The relevance of the notion for all publicity is good publicity: The influencing factors in the 21st century

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ABSTRACT

In the age of technology and a competitive market within the Philippines, an adverse stance or aftereffects of a situation have a significant impact on the sensibility of the audiences and are likely to prompt either positive or negative reactions from them. However, in the marketing and advertising sectors, the belief “All Publicity Is Good Publicity” is well-known, which states that any form of publicity is fine as long as it cultivates presence and visibility. To be able to determine whether the notion is still highly appropriate in the 21st century and to provide a definite difference between good and bad publicity, the researchers have used a mixed-method approach and employed the use of quasi-experiment and short Focus Group Discussion (FGD) instruments for forty (40) participants under the Generation Z demographic group in Metro Manila. The researchers have also chosen six (6) business owners, advertisers, or managers within the metro for personal interviews in order to identify the perspective of both parties. Overall, the results show that the notion is no longer very relevant. According to the four influencing factors, defiance of advertising ethics does not always result in negative press, but non-compliance with corporate social responsibility (CSR), controversial advertising and situations, and corporate scandals do. It is important to highlight that every advertising or activity must be well-planned, since there is a clear difference between good and poor exposure.

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Introduction

The role of publicity is to raise awareness of an individual, product, or service and to capture the attention of the audience. However, a marketing idea that public relations and marketing firms have contested throughout time is "All Publicity Is Good Publicity." This may have been true years ago since any sort of publicity, good or bad, as long as it generates awareness, was ideal. It provided a chance for some businesses to make a lasting impression, which contributed to some unfortunate and poor marketing decisions. It is evident that times have changed and many principles have also evolved through time.

We are now in a generation where people can distinguish what is well-known and widespread, as well as what is good and bad, and this study primarily seeks to give a clear distinction between good and bad publicity, which are sometimes confused with one another. Thus, the researchers have been compelled to know whether the notion is still relevant in the 21st century in the Philippines as previous articles have focused on the effects of advertising and publicity, but they are restricted to an international environment and only cater to particular groups. Moreover, an experimental study design was mostly utilized to determine the cause and effect of factors for the explanation of concepts, perspectives, and experiences.

To differentiate this study from prior articles and in accordance with the recommendations, this study has employed a mixed-method approach consisting of quantitative and qualitative parts. It has two targeted groups: Generation Z and industry professionals, and it
has used extensive perceptions as well as actual company advertisements and cases. The data collection included quasi-experiment, short Focus Group Discussion (FGD), and personal interviews instruments to be able to assess the judgment of participants.

Overall, this study has provided a distinct scope whether an advertising material, content, and corporation actions result in either good or bad publicity, provided a difference in the subjects' perception of the goodness or badness of an advertising scheme or actions, and identified whether there is a significant relationship between the independent variables (Non-Compliance to Corporate Social Responsibility, Defiance to Advertising Ethics, Controversial Advertising & Situations, and Corporate Scandals) and the dependent variable (Brand Publicity).

Literature Review

Conceptual Background and Hypothesis Development

Brand Publicity

Information that comes from public, confidently interpreted, and reasonably trusted sources to increase media visibility, awareness, or interest for an agency, good, service, celebrity, or cause is referred to as publicity (Levy, 2017; Hallahan, 2018). Scholars such as Nguyen et al. (2013) revealed that consumer behavioral intentions can be greatly influenced by publicity. Even so, Wang et al. (2018) stated that information publicity is inadequate and has little effect on customer intentions, so frequency and publicity content should be enhanced. Brand information obtained from public sources can either be positive or negative, but it is still considered as highly reliable and trustworthy as consumers give this a high level of legitimacy (Levy, 2017; Kim et al. 2016).

In line with the statement above, information gathered from public sources can be both good and harmful. Good publicity ensures that the general public would see a company favorably. Sohn & Laricy (2012) revealed that good reputation can counter the effect of a company’s hard times and positively valenced publicity can improve public perception and can be used to manage its reputation.

