

## **Perception of Advertising on Sports Apparel Purchase among Young Malaysians**

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### **Abstract**

This study investigated the influence of advertising on sports apparel purchasing decisions of young Malaysians based on gender, usage pattern, and purchasing style. The study involved administering questionnaires to two hundred and forty-eight randomly selected students from the Faculty of Sports Science and Recreation (N=248). The results showed a significant difference based on the gender and quality element ( $p < 0.05$ ) of perception towards advertising. In addition, there was a significant difference in quality element ( $p < 0.05$ ) of perception towards advertising based on usage pattern. This research found that young Malaysians' perception of advertising on sports apparel purchasing style significantly differs for all three domains of design, quality, and brand. This study will help entrepreneurs and marketers identify the dimensions of customers' perception towards advertising to improve the quality in the future. Further research should enlarge the scope of sports apparel and combine cognitive and affective factors, such as emotional responses and online trust, that impact the effects of advertising on purchase intention.

**Keywords:** Advertising, purchasing style, usage pattern

### **1. Introduction**

#### *1.1 Introduce the Problem*

Most people live in a world dominated by the mass media such as television, advertising, movies, and videos (Kumar & Raju, 2013). Advertising is famous for its extensive durable effect on purchasers (Kumar & Raju, 2013). Advertising is a sub-component of the promotion mix, one of the 4P's in the marketing mix of product, price, place, and promotion (Kumar & Raju, 2013). As a marketing strategy, advertising works as an essential instrument in crafting product awareness in consumers' minds to make an eventual purchase decision. The advancement of advertisement started many years ago and resorted to using images and pictorial signs to draw in their product users. Advertisements were handcrafted in the past and were not sophisticated. However, they are now one of the leading causes of communication instruments used by producers to attract customers (Kumar & Raju, 2013).

#### *1.2 Literature review*

The main point of advertising is influencing purchasing conduct by promoting brand image. Advertisers do this by creating a connection with the consumer. The association makes the

consumer more likely to relate to the advertisement of those brands, which have esteem and clear messages (Kumar & Raju, 2013). As a result, researchers have investigated the effect of advertisements on the purchasing behaviour of consumers (Methar & Fahad, 2016). The research has focused on consumers' attitudes towards advertising and how it affects their purchasing power. A customer's attitude towards one object equally affects their approaches towards another. Customers who like and are devoted to an advertisement will eventually transfer to the product's brand (Methar & Fahad, 2016). Although many marketing weapons influence consumers, advertising remains the primary weapon due to its more prolonged impact on viewers' minds (Katke, 2007). Even though it is a known fact that young Malaysians purchasing power is on the rise due to the influence of advertising, there is still limited research on the impact of advertising on young Malaysians. Based on the preceding, the present study examined the perception of advertising on sports apparel purchases among young Malaysians.

### 1.2.1 Sport Apparel

Sportswear is a cloth worn by people for running, cycling, and marathons (Jayan & Mathew, 2015). According to previous researcher (Jayan & Mathew, 2015) sports apparel is clothes, counting cleats, worn for sport or physical workout. It is worn for most sports and physical work out for comfort or safety. Therefore, sports apparel is a product obtained for sporting activities (Lu & Xu, 2015). Meanwhile researchers see sports apparel as attire and footwear made for sports participation and comprises casual clothes worn by the public for day-to-day activities (Ko et. al., 2012).

The sports apparel industry was over \$163 billion by 2016 due to lifestyle and demand from the youth, baby boomers, and ladies' customers (Jayan & Mathew, 2015). It would increase at 7.5 per cent through 2017 (Tong & Hawley, 2009). Brands have almost 75 per cent of the sports apparel market internationally. The best two brands, Adidas, and Nike, dominate 40 per cent of the world market (Tong & Hawley, 2009). The international sports apparel business is very competitive, with brands using advertisements to stay ahead of the competition. The sports apparel industry is a growing market worldwide (Tong & Hawley, 2009). Sportswear brands are committed to creating brand loyalty through advertising (Lu, Xu & Tao, 2019).

