

“Shopee” Advertisement: A Dream Beyond Reality

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Abstract

Shopee claims that during QS-2020 there were 260 million transactions on the Shopee platform with an average daily rate of 2.8 million transactions. This indicates that shopee is one of the e-commerce that is in demand by the people of Indonesia. The product in this case is only a commodity that fulfills hopes, dreams, desires to show self-existence. Shopee offers everything that humans need from genuine to imitation goods. Based on the results of the analysis of the two problem formulations above, it can be concluded that Shopee is an application that is in demand by many people because it offers free shipping on beautiful dates. In addition, shopee also carries an orange color brand that is easy for the public to remember. Advertising is one of the important factors in influencing the culture of consumerism in society.

Keywords: Consumerism, Hipereality, Shopee, Shopping Platform

INTRODUCTION

Everyone wants to satisfy his/her need, particularly primary need like food and clothing. In this digital era, producer market facilitates access to the need using online system through utilizing social media. The wish to satisfy need can be fulfilled without coming to the location. Moreover, in pandemic era, people reluctantly come to the market to meet the need directly. The implementation of large-scale social restriction program makes people more frequently use ecommerce application they have downloaded on their own gadget.

Many ecommerce applications offer various products with varying advertisements, for example: *Shopee*, *Tokopedia*, *Bukalapak*, *Lazada*, and etc. Everyone will choose ecommerce application according to their choice. Human's dependence on visual world is irrefutable now. Through various advertisements in television and social

media, an individual sometimes buys any product he/she does not need. However, he/she does so because he/she wants to buy it merely as the symbol of prestige.

The principle of fulfilling need is no longer a simple problem in both micro-and macro-economic market. A producer has a principle to minimize production cost in order to get maximum profit. An attempt taken by producer to promote its product is to use advertisement, in both social media and television. Originally, advertisement is intended to be a media informing the consumers the product they want to sell. The advertisement is of course presented using persuasive language and visual display. However, in fact advertisements appearing in globalization era are beyond the reality. Thus, many people buy products because of the attractive advertisement and promotion (e.g. discount) rather than due to the need. One of advertisements we found frequently on Television, *Instagram*, *Youtube*,

and even *Facebook* is *Shopee e-commerce* advertisement with orange typical color and logo appearing on our television and social media. As one of ecommerce platforms, *Shopee* has many varying advertisements according to marketplace it targets, for instance, adolescent, child, and adult advertisements, in accordance with their need attractiveness. In addition to *orange* color, *Shopee* also has another typical characteristic when entering advertising world, featuring advertisement stars who are dancing becoming trend among adolescents. Advertisement makes an individual interested in the product offered by the producer. Considering the data revealed by Haryanto on detik.com page, the volume of digital transaction during pandemic era increases up to 130% in *Shopee e-commerce* in Indonesian people. *Shopee* claims that there have been 260 million transactions during 2020 in *Shopee* platform, with 2.8 million transactions per day on average. It indicates that *Shopee* is one of the most preferred e-commerce to Indonesian people.

Although *Shopee* is not the number one among the most preferred ecommerce to people, its advertisements are interesting to study because it has advertisements always featured on television and social media. In addition, closely observed, the advertisements of *Shopee* feature anything beyond human logical reasoning. For example, see an advertisement of cosmetic featuring an individual formerly having ordinary or plain appearance change into the younger and glowing one having used one of x-brand cosmetic product. Viewed from reality, it is impossible for an individual to change into 10-20 younger one only by using a cosmetic product. Borrowing Jean Baudrillard's term, the advertisements of *Shopee* contain hyperreality; thus the author is interested in exploring more in-depth why it occurs. On the other hand, Indonesian people are

highly provoked by *Shopee* advertisement. It can be seen from the result of survey indicating that *Shopee* is on the second position with 837,000,000,000 consumers, with 90 million visitors per month on average.

As aforementioned, we can see *Shopee* advertisement on our television and social media. Globalization era requires human beings to master the technology developing rapidly and almost infinitely. Television and social media advertisement is a typical communication model because they feature audio and visual aspects that can be captured spontaneously by the viewer. Recently, advertisement becomes a discourse requiring people to follow the image offered. Advertisement often makes the viewers follow what it features. An individual consumes product not because he/she needs it (the use value of product) but because the image featured by the advertisement. An individual wants to be the one featured on the advertisement. In this case, product serves only as a commodity that meet an individual's hope, dream, and want to show his/her self existence.