Conversely, as mentioned in the study of Yu et al. (2016), negative brand publicity is described as the unremunerated distribution of potentially incriminating information about a brand in the mass media or by word-of-mouth. Roozen & Raedts (2020) explained how damaging bad publicity can be to a brand's reputation and how difficult it is to restore by good publicity. Marketers can devote resources to communication channels that can efficiently engage with consumers when a brand experiences negative publicity and if it is not efficiently managed, the brand can face more severe repercussions, such as brand hate. (Yu et al., 2018; Hegner et al., 2017). Non-Compliance to Corporate Social Responsibility

The principle of CSR has grown in popularity among practitioners and researchers alike, and definitely, CSR has developed over time and may have various effects depending on the audience, organisation, and cultural context (Visser & Tollhurst, 2017). Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is on the rise in today's global marketplace (UN Global Compact & Accenture, 2016), with businesses of all sizes seeking to be socially responsible. According to Einwillera et al. (2019), CSR is high on the global corporate agenda, inspired, at least in part, by the business case that “doing good” has positive effects on key stakeholder groups, such as defending against negative publicity due to CSR’s positive impact on customers' identification with the brand.

In relation to brand publicity in the 21st century, corporations are absolutely fragile in times of crisis. No matter how much a company prepares for a business crisis, it can still face unexpected negative publicity, which is why they must have a strategic marketing strategy in place (Chung & Jiang, 2017). Continuous CSR activities can also help companies with a bad reputation change consumers' perceptions of the company's CSR activities as consumers' confidence in the company's CSR activities increased in both experimental conditions of a study conducted (Bögel, 2016).

As mentioned by Holiday et al. (2020), CSR promotional campaigns make a significant contribution to social issues but more than that, CSR advertising campaigns, in particular, have an effect on long-term audience trigger interaction behavior. When customers who strongly associate with a business because of CSR are faced with negative publicity about CSR, the importance of morality in their self-concept, which underpins CSR, leads to a severe disconnect between their own moral identity and the “real” identity of the company that violated their moral values. (Einwillera et al., 2019).

H1: Non-compliance to Corporate Social Responsibility has a negative impact on brand publicity in the 21st century.

Defiance to Advertising Ethics

Advertising ethics refers to collecting specific rules that govern how the buyer and seller communicate. Advertising ethics often includes ethical questions about the advertising message, the audiences targeted by the advertisement, the advertising of controversial goods and services, and the impact of advertising on social principles.

As a result, ethical advertisements are those that do not lie, stay within decency's bounds, and do not no remake misleading or false statements (Belyh, 2017). According to Rinallo et al. (2012), previous studies and reports by national bodies regarding consumer rights have progressed to reduce unethical advertising practices.

In recent decades, many studies dealing with advertising ethics have discovered that unethical practices mainly refer to the use of controversial content. Additionally, Moraes & Michaelidou (2017) classify ethical issues in advertising involving deception,
representation, vulnerable population targeting, the moral standards of advertising and advertising experts, advertising of contentious products, advertising as compelling ideology, and controversial advertising (provocative or obscene).

Many advertisements today, in the 21st century, are exaggerated, and many advertisers blast their commercials. This gives the impression that the advertisers are unaware of ethical standards and norms. Many marketers want to portray their product as the best and most exclusive on the market or less expensive and more valuable than the competition’s. However, many of these advertisements are misleading and dishonest to consumers, rendering them unethical.

**H2: Defiance to advertising ethics has a detrimental effect on brand publicity in the 21st century.**

**Controversial Advertising & Situations**

As cited by Waller (2005), either by a form of product or execution, which can evoke reactions of humiliation, distaste, disgust, insult, or outrage from a segment of people when viewed is how controversial advertising is described.

Therefore, any international advertisers wanting to undertake a promotional campaign in a new market that may be perceived as controversial must then tread the line between successfully communicating to the marketplace and offending some people in the market. However, it appears that the amount of controversial advertising being broadcast and printed is increasing. Additionally, Maison and Pawlowska (2017) discovered that while controversial advertising may be effective at drawing attention, it can also be detrimental to a brand’s image.

Companies that manufacture a specific product or take a particular approach to the subject matter do so on purpose, knowing that the particular method to sell a product or the subject matter will be viewed as potentially controversial by a particular market segment (Van Niekerk & Jenkinson, 2013).

Niekerk and Jenkinson (2013) expressed that controversy may be helpful to an attention-getting tactic because advertising is all about gaining the target market's attention. It may also sensitize language professionals to controversial subject matter themes (such as religion, race, and culture). This may be recognized as controversial. Thus, it is not always the advertising company's intention to stir up controversy, but an unexpected outcome can sometimes have financial ramifications for the brand publicity.

