

The Impact of Soft-Sell Appeal in TikTok on the Attitude towards the Ads

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Abstract: - This research analyses the impact of soft-sell advertising dimensions (image, feeling, and implicitness) on TikTok's viewers' purchase intentions through a positive attitude toward the ads. While many studies about soft-sell appeals, this research adds external validity to those studies by using the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) framework in the context of soft-selling in TikTok short videos. Since TikTok is now used for selling, the short video advertisements may drive purchase intention. We used a quantitative survey method with social media users in Indonesia. Data were collected using non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling method. We collected 209 usable responses and tested the hypothesis using partial least square structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS 4.0. Findings show that the data support all four hypotheses; the three soft-sell dimensions drive a positive attitude toward the ad and positively impact purchase intention. While all three soft-selling dimensions drive the positive attitude toward the ad, image plays the most crucial role. The study contributes to understanding advertising theory, especially theories about message appeal affecting viewers' behaviour, offering practical implications for advertising content creators.

Key-Words: - soft-sell, attitude toward the ad, advertising appeal, implicitness, image, feeling, purchase intention.

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1 Introduction

Due to the proliferation of digital marketing, customer interactions between firms and their clients have significantly changed. The interaction, availability of various content, and digital format enable smooth and personalized customer communication. Typically, consumers who use internet resources for shopping rely on social media, [1].

Millennials now frequently interact with influencer posts on social media, showing them the combination of commercial content and entertainment aspects in influencer video marketing, [2]. TikTok, a video-sharing social media app, has increased in popularity since its launch in 2016. While its popularity is unquestionable at first sight, it provides capabilities previously available on well-established platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook, [3]. Unlike Facebook, a text-based social media platform, and Instagram, a picture-based platform, TikTok is a platform for short videos, [4]. Studying the marketing communication style used in quick video content on this platform is essential. Based on the messages in short marketing videos uploaded to

TikTok, we can differentiate them into hard-selling (advertising the product and service in an obvious way) and soft-selling (non-obvious advertising).

The impact of soft-sell advertising has been extensively studied in the past. However, few studies have examined the relationship between soft-sell advertising and purchase intention in high-context cultures. The majority of Asian languages, like the Indonesian language, are high context. In high-context culture, an indirect communication style is preferred; the words should not be too 'forward,' too 'brash,' or bold; it should be more visual and with much more non-verbal signs than in cultures with low-context communication, [5].

However, globalization may shift this trend to more explicit communication, and people prefer direct verbal interaction. Due to this shift in the communication trend, the authors are drawn to investigate whether soft-selling approaches still form positive attitudes toward the message in high-context cultures. In the context of TikTok ads, it is essential to understand whether the impact of soft selling is still positive and, therefore, preferable. This study will

help marketers choose the right message strategy when advertising on TikTok in a high-context culture.

2 Problem Formulation (Literature Review and Hypotheses Formulation)

2.1 Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) Theory

The stimulus-organism-response (SOR) theory indicates that external stimuli affect an individual's affective (feeling) and cognitive (perception) reactions, which in turn shape individual behaviour. This study examined frameworks for online consumer behaviour using the SOR model, [5]. Customers are triggered by the stimulus, including situational or marketing stimuli, [6]. This study's stimulus comes from the three soft-sell message appeal dimensions (image, feeling, and explicitness). A person's affective and cognitive states represent their internal state, known as the organism [7]; it is also seen as a transition condition between the stimulus and the response, [8]. In this study, attitude towards the ad acts as the organism, as it results from the stimuli. Intention to purchase is a positive response resulting from the attitude towards the ad.

2.2 Soft Sell Advertising

Soft-sell advertising works on three components that evoke: (1) the degree of emotion, (2) the degree of implication, and (3) the degree to which the advertisement expresses the image, [9]. We propose and endorse the following changes to terminology to establish the specification of soft sell appeal dimensions: an emotional (feeling) that is a response from the audience. These appeals are often reserved and indirect; images or moods may be conveyed using beautiful scenes, emotionally charged narrative progression, or other indirect methods. Below are details of the three components used to implement soft-sell appeals.

