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THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ADVERTISEMENT BY PETRONAS ON CONSERVATION OF MALAYSIAN CULTURE

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Abstract

The semiotic elements which exist from the social culture create different ways of thinking among races. This research aimed to analyze the extent of message of community service advertisement able to be delivered through advertisements by PETRONAS across the semiotics of races; and its effectiveness in preserving the cultures in Malaysia. Eight community service advertisements of PETRONAS in four categories were used in this study. Two adverts with the theme of Chinese culture, two with Indian culture, two with Malay culture and two universal advertisements. The study conducted was based on factorial design 4 x 3 (four categories of community service advertisements and three categories of races) and data analyzed were based on scores from cognitive response, effective response, understanding, thinking, productive, reflective thinking and self-engagement by race. The number of samples will be able to accommodate the design requirements 4 x 3 as each group watches all the selected community service advertisements by PETRONAS.

Keywords: Semiotics, Community Service Commercials, Affective responses, Cognitive responses, a clash of cultures

1. Introduction

The assimilation concept in Malaysia is very different from the concept as practiced in other countries where ethnic identity is removed and replaced with a common national identity. There are various programs undertaken by government and non-governmental organizations to enhance national unity. An advertisement on the Public Service Announcement (PSA) PETRONAS is one example of such program. PETRONAS PSA advertisements convey the message to trigger universal emotions, nostalgia, friendships, and bonds of affection, sacrifice, and educating to be independent through nurturing love. The study questions developed are; a) whether there are significant differences in the response of Cognitive and Affective response in categories of race and community service advertisements and, b) whether there are significant differences in the response of Cognitive and Affective response, Understanding, Productive Thinking, Reflective Thinking and Self-engagement.

2. The Study Hypothesis

Study hypotheses to answer the research questions are:

- H₀₁: There is no significant difference between; a) Cognitive response and, b) Affective responses by race.
- H₀₂: There is no significant difference between; a) Understanding, b) Productive Thinking, c) Reflective Thinking and, d) Self-engagement by race.
- H₀₃: There is no significant difference in Affective responses by category of PSA for; a) Malays, b) Chinese c) Indians and d) Universal according to race.

3. Research Methodology

This study was conducted using the factorial design 4 x 3 (four categories and three categories of race PSA) and the data were also analyzed based on scores from Cognitive response, Affective response, Understanding, Productive Thinking, Reflective Thinking and Self-engagement by gender and race. The sample consists of 90 students from three races of the Malay, Chinese and Indian; with each race comprising of 30 students aged

between 21 to 31 years. Independent variables are the contents of the race-themed stories contained within PSA advertisements. PSA (Public Service Announcement, consists of two Chinese advertisements, two Indians, two advertisements of the Malays, and two universal advertisements. The dependent variable is the response after watching all 8 advertisements, the response of Cognitive, Affective responses, Understanding, Productive Thinking, Reflective Thinking and Self-engagement by definition Belenky et al (1986). Moderator variable is the race. The findings were analyzed using ANOVA. An instrument that was developed is based on the analysis of Bloom's Cognitive Taxonomy (1956) and the Affective Taxonomy (1956)

An instrument developed using a Likert scale in which respondents were given five choices of answers such as:
1 = Strongly disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Uncertain
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly agree

Based on pilot studies conducted, the reliability of the resulting instrument is 0.987; data were analyzed using SPSS for statistical analysis.

4. Findings

4.1 Hypothesis testing Nol 1

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in a) Cognitive response and b) Affective responses by race

Table 1 gives the mean values, the standard deviation and test results of the ANOVA and Tukey; for Cognitive and Affective responses by race. P values for the response of Cognitive and Affective response is smaller than 0.05, as such the hypothesis H01a and H01b are rejected. Tukey tests showed that the significant differences in Cognitive and Affective response are between Malays and Chinese respondents (p = 0007 for Cognitive response and p = 0.004 for Affective responses) while for Indian and Chinese (p = 0013 in Cognitive response, and p = 0002 for Affective responses). There are no significant differences between the Malays and Indians for both of these responses. This finding indicates that the Chinese respondents did not give a high Cognitive and Affective response in comparison to the Malay and Indian respondents.

