

# WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THEY LAUGH: HOW HUMOROUS ADVERTISEMENTS HAVE AN EFFECT ON CONSUMERS' ATTITUDES, WORD OF MOUTH INTENTIONS, AND PURCHASE INTENTIONS, WITH THE NEED FOR HUMOR PLAYING A MODERATING ROLE

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Even though there is a risk from using humor as an advertising campaign strategy in industries which rely on trust and their technological prowess, like the telecommunications sector, the fact that there are a great number of humorous advertisements arranged by telecommunications companies in Indonesia needs to be researched. **Background Problems:** This research aims to narrow the phenomenon by investigating the effect of humorous advertisements with the need for humor as a moderating role on consumers' attitudes, consumers' intent to purchase, and their word of mouth intention. **Novelty:** By adding the need for humor in a moderating role, and the word of mouth intention as an endogenous variable, this research aims to extend the existing models of humorous advertising's effectiveness. **Research Methods:** The research was designed to focus on consumers who can be classified as young adults (18 to 34 years old) and are not users of the mobile SIM card brands that the ad they perceived as funny ones. The researcher conducted a survey with a five point Likert scale, an online questionnaire, and purposive sampling as the primary data collection methods. **Finding/Results:** The result shows that although a humorous advertisement has a significant impact on the attitude toward the advertisement and the word of mouth intention, the humorous advertisement has no significant impact on the attitude toward the brand and the consumers' intent to purchase. The need for humor failed to moderate the relationship between the humorous advertisement and the attitude toward the advertisement in this study. **Conclusion:** The researcher concludes that the impact of a humorous advertisement was limited to only entertaining the consumers, and to encourage their word of mouth intention, not their purchase intention.

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## INTRODUCTION

Advertising is considered to be the most persuasive tool in marketing's history. Designing an effective advertisement is not an easy job. A good advertisement should be able to attract people's attention and bring a good sense (joyful and comfortable feeling) to the targeted buyers at the same time. One type of advertisement that is commonly used by advertisers includes humor. According to Madden and Weinberger (1984), Weinberger *et al.* (1995), Cafanescu and Tom (2001), Clow and Baack (2002), Olsson and Larsson (2005), Beard (2005), Wang *et al.* (2014), Lee (2014), Chang and Chang (2014), Ventakesh and Senthilkumar (2015), the use of humor in advertising is about 10-30% of the advertisement population. Humor had been widely used in commercials because it is an effective tool to attract the consumers' attention, it enhances the likeability of the advert and brand, it creates emotional bonds with the consumer, increases the brand's awareness and popularity, enhances its comprehension, leads the brand's recall, and generates more sales. Phelps *et al.* (2004), Lance and Guy (2006), Moldovan and Lehmann (2010) also added that the more creative (engaging and entertaining) the advertising is perceived to be by the consumer, the more the advertising may be discussed (word of mouth), improving the chance of it going viral.

Even though more than a fourth of all commercial advertisements worldwide use humor, there is also a risk of using humor in advertising. Humor can blur the message and harm the brand (Beard, 2006:154 and Mehra, 2009:31). People who view the advertisement may become too focused on the humor so they take little notice of anything else (humor can distract people from the embedded message or brand). More than that, the use of humor in an advertisement can be ineffective when the product that is advertised

relies on trust or technology (Dong-Hun, 2009). Therefore, humorous advertisements should be limited to low involvement and low risk product types (Spotts *et al.*, 1997; Djambaska *et al.*, 2016).

While previous research has only focused on how effectively humorous advertising impacts on source credibility, comprehension, persuasion, attention (Weinberger & Gullas, 1992), recall (Cantor & Venus, 2009), the consumers' attitude toward the brand and the advert's attitude (Zhang & Zinkhan, 2006), and purchase and repurchase (Verma, 2009); this study proposes to investigate the effect of humorous advertising with the need for humor as a moderating role on the consumers' attitudes, and its impact on consumers' intent to purchase and word of mouth intention. By adding the need for humor in a moderating role and word of mouth intention as an endogenous variable, this research aims to extend the existing models of humorous advertising's effectiveness. The researcher chose advertisements for the mobile SIM card (Axis, XL, and As) as the object of this research, because the communications industry has spent over four trillion rupiah on advertising (Pradana, 2013) and the consistency of the brand (Axis, XL, and As) using humor appeal in their advertising campaigns.