### 1.2.2 Concept of Advertising

Advertising influences customers to buy goods and services by strengthening a new product or promoting existing ones (Terkan, 2014). According to the British Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA), advertising promotes the central message for the product or services for consumers at the least possible cost (Terkan, 2014). It is a non-personal promotion for highlighting thoughts, goods, and services by an advertiser (Dominick, 2013). According to Benson-Eluwa, the Advertising Practitioners of Nigeria (APCON) defines advertising as an alluring knowledge about goods and services that advertisers promote through mass media. According to the previous researcher, the market consists of customers, so companies use advertisements to attract them to purchase their goods and services (Trehan & Trehan, 2011).

Advertising evolves into more significant popularity as most companies and associations turn to it as a method for getting their product or services recognized by customers. There are essential components of advertising that attract customers, provide data, and persuade consumers. First,

advertising helps to sell goods and services. Second, it is a critical mechanism in business marketing. Third, customers can study every detail of products or services through advertisements, making advertising essential for business competition. Fourth, consumers create permanent images in their minds of goods and services depicted in advertisements. Fifth, quality should not be missing from advertising. Customers perceive quality equally with production competence and advertising competence. Finally, customers' attitudes and behaviour are highly affected by advertisements and, subsequently, their buying behaviour (Terkan, 2014).

### 1.2.3 Consumers' Attitudinal Responses towards Advertising

Attitude is a significant stimulus to maintain effectiveness (Shaouf, Lu & Li, 2016). However, attitudes change over time as people acquire new information about things, views, and objects from different sources (Kwek, Lau & Tan, 2010). Attitude is "a learned propensity of human beings," personal evaluation, emotions that connect to things and thoughts (Kwek, Lau & Tan, 2010).

### 1.2.4 Advertising Design

An essential aspect of advertising is its design and presentation to attract consumers. Therefore, design is a critical component in advertising (Shaouf, Lu & Li, 2016). Besides, Duffet (2015) calls for efficiently designed advertisements to attract consumers to products and services. The design uses images to build a compelling message to attract a specific audience (Köksal & Fatma, 2013). The design of the advertisement aims to display the main message to the reasonable possibility to consumers. For example, a design might involve the choice of colors used in the advertisement to promote a message and make it more attractive.

### 1.2.5 Advertising Brand and the Quality of Advertisements

Advertisement introduces brands to consumers and influences their perception of brands. For example, advertisements with pictures create a link between the brand advertised and the memories of consumers (Methar & Fahad, 2016). An excellent advertisement can change a person's judgment about a product or service. For example, an advertising company in New York in 1938 used advertisements to change the public perception of diamonds. It changed views of diamonds from mere objects to monetary value and eventually to a symbol of engagement and enduring love (Methar & Fahad, 2016) and concluded advertisements influence consumers' behaviour.

### 1.2.6 Difference Perception on Advertising based on gender

There are gender differences in the perception of brand advertising (Cyr, 2014). The definition of "gender" explains whether a person is biologically man or woman (Shaouf, Lu & Li, 2016), (Richard et.al. 2010). Therefore, gender is vital for advertisers as they seek to introduce brands to both men and women. For example, there is an insignificant difference in how men and women access the Internet (Cyr, 2014). Research shows that 37% of women worldwide use the Internet and approximately 40% of men [19]. Besides, male Internet users expressed a more favourable attitude toward online advertisements than women users (Internet World Stats, 2014).

An investigation of gender-related buying proposes that online purchase intent for male customers is higher than for women (Davis, Lang & San Diego, 2014). Inclinations for advertising design, including contours, colours, and images, are higher in women than men (Mahzari & Ahmadzadeh, 2014). These differences between men and women regarding advertising influence online purchase intentions (Mahzari & Ahmadzadeh, 2014). As a result, advertisers need to know gender differences and design their advertisements to reach men and women (Tsieh, Hatzithomas & Boutsouki, 2016). For advertisers, the significant position regarding gender issues might be how men and women react to advertising messages. There is evidence that men have more conclusive attitudes toward advertising than women (Shaouf, Lu & Li, 2016) making men more susceptible to advertisements than women.

