

THE SYMBOLIC INTERACTION IN CONSUMER PURCHASE DECISION AFTER SEEING ADVERTISEMENT: A CASE STUDY ON THE INSTAGRAM OF KIN DOG FOOD

Intan Aprilia Yohana Suthianto¹, Muhammad Adi Pribadi^{2*}

¹Faculty of Communication Science, Tarumanagara University, Jakarta

²Faculty of Communication Science, Tarumanagara University, Jakarta

Email: adip@fikom.untar.ac.id

*Corresponding author

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to determine the process of symbolic interaction in purchase decisions by the consumer after seeing an advertisement on the Instagram of Kin Dog Food. Marketing communication has a vital role in the product marketing process because good marketing can achieve the company's main goal. The process of communication between sellers and buyers can be formed because of the role of symbolic interaction. The theory described in this research is the theory of symbolic interaction, purchase Decision and advertising. This research is qualitative research with an exploratory case study method, the research subjects are consumers who have bought the Kin Dog Food products. Data collection methods used are in-depth interviews, observation and documentation. The researchers conducted in-depth interviews with six informants who were consumers of Kin Dog Food and observed Instagram @kin_dog_food to monitor consumer responses to the advertisement on Instagram @kin_dog_food to ensure the accuracy of the data. The result of this research indicate that symbolic interactions play an important role in consumer purchase decision for Kin Dog Food, because the admin is quite active in providing content, advertisement and information on Instagram @kin_dog_food so as to attract consumers' attention to follow the information and finally buy Kin Dog Food products.

Keywords: Symbolic interaction, purchase decision, instagram

1. PREFACE

Information and communication technology is the application of knowledge and skills used by humans to flow information or messages with the aim of helping to solve human problems (social activities) in order to achieve the goals of communication itself [1]. In this modern era, information and communication technology has developed very rapidly. This is reflected in the change in the use of technology as a means of community communication, namely from conventional methods to modern or all-digital. Currently, almost all people already have communication devices equipped with social media so that they can still communicate in the modern era without the barriers of distance and time. Based on a survey conducted by we are social, in January 2021 the most widely used social media by the Indonesian people were Youtube (93.8%), Whatsapp (87.7%), Instagram (86.6%), Facebook (85.5%), and so on. The survey results show that currently the Indonesian people are familiar with the existence of social media as a communication tool used in the community. The existence of technology facilitates human activities, especially in terms of communicating and interacting with fellow humans. Communication technology helps humans in communicating because it can provide unlimited information and facilitate communication between humans.

Apart from being a means of human communication, social media can also be used as a means to carry out sales promotions or advertisements for a product effectively and efficiently. It is said to be effective and efficient because the seller can reduce the costs and promotional activities of their products by utilizing the features available on each social media, so the seller can market

the product to the public in Indonesia without any barriers distance and time. Marketing activities that can be carried out include placing product advertisements on Instagram, installing adsense on Youtube, collaborating with influencers or celebrities, and so on.

Promoting on social media can easily increase a company's online sales. Almost all fields or types of business in Indonesia have been carried out through social media, such as food and beverage, transportation, education, lodging, and others. This is closely related to the symbolic interaction that occurs when there is marketing communication, the communication process between the seller and the buyer can occur because of the influence of the role of symbolic interaction. Marketing communication has an important role in the marketing process of a product because good marketing communication can positively affect the development of the company [2]. The purpose of marketing communication is to strengthen the marketing strategy that will be applied by the company to the wider community so that people can make buying decisions for the products advertised by the company.

Marketing communications in the pet food industry also have an important role. As reported in Pet Food Indonesia, that not only humans need nutritious and healthy food, pet dogs also need it. Because by providing good nutrition, growth and health can be better and perfectly preserved. Lots of considerations are needed in determining the right one for a pet, it can be the source of protein, the age and habits of each pet dog [3]. Therefore, symbolic interactions in pet food marketing communication have an important role so that pet owners are not mistaken in determining good and right nutrition for each of their pets.

Symbolic interaction

Symbolic interaction theory is a form of description that assumes that humans will form an understanding or understanding if it is based on a communication process by paying attention to the symbols that are owned between individuals who are communicating. In the theory of symbolic interaction states that individuals can form appropriate and good communication if individuals can form the right meaning of the communication process. Symbols will also occur if there has been an understanding of the meaning of the symbol.

According to Mead in [4], there are three critical concepts in communication that use the study of symbolic interaction, namely mind, self, and society. Mind is an ability to use symbols that are commonly used by society and have the same social meaning. Mead believed that humans should develop their minds through interactions with other individuals. Self consists of two types. The first type of self-concept is the looking-glass self, meaning seeing oneself based on the perception of others. The second concept is the pygmalion effect, which is an effect that can reduce/increase the expectations of others for a person. The last concept is society or an order of social relations created, built and constructed by a person while in the community and can take on his role when in the community.