According to Spotts *et al.* (1997), and Djambaska *et al.* (2016), humor is less suited to high involvement and high risk products. Dong-Hun (2009) also added that humor is not a very strong advertising strategy in industries which rely on trust and technological prowess like the finance, telecommunications, and electronics sectors. Therefore, the fact that there are a great number of humorous advertisements, arranged by telecommunication companies, needs to be researched. This research also will cover this research-practice gap.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. Humorous Advertisements

Marketers often use humor in their advertising strategy. The use of humor in adverts will be more effective in promoting low involvement and low risk products (sense of feeling), where the humor can enhance the selling message in a meaningful way (Spotts *et al.*, 1997; Schiffman *et al.*, 2010:291; Kellaris and Cline, 2007; Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2013:403; Djambaska *et al.*, 2016). Humor needs to be relevant to the product/brand, so the consumer can relate to the embedded message more easily. The relevance between humor and the type of message can be classified into two categories: humor dominant and message dominant. In a humor dominant advertisement, the use of humor is superordinate than the message. Meanwhile, in the dominant message advertisement, the use of humor is subordinate to the message. Spotts *et al.* (1997) suggested that advertisers of low involvement and low risk products should reconsider their decision to use humor in their adverts. For high involvement-high risk products, the humor should be focused on the message's dominance rather than the humor's dominance.

The use of humor is popular, and considered to be an effective advertisement style to attract the consumers' attention. Many advertisers use humor in their advertising strategies, as humor can enhance people's enjoyment of the advert, which in turn has a positive effect on their attitude to the brand. The more positive the consumers' attitude is toward the brand, the higher the possibility of their purchase intention will be (Weinberger and Gullas, 1992; Schiffman *et al.*, 2010:292; Shimp, 2010:259; Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2013:403).

H<sub>1</sub>: Humorous adverts have a positive effect on people's attitudes toward advertising.

### 2. Need for Humor

Galloway (2010), Schiffman *et al.* (2010:292), Shimp (2010:260), Piccard and Blanc (2013) have all defined the need for humor as an individual's need or tendency to produce, seek out, enjoy, process, engage, and entertain by employing their wit and amusing or nonsensical (humorous) stimuli. Research by Cline *et al.*, (2013) concluded that the impact of a humorous advertisement on a person's attitude toward the advertisement could be moderated by the need for humor. Individuals with a higher need for humor responded to humorous stimuli more positively than individuals with less need for humor (Crawford and Gregory, 2011; Piccard and Blanc, 2013; Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2013:403).

H<sub>2</sub>: Humorous adverts that are moderated by the need for humor have a positive effect on people's attitudes toward advertisements.

### 3. Attitude toward Advertisements and Brands

People's attitudes towards advertisements have been defined as their predisposition (feelings and judgments) toward their exposure to advertising (Schiffman *et al.*, 2010:241; Sallam and Algammash, 2016); while their attitude towards the brand is defined as the consumers' overall evaluation of the attributes of the brand/product, and their belief in it (Schiffman *et al.*, 2010:238; Ghorban, 2012). Previous research found that there is a positive and significant relationship between the attitude toward advertising and the attitude toward the brand (Gardner, 1985; Gresham and Shimp, 1985; Mackenzie *et al.*, 1986, Zhang & Zinkhan, 2006; Ghorban, 2012; Sallam and Algammash; 2016)

H<sub>3</sub>: Attitude toward the advert has a positive effect on the attitude toward the brand.

#### 4. Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is the plan to purchase, or the likelihood of doing so, a particular brand or product in the future (Schiffman *et al.*, 2010:241). Purchase intention is formed through the interaction between the attitude toward the advertising and the attitude toward the brand. The attitude toward the advertising influences the attitude toward the brand both directly and indirectly. The more positive the consumer's attitude is toward the advertising, the higher is the possibility of the brand/product being perceived positively by the consumers. Thus, the more positively the brand/product is perceived by the consumers, the higher is the possibility of the consumers purchasing the brand/product being advertised (Gardner, 1985; Gresham and Shimp, 1985; Mackenzie *et al.*, 1986; Ghorban, 2012; Mirabi *et al.*, 2015).

H<sub>4</sub>: Attitude toward the advertising has a positive effect on the intention to purchase.

