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Prankvertising Phenomenon

The Effects on Consumer Buying Decision

Master Thesis

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Abstract: Prankvertising is a phenomenon that is gaining significant exposure in marketing world, attracting both small and large companies to implement it as a new advertising strategy. Its success has been proven by millions of views and shares within a few days, reflecting an effective tool of viral marketing. Despite its success in gaining rapid audience reach, the argument relating to its true success, whether prankvertising can affect consumer buying decision, is also increasing. This thesis, thus, aims to explore this new phenomenon impact on consumer behavior by connecting theories of word-of-mouth, viral marketing, advertising and consumption theories such as BDT and CCT. Examples of prankvertising videos produced by different industries were used to delve into consumer reactions towards prank videos. From the study, prankvertising was found to be an effective advertising tool that can affect consumer buying decision. The findings revealed three aspects effecting on consumer buying decision; emotion, engagement, and memorability. Prankvertising was activated through a number of emotions appeared from the prank content, which 'Caring' emotional category proves to be the most encouraging consumer buying decision. The higher the engagement of the consumer to the prank video, the more it affects their buying decision. Finally, consumer's memorability of the name of the product advertised also had effects on consumer's buying implementation.

Thesis purpose: To gain a deep understanding of prankvertising phenomenon effects on consumer buying decision through a critical analysis that explores consumer behavior discourse within an online context.

Methodology: The philosophical roots of pragmatism guided the research through an abductive approach aiming at connecting the two broad theoretical frameworks of prankvertising phenomenon and consumption theories. Four prankvertising videos were explored through quantitative analysis, triangulated with descriptive data collection using qualitative approach.

Theoretical perspective: The research builds on consumer theories with the motivation to explore prankvertising effects on consumer behavior, and also takes into account how prankvertising content and consumer buying decision connects to these concepts.

Empirical data: The results were collected from quantitative self-completion questionnaire and qualitative semi-structured interview with the use of prankvertising examples from four industries, electronic industry (Samsung), airlines industry (WestJet Airline), movie industry (Carrie Movie), and personal care product (Her Deodorant).

Conclusion: With regards to the new prankvertising phenomenon, it can affect consumer behavior in term of their buying decision. The effects tend to be derived from its prank content through emotion, consumer engagement, and memorability.

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1. Introduction

LG, a South Korean electronics giant company, conducted a hoax interview in a room which the window was replaced by LG's new HD TV screen playing a video of meteor attack. The falling meteors, shown on the high definition screen, provided shock value for the interviewees and created their scary reaction to the prank. The hidden camera was placed in the folders, flowerpot, and under the desk to record interviewees' authentic actions. The prank record was broadcasted throughout the Internet creating rapid spread of word-of-mouth. This two-minute video gained huge awareness that it was shared and went viral in a few days with more than 15.4 million total views on YouTube (Brenzel, 2014). In this regard, LG employed a new advertising strategy to promote its new 84-inch ultra-realistic HD TV. With the exciting prank content, LG could rapidly spread the advertising message via the help from the audience. This new type of consumer-generated viral marketing is called 'prankvertising', which now widely gains popularity by many marketers.



Figure 1.1: Meteor Job Interview Prank (Brenzel, 2014)
(15,388,677 YouTube views with 790,093 social shares)

It is becoming extremely difficult for marketers to advertise their products and services effectively via the traditional means of communication such as television and printed ads (Nail, 2005). As consumers are bombarded by abundant advertisements of 3,000-5,000 advertising messages per day (Media Matters, 2007), companies are forced to be creative enough to break through the clutter and gain attention from them. Particularly, in the age of

online advertising, it is even more crucial for companies to include new and unique content in their advertising to differentiate themselves from others. This is to ensure that their advertisements get views, likes and shares (Cameron and San Jose, 2011).

In current social media era, the consumer-generated advertising in the forms of electronic peer-to-peer communication or online word-of-mouth is not something new (DeBruyn and Lilien, 2008). Vilpponen, et al. (2006) see online word-of-mouth advertising, or viral marketing, as a tool used to encourage people to communicate a market message to others. Similar to viruses, such strategies take advantage of rapid spread of the message to reach millions of people. Viral marketing appears in many forms such as video clips, interactive Flash games, ebooks, software, images, text messages, email messages, or web pages (Cohn, 2013). Recently, a new type of viral marketing strategy which includes creative, unique and new advertising content has been introduced to marketers. It enables the marketing message to go viral overnight. The new strategy has been widely implemented by small and large companies including LG, which previously illustrated by its famous meteor prank-themed advertising campaign. As the name suggests, such strategy is called 'prankvertising' (Grover, 2014).

Prankvertising is a phenomenon of viral marketing that subjects unsuspecting consumers in pranks set up by companies with the whole situation filmed and distributed all over the internet (Roth, 2013). Innovative-designed prank content highly attracts people's attention with an inbuilt sense of reality. The viewers find it easier to relate the advertisements to the brands, as its credibility is gained when their friends share it. Moreover, as prankvertising requires a lower budget compared to the traditional advertising, it turns out to be a persuasive alternative of getting maximum reach in minimum cost (Grover, 2014). This makes the phenomenon as one of the most popular trends for marketers in 2013. The strategy is used to market an array of products and services, from feature films to soft drinks to meditation techniques via this method (Brenzel, 2014). However, in parallel with its success in reaching the audience, there has been an increasing argument whether prankvertising can lead to consumer buying decision.

1.1 Problem Discussion

Recently, prankvertising has been introduced in marketing area with an impressive statistical data of consumer reach. This attracts both small and large multinational firms to utilize the phenomenon, making prankvertising a commonplace (Keywest, 2014). A giant Hollywood movie company, 20th Century Fox, employed the *Telekinetic Coffee Shop Surprise* prankvertising to promote the new movie ‘Carrie’, which has garnered 53,499,650 YouTube views with 2,742,124 social shares in 2013. Other well-known heritage brands do not hesitate to capture such tempting opportunity such as Pepsi, Coke, Nivea, LG, Samsung and Carlsberg (Brenzel, 2014). Gaining marketing attentions, the rise of prankvertising’s argument is more apparent. Many prankvertising-related articles claimed that its success could be proven from the ‘number of views’ shown in social media platforms such as YouTube, which reflects the product or brand awareness. However, significant numbers of marketing bloggers questioned whether prankvertising could affect consumer buying decision. An example of one criticism to a movie prankvertising’s success is that “Wouldn’t it be nice if 46 million views on such viral video can actually be translated into 46 million tickets?” (Dwayne, n.d.).

Bhatt (2012) stated that consumer demand is not always shifted by persuasive advertisements. There is no guarantee that consumers who actively share the viral videos will buy the advertised product or service. Proven evidence is weak to support that a viral video, no matter how successful, is likely to convince consumers to buy a product or service (O’Leary, 2010). A viral marketing campaign, which undoubtedly builds product and brand awareness to consumers, sometimes does not lead to a higher market share (Ferguson, 2008). Although consumers love the video, it does not always influence their buying decision. The question relating to the ‘true success’ of prankvertising is thus raised; whether the prankvertising can lead to consumer buying decision of the products or services. Moreover, in parallel what could be the effects from prankvertising on their buying decision. Moreover, as prankvertising is the new phenomenon that gains huge attentions from many companies, the argument brings significant complications to prankvertising and calls for more theoretical research attention on this phenomenon.

According to Bronner and Hoog (2010), consumer-generated advertising, such as word-of-mouth and viral marketing, is established under the co-creation marketing process developed by the consumers themselves. This gives rise to the importance of consumers study in this regard. Factors such as consumers’ ability, motivation and opportunity

influences their buying decision differently (Laaksonen, 2010). The variety in socio-cultural aspect fosters distinctive consumer buying behavior across societies (Arnould and Thompson, 2005). The underlying concepts reflect the complexity of consumer buying decisions.

Although the marketing online texts do touch on how consumers react to prankvertising and raise questions about its 'true success', we have not uncovered any concise effort made towards enlightening academia and practice to prankvertising's arguments. Since prankvertising has recently begun to gain significant exposure, what has been done regarding the phenomena is limited to marketing blogs or non-academic context. The relevant existing academic theories are more presented in the forms of word-of-mouth and viral marketing, leaving out the specific area of prankvertising. On the other hand, academic studies relating to consumption such as Behavioral Decision Theory (BDT) and Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) have provided a deep understanding relating to consumer decision making in terms of their buying behavior, but no connection to prankvertising. We, therefore, see the gap in connecting the new phenomenon of viral marketing to consumer behavior in a theoretical context, as well as bringing the theory contribution of prankvertising.

1.2 Research Purpose and Context

Since more and more companies are exposed to the use of prankvertising as a new consumer-generated viral marketing (Brenzel, 2014), implementing the strategy requires a deep understanding in the role of the consumers. Even though the investment to establish a viral marketing in social networks is relatively small, the cost of generating content is high, as it demands creativity, time and qualified talent (Armelli and Villanueva, 2011). Insufficient understanding of prankvertising effects on consumers can deliver undesirable advertising content to the targeted audience, reflecting negative consumers' reaction in terms of their buying decision (Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012). Putting efforts in time and money could, thus, be worthless (Kemp, Bui, and Chapa, 2012). Many marketing managers spend millions creating a certain viral marketing campaign aiming to increase market share; ultimately, the final answer lies with consumers. The aim of this study is to develop a conceptual and methodological framework relating to prankvertising phenomenon by drawing from the discipline of consumer buying behavior.

