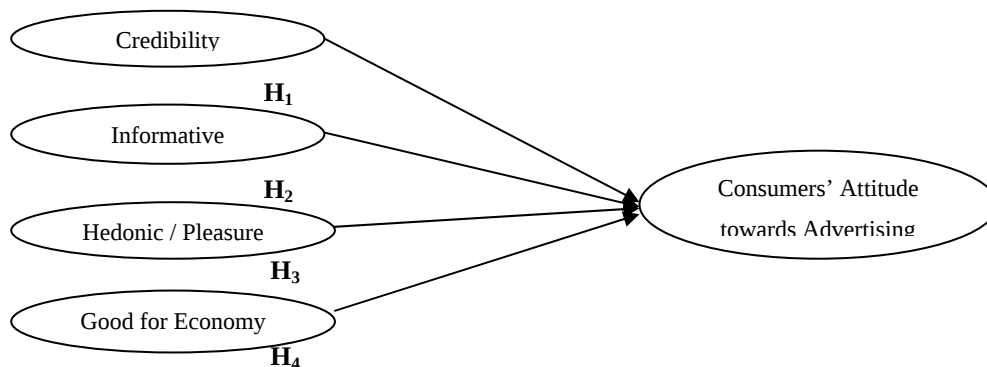
2.5 Hedonic/Pleasure

Bauer and Greyser's (1968) research stipulates that hedonic/pleasure is one of the experiences of advertisements, and the advertisement can touch on consumers' sentiment as well as nice to look at. Advertisement can be considered as a source of pleasure and entertainment (Alwitt and Prabhaker 1992; Pollay and Mittal 1993). Bauer and Greyser (1968) also argue that consumers' responses to the advertisements are provisioned by their hedonic value. Consumers like and prefer to see advertisements that have more entertainment and pleasurable elements, the more the pleasure the better it is (Alwitt and Prabhaker 1992; Pollay and Mittal, 1993). Abd Aziz, Mohd Yasin, and Syed A. Kadir (2008) state that advertisement can be enjoyable and entertaining in attracting and maintaining attention given to customers' needs and wants. Raman and Leekenby (1998) further describe that hedonic can serve as an evaluation of entertainment value of an advertisement while the interest is viewed as an evaluation of curiosity. The research conducted by Bauer and Greyser (1968) indicates that hedonic value of advertisements can command and condition consumers' reaction towards the advertisement. Similarly Alwitt & Prabhaker (1992) and Pollay & Mittal (1993) found that the hedonic factor will create significant favourable attitude towards advertising. In other words, the more positive the belief in Hedonic/ Pleasure is, the more positive is the audience's attitude towards advertising. Therefore, Ramaprasad and Thurwanger (1998), Munusamy and Wong (2007), Pollay and Mittal (1993), Petrovici et al. (2007) argue that hedonic/pleasure is positively related to consumers' attitude towards advertising.

2.6 Good for Economy

Belch and Belch (2008) suggest that the concept of 'good for economy' reflects the point of view that advertising speeds up the adoption of new goods and technologies by consumers', fosters full employment, reduces the average costs of production, elevates producers about healthy competition, and increases the standard of living on average. In addition, an essential view of advertising supporters is that advertising is the lifeblood of business. Thus it gives consumers' information about products and services and supports them to improve customer's standard of living (Belch & Belch, 2008). Galbraith (1967, p.45) states that "advertising and its related arts thus help develop the kind of man (people) the goals of the industrial system require one that reliably spends his income and works reliably because he is always in need of more." Galbraith's argument is supported by Bauer and Greyser (1968). In their study, Bauer and Greyser (1968) found that over 70 percent of their sample believed that advertising increases the standard of living and led to good products.

The economics of information theory as cited in Stigler (1961) and Telser (1964) suggests that advertising can provide information and/ or reduce cost of searching. This argument is also supported by a few prominent researchers (Nelson, 1974; Eskin & Baron, 1977; Chiplin and Sturgess, 1981; Bharawaj, Varadarajan, and Fahy, 1993). Therefore, it may be said that 'good for economy' addresses the concrete economic effects of advertising for consumers' (Munusamy and Wong, 2007). The economic benefit of advertising is the ability of the advertisers to provide accurate and reliable information about their products to the audience (Petrovici et al., 2007). Therefore, Munusamy and Wong (2007), Tan and Chia (2007), Wang et al. (2009) conclude that 'good for economy' is positively related to consumers' attitude towards advertising. In other words, the more positive the credence in 'good for economy', the more positive are customers' attitude towards advertising. Figure 1 illustrates the proposed conceptual framework for this research.