2.2.1 Feeling

Soft-selling causes emotional reactions to the stimuli used in advertising. Soft-sell uses implicit and image-focused communications to arouse feelings, [10]. This emotional connection can lead to stronger brand attachment and a willingness to pay higher prices for branded products or services, [11]. Several theories

support the idea that both emotion and cognition influence persuasive communication. Many previous studies have investigated the extent to which ads are designed to evoke emotion rather than logical thinking. For example, the cognitive response hypothesis posits that thoughts and feelings, or "cognitive responses, " shape and change attitudes", [12].

2.2.2 Implicitness

Implicitness refers to using subdued or indirect language, including storytelling or emotional appeals, to make a point without making it clear, [13]. Soft-sell appeals transform and can result in the semantic expansion or multiplication of meaning when utilized in delicate, indirect, and subtle communications, [10]. Soft-sell does not specifically underline a product's competitive advantage and could be more sales-oriented, [10]. Subtle methods are used in implicit advertising to communicate a company's message, letting customers judge.

2.2.3 Image

Soft-selling attempts to evoke emotions by using implicit and image-focused messaging, [10]. A prior study found that non-textual information about products and brands, such as size, color, and brand logos, can significantly influence how well advertisement's function and how consumers view the products, [14]. In advertising, "image" refers to the general opinion or impression that a customer gets of a product or brand from its advertising. It encompasses the emotional and visual connections made by advertising messages, including the messaging, imagery, and color choices, [15]. Products are endowed with unique properties through a symbolic relationship, [16]. When a product is "installed" in a symbolic environment, it acquires meaning beyond its functions and components.

2.3 Attitude towards the Advertisement

Attitude toward the ad is the audience's affective reaction to the ad [17]. It is a good determinant of how effective the message is [18], [19], [20]. The consumer's attitude influences their behaviour, positively impacting their desire to purchase. Consumer attitudes in the online environment are influenced by various factors, including perceived benefits, perceived advertising value, customers' delight, electronic word-of-mouth, and perceived social presence, [21]. Attitudes toward social media

advertising significantly impact millennial purchasing desire, and peer communication significantly affects purchase intention, [22].

2.4 Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is customers' willingness and ability to acquire recommended things after using social media, [23]. One research study discovered that social media is a visible consumption channel that increases purchase intention and has a beneficial impact, [24]. In TikTok advertisements, purchase intention can be described as TikTok users' propensity or willingness to acquire a product or service promoted on the platform, [25]. Soft-sell advertising affects purchase intention more when using celebrity endorsements than social media influencers, [26].

2.5 Hypothesis Development

Both positive and negative emotions are evoked by advertising, which impacts users' attitudes in general. A person's attitude is influenced by how they feel about the advertisement, which might affect whether they plan to purchase, [27]. The relationship between affect (emotional feelings) and attitude towards the ad has been extensively studied, and the evidence strongly supports a positive relationship between the constructs. This means that emotional feelings positively and significantly impact attitude towards the ad [28]. Therefore, it can be concluded that attitude toward the advertisement is positively influenced by feeling, as stated in the following hypotheses:

H₁: Feeling has a positive impact on attitude towards the ad.

Implicit messages in advertising, such as those conveyed through visuals or music, can positively and significantly impact attitudes toward the ad and brand, [28]. In contrast to advertisements with literal messages, ads with metaphors increase cognitive elaboration and attitudes toward the ad, [29]. Incidental stimuli, such as the unpurposeful display of an advertisement banner, can develop an implicit positive attitude toward the advertised brand, [30]. Therefore, we derive the following hypotheses:

H₂: Implicitness has a positive impact on attitude towards the ad.

Image significantly impacts attitudes towards advertising, [31]. When consumers can quickly and vividly imagine themselves in the advertisement's

content, it enhances their engagement and connection with the ad, [32], [33]. find that the image used in the advertisement can impact attitudes toward the ad, [34]. From the above elaboration, we can hypothesize that:

H₃: Image has a positive impact on attitude towards the ad.