Firstly, in our literature review, we will establish the state of research, subsequently establishing connections not yet drawn in the theoretical frameworks of consumer-generated advertising literatures and consumer theories. Through these means, we aim at contributing a clearer view of prankvertising and its connection to consumer buying behavior. Subsequently, the methodology employed in our study will be explained. The research philosophies of pragmatism will be considered as a point of departure of our research, which will be facilitated by abductive research approach. The research strategy of experiment with multiple examples deployed by the four prankvertising videos will be described. The mixed method between quantitative self-completion questionnaire and qualitative semi-structured interview will be implemented as our research choice. Afterwards, the empirical data collected from our research techniques and procedures will be later presented. This will be followed by the in-depth analysis and discussion aiming to answer our research question. Lastly, the conclusion will be drawn, along with the limitations which we confronted during the study. The research of prankvertising in an effort to include and make use of consumer behavioral aspects is expected to have the potential for future academic research, which the direction for future research will be suggested at the end of the paper.

1.3 Research questions

In line with our critical pursuit, we will examine the following research question in depth and with several methodological techniques.

“What are the effects of prankvertising phenomenon on consumer buying decision?”

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will explore into the theoretical frameworks with regard to our research question that relate to prankvertising phenomenon and its effects on consumer buying decision. Therefore, we structured our literature review into 2 parts; prankvertising phenomenon and consumer theories. Although there is a lack of academic literature on prankvertising phenomenon, we come across its similarities in nature with academic-rich marketing literatures of word-of-mouth and viral marketing. Thus, the first part of prankvertising phenomenon will begin by exploring from the broadest context of word-of-mouth, then narrowing down to viral marketing, which subsequently, leading to the foundation of prankvertising definition. The derived term of prankvertising will be furnished from the synthesized comparison by exploring the similarities and differences among the concepts of word-of-mouth, viral marketing, and prankvertising phenomenon. This will contribute to an independent understanding of prankvertising itself. The table summarizing the comparison between these three consumer-generated advertising (CGA) will be conducted at the end of the first part to provide a broader view for the phenomenon definition.

Building from a deep understanding of prankvertising nature and characteristic, the second part of theoretical review further manifests into the relationship with consumer behavior in term of BDT and CCT perspectives to see what influence consumer buying decision. BDT literatures, on one hand, will mainly focus on the consumer as an individual. The chosen BDT models of Consumer Information Processing Model and Hierarchy of Effects Model (HOE) will highlight consumer behavior individually with the effects by advertising. As prankvertising is fostered by social network, which allows Internet users to influence each other by their decision making process (Constantinides, 2004), CCT providing socio-cultural factors affecting consumer behavior is included in the second part.

2.2 Prankvertising Phenomenon

2.2.1 *Word-of-mouth*

Word-of-mouth (WOM), which its power being recognized as a significant factor influencing consumer buying decisions, emerged in 1960s (Lam, Mizerski and Lee, 2005). The term refers to oral, person-to-person communication between a receiver and a communicator whom the receiver perceives as non-commercial, regarding the brands, products, or services (Breazeale, 2009). It has long been believed that WOM can be even more influential in consumer decision making than any marketer-controlled source of information (Buttle, 1998). This is because WOM provides source of reliability and the flexibility of interpersonal communication (Breazeale, 2009).

As WOM has a strong influence on individual psychology, its results can appear in both positive and negative aspects. In the case that consumers interpret a particular WOM as positive, there is a potential increase that consumers will buy a product. Although positive WOM has been proven to have a significant impact on consumer decision making (Buttle, 1998), research has shown that negative WOM can be even more influential (Bolfing, 1989), due to the fact that dissatisfied customers tend to tell more people about their experience than those who are satisfied or even delighted (Arndt, 1967). For instance, very satisfied consumers will share their positive experience to an average of three people; meanwhile, a bad experience will be shared to 10 people (Gombeski, et al., 2011).

A good example and, also, a good lesson to be learned by United Airlines occurred when a Canadian musician, Dave Carroll wrote a song called 'United Breaks Guitars' and uploaded it on YouTube. The catchy song with clever lyrics contains the story of his negative experience with United Airlines, creating a bad word-of-mouth to the United brand and also affecting the consumer buying decision (Bernoff and Schadler, 2010). The viral video generated 1.5 million YouTube views with 10,000 comments in three days. It immediately attracted attention on blogs, Twitter and other websites (Garfield, 2009).

The situation seems to be smooth in the end. However, according to the UK Daily Mail, it claimed that United lost 10% of its share value, or \$180 million, as a result of this viral revenge (Wrenn, E., 2009).



Figure 2.1: United Breaks Guitars video (Christmas, Z., 2009)

Refer to the example above, WOM plays a significant role in influencing the consumers to buy a product or service. Companies cannot underestimate the power of social media such as blogs, websites and video platforms. The negative WOM, illustrated by the ‘United Breaks Guitars’ example, reflects a negative impact on consumer behavior. On the other hand, the success of positive WOM is able to increase the amount of sales. As WOM appears to be a rationale and a solution to maximize the profit, it has become so popular and is considered as a major marketing tool utilized by many companies (Sheng, 2012).

With the Internet proliferation, the nature of word-of-mouth has been changed as the Internet increases average consumer’s ability to make their voices heard by more people and for an extended period. Referring to the United Airlines’ case, huge users’ reach was facilitated by Internet and social media platform, encouraging a faster negative word-of-mouth than in the old days. Similarly, with the help of Internet, positive word-of-mouth generates rapid information flow and benefits the companies. This reflects the

nature of ‘online word-of-mouth’ or the current popular marketing term of ‘viral marketing’, which also plays an increasingly significant role in consumer decision making (Breazeale, 2009).

2.2.2 *Viral marketing*

Online word-of-mouth or viral marketing has become a hot topic in marketing area. The term “viral marketing” refers to the ways consumers mutually share and spread marketing-relevant information, deliberately sent out by marketers to stimulate and capitalize on word-of-mouth (WOM) behaviors. Because viral marketing campaigns leave the dispersion of marketing messages up to consumers, they tend to be more cost efficient than traditional mass media advertising. Viral marketing provides a new venue for companies to reach consumers and to strategically influence consumer opinions (Breazeale, 2009). It is suggested that viral marketing is successfully leveraged as a new marketing tool (Duan, Gu and Whinston, 2008). In order to create a successful viral marketing, three conditions need to be fulfilled; giving the right message to the right people in the right circumstance (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2011).

Right people: Choosing the target group to help spread the message can be called ‘seeding strategy’ (Yuping, 2012). According to the empirical study by Hinz, Skiera, Barrot and Becker, (2011), the results show that the best seeding strategies can be up to eight times more successful than other seeding strategies. There are 3 individual-level user motivations: socializing, creativity, and escape. In order to create the phenomenon of viral marketing in sharing, Eisenbeiss, et al. (2012) suggested that marketers need to ensure that the message is shared by individuals who have socializing motivations. This refers to a group of people who is primarily concerned with establishing and maintaining personal relationships with other members in the network. They, thus, tend to have access to a large amount of marketplace information, which will later be spread to a huge number of social connections (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2011). Moreover, Yuping (2012) also added that a marketer should choose consumers with strong influence on others who are also advertisers, rather than simply wider reach. Seeding to well-connected people is

the most successful approach, as they are more likely to participate in viral marketing campaigns. Hinz, Skiera, Barrot and Becker (2011) have classified people into three types: “hubs,” who are well-connected people with a high number of connections to others; “fringes,” who are poorly connected; and “bridges,” who connect two unconnected parts of the network and acts as a network intermediary. Marketers can gain the high number of recommendations and awareness across various platforms, as well as motivate interactions through their viral marketing campaigns, if they seed the message to hubs (high-degree seeding) or bridges (high-betweenness seeding). This is because these groups of people promise a wider spread of the viral message (Hinz, Skiera, Barrot and Becker, 2011).

Right message: With the information overflow in the Internet, it is hard to gain people’s attention. Only the messages which are new, interesting, and exciting will have potential to create a viral marketing epidemic. These kinds of messages can be done through true stories, real reactions of people, rumors, humorous or hilarious messages, and even sexual contents. The right viral message should also trigger an emotional feeling with the relevant target group (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2011). Several studies have shown that emotions play a role in whether or not a message will go viral. They also suggest that pleasant content results in greatest pass-along, while conflicting findings report that unpleasant content generates the highest probability of pass-along. Surprise content is important for viral success, and many advertisers have resorted to shocking content, such as sexuality, nudity, and violence to create intense emotional responses in viewers. Shocking advertising content increases attention and positive behavior. Moreover, disgusting content results in a higher probability of pass-along among consumers who have low involvement with the advertised product (Henke, 2013).

Right circumstance: Social network remains a crucial determinant of optimal viral marketing in practice because a social structure is much easier to observe and measure than communication intensity, quality, or frequency. Companies should use social network information about mutual relationships to determine their viral marketing strategy. Online communities such as Facebook might begin to offer information on

members' social positions to third-party marketers or provide the option to specify target group (Hinz, Skiera, Barrot and Becker, 2011). Many companies fail to promote viral marketing when they spread the message too broadly. It is important to choose a right platform which is specific enough to focus on the target group (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2011). For example, Youtube, which is a sharing platform for user-generated videos, provides the functions of rating, views and subscription. These help marketers target user-generated videos which likely to go viral as soon as possible (Hoffman and Novak, 2012).

The most successful viral marketing campaign in 2013 of Dove would be used to illustrate the impact of viral marketing on consumer buying behavior. Being awarded as the most popular video of 2013, 'Dove Real Beauty Sketches' has gained over 114 million views on YouTube only 1 month after the release (Menaker, 2014). The key message of the advertisement is implied as "You are more beautiful than you think" (Spitznagel, 2013).



Figure 2.2: Dove Real Beauty Sketches (Menaker, 2014)

The video content creates the *right message* that conveys strong emotional feeling to the target audience, who are women. According to Dove survey data, more than half of women globally, contributing to 54%, agree that when it comes to how they look, they

are their own worst beauty critic. According to Lam, et al. (2009), consumers who receive WOM containing relevant message to their cultures or subcultures tend to spread particular WOM than those who are not culturally exposed to. Therefore, the video success could be gained from emotional connection between the video content and women's attitude towards their own beauty. There is no doubt why the video received people's attention, as it represents the powerful concept that is relevant to the target group, breaking the clutter of abundant advertisements (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2011).

