Influencer representation in Tokopedia advertising: Tokopedia squad

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1. Introduction

Advertising is all personal presentation and promotional activities for an idea, product or service paid by an identifiable sponsor [1]. Kotler stated that advertising is divided into 2 categories, namely traditional advertising, and advertising on digital media. Advertisements published through television, magazines and radio are called traditional media advertisements. On the other hand, digital media advertisements are advertisements that are uploaded through Internet sites and social media.

YouTube is an application that provides free services for its users to upload videos or personal content that can be viewed by the public. Content creators can also receive a "salary" from YouTube, which comes from the advertisements that are inserted into their videos. With YouTube, companies can produce advertisements and insert their ads into the creator's content videos. Due to the rapid growth of YouTube and social media users in Indonesia, many companies are naturally interested in using YouTube as a medium to promote their products or services through advertising. Tokopedia is one of the companies with the largest IT and telecommunications sub-industry in Indonesia. It was founded in 2009 by William Tanuwijaya and Leontinus Alpha Edison and is based in Jakarta. The system that is operated by Tokopedia is to bring together the buyers and the sellers through the Internet. Tokopedia also provides facilities for each community to open their own shop or brand to be managed in this online shop.

Although Tokopedia is the most visited e-commerce by consumers and one of the most popular at the moment [2], Tokopedia still advertises to maintain its position from competing e-commerce. Tokopedia also uses television advertising, social media, and artists as part of a successful marketing strategy [3]. Advertising is a form of communication that does not involve direct interaction between the communicator and the communicant and is usually funded by a single sponsor to promote a particular business, good, idea, or service. It often uses mass media channels such as television, radio, magazines, or newspapers and maintains an impersonal nature with limited face-to-face communication, except in the case of direct response advertising or direct marketing [4].
Advertising is a promotional tool from the new marketing communications mix, a set of media used by companies to persuade, remind, and inform consumers about the brand of the product or service being sold [5]. The purpose of marketing communications is to convey information about products or services and to influence consumers to purchase the products being sold [6].

Furthermore, an advertisement from Tokopedia will be examined in this article. One of the advertisements produced by Tokopedia is an advertisement entitled Tokopedia Squad. This advertisement, which was posted on YouTube on July 18, 2022, contains several influencers from the capital. This advertisement entitled "Tokopedia Squad" tells that Tokopedia has a group of influencers who can provide all the needs of consumers through Tokopedia, from the fields of technology, fashion, baby equipment to makeup needs. Each influencer in this ad has a difference in their respective market types. The use of influencers in this advertisement is very interesting to study. Because there is a uniqueness in that not many ads use so many influencers. Most ads use only one to three influencers. In the case of this ad, Tokopedia uses more than five influencers, eleven influencers. The "Tokopedia Squad" advertisement presents a group of influencers who represent the lifestyle of Indonesia's young generation and promote the Tokopedia platform as a practical shopping solution [7].

To find out the meaning contained in this advertisement, the researchers used semiotics. In this semiotic analysis, the author uses Peirce's semiotic theory. Peirce argued that there are three elements contained in a sign, namely representamen, object, and interpretant. These three elements are interrelated or related to each other, the relationship between sending signs and receiving signs can be called the process of semiosis. The process of interpreting properties in Peirce explores the relationship between 3 arrow directions, namely: representation or R (quall Sign, signed, and legisign), object or O (icon, index, and symbol), and interpretant or I, namely: rheme, decisor, and argument. R is part of the properties that can be physically and mentally perceived and refers to something represented by O, then I is a process that can interpret the relationship between R and O. A representation is a body or module that has a function as a characteristic, can be interpreted is the meaning of another characteristic that is equivalent to it, or a set of personal interpretations that can be publicly interpreted.

