THE IMPACT OF ALTRUISM MESSAGES IN GREEN PRODUCT ADVERTISING ON CONSUMER ATTITUDE: A SURVEY TO GEN Z

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Abstract

Companies in Indonesia have started doing green marketing, creating eco-friendly products, and exploding advertising in the media which is ecologically sound marketing. However, ads oriented to moral values (value-oriented) are the least likeable. It has caused consumers to become confused, doubtful, and apathetic about the integrity of green marketing activities. Therefore, communicating the advantages of certain brands for the environment and society is very important in running a good business, mainly if the ad is aimed at generation Z, who adhere to green values and sustainability, where these values can affect their attitude towards a brand. This study aims to provide information about the level of altruism in generation Z, along with measuring their attitudes towards advertisements containing altruistic messages so that companies can design appropriate communication strategies to persuade more consumers and customers to buy environmentally friendly products. The method used is the descriptive-associative method. Data collection techniques will be carried out using a quantitative approach with a survey design and a qualitative approach with a lab experiment design. The survey was used to identify samples with altruistic and non-altruistic characteristics. At the same time, this study used the experimental method to determine the impact of advertising with altruistic and non-altruistic messages on both groups of respondents. This study's determination of the sample uses a non-probability sampling totaling 181 Z generation respondents. Advertisements containing altruism messages, especially those containing environmentally sound messages, can positively impact the attitudes of Z generation respondents with both moderate altruistic and non-altruistic characteristics. However, although some of them like the advertising stimulus message in the altruism category, most do not yet have an interest in buying it.

Keywords

Green Marketing, Green Product, Advertising, Altruism Message

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Introduction

In 2009, AC Nielsen revealed that more than 50% of consumers in Indonesia care about the environment (Honantha, 2012). They care about global warming, water scarcity and water pollution (Honantha, 2012). According to Cho (2012), consumers' awareness of their role in the environment is reflected in their buying behavior that considers environmental issues. According to Frey and Stutzer (2006), it can be caused by the consumers' altruism characteristic. An altruist will consider two dimensions: choices that benefit themselves as individuals and those that benefit others and the environment (Brécard et al., 2009).

Recognizing the existence of green consumers, companies in Indonesia have started to carry out green marketing. They started by creating eco-friendly products using eco-friendly packaging (Graha Kerindo Utama, 2012), carrying out corporate social responsibility relevant to environmental issues such as beach cleaning activities in Bali's main beaches (Prahadi, 2015). They also try to build a brand image associated with addressing environmental issues through advertising. One of them is Danone Aqua which urges consumers to reduce waste by destroying it first (Danone-Aqua, 2011). According to Ottman (2011), communicating initiatives that genuinely have an environmental and social impact will help a brand pioneer the environmentalism trend. However, according to Hellen Katherina, Media Director of Nielson Indonesia, value-oriented advertisements that tell stories about real life, smells of humor, and is family-oriented are the least liked (Wulandari, 2015). Therefore, communicating the environmentally and socially advantages of a particular brand that is likeable is critical in running a good business (Ottman, 2011). Mainly if the ad is aimed at the Z generation, who adhere to green values and sustainability, that can affect their attitude towards a brand (Bart et al., 2014; Ching et al., 2014; Huang et al., 2013; Lu et al., 2014).

Altruism is a cooperative behavior by which the person who acts helpfully increases the other (Le Galliard et al., 2003). According to Adomaviciute et al. (2016), in relation to marketing, "Altruism is considered to be a core variable that moves consumers to support social causes, increasing their intention to be more socially responsible members of society". When altruistic views develop, they will become more socially responsible, and they will have a sense of trust in companies that also have social responsibility (Zhou et al., 2023). Hence, the positive impact of messages conveyed through advertising is essential to research so that the cost used for advertising spending will not be in vain.