Meanwhile, according to Blumer in Jozef Richard Raco, symbolic interaction is human activity towards other people and things based on the meaning they give to those people and things. Blumer then developed three theories, namely the theory of meaning (meaning), language (language) and thought (thought). Symbolic interaction emphasizes the principle of understanding as the center of every human action. Second, meaningful language can give humans a meaning that is expressed by symbols. The third is thinking, which means modifying each individual's symbol interpretation.

Symbolic interaction theory emphasizes the importance of meaning and interpretation as an essential human process in behaving and relating. Human attitudes and behavior do not occur mechanically as a reaction to something outside. Human attitudes and behavior result from an interpretation that has a certain meaning and then determines its reaction to stimuli that come from outside [5].

Symbolic interaction theory can be accepted in the field of communication science because in this theory it can place communication at the forefront of the study of humans as social beings [6]. According to [6] in essence, humans are creatures who need to interact, so humans need to adapt to the surrounding environment.

In connection with the discussion of humans as social beings who need to interact, the symbolic interaction of humans in making a decision is also very important to note. So that the description of the theory above is the basis for researchers in examining symbolic interactions in purchasing pet food decisions after seeing advertisements on the Instagram of Kin Dog Food, researchers discuss this because there is a tendency that until now there are still many consumers who are confused about buying the right pet food based on advertisements on Instagram.

Purchase decision

According to [7], in making purchasing decisions, consumers will go through five phases that occur before and after the purchase: problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision (purchase decision), and postpurchase behavior (behavior after purchase). The following is an explanation of each phase based on the theory made by [7]:

(a) Problem Recognition

The beginning of the buying process is when consumers begin to realize there is a problem/need that internal or external factors can influence. The company must be able to identify and understand the conditions experienced by these consumers to apply the right marketing strategy to the needs of their consumers.

(b) Information Search

In this phase, a person will easily receive information related to a product and act as an active information seeker. There are four main sources for consumers to search for information, namely: (1) personal (family, friends, neighbors, and others); (2) commercial (advertising, website, email, display, and others); (3) public (social media, consumer-rating organizations, mass media, and others); and (4) experiential (handling, inspection, product use, and others). In this phase, the company must understand what kind of information potential customers need.

(c) Evaluation of Alternatives

In the evaluation phase of alternative consumer products, there are several processes and models of the evaluation. First, consumers will try to fulfill all their needs. Second, consumers will look for the benefits obtained from the product. Third, consumers will see each product as a collection of attributes (eg comfort, cleanliness, taste, price, quality, etc.) that will provide benefits. Consumers will pay more attention to products that provide the most benefits according to their expected needs. In this phase, the company can classify its products based on each consumer's attribute groups and benefits.

(d) Purchase Decision

When in the evaluation phase, consumers are able to classify products according to their attributes and benefits, then in the next phase, consumers' purchase intentions will appear, which are generally divided into five sub-decisions, namely brand, dealer/store, quantity, time, and payment method. However, not always purchase intentions can be used as a reference in consumer purchasing decisions. There are several risks that can influence consumer purchasing decisions, namely functional, physical, financial, social, psychological, and time risks. The company must understand the factors that provoke these risks to provide information and motivation to consumers to minimize these risks.

(e) Postpurchase Behavior

Marketing communications must provide confidence and evaluation that can strengthen consumer choice and make consumers feel comfortable with the product. Therefore, the task of the marketer (marketing) does not end only until the purchase occurs. Marketers must monitor post-purchase consumer satisfaction, post-purchase consumer actions, and post-purchase product use and disposal.

Advertising

According to [7], advertising is any form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services paid for by sponsors and promoted through print media (newspapers / magazines), broadcast media (radio / television), network media. (telephone, cable, satellite or wireless), electronic media (audiotape, videotape, videodisk, CD-ROM or Webpage), and display media (billboard, sign or poster).

The purpose of advertising is a communication task and a certain level of achievement that must be achieved within a certain period of time. Kotler & Keller (2016: 609) [7] classify advertising objectives into four parts, namely: (a) Informative Advertising, informative advertising aims to create brand awareness and knowledge about new products or new features of existing products; (b) Persuasive Advertising, persuasive advertising aims to create likes, preferences, beliefs, and purchases of a product or service. Some persuasive ads are comparative ads, which explicitly compare the attributes of two or more brands; (c) Reminder Advertising, reminder advertising aims to stimulate product or service repurchase; (d) Reinforcement advertising aims to convince current buyers that they have made the right choice.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach. According to John Creswell in Jozef Richard Raco, there are five qualitative research methods: biography, phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory, and case studies [5]. The method that the researcher in this research will use is the case study method. According to John Creswell in Jozef Richard Raco, the case study method is a qualitative method that seeks to explore a particular case in depth by using various sources of information. According to Creswell, a case study explores bounded systems or cases. A case will be interesting to study because of the distinctive features that have meaning in other people [5]. In this research, the researcher will use the exploratory case study research method because the subjects of this research are people who have made purchase decisions in choosing pet food based on the advertisements they have seen on the Instagram of Kin Dog Food.