Shopee offers anything the people need, from original to counterfeit products. This research focuses on *Shopee* advertisement concentrating on fashion and make up interest. Advertisement featuring image of reality beyond its originality is called hyperreality. This concept is suggested by Baudrillard. He said that hyperreality is a concept in which reality is inseparable from the production of sign game beyond the reality.

Advertisement features the product sold by carrying social status, hope, brand, and quasi desire principles. It can be seen from, among others, *Shopee e-commerce* featuring advertisement beyond the real world.

Considering the people's enthusiasm with using *Shopee* service as

the ecommerce platform, the author is interested in observing what the regulation used by Shopee to attract its customers and why Shopee becomes one of most preferred ecommerce particularly to youths. The problem statements the author wants to address in this research are:

1. Why does Shopee advertisement become the symbol of consuming society in Indonesia?
2. What is hyperreality in Shopee advertisement, according to Baudrillard's view?

METHODOLOGY

In this research, the author used a qualitative method. A qualitative research method utilizes interpretation entirely to present the data in description form, including written word and observable behavior (Nyoman Kutha Ratna, 2011:46). Behavior observed in this research was purchasing behavior based on questionnaire distributed online.

In addition, a qualitative research is the one processing and providing descriptive data including result of interview, image, photograph, video recording, and etc (Poerwandari, 1998: 29). In addition to reading book reference, this research also collected data from such data sources as journals. The author also conducted interview with ten resource persons or informants related to the Shopee advertisements appearing on television and social media and compared the result of analysis and the result of interview.

The data of research is information source to be selected as the material of analysis (Siswanto, 2010:70). The primary data used in this research included the Shopee advertisements appearing on television and Shopee ecommerce. Meanwhile secondary data was collected

through summarizing the result of interview with informants. Then, the author would draw a conclusion from both primary and secondary data. The author used Jean Baudrillard's theory with his simulacrum and hyperreality concept to analyze the data.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

1. *Shopee* : The Symbol of the Consumption in Indonesian Society

a. Advertising Industry

Advertising is one of the things that is inherent in the era of modern society. In the past we could only find advertisements on radio, television, and maybe billboards plastered on downtown streets. However, in today's digital era, people are surrounded by advertisements in all lines of life because people cannot be separated from their mobile phones. Gadgets are tools used by producers to market their products to the public. If we want to observe, we will find ads on all social media accounts that we have such as Instagram, Facebook, Whatsapp, and so on. Even now individuals become agents in advertising certain products on their social media. For example, I have an Instagram social media account with a lot of followers. Individuals who have many followers are called celebrities. This will be used by producers to promote their products by inviting the celebrity to advertise their products on their account. Of course, the celebgram will receive a pre-agreed honorarium. In addition to the social media that we have, now e-commerce does not only display advertisements in the form of images, but has become increasingly popular in video media to attract customers more. Advertising is an important element because consumers will pay attention to the advertisements of the products to be purchased. In addition, advertisements can

also influence people to buy the products offered and provide investment for certain brands. Advertising becomes a medium for interpreting the quality of goods and services based on consumer needs (Kotler, 2001: 56).

When displaying advertisements, the basic principle of persuasion becomes an important element because the purpose of advertisements is to make the products they sell sell well in the market. Therefore, market share is an important element in the world of advertising. Markets and marketing are important to maintain economic stability in the direction of making a profit. There are three main concepts in marketing, namely: meeting consumer needs and wants, coordinated marketing efforts throughout the organization, and achieving long-term goals (Lee, 2004). Shopee is an interesting object of study to research because Shopee advertisements appear very often on television and even on our social media. In addition, based on several statistical data, it shows that Shopee is the second e-commerce that is in demand by the Indonesian people, namely nearly 90 million people per month buying advertisements on Shopee. One of the important elements in advertising, as the researchers mentioned above, is that Shopee e-commerce is always persuasive in displaying advertisements with its characteristics that consistently do not change. Shopee as an e-commerce that is in demand by the public has a characteristic color that is always consistent with shades of orange, both actors and actresses who play their advertisements and e-commerce applications that also have an orange brand, as shown in the image below. With a brand that does not change, it is easy for people to remember Shopee as an application to buy daily necessities. The Shopee's logo can look like the image below;



Shopee is an online shopping application that was founded in Singapore by Garena-Sea Limited in 2009. Shopee was founded by Forrest Li in Singapore and was first launched in 2015. Since then Shopee has started to expand in Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan, the Philippines, and even in Indonesia. . In addition to having a distinctive brand, one of the things that makes Shopee attractive to the Indonesian people is because this e-commerce offers a free shipping program (postage reduction) in purchasing its products. This free shipping system is given to consumers, especially on certain dates, for example the 9th of September (9.9), the 10th of October (10.10), the 11th of November (11.11) and the 12th of December (12.12). It's easy to remember why Shopee has become the e-commerce chosen as a media to fulfill needs.