Some studies that tie altruism with marketing communication strategy, especially advertising, had been done by several researchers. Previous research on organic food, the altruistic character of a person is a factor that can play an important role in shaping consumer attitudes (Honkanen et al., 2006) and purchase intention (Septianto et al., 2019). The same thing was also stated by Haytko & Matulich (2008) and Krstić et al. (2021), that consumers who have environmental concerns will prefer environmentally sound (green advertising) advertising to advertisements that are not. Septianto et al. (2019) found that altruism is one of the deciding factors on the demand of green product, especially the demand of organic food. Other study conducted by Adomaviciute et al. (2016) found that altruism is one of the factors that can influence and strengthen consumer purchase intention on cause-related product. Next, Honkanen et al. (2006) and Septianto et al. (2019), found that altruism is on of moral factors that influence organic food selection. The higher the level of altruism in consumers, the more positive the impact of altruism

messages advertisement on their attitudes (Haytko & Matulich, 2008; Honkanen et al., 2006; Reimers et al., 2017). Even though some studies on altruism in marketing have been conducted, however, as seen on the Google Scholar search engine result, in which if we put "altruism" or "altruistic" as keywords, the result shown are mostly related to psychology and social, whereas studies that discuss altruism in relation with marketing are still rare. Common study by Ansu-Mensah (2021) which discuss green product awareness as influencing factor to green product purchase intention and Haytko & Matulich (2008) that discuss the relation between environmentally responsible consumers with green advertising, did not explicitly mention altruism.

Therefore, to fill in the gap, this study aims to examine the impact of environmentally sound advertising as part of altruistic advertising on the attitudes of generation Z consumers aged 17-23 years, who are considered more altruistic in terms of environmental concern than generations X or before (Ottman, 2011). The novelty part in this study is the respondents who are Z generation of 17-23 years old (Finn & Donovan, 2013), which are considered to have more awareness and knowledge regarding the environment (Ottman, 2011). It is expected that discussing specifically on consumer characteristic, sustainable companies can formulate marketing communication strategy, especially advertising messages that could empower positive attitude which in the end fostering more Z generation consumers to consume green products.

Methodology

The objective of this study is to illustrate whether Z generation consumers which who have altruistic characteristic and whether advertisements with altruism messages can generate positive impact to their attitude. So, the method used is the descriptive–associative method. Data collection techniques will be carried out with a quantitative approach with a survey design and a qualitative one with a lab experiment design. The survey was used to identify samples with altruistic and non-altruistic characters. At the same time, the experimental design was conducted to determine the impact of advertising with altruistic and non-altruistic messages on the two groups of respondents.

Determination of the sample in this study using a non-probability sampling technique with a purposive - quota sampling method where the respondents are aged 17-23 years who are included in the generation category. Calculating the number of samples will use the rule of thumb for research with an experimental design from Sekaran & Bougie (2016) where the number of samples is in the range of 10 (ten) respondents.

In this study, it is targeted that each controlled experimental group (matching group) will consist of 10 respondents so that the total number of respondents will be 20 people. The first group consists of respondents with altruistic characteristics, and the second group consists of non-altruistic respondents. The experiment was carried out once with two treatments by providing a different stimulus.

Experiments were carried out on each group of respondents with altruistic characteristics and those who do not have altruistic characteristics by providing two stimuli in the form of advertisements that do not contain or contain messages of altruism. The stimulus consisting of 5 pairs representing several product categories, namely advertising messages for washing machines, shoes, shampoo, television, and coffee. This is done to measure the consistency of respondents' answers so that conclusions can be drawn in the end.

Each stimulus is given as an advertisement image and a message shown simultaneously on the focus screen. Respondents were allowed to see each stimulus for 30 seconds. Then the

respondent is required to answer open-ended questions regarding each stimulus. The experimental results will be analyzed using Solomon's four-group design analysis with two experimental groups and two control groups. The experimental group consists of respondents with altruistic and no altruistic characteristics who are given advertising treatment with and without messages of altruism.

Figure 1. Stimulus A and B

Respondents were given two statements per stimulus to confirm that each stimulus, including advertisements, was perceived to have altruistic and non-altruistic messages. The first indicator assesses whether the advertisement message contains an appeal to concern for the environment. The second is whether the advertisement contains a message that contains an inducement to participate in environmental sustainability (Taflinger, 1996).