H<sub>5</sub>: Attitude toward the brand has a positive effect on the intention to purchase.

#### 5. Word of Mouth Intention

Word of mouth is a marketing strategy where an individual who does not have any interest in the brand/product is willing to share interesting information about the brand/product verbally, including in face-to-face meetings or over the telephone or via the internet. Mikalef *et al.* (2013) defined the word of mouth intention as the intention to share relevant and interesting information about a product or service through various communication channels. Generally, consumers have more trust in their family's or friends' opinions than in marketing communications, because these personal sources have no reason not to express their true feelings and opinions.

With the extensive growth of technology in recent years, more than half of all companies use

video as their new advertising strategy. A viral (marketing) video is an electronic word of mouth advertising, in which consumers will spread any information about a brand/product to other consumer through technological (social media) channels (Phelps *et al.*, 2004). Huang *et al.*, (2013) explain that a positive attitude toward advertisements plays a significant role in affecting the chance of the information being widely spread. Advertising with an unusual content (creative, engaging, entertaining, and enjoyable) is considered to be the most viral advertising content worldwide (King and Tinkham, 1989; Lance and Guy, 2006; Binet and Field, 2009; Moldovan and Lehman, 2010).

H<sub>6</sub>: Attitude toward the advertising has a positive effect on the intention to communicate by word of mouth.

### METHOD, DATA, AND ANALYSIS

#### 1. Research Design

The researcher chose the mobile SIM card TV advertisements (Tukang Ojek by Axis, Awet Muda by Axis, Gratis Hepi-Hepi by As, Gratis 30 Jam by As, Seribu Donat by XL, Seribu Halte by XL) as the object of this research. The reason why the researcher uses these advertised product categories and brands is because this industries have spent over four trillion rupiah on advertising (Pradana, 2013) and the brands consistently used humor in their TV advertising campaigns.

This research can be classified as conclusive-causal research because the aim of this research is to investigate the effect of humor in adverts, with the need for humor in a moderating role for consumers' attitudes, and its impact on their intention to purchase or promote the advertising by word of mouth.

The researcher conducted a survey with a five point Likert scale, an online questionnaire, and purposive (which is also known as judg-

ment) sampling as the primary data collection methods. Purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling in which the researcher selects the sample, based on his or her judgment (Fricker, 2008:200). The target respondents of this research are individuals who can be classified as young adults or within the age range of 18 to 34 years old (Blackwell *et al.*, 2006:192) and are not classified as users of the mobile SIM card brands that the advertisement they perceived as funny (humorous) ones. The researcher argued that the young adult consumers have their own purchasing capabilities; they are impulsive, and mature enough to evaluate different brand or products. Wolburg and Pokrywczynski (2001) added that this age-group has a great deal of spending power.

The researcher uses a mixed delivery method, in which the questionnaires were delivered through a traditional (personal delivery of the survey) method and also by an online (computer delivered survey) channel, to yield a higher response rate at a competitive cost. In the beginning, the targeted respondents are exposed to the mobile SIM cards' humorous advertisements (Axis, As, XL). Then, they have to answer a question about what they most liked (or found funny) about the mobile SIM cards' advertisements. The targeted respondents should/must state which specific advertisement they perceived as being funny. For example, if respondent "A" feels that the Seribu Donut advertisement was the funniest one, he/she should answer the XL questionnaire, and so on. In total, 156 questionnaires were sent out, and 126 valid questionnaires were received. Henseler, Ringle, and Sinkovics (2009), Marcoulides and Saunders (2006) argue that this

sample size is considered to be a good starting point for running path models.

## 2. Research Variables

This research consists of four variables which are exogenous (the humorous advertisement), exogenous-endogenous (people's attitude toward the advertisement and toward the brand), endogenous (purchase intention and word of mouth intention), and moderator (need for humor). All of the indicators in this research can be classified as reflective indicators. The reflective indicator known as the function of latent variables are expected to have high inter correlations with the latent variable (Coltman *et al.*, 2008; Okazaki, 2012:254). The research variables and indicators are presented in Table 1.