**H3: Controversial advertising and situations drive an unfavorable impact on brand publicity in the 21st century.**

**High Company Affiliation to Corporate Scandals**

Ethical scandals and predicaments can seriously harm a company's image, affecting customers' perceptions of the company's morals. A company's unethical actions can exist in various forms (Zhang et al., 2017). When a company's unethical activities are revealed to the media and public, these can result in a scandal. A corporate scandal is defined as an act committed knowingly by a company with the intent to deceive stakeholders, regulatory agencies, and/or the general public and is likely to cast doubt on existing business practices (Driel, 2018; Tanimura & Okamoto, 2013). The company's unethical behavior will result in a public relations crisis. In reality, some business owners purposefully act irresponsibly to gain public attention, which frequently results in bad publicity that has a negative significant impact on a company's image (Zhu & Chang, 2012).

Assessing how firms can defend themselves in the outcome of an unethical activity is becoming more critical as customers' use of the Internet and social media allows negative details about such behavior to spread more rapidly than it has ever been. (Dutta & Pullig 2011). In a study made by Boyd (2011) individuals planning on engaging in unethical or unlawful business practices will, of course, attempt the greatest amount of "cover" that is possible to conceal their activities to avoid bad publicity. Other firms consider some ways to help avoid negative perceptions during times of bad publicity caused by either intentional or unintentional corporate scandals. Some studies revealed that the brand-customer relationship strength is critical in forming a positive prior attitude toward the brand which must be nurtured or else, it will erode over time, resulting in strong negative behavioral reactions toward the company or a brand. (Jeon & Beck, 2016; Bowen et al., 2017)

**H4: High company affiliation to corporate scandals produces adverse influence to brand publicity in the 21st century.**

![Conceptual Framework/Model of the Study](image-url)
Research And Methodology

Because the study has a mixed-method design with both quantitative and qualitative components to data gathering and analysis (Creswell & Tashakkori, 2007), the data collection stage has utilized a total of three research instruments. First, a quantitative method of the research study will be used to gather numerical data and generalize it across groups of people and demographics to explain a particular phenomenon (Babbie, 2010). Second, a qualitative method collects and evaluates non-numerical data to comprehend ideas, opinions, or experiences better.

The researchers maximized the use of a quasi-experimental technique and short Focus Group Discussions (FGD) for Generation Z, then personal interviews for company owners, advertising, or managers, all on an internet scale. The researchers have used power analysis with the pwr package in R software version 4.1.0 to determine the sample size of the quasi-experiment, including the Short Focus Group (FGD). Using the approximation of the chi-square ($\chi^2$) distribution on the data with an assumed large effect size of 0.6, a power of 0.8, level of significance ($\alpha$) equal to 0.05, the minimum needed sample size was thirty-four (34) participants. In order to balance the number of participants, the researchers have recruited a minimum of forty (40) respondents while following the specified criterion. In terms of the sample size for the personal interviews, the researchers had six (6) industry experts who were chosen based on a predefined criterion.

The self-made questions have been evaluated by two practitioners and one academician in order to ensure a strong set of questions. Any required changes have been made thereafter. After the entire data collection process, the researchers have integrated the Cochran Q Test and One Sample Proportion Z-Test as statistical tools to determine the relationship between the variables. The Cochran Q Test aims to determine whether the perception of the subjects for all treatments are different while the One Sample Proportion Z-Test is used to compare an observed proportion to a theoretical one in dichotomous data. To complete the study, the researchers have used Thematic Analysis to carefully identify patterns or themes.

Result And Discussion

Quasi-Experiment Data

A total of 40 participants were selected using the inclusion and exclusion criteria discussed in the previous chapter. One of the participants was not able to follow the quasi-experiment closely because of external factors and had to be excluded from the analysis. Despite the time constraints, the researchers were able to follow the randomization mechanism in the experimental design. All the participants proceeded to the treatment room after the registration and briefing and watched the video clips of the various sequences, answering the corresponding questionnaire after each treatment. After all the treatments were applied, the researchers conducted a short focus group discussion and debriefed the participants.

This part is divided into three parts. The first section will present the results of Cochran’s Q test for heterogeneity. The second part will discuss the post hoc analysis using one sample proportion z-tests. The last part will show the descriptive analysis of the attributes associated with good publicity and bad publicity.