### 1.2.7 Purchasing Style

Shopping is a part of everyday life activities for most people. It includes shopping for groceries, toiletries, and other necessities of life (Reddy & JayaLaxmi, 2014). In addition, shopping reduces stress (Reddy & JayaLaxmi, 2014). Overall, there are two categories of shopping, traditional shopping, and online shopping. Traditional shopping is walking or driving to your local corner store or shopping mall.

In contrast, online shopping is using your laptop to order things through the Internet. These days, more and more people prefer to "go shopping" via the Internet (Reddy & JayaLaxmi, 2014). Online shopping starts with a click on the keyboard of your laptop that instantly offers you choices. It also saves customers the trouble of physically traveling to local shops and jostling with crowds to buy what they need (traditional shopping). Moreover, online shopping is easily accessible due to the availability of laptops in most households. According to previous researchers, (Reddy & JayaLaxmi, 2014), online shopping or e-shopping is an electronic marketplace that allows customers to straightforwardly purchase goods or services from a seller through the Internet using a network browser.

The Internet marketplace is also known as an; e-web store, e-shop, e-store, internet stop, web shop, webstore, online sort, and virtual store. It is fast and convenient and occurs during all hours of the day. As a result, online shopping is flexible and easy to find all goods by quickly keying in the consumer's item on a computer. Therefore, more people use Internet shopping than traditional shopping (Reddy & JayaLaxmi, 2014). While online shopping allows for reimbursements and returns of items customers do not like, a significant conventional shopping advantage over online shopping is the consumer's ability to select and check out an article to physically see it and even try it on before purchasing it. This ability to examine items is why some customers still opt for conventional shopping over online shopping. The E-shopping arena is where purchasers and suppliers do not meet each other, preventing customers from examining products first-hand before purchasing them. As a result, traditional customers still like to inspect the item they want to buy before purchasing them (Reddy & JayaLaxmi, 2014).

### 1.2.8 Usage Pattern of Buying Behaviour

Final consumers, people, and households, who buy goods and services for personal use, are consumers' buying behaviour (Kotler, 2011). Buying behaviour is subordinate to cultural, social,

personal, and mental factors that affect the buyer (Kotler, 2011). Buying high-involvement items may be risky for the buyer. Items purchased for personal use have both internal and external stimuli, affecting the purchase (Derakhshide & Emadzadeh, 2012). Customer satisfaction is the consumer's assessment of the performance of the items or service in connection to their own experience (Schiffman, 2010).

In the current context of sports, there are casual, and sports uses of sports apparel. Subsequently, it is interesting to discover how consumers use sportswear products in their day-to-day life (Öndogan et.al., 2016). The preceding assessed the way advertisements influenced the purchasing of sports apparel. The present study examined young Malaysian's perception of advertising of sports apparel and how it affects their purchasing behaviour by gender.

## **2. Method**

The present study's research design was descriptive research with a quantitative analysis of the data collected. It is also an applied study since its findings would help advertisers craft effective advertisements aimed at young Malaysians (Mirzayi & Amini, 2006). The study used questionnaires to collect data for the research.

### *2.1 Identify Subsections*

The study used a questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of sections A and B. Section A comprised the demographic profiles of respondents of gender, education level, preferred brand, how often you use sports apparel, and how you purchase sports apparel. Section B consisted of perception towards the advertising of sports apparel. Section B consisted of 11 questions adopted from the previous researcher (Shaouf, Lu & Li, 2016) and the Cronbach's Alpha was 0.875 from a pilot study. Respondents registered their responses to Section B on a Likert-type scale. The responses to Sections A and B were collected, collated, and analysed with SPSS version 23. SPSS is a general statistic software used to analyse data collected from questionnaires.

### *2.2 Participant (Subject) Characteristics*

In this study, the research population was students from the Faculty of Sports Science and Recreation (FSR), University Technology MARA (UiTM), Seremban, Negeri Sembilan. The initial phase was the identification of the target population. A target population is a total of individuals of interest for the study. Next, from the target population, the sample was selected. The sampling process ensured that all target population members had an equal chance of inclusion in the study.

### *2.3 Sampling Procedures*

The sampling technique used to select the sample was the probability sampling technique of random sampling, which allowed each person in the population has an equal chance of selection.