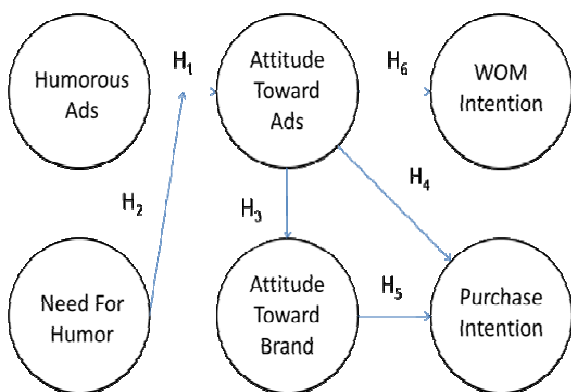
## 3. Research Framework

The research framework proposed by the researcher to investigate the effect of a humorous advert on consumers' attitudes, purchase intentions, and word of mouth intentions, with the need for humor in a moderating role, can be briefly described in Figure 1.

The research adopted PLS-SEM analysis to examine the different effects between variables. The researcher chose PLS-SEM because this research is trying to extend the existing structural theory. PLS is a particularly suitable tool for analyzing data where the theoretical model is insufficiently grounded and its measures are not robust (Acedo and Jones, 2007; Sinkovics, *et al.*, 2016). This research adds the need for humor and word of mouth intention variables to predict the effectiveness of a humorous advertisement, which is rarely used by other researchers.

**Table 1.** Research Variables and Indicators

Variables	Indicators	References
Humor (HUM)	The commercial message was fun to watch (HUM1)	Bearden and Netemeyer (1999:297)
	The commercial storyboard was fun to watch (HUM2)	
	The commercial actor was so funny (HUM3)	
	I thought the commercial was very funny and good (HUM4)	
Need For Humor (NHUM)	People expect me to say amusing things (NHUM1)	Picard and Blanc (2013)
	People tell me that I am quick witted (NHUM2)	
	I need to be with people who have a sense of humor (NHUM3)	
	I often read jokes and funny stories (NHUM4)	
	I enjoy being around quick witted people (NHUM5)	
Attitude Toward Advert (AAAd)	I thought the commercial was interesting (AAAd1)	Chattopadhyay and Nedungadi (1992)
	I thought the commercial was pleasant (AAAd2)	
	I like the commercial (AAAd3)	
	The commercial was not bad (AAAd4)	
Attitude Toward Brand (AB)	I thought the SMS/telephone tariff of brand X was beneficial (AB1)	Mitchel (1986)
	I thought the social media/BBM tariff of brand X was beneficial (AB2)	
	I believe that the signal of brand X was good (AB3)	
	I thought the internet plans of brand X were beneficial (AB4)	
Purchase Intention (PI)	I want to buy the advertised brand/product in the near future (PI1)	Mullet and Karson (1985)
	I may buy the advertised brand/product in the near future (PI2)	
	I definitely will buy the advertised brand/product in the near future (PI3)	
	I probably will buy the advertised brand/product in the near future (PI4)	
WOM Intention (WOMI)	I will recommend this funny commercial to a friend (WOMI1)	Cheema and Kaikati (2010) and Mikalef et al (2013)
	I will talk to my friend about this funny commercial (WOMI2)	
	I will click "share" to show my appreciation of this commercial on social media (WOMI3)	
	I will talk to my friend about brand X (WOMI4)	



**Figure 1.** Research Framework

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

**1. Validity and Reliability**

The researcher used convergent validity and discriminant validity to measure the validity of

the construct (see Table 2 and Table 3). According to Chin (1998), the rules of thumb to measure validity are that the AVE/communality score must be higher than 0.50, the loading factor scores must be higher than 0.70, and the cross loading scores of the reflective construct with its own indicators must be greater than the correlation with other latent variables. The results show that there are two indicators of the need for humor, which are NHUM2 (people tell me that I am quick witted) and NHUM 3 (I need to be with people who have a sense of humor), which must be extracted from the models because those indicators scored lower than 0.70 and 0.50 for their loading factor and AVE-communality scores.