Cochran’s Q Test for Heterogeneity

In order to establish that non-compliance to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), defiance to advertising ethics, controversial advertising and situations, and high company affiliation to corporate scandals have significant relationships with collateral and brand image in the 21st century, the researchers tested the hypothesis that the proportion of participants who perceived that the advertisement will lead to good publicity is equal across all five treatments. A rejection of the null hypothesis provides evidence that at least two of the treatments have a significant difference.

Table 1: Responses of Subjects to Different Treatments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Good Publicity</th>
<th>Bad Publicity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Compliance to Corporate Social Responsibility</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defiance to Advertising Ethics</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controversial Advertising and Situations</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Company Affiliation to Corporate Scandals</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Cochran’s Q Test for Heterogeneity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cochran’s Q Test</th>
<th>80.8224</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p-value</td>
<td>&lt; 0.0001**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(**) denotes significance at 1% alpha
Ho: The proportion of “Good Publicity” responses is the same for all treatments.
Ha: There is at least two treatments that has a significant difference.

Table 2 displays the results of the Cochran’s Q test for homogeneity. The test statistic Q is equal to 80.8224 with p-value less than 0.0001 and degrees of freedom equal to 4. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, we can conclude that the subjects’ perceptions of at least two treatments differ. Post hoc tests were used to identify which treatments differed significantly from the control.

Post Hoc Analysis

McNemar’s test for correlated proportions cannot be used to identify which treatments are different because the control treatment has zero “Bad Publicity” responses, making 2x2 contingency tables between the control treatment and other treatments impossible. Instead, we established that the respondents could reliably identify ads that will lead to good publicity. Thus, we will be using one-tailed one sample z-tests to check if the proportion of participants who identified that the advertisement would lead to bad publicity is greater than 50%, a significant majority.

The sample consists of the Generation Z participants of the quasi-experiment. Unless there is a latent variable excluded from consideration in setting the inclusion and exclusion criteria in selecting the participants, the sample is probably a representative sample. The dependent variable, whether the subject perceived that the ad will lead to good publicity or bad publicity is dichotomous.

The experiment was designed such that each outcome has the same probability of success and is mutually exclusive. Since np_e is 20 and nq is 20, the third assumption that sampling distribution of p is well approximated by a normal curve is met.

Non-Compliance to Corporate Social Responsibility

Ho1: The proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad with Non-Compliance to CSR would lead to bad publicity is equal to the proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad would lead to good publicity.

Ha1: The proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad with Non-Compliance to CSR would lead to bad publicity is greater than the proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad would lead to good publicity.

Table 1 shows that all the subjects perceived that the control treatment will lead to good publicity while the ad that showed non-compliance to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) will lead to bad publicity. The test conducted supports this observation. Table 3 displays the results of the one sample proportion z-test for non-compliance to CSR. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that the proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad with non-compliance to CSR would lead to bad publicity is greater than the proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad would lead to good publicity. Based on the findings of this and other studies, it is clear that companies that engage in community and environmental CSR activities reap the benefits of their investment in the form of increased market share, and those consumers value CSR activities and reward them by purchasing more products and services from these companies (Rahman et al., 2017).

Table 3: One Sample Proportion Z-Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1-Sample Proportions Test Without Continuity Correction</th>
<th>Non-Compliance to Corporate Social Responsibility</th>
<th>Defiance to Advertising Ethics</th>
<th>Controversial Advertising and Situations</th>
<th>High Company Affiliation to Corporate Scandals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X-squared</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>32.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Df</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p-value</td>
<td>&lt; 0.0001**</td>
<td>0.9431</td>
<td>0.0057***</td>
<td>&lt; 0.0001**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample estimate of p</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.375</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Defiance to Advertising Ethics

Ho2: The proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad with Defiance to Advertising Ethics would lead to bad publicity is equal to the proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad would lead to good publicity.

Ha2: The proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad with Defiance to Advertising Ethics would lead to bad publicity is greater than the proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad would lead to good publicity.

Table 1 shows that the majority of the subjects perceived that the ad would lead to good publicity.

Table 3 displays the results of the one sample proportion z-test for defiance to advertising ethics. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, we cannot reject the null hypothesis. There is no sufficient evidence to conclude that the proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad that defied advertising ethics would lead to bad publicity is greater than the proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad would lead to good publicity. Therefore, not all contentious commercials are unethical, and not all unethical ads are contentious.