In the previous explanation, researchers have explained why Shopee has become an e-commerce that is in demand by consumers because Shopee offers free shipping by buyers. The word "free shipping" is always ringing in people's minds. It is an attractive offer because people do not need to pay shipping costs to purchase their products. Especially metropolitan people who don't have much time to buy one item at shopping places such as malls. This is also supported by the condition of the world which is being hit by the Covid-19 pandemic. A person should not do activities outside the home excessively, so this makes e-commerce an alternative medium to meet needs without having to leave the house. The

advertisements offered by Shopee stimulate people to consume goods that they shouldn't need. Consumerism is a culture that cannot be avoided by society because people are also affected by advertisements. Consumerism is a lifestyle that considers a luxury / luxury item a measure of pleasure and even happiness. This is also in line with what was expressed by Marcuse that modern society in its life can never be separated from technology and capitalism. The rapid development of technology is also an effort to control the capitalist system (1998). Humans will be made comfortable with technology, so they feel whatever they want will be fulfilled through technology. Whereas technology is one of the tools to perpetuate capitalism, because human activities can be observed through technology. Currently, the buying and selling process does not have to meet in person, but seeing the development of modernism, people can transact via virtual.

Based on observations, Shopee is an e-commerce that is more in demand by women. 10 people who became resource persons based on the results of interviews said that 7 people had shopped at Shoppe and 3 people had never. The 7 people are 5 women and 2 men. It can be concluded that women use the Shopee application more than men. From the results of online interviews, they get the results that they are interested in buying goods at Shopee because they are interested in seeing advertisements on television and their social media. In addition, the products they buy are varied, based on desires such as household appliances, baby needs, clothes (fashion), make-up, and so on. They think that Shopee is a very helpful e-commerce because they don't have to leave the house to buy the things they need.

b. Consumerism

This consumerist culture at Shopee is due to the incessant advertising of free

shipping. People buy products not because of need, but because of the offer of free shipping. In addition, Shopee is an e-commerce platform that offers all primary and secondary needs, goods and services. Whatever you are looking for, you will find it on Shopee. From goods of lower economy class, middle class, and upper economy class. Lower class people are those who have a per capita income of more than US\$ 2 PPP up to. US\$ 4 PPP per capita per day, middle class people with an income of more than US\$ 4 PPP s.d. US\$ 10 PPP, and upper middle class people more than US\$ 10 PPP up to. US\$20 PPP per day, and the upper class are those who have an income of more than US\$20 PPP per capita per day (<https://fiskal.kemenkeu.go.id>). People can shop virtually without being limited in time, that is, for 24 hours we can shop just by clicking what we need. On the other hand, Shopee offers everything you need in virtual form. This is in line with what was conveyed by Jean Baudrillan with his theory of simulacra. The conclusion is that Shopee advertising is a symbol that Indonesian society is a consumption society. It is proven by the data that the number of transactions at Shopee reaches 900 million consumers. One of the reasons why Shopee's advertisements have become symbols of the consumption community is because bombastic advertisements make people buy necessities, not because they are urgent needs. However, they buy the product because they want to buy a certain brand/brand. When someone can buy a certain brand they consider themselves to have a higher social status compared to others.

c. Simulacra in the *Shopee* App

According to Baudrilland, the development of the world of digital technology which is based on binary-capital is a process of

social transformation of society into sustainable capitalism. According to him, current reality is being redefined as a form that can be perfectly reproduced and can be simulated (Hidayat, 2012: 78). In the discourse of simulation, humans inhabit a space of reality, where the difference between real and fantasy, genuine and fake is very thin. Humans live in an imaginary space that is real as a factual fiction. Simulation realities become a new life space where humans find and actualize their own existence (Hidayat, 2012: 83). According to Pilliang, one example of a simulation room is a shopping mall. The mall becomes a simulation world that presents a pseudo-artificial reality. Shopping malls display a pseudo-fun, beyond the real world. It reduces, manipulates, and is simulated as a place that has comfort in meeting needs. In shopping malls, we find shops, banks, restaurants, salons, cinemas and other objects with their respective themes, such as youth, exclusivity, cosmopolitan, and so on (1998: 238).