Table 1: Mean, Standard Deviation and test results of the ANOVA and Tukey for Cognitive and Affective responses by race.

| | | Mean | Standard Deviation | N | ANOVA tests | Tukey tests |
|-----------|---------|--------|--------------------|----|-------------------------------|---|
| Cognitive | Malay | 260.93 | 22.18 | 30 | F (2,87) = 6.063 P = 0.003 | Malay= Indian Malay > Chinese (p = 0.007) Indian > Chinese (p = 0.013) |
| | Chinese | 239.00 | 33.97 | 30 | | |
| | Indian | 259.53 | 24.32 | 30 | | |
| Affective | Malay | 268.23 | 21.22 | 30 | F (2,87) = 7.081 P = 0.001 | Malay = Indian Malay > Chinese (p = 0.004) Indian > Chinese (p = 0.002) |
| | Chinese | 243.60 | 36.41 | 30 | | |
| | Indian | 270.23 | 27.60 | 30 | | |

4.2 Testing Hypothesis Nol 2

H₀₂: There were no significant differences on a) Understanding, b) Productive Thinking, c) Reflective Thinking and d) Self-engagement by race.

Table 2 gives the values of Mean, Standard Deviation and test results of the ANOVA and Tukey for; a) Understanding, b) Productive Thinking, c) Reflective Thinking and d) Self-engagement by race. P values for; a) Understanding, b) Productive Thinking, c) Reflective Thinking and d) Self-engagement by race are smaller than

0.05, therefore the hypothesis H_{02a} , H_{02b} , H_{02c} and H_{02d} are rejected. Tukey tests illustrate that; a) there are significant differences between respondents' understanding of Indian and Chinese ($p = 0.018$) while there were no significant differences between the Malays and Chinese and Malays and Indians; b) there are significant differences for Self-engagement between the Malays and Chinese respondents ($p = 0.003$) and Indian and Chinese ($p = 0.001$) while there were no significant differences between Malays and Indians; c) there were significant differences for Self-engagement between the Malays and Chinese respondents ($p = 0.013$) and Indian and Chinese ($p = 0.005$) while there were no significant differences between the Malays and Indians, and d) there were significant differences for Self-engagement between the Malays and Chinese respondents ($p = 0.002$) and Indian and Chinese ($p = 0.017$) while there were no significant differences between the Malay and Indian. This finding indicates that except for the dimensions of understanding, the Chinese respondents have not responded as prominent as the Malay and Indian respondents pertaining to Productive Thinking, Reflective Thinking and Self-engagement.

Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation and test results of the ANOVA and Tukey for; a) Understanding, b) Productive Thinking c) Reflective Thinking d) Self-engagement by race

| | | Mean | Standard Deviation | N | ANOVA tests | Tukey tests |
|---------------|---------|--------|--------------------|----|-------------------------------|--|
| Understanding | Malay | 66.96 | 5.37 | 30 | F (2,87) = 4.347 P = 0.016 | Malay = Indian, Malay = Chinese Indian > Chinese ($p = 0.018$) |
| | Chinese | 63.13 | 7.71 | 30 | | |
| | Indian | 67.90 | 6.60 | 30 | | |
| Engagement | Malay | 65.10 | 6.35 | 30 | F (2,87) = 9.656 P = 0.001 | Malay = Indian Malay > Chinese ($p = 0.003$) Indian > Chinese ($p = 0.0001$) |
| | Chinese | 57.96 | 10.21 | 30 | | |
| | Indian | 66.53 | 7.17 | 30 | | |
| Productive | Malay | 163.60 | 13.67 | 30 | F (2,87) = 6.345 P = 0.003 | Malay = Indian Malay > Chinese ($p = 0.013$) Indian > Chinese ($p = 0.005$) |
| | Chinese | 150.06 | 22.74 | 30 | | |
| | Indian | 165.13 | 16.45 | 30 | | |
| Reflective | Malay | 163.96 | 15.12 | 30 | F (2,87) = 6.738 P = 0.002 | Malay = Indian Malay > Chinese ($p = 0.002$) Indian > Chinese ($p = 0.017$) |
| | Chinese | 146.66 | 23.64 | 30 | | |
| | Indian | 160.70 | 18.45 | 30 | | |