A positive attitude toward full-length and skippable advertisements influences consumers' intentions to purchase, [27], [35]. It may be concluded that attitude toward the ad has a favourable and considerable impact on purchase intention, [36]. A study finds that attitude toward the ad positively and significantly impacts the intention to purchase, [37], [38]. Much research on attitudes agrees that attitudes are strong, direct, and positive predictors of intentions, [39]. Another study found that while consumers' attitudes toward advertising positively and significantly impacted brand attitudes and purchase intent, the soft-selling appeal led to stronger purchase intent, [40]. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

H₄: Attitude toward the ad positively impacts the customer's purchase intention.

Referring to the derived hypothesis, a conceptual research framework is established by utilizing previously discussed theoretical concepts, as shown in Figure 1.

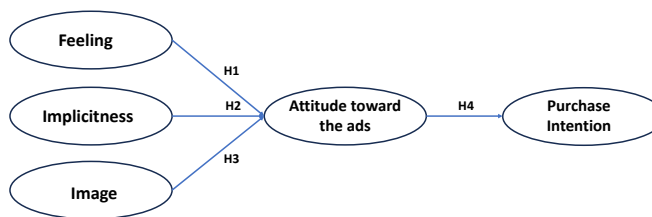


Fig. 1: Conceptual Model, [9], [41]

3 Method

3.1 Data Collection

This research uses a quantitative survey method with non-probability sampling (i.e., purposive sampling). Data was collected using an online survey via Google Forms, and distributed via social media (WhatsApp, Instagram, LinkedIn, Line). Respondents were filtered before filling out the questionnaire to ensure the responses came from a suitable target respondent. The

target population for this study was millennials and Gen Z in Jakarta. The unit of analysis in this study is TikTok users who have purchased products after watching short video advertisements on TikTok.

The questionnaire was divided into several parts. The first part collects respondents' demographic and psychographic profiles, while the second part collects responses for measurement items. The data collection period was two months, from August to October 2023. After filtering out those who did not align with this study's unit of analysis, we collected 209 usable respondents.

Table 1. Respondent's profile

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	84	40.2%
Female	125	59.8%
Age	Frequency	Percent
18-27	71	34.0%
28-37	52	24.9%
38-47	61	29.2%
48-57	25	12.0%
Education	Frequency	Percent
Bachelor's degree	127	60.8%
Master's degree	29	13.9%
Postgraduate	23	11.0%
Senior High School	30	14.4%
Occupation	Frequency	Percent
State employee	38	18.2%
Private employee	61	29.2%
Student	32	15.3%
Entrepreneur	78	37.3%

Source: Researcher's collected data

Table 1 shows that the majority of the respondents are Female (59.8%), and for the Age, most of them are in within 18-27 (34.0%), with educational background are in bachelor's degree with the percentage of 60.8%. Lastly, the occupation is private employee (29.2%).

The majority (34%) of our respondents are from Generation Z, which is the average age of TikTok viewers, followed by the older generation (Gen Y and Gen X). Females make up ~60% of respondents. Respondents are well educated (bachelor's degrees and above contribute to ~85% of the respondents), with most of the respondents being productive in their jobs (~85%) and the rest being students (~15%).

Quantitative data is measured on a numerical scale (numbers). This research uses quantitative data from questionnaire responses on a Likert Scale of 1-5 (score 5 = Very important, 4 = Important, 3 = Sufficient, 2 = Not important, and score 1 = Very Not Important). The

Likert scale measures the attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of a person or group of people about social phenomena, [42].

This research uses data analysis in the Partial Least Structural Equation Model (PLS-SEM) method, using Smart PLS 4 Version 4.0.9.5. The PLS-SEM method is widely used in social science research, as it enables the estimate of complex models with many constructs, indicator variables, and structural paths without a strict requirement on the normal distribution of the data, [43]. There are two broad approaches to executing SEM: covariance-based SEM and variance-based SEM. Among variance-based SEM, PLS-SEM is considered to be fully developed and uses a general approach. PLS-SEM is also well-known as a causal-predictive approach that emphasizes model prediction, which is aligned with the objective of this study, i.e. to predict the purchase intention of the viewers.