Shopee offers a wide variety of products from many sellers in various regions. Even Shopee also sells products that come from abroad, so that the competitiveness of sales on Shopee's e-commerce is very high. Buyers can search for goods by location that matches where they live. In addition, Shopee also offers a COD (Cash on Delivery) system between sellers and buyers, where sellers and buyers meet at one location to transact. Simulacra is an instrument that can change something abstract into concrete and vice versa: change the concrete into abstract. In e-commerce shopee simulacra we can know from something abstract to real. Shopee is like a shopping mall, whatever we are looking for we will find. On the shopping platform, Shopee will show several features regarding the category of needs. Shopee

also offers certain services in its e-commerce, such as electricity bills, telephone bills, and so on. This can be seen from the image below.



The advertisement that the audience wants to convey has symbols that are implied in it either explicitly or implicitly. Advertising produces a simulation through signs that have references. The simulation includes all aspects of signs that exist in all lines of life such as science, ideology, and even religious ideology. Producers and advertisers will present simulations in the form of predictions based on people's desires to produce reality according to their wishes (all wishes). Advertising is very influential on consumer culture. People sometimes do not consider aspects of needs, but only as symbols, lifestyles, and tastes. Not infrequently there are individuals who are lulled by the existence of various advertisements, but do not have the money to meet their needs. In the end they will experience distortion/oppression.

In the case of Shopee, people become distorted, that is, they will find it difficult to distinguish between facts and images. The problem of purchasing a product is not because of a need but because of a

temporary desire. According to Hastuti, one way to suppress distortion is by not using information (in this case advertising) in making decisions. In addition, another way of suppressing distortion is by reducing the number of links in the communication network, so the number of filtering and communication distortions will be reduced (2013: 36). The point is that people who receive advertisements do not make a decision to buy a product, but the importance of doing further research is whether the product is indeed a pressing need. Distortion can be suppressed by means of awareness of the need. Individuals and even society must realize that what he will buy is really a necessity.

2. Hyperreality: A World of Beyond Dreams

One example of hyperreality in advertisements that we can find on television, for example in toothpaste advertisements. Initially a person has yellow teeth and cavities. After using certain branded products, the teeth immediately become clean white. Another example of hyperreality is barbie dolls, both male and female. Barbie has beauty and good looks that exceed human facts. They are shown as the coveted shape by many. According to Baudrillard, hyperreality is a concept in postmodernism where the size of reality cannot be held. The world of hyperreality is seen as a world of engineering through signs. Hyperreality is a condition that contains falsehood in it and blends in with facts. Facts are confused with fabrications, lies merge with truth, and signs merge with reality (Baudrillard, 1983).

If we look at the Shopee advertisement on television, it shows an

actor played by Prilly Latuconsina who is sad. Suddenly an actress came with a smartphone and showed the Shopee e-commerce to the female actress. Suddenly the woman who was originally only wearing ordinary clothes, became wearing orange party clothes. After that, a miracle also appeared when the woman who played the ad suddenly got flowers. Actually, the message that the producers and advertisers want to convey is that Shopee is an application that can be used to buy goods in the form of clothes and flowers. On the other hand, the woman who was initially sad then smiled after turning into a more beautiful woman and carrying a bucket of flowers.



In the real world, it is not possible if the things we need appear suddenly. Someone needs a process in meeting needs. For example, when we shop virtually, we have to go through the payment process – confirmation – delivery – and the goods will arrive. However, in the advertisement, it displays the desired needs which immediately fall from the sky (magic). If we look at the theory of Friedrich Nietzsche which says that individuals are people who are not satisfied in meeting their needs. Humans always have a desire to achieve the needs he wants. If a person always gets what he wants until finally he feels nothing / emptiness in his soul because everything he wants is fulfilled. This case will stimulate someone to take criminal action. This is also in line with the case of the consumer culture of society. If people cannot control themselves from the consumption culture caused by advertisements that go beyond the boundaries of the real world, they will become hedonistic and

disoriented. The hedonists themselves are the targets of capitalism. Humans are objects of capitalism that cannot be avoided, but humans are individuals who can think about needs that must be met and not just bought.