In essence, representations and interpretants can be said to be like properties, namely something that can represent something else, it's just that the representation appears before the interpretant, and the interpretant exists because of the existence of the representation. Objects are represented by properties that have the character of "reality" or something that is thought to exist. This means objects that are concrete or real, especially abstract, imaginary, and fictitious. Peirce’s properties and denotation focus on three aspects of properties, namely iconic, indexical, and symbolic. Iconic is something that represents and acts like a unified indicator with the shape of the object (appears in a photograph or painting). An index acts like an indicator and shows its sign, and a symbol is an indicator that acts like an indicator used in currency [8]. In addition, the researchers used Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotics and made Tokopedia's advertisements the subject of research. This can be seen from the signs and meanings contained in the advertisement. Thus, the researcher raised the title Representation of the Meaning of Influencers in the "Tokopedia Squad" Advertisement.

2. Methodology

Researchers use a qualitative approach which aims to describe and reveal what phenomena exist in the research objects being studied [9]. Meanwhile, this research is a qualitative descriptive type that aims to describe the facts about certain objects accurately, factually, and systematically. The research material used by the researchers in this study was an advertisement from Tokopedia, namely Tokopedia Squad. This advertisement is an advertisement that is broadcast on the internet network and has almost the same concept as other advertisements. This Tokopedia Squad ad is 1:38 minutes long and there are eleven influencers used in the ad. In this research, the researchers studied 5 influencers used by Tokopedia in the advertisement. The analysis carried out is limited to the Influencer who plays this advertisement, where there is evidence that the Influencer is used to describe various features and categories in Tokopedia. This research uses Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic analysis method. Semiotics is a model of social science that aims to understand the world as a connected system and has a foundation that is often called 'signs' [10]. Therefore, semiotics basically studies the existence of a sign. The semiotic study itself is used as an approach strategy that acts as a tool for analyzing media texts with the assumption that there are media that are communicated with different types of signs [10].

Pierce analyzes semiotics using a triadic model, in this model there are three elements, namely sign, interpretant, and object. This model is called the triangle meaning semiotics. There are three elements in Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic analysis, namely [9]:

1. Sign: a physical form whose shape and form can be seen from the human five senses. Apart from that, a sign is something that can describe other things apart from the sign itself. The reference for evaluating a sign is usually called the object.
2. Object: As explained above, an object is a reference for a sign, which has a social context as a reference to the sign or describes the sign.

3. Interpretant: the concept of an individual's thoughts that use signs, as a result creating a certain meaning, or a meaning that is basically contained in a person's mind, which contains the object referred to by a sign.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Results

This research examines the presence of influencers in Tokopedia's marketing strategy, which involves eleven influencers representing different market categories in Tokopedia Squad advertisements. Although eleven influencers were involved in this advertisement, the analysis conducted will focus on five specific influencers. The selection of these five influencers was based on qualitative considerations and relevance to the research objectives. In addition, the selection of the five influencers was based on popularity and the different target markets each influencer is targeting. The five influencers have different target markets and are more popular than other influencers. Therefore, this research will analyze in more detail the role of five influencers who are considered to best represent the positive influence and impact on Tokopedia's image and sales in different market categories.

**Scene 1 - Time: 0:15 - 0:19**

*Figure 1. Analysis of Jerome Polin Sign*

**Object**

In figure 1a there is a group of young people gathered in a room planning something, all dressed informally and sitting next to each other. In figure 1b there is a young man holding a piece of paper and showing an expression of thinking.

**Interpretant**

In Figure 1a, a group of young men and women can be seen gathering in a room and planning something, as can be seen from the table filled with papers and the room with lots of paper stuck to the wall. The layout of the room also gives the impression of 'secrecy', as they gather in rooms that look hidden and abandoned, rather than in open spaces. The color symbols in Figure 1a illustrate harmony, with cool tones. From the color of the room, the color of the influencers' faces is greenish. The green color means success and growth, and the color of the Tokopedia logo is also green. This means that Tokopedia wants to show that its application and this advertisement bring growth to its audience and the dominant green color can also mean that this ad has a strong personality for the Tokopedia brand. In this scene, a long shot is also used to show all the influencers in this Tokopedia Squad ad.