According to Samsu, the research subject is an object, thing, or person, which is a place where data for research variables can be attached [8]. A research can be of high quality if the data

collected is complete, consisting of primary and secondary data. Primary data is data in verbal form, such as spoken words, gestures or behavior shown by research subjects (informants) regarding the variables studied. While secondary data is data obtained from graphic documents, photos, films, video recordings, objects, and others that can be primary data [9]. The subjects of this research were pet food consumers who had made purchase decisions based on advertisements on Kin Dog Food's Instagram. The criteria for this research subject are consumers who have purchased Kin Dog Food products and have followed Instagram @kin_dog_food.

This research was conducted by means of interviews, observations and documentation to several consumers of Kin Dog Food pet food. The information to be achieved from the direct observation and interview process includes the extent to which consumers know the Kin Dog Food brand, how consumers judge the quality of Kin Dog Food, how much consumers trust the Kin Dog Food brand as food for their pets, to how much influence advertising has on the Instagram of Kin Dog Food on consumer decisions to buy Kin Dog Food brand pet food, and other information. After getting detailed information, the next step is to provide suggestions and recommendations for the Kin Dog Food brand and can help other consumers in making decisions to buy pet food.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Symbolic interaction

The symbolic interaction that occurs on Instagram Kin Dog Food is when @kin_dog_food posts on their Instagram feed and then followers receive the information on their respective Instagrams and finally respond to the information provided on Instagram @kin_dog_food. This is evidenced by a statement from one of the following research informants:

"Yeah, I always like it when I see it, sometimes I even like searching sometimes, so I'm looking for Kin Dog Food just to have a look."

Content or information uploaded on social media has an important role in the process of selling a product. In this case, Instagram @kin_dog_food has a good first impression from its consumers. The researcher as one of the consumers of the Kin Dog Food product also had a good first impression when he first saw Instagram @kin_dog_food, the researcher was interested because it was the first time he saw dog food that looks hygienic and has premium quality. As stated by one of the following informants:

"In short, it's cool, I mean, I'm also a visual person, so if you look at Instagram feeds, good people are happy, right. It was the first time in 2017 that I didn't know raw food, so my first dog also ate kibbles, right, I kept looking at this (Kin Dog Food) what's wrong with this funny Instagram and then I saw why it was given raw meat? So from there, I started looking for something, wow, there's a name for raw food, and what are the advantages and disadvantages. Then I tried Kin, so finally I'm using Kin. Yes, others have tried it, but the quality is really the best, Kin."

Social media has succeeded in changing the human communication process to be faster, simpler, and open / transparent. Because only by using one social media a person can provide information simultaneously to many audiences or vice versa, namely being able to get information from various sources directly and quickly so that communication interactions and information exchange processes can occur indirectly through social media. Researchers as consumers are also

satisfied with sharing information by Instagram @kin_dog_food because in several Instagram posts @kin_dog_food also provides menu inspiration, for example wanting to make a menu at home but don't know what meat composition should be mixed with vegetables or fruit or vitamins. so that the nutrition is balanced, because consumers as ordinary people must not understand what compositions are good and right in one menu.

Many individuals take advantage of the use of social media to facilitate their daily activities, such as shopping, finding and sharing information, communicating or interacting with other individuals, exchanging ideas with others, as a medium of entertainment, and others. As a statement given by one of the informants of this research, namely:

"More often I buy online but also offline sometimes a few times while going, it's actually really good. I bought the one in West Jakarta because it is the closest to my house."

Likewise with other informants who gave their statements regarding sharing information on Kin Dog Food on their personal Instagram, namely:

"When it comes to sharing very often, usually the topics vary, there are pros and cons of raw food, some say it's dangerous, some say it's good, sometimes they also talk about what kibbles are good, it just depends on the topic. At that time, I also frozen the raw food into a birthday cake when my dog had his 3rd birthday (last year) and I shared it on Instagram and tagged the Kin Dog Food."

One of the informants also shared the Kin Dog Food product with the following statement:

"Once, every time I buy I share it on Instagram Story."

