

## An Exploration of Audience Views on Musical Power in Television Advertising and Consumer Decision Making

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### ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this article is to explore the exposure of musical power in television advertising on consumer decision making. This study applies an in-depth interview as the method of data collection from young consumers. The in-depth interview involves ten informants that were selected based on purposive sampling. The sampling was chosen based on demographic and psychographic survey as to explore their knowledge of topic interest. The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) was applied to view the process of decision making among young consumers vis-à-vis of musical content in television advertisement. Using thematic approach, two themes emerged from qualitative data. The finding reported in this study, revealed that music in advertisement affects audiences' emotions and moods. Also, music in advertisement shapes perception about the advertised products or services. This study contributes by offering relevant insight to the advertising and music industries in incorporating musical tones and catchy sounds as an important component of advertisement content.

#### Keywords:

Advertising; music; consumer decision  
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## 1. Introduction

Advertising has remained an important means of persuading and stimulating consumers' decision towards a product or service. According to Shevy *et al.*, [35], advertising can be known as the most energetic source of income that motivates the majority of profitable media. Furthermore, the function of advertising is more towards the engagement or attraction of the emotion and behavioural decision [46]. In fact, the primary purpose of any advertisement is to influence consumers decision about the advertised products or services that are [18] existing in the marketplace. Music has always been an important component of advertisement content [6,21]. Music is said to have the power to influence the purchase of advertised product or services through long-term effects [46].

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Furthermore, music in advertisement can arouse the audience emotion towards the advertisement content [2,35,47]. As stated by Bolatito [6], persuasion of an advertisement can makes the audience become changing in preferences, reinforcing, and shaping responses towards the advertised product or services in advertisement content. Although, almost all television advertisements are incorporated with musical contents to persuades audience, however, advertisers still find it difficult to engage with their target audience [39]. As stated by Teixeira [39] the presence of musical contents in advertisement can be distracting as some audience may not pay attention to other components of the advertisement content while others may find it uninteresting [14]. Hence, the role of musical contents in advertisement can be said to be paradoxically positive and negative at the same time.

More so, there has been limited study on musical content in advertisement and its role in consumer decision making process towards the advertised products and services. Therefore, this study aims at exploring how musical contents are used to engage consumers and attract them to make decision to buy a particular products or services.

### *1.1 Musical Power Exposure on Consumer Decision Making*

Music has the power as it can satisfy the audience emotional needs [22,24,25] towards the advertised product or service that is shown on television. Basically, musical power is known to increase cognitive load, which is to motivate and stimulate audience to think. Jones [19] stated that music has the power to stimulate a massive amount of cognitive, affective and motor responses as the advertisement can generally motivates the consumer in terms of decision making to purchase the advertised product or services [1].

Furthermore, consumers will be motivated to search the related information about the advertised products or services, and process it more cautiously when they are in high motivation [26]. There is a study done by Nielsen [26], which, found that music can put viewers and listeners in a more positive mood, leading to a greater confidence on intuition and focus on detail of the advertisement content. Also, Adhikary [1] claimed that advertising has the ability to arouse responses from consumers in terms of decision-making process of buying the advertised product or services. The exposure of music can arise the desires or intention towards the advertised product or service in visual form, which is a confluence of emotions and state of mind, that can put consumer in decision making context of buying it [1,23].

Music moves the consumer to search and process the information in deeper level. Szabo [31] states that music in the form of audiovisual solutions can be useful for the success of the advertisement, as it could increase and retain attraction and the attention of the viewers. Furthermore, music in the sense of present, which allows consumer to have the choice of product based on todays trend. For example, consumers' choices are more based on identity play, gaining social currency and self-branding [45] in which the music can portray through advertising perspectives. Then, the choices that are made by consumers are significantly influenced by the changes in decision making context for example time pressure and endless opportunities [45]. Thus, consumer will have cognitive processing as it leads them to focus on the advertisement content to buy the advertised product that is arose by its musical exposure.

## **2. Method**

This research uses qualitative approach as it needs an in-depth interpretation. The research question can be linked to the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) because it is the persuasion

communication theory [27,29,35] in which the use of musical power for this study is suitable in exploring its affection on consumer decision making through television advertisement content.

Furthermore, Tongco [40] suggested that the applied in-depth interview for this research is to have a clear understanding of a phenomenon. Hence, qualitative approach is very suitable as it can figure meanings and experiences from the expert point of view, as well as it provides the need for new knowledge.