Source: Developed for this study

Fig. 1: Proposed key determinants of consumers' attitude towards advertising

2.7 Hypotheses

A brief examination of the extant literature and the resultant research gaps led to the development of the hypotheses in this research. The five hypotheses are:

H1: Credibility of an advertising message is positively related to consumers' attitude towards advertising.

H2: Informative of an advertising message is positively related to consumers' attitude towards advertising.

H3: Hedonic/ pleasure of an advertising message is positively related to consumers' attitude towards advertising.

H4: Good for Economy of an advertising message is positively related to consumers' attitude towards advertising.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Research Design

Positivist approach was adopted in this research because this approach: (1) allowed the researcher to search for truths of the observation by empirical evidence via the hypothetico-deductive method; and (2) many researches and observations on the consumer attitude towards advertising had been conducted and the extant literature was well developed (Jankowicz, 2005). The collection of primary data approach was used as opposed to secondary data because it is considered that secondary data is unable to serve the objectives of this research.

3.2 Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire is divided into two parts. The first part of the questionnaire elaborates on the independent and dependent variables that would be tested in the survey. The second part of the questionnaire identifies the personal information of the respondents. Questionnaire in the form of scaled-response questions was adopted in the second part because “scaling permits measurement of the intensity of respondents’ answers” (Churchill and Brown, 2004, p.329). The items of the questionnaire were adopted from different sources of the extant literature. The items for the independent variable ‘credibility’ were adopted from Korgaonkar and Wolin (2004) with the original Cronbach alpha value of 0.86. The items for the three independent variables ‘informative’, ‘hedonic/pleasure’, ‘good for economy’ were adopted from Ramaprasad and Thurwanger (1998) with the original Cronbach alpha value of 0.772, 0.759 and 0.658 respectively. Lastly, the items for dependent variable ‘attitude toward advertising’ were adopted from Ramaprasad and Thurwanger (2000) with the original Cronbach alpha value of 0.807. Interval scale was adopted for the measurement scales because the scale allowed “the comparison of the size of the differences among and between members” (Churchill and Brown, 2004, p.324). Likert scale format was applied as the scale was suitable for self-administered survey method (Hair, Bush and Ortinau, 2004). A 5-point Likert scale anchored by “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5) was adopted as the attitude measurement for the independent and dependent variables.

3.3 Sampling and Administration of Survey

The target population in this research covered all the undergraduate students in University ‘A’ and the sampling unit included all the current full-time undergraduate business students. A preliminary pre-screening technique was included in the questionnaire. Students who have shown keen interest in purchasing items by referring to the advertisements in the various media will proceed to the subsequent sections and complete the questionnaire. Convenience-sampling technique was used to select potential respondents.

Self-administered survey method in the form of drop-off surveys technique was adopted to ensure the confidentiality and non-obligation aspects of participating in the survey. The survey was conducted inside the lecture hall and a ‘ballot-box’ was placed at the main exit point where respondents could drop off the questionnaires into the box as they leave the venue. The voluntary nature of the participation was explained verbally as well as indicated on the cover page of the survey questionnaire. Potential participants were invited to complete the anonymous survey questionnaire that would take approximately 15 minutes of the respondent’s time.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

A total of 280 sets of questionnaires were distributed to the potential student respondents and a total of 267 questionnaires were collected. Out of this, 17 sets of the questionnaires were considered unusable because over 25 percent of the questions in Part One of the questionnaire were not answered (Sekaran, 2003). It was

assumed that the respondents were either unwilling to cooperate or not serious with the survey. Therefore, only 263 usable sets of collected questionnaires were used for the data analysis. Thereby, the response rate was 93.9 percent.

4.1 Respondents' Demographic Profile

Based on the survey, the male respondents represented 45.6 percent of the total respondents while female respondents represented 54.4 percent. This is a normal phenomenon because majority of the tertiary students in Malaysia are female. The age distributions of the respondents were: (1) below 20 years old (19.6); (2) between the age of 20-25 years old (71.2 percent); (3) between the age of 26-30 years old (6.7 percent); and lastly (4) above 30 years old (2.5 percent). In terms of the ethnic groups, the majority were Chinese (78.8 percent), followed by Malay (12.8 percent), and Indian (8.4 percent). The respondents were skewed towards Chinese ethnic group because the survey was conducted in University 'A', in which most of the students are Chinese.