**Table 2.** Convergent and Discriminant Validity Test

	AVE / Communality	HUM	NHUM	AAd	AB	PI	WOMI
HUM 1	0.602	0.845*	0.138	0.540	0.070	0.018	0.294
HUM 2		0.756*	0.163	0.458	0.021	0.141	0.179
HUM 3		0.687*	0.018	0.513	0.035	-0.011	0.225
HUM 4		0.805*	0.077	0.591	0.135	0.058	0.317
NHUM 1	0.491	0.192	0.750*	0.160	0.067	0.133	0.385
NHUM 2		0.033	0.681*	0.114	-0.037	0.036	0.042
NHUM 3		0.029	0.589*	0.062	-0.027	0.051	0.052
NHUM 4		0.012	0.732*	0.104	-0.087	0.146	0.102
NHUM 5		0.097	0.738*	0.190	-0.011	0.028	0.180
AAd 1	0.626	0.580	0.134	0.797*	0.160	0.203	0.284
AAd 2		0.506	0.139	0.722*	0.099	-0.013	0.348
AAd 3		0.562	0.108	0.802*	0.020	0.0003	0.338
AAd 4		0.506	0.249	0.838*	0.061	0.208	0.276
AB 1	0.647	0.120	-0.096	0.158	0.907**	0.375	0.265
AB 2		0.033	0.050	0.096	0.858**	0.376	0.237
AB 3		0.045	0.039	0.076	0.824**	0.314	0.201
AB 4		0.084	-0.028	0.006	0.592**	0.344	0.099
PI 1	0.847	0.020	0.081	0.046	0.450	0.924*	0.161
PI 2		0.054	0.042	0.064	0.274	0.856*	0.165
PI 3		0.054	0.111	0.148	0.476	0.955*	0.248
PI 4		0.110	0.149	0.204	0.376	0.943*	0.224
WOMI 1	0.588	0.344	0.079	0.344	0.200	0.130	0.887**
WOMI 2		0.293	0.128	0.386	0.158	0.109	0.893**
WOMI 3		0.243	0.174	0.284	0.246	0.269	0.772**
WOMI 4		0.032	-0.061	0.104	0.317	0.357	0.415**

The rules of thumb that the researcher used to measure reliability are Cronbach's alpha > 0.60 and composite reliability > 0.70. The results showed that value of Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability in this research are more than 0.60 and 0.70 which means that all the variables in this research are reliable.

**Table 3.** Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
HUM	0.777	0.857
NHUM	0.644	0.803
AAd	0.799	0.870
AB	0.807	0.878
PI	0.940	0.957
WOMI	0.819	0.892

The author needs to report the results in sufficient detail so that the reader can see which statistical analysis was conducted and why, and later to justify the conclusions.

## 2. Discussions of Research Findings

The following demographic profile of the respondents (Table 4) shows that 73% of the respondents are male, 46% are aged between 22 and 25 years old, and 38% of the respondents thought that the *Tukang Ojek* (Axis) advertisement was the best. Signal issues are the main reason for the respondents to switch from their existing brand (46%), followed by another brand's promotion plan, trying another brand, and the expiration of the respondent's promo plan.

**Table 4.** Demographic Profile

Demographic Profile	Percentage	Demographic Profile	Percentage
Gender	100	Most Liked Part of Advert	100
Male	73	Tukang Ojek by Axis	38
Female	27	Seribu Halte by XL	17
Age (Years Old)	100	Gratis 30 Jam by As	14
18 – 21	30	Awet Muda by Axis	13
22 – 25	46	Seribu Donat by XL	12
26 – 29	15	Gratis Hepi-Hepi by As	6
≥ 30	7	Brand Switching Reason	100
Unanswered	2	Signal issues	46
		Another brand's promo	24
		Try another brand	23
		Expiration of promo plan	7

**Table 5.** Hypotheses Testing

Variable	p-Value	t-Statistics	t-Table	Decision
HUM -> AAd	1.8378E-13	8.379	1.64	Accepted
HUM*NHUM -> AAd	0.465423619	0.087	1.64	Rejected
AAd -> PI	0.120216101	1.181	1.64	Rejected
AAd -> AB	0.174752731	0.940	1.64	Rejected
AAd -> WOMI	1.08371E-05	4.460	1.64	Accepted
AB -> PI	5.28617E-07	5.204	1.64	Accepted

Hypothesis 1 stated that there was a positive and significant effect of humorous advertising on people's attitudes toward the advertisement. The result of the hypotheses testing (Table 5) shows that the value of the t-statistics (8.379) was higher than the t-tables' value (1.64), and the p-value (1.8378E-13) was smaller than 0.05, which means that hypothesis 1 is accepted. Therefore, this research supports previous studies that found humor can enhance people's enjoyment of an advert (Weinberger and Gullas, 1992; Schiffman *et al.*, 2010:292; Shimp, 2010: 259; Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2013:403). A humorous advertisement can explain about 48% of the positive attitude toward the advertisement in this research.