Meanwhile, to measure the altruistic character of respondents, the researcher refers to the measurement of altruism by (Rushton et al., 1981) which has been tested for validity and reliability. In this measurement, respondents were given six statements relating to demographic data and 14 statements relating to acts of altruism and asked to answer "never", "never once", "more than once", "often" and "very often." The results of the questionnaire measured, descriptively. The measuring scale in the survey uses a Likert scale consisting of 5 (five) interval scales, 1 (one), represents strongly disagree and 5 (five) represents strongly agree and number in between represents do not agree, neutral, and agree. The categories of the assessment scores for the level of respondents' altruism characteristics are as follows:

Table 1.
Guidelines for Categorization of Respondents' Altruism Character Assessment Score Index

Interval	General Category
0 – 25	Non altruistic
26 – 49	Non-altruistic who have altruistic tendencies
50 – 75	Medium category altruistic
76 – 100	Altruistic

In analyzing respondents' attitudes, in addition to giving 5 (five) pairs of stimuli, each coded A and B to the experimental group and control group, each respondent from the two groups was given closed and open questions regarding their attitude towards each given stimulus. Following in Table 2 are the questions given.

Table 2.
Questions of Respondents' Attitudes to Advertising

No	Questions
1	Between the two ads you saw, which one did you like? A or B
2	If scaled, how much did you like the ad you selected? (1) Low/ Low (2) Medium/ Medium (3) High/ High
3	Why did you choose this ad?
4	Which part of your ad of your choice did you like?
5	Will the content of the advertising message be able to make you buy the product in the future? A or B?
6	Why?

Results and Discussion

This research was carried out in stages, starting from the selection of invitations to the implementation of experiments. Because it is done online, survey results can be easily traced. After surveying to find respondents who were altruist and non-altruist, the researcher then conducted experiments on 10 (ten) altruist respondents and 10 (ten), non-altruist respondents by providing 5 (five) pairs of stimuli, and respondents were asked to choose what they liked.

The experiment was carried out in Classroom No. 5 at the Faculty of Psychology, University of Jenderal Achmad Yani (Unjani) on December 27, 2018 at 09.00 – 11.00. The implementation was guided by researchers. These are some photos of the experimental process.

Figure 2. Laboratory Experiment Participants

Figure 3. Researchers Guide the Process of Laboratory Experiments

Results

From the online questionnaire results for approximately two weeks, 182 respondents filled out the questionnaire. Based on the test results of respondents who met the criteria as respondents who were altruistic, only 1% had an index score of 76. In comparison, 44% were altruistic in the medium category with an index score of 50–75, 48% were non-altruistic and tended to be altruistic with an index score of 26.8–48.2, and 7% were not included in the altruistic category with an index score of 14.3–25. The analysis results are based on the guidelines for categorizing the respondent's altruism character assessment index score (Table 2). Based on the analysis of the altruistic character of the respondents, the researcher invited the 10 (ten) respondents who got the highest index score, consisting of respondents with an index score of 71.4–76.8, with the category of respondents having moderate to high altruistic characteristics. As for the control members, the researcher invited 10 (ten) respondents who got the lowest index score, with an index score of 14.3–23.2, with the category of respondents with non-altruism characteristics. However, of the 10 (ten) respondents with the highest score, only 4 (four) people were able to fulfill the researcher's invitation to conduct experiments, so respondents with a score of 53.7 who were included in the altruistic category were also invited to become members of the experimental group so that members of the experimental group remained—totaling 10 (ten) people. Similarly, of the 10 (ten) respondents, only 5 (five) people could fulfill the researcher's invitation, so respondents with an index score of 14.28, which included respondents with characteristics that tended to altruism, were invited, and became members of the control group. The following is a detailed profile of respondents from the experimental group.

Table 3.
Experimental Group Respondent Profile

Respondent	Year of Birth	Index Score	Character Category
A1	1996	71.4	Medium category altruistic
A2	1997	71.4	Medium category altruistic
A3	2000	71.4	Medium category altruistic
A4	1999	71.4	Medium category altruistic
A5	2000	66.1	Medium category altruistic
A6	1999	66.1	Medium category altruistic
A7	1996	64.3	Medium category altruistic
A8	1996	62.5	Medium category altruistic
A9	1995	62.3	Medium category altruistic
A10	1998	53.6	Medium category altruistic

**Remarks: A1 – A10 = Respondents in the altruist category

Table 4.
Control Group Respondent Profile

Respondent	Year of Birth	Index Score	Character Category
NA1	1998	14.3	Non altruistic
NA2	1998	19.6	Non altruistic
NA3	1997	23.2	Non altruistic