One of the reasons why people agree with advertisements on television and social media is because they have desires that sometimes cannot be achieved in the real world. If we look deeper, Shopee is an e-commerce that provides goods needed by individuals. Whatever we can find on the shopping platform. However, sometimes the ads that are served have no relationship with the product to be sold. For example, when we discuss advertising from the point of view of sex, we will find ads that smell a little pornographic. For example, an advertisement for bath soap does not focus on the advantages of the product, but on the side of an actress who is taking a bath rubbing her entire body which is described as very white and shiny. The element of sexuality is often involved by advertisers to attract consumers to buy their products. If we look at the advertisements on Shopee, they have nothing to do with sexuality, but they involve teenage romance which is still very popular among young people. There is no relationship between the love story between a man and a woman, but Shopee adopts this as a market strategy. They want to advertise fashion products by raising the issue of the dynamics of youth aspirations.

Different socio-economic conditions make people brought into a dream world by advertising. Judging from Shopee's advertisements, as stated above, Shopee is the number two e-commerce in Indonesia. Shopee is being enjoyed because of some of the peculiarities of brand-changing advertisements and the discount programs offered. Whatever we are looking for, we will find it on Shopee. However, what is interesting about the relationship between consumer advertising is the ability of a person to spend his money. There are many cases that actually, individuals and society do not have the ability to buy a particular product that they are interested in as a result of the advertisements they see. Every human being has a desire to fulfill all needs, just as when we sleep we will dream of things

that we cannot achieve in the real world. Dreams are a solution to fulfill unfulfilled desires. Humans also have this attitude, when they do not have the ability to realize their desires in meeting their needs, they often force themselves into debt and even commit criminal acts. This case is also inseparable from the influence of advertising, consumer culture, and industrial capitalism. Shopee is a dream world because it offers everything we need in the world, but people become individuals who are not aware of the difference between needs and wants. Therefore, they will do anything to fulfill their desires. On the other hand, they will make alternative solutions to meet their desired needs, namely looking for goods with quality that is brought in original (KW). The influence of actresses, actors, and celebgrams who display a luxurious life makes people want to have this condition. However, they didn't have any abilities in them so they would look for items that were similar to the real thing. This situation is also used by producers to capture consumer market share. By offering KW/quality products below the original, people who have a passion like the world of television will feel satisfied. However, they ultimately have deeds that are beyond their capabilities. They force themselves to equate themselves with people who have big finances. If this continues, there may be cases of madness. In addition, Hyperreality in Shopee also displays a beauty product that doesn't make sense. For example, an advertisement for a beauty brand that is currently popular recently. They show someone who initially has dull facial skin, then after being smeared with the product, the woman's face will immediately become bright and beautiful. As a human being, we should be aware between reality and desire, which are needs and which are only desires. Do not let us be consumed by advertising and become human hedonism.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis of the two problem formulations above, it can be concluded that Shopee is an application that is in demand by many people because it offers free shipping on beautiful dates. In

addition, shopee also carries an orange color brand that is easy for the public to remember. Advertising is one of the important factors in influencing the culture of consumerism in society. This consumerist culture at Shopee is due to the incessant advertising of free shipping. People buy products not because of need, but because of the offer of free shipping. In addition, Shopee is an e-commerce platform that offers all primary and secondary needs, goods and services. Whatever you are looking for, you will find it on Shopee. People sometimes do not consider aspects of needs, but only as symbols, lifestyles, and tastes. Not infrequently there are individuals who are lulled by the existence of various advertisements, but do not have the money to meet their needs. In the end they will experience distortion/oppression. One way to suppress distortion is that people do not accept advertisements and make decisions to buy products, but the importance of doing further research is whether the product is indeed a pressing need.

Distortion can be suppressed by means of awareness of the need. Individuals and even society must realize that what he will buy is really a necessity. Furthermore, the hyperreality in Shopee can be seen from the production of advertisements displayed by the audience, namely the appearance of goods magically / immediately. Shopee is a dream world because it offers everything we need in the world, but people become individuals who are not aware of the difference between needs and wants.

One way to suppress consumer culture is to create awareness of the fulfillment of needs. The goods we will buy are goods that are indeed a necessity, not because of prestige or being eaten by certain brands.

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