#### *2.3.1 Sample Size, Power, and Precision*

This research population included students aged 18 years and above. The total population of FSR students was 663. Using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) schedule for selecting a sample, the

sample from a population of 663 was 248 students. However, to avoid an unreturned questionnaire, 20 percent of the actual sample has been added, making the total number of respondents is 298 students.

### 2.3.2 Research Design

There were several procedures the researcher followed in conducting this research. First, the researcher obtained ethical approval from the Faculty of Sports Science and Recreation for the study. Second, the researcher obtained permission from the respective supervisor to proceed with the study by ensuring the validity of the questionnaires. Third, the researcher gave a short briefing to the respondents regarding the research. Four, the researcher distributed the questionnaires to the respondents for completion. Finally, the researcher collected the completed questionnaires for collation and statistical analysis using SPSS.

### 3. Results

Table 1 presents the results of the demographic profile of the respondents for the research.

Table 1.  
Demographic Profile of Respondents

Items	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	178	59.7
Female	120	40.3
<i>Level of Education</i>		
Diploma	101	33.9
Degree	197	66.1
<i>Brand</i>		
Nike	85	28.5
Puma	47	15.8
Under Armour	21	7.0
Adidas	105	35.2
New Balance	23	7.7
Others	17	5.7
<i>Daily Usage</i>		
Often	211	70.8
Occasionally	87	29.2
<i>Purchase</i>		
Online Store	46	15.4
Retail Shop	252	84.6

The results in Table 1 indicate that 59.7% (n=178) of the respondents were males and 40.3% (n=120) were females. Regarding respondents' level of education 33.9% (n=101) were Diploma

and 66.1% (n=197) were Degree students (Table 1). As for brand, and as shown in Table 1, respondents perceived Adidas as the most famous brand they use with 35.2% (n=105), followed by Nike 28.5% (n=85), Puma 15.8% (n=47), New Balance 7.7% (n=23), Under Armour 7.0 (n=21), and lastly other brands was 5.7% (n=17). As for the level of use of sports apparel, Table 1, shows that 70.8% (n=211) used sportswear for daily usage meanwhile 29.2% (n=87) used it occasionally. As for purchase behavior regarding where respondents bought sports apparel, Table 1 indicates that 84.6% (n=252) bought sportswear at retail shops and only 15.4% (n=46) bought it through online stores.

#### 4.1 Perception towards the advertising of sports apparel

Table 2 displays the descriptive statistics of the perception towards advertising sports apparel, using mean and standard deviation. Table 2 is respondents' responses to the 11-items questionnaire on advertising.

Table 2.  
Perception towards advertising on sports apparel

Perception towards Advertising	Mean	SD
<i>The advertisement of sports apparel contained attractive visual connections.</i>	4.28	.719
<i>The visual design elements used made the advertisement of sports apparel look professional and well designed.</i>	4.27	.721
<i>I like sports apparel advertisements.</i>	4.20	.826
<i>My impression of the apparel brand is strengthened.</i>	4.19	.792
<i>The visual elements in the advertisement of sports apparel were pleasing.</i>	4.18	.782
<i>I find the advertising of sports apparel is a good thing.</i>	4.16	.792
<i>I am favorable toward sports apparel advertisement</i>	4.14	.836
<i>Most sports apparel advertisements are pleasant.</i>	4.13	.765
<i>I develop a preference for the brand in the advertisement.</i>	4.13	.797
<i>I am more in love with the advertised brand.</i>	4.11	.830
<i>The visual elements of the advertisements of sports apparel were of high quality.</i>	4.11	.783

As shown in Table 2 above, the highest respondents' score on their perception of advertising of sports apparel was (M = 4.28, SD = .719) for the item "The advertisement of sports apparel contained attractive visual connections." The lowest mean score was "The visual elements of the advertisements of sports apparel were of high quality" with (M = 4.11, SD = .783). It shows that the respondents focus most on the attractiveness of visuals in advertisements of sports apparel and do not focus on the visual quality.

4.2 Difference of perception towards advertising based on gender

Table 3.

Difference of perception towards advertising on sports apparel among respondents based on gender.