4.3 Hypothesis Testing Nol 3

H_{03} : There were no significant differences by category of Affective responses PSA for; a) Malays, b) Chinese c) Indian and; d) Universal by race

Table 3 gives the values of Mean, Standard Deviation and test results of the ANOVA and Tukey Affective responses by category of PSA by race. P values for a) PSA Malay, c) PSA Indian, and d) PSA Universal by race are smaller than 0.05; as such the hypotheses H_{03a} , H_{03c} and H_{03d} are rejected. However, the value of p for Chinese PSA is greater than 0.05 therefore; H_{03b} is accepted. Tukey tests show that; a) for PSA Malay, there are significant differences for cognitive responses between Malays and Chinese respondents ($p = 0.006$), and Indian and Chinese respondents ($p = 0.029$) while there were no significant differences between the Malays and Indians; c) there are significant differences for PSA Indians between Malays and Chinese respondents ($p = 0.004$) and Indian and Chinese ($p = 0.001$) while there was no significant difference between the Malays and Indians, and d) there are significant differences for PSA Universal between Malays and Chinese respondents ($p = 0.001$) and Indian and Chinese ($p = 0.001$) while there were no significant differences between the Malays and Indians. This finding indicates that except for the PSA Chinese, Chinese respondents have not responded as

higher in Affective response than the Malay and Indian respondents for PSA Malay, PSA Indian and PSA Universal.

Table 3: Mean, Standard Deviation and test results of the ANOVA and Tukey for Affective responses by category of PSA by race

| | | Standard | | N | ANOVA tests | Tukey tests |
|-------------------------|---------|----------|-----------|----|--------------------------------|---|
| | | Mean | Deviation | | | |
| Affective PSA Malay | Malay | 68.80 | 5.22 | 30 | F (2,87) = 5.650 P = 0.005 | Malay > Chinese (p = 0.006) Malay = Indian Indian > Chinese (p = 0.029) |
| | Chinese | 60.70 | 13.39 | 30 | | |
| | Indian | 67.40 | 9.57 | 30 | | |
| Affective PSA Chinese | Malay | 67.36 | 7.19 | 30 | F (2,87) = 0.019 P = 0.981 | No significant differences |
| | Chinese | 66.96 | 8.61 | 30 | | |
| | Indian | 67.10 | 8.23 | 30 | | |
| Affective PSA Indian | Malay | 63.60 | 8.32 | 30 | F (2,87) = 12.376 P = 0.001 | Malay = Indian Malay > Chinese (p = 0.004) Indian > Chinese (p = 0.001) |
| | Chinese | 55.20 | 12.47 | 30 | | |
| | Indian | 67.73 | 8.46 | 30 | | |
| Affective PSA Universal | Malay | 68.46 | 4.68 | 30 | F (2,87) = 10.957 P = 0.001 | Malay = Indian Malay > Chinese (p = 0.001) Indian > Chinese (p = 0.001) |
| | Chinese | 60.73 | 9.35 | 30 | | |
| | Indian | 68.00 | 6.71 | 30 | | |

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Malay and Indian respondents significantly reported the same high performance and difference compared with the performance of Chinese respondents pertaining to responses for Cognitive and Affective and Productive Thinking; Reflective Thinking and Self-engagement. Chinese respondents gave Cognitive and Affective response equivalent to the Malay and Indian respondents only on the dimensions of understanding. Thus, this shows that the Chinese respondents understand the meaning conveyed but cannot execute in the context of their different culture and philosophy, epistemology, and way of thinking; inclusive application value. This finding is consistent with the existence of differences in the standpoint of ethical decision making. According to Petty, Baker, & Gleicher (1991), despite having the same problem, we will make decisions that differ from one another. They added the difference in attitude and behaviors are factors which lead to different interpretation of PSA results even though viewed the same. Based on the study of Grube (1993), beliefs and current knowledge and attitudes do influence the perception of the viewer to a message. While according to Spencer & Markstrom-Adams (1990), the formation of identity is the key to the direction and purpose in life besides an impact on the capability and performance of a person. This study was supported by Camino (1992) who stated that ethnic identity influences the way people see and understand things, and also influence the mode of response to the environment. This study shows that the semiotic differences between races still exist and therefore the messages contained in this PSA are not always accepted or understood from the same or similar perspectives.