The good content further led to the power of sharing by the *right people*. According to Unruly's data, the video was shared 3.74 million times, making it the third most shared video in the era. The advertising content is new, unique and modernized, targeting people who have socializing motivation. It encourages the sharing by modern Internet users of women, men, media and even other brands (Eisenbeiss, et al., 2012). In addition, Dove did a careful media planning. The brand partnered with YouTube and Unruly to facilitate the sharing and seeding strategy, reflecting the *right circumstance* to gain positive viral impact (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2011; Stampler, 2013). The success of positive consumers' reaction was represented by IRI data showing Dove's U.S. sales increase by 1% in four weeks after the viral video was released. The figure proves to be Dove's victorious accomplishment compared with previous year that it took 1 year to gain 3% rise in sales (Neff, 2013).

From Dove example, it shows the success of positive consumer-generated marketing, which highly benefits the company in term of consumer buying decision. This, thus, strengthens the importance of careful planning for a viral marketing campaign that the companies should deliver the right message to the right people in the right circumstance. In 2013, while 'Dove Real Beauty Sketches' ranks first as the most successful viral marketing campaign, the fourth success belongs to 'Pepsi (Test Drive)' prank video, which later introduce marketers to a new phenomenon of viral marketing of 'prankvertising' (Menaker, 2014).

2.2.3 Prankvertising

Although there has not yet been much research about prankvertising, the phenomenon is defined by marketing bloggers as a marketing strategy to achieve a successful word-of-mouth or viral marketing which includes unsuspecting consumers, mostly in public places, in pranks set up by companies. The whole situation is filmed and distributed all over the Internet via blogs and social media (Roth, 2013). Prankvertising is aimed to shock unwitting participants and entertain the online audience. It shows the real reactions of people and creates emotional messages to the audience. As the nature of social media is sensitive to new and exciting content, it is more likely that this kind of message is highly viewed and shared. Although prankvertising existed long before the online marketing era, such as *Candid Camera* which has brought pranks to television in 1948 and *Punk'd* transformed them to the new generation (Luckerson, 2014), its popularity has increased rapidly after marketers realized how powerful it is to generate a viral success or word-of-mouth in online world (McMullen, 2013).

We support the argument that prankvertising is a part of viral marketing and also word-of-mouth due to its similarity in nature of success, which one of the most popular examples of 'Pepsi (Test Drive)' would be used to illustrate. A professional car-racing driver, Jeff Gordon, took an unsuspecting car salesman on the scariest ride and records his experience via a hidden camera inside a Pepsi Can. The video contains the shock reaction from the misfortune car salesman. It has been posted online and reached over 40 million YouTube views (Menaker, 2014).

Referring to viral marketing literature explained earlier, Pepsi's prankvertising includes the *right message* of emotional impression to the audience. The surprise prank content represent a type of emotional message that consumers have never experienced from existing advertising (Henke, 2013). Moreover, the prank was done by the world famous car racer, Jeff Gordon, this stimulates the use of 'hubs' (high-degree seeding), who are well-connected people with a high number of connections to others. Thus, the prankvertising applies the use of *right people* to promise a wider spread of the viral

message. Regarding the *right circumstance*, although Pepsi did not cooperate with a social media platform (Menaker, 2014), the company uploaded the video on YouTube Pepsi channel and its own network sites. This sharing platform for user-generated videos provides the functions of rating, views and subscription (Hoffman and Novak, 2012), facilitating the user-generated video to go viral on other sport websites (Rey, 2013).



Figure 2.3: Pepsi MAX and Jeff Gordon Present: “Test Drive” (Brenzel, 2014)
(40,520,838 YouTube views with 2,643,333 social shares)

According to the above examples, three conditions of *right people*, *right message* and *right circumstance* were met in order to facilitate the prankvertising achievement. However, we see that other successful prankvertising campaigns such as LG’s meteor prank and *Telekinetic Coffee Shop Surprise* to promote the new movie ‘Carrie’ contains only one condition of the *right message* to generate word-of-mouth and viral success. This means that prankvertising does not need to be involved with a famous celebrity to generate ‘hub’ seeding for *right people* like Pepsi. Companies implementing prankvertising do not always need to partner up with other social media platforms for *right circumstance* like Dove. Instead, most prankvertising used normal people to perform the pranks, and the videos were simply shared on the free social media channel such as YouTube. This reflects less important roles for the conditions such as *right people* and *right circumstance*, while give explicit to the *right message* generated by the prank situation itself.

In prankvertising, the *right message* generally contains surprise emotion to generate the viral success. According to Figure 2.4, Douglas-Cowie, Cox et al. (2005) propose a list of 48 emotion categories which are the default set for Emotion Annotation and Representation Language (EARL). Dobele, et al. (2007) argue that successful viral marketing campaigns trigger emotional responses from the recipient and encourage sharing. Viral messages need to contain the element of surprise, and at the same time it must also be combined with other emotions to guarantee viral success in term of viewing and sharing. This supports our argument about prankvertising success in audience reach that the *right message* involving surprise emotion under Reactive should be embedded.

Figure 2.4: Emotion Annotation and Representation Language (EARL) (Douglas-Cowie, Cox et al., 2005)

a). Negatively associated emotions

Negative& forceful	Negative & not in control	Negative thoughts	Negative& passive	Agitation
Anger	Anxiety	Doubt	Boredom	Shock
Annoyance	Embarrassment	Envy	Despair	Stress
Contempt	Fear	Frustration	Disappointment	Tension
Disgust	Helplessness	Guilt	Hurt	
Irritation	Powerlessness	Shame	Sadness	
	Worry			

b). Positively associated emotions

Positive& forceful	Caring	Positive thoughts	Quiet positive	Reactive
Amusement	Affection	Courage	Calm	Interest
Delight	Empathy	Hope	Content	Politeness
Elation	Friendliness	Pride	Relaxed	Surprise
Excitement	Love	Satisfaction	Relieved	
Happiness		Trust	Serene	
Joy				
Pleasure				

It could be concluded that prankvertising phenomenon is a part of word-of-mouth and viral marketing. However, these three terms are not exactly the same but have minor differences in its advertising nature. Word-of-mouth can be generated from consumers in

a wider context, not only limited in the online world. Instead, those word-of-mouth in online world refer to viral marketing, which requires *right people, right message and right circumstance* to achieve audience reach. Meanwhile, prankvertising success mainly depends on the *right emotional message* of the surprised prank content itself, regardless of the *right people* and *right circumstance*. Figure 2.5 below summarizes the similarities and differences in nature between word-of-mouth, viral marketing and prankvertising. Advertising concept was added to provide a clearer understanding by comparing to the general concept in marketing communication.

Figure 2.5: Prankvertising characteristics in comparison to Advertising, Word-of-mouth, and Viral marketing

	Advertising	Word-of-mouth	Viral Marketing	Prankvertising
Type of Advertising	Company-generated	Consumer-generated	Consumer-generated	Consumer-generated
Message Content	Persuasive or Informative	Persuasive or Informative	Persuasive	Persuasive
Credibility	Low	High	High	High
Push or Pull Strategy?	Push	Push/Pull	Pull	Pull
Distribution Channel	Mass Media One to Many	One to One One to Many	Internet One to Many	Internet One to Many
Often associate with 'Surprise'?	No	No	No	Yes
Strategy for Success		Consumer Focus	Right Message/ Right People/ Right Circumstance	Right Message (Emotion)

Remark: The strategy for success under Advertising is not included, as the particular area is not covered by our study.

Framing from the literature synthesis of prankvertising phenomenon, it seems that prankvertising can gain positive consumer buying decision through the use of *right emotional message* of surprise, similar to WOM and viral marketing. However, refer to the prankvertising's true success argument in Chapter 1, although a particular prank video garnered huge audience reach, there is no guarantee that this success can lead to

consumer buying decision. This reflects the fact that there must be other factors that play important roles in consumer behavior. Therefore, it is necessary to explore into consumer theories of BDT and CCT perspective in advertising context to see what factors can also influence consumer buying decision. This is done in order to form sufficient knowledge to conduct an empirical study to help guide us to answer the research question. The consumer theory will, thus, be subsequently reviewed in the second part.

2.3 Consumer Theory

Since prankvertising audience can act as both the messengers of the video sharing and the potential buyers of the advertised product or service, it is extremely crucial to understand what drive consumer behavior in order to assess their buying decision. BDT consumption theories will be reviewed first, as the perspective focuses mainly on individual consumer, which the three widely-used models of Consumer Information Process model, the Hierarchy of Effects model, and FCB Grid will facilitate the explanation of consumer decision making processes. Subsequently, CCT theories, which focus more on consumers as social beings, will be further analyzed to reflect other influential factors such as family, friends, cultural values, social class, or subculture (Matsuno, 1997). This is because values and norms are developed as guidelines for human behavior. They can be considered as the criteria that individuals use to select and justify their actions and to value objects and behavior of others (Fraj and Martinez, 2006).

2.3.1 Literature Review of BDT and Consumer Decision Making

The Consumer Information Processing model

The first step to understand consumer buying behavior is to learn how they make decisions. This process largely views consumers as being cognitive or problem-solving and, to a lesser degree, affective or emotional (Kotler, 1997; Solomon, 1996). Such view is presented by the Consumer Information Processing model. In this model, the consumer progress through five stages: problem recognition, search for information, evaluation and selection of alternatives, decision implementation, and post-purchase evaluation, as

described in Figure 2.6. Along these five stages, advertising can influence consumer buying decision differently. However, with regard to our research question, the model will be focused until the stage of making a decision to purchase to reflect the buying behavior. Thus, the last stage of post-purchase evaluation will not be covered in our review.