4.2 Reliability Test

The reliability of a measure indicates the stability and consistency with which the instrument measures the concept and helps to assess the 'goodness' of a measure (Cavana, Delahaye and Sekaran, 2001). All the constructs were tested for the consistency reliability of the items within the constructs by using Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis. Based on Table 3, the results indicated that the Cronbach's alpha for all the five constructs were well above 0.70 as recommended by Cavana et al. (2001). Cronbach's alpha for the constructs ranged from the lowest of 0.808 (good for economy) to 0.927 (credibility). In conclusion, the results showed that the scores of the Cronbach's alpha for all the constructs exceeded the threshold of 0.70 indicating that the measurement scales of the constructs were stable and consistent.

Table 3: Five Factors Identified by the Principal Components Factor Analysis

Factor's Name	Variable	Factor Loading	Eigen-value	Percentage of Variance Explained	Cronbach's Reliability Coefficients
Credibility	The printed advertisement is credible	0.917	2.330	13.998	0.927
	The printed advertisement is trustworthy	0.911			
	The printed advertisement is believable	0.903			
Informative	Advertising is a valuable source of information about sales	0.834	1.354	12.841	0.839
	Advertising tells me which brands have the features I am looking for	0.854			
	Advertising keeps me up to date about products/services available in the marketplace	0.838			
Hedonic / Pleasure	Sometimes advertisements are even more enjoyable than other media content	0.754	3.206	14.759	0.851
	Sometimes I take pleasure in thinking about what I saw or heard in advertisement	0.830			
	Advertising contains a lot of excitement and surprises	0.796			
	Most of the time advertising contains funny characters and is enjoyable	0.763			

To be continued...

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Factor's Name	Variable	Factor Loading	Eigen-value	Percentage of Variance Explained	Cronbach's Reliability Coefficients
Good for Economy	In general, advertising helps our nation's economy	0.773	1.118	11.943	0.808
	Advertising helps raise our standard of living	0.774			
	People wear branded goods because of advertising	0.744			
Attitude toward Advertising	I consider advertising is useful as it promotes the latest products	0.510	5.319	16.604	0.830
	Through advertising I got to know more innovative ideas	0.609			
	I refer to advertising because it allows me to enjoy the best deal out of the competing products advertised	0.667			
	I support advertising because it is where creativity is highly appreciated	0.722			
	I support advertising because it plays an important part in my buying decision	0.791			
	My general opinion of advertising is favourable	0.805			

KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy = 0.826; $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$); $df = 171$

Cumulative Percentage Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings = 70.145

4.3 Validity Test

According to Hair, Babin, Money and Samouel (2003, p.174), "validity is the extent to which a construct measures what it is supposed to measure". Construct validity was adopted in this research as validity measurement and factor analysis was used to measure this (Cavana et al., 2001). The details of the factor analysis were presented in Table 3.

The results indicated that factor analysis was appropriate because the value of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) was 0.826 (between 0.5 and 1.0) and the statistical test for Bartlett test of sphericity was significant ($p = 0.000$; $d.f. = 171$) for all the correlations within a correlation matrix (at least for some of the constructs). Based on the principal components analysis and VARIMAX procedure in orthogonal rotation, the results showed that the Eigenvalues for all the constructs were greater than 1.0, ranging from the lowest 1.118 (good for economy) to the highest of 5.319 (attitude toward advertising). In terms of convergent validity, factor loadings for all items within a construct were more than 0.50. Discriminant validity indicated that all items were allocated according to the different constructs. Therefore, the items were not overlapping and they supported the respective constructs.

4.4 Regression Analysis

4.4.1 Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis is defined as "a statistical technique which analyzes the linear relationships between a dependent variable and multiple independent variables by estimating coefficients for the equation for a straight line" (Hair et al., 2004, p.578). Multiple regression analysis was carried out to test the hypotheses and the results were presented in Table 4.

The p value of the t-test ($p = 0.000$) for credibility is less than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, credibility of an advertising message is positively related to consumers' attitude towards advertising. According to Haghirian and Madlberger (2005), credibility of an advertising message has positive influence on consumer attitude towards advertising. Thus, the finding supports the extant literature.

Based on the Table 4, the p value of the t-test ($p = 0.000$) for informative is less than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, the study concludes that informative of an advertising message is positively related to consumers' attitude towards advertising. Extant literature suggests that informative of an advertising message positively influence consumers' attitude towards advertising (Ramaprasad and Thurwanger, 2005; Ducoffe, 1996; Haghirian and Madlberger, 2005). Thus, the finding from the current study supports the extant literature.