In social marketing awareness initiatives, controversial commercials can have a positive effect (Shabbir et al., 2018).
Controversial Advertising and Situation

Ho3: The proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad with Controversial Advertising and Situations would lead to bad publicity is equal to the proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad would lead to good publicity.

Ha3: The proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad with Controversial Advertising and Situations would lead to bad publicity is greater than the proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad would lead to good publicity.

Table 1 shows that many of the subjects perceived that the ad that shows controversial advertising and situations would lead to bad publicity. Table 3 displays the results of the one sample proportion z-test for controversial advertising and situations. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that the proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad with controversial advertising and situations would lead to bad publicity is greater than the proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad would lead to good publicity.

Overall, controversial advertising does not promote positive brand perceptions or increase the purchase intention of the viewers according to Moraes & Nina (2017). When consumers see messages as exploitative or threatening, a brand's chances of receiving unfavorable feedback increase, and consumers' desire to avoid the brand rises (Villegas & Morton 2020). In a study conducted by Nermend and Latuszyska (2017), they discovered that when controversial advertising is exposed to consumers, the brand image suffers.

High Company Affiliation to Corporate Scandals

Ho4: The proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad with High Company Affiliation to Corporate Scandals would lead to bad publicity is equal to the proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad would lead to good publicity.

Ha4: The proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad with High Company Affiliation to Corporate Scandals would lead to bad publicity is greater than the proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad would lead to good publicity.

Table 1 shows that most of the subjects perceived that the clip that shows high company affiliation to corporate scandals would lead to bad publicity. Table 3 displays the results of the one sample proportion z-test for high company affiliation to corporate scandals. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that the proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad with high company affiliation to corporate scandals would lead to bad publicity is greater than the proportion of subjects who perceived that the ad would lead to good publicity. This finding demonstrates that a negative company's reputation impacts consumers' views and purchasing intentions (Jung & Seock, 2016).

Attributes Associated with Good Publicity and Bad Publicity

This section provides the information received from the questionnaire's various questions. A multiple response question presents a list of possible answer options, and the respondent is asked to select all the options that they deem true. This type of question was utilized to gain insights into the attributes associated with good publicity and bad publicity. The frequency of the responses was tabulated along with their perception of the advertisement.

![Figure 2: Attributes Associated with Good Publicity and Bad Publicity](image)

Figure 2 shows the aggregated attributes associated with the ads watched by the respondents and their corresponding perception of the said ad. Violence, unlawful acts, offensive acts, misleading claims, low quality or disruptive content, unattractive features, and unequal/unfair practices are mostly associated with the ads that are perceived to lead to bad publicity. While original content, catchy phrases, compelling life lessons, powerful images, persuasive content, unique features, and cliché ads are mostly associated with good publicity.

Short Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Data

The study conducted five focus groups as a quasi-experiment via Zoom. In every treatment room, there were eight participants and were in-depth. The total sample size was 40. To ensure that the sample was well-represented, the Gen-Z participants were assured to seemingly fall into the specified criteria identified by the researchers.
The participants were given four questions to decipher. The queries on good and bad publicity were reflected in the following: 1) How do you define good publicity? 2) How do you define bad publicity? 3) How do you identify if an advertisement will result in good or bad publicity to the brand it represents? and 4) Do you believe that the notion/belief “All publicity is still good publicity” is still applicable in today’s generation? If yes, why? If no, why?

Representations of the Participants on Good Publicity

Defining good publicity was the first point of discussion among the participants. Figure 3 shows the codes, organizing themes, and global themes on the observations of the participants on good publicity. Different and interrelated codes were derived from the participants in each treatment room. However, it can be noticed that there are some codes that were repetitively mentioned. Moreover, these codes signified the identification of the organizing themes which in turn led to the formulation of the general theme: effective marketing campaign.

In addition, to further reflect the generalization of the annotations of the participants, Figure 4 shows the graphical representations of word frequency that give greater distinction to words that appear more frequently in the discussion. Thus, the all-encompassing statement: “Good publicity is company means which can communicate a positive brand image of products to the people and the public” was generated.