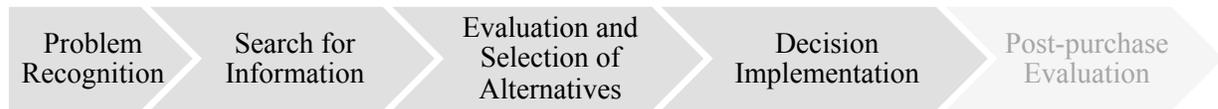


Figure 2.6: The Consumer Information Processing Model (Solomon, 1996)

Problem Recognition

The consumer buying process begins when the buyer has the need or recognizes the problem that is when consumers discovered a difference between the desired state and the actual state (Matsuno, 1997). For example, Maria may recognize that her smart phone is not functioning as well as she expected it to be. Thus, she has a need to find a new one. At this stage, advertising can play a role to trigger consumers' problem, which they may not be aware of, and encourage them to search for more information about a certain product or service.

Search for Information

After consumers are aware of the problem, they search for more information regarding the brands, product features, and product characteristics. For example, Maria may become attentive to smart phone advertisements, smart phones bought by her peers, and conversations about smart phones. Biehal and Chakravarti 1986; Wyer and Srull 1986 stated that, as information accessibility increases, the likelihood that information is used as an input for judgment also increases. Theoretically, there is a *universal set* of brands in the market available, but Maria will be aware of only some brands (*awareness set*), some of these brands may satisfy her buying criteria, such as large screen and price (*consideration set*). Finally, a few brands will remain as strong candidates as Maria proceeds to more information search (*choice set*) (Vroomen, Hans Franses, and Van

Nierop, 2004). It is important for companies to deploy informative marketing strategy and make their products and services highly visible, allowing consumers to reach the information easily when they search for it.

Evaluation and Selection of Alternatives

The evaluation and selection of alternatives are personal based on consumer's personal view on the importance of benefits and attributes. There is no single process that could be applied by all consumers or neither by one consumer in all buying situations. However, one proposed method is to see the evaluation process as being cognitive and rational. Under this prospect, a consumer looks for the benefits of problem solving the product has to offer. Then, he or she views each product as a bundle of attributes and the different levels that these products can solve his or her problem and satisfy his or her need. Matsuno (1997) proposes a hierarchical model to organize the relationships among the *need* (e.g. Maria needs a smart phone to watch movie and chat), *benefits* (e.g. does not break down, portability), and *attributes* (e.g. warranty, brand reputation, size, speed, price). In this stage, advertising acts as a conviction builder in consumers' minds to make them buy the product or service. Furthermore, if advertising is coupled with some sales promotion strategies, it can arouse consumers to an instantaneous action.

Decision Implementation

In order to implement a buying decision, a consumer will have to select the specific products or services, and the place to buy. There are three ways to the decision, 1) simultaneously, 2) item first, place to buy second, or 3) place to buy first, item second (Matsuno, 1997). For example, simultaneously means that Maria selects a set of brands based on both criteria of smart phone's features (attributes) and availability in the stores. Maria can also choose where to buy first (e.g. drop by a store near her workplace, or a trustworthy website), then select from the brands available at the store. Once decision regarding the brand and the place to buy has been made, a consumer moves on to the purchase transaction (Matsuno, 1997). At this stage, persuasive advertising content of product availability, convenience of stores, and retailers' trustworthiness can increase the potential of purchase.

With regard to the Consumer Information Processing Model, it can be implied from BDT perspective that along the decision making process, advertising is able to affect consumer behavior in many ways. This means that advertising can stimulate the purchase with the content that triggers consumer need or problem (problem recognition stage); the content which is informative (search for information stage); the content about sales promotion or other useful information comparing to other alternatives (evaluation and selection of alternatives); content about product or service availability, convenience, and trustworthy (decision implementation). By doing so, companies can encourage positive consumer reaction via advertising. However, as pointed out that advertising with emotional message, such as prankvertising can also affect consumer purchasing decision. The next model of HOE will present how emotion can play roles to consumer behavior.

The Hierarchy of Effects and Purchase Involvement

Hierarchy of Effects model (HOE) presented in Figure 2.7 is widely used in the explanation of consumer decision making process and shows the process by which advertising works. HOE is similar to the Consumer Information Processing model that consumers experience a sequence of psychological stages before purchasing a product or service (Lavidge and Steiner, 1961). HOE model, however, highlights consumer learning that takes place as he or she processes information from the external world.

According to Figure 2.7 in the following page, HOE Model begins with the stage where consumers are *unaware* about the product or service. Subsequently, consumers gain *awareness* triggered by external stimuli such as shared content (word-of-mouth) or potentially a “viral message”, if the content is shared online. As the consumers obtain more information, they further develop a better *knowledge* about the product or service. Such knowledge is used as a basis to form a *liking or disliking* which leads to a stronger *preference* of a product or service in comparison to others. At this stage, the consumer developed a psychological preference, which is later proceeded to the *conviction* stage to actually *purchase* the product or service (Delozier, 1976).

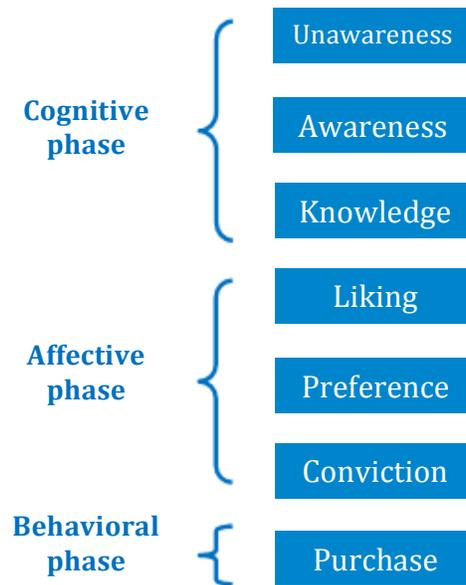


Figure 2.7: Hierarchy of Effects Model (HOE) (adapted from Delozier, 1976)

Both the Consumer Information Processing model and HOE model assume that people are cognitively driven, thinking information processors. However, there exists controversy, as some scholars claimed that consumers often develop cognitive judgment (knowledge or thinking) towards a product or service after forming liking and preference (an emotional response or feeling) (Matsuno, 1997). Therefore, Laaksonen (2010) suggests that marketers are able to use advertisements appealing to consumers both emotionally and personally. This could be done through the executions that evoke feelings and emotions. Such controversy, thus, allows advertising with emotional content such as prankvertising to potentially affect consumer buying decision.

According to Figure 2.8, Ratchford (1987) illustrates on Foote, Cone and Belding grid (FCB) in the light of consumer decision making and attempts to categorize consumers according to their levels of involvement and their attitudes. Each quadrant represents a combination of consumer thought and involvement. Products or services can be assigned in one of the four quadrants depending on the reasons behind its selection, either emotional or its functional benefits. Each quadrant has a different sequence

including the elements of ‘think’, ‘feel’ and ‘do’, which is accounted for each consumer decision making process and the processing of advertisements about the products or services (Teng, Huang and Hsieh, 2010).

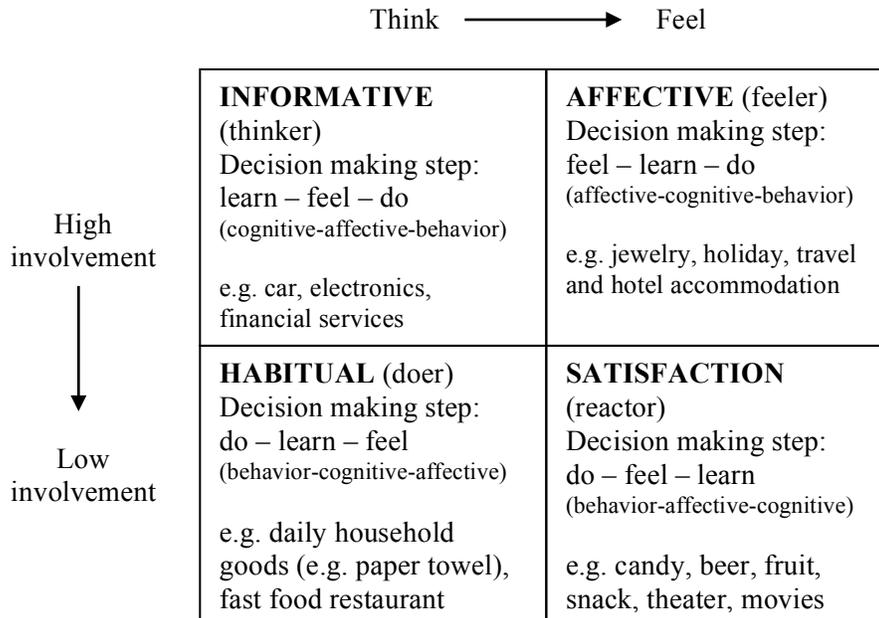


Figure 2.8: FCB Grid (Ratchford, 1987)

Similar to HOE model, in high-involvement products, the cognitive stage usually happens before the affective stage, and followed by behavioral stage. In low-involvement products, awareness is created first, which the feeling will be later formed (Vaughn, 1986). Prankvertising, which involves emotional content, tends to be more visible in Affective and Satisfaction quadrants such as in airline industry and movie industry, as such quadrants are fostered by ‘feel’. These groups of ‘feeler’ and ‘reactor’ will prioritize their decision making process on feeling before learning, and tend to base their buying decision upon the emotion.