In Figure 1a, you can see a young man holding a piece of paper while he seems to be thinking and paying attention to the paper. This young man is Jerome Polin, one of the influencers used in this ad. In scene 1, you can also see that writing appears on the screen showing Jerome Polin's name and his role in this advert, as a member of the Tokopedia team. Jerome Polin's role as a leader can be deduced from his diverse content, and this influencer is also famous for his intelligence in the field of mathematics, as he has several achievements in this field, even receiving a 100% scholarship to study in Japan. Therefore, in addition to his large number of followers on social media, Jerome Polin's smart and educated branding is suitable to make him the president of the Tokopedia squad. In this scene, you can see that the shot was taken from a low angle, which aims to
show a character who has more power than those of us who are in a lower position. This can also convey the role of Jerome Polin in this advert, who is the leader of the Tokopedia Squad.

**Scene 2 - Time: 0:23 - 0:27**

![Figure 2. Analysis of David Brendi Sign](image)

**Object**

In Figure 2a you can see a man sleeping in his room, then a hanging figure comes down to him and wants to give him something or do something to him. In picture 2b, a person hanging from a board, dressed in black, is putting a watch on a young man sleeping in his bed.

**Interpretant**

In Figure 2a you can see a man sleeping in his room, then there is a hanged person who comes down to him and wants to give him something or do something to him, the hanged person is David Gadgetin, because there is a narrative that Gadgetin writes and explains the category, namely the electronic category. Also, here you can see David hanging from the roof like a thief, which illustrates that the activities that were carried out were secret and the sleeping young man did not want to know. In this scene you can see that the rooms in this scene are again dominated by green, because they want to strengthen the brand identity of Tokopedia, where the Tokopedia logo is green. The shot in this scene uses a high angle, where the audience is made to feel involved and see directly what is happening in this ad, where Tokopedia wants us, the audience, to understand the problems of the man sleeping in the room.

In Figure 2b we can see David attaching an electronic device, a watch, to the hand of a young man named Angga, as the narrator calls him. David Gadgetin uses electronic devices because he is an influencer in the electronics sector and his target market is fans of electronic devices. Also, in this scene, David Gadgetin helps himself by installing a clock with an alarm to make sure he wakes up to go on a date with his girlfriend. In this case, we can see that Tokopedia provides solutions and helps people through the products it sells. In this scene, David Gadgetin describes the electronics category. Also, in this scene you can see a change in atmosphere based on the colors in Figure 2a, where there is an increase in light and brightness, which makes the colors in this scene look brighter. When David Gadgetin came down and installed the clock, the background colour visible behind him was a green wall. The difference in color nuances and the green background can mean that Tokopedia is here to provide growth and success for its users, aka it is here to be a solution for its users.

**Scene 3 - Time: 0:45 - 0:47**

![Figure 3. Analysis of Titan Tyra Sign](image)
Object
In Figure 3, there is a woman watching another woman (Titan) holding a make-up tool while giving information about the product she is holding.

Interpretant
In Figure 3 there is a female actor, an influencer called Titan Tyra, she is an influencer in the beauty industry, here you can see Titan Tyra giving information about the product she is holding. The product that he is holding is a beauty product, you can also tell by the gestures that he is making, like putting on powder or make-up. In this scene you can also see a visual effect that represents the live Instagram frame. This scene shows Titan Tyra reviewing make-up products while "live" on Instagram. It highlights that this beauty category is being demonstrated by Titan Tyra, an influencer in the make-up space, explaining the product she is holding, which she hopes will help consumers improve their beauty.

In this scene, it is also shown that there are female talents who are confused, and Titan Tyra appears and gives tips about beauty tools. This is emphasized again in this advertisement, where Tokopedia is here to provide a solution for users who are confused about looking for make-up tools, and in this advertisement, Titan Tyra is the face for Tokopedia users to be the solution. In this scene there is also a change in color which is more cheerful. It can be seen from the various colors in the background and the color of the clothes worn by Titan Tyra. Although it is still dominated by green. However, the green color in this scene is brighter or brighter, depicting a happier atmosphere than the previous scene or the David Gadgetin scene. Where Titan Tyra, apart from providing solutions, also brings happiness through the tips given on beauty tools.