Besides that, purposive sampling was applied as it requires access to key informants in the field who can help in identifying information-rich cases [37]. The applied purposive sampling can be done in many ways of data gathering technique [17]. For example, there is a study about farmers, their main economic activities and land uses where it applied purposive sampling in selection of farmers through interviews, survey, and focus group discussion [4]. Thus, purposive sampling is the most effective technique when a researcher needs to study a particular field with knowledgeable experts within [40].

Furthermore, this research chooses to use demographic and psychographic survey as to identify informants with information rich cases in understanding the exposure of musical power in television advertising and consumer decision making perspectives. This survey was done using online application to young consumers group. As stated by Friestad *et al.*, [10], this survey is important as to retain consumers and it identifies basic beliefs and attitudes that influence consumer behavior in various situations. Researcher distributes the survey to fifty young consumers to participate on this study. After that, only twenty-five respondent have answered the survey and from that, the researcher starts to find which respondent has the richest information on this topic interest. Based on the answers given by the respondents, researcher manage to find only ten respondent that has the richest information using the purposive sampling technique. Hence, by using the demographic and psychographic survey will expose the researcher to recognize informants that has knowledge in this topic interest based on their response in the survey.

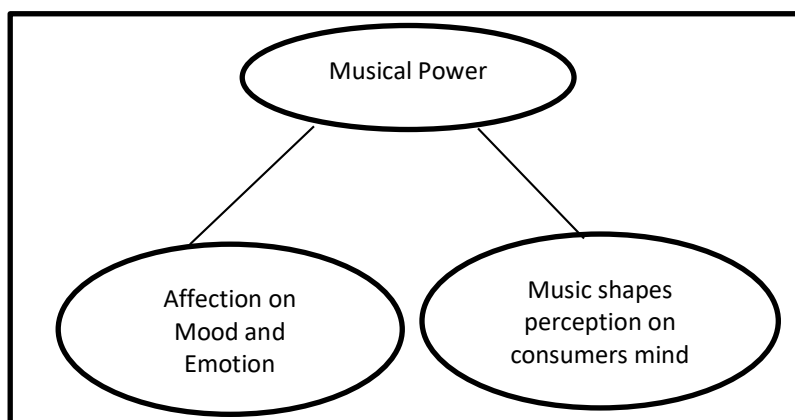
The ten informants from young consumers survey are chosen for in-depth interview session based on the response that they gave in the survey. The ten informants are believed to have the rich information regarding this topic interest. Then, thematic analysis is chosen to produce the themes. During data analysis stage, researcher analysed the transcription of the interview and coded line by line using recoding units, until researcher stop at tenth informants as it is found that the interview data seems to be repeated and no new information gained. Saunders [34], stated that saturation point arrives when there is no new information is obtained from the analysis. Hence, the researcher has to produce the logical structure arrangement of the data by determining and interpret it [6]. The informants will be labelled as for example, consumer 1, (C1), consumer 2 (C2).

### 3. Findings

In findings there are two themes emerged from this study on the exposure of musical power bring response to the consumer mind in terms of making decision towards buying the advertised products or services. First is music affection on mood and emotion. Second, music shapes the perception on consumers mind about the advertisement content.

Figure 1 shows that the exposure of musical power can leads to consumer decision making in two-fold. First it can arise its affection on emotions and mood of young consumer towards the advertisement content. Since music function is to affects consumers' moods and emotion, it can put them in decision making as well towards the advertisement content. As stated in the (ELM) theory, [11,35] music affects the consumers emotions towards the advertisement content as well as it raised their motivation and capacity to elaborate and make decisions of buying the advertised product or

service. Second, it can shape perception of the advertised product or service inside the consumer's mind. The themes produced using Nvivo data analysis program as it is the clear way to manage and analysed the data.



**Fig. 1.** The thematic mapping on the exposure of musical power leads to consumer decision making

### 3.1 Music as Affection on Emotion and Mood

This section discusses the findings obtained from the musical power exposure towards consumer decision making of advertised product or service. Music can be as affection on emotions and mood towards the advertisement content. Based on data analysis, nine informants emphasised that music has strong power to affect consumer emotions and mood when viewing the advertisement content through television. Television, video or audio-visual form is a medium that can reach a wide range of viewers [32] as the advertisers can use it to advertise their products or services. As stated by Burnard *et al.*, [7], music is the most prevalent features as its power has the ability to represent or express meanings to be understood by the audience. For instance, (inf C10) explain on how music affects her mood and emotion towards the advertisement content.