The three consumption models supported by BDT perspective have been brought up to reflect consumer decision making process and how advertising could affect their buying decision. With regards to the Consumer Information Processing model and HOE model, they suggest that consumers are cognitively driven, which their decision making

process need to begin with the development of knowledge towards a product or service first. Meanwhile, FCB grid indicates a clearer view of affective consumer driven, by emotion or feeling, in the Affective quadrant. Therefore, from FCB grid perspective, it allows advertising with emotional content such as prankvertising to possibly affect consumer buying decision.

With regards to BDT perspective, the review into individual involvement factor is not sufficient for the comprehension and analysis of consumer buying behavior. Prankvertising is fostered by social network, which allows Internet users to influence each other by their decision making process (Constantinides, 2004). Therefore, factors influencing consumer buying decision is able to depend on group influence (Laaksonen, 2010). CCT theory, which involves socio-cultural factors affecting consumer behavior, will further serve this perspective.

2.3.2 Literature Review of CCT

Traditionally, consumer behavior research has focused on individual behavior (Hansen, 2010). In fact, consumer decisions are made in relation to others, the reference groups, which are “a group of people who significantly influences an individual’s behavior” (Hansen, 2010) such as families, peers, colleagues. In a culture, values and norms are guidelines for human behavior and they are the criteria that individuals use to select and explain their actions and also to value objects and behavior of others (Fraj and Martinez, 2006).

The relationship between the development of individual self identity and collective socio identity is parallel and inseparable; Jenkins (1996) describes this relationship as “internal-external dialectic of identification” or in other word, self-identity must be authorized through social interaction and embedded in social practices. The choice of consumption of products, services, and media defines the self and the relationship through social interaction; hence, self can be referred to a symbolic meaning of goods and the role played by brands (Elliot and Wattanasuwan, 1998). As

consumption plays a vital role in providing meanings and values for the foundation of consumer's individuality and the society, advertising could be recognized as one of the major sources portrayed these symbolic meanings (Elliot and Wattanasuwan, 1998). The consumer uses these symbolic meanings to construct, maintain and express their multiple identities through their choice of consumption.

Advertising can be successful by signifying the message that the majority of people can relate to. By doing so, people are willing to get involved with the advertised message and are potential adopting the advertised product or service. As explained by narrative identity theory (Ricoeur, 1992), in order to gain viral success, people require a narrative identity to pass on the message. This means people should be able to relate themselves to the stories and can make sense of themselves by the stories they can (or cannot) tell (Elliot and Wattanasuwan, 1998). This way, consumers are becoming active and participating audience (Anderson and Meyer, 1988). Consumers are related differently to a message, product, or service because they possess different and inconsistent cultural meaning. This is because the narrative identity is related to personal past history or personal situation that shape personal perception and social knowledge (Livingstone, 1995). Therefore, it does not mean that everybody shares the video for the same symbolic meaning, nor does everyone buys the product to satisfy only themselves, but also takes into account the society aspect.

According to Goffman (1959) and Grunert (1986), one of the most powerful sources of endured symbolic meanings is advertising. As a part of a cultural system, advertising indicates and guides all aspects of the consumer's existence (Ritson and Elliott, 1995). On the other hand, all aspects of the consumer's existence also indicate advertising creativity. Therefore, advertising does not only facilitate cultural meanings for the consumer (Lannon and Cooper, 1983), but also represents cultural meanings from consumer's view and contribute to the advertised product or service. Thus, advertising plays both roles in transferring or creating meanings into culture and also a cultural product itself (Ritson and Elliott, 1995).

Elliott and Wattanasuwan (1998) proposed a modeled process of consumption that give rise to the realms of self-symbolism and social-symbolism presented in Figure 2.9. The functions of the symbolic meanings of products operate in two directions; Self-Symbolism and Social-Symbolism. Self-Symbolism refers to the inward towards constructing our self-identity, whereas Social-Symbolism refers to outward in constructing the social world (Elliott, 1997). Moreover, as advertising is a form of mass media communication, its meanings also arises in the interpersonal communication among consumers and may subsequently become socially shared meaning (Elliott and Wattanasuwan, 1998).

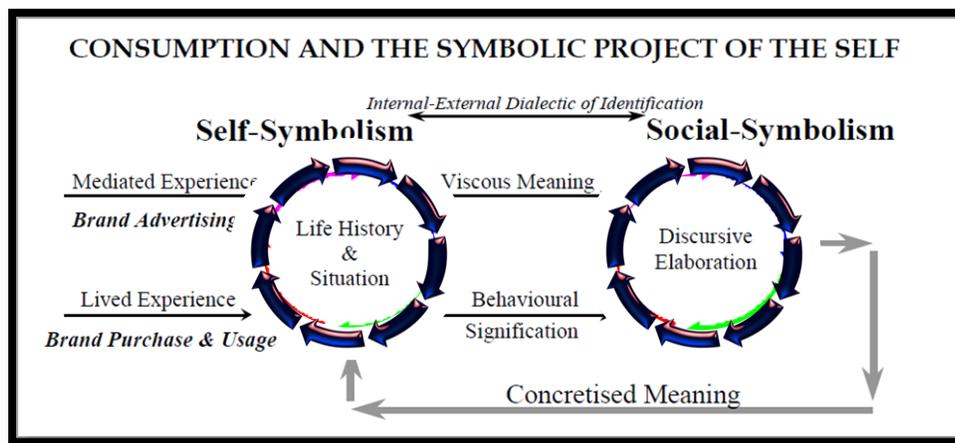


Figure 2.9: Consumption and the symbolic project of the self (Elliott and Wattanasuwan, 1998)

Refer to Figure 2.9, advertising tends to emerge under mediated experience to later form self-symbolism. Anderson and Meyer (1988) mention that “the meaning [of advertising] is not delivered in the communication process, rather it is constructed within”. Smith and Swinyard (1988) note that consumer’s attitude and behavior derived from mediated experience such as advertising is not as strong and predictable as those formed through direct experience. Therefore, lived experience in purchasing, and using the brand dominates the mediated experience of the brand from advertising. Mediated experience of advertising are liable to be rejected or forgotten until they have been realized in lived experience with the brand in a social context which gives rise to its symbolic meaning.

Word-of-mouth and viral marketing are examples of aesthetically appealing advertisements or a mediated experience symbolism that individuals could interpret and derive behavioral signification from self to social. In addition, individuals derive a concretized meaning of social symbolism from discursive elaboration and relate to their self identity. Specifically, for advertising which operates under social media such as viral marketing, consumer buying decision could be socially influenced. Such advertising can be considered as one of the resources for symbolic construction of the self in relation to the society.

In addition, consumer's ability to make sense of and transfer meanings from an advertisement is portrayed in the advertising literacy (Heath, 1983). Advertising literacy integrates the issues of cultural and interactive advertising. Many consumers, especially young adults, employ advertising literacy to identify their identity within their choices of social groups. Willis (1990) notes that young people are increasingly involved in advertisement. Therefore, these young people can derive symbolic pleasure from the advertisements and appreciate the active role they play in understanding and passing on the message.

From CCT perspective, the choice of consumption of products, services, and media is constructed through consumer symbolic meanings. From Figure 2.9, it suggests that advertising could be recognized as one of the major sources portrayed the symbolic meanings (Elliot and Wattanasuwan, 1998). Advertising, therefore, can provide meanings and values for the foundation of consumer's individuality and the society. Moreover, advertising, which operates under social media such as viral marketing, tends to influence consumer buying decision socially. Consumers, especially young adults, employ advertising literacy to identify their identity within their choices of social groups. Therefore, we see this group of young people as active consumers who are willing to involve with the advertisements.

2.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, we explored into the literature review of prankvertising phenomenon and consumer theories. It can be concluded prankvertising is part of WOM and viral marketing that they are all driven by consumers. WOM plays a significant role in influencing the consumers to buy a product or service. Meanwhile, successful viral marketing could also lead to consumer buying decision, if the three conditions of *right message, right people, and right circumstance* are met. However, for prankvertising, it seems that only *right message* is sufficient to trigger consumer sharing and enjoy huge audience reach. The particular *right message* tends to involve a surprise emotion generated by the prank content. By delving into consumer theories, consumers generally process their buying decision upon a sequence of psychological stages, where consumers are cognitively driven. However, some theories suggest that consumers also process their buying decision from affective phase involving with emotion and feeling. From the socio-cultural view of consumer behavior, it suggests that advertising could be recognized as one of the major sources portrayed the symbolic meanings. Advertising tends to influence consumer buying decision socially, which young adults are considered as active consumers.

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter entails the methodology we have chosen to elicit answers to the research question. In order to comprehensively delve into particular research techniques or procedures to collect an empirical data, the Research Onion by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2008) was used to help defining each research step. Figure 3.1 provided a guide to the structured approach to explain the considerations, underlying the choice of data collection. Several layers of the onion need to be peeled away to get into the center of the Research Onion, by which means the methods to depict the effects of prankvertising on consumer buying decision.