Representations of the Participants on Bad Publicity

The participants were then asked to define bad publicity. Collective answers stemmed from the participants as they uttered almost the same points in stating their definitions. Codes that were generated from each treatment room stressed the points on the impact of bad publicity, bad publicity structure, images of bad publicity, effects on established products, and influence on public attention. The codes shown in the concept map of bad publicity (Figure 5) reflected the characteristics and individualities of the definitions given by the participants, which further contributed to the documentation of negative reviews or word of mouth as its global theme.

Identifications of Brand Advertisement Leading to Good or Bad Publicity

Moreover, a generalized statement: “Bad publicity is something that viewers think negatively, such as offensive, insensitive, negative information on advertisements or image of a company” can be derived in Figure 6. This generalization was coined from the actual statements articulated by the participants.
The connotations of good or bad publicity are contingent on how the products or services of a certain company are being advertised. The third question in the FGD: “How do you identify if an advertisement will result in good or bad publicity to the brand it represents?” was able to generate different but unified elements pertaining to the evaluation of advertisements. Figure 7 shows the global theme on consumers’ trust in the company as shaped by the organizing themes, which apparently came from the different codes extracted from the transcripts of the five focus group discussions. The codes indicated that advertisements must be appropriate and ethical and no political and sensitive issues to affect good publicity, that unique and catchy content, results, and contents of the advertisements lead to a good impression of the viewers. On the other hand, projection on the content/message, creative and unique presentation that catches the attention quickly and reflected in the word of mouth must not be against any good morals and no violence or discrimination so as not to lead to bad publicity which in turn will affect the brand. Furthermore, to justify the organizing themes, as well as the global theme that has been identified, Figure 8 shows the overall statement: “Good or bad publicity is the result of how people show feedback and values on the content of the brand advertisement”. This comprehensive statement proves that good or bad publicity is influenced by the people’s own interpretation of any advertisement.

Interpretations of Today’s Generation on Applicability of the Notion “All Publicity is Still Good Publicity”

The notion “All publicity is still good publicity” was presented to the participants in order to decide on its applicability on today’s generation. The way the statement was scrutinized leads to the determination of the organizing themes (Figure 9) such as the cause and effects of publicity, the assessment on publicity, the current behavior of consumers particularly the Gen-Z group of consumers, the elements of publicity and the characteristics of consumers. Analyzing further the said themes, WOM Marketing as its global theme was manifested. Word-of-mouth marketing (WOM marketing) is when a consumer’s curiosity about a company’s product or service is mirrored in their daily conversations. Essentially, it is free advertising activated by customer experiences—and usually, something that goes further than what they expected. This can be reinvigorated through different publicity undertakings set up by companies, or by having opportunities to reassure consumer-to-consumer and consumer-to-marketer communications (Hayes, 2021).

Figure 10 reveals the noticeable statement that generalized the observations of the participants. “Yes, good publicity will still be applicable on today’s generation as people think of brands to become aware on advertisements and increase awareness on the content and image of the company”. This sweeping statement answered the question “Do you believe that the notion/belief “All publicity is still good publicity” is still applicable in today’s generation? If yes, why? If no, why?”.
Personal Interviews Data

Interviews with six business owners/advertisers/managers from different companies in the Philippines were done to provide support to the quantitative findings of the study. First, the interviewees were asked to provide their brief profile and professional qualifications and experiences as well as a short sketch of the company where the interviewees are connected.

Characterizations of Business Owners/Advertisers/Managers on Good Publicity

The participants of the study were asked to define good publicity. Figure 11 shows the significance of words and co-occurrences from interview transcripts. As shown, the responses of the interviewees can be generalized as: “Good publicity achieves positive example of products and as a result, creates awareness on company brand”. Further, the documentation of the most frequently found words in the responses contain one or more of the following three themes: 1) Purpose of good publicity; 2) Benefits of good publicity; and 3) Good publicity outcome. The word cloud illustrates that good publicity, which is the center of the study, is noticeable in the minds of the participants whose observations contained the three themes identified. Moreover, Figure 12 shows the thematic map of good publicity, wherein sub-themes are indicated. Furthermore, the theme pertaining to the good publicity outcome generated communication plan and achievement of end result as it may build potential client awareness.