Malay and Indian respondents reported the same high performance and significantly different compared to their Chinese respondent for Cognitive and Affective response for the PSA Malay, PSA Indian and PSA Universal. Chinese respondent for Cognitive and Affective response is equivalent to the Malay and Indian respondents only in PSA Chinese. This shows that the Chinese respondents are selective with PSA displayed and only participate when it actually touched the culture and context of their stories. The differentiating factor in their semiotic makes it difficult to share the culture of Indian and Malay respondents and difficult for them to accept the semiotic and cultural of Malay and Indian respondents, in tandem with the view of Boesch (2002) who reported that culture is an individual's right which is difficult to change.

This contrasts with the Malay and Indian respondents, who respectively can share many similar elements of culture and semiotics. Among the factors that influenced a culture and semiotic are the philosophy of life, a way of thinking and epistemology as practiced by any race. For the Chinese, they are taught from an early age with a firm culture, logic and high discipline, while the Indian and the Malay culture are taught by a gentle, full of love and to have empathy for the elderly. For example, Chinese respondents reported that the advertisements in No Charge and Inside the Ward is understandable but contained unacceptable values, because the value and semiotics in both the PSA are different from the values that are practiced by them. This shows that the semiotic and values of the Malay and Indian contain many similarities while the semiotic while the values of the Chinese are still reserved.

Shweder (1990) stated that culture is considered as internal and external processes or an interaction for an individual and the social world; hence this statement reinforces why there are discrepancies between the values among races. Lack of cross-exposure between cultures thus preserved the Semiotic race in its original form, including the threat of a culture of mistrust and stereotypes (Cohen, 1999 & Ogbu, 1990). According to Caliber Associates (2003) the integrity among races can change and is influenced by five factors such as; family factors, attitudes, mentoring, communications, programs and community or; community factors. Demographic characteristics, attitudes, culture and the perception may have an impact on racial adaptation.

Besides being opened inclusive resemblance in attitudes, the interaction styles also affect the quality of relationship among same race or different races. According to Caliber Associates (2003) the attitude of an ethnic and the cultural identity gives an impact in a relationship; and is difficult to determine whether there are discriminations against young people and ethnic groups. Caliber Associates (2003) reported that shared interest among races help to develop good relations among races of different racial backgrounds. In addition, the sharing of socioeconomic status, experience, aim of relationships, geographical distance and duration of relations also affect the integrity among races. Among other factors that affect the integrity of the races are the environments or the conducted activities. Environmental orientation programs include cultural programs, the demographic characteristics of program staff, the support given during the match, the approach and; customization of training programs will give adverse reactions among mentors, participants and family members of the same race and different races. Community characteristics also possess an influenced, which influenced the opinions and culture of mentors and participants. Factors such as population demographics, cultural or racial skepticism, social capital and the structure of opportunities available to the youths can also change the races interest of appropriate practices in the program given.

6. Limitation of Studies and Proposal for Further Research

The study found that the Malay and Indian respondents are equal in appreciation and involvement of Cognitive and Affective for all categories of PSA. Chinese respondents indicated that they understood the messages and values that are communicated but did not participate in the appreciation value of Cognitive and Affective values. Chinese respondents are selective for the PSA to be publicized and only involved as and when the PSA aired really impinge their culture and perspective of their lives. Semiotics change of races does not simply occur. It is proposed that the appropriate bodies need to create intensive programs to increase cross- exposure among races, such as a dynamic program for all ages, sports, culture, education, and entertainment; that involve various races in Malaysia.

This conclusion is limited to university students with a level of maturity as well as higher education and a broad exposure to different cultures, whether through movies or life experience. The study also was limited to respondents' age because; according to Perry (1970) as a person gets older they became flexible in their stand.

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