PLS-SEM was used to analyze the data in two stages. The first stage tests the validity and reliability of the measurement items (called the measurement model), and the second stage tests the hypothesis (called the structural model), [44].

The 27 measurement items of soft-sell dimensions are taken from [41]; 5 items for attitude toward the ad are taken from [45] and [37], and 5 items measuring purchase intention are taken from [44] and [40]. Using a back-to-back translation method, questionnaire items are translated into the local (Indonesian) language. A pilot test was conducted to ensure the questions would be well understood by the respondents.

Figure 2 shows the structure of an SEM model in this study, comprised of a Measurement Model and a Structural Model.

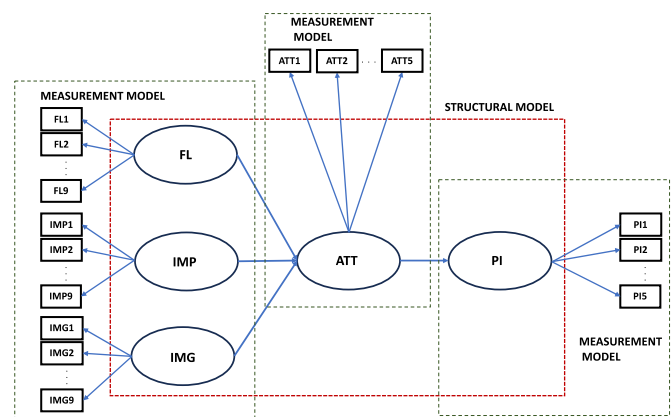


Fig. 2: SEM Model, [41], [42]

3.2 Measurement (Outer) Model Assessment

Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to assess the reliability and validity of the measures. Cronbach's Alpha (CA) and composite reliability (CR) values were calculated to determine whether the measurement items fulfil the reliability requirement. Since Cronbach's Alpha is considered to give a less precise measure of reliability, the composite reliability and rho A value must also be considered when using PLS-SEM, [43]. Reliability values above 0.70 are considered good, with higher values in CA, rho A, and CR indicating higher levels of reliability.

We tested the convergent validity by looking at AVE values that show 0.50 or higher, suggesting the construct accounts for 50 percent or greater of the variability in the items that constitute the construct. The construct validity of the measurement items is measured by factor loading, with a value > 0.708 confirming validity.

The PLS algorithm in the Smart PLS4 provides the statistical output of measurement model assessment. The results can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Measurement items assessment

Variables and Statement Items	FL	CA	rho A	CR	AVE
Feeling (FL)					
1. Without realizing it, I understood the message of this TikTok Ad.	0.714	0.907	0.919	0.923	0.573
2. I feel this TikTok ad is creative	0.898				
3. I find this TikTok ad instinctively interesting	0.737				
4. I feel like this TikTok ad makes the audience feel something.	0.708				
5. I feel this TikTok ad triggers the audience's imagination.	0.703				
6. I feel like this TikTok ad is open to interpretation.	0.794				
7. I feel like this TikTok ad is not being honest enough.	0.726				
8. I feel like this TikTok ad doesn't show a clear picture.	0.803				
9. I feel this ad is irrelevant to me	0.709				
Implicitness (IMP)					
1. This TikTok ad doesn't really stand out.	0.706	0.923	0.928	0.936	0.620
2. This TikTok ad gives subtle advice	0.737				
3. This TikTok ad doesn't directly say what they are selling.	0.848				
4. This TikTok ad contains an implied message in it.	0.875				
5. This TikTok ad doesn't exactly say anything.	0.768				
6. This TikTok ad touches on something in a subtle way.	0.755				
7. This TikTok ad attracts attention.	0.758				
8. This TikTok ad builds closeness.	0.797				
9. This TikTok ad is expressive.	0.828				
Image (IMG)					
1. This TikTok ad focuses on images and visuals.	0.74	0.900	0.904	0.918	0.556
2. This TikTok ad is entertaining.	0.776				
3. This TikTok ad is full of interpretation.	0.721				
4. This TikTok ad uses symbols to convey meaning.	0.712				
5. This TikTok ad tends to touch the soul	0.753				
6. This TikTok ad does not show the appearance of the product.	0.774				
7. This TikTok ad focuses on Appearance.	0.723				
8. This TikTok ad is cheerful.	0.712				
9. This TikTok ad focuses on creating an impression.	0.793				
Attitude Towards The Ad (ATT)					
1. Overall, I consider this TikTok ad to be a good thing	0.812	0.839	0.851	0.886	0.610
2. This TikTok ad makes me want to buy the advertised product.	0.862				
3. Overall, I like this TikTok ad.	0.717				
4. I consider this TikTok ad very important.	0.778				
5. Overall my impression of this TikTok ad is very good.	0.725				
Purchase Intention (PI)					
1. I am interested in buying the product in this TikTok ad.	0.725	0.832	0.867	0.881	0.599
2. I want to shop more often on TikTok ads.	0.919				
3. I would like to buy back on TikTok ads in the future.	0.733				
4. I am very interested in buying the product advertised on TikTok.	0.718				
5. most likely, I will buy the product advertised on this tiktok.	0.756				