This research also proved that there was a positive and significant relationship between the attitude toward a brand and the intention to

purchase it (stated in this research as hypothesis 5) and the attitude toward advertisement and the intention to pass on the information by word of mouth (stated in this research as hypothesis 6). For hypothesis 5, the value of the t-statistics (4.460) was higher than that of the t-tables (1.64) and the p-value (1.08371E-05) was smaller than 0.05. For hypothesis 6, the value of the t-statistics (5.204) was also higher than the t-tables value (1.64) and the p-value (5.28617E-07) was smaller than 0.05.

This research supports previous studies by King and Tinkham (1989), Lance and Guy (2006), Binet and Field (2009), Moldovan and Lehman (2010) that stated there is a positive relationship between the attitude toward an advertisement and the word of mouth intention. The more positive the attitude toward the advert is, the higher the possibility is that the advert



will stimulate the word of mouth intention. This research also supports Ghorban (2012) and Mirabi *et al.* (2015), who argued that the attitude toward a brand has a positive and significant influence on the consumers' purchase intention, which means that the more positive the attributes of the brand are, as perceived by the consumer, the more likely it is that the consumer will have an intention to purchase. In addition, the  $R^2$  value of the attitude toward the advertisement to the word of mouth intention (20%), which is higher than the  $R^2$  value of the attitude toward the brand to the purchase intention (15%), indicated that the effect of a humorous advertisement on the word of mouth intention is higher than its effect on the intention to purchase (Appendix). The use of humor in an advert is more effective at entertaining the consumers, so it encourages their word of mouth intention, rather than their purchase intention.

This research failed to prove the proposed hypothesis that stated there was a positive and significant relationship between people's attitude toward an advertisement and their attitude toward a particular brand ( $H_3$ ) and their attitude toward an advert and their purchase intention ( $H_4$ ). The values for the t-statistics (0.940 and 1.181) were lower than that of the t-tables (1.64) and the p-values (0.120216101 and 0.174752731) were higher than 0.05, which means that  $H_3$  and  $H_4$  are rejected. This research failed to prove the mediation effect of attitude toward an advertisement on the attitude toward the brand and the purchase intention, also the attitude toward the brand on the purchase intention. The mediation exists if the coefficient of the direct path between the independent and dependent variables is significant. Since the direct effect between the variables in this research is not significantly proved, the mediation test cannot be continued. The majority of the respondents in this research chose the advert

featuring the *Tukang Ojek* as the funniest one. The researcher classified the *Tukang Ojek* advertisement as being humor dominant. The use of a humor dominant advert appears to be ineffective for high risk product categories, because a high-risk product requires extensive thought (information) and a high level of involvement (Weinberger and Gullas, 1992; Spotts *et al.*, 1997). Therefore, the use of a humor dominant advert for a high-risk product will harm the brand because the consumers are too focused on the humor, so they take little notice of the underlying message. The less information the consumers get about the brand's attributes from the advertisement, the lower the consumers' attitude toward the brand is. This implies there will be less intention to purchase the brand.

Finally, unlike Galloway (2010), Schiffman *et al.* (2010:292), Shimp (2010:260), Piccard and Blanc (2013), Hawkins and Mothersbaugh (2013:403) who all stated that individuals with a greater need for humor are more easily persuaded by humorous appeals, which create a positive attitude toward the advertisement ( $H_2$ ), this research concluded the opposite. The value of the t-statistics (0.087) was lower than the t-tables value (1.64) and the p-value (0.465423619) was higher than 0.05 which means that  $H_2$  is rejected. There is a negative and insignificant relationship between humorous advertisements and people's attitude toward such advertisements, with the need for humor as a moderating role in this research. The researcher indicated that the decision to use the mobile SIM cards as the object of this research is the root cause of why there are different results between this research and previous ones. The majority of the respondents in this research perceive a mobile SIM card as a high risk and high level of involvement product (they will change their existing brand only when there are some technical issues, like signal problems, and they also

have the perception that a mobile SIM card is like an alternative identity for each individual). Therefore, consumers will be more focused and more critical about deciding whether they should switch their existing mobile SIM card or not.

