

The impact of messages assertiveness on to compliance with perceived importance as a moderation variables on the anti-cigarette campaign in Surabaya

Kristiningsih; R.S. Wuryaningrum & A. Trimarjono

Wijaya Kusuma Surabaya University

kristiningsih_uwks@yahoo.co.id

ricapamenan@gmail.com

adriantotri@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: Cigarettes consumption can cause diseases. The Ministry of Health launched Public Service Ads containings testimonials from former smokers who suffered from throat cancer, which were made in the context of the "Stop Enjoying Cigarettes before Cigarettes Enjoy You" campaign. The campaign's success or failure cannot be separated from the strategy of how to communicate the campaign program to the right targets. There are several ways that effective message delivery techniques can be applied in accordance with the targets market. Assertiveness communication is the ability to communicate what one wants, feels, and thinks, but still maintain and respect the rights and feelings of others. This research aims to find out the impact of assertive messages on consumers' compliance by seeing the moderate effect of perceived importance of the anti cigarette campaign in Surabaya. The population of this study is active smokers in Surabaya, people who are either still actively smoking now or who are trying to stop smoking, the statistical test used is Moderating Regression Analysis (MRA). The research results indicate that message assertiveness has a significant influence on levels of compliance and it also shows that perceived importance is the moderating variable that links message assertiveness and compliance.

Keywords - message assertiveness, compliance, perceived importance, moderating regression analysis.

1 INTRODUCTION

Marketing communication is an important aspect of the overall marketing mission, as well as the determinant factor of marketing success. Marketing communications can also be understood by describing two basic elements, namely communication and marketing.

There are several effective message delivery techniques that can be applied, according to the target market. To build effective communication, the method of delivering messages or information needs to be carefully designed so that it can be adjusted to the characteristics of the person being informed as well as the circumstances of the social environment concerned. However, the success of communication is partially determined by the power of the message itself. With the message, one can control the attitude and behavior of the communicants. There are several ways to communicate the message; Aggressive Communication, Passive Communication (Submissive) and Assertive Communication.

Assertive communication is an open communication that stands up for one's point of view, while also respecting the rights and beliefs of others. Assertive communication is not merely

concerned with to the final result, but also the emotion of the message receiver. Assertiveness is an ability to communicate what one wants, feels, and thinks; nevertheless it still maintains and respects the rights and feelings of others.

Many various communication researches have shown the weakness of assertive phrases used in persuasion, such as in the following researches; consumer behavior and psycholinguistics (e.g. Dillard & Sheen, 2005; Dillard et al., 1997; Edwards, Li & Lee, 2002; Gibbs, 1986; Holtgraves, 1991), the more people see a cause as important, the more they obey the message that promotes the cause (Clark, 1993; Clarck, 1998; Cleveland; et al., 2005), compliance with messages that encourage environmentally responsible behavior is related to important consumer goals (Goldstein; et al., 2008; Granzin & Olsen, 1991; Grinstein & Nisan, 2009).

Various forms of anti-smoking campaigns have been delivered in various ways; assertively, non-assertively, aggressively or passively. But the effectiveness of delivering messages to its target market still needs to be further evaluated. The purpose of this research is to find out the impact of assertive messages on consumers' compliance by

seeing the moderate effect of perceived importance of an anti-cigarette campaign in Surabaya.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Message Assertiveness.

Assertive communication is a way of communicating that shows one's self-respect, as well as respect for the rights of others, concern for others and empathy, but still refers to the ultimate goal (goals do not change). In the dictionary, the word assertive means firm and assertiveness is firmness. But in the literature of education, the word assertive itself is interpreted as the courage to state what is thought honestly and openly without disturbing the relationship. Assertive communication does not only concern the final result (Kronrod, 2012)

There are seven characteristics of assertive communication. They are being open and honest with the opinions of oneself and others, listening to other people's opinions and understanding them, expressing personal opinions without sacrificing other people's feelings, seeking joint solutions and decisions, respecting oneself and others, overcoming conflict, expressing personal feelings, being honest but being careful, and lastly, maintaining self-righteousness. (Sarafino, 2007)

2.2. Compliance

Compliance is a form of indirect social influence by others. Compliance refers to how an individual affirms or rejects other people's requests. Compliance is one of the many psychological constraints studied in social psychology, especially prosocial behavior as introduced by Robert B. Cialdini, a professor of psychology and marketing who conducted the study through direct observation.

The definition of obedience comes from the basic obedient, which means discipline and obedience (Niven, 2002), whereas according to Bastable (2002), it is a term that describes obedience or surrender to a predetermined goal.

Normally, people more often affirm the requests of others, although actually they want to refuse them. What factors can increase or decrease an individual's compliance to perform the action requested? In several of Robert B. Cialdini's studies, he concludes that there are many compliance techniques that are actually based on the basic principles. The basic principles of compliance are as follows (Cialdini in Sarlito, 2009): Friendship or likes, Commitment or consistency, Scarcity, Reciprocity, Social validation and Authority.