Source: Researcher's analysis – SmartPLS4 output

As shown in Table 2, all variables offer good construct reliability, confirmed by Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values above 0.7. The factor loadings of all the items were > 0.70, confirming the construct validity, and the average variance extracted (AVE) of the latent variables was above 0.50 for all the study constructs, indicating good convergent validity.

We tested discriminant validity by looking at Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) values, which must be lower than 0.85 for conceptually different constructs and lower than 0.90 for conceptually similar constructs [43].

Table 3. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

Construc	Attitude toward the ad	Feeling	Image	Implicitness	Purchase Intention
Attitude toward the ad					
Feeling	0.773				
Image	0.840	0.739			
Implicitness	0.830	0.784	0.795		
Purchase Intention	0.803	0.737	0.724	0.703	

Source: Researchers' analysis – SmartPLS4 output

The results in Table 3 show that all values are less than 0.85, confirming the construct's discriminant validity. Therefore, this research can use all measurement items to measure all the constructs in this study.

3.3 Structural (Inner) Model Assessment / Hypothesis Testing

After the measurements in this study met the standards, a hypothesis analysis was carried out using the PLS-SEM Software - Smart PLS4 Version 4. In this stage, the analysis focuses on testing the relationship between variables in the model, hence testing the hypothesis. In addition to checking the statistical significance ($p < 0.05$), we look at the R^2 and the path coefficient. Based on the views of [43], the significance value must be < 0.05 , with a weight close to 0 indicating a weak relationship, while a weight close to +1 (or -1) indicates a strong positive (or negative) relationship. Meanwhile, R^2 ranges from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating greater explanatory power and, therefore, favourable. R^2 values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 can be classified as having strong, moderate, and low explanatory power, respectively.

In this research, we deploy bootstrapping using 5,000 sub-samples to test the hypothesis following the path model in Figure 3 and a two-tailed statistical test to confirm the hypothesis.

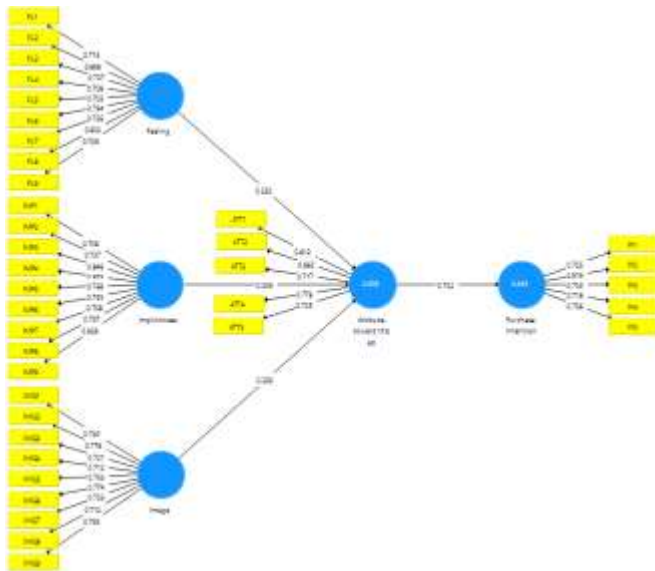


Fig. 3: PLS full model (path coefficient)
 Source: Researchers' data – SmartPLS4 output