Sports Apparel		Mean	SD	Sig (p)	t
Design	Male	4.20	.64	.494	-.68
	Female	4.25	.63		
Quality	Male	4.09	.64	.009	-2.25
	Female	4.27	.55		
Brand	Male	4.08	.70	.063	-1.87
	Female	4.24	.72		

\*p < .05

According to Table 3 an independent *t*-test was conducted to assess the differences of perception towards advertising on sport apparel among respondents based on gender for design, quality, and brand in advertising. For design, an independent-samples *t*-test indicated that scores were significantly lower for males (M=4.20, SD=.64), than females (M=4.35, SD = .63), *t* (260) = -.68, *p* = .494. For quality the scores for males were significantly lower (M=4.09, SD = .64) than females (M=4.27, SD = .55), *t* (279), = -2.25, *p* = .009. Lastly, for brand, independent *t*-test indicated that males also had lower scores (M=4.08, SD = .70) than females (M=4.24, SD = .72), *t* (249), = -1.86, *p* = .063.

4.3 Difference of perception towards advertising based on the usage pattern

Table 4.

Difference of perception towards advertising on sports apparel among respondents based on usage pattern.

	Usage Pattern	Mean	SD	Sig(p)	T
Design	Daily Usage	4.24	.62	.473	.74
	Occasional Usage	4.18	.67		
Quality	Daily Usage	4.23	.56	.009	2.90
	Occasional Usage	4.00	.70		
Brand	Daily Usage	4.18	.68	.189	1.40
	Occasional Usage	4.05	.79		

\*p < .05

According to Table 4, an independent *t*-test was conducted to assess the differences of perception towards advertising on sports apparel among respondents based on usage patterns for design, quality, and brand in advertising. For design, an independent *t*-test indicated that scores were significantly higher for daily usage (M=4.24, SD= .62), than occasional usage (M=4.18, SD = .67), *t* (149) = .71, *p* =.473. For quality, the scores for daily usage were significantly higher



(M=4.23, SD = .56) than occasional usage (M=4.00, SD = .70),  $t(134) = 2.65, p = .009$ . Lastly, for brand, independent  $t$ -test indicated that daily usage had higher scores (M=4.18, SD = .68) than occasional usage (M=4.05, SD = .72),  $t(141) = 1.31, p = .189$ .

*4.4 Difference of perception towards advertising based on purchasing style*

Table 5 shows the differences of perception towards advertising on sport apparel among respondents based on purchasing style for design, quality, and brand in advertising. For design, an independent  $t$ -test indicated that the scores were significantly lower for online store shopping (M=3.97, SD= .80), than retail shop shopping (M=4.27, SD = .59),  $t(54) = -2.76, p = .008$ . For quality scores for online store shopping was significantly lower (M=3.94, SD = .66) than retail shop shopping (M=4.20, SD = .60),  $t(59) = -2.48, p = .016$ . Lastly, for brand, independent  $t$ -test indicated that online store shopping had lower scores (M=3.88, SD = .68) than retail shop shopping (M=4.19, SD = .71),  $t(63) = -2.76, p = .007$

Table 5.

Difference of perception towards advertising on sports apparel among respondents based on purchasing style.

	Purchasing Style	Mean	SD	Sig(p)	T
Design	Online Store Shopping	3.93	.80	.008	-3.42
	Retail Shop Shopping	4.27	.59		-2.76
Quality	Online Store Shopping	3.94	.66	.016	-2.63
	Retail Shop Shopping	4.20	.60		-2.48
Brand	Online Store Shopping	3.88	.68	.007	-2.70
	Retail Shop Shopping	4.19	.71		-2.76

\*p < .05

In the Results section, summarize the collected data and the analysis performed on those data relevant to the discourse that is to follow. Report the data in sufficient detail to justify your conclusions. Mention all relevant results, including those that run counter to expectation; be sure to include small effect sizes (or statistically nonsignificant findings) when theory predicts large (or statistically significant) ones. Do not hide uncomfortable results by omission. Do not include individual scores or raw data with the exception, for example, of single-case designs or illustrative examples. In the spirit of data sharing (encouraged by APA and other professional associations and sometimes required by funding agencies), raw data, including study characteristics and individual effect sizes used in a meta-analysis, can be made available on supplemental online archives.