Characterizations of Business Owners/Advertisers/Managers on Bad Publicity

The participants were then asked on how they define bad publicity. It was revealed that “Negative image and examples from wrong individuals can jump into controversy among marketing practitioners that may cause damage in positioning the brand.” Figure 13 shows the highlights from the interview transcripts on bad publicity. However, this generalization can be further noticed in the participants' responses. Also, from this generalization, the following themes were documented: 1) Effects of bad publicity; 2) Images of bad publicity; and 3) Causes of bad publicity. Figure 14 shows the sub-themes and/or codes in each identified theme. As shown, the effects of bad publicity were apparent in a) Bad publicity negatively affects the business, and b) Leads to disappointment and distrust from the public. On the other hand, the images of bad publicity reflect different sub-themes and/or codes, since the transcripts of the interview showed that: a) Bad publicity creates a negative image; and b) Businesses can be portrayed as irresponsible, dishonest, or just after their best interest. Moreover, the causes of bad publicity are evident on the following: a) Bad publicity means accuracy or hitting the wrong entry; b) Bad publicity happens when consumers get another message outside the original intention of the brand; c) Bad publicity happens when an ad touches onto negative aspects of society like discrimination, it becomes politicized, or if a piece of communication is aligned in advertising degrades some part of the society or if a product name is misunderstood and it backfires the brand; d) Bad publicity is when you get a bad brand reputation. Scandals from executives, controversies like malpractice, disgruntled employees, bashing, expose; and e) Publicity always happen in social media. Some sub-themes and/or codes are connected to other encryptions, and for that reason, the support for the identified themes is evident.
Documentation of Brand Advertisement Leading to Good or Bad Publicity

In connection with the need to advertise, the question “How do you identify if an advertisement will result in good or bad publicity to the brand it represents?” was enunciated to the participants. Numerous responses support one identified theme - elements of advertising. However, another theme was emphasized on the impact of advertising content and advertising credibility. These three themes further sustained the generalization of the participants’ responses, as shown in Figure 15. The image generated in the Word Cloud highlighted the overview of the responses as “Example of the campaign with positive emotions in the advertisement will always create want or interest and a result of a good or a bad publicity of a brand.” The generated themes, however, were pointed out by different sub-themes and codes. Figure 18 shows that advertising elements emanated from the responses that itemized that an advertisement must be carefully analyzed and an advertisement should always be good. In addition, the impact of advertising content can be considered vital if the good ad informs or highlight positive things about the brand, and the effect of an advertisement varies on the different demographics. These requisites conversely support advertising credibility, supplemented by website credibility and credibility of the sources. Moreover, the thematic map shows how the sub-themes and codes work together to support the generalized statement.

Impact of Good or Bad Publicity on the Business as a Whole

The participants of the study were then asked to share their experiences regarding their encounters with good or bad publicity, as well as their opinion regarding the impact to the business as a whole. There are two statements that held the sweeping statement: Good or bad publicity of a company can happen on how customers think about the brand, people, media, mobile news, and company image (Figure 17). Furthermore, there are also another documented statement from one of the interviewees that leads to the citations of additional themes. Hence, the three generated themes are the prominence of publicity in business, taking corrective actions, and the company’s reputation and is shown on the map (Figure 18).
Discussion

The adage "All publicity is still good publicity" is undoubtedly well-known, especially today. However, it is questionable whether it holds relevance in the twenty-first century because it was coined years ago. As a result, this research was carried out to establish the potential factors that may influence the plausibility of the notion. This research sought to determine a clear distinction between good and poor publicity, as well as to learn about the perspectives of Generation Z and business owners, advertisers, or managers, as well as to observe the link between the presented factors and publicity itself.

The research discovered the study's main findings after obtaining data using a quasi-experiment, a short Focus Group Discussion (FGD), and personal interviews. First, there is a contrast between good and bad publicity, with good publicity referring to positive characteristics and bad publicity referring to negative traits. Therefore, it is true that good publicity affects a company's reputation and is crucial to its success. Consequently, the findings indicate that both demographic groups can accurately distinguish between good and negative publicity, which is an important tool in shaping the applicability of the notion today. Similarly, there are factors that individuals consider when mapping out if advertising or action would generate positive or negative publicity, such as a review of the characteristics or details of a scenario. Second, influencing factors drive publicity, and of the four elements highlighted, Non-Compliance with CSR, Defiance of Advertising Ethics, Controversial Advertising, and High Company Affiliation with Corporate Scandals, the second is the only one that did not result in bad publicity, which is the Defiance to Advertising Ethics. Third, good and bad publicity have an absolute impact on the business because publicity equals sales and having good or bad publicity may affect the company's overall success. Overall, most participants' responses indicate that not all publicity is good publicity since, while bad publicity raises awareness, it diminishes brand equity and image, resulting in widespread negative publicity.