Interpretant
In Figure 4a you can see a child playing games, as can be seen by his body gestures and fingers pressing buttons on his smartphone, as well as tilting his smartphone, indicating that the child is playing games on his mobile phone, then suddenly a woman appears next to him. The woman is Angie Marchieta. Angie is an influencer who works in the gaming industry because she is the brand ambassador for an e-sports team in Indonesia, Bigetron. In this scene, you can see Angie suddenly appearing next to him as if she were playing a game, but her phone is not tilted, and she is not pressing the buttons as aggressively as the boy. There is also a visual effect showing Tokopedia's sales categories, Top-up, and Bills. In this scene a medium shot was used to show a significant difference in expression, before Angie arrived the child looked focused on playing the game, after Angie's presence the child looked happier and more cheerful, but still focused on the game. Here we can see that Tokopedia has come to bring joy to its users, in this case represented by Angie Marcheria. Furthermore, in terms of color, this scene is dominated by neutral colors, such as grey and cream, with green touches only on the clothes worn by Angie Marcheria. The color grey means neutral, impartial, or undecided. This means that the child in this scene is in a state of doubt or boredom until Angie arrives and makes his play experience
more cheerful. In this scene it can also be seen that Angie is the only one who brings shades of green, which means that Angie carries the brand identity of Tokopedia, or you could say that Angie represents Tokopedia in this scene.

In Figure 4b you can see a child playing a game and Angie is sitting next to him, then the child gives a gesture of success with his fist and the dialogue is "yes", this illustrates the success achieved by the child in playing the game, along with the gesture given by the child, Angie is seen pressing her smartphone and then a visual effect appears that says "top up was successful". This shows Angie topping up the child's bill for playing the game and making them happy. In this scene it can also be seen that Angie is acting here as an influencer, providing solutions to Tokopedia consumers, that Tokopedia can also be a means for consumers to top up, especially in the games category, because once again Angie is an influencer whose followers are mostly people.

- People who like to play games, especially mobile legend games, because Angie is known as a beautiful woman who is the brand ambassador of Bigetron, the Indonesian e-sports team.

**Scene 5**

**Object**

In Figure 5 it can be seen a woman posing like a model in a place where there is a wardrobe or clothes storage area with several clothes hanging in the wardrobe.

**Interpretant**

Figure 5 shows a woman posing like a model, this woman is Patricia Gouw. where Patricia Gouw is also an Influencer from Indonesia. In this scene, Patricia is describing the women's fashion category, which can be seen from the appearance of a visual effect that says the model's name is Patricia Gouw and she is describing the women's fashion category. The reason why Patricia Gouw has become the face of the women's fashion category can be derived from the analysis that Patricia Gouw became known to the public through her participation in a television programme entitled Asia's Next Top Model. In this international television programme, Patricia Gouw managed to come second. Apart from that, she has also participated in various beauty pageants, namely Femina Face 2010 runner-up, 2nd runner-up in Miss ASEAN 2010, Top 15 finalist in Miss Indonesia 2012. Since 2016, Patricia has also had a presenter and radio broadcaster, namely Hard Rock FM.

In this scene, there are also differences in color tones, where in the scene seen above, the color tone is dominated by yellow. The yellow color represents joy and happiness. In this scene, Tokopedia wants to share joy and happiness with its viewers through its presence as an application that offers various types of products and services, in this scene, of course, through Patricia Gouw, who represents the Women's Fashion category.