The p value of the t-test ($p = 0.000$) for hedonic/pleasure is less than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore hedonic/pleasure of an advertising message is positively related to consumers' attitude towards advertising. The extant literature also suggests that hedonic/pleasure of an advertising message affect consumers' attitude towards advertising (Ramaprasad and Thurwanger, 1998; Munusamy and Wong, 2007; Pollay and Mittal, 1993; Petrovici, Marinova, Marinov and Lee, 2007). Thus, the finding supports the extant literature.

Table 4: Result of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis for this Research

a)	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	7.778	1.478		5.262	0.000
	Credibility	0.360	0.059	0.332	6.136	0.000
	Informative	0.417	0.079	0.287	5.282	0.000
	Hedonic/Pleasure	0.260	0.069	0.240	3.780	0.000
	Good for Economy	0.266	0.085	0.198	3.130	0.002

a Dependent Variable: Attitude toward Advertising

Independent variables: credibility, informative, hedonic/pleasure, and good for economy.

R = 56.4 R Square = 31.8 Adjusted R Square = 30.7
F = 28.518 P = 0.000 ($p < 0.05$)

Finally, the study concludes that good for economy of an advertising message is also positively related to consumers' attitude towards advertising. This is based on the result of the p value of the t-test ($p = 0.002$) which is less than the alpha value of 0.05. The extant literature suggests that good for economy of an advertising message positively influence consumers' attitude towards advertising (Munusamy and Wong, 2007; Tan and Chia, 2007; Wang et.al, 2009), which is supported in this study.

The following is the multiple regression equation for the study:

Attitude toward Advertising = 7.778 + 0.417 Informative + 0.360 Credibility + 0.266 Good for Economy + 0.260 Hedonic/Pleasure

The values of un-standardized Beta coefficient among the independent variables ranged from the weakest relationship of 0.260 (between hedonic/pleasure and the consumers' attitude towards advertising) to the strongest relationship of 0.417 (between informative and the consumers' attitude towards advertising). Therefore this suggest that 'informative' is the most important antecedent in affecting consumers' attitude towards advertising. 'Credibility' (0.360) and 'good for economy' (0.266) are ranked the second and third most important of antecedents. Consumers' attitude towards advertising can be explained 31.8 percent by a combination of the various independent variables (r square = 0.318) which includes credibility, informative, hedonic/pleasure, and good for economy.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Implications of the Research

The research findings and contributions brought some implications to various stakeholders. The implications can be divided into two categories: theoretical and managerial implications. In terms of theoretical implication, the current empirical research re-affirms the notion that the determinants of consumers' attitude towards advertising can be applied in a highly regulated media environment in Malaysia. In terms of managerial implication, the findings do provide some insights and feedback for administrators of media industry in drafting various advertising strategies on how to increase the favourable consumers' attitude towards advertising. As part of the efforts to create favourable consumers' attitude, some suggested strategies include: (i) ensuring the sources of advertisement are credible, trustworthy and believable; (2) keeping the advertising message informative, customer oriented and up to date; (3) incorporating the elements of fun, excitement, surprises and pleasure in the advertisement messages, and lastly (4) emphasizing the concept of 'made in Malaysia' to evoke the feeling of partnership in helping the nation grow economically.

5.2 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

Although the research findings provide some new insights, these should be viewed in light of some limitations. The study is based on cross-sectional data that is only capable of revealing the net effect of predictor variable towards a particular criterion variable at a specific point in time (Cavana et al., 2001). Due to the inherent limitation of cross-sectional study, the findings are not able to "explain why the observed patterns are there" (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe, 2003, p.p.45). In other words, this research is not able to describe satisfactorily the observed changes in pattern and the causality of consumers' attitude towards advertising. In addition, the restriction of the boundary set in selecting the undergraduate business students in University 'A' as samples resulted in the findings not generalizable across all private higher education institutions in the country.

Due to the limitations, two recommendations are suggested for further research for the purpose of enhancing the study. Consumers' attitude towards advertising is a form of psychological judgement in which this judgement will change over time. Therefore, cross-sectional study may not be able to portray the observed changes in patterns and the causality of the consumer attitude towards advertising (Easterby-Smith et al., 2003). Longitudinal study, which can capture the temporal dynamics of perception change that affect the determinants of consumers' attitude toward advertising, is proposed to be adopted in the future research in order to help researchers to identify the cause and effect relationships among the various constructs (Cavana et al., 2001). Besides, it is also recommended that future researchers broaden the research setting by incorporating more private higher education institutions and drawing more respondents who are enrolled in various undergraduate degree programmes as this may enhance the validity and generalization of the research findings.

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