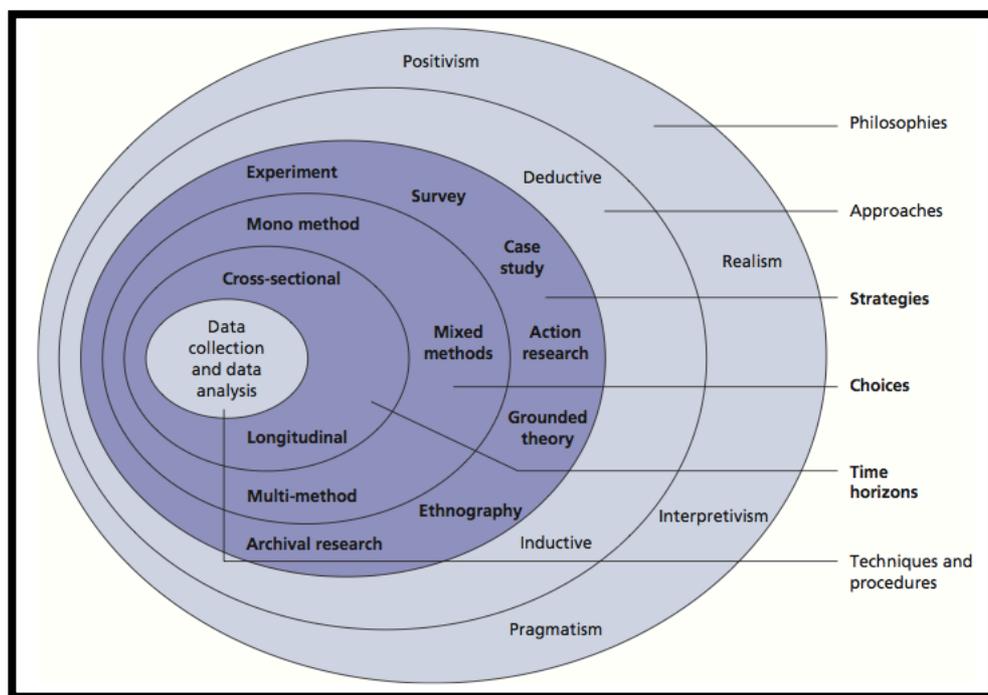


Figure 3.1 The Research Onion by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2008)

3.2 Research Philosophy

Unavoidable debate between epistemology and ontology research philosophies emanates the ‘pragmatism’ position, which argued that the most important determinant of the research philosophy was the research question. The idea disputes what Guba and Lincoln (1994) claimed about the research questions that were secondary to the questions of epistemology and ontology. However, we support the statement that a researcher needs to seek out which research approach better answer a particular research question. This helps us

to minimize the focus on rather pointless debates such as truth, reality, natural scientific, or social actors. Therefore, ‘pragmatism’ is the research philosophy we took a stand. We, thus, derived our methodology from the research question by critically select the research approach, strategy and choice which best explore prankvertising effects on consumer buying decision. According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998), pragmatism is inherently engaging, as the philosophical paradigm shed the light on the heart of research.

By basing on pragmatism philosophy, we related our research to the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge. For example, prankvertising, which operates under online society, requires a study to the large extent of sufficient sample size to explore prospect consumer behaviors. At the same time, examining consumer behavior is dependent on descriptive understanding rather than numerical statistic. Our research choice, thus, needs to consistently serve the idea intending to derive the data collected from both quantitative and qualitative methods. Pragmatism allows flexibility in choosing research methodology that unless the research question does steer unambiguously which the philosophy, such as a positivist or interpretivist, should be adopted, it is perfectly possible to conduct a research with both philosophies. This reflects the knowledge foundation of abductive research approach, which enables researchers to apply either qualitative or quantitative research approaches or both (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998). Such approach is, thus, highly appropriate in our study of prankvertising effects on consumer behavior.

3.3 Research Approach, Strategy and Choice

Deriving from the research question which is rooted from the two broad theoretical frameworks of prankvertising phenomenon and consumer theories in Chapter 2, an ‘abductive approach’ was adopted. Dubois and Gadde (2002) argued that a researcher could develop the understanding by conducting an empirical study synthesized from existing theoretical frameworks. By adopting abductive approach, empirical findings relating to consumer behavior towards this new viral marketing phenomenon are able to change the view of consumption theories and the other way around. This means a more robust understanding of WOM and viral marketing, and consumer theoretical review such as BDT and CCT perspectives combining with a research of people reaction to the prank videos would develop the finest research quality to answer the research question.

Since we intend to bridge the existing theoretical frameworks of viral marketing to

consumer behavior, our research falls under the study of causal connections of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, which is deployed by an experiment research strategy. The strategy was used in our explanatory research to study a clearer view the relationships (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2008). This means that the strategy allowed us to gain a rich understanding of the prankvertising phenomenon on consumer research and the processes being enacted. Although most prankvertising creates surprise emotion to the audience, each prank content is produced differently depending on the objective of each product or service type. This means that different prankvertising can uniquely lead to different consumers' reaction. We, thus, implemented experiment research strategy with multiple examples to delve into consumer behaviors by comparing the findings of the first example occurred to the other examples and, as a consequence, constituting the generalization from these findings.

By adopting experiment as a research strategy, the data collection techniques exploited are likely to be used in combination (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2008). Moreover, abductive research approach enables researchers to apply either qualitative or quantitative research approaches or both (Dubois and Gadde, 2002). This leads to the research choice of mixed methods, both quantitative and qualitative. The logic of triangulation was used to support the mixed methods implementation. In our research, qualitative strategy was cross-checked against quantitative strategy (Bryman and Bell, 2007). It could be considered as 'connecting the dots', since qualitative strategy was used to gain a supplementary data, strengthening the quantitative data. Moreover, the mixed methods provided us with specificity and accuracy from quantitative data and the ability to interpret complex situations provided by qualitative analysis (Bryman and Bell, 2007). Thus, this research choice enabled us to better evaluate the extent to which our research findings could be trusted by the interpretations made from them.

At the first stage, quantitative method was implemented to collect sufficient data from online consumers. Although the study of consumer behavior tends to rely on words rather than numbers, with the use of Likert Scale, we quantified the immeasurable data such as interesting and exciting degree of the prank videos. Quantitative method was chosen to ensure our research validity and reliability, as it allows large sample size to be collected in order to support the argumentation. As prankvertising is operated in social network, which serves millions of people, large sample size is necessary to effectively derive the research

answer. Meanwhile, qualitative method provides a great deal of descriptive detail and the context emphasis, supporting quantitative method. The follow-up qualitative questions were asked to gain explanation and understanding of social behavior, such as from CCT perspective, which were unable to be seen deeply via quantitative method (Bryman and Bell, 2007).

Despite the view of epistemological and ontological objections to the mixed methods research (Bryman and Bell, 2007), we see the strengths of the data collection and data analysis techniques with the synergy of mixed methods. This means quantitative and qualitative research association is believed to have capability of being fused.

3.4 Research Design

According to Bryman and Bell (2007), a research design “provides a framework for the generation of evidence that is suited both to a certain set of criteria and to the research question”. In other words, it bridges research question to the research process. Therefore, a good synchronization of the research purpose, theoretical framework, research context as well as the techniques used in data collection and analysis becomes very important to apprehend the validity and coherence of the design.

This study employed a mixed methods research design of quantitative and qualitative with explanatory approach at an interactive level. We used a cross-sectional survey of the potential consumer group, which was designed to assess consumer buying behavior at both personal level and social level. The survey was aimed to explore what influence consumer buying decision by engaging with prankvertising, from viewing, sharing and liking.

The study started by collecting and analyzing quantitative data. We further collected and analyzed qualitative data in a second phase as a follow-up to the quantitative results. Subsequently, we connected the phases by using the quantitative results to shape the qualitative research question, sampling, and data collection, as shown in Figure 3.2 in the following page.

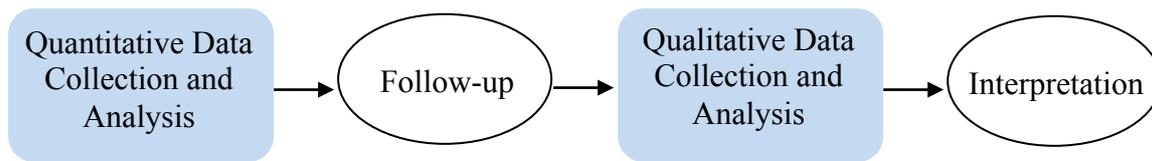


Figure 3.2: The Explanatory Sequential Design

Firstly, quantitative data from the survey were collected and analyzed for the commonalities, trends and differences in term of the effects of prankvertising on consumer buying decision. The quantitative results collected by Web survey based self-completion questionnaire were the main interpretative resources of the study. For the next phase of the study, qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted for follow-up purpose. The reason for following up with the respondents' feedback from the survey was to obtain an in-depth behavioral and cultural understanding behind their choices of the survey answers. Finally, as mentioned earlier, the interpretation of findings were mainly based on the quantitative data but supported by qualitative data from the interviews. This is to provide a more comprehensive discussion into consumer cultural and social justifications to their buying decision.

Therefore, Figure 3.3 in the next page will further elaborate the research design selection, following the steps for conducting the mixed methods study and planned to answer the research question. This includes the feasibility and rationale of the mixed methods deployed. We will explain about the data collection, the detailed construction and the design of the measurement instruments. Lastly, we will state how the research was framed, including how exactly the data had been collected, and how they were analyzed sequentially.