2.3. Perceived Importance

Perceived importance is important in the delivery of marketing communications. Perceived importance

indicates how important a certain problem is to the consumer and how much consumers are involved in it.

Perceived importance involves underpinning consumers' acceptance of communication messages. In the acceptance of the communication process, consumers sometimes comply to both important and unimportant messages. The findings on Kronrod's et al. (2012) research indicates that if the problem is not recognized as important, the communication receiver will see a message / communication and tend to stick with it.

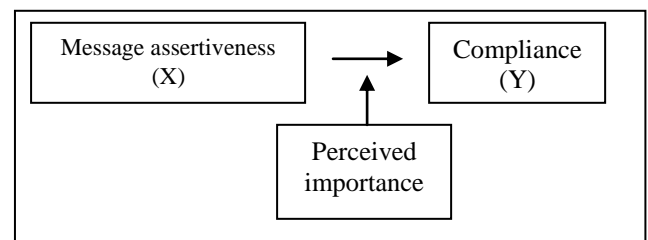
2.4. Hypothesis Building

Some literature shows that when a problem is considered as important, then the message becomes meaningful. However, on the other hand, when the problem is considered unimportant, the message becomes meaningless. The key idea is that issues that are perceived as important also affect linguistic expectations. Firmness can support perceived urgency and influence ideas that cover important issues. Therefore, the message's languages, expectations, and bold requests need to be more persuasive when the recipient also views the issues as important (Burgoon; et al., 1994).

Fazio (1986, 1995) argues that strict language is more likely to be used in cases where it is in line with established attitudes. Conversely, weak and polite requests in this context may be considered irritating or "too polite" (Lakoff & Sachiko 2005; Tsuzuki, Miamoto, and Zhang 1999). This, in turn, reduces compliance because nonassertive languages are not in tune with the perceived importance of the problem.

- H1. Message assertiveness has a significant effect on the level of customer compliance
- H2. Perceived importance has a significant effect on consumer compliance
- H3. Perceived importance moderates the influence of message assertiveness to consumer compliance

Fig. 1. Conceptual framework



3. RESEARCH METHOD

3.1. Population and Sample

The population of this study is active smokers in Surabaya, who are either still actively smoking or who are trying to stop smoking. This research used non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling method, and a sample determination technique with certain consideration. So the data obtained are more representative due to conducting a competent research process in their field (Sugiyono, 2010: 124). The sample criteria used are: active smokers, age of respondents 17 years and over, men, knowing the anti-smoking campaign program

3.2. Variables and their Measurements

1. *Message assertiveness (X)* is the consumer's assessment of anti-cigarette campaign messages conveyed in a strict language. It was measured by three indicators (Burgoon; et al., 1994)

2. *Compliance l (Z)* refers to the extent to which a consumer accepts or rejects a request to comply with a message to quit smoking. It was measured by six indicators. (Cialdiani, 2009):

3. *Perceived importance(Y)* is the consumers' perception of the importance of the issue in question. When the consumers feel that the problem is important to them and they have a high involvement in the problem then the consumers will tend to behave / respond to it. It was measured by two indicators.

When the questionnaires were distributed, the respondents were given cognitive treatment by given shown the examples of anti-smoking campaign scripts or taglines from the government in order to facilitate their understanding of the assertive message in question. The questions in the questionnaire were made using the Likert scale (1-5) which has five levels of preferences (5:Favourable to 1 Unfavorable).

3.2. Analysis Technique

In accordance with the purpose of the research, which was finding out the impact of the independent variable, of message assertiveness on the level of compliance by looking at the moderation effects of the perceived importance variable, then the statistical test used is Moderating Regression Analysis (MRA).

4. RESULT OF RESEARCH

Of the 100 respondents who met the criteria specified in the study, only 94 respondents filled in the questionnaire completely. The remaining six respondents did not fill it in completely, so that the respondent's answer was cancelled for further processing in this study.

- Partially message assertiveness (X) variable has a significant effect on compliance (Y),
- Partially variable of perceived importance (Z) has a significant influence on compliance (Y),
- Partially multiplication between variable of message assertiveness (X) with variable of perceived importance (Z),
- The perceived importance (Z) variable is a moderation variable
- It can be known that all the significant values are equal to or less than 0.05

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	9.824	2.315		4.243	.000
message	-.206	.572	-.1397	3.604	.001
importance	1.487	.748	-.1229	1.987	.050
xz	.464	.186	1.759	2.503	.014

The R Square used in the test is 0.359, which shows that from the equation 35.9% of the compliance change value (Y) is influenced by both of the variables studied, while the rest, 0.641 or 64.1%, are influenced by other variables that are not in the research model.