Respondent	Year of Birth	Index Score	Character Category
NA4	1998	25	Non altruistic
NA5	1997	25	Non-altruistic who have altruistic tendencies
NA6	1996	26.8	Non-altruistic who have altruistic tendencies
NA7	1998	26.8	Non-altruistic who have altruistic tendencies
NA8	1997	28.6	Non-altruistic who have altruistic tendencies
NA9	1998	28.6	Non-altruistic who have altruistic tendencies
NA10	1998	30.35	Non-altruistic who have altruistic tendencies

Of the 10 (ten) respondents who are altruistic (A), 90% like the advertising stimulus that has an altruism message with the theme of caring for the environment. For washing machine products, out of 10 (ten) respondents A, 8 respondents liked the advertising stimulus containing the message of altruism with an average level of liking for the medium/medium category (2.2) and nine respondents stated that the content of the stimulus message made them have an interest in buying. Furthermore, for shoes, shampoo, and television (TV) products, each of nine respondents A liked the advertising stimulus containing the message of altruism with a level of liking for the medium (2.3) category and the medium tended to be high (2.6).

From each of these stimuli, the message content in the shoe product stimulus made nine respondents A interested in buying, and the message content in the shampoo product stimulus made eight respondents A interested in buying. The message content in the TV product stimulus made all the respondents A want to buy the product. As for coffee products, all respondents A liked the advertisement stimulus containing the message of altruism, with the level of liking medium/medium tending to be high (2.5) and making seven respondents A interested in buying them. All respondents A likes and makes them have an interest in buying these products due to the content of the message that contains a message that invites to preserve the environment.

Of the ten respondents with non-altruistic (NA) characteristics, 56% like the content of the stimulus message that does not contain the message of altruism, and the other 44% like the content of the message that contains the message of altruism with the theme of caring for the environment. In the washing machine product stimulus, four NA respondents liked the stimulus with the message content in the non-altruism category, and six NA respondents liked the stimulus with the altruism category message content with a medium level of liking (2). In contrast to the washing machine product, in the shoe product stimulus, four NA respondents liked the content of the non-altruism category stimulus message, while six of them liked the altruism category stimulus message content, with medium levels tending to be high (2,5).

For shampoo products, a balanced choice was found where five NA respondents liked the content of the stimulus message in the non-altruism category, and five other respondents liked the content of the stimulus message in the altruism category, with a level of liking for the medium/medium category (2). Furthermore, for television products, seven NA respondents liked the content of the stimulus message in the non-altruism category, with a liking level for the medium category, and three NA respondents liked the content of the stimulus message in the altruism

category. For the content of the stimulus message on coffee products, six NA respondents liked the content of the stimulus message in the non-altruism category, with a level of liking for the medium category. In contrast, the other four liked the content of the stimulus message in the altruism category with the theme of caring for the environment.

Discussion

Advertisements containing messages of altruism, especially those containing environmentally sound messages, can positively impact the attitudes of generation Z consumers aged 17-23 years. This is indicated by the liking of the advertising stimulus consisting of washing machines, shoes, shampoo, TV, and coffee categories, not only by almost all respondents with moderate altruistic characters but also by respondents with non-altruistic characters.

Based on the results of the study, companies that produce green products can communicate their advantages using message content or advertising tag lines that contain messages of altruism, especially those containing an urge to care for the environment and participate in preserving the environment if the product is intended for the Generation Z age 17 – 23 years who have an altruistic character.

However, generation Z respondents aged 17 – 23 years who have non-altruistic characters can also be potential market targets for green products based on research results which show that these respondents like the content of advertising stimulus messages that contain messages of altruism or environmental insight. In addition, if the respondent is targeted for buying behavior, advertising as a means of communicating product advantages should not only focus on the advantages of environmentally friendly products, but on other advantages that can further encourage buying behavior.

To form consumer awareness for generation Z aged 17 – 23 years through consciously consumption patterns, product advertising messages that are environmentally sound should not only call for caring for the environment but also encourage consumer participation in preserving the environment in addition to communicating other advantages.

According to the results, this study supports the previous studies that found consumer attitudes will be shown by liking as a response to marketing communications, in this study especially advertising. In addition, this study also found that altruistic character of a person is a factor that can play an important role in shaping consumer attitudes towards green products (Frey & Stutzer, 2006; Haytko & Matulich, 2008; Honkanen et al., 2006). However, through lab experiment method, this study also found that not only altruism that influence the purchase of intention, but also egoism or in this study called non-altruist (Kareklas et al., 2014).

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