According to Mead in West & Turner, there are three critical concepts in communication that use the study of symbolic interaction, namely mind, self, and society. Mind is an ability to use symbols that are commonly used by society and have the same social meaning. Mead believed that humans should develop their minds through interactions with other individuals [4]. Based on the results of interviews with informants who are Instagram followers @kin_dog_food, Kin Dog Food has carried out symbolic interactions with its consumers well. Likewise, the response and service provided by Kin Dog Food made the informants feel satisfied. It can also be seen from the statements of the informants about how interested they are in the information uploaded on Instagram @kin_dog_food. The informants feel that the content uploaded on Instagram @kin_dog_food is very educative and useful for people who follow Instagram @kin_dog_food. If the informants see or like or feel the content is very useful, they will give a Like (Love) posted on Instagram @kin_dog_food.

Self consists of two types, the first of the concept of self is the looking-glass self, which means seeing oneself based on the perception of others. And the second is the pygmalion effect, which is an effect that can decrease/increase the expectations of others for a person. The concept of looking-glass self on Instagram @kin_dog_food can be seen from the responses of followers who gave good reviews about their experiences after buying products from Instagram @kin_dog_food. Meanwhile, the concept of the pygmalion effect that occurs on Instagram @kin_dog_food is reflected in the expectations of informants on Instagram @kin_dog_food.

While the Society or an order of social relations that is created, built and constructed by a person while in the midst of society and is able to take on his role when in the midst of society. The concept of society that occurs on Instagram @kin_dog_food can be seen from the frequent Instagram @kin_dog_food reposting consumers who tag Instagram @kin_dog_food on their Instagram stories and also some interactive content they do.

Purchase decisions

The purchase decision of Kin Dog Food consumers after viewing Instagram @kin_dog_food is influenced by several factors such as price, quality, reviews, advertising on Instagram, service and others. In general, there are five phases that need to be passed when making a buying decision. The following are the stages of purchasing decisions made by consumers after seeing advertisements on Instagram @kin_dog_food:

(a) Problem recognition

According to Kotler & Keller, the beginning of the buying process is when consumers begin to realize there is a problem/need that can be influenced by internal or external factors. In this case, Kin Dog Food consumers are starting to realize their needs or problems regarding the consumption of their favorite dog food.

(b) Information search

In this phase, a person will become easier to receive information related to a product and act as an active information seeker. It is proven by a statement from one of the informants, namely:

"It was the first time in 2017 that I didn't know raw food, so my first dog also ate kibbles, right, so what are you looking at (Kin Dog Food)? How come the Instagram is funny and I keep seeing this, why is it given raw meat? So from there, I started looking for information, wow, there's a name for raw food and what are the advantages and disadvantages. Then, I tried Kin, and finally, until now, I'm using Kin. Yes, others have tried it, but the quality is really the best, Kin."

(c) Evaluation of alternatives

In the evaluation phase of alternative consumer products, there are several processes and models of the evaluation. Consumers will pay more attention to products that provide the most benefits according to their expected needs. This is evidenced by a statement given by one of the informants as follows:

"Before using Kin Dog Food, I actually tried several brands. There was only a brand before Kin Dog Food, so I found hair like wire inside, even though this brand is quite famous. Then I changed to Kin Dog Food, then Kin Dog Food, it's very clear the ingredients are written on the back of the label."

(d) Purchase Decision

In the next phase, consumer purchasing decisions will appear, which are generally divided into five sub-decisions, namely brand, dealer/store, quantity, time, and payment method. As stated by one of the informants, namely:

"I have 2 dogs and it's okay to just eat them, not for other needs such as snacks, grooming, vitamins - lots of vitamins. But after I found out some of the benefits from some of my friends, I still wanted to try it, and it turned out that my anabul liked all of them."

The advantage is that the raw food that Kin Dog Food sells is processed from natural ingredients without harmful chemicals, which is safe for our children. Because there are many brands of food or snacks for our dogs, which turns out to be a few, some are supposed to not actually be harmful to our dogs, which they find out in the long term, not in the short term. So it's better to prevent than cure."

(e) Postpurchase behavior

Marketing communications must provide confidence and evaluation that can strengthen consumer choice and make consumers feel comfortable with the product. In this case, Kin Dog Food continues to provide maximum service to consumers even after they make a purchase of Kin Dog Food products.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results and analysis of the research, the researcher concludes from this study that there is an important role of symbolic interaction in the consumer purchasing decision process of Kin Dog Food which can be proven from the interactions that occur between the seller (Instagram @kin_dog_food) and the consumer (subject of research) quite active and services provided through Instagram @kin_dog_food also make consumers feel comfortable to buy the Kin Dog Food products.

Another thing that proves that symbolic interaction has a role in the consumer purchasing decision process can be seen in the content, advertisements and appearance of Instagram @kin_dog_food which also has an important role in consumer purchasing decisions. Consumers feel confident to buy the Kin Dog Food products, because Instagram @kin_dog_food is very open to consumers, both in terms of consultation, product composition used, production process, to admitting when they make mistakes.

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