The results of hypothesis testing showed that the feeling ($\beta = 0.232$, $p < 0.05$), implicitness ($\beta = 0.309$, $p < 0.05$), and image ($\beta = 0.359$, $p < 0.05$) positively and significantly impact the attitude toward the ad. Likewise, the results revealed that attitude toward the ad positively impacts purchase intention ($\beta = 0.702$, $p < 0.05$), as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Path Coefficients	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Feeling -> Attitude toward the ad	0.232	2.322	0.021
Implicitness -> Attitude toward the ad	0.309	2.952	0.003
Image -> Attitude toward the ad	0.359	3.333	0.001
Attitude toward the ad -> Purchase Intention	0.702	10.073	0.000

Source: Researchers' data – SmartPLS4 output

Based on the above hypothesis testing result, the equation model in this study is as follows:

$$Attitude = 0.232 \text{ Feeling} + 0.309 \text{ Implicitness} + 0.359 \text{ Image} \quad (1)$$

$$Purchase \ Intention = 0.702 \text{ Attitude toward the ad} \quad (2)$$

Based on Table 4, all four hypotheses proposed were accepted, with image playing the most crucial role in shaping a positive attitude toward the ad. Table 5 shows the R-square (R^2) values, indicating a good fit for the model.

Table 5. R-square values

Variable	R Square
Attitude toward the ad	0.656
Purchase Intention	0.493

Source: Researchers' data – SmartPLS4 output

Data shows a 65.6% change in the respondent's attitude toward the ad, driven by the video content's soft-sell components (feeling, implicitness, and image). Meanwhile, the attitude toward the advertisement can predict 49.3% of the purchase intention.

3.4 Discussion

In the current study, three components of soft-sell advertising (feeling, implicitness, and image) were investigated to determine their role as predictors of attitude toward advertisement and further driving purchase intention for the promoted goods in the TikTok video.

Advertising evokes positive and negative emotions, which impacts users' attitudes in general. This study confirmed that attitude toward advertising is positively influenced by feelings, which aligns with previous research findings, [34].

Several previous journals state that image significantly impacts attitudes toward advertising; one of them is from, [32]. When consumers can quickly and vividly imagine themselves in the advertisement's content, it enhances their engagement and connection with the ad, [33]. A TikTok short video that is entertaining, focuses on appearance, and is cheerful will impress the viewers. This will create a willingness to watch longer, creating a positive attitude toward the ad. In this study, the image shows the highest impact on attitudes toward the ad.

Implicit messages in advertising, such as those conveyed through visuals or music, can positively and significantly impact attitudes toward the ad and brand [29]. When TikTok videos do not directly say what they are selling and do not show the product they promote, it builds closeness and makes viewers better engaged and, therefore, willing to hear more. This creates a positive attitude toward the ads. A study found that the experiment's findings demonstrated that incidental exposure to an ad banner allows for forming an implicit positive attitude towards the advertised brand, [31]. This study's soft-sell dimension has the second highest impact on attitudes toward the ad.

The intensity of emotions associated with emotional stimuli can positively influence consumers' attitudes toward advertising, [45]. When an ad can make the viewer feel something, it will drive them to have a positive attitude toward the ad and may affect their plan to purchase, [27], [40]. A touching ad can also trigger viewers' imagination and create an effect on the ad. The relationship between affect (emotional feelings) and attitude towards the advertisement has been extensively studied, and our findings strongly support a positive relationship as previously studied [28], [44].