**4. Discussion**

Based on the results of the analysis, this research found several influencers used in the Tokopedia Squad advertisement. There are eleven influencers in the advertisement. However, this research only examined 5 influencers, which were analyzed based on Peirce's semiotic analysis technique. The selection of the five influencers was based on their popularity and the different target markets that each influencer addresses. The five influencers have different target markets and have higher popularity than other influencers. This research shows five different characters, namely Jerome Polin, David Gadgetin, Titan Tyra, Patricia Gouw, and Angie.
Marchieta. These five individuals are Influencers, each of whom is categorized as a Macro Influencer, who has many followers and can influence the consumers whose products are promoted.

Jerome Polin is an influencer who posts educational content such as math tests, life as a student in Japan and educating Indonesians about Japanese culture. Today, Jerome has more than 7 million followers on Instagram and more than 10 million subscribers on YouTube. That is why the role played in the ad is the leader of the Tokopedia Squad. Being a leader requires a high level of intelligence. Therefore, Jerome Polin, apart from being famous for his entertaining content, Jerome Polin is also known for his high intellect, he managed to get a 100% scholarship to study in Japan, Jerome Polin also has high skills in mathematics which we can see in his content, it can be concluded that Jerome Polin became the leader of the Tokopedia Squad because he has a high intellect and many followers.

This research examines the involvement of a second influencer, David Gadgetin. The analysis presented in the table reveals that David assists a young individual by providing a watch that serves as a reminder for an upcoming morning appointment. This intervention prevents the young man from oversleeping and subsequently forgetting about the scheduled engagement. Consequently, it can be inferred that David is an influencer who promotes the product category of technology, specifically within the context of Tokopedia. Due to David Gadgetin's status as an Influencer specializing in the production of material pertaining to contemporary gadgets, his following predominantly consists of individuals seeking knowledge regarding diverse gadgets available in the market.

Likewise with Patricia Gouw's role in this Tokopedia Squad advertisement, Patricia Gouw is an influencer who has various achievements in Indonesia in the field of beauty. Unlike other influencers who started their careers through YouTube or Tiktok applications, Patricia Gouw started her career in traditional mass media, namely television. Patricia Gouw became known to the public because she participated in a television program entitled Asia's Next Top Model. In this international television program, Patricia Gouw succeeded in occupying second place. Apart from that, she also participated in various beauty competitions, namely runner up face of Femina 2010, 2nd place winner in Miss ASEAN 2010, top 15 finalists in the Miss Indonesia 2012 beauty event. Patricia has also been a presenter and radio broadcaster, namely Hard Rock FM, since 2016. In the scene in the Tokopedia Squad advertisement, Patricia Gouw appears to be a figure who provides inspiration regarding women's fashion, as can also be seen from the visuals that write about the women's fashion category. Patricia Gouw is an influencer who is a figure for Tokopedia to describe the women's fashion category for Tokopedia consumers.

Furthermore, Titan Tyra in the scene in Tokopedia Squad is also an influencer who describes one of Tokopedia's sales categories, namely body care and beauty. Because Titan Tyra is an internet celebrity from Indonesia. Starting her career in 2008 as a beauty vlogger, Titan Tyra was able to hook many Indonesians with her content. Titan Tyra has a YouTube account which has more than 900 thousand subscribers. She often gives beauty tips and tips on how to take care of herself, so she looks more beautiful [11]. Next, the fifth influencer, Angie Marchieta, described the Tokopedia categories, namely Top up and Bills. Angie is an influencer who is famous for her looks and beauty. Starting from creating content on his personal TikTok then becoming the brand ambassador of an Indonesian e-sports team, namely Bigetron. Because she is the brand ambassador for an e-sports team, Angie is famous for branding female gamers who have beautiful faces. Angie also has thousands of fans in Indonesia, her YouTube channel has 485 thousand subscribers, and her TikTok account has reached 1.9 million followers. Plus becoming a brand ambassador or from the Indonesian e-sports team, namely Bigetron. With her image as a brand ambassador for an e-sports team, Angie has many followers who like playing games. And in game play you need a top up to buy characters or features that can make the game more exciting.