The results of the moderation regression testing conducted with the help of the SPSS (Statistical Program for Social Science) computer program for Windows obtained the following regression equation:

$$Y = 9,824 - 2,060 X - 1,487 Z + 0,464 XZ$$

5. IMPLICATION, CONCLUSION AND LIMITATION

5.1. Implication

From the results of this research in the previous sub-chapter, it can be seen that the message assertiveness (X) variable has a significant effect on compliance (Y), and that perceived importance (Z) variables significantly influence compliance (Y). This means that when the consumer sees an assertive advertising campaign with straightforward language prohibiting people from smoking, consumers are becoming less compliant. A call to force people to quit smoking makes consumers reluctant to comply with the invitation, even though they know that the

invitation is for their own good. This is in accordance with the findings obtained in previous research which shows the weakness of assertive phrases used in persuasion, such as in the following researches; consumer behavior and psycholinguistics (e.g. Dillard & Sheen, 2005; Dillard et al., 1997; Edwards, Li & Lee, 2002; Gibbs, 1986; Holtgraves, 1991), and that messages / prohibitions that are open (assertive) tend to make people become reluctant to comply with the ban. Managerial implications that could be drawn from this research are that it is a good idea to ban coercive messages or to use a call to not smoke that is not assertive.

The perceived importance (Z) variable significantly affects the compliance (Y) and a negative value means that when a consumer considers himself to have no involvement with a cigarette problem or assumes a cigarette problem is not an issue that matters to him, he will obey the prohibition to quit smoking. On the other hand, if the consumer feels the cigarette problem is important to him and he is involved with the problem of cigarettes, then he becomes disobedient to the smoking ban.

Perceived importance is a moderating variable that links between the message assertiveness and compliance variables. It means that when the consumer sees an assertive advertisement message to ban smoking, the consumer becomes disobedient to the smoking cessation and the correlation becomes stronger when the consumer feels that the cigarette problem is not important to him and he is not involved in it.

This study supports the findings of Kronrod's (2012), which indicate that if the problem is not recognized as important, the communication receiver will see a message and stick with it. Someone will comply with an invitation / ban depending on how important the problem is to him / her.

5.2. Conclusion

From the research results and discussion described in the previous section, several conclusions can be drawn from the study as follows:

1. message assertiveness significantly influences compliance on anti-smoking advertising campaigns in Surabaya.
2. It is found that perceived importance significantly influences compliance on anti-smoking campaigns.
3. It is found that perceived importance is the moderating variable that correlates the message assertiveness toward compliance in the anti-smoking campaigns.

5.3. Limitations and Further Research

From the study results, discussion and conclusions that have been described in the previous section,

some suggestions can be given for further research. They are:

1. Further research should be able to examine the factors of the demographic characteristics of the respondents such as age, family and education background, as a valence moderator that affect compliance.
2. such as consumers, who are still actively smoking and those who have stopped smoking. The subsequent research can also expand the objects of the research into two groups of consumers.
3. There is a limited data collection procedure in distributing questionnaires and showing video advertising campaigns directly to each consumer, so that the respondents were not treated equally or not conditioned in the same circumstances.

6. REFERENCES

- Shimp, T. A. (2003). *Advertisement and Promotion*, Erlangga, Jakarta,
- Burgoon, M. Hunsaker, F. G. & Dawson, E. J. (1994). *Approaches to gaining compliance*. In *Human Communication* (3rd ed.) pp.203-217) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications
- Cialdini, R. B., & Goldstein. 2004, N. J, "Social influence: Compliance and Conformity". *Annual Review of Psychology*, 55, 591-621.
- Clark, Anne R, "The Impact of Cost of Compliance, Deservingness of Aid, and Directness of Request on Reactions to the Request," *Souther Communication Journal*, 58 (3), 215–26, 1993.
- Cleveland, Mark, Maria Kalamas, and Michel Laroche, 2005, "Shades of Green: Linking Environmental Locus of Control and pro-Environmental Behaviors," *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 22 (4), 198–212.
- Goldstein, Noah J., Robert B. Cialdini, and Vladas Griskevicius. 2008, "Norms to Motivate Environmental Conservation in Hotels," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 35 (3), 472–82
- Grinstein, Amir and Udi Nisan. 2009. "Demarketing, Minorities and Marketing Attachment," *Journal of Marketing*, 73 (April), 105–122.
- Khasali, Rhenald, 2007., *Manajemen Periklanan, Konsep dan Aplikasinya di Indonesia*, Grafiti, Jakarta
- Kronrod Ann, Amir Grinstein, & Luc Wathieu. 2012. "Go Green! Should Environmental Messages Be So Assertive?" *Journal of Marketing* Vol. 76 (January 2012), 95–102
- Lakoff, Robin T. and Ide Sachiko, eds. 2005., *Broadening the Horizon of Linguistic Politeness, Pragmatics and Beyond* New Series 139. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Peraturan Pemerintah No 109/2012 Tentang Kampanye Anti Rokok
- Sarafino dan Slamet B, 2007. *Psikologi Umum*. Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya,

Sarwono, Sarlito W., dan Meinarno,Eko A. 2009. Psikologi Sosial, Salemba Humanika, Jakarta.