Through this study, the researchers demonstrated a fundamental difference between good and bad publicity. They were also able to explore the contributing elements, views, impact, and other relevant information for a deeper understanding of the concept.

Conclusions

Publicity is undoubtedly a powerful tool for boosting productivity, efficiency, and profitability in dynamic companies and businesses. It divides between good and bad publicity, all of which have a favorable or negative impact on the company. After performing the research, the researchers concluded a significant difference between good and poor publicity. The notion "All publicity is still good publicity" is no longer as totally applicable as it was in the previous era, owing to various factors. When we talk about good publicity, we are talking about a positive brand image, attracting customers, having credibility and trustworthiness, and overall, an effective marketing campaign, as it certainly conveys an influential advertisement or action, from the perspective of both Generation Z and business owners, advertisers, or managers. On the other hand, when we discuss bad publicity from the perspective of conclusive demographic groups, it primarily refers to offensiveness, insensitivity, and unethical practices, as well as a company's bad reputation as a result of their advertisements and actions, all of which are linked to negative reviews or word-of-mouth. While they have some similarities, they also differ in some ways, such as Generation Z focusing more on the message and content of a specific advertisement or action in determining whether it is good or bad publicity. In contrast, business owners, advertisers, or managers focus on driving awareness as their primary goal, and whereas it results in good or bad publicity is irrelevant because they have achieved their end goal – talkability. This mainly stemmed from their personal experiences. The researchers also identified the factors that influence publicity and found that, with the exception of defiance of advertising ethics, all of the factors described would lead to bad publicity, supporting the new argument that the idea is no longer highly applicable. There would also be several internal and external factors to consider; however, this would need a separate investigation in the future. There are also ways to determine whether publicity will lead to good or bad publicity, such as the characteristic, content, structure, evaluation, and impact, and if all of these factors are positive, it will almost certainly lead to good publicity, as it implies that consumers trust the company or business. Because, once again, exposure equals sales, this includes being transparent, honest, ethical, and growth-oriented. Thus, it is critical to create a clear

Figure 17: Impact of Good or Bad Publicity to Business

Figure 18: Thematic Map of Impact of Good or Bad Publicity to Business
distinction between good and poor publicity. If a corporation or business has excellent publicity, it must retain it, while if they have negative publicity, it must offer remedial activities through public relations.

Recommendation

Because this is a marketing-related study, the researchers intend to transmit particular ideologies and advice for existing and future companies, as well as diversified customers in general based on the perspective of Generation Z and business owners, advertisers, or managers. The researchers recommend industry specialists to be cautious in conceiving and operationalizing ads and immersing themselves in numerous situations since this might result in either positive or unfavorable publicity, based on the data and conclusions. As a result, they must pay close attention to every element of their commercials and actions while participating in CSR efforts, adhering to advertising ethics, and avoiding involvement in contentious campaigns and controversies. They should also analyze the characteristics of their ads and acts, and if they are implicated in such negative aspects, they must take corrective or remedial action. Their fundamental intent must be to fulfill the communication plan's objectives, exemplify their brand positioning, and create brand love through positive vitality and talkability. They must also avoid controversies, errors, and irresponsibility and dramatically maximize how customers think about the brand, people, media, mobile news, and business image since they are the most likely sources of good or bad publicity. The researchers also recommend that consumers use their thorough awareness of the distinction between good and bad publicity and interact with them based on the reality of the company advertisement or activity. Because not all publicities are perceived to be good in general, they must be the first to respond to any negative publicity or stunts. They must be comprehensive in their responses to avoid asserting the concept of effectiveness. As a result, viewers must be alert and critical, as word-of-mouth is crucial in directing a company's publicity.

Directions for future research

The future researchers should undertake a research study comparing the perspectives of people born before the 20th century and those born in the 21st century to ensure inclusion. This would also provide further insight into how the concept or notion came to be and if it is still valid in light of the numerous variations, emergence, and principles between then and today. The researchers also recommend that, in addition to the presented independent variables, more contributing factors be identified to secure the correctness and depth of the study. Aside from that, the researchers suggest providing remedial activities on how to recover from unpleasant events in order to maintain positive publicity. Last but not least, the researchers indicate that studies be conducted in other nations, not only the Philippines, to see if culture is an absolute influence.

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