Individuals' attitudes toward advertising significantly influence their intention to purchase online [35], which aligns with our findings in this study. In addition to that, a person's disposition toward an advertisement significantly impacts their desire to buy, as stated clearly in plenty of previous research, [36]. One's attitude toward the ad significantly and favourably influences their intention to buy [37], [38], [44]. According to those studies, intention is firmly, directly, and favorably predicted by attitude, which has been validated in several contexts, [39]. Another study found that while consumers' attitudes toward advertising positively and significantly impacted brand attitudes and purchase intentions, the soft-selling appeal led to stronger purchase intentions, [46]. The present study found that attitudes toward advertisements significantly affected both attitudes toward brand and purchase intention, [37], [45]. They discovered in their research that attitude toward the ad significantly affects purchase intention for well-known and unknown brands, which also happens in TikTok.

This finding gives a new perspective on studying advertising message appeal and audiences' culture, [9]. Okazaki, et al., suggest that soft-sell appeals are less effective in Japan, although Japanese culture is considered high-context, contrary to this study's findings, [9]. We also add the external validity of Mohammadi's claim that soft-sell ads are preferred in hedonic and recreational products by looking into short video watching as entertainment, [47]. This study also adds an understanding of advertising theories that, in addition to message content, message appeals (i.e., soft-sell appeals) are important in shaping positive attitudes toward the ad, [48].

4 Conclusion and Recommendation

This study examined the relationship between online purchase intention and social media soft-sell advertising in Indonesia, using feeling, implicitness, and image as soft-sell dimensions and attitude toward the advertisement as a mediating factor. All three soft-selling components (implicitness, image, feeling) positively impact the attitude toward the ad; the largest impact comes from the image. Meanwhile, customers with a positive attitude toward the ad will increase their purchase intention.

This research contributes to the SOR theory by giving a well-structured perspective on understanding the effects of advertising message appeals as stimuli on the mental states of TikTok ad viewers and, subsequently, how they react toward purchase intention.

4.1 Managerial Implications

Marketers should use soft-sell advertising techniques to improve consumers' attitudes toward the advertisement and buying propensity. To make their advertising efforts more effective, marketers can create soft-sell messages that are implicit and subtle advertisements that elicit happy emotions, for example, using story-telling instead of other cognitive-based messages. The video ads should also contain positive images and not directly show the product they promote.

Nevertheless, although this study confirms the positive impact of soft-selling appeals, generalization needs to be carefully applied. Indonesia is a large country that comprises many subcultures with different traits. Some subcultures lean toward high-context communication, while others are toward low-context. Therefore, customizing message appeals is essential when communicating value propositions to varying subcultures in Indonesia.

The study examines the usage of soft-sell advertising on social media platforms, particularly TikTok short videos. The attention span of the audience of a short video on a smartphone is shorter than that of a TV. It confirms the importance of emotions in persuasive communication using short videos (less than one minute long). The more positive emotions can be induced by a soft-sell message, the longer the audience stays with the ad and the more impactful the message will be. Since short videos are considered to fit into viewers' busy lives, making one that engages the audience to the end will be the main challenge for TikTok marketers.

4.2 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

This study's use of a comparatively small sample size (209) is one of its limitations. This suggests that it might not be possible to extrapolate the findings to the greater Indonesian consumer base. Furthermore, the study used self-reported data, which might contain bias.

This study did not differentiate whether the response was toward a specific product type (e.g., low involvement vs. high involvement, goods vs. services, search goods vs. experience goods). Future research can consider this to understand whether the impact of soft-sell appeals is the same across different types of products.

Future research can investigate the potential impact of other variables on the relationship between attitude toward the ad and purchase intention on TikTok. Some videos go viral; however, the conversion rate is low. What moderates the relationship between attitude toward the ad and purchase intention?

Another suggestion for future research is to use a bigger sample size and cover different subcultures to improve the generalizability of the findings. Deeper analysis using a mixed method to uncover the subtle differences between respondent groups can enhance the understanding of the impact of soft-sell appeals.

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- Flavegi Monesa carried out the writing, original draft, visualization, reviewing, investigation, conducting formal analysis, and draft editing.
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