In general, this research concluded that the use of humor in advertising enhances the advert's acceptance and enjoyment (attitude toward advertisement) with or without the moderating role of the consumers' need for humor. The more positive the consumers' attitude is toward the advert, the higher the intention of the consumers is to spread the word about the commercial. This research failed to prove the mediating effect of the attitude toward the advertisement on the attitude toward the brand and the intention to purchase, and also the attitude toward the brand on the intention to purchase. It means that the impact of a humorous advertisement in this research was limited to entertaining the consumers, to encourage their word of mouth intention, but not their purchase intention.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

### 1. Conclusions

The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of a humorous advertisement, with the need for humor as a moderating role, on the consumers' attitude, the consumers' intent to purchase, and their word of mouth intention. The results showed that there is a positive relationship between a humorous advertisement, the attitude toward the advertisement, and the word of mouth intention. It means that the use of humor has significantly proved to increase the acceptance and enjoyment of the advertisement, thus, increasing the consumers' intent to share stories about the brand, product, or campaign.

This research also proved the positive relationship between the attitude toward the brand

and the intention to purchase. Although, this positive relationship exists, this research failed to explain the effect of the attitude toward the advertisement on the attitude toward the brand. Therefore, the researcher concludes that the impact of a humorous advertisement is limited to entertaining the consumers, and so encouraging their word of mouth intention, but not their purchase intention.

The need for humor has failed to moderate the relationship between a humorous advertisement and the attitude toward the advertisement in this research. The failure of the need for humor to moderate the relationship between a humorous advertisement and the attitude toward the advertisement is because the majority of the respondents in this research perceive mobile SIM cards as high risk products. A high-risk product requires extensive thought and a high level of involvement. Therefore, the need for cognitive thought will be higher than the need for humor with this category of product.

### 2. Suggestions

This research contributes to both the theoretical and practical aspects. From the theoretical aspect, this research adds to the literature about the metrics of advertising's effectiveness. The result of this research shows that there is a positive relationship between the attitude toward an advertisement and the word of mouth intention, which means the more positive the consumer's attitude toward the advertisement is, the more the advertising may be discussed (word of mouth) and possibly go viral. Therefore, the researcher suggests "word of mouth" be used as a new indicator for measuring the effectiveness of advertising campaigns (the greater the effect of the spread of information by word of mouth, the more effective the advertising campaign is).

From a practical standpoint, the failure of this research to prove that there is a positive

relationship between the need for humor and the attitude toward the brand, and thus the attitude toward the brand and the attitude toward the advertisement on the intention to purchase, indicates that the mobile SIM cards that were used as the object in this research are perceived to be high risk products. A high-risk product requires extensive thought and a high level of involvement. The consumer will be more focused and critical when selecting and evaluating the information. They need more information about a brand or product before making any purchase decision. Therefore, the researcher suggests the design of the advertisement should be arranged to fulfill the consumers' cognitive needs. Intentional relatedness messages that focus on the image, or information adverts, can be used as an alternative when designing humorous advertisements. Another recommendation that can be considered when designing humorous advertisements for a high risk product is using humor as a tool to grab the consumers' attention, and then direct their attention to the marketing campaign that has already been published in websites or social media channels that are owned by the brand or company. The use of integrated promotion channels, both traditional (TV) and modern (website/social media), is based on the assumption that the target market for new mobile SIM cards is new users, probably aged between 18 and 21 years old. Consumers at that age are classified as tech savvy people and have an adventurous spirit, which means that they are still looking for their best fit options for every brand/product that they use. They are usually more reactive toward promotional exposure.

### 3. Limitations

The majority of the respondents, who were classified as young post-college graduates (22-25 years old), might make the findings about the

purchase intentions and word of mouth intentions less generalizable. Young post-college consumers often see mobile SIM cards as high involvement products (they will change their mobile SIM card only if there are some technical issues, like a signal problem). Therefore, the use of humor in a mobile SIM card's advertisement, to increase their intent to purchase, will be ineffective. Future research should address this issue by taking a sample that is more representative of the general population.

The results in this research that had small  $R^2$  values indicated that there are other variables outside the models used that needed to be engaged to explain the purchase intentions and word of mouth intentions. Future research should be conducted on a broader scale by including the need for cognition, the need for uniqueness, a subjective norm, previous brand evaluations, and other variables for predicting the purchase intentions and word of mouth intentions.

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APPENDIX