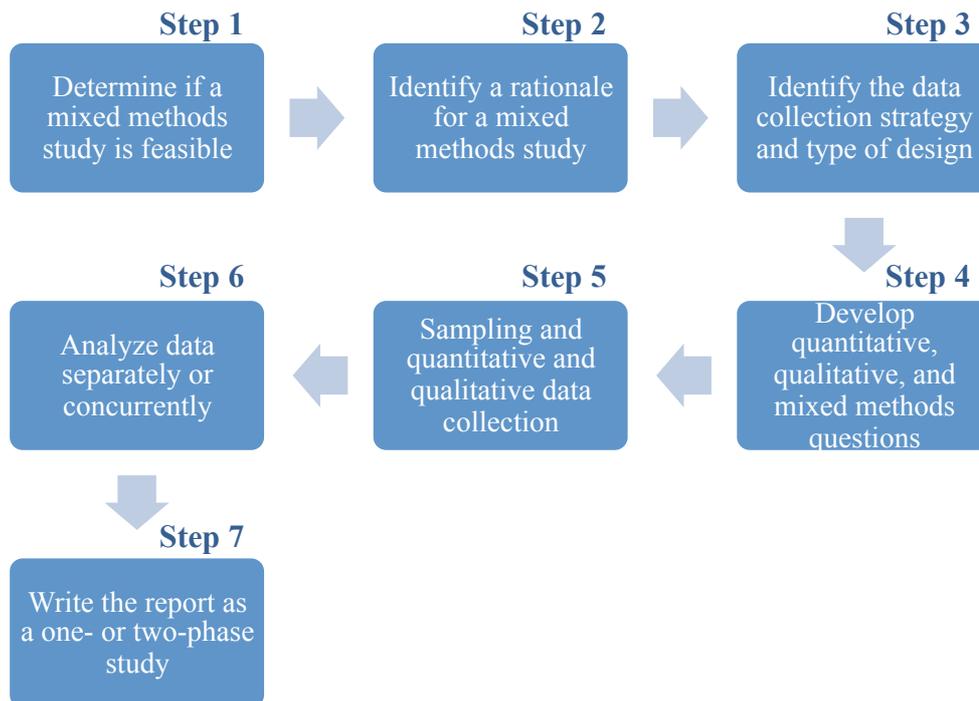


Figure 3.3: Steps for conduction a mixed methods study, adapted from Creswell (2012)

Step1: Feasibility of the mixed methods

This study used the mixed methods research design of quantitative and qualitative methods (sequentially) to collect primary data. The scope of our study is not limited to personalized scaled behavior but also connects to consumers' social values and other factors influencing their decision making. Therefore, it is feasible to use qualitative interviews in assessing consumer cultural perspectives and also for the purpose of triangulation of the responses. The semi-structured interview allows the interviewer to some degree, although not completely, random probe. Gilbert (1993) suggests "Random probes provide a check on the validity of questions and yield a representative sample of verbatim comments which can be used as illustrative quotations when writing-up the research." Therefore we combined methods of survey and interview to benefit from the advantages of both methods.

With regard to the feasibility of the study, we conducted pilot study with the aim to develop and test adequacy of the survey, assessing whether it was realistic and workable. As suggested by De Vaus (1993) "Do not take the risk. Pilot test first," pilot study was regarded as a trial run, done in preparation for the major study (Polit et al., 2001). Five surveys were distributed to members of relevant population, which were Generation Y social media users. The adjustment regarding the survey outline, length of time required to complete the survey

and specific words were made prior to the formal launch of the survey to ensure the quality of the respondent answers and high respondent rate. For example, the respondent reported that the use of emotional categories titles such as *Positive & forceful* and *Agitation* (Douglas-Cowie, et al., 2005) were not elaborated enough and they had trouble understanding the terms. As for the justification, we used more understandable emotion terminologies under each emotion categories such as *Amusement/Joy* instead of *Positive & forceful*, and *Shock/Stress* instead of *Agitation*. In addition, since prankvertising in relation to buying decision is a relatively unexplored topic (Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012), we also conducted a pilot interview on the members of relevant population and used the results to make justification to the survey. Such justification includes the question regarding assumed prank situation (*Question 8* in the survey).

Step2: Rationale for a mixed methods study

There are several reasons for the preference of an explanatory design. Firstly, by using qualitative data collected from semi-structured interview, it helped explain quantitative results collected from self-completion questionnaire, which required further exploration. The second reason was to use quantitative results to identify interviewees for qualitative study. Prankvertising is a relatively new marketing phenomenon and there is no directly supporting academic literature. Therefore, we see the possibility that new questions regarding this phenomenon and its effect on consumer buying decision could be emerged from the quantitative results. The follow-up with interview would allow qualitative data collection. Such data reflects an in-depth perspective of the respondents. In other word, it supports the psychological assumption from the quantitative phase, shifting to qualitative phase construction (Gilbert, 1993).

Step 3: Data collection strategies and the type of designs

As explained earlier in the explanatory sequential design structure, the study began with the quantitative survey with the method of self-completion questionnaire. According to Bryman and Bell (2007), questionnaire, as a cross-sectional design “entails the collection of data...at a single point in time in order to collect a body of quantitative and quantifiable data in connection with two or more variables [such as emotional connections, sharing, and recognition], which are then examined to detect patterns of association”. The survey method was considered appropriate for our study purpose supported by many reasons. Firstly, it is suitable for asking individuals to self-report about particular behaviors, attitudes, opinions,

characteristics, expectations, self-classification, and knowledge (Neuman, 1997). Moreover, according to Groves, et al., (2004), surveys are useful tool in the characteristics description of large sample populations. For example, in the prankvertising study, it could serve millions of prankvertising viewers.

The purpose of this study is to investigate how prankvertising affects consumer buying decision. Prankvertising already contains the surprise element in its nature. However, we would like to further identify its emotional linkage to other types of consumer emotional engagement such as fear, irritated, friendliness, love, and relaxed. The different emotions attached to the videos may have different effects on consumer buying decision, whether to buy or not to buy. In addition, there are more than just personal emotions that affect consumer decision. The study also looks into the social context that could affect consumer as well. Thus, this study aims at inviting the potential consumers to evaluate their emotions and their social factors on the basis of their retrospective and prospective viewpoints of their buying behavior “at a single point in time” (Bryman and Bell, 2007). The quantitative self-completion questionnaire contains the required elements to seek findings to answer the research question. The purpose of deploying self-completion questionnaire for this study was to produce quantitative or numerical data about consumer engagement in buying decision that could later be statistically analyzed.

Secondly, Web based self-administered survey method was appropriate, because it allowed us to gain a relatively convenient access to the sample population, or the potential respondents which were social media user. Moreover, members of the sample population were expectedly willing to cooperate with the study and to present their points of view about prankvertising. Self-completion questionnaire allowed respondents to complete questionnaires at their own convenience. Therefore, they would rather complete the questionnaires at ease and be able to focus on the content of the prankvertising videos delivered in the survey. This would, thus, enhance the research quality. Furthermore, cross-sectional designs, as opposed to longitudinal designs, require less devotion from the research participants. Cross-sectional designs take less time to complete, and do not contain as many obstacles related to finding and maintaining a sample population (Bryman and Bell, 2007).

Thirdly, the survey method also suits the study’s theoretical construct. As discussed in Section 2.3 regarding consumer literature review, there are many variables of personal and

cultural aspects in driving consumer behavior and their perceptions. Therefore, the Consumer Information Processing and the Hierarchy of Effects models are a multi-leveled and multi-faceted system (Matsuno, 1997). A design of the survey provided consistent quantification based on this measurable and identifiable theory construction by “entailing the collection of data on more than one case” (Bryman and Bell, 2007). This allowed us to identify variation amongst the respondents and to examine the pattern of associations between variables. In summary, being characterized with certain elements, such as “at a single point of time”, “more than one case” and “quantitative or quantifiable data” (Bryman, 2012), the survey design was appropriate and adequate to answer the research question.

However, the quantitative survey design with self-completion questionnaire also contains limitations. In general, quantitative researches rather result in causal description and not causal interpretations. Due to the dependence on questionnaire as a data collection instrument, it could jeopardize the internal validity and ecological validity. To compensate these drawbacks, the study follows up with the second phase of data collection, the qualitative semi-structured interview with volunteered consumer groups, in order to clarify the content of the questionnaire results. This is essential to get an in-depth meaning behind the collected quantitative data.

Step 4: Development of self-completion questionnaire and semi-structured interview

The first measure instrument for this study is self-completion questionnaire with the videos attachment, and the follow-up is the semi-structured interview. The study uses four prankvertising videos, created for the marketing purpose in four different industries. The video selection criteria and the construction of questions of self-completion questionnaire and semi-structured interview will be discussed in the following section.

Video selection

With regard to the FCB grid (Ratchford, 1987) depicted in Figure 3.4, provided here for convenient, consumers had been categorized into four groups according to their levels of involvement and their attitudes. The products and services can also be classified in accordance with these consumer groups, which includes 1) high involvement product with an emphasize on think attitude (*Informative*), 2) high involvement product with an emphasize on

feel attitude (*Affective*), 3) low involvement product with an emphasize on think attitude (*Habitual*), and 4) low involvement product with an emphasize on feel attitude (*Satisfaction*).

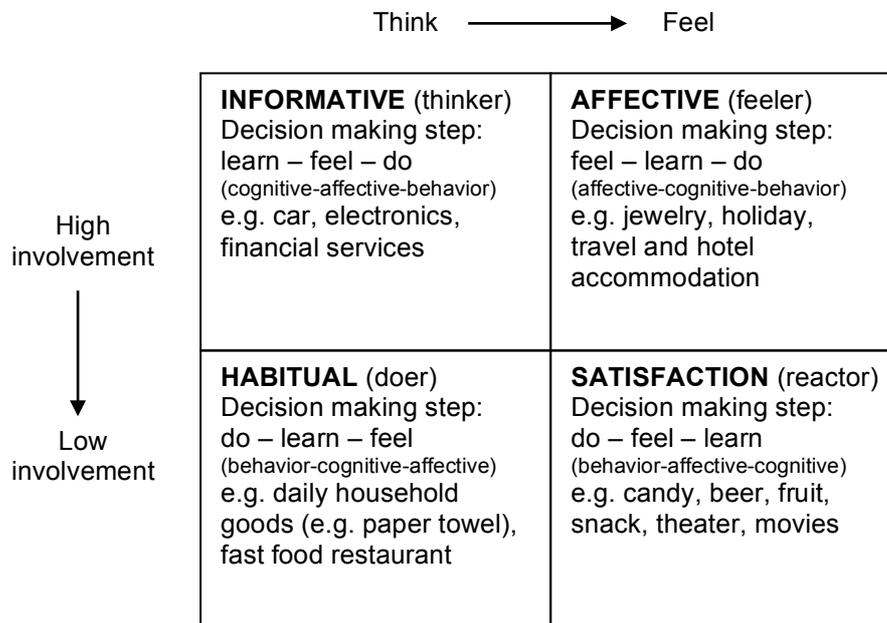


Figure 3.4: FCB Grid (Ratchford, 1987)

In order to include a wide variety of prankvertising videos for the study, we selected one video from each FCB categories as a representative, based on its high number of views and the comments on YouTube. As a result, Samsung's '*All eyes on the S4*' prank video campaign, which is identified within the electronics industry, was selected to represent the *Informative* group; WestJet Airlines' '*WestJet Christmas Miracle: real-time giving*' video was chosen to represent the *Affective* group; Her deodorant's '*Baby kidnap prank, Stress test*' campaign was selected to represent the *Habitual* group; and finally, Carrie Movie's '*Telekinetic Coffee Shop Surprise*' promotion campaign, which is identified within the movie industry, was selected to represent the *Satisfaction* group. Figure 3.5 below shows the selected videos and the category they represented. In addition, the chosen videos were re uploaded in the questionnaire, purposely to avoid the respondents seeing the high number of views, likes, and comments of the videos. These factors could create bias to the respondents' decision making and, hence, affect the quality of the survey results.