*"Its music attracts me first...The music which is fast beat, because it can attract us to see what the advertisement is all about and [it] can lift our mood up. It's like the instrument to attract consumer to watch and to listen to the advertisement... even we are eating but when we hear the advertisement, we straightly see what the advertisement is all about."* (Inf C 10)

Similarly, (Inf C6) and (inf C8) have the same point of views as well as they supported (Inf C10) point of view. They explained that musical power can influence consumers emotions and mood strongly as it can affect their decision making as they started to focus on the advertisement content.

*"Music that is able to stimulate people's emotion towards the brand in advertising as it can put consumers to think because of its melody, its lyrics [and] so [that] it attracts people to more focus on what is in the ad, so that's when the music becomes powerful."* (Inf C6)

The above quote from (C6) shows that music has the ability to put consumer in cognitive processing towards the advertisement content. According to ELM theory, consumer will use effortful

processing that is essential to pay careful attention to the relevant information in the message, relating that information to previous knowledge stored in memory [29]. Thus, music will trigger consumers mind to think and put them in decision making as they started to focus on advertisement content.

*“Actually, the [advertisement content shows] product [that] just [seems as] an ordinary product, but when it came with the music, it makes the consumer to feel interested that they wanted to buy the product...[in advertisement content] for me, when I watch Cadbury ad, I feel happy the way the music was played at the background makes me want that chocolate,... and I make up my mind to buy it when I get to class next week. so, the [advertiser] just want to attract consumer to buy their product.”* (C8)

Generally, everything from music in advertising perspectives has been shown to influence the consumers thought in terms of decision making, and feelings which can be known also as behaviour towards the advertisement content. As stated by Burnard *et al.*, [7], music is very strong for consumers emotions and mood as it can affect the consumer decision making towards the advertised product or services [42]. These findings showed that from the attraction or affection of music towards the consumers mind, will put them in decision making on the advertisement content. Thus, music is a powerful and appealing stimulus that influences decision-making processes, risk-taking, and affects consumers’ behavioural choices towards the advertisement content.

### 3.2 Music Shapes the Perception of the Advertised Product or Service inside the Consumer’s Mind

Music can bring perception about the advertised product or service through visual form which is television screen. Belcher *et al.*, [4] explained that perception comes from outer environment produces signals such as (visual, auditory, etc.) can be sensed, as an individual receives these signals and converts them into psychologically meaningful representations that define our inner experience of the world. Based on data analysis, there are eight consumers talking about music bring perception to consumers mind as it would affect their decision making of having the advertised product. For instance, (inf C10) and (Inf C2) explain on how music bring perception to their mind about the advantage of the advertised product or service in television advertisement content.

*“...music can give perception to the consumer about the product. For example, advertisement about a perfume, music that they use is soft. So, we can know from there, the use of soft music shows us the softness of the perfume smell. Yes, it does gives effects [to the decision making]. Because if we like the music, we will get influenced with that product. For example, if we like the music, and indirectly if it related with the product, we will try to find more information about the product that we fall in love to get it.”* (C10)

*“Music brings the perception to youngsters about the product. For example, there is one ad about clear shampoo featuring Nichole Scherzinger the music gives the perception to me... I’m like...wow! Its powerful, the shampoo must be very good, so it can make the consumer attracted to try the product.”* (C2)

Hence, music has the power to bring perception towards the consumer’s mind regarding the advertised product or services in television advertising content. Godambe [13], states that music

induces human brain to process information as it attracts attention, and stimulate emotions of the consumer towards the advertisement content [47]. Indirectly it can lead them to be in decision making context to buy the advertised product or services.

#### 4. Conclusions

In conclusion, this article has discussed primarily on the issue related to music and its power in advertising. The findings of this study are hoped to provide insight on the importance of the exposure of musical power towards consumer decision making. Thus, the finding may provide contribution in advertising industry on producing new and fresh tone but catchy sounds for visual advertising perspectives as to capture consumers mind to make decision of buying the advertised product through television advertisement effectively.

Overall finding from this study shows that music has the strong exposure as it can induce consumers emotion as well as bring the perception about the advertised product or service to their mind. By this process of occurrence, decision making of young consumer might be affected as they started process the information from the advertisement content.

For future study, a researcher can explore more on how music needs to be used in creative advertising techniques that can tap into an overly competitive market. The researcher also can carry out a research on music that is unique and readily available to catch the listeners' attention especially from the millennials group of audience as to see their response and their point of view. For example, advertisements with artsy creative and high visual impact frequently score with millennials group [38]. Thus, the high-quality creativity with movie quality visuals is frequently a good start in scoring with the group via television advertising perspectives [38].

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