With the five scenes analyzed from the five influencers, it can be concluded that the five influencers describe the sales categories and features found on Tokopedia, namely, Electronics, Beauty, Women's Clothing, and Top up bills. Where there is a marketing communication concept, namely the use of Influencers to communicate with Tokopedia users. Where Influencers are used here as a means for Tokopedia to reach its users. The influencer who represents the Tokopedia category in this advertisement also has a similar target market, such as David Gadgetin who has a target market or audience who follows him to find out information about the latest electronic devices on the market. Therefore, if David Gadgetin's followers want to buy electronic equipment, they can look for it on Tokopedia. Influencers have loyal followers, so they can increase visits to company websites, and even increase sales of a product, just through recommendations uploaded to a particular media channel [12].

Furthermore, each influencer presents certain categories and features that Tokopedia has, because apart
from the influencers having a large following, they also each have a strong fan base. Strengthened by writings from Savitri [13], namely Tokopedia has succeeded in selecting influencers who suit its product and target market to attract consumer buying interest. This research discusses the influence of celebrity endorsers and advertising in online marketing, especially on Tokopedia in Denpasar. The results show that celebrity endorsers, such as Isyana Sarasvati, and television advertisements have a positive impact on consumer buying interest. The conclusion of this research is that celebrity endorsers and advertising play an important role in increasing consumer buying interest, with suggestions to consider the criteria of celebrity endorsers and create attractive and unique advertisements.

Apart from that, the use of brand ambassadors in other Tokopedia advertisements has also been proven to have an influence. Tokopedia uses BTS as brand ambassadors in online advertising to attract consumer attention, depict BTS's positive character and create a positive image for Tokopedia. Data-based marketing strategies and collaboration with BTS fans have helped Tokopedia build strong brand awareness. This reflects the important role of BTS representation in Tokopedia advertising and its positive impact on consumer preferences in online shopping [14]. Furthermore, research from Wijaya [7] regarding the Tokopedia Squad advertisement revealed how this advertisement builds an ideology of convenience and consumerism, using influencers and language that accommodates the modern lifestyle of millennials. This advertisement successfully targets its audience consisting of young people who are looking for convenience, novelty, and exclusivity in online shopping, reflecting the influence of Tokopedia's power in influencing consumer perceptions and behavior.

Thus, it is very possible that these influencers can increase awareness of the category advantages that Tokopedia has. Like research from Thehawijaya and Susilo [15] that the use of figures, for example certain brand ambassadors, has a significant impact on product sales on Tokopedia. In other words, implicitly the categories and features contained in Tokopedia described in the advertisement can help increase awareness for its users, as a breakthrough from Tokopedia. Including how fans or followers of each influencer can be influenced to shop online via Tokopedia.

5. Conclusion

Tokopedia Squad commercials' use of the notion of influencer marketing communication was examined using different analytical tables that were supplied as part of this research. Influencers are used to describe several characteristics or categories in the program through an advertisement titled Tokopedia Squad. A variety of Influencers are employed to spread messages to Tokopedia users. Eleven influencers were utilized in this advertising, which might be considered many influencers for a single advertisement. There aren't many businesses that create advertising with so many Influencers. Following investigation, the categories, or qualities of Tokopedia were described using eleven influencers. Because each influencer has their own market, Tokopedia uses them to showcase the features or categories of the Tokopedia application, which naturally caters to each influencer's intended market or audience.

From this study, it can be inferred that the promotion of various features and product categories given by this platform has been enhanced by the usage of influencers in Tokopedia Squad advertising. According to research, influencers can generate consumer awareness and purchasing interest, particularly when they are carefully chosen in accordance with the products and target market of Tokopedia. In addition, Tokopedia makes use of artists, social media, and television advertising as part of an effective marketing plan. Another illustration of how this platform uses influencers to project an image of convenience and materialism that appeals to millennials is the use of influencers in Tokopedia Squad advertising. Influencers can contribute significantly to the growth of Tokopedia in the e-commerce market by raising consumer interest and awareness of the platform.

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Reference


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