**4. Discussion**

The research examined the influence of advertising on young Malaysians purchasing and usage of sports apparel. The results from the demographic profile of respondents showed that the majority used Nike and Puma brands. It might be because these brands are the most popular compared to other types of brands. However, the demographic profile also showed that most

respondents used sports apparel daily and indicated their popularity. In addition, the respondents preferred retail shop shopping over online store shopping for their sports apparel. This result might be because it was convenient to shop in retail stores to ensure that the sports apparel, they bought was suitable for them before purchasing them, which would not be possible with online shopping.

#### *5.1 Perception of respondents towards advertising on sports apparel*

The results showed that the highest perception of advertising was "The advertisement of sports apparel contained attractive visual connection." This result is in line with the statement from Duffet (2015), who emphasized carefully designed advertisements are appealing to the target audience. Incorporating the fundamentals that make up visual advertising makes advertisements appealing. The fundamentals include imagery, colours, fonts, structure, recurrence, and comicality and primarily appeal to humankind. The more you have these fundamentals in advertisements, the more effective they would be because they would appeal to the target audience (Duffet, 2015). Therefore, the inclusion of visual elements in advertisements ensures their appeal and effectiveness.

#### *5.2 Difference of perception towards advertising based on gender*

Based on the results, there is a difference in gender in one of the three elements of perception towards advertising: the quality of advertising. The results align with the previous research that for advertisers, the most vital viewpoint of gender issues might be how men and women react in an unexpected way to advertising quality and message (Shaouf, Lu & Li, 2016). Notably, there is impressive proof to propose that men have more positive attitudes toward advertising than women. It might be because men tend to focus on quality rather than design and brand in advertisements.

#### *5.3 Difference of perception towards advertising based on usage pattern.*

Based on the results, there is a difference in usage patterns on one of the three elements of perception towards advertising. The results support Schiffman (2010) statement that sports apparel is also used for casual wear or non-sporting purposes, as observed in the present study. Hence it is interesting to find out that consumers are using sportswear products in their day-to-day life. The results indicate that sports apparel is worn for sports but also for non-sporting purposes.

#### *5.4 Difference of perception towards advertising based on purchasing style.*

Based on the results, there are statistically significant differences in terms of perception towards advertising based on purchasing style. The results contradicted Laxmi (2014) that many people buy things through the Internet due to widespread ownership of laptops. Online shopping is popular due to its convenience in contrast to retail shopping. While online shopping occurs in the comfort of one's home or office, retail shopping requires travel to the shop to make the purchase which takes time. Although online shopping is more popular, some shoppers prefer retail shopping. It allows them to physically examine an item and even try it to check it fits before purchase.

## **5. Conclusion**

The rapid development in advertising and new cutting-edge knowledge offers daunting openings for both practitioners and academics. Therefore, the present study mainly attempted to investigate the nature of young Malaysian's perception of advertising on sports apparel. In addition, it examined gender differences in advertising and whether visual aspects of advertising affect young Malaysians purchasing style and usage patterns. The overall results provided strong support for the objectives in advertising, playing a pivotal role in forming consumers' attitudes, usage patterns, and purchasing styles. Furthermore, it shows that these findings support the stream of research that advertising can influence viewers' attitudes towards it. Goods manufactured and services created depend on customers' growing desire and need for them. Advertisements promote manufactured goods and services to consumers. Therefore, advertisements are essential instruments for companies as they compete for market share with their competitors. As a result, companies in commercial goods and services use advertising to publicize and promote their products. The study findings will help companies, entrepreneurs, and marketers identify the dimensions of customers' perception of advertising and incorporate them into effective advertisements to introduce their products.

For future research, the present study recommends extensive investigation with a larger sample involving the perception of all Malaysians of advertisements promoting sports apparel. In addition, it would be interesting to examine the influence of demographic variables of age, income, ethnicity, education, and occupation on their perception of advertisements for sports apparel. Next, the researcher should enlarge the scope of sports apparel by genres such as shirts, shorts, and shoes. Besides that, this study focuses on advertising attitude and brand attitude as significant cognitive predictors of purchase intention. However, it is interesting to combine mental and affective factors, such as emotional responses and online trust, that influence the effects of advertising on sports apparel purchase intention.

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