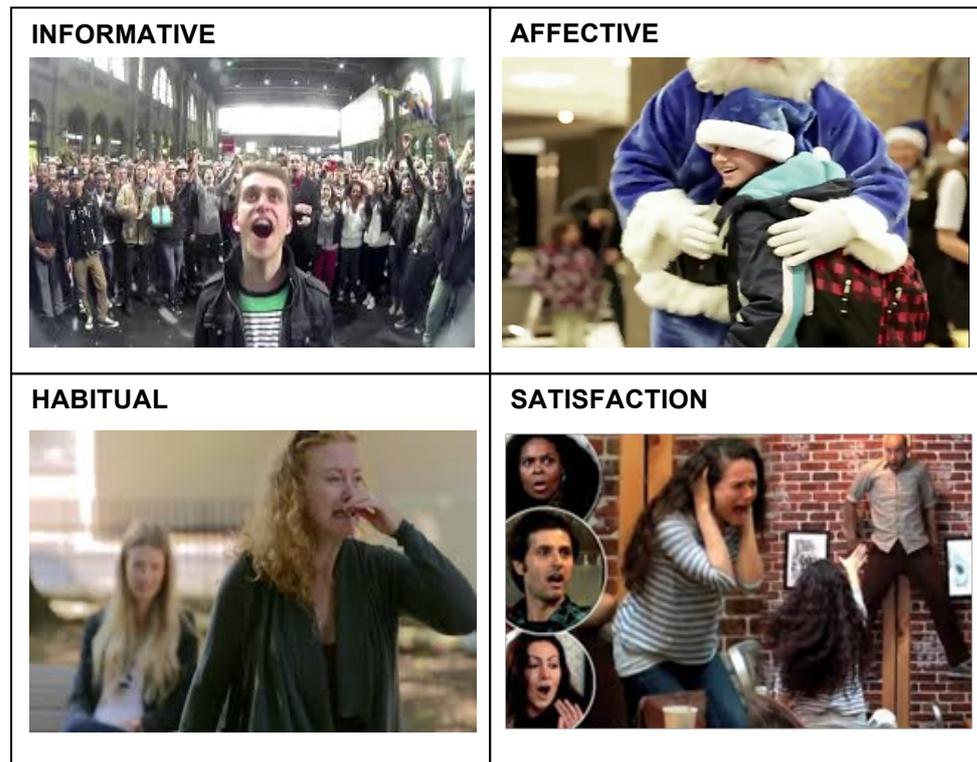


Figure 3.5: Video Selection, Top left, Samsung’s ‘All eyes on the S4’ (Informative consumer category); Top right, WestJet Airlines’ ‘WestJet Christmas Miracle: real-time giving’ (Affective consumer category); Bottom left, Her deodorant’s ‘Baby kidnap prank, Stress test’ (Habitual consumer category); Bottom right, Carrie movie’s ‘Telekinetic Coffee Shop Surprise’ (Satisfaction consumer category). (Swisscom, 2013; WestJet, 2013; Funnz4u, 2013; CarrieNYC, 2013)

Informative - Samsung’s *All eyes on the S4*.

The promotion campaign took place at Zurich Central train station; it invited the pedestrians to use their eyes to win a Samsung Galaxy S4. Samsung had a built-in Smart Pause function, meaning that Samsung knew when someone was looking at it. The participant who could stare at the screen for 60 minutes would win a free Samsung Galaxy S4. However, during the game, the players were challenged by a number of distractions (Swisscom, 2013).

Affective - WestJet Airlines’ *WestJet Christmas Miracle: real-time giving*

This Christmas campaign portrayed the spirit of Christmas giving. The airline created a set up which invited customers of this lucky flight to ask for their ideal gifts in a temporary

Christmas grotto at the airport. Unknowingly, by the time they reached their destination, their wishes came true. The wished gifts for each passenger were nicely wrapped up and delivered on the conveyor belt at the baggage claim area. Then, the Christmas song was played and the passengers were greeted by the WestJet styled Santa (WestJet, 2013).

Habitual - Her Deodorant's *Baby kidnap prank, stress test.*

The prankvertising took place on the street, targeting mothers with a baby stroller. A stunt distracted a mother, while another stunt stole the baby and ran away. At the end, a police came and told the mothers that they did not need to be stressed and the situation was a prank. In the end, the stunt returned the baby to the mother (Funnz4u, 2013).

Satisfaction - Carrie movie's *Telekinetic Coffee Shop Surprise.*

The prank took place in a New York coffee shop, the prankvertising was created to promote a movie, Carrie, which involves a girl who has strong telekinetic abilities. In the prank, a girl was very angry after a man spilled coffee on her laptop. Instead of reacting to him like a normal person, she did a Carrie-like telekinetic action on him, sending the poor guy flying up and hitting the wall. The girl screamed at last and the books flew off from the shelves. The situation was all set up with a fake wall, a stuntman, remote-controlled tables and fallen chairs (Horgan, 2013).

Self-completion questionnaire construct

The quantitative data is the focused data for our study. The questionnaire was divided into two main parts; the respondents' personal information part and the investigation part. For the first part, the respondents' personal information such as age, sex, career, and social media interaction were asked. The demographic data was useful in characterizing the respondents for the in-depth interviews later in the study. Different groups of career such as marketing related or non-marketing related careers may have different expectations or develop different impressions towards the marketing tactic such as prankvertising. The respondents may also hold different values and perspectives towards social media usage, which is the main distribution channel of prankvertising. As described in the theoretical review under Section 2.3.2, the primary target of the innovative marketing strategy such as viral marketing is young people or Generation Y (Gen Y). The demographic information relating to the

respondents' age would enhance the reliability of the study in prankvertising phenomenon, as Gen Y is the group of people who are mostly involved with social network and tend to be prankvertising target audience. Moreover, it may provide a more comprehensive description to Gen Y's characteristics by seeing the correlations between their social media usages and the effects on sharing or viewing the video (Willis, 1990).

The second part composes of the four prank videos. A set of eight questions was asked after the respondents watched each video. The questions involved the respondents' emotional engagement to the video, product or service, brand, and their potential buying decision. The similar set of eight questions was repeated for every video; therefore, in total there were 32 questions. The repetitive set of questions was asked in order to reduce the bias in the response towards a specific prank video and enable the respondent to pay more attention to the videos. In addition, it would also simplify the questionnaire and reduce the time that respondents need to spend in interpreting the questions.

Question 1, following a video, asked for the respondent's feeling towards the video he/she had just watched. As described by Douglas-Cowie, et al. (2005) (see Section 2.2.3, reposted here as Figure 3.6), human possess 48 emotions, which can be grouped into 10 categories; *negative & forceful*, *negative & not in control*, *negative thoughts*, *negative & passive*, *agitation*, *positive & forceful*, *caring*, *positive thoughts*, *quiet positive*, and *reactive*. Dobelet al. (2007) argues that successful viral marketing campaigns trigger emotional responses from the recipient and encourage sharing. Viral marketing in general, or specifically prankvertising, already contains the element of surprise in its nature. Therefore, question 1 was left with the 9 choices out of 10 emotional categories, with *reactive* category being removed (surprise is under this category). A respondent was allowed to select 1 out of 9 emotional categories, which they felt most connected to. For the design of choices of this question, however, we used more understandable terms to represent each emotional category such as "Irritation/Contempt" instead of "*negative & forceful*" for the ease of comprehension for the respondents. Such assumption was proved by our pilot study as explained earlier. By using a more understandable term, the emotions presented in the survey would be clear enough to represent their categories. According to Bryman and Bell (2007) and Dillman (2007), in order to enhance the response rate, it is advised to avoid making the questionnaire too bulky. Therefore, we selected only the two most understandable emotions from each category, instead of presenting all the emotions listed under each category.

Figure 3.6: Emotion Annotation and Representation Language (EARL), (Douglas-Cowie, Cox et al., 2005)

a.) Negatively associated emotions

Negative & forceful	Negative & not in control	Negative thoughts	Negative & passive	Agitation
Anger	Anxiety	Doubt	Boredom	Shock
Annoyance	Embarrassment	Envy	Despair	Stress
Contempt	Fear	Frustration	Disappointment	Tension
Disgust	Helplessness	Guilt	Hurt	
Irritation	Powerlessness	Shame	Sadness	
	Worry			

b.) Positively associated emotions

Positive & forceful	Caring	Positive thoughts	Quiet positive	Reactive
Amusement	Affection	Courage	Calm	Interest
Delight	Empathy	Hope	Content	Politeness
Elation	Friendliness	Pride	Relaxed	Surprise
Excitement	Love	Satisfaction	Relieved	
Happiness		Trust	Serene	
Joy				
Pleasure				

Question 2 addressed specifically to the *reactive* emotional category. As it has been mentioned by scholars such as Dobeles et al. (2007) that the nature of viral marketing involves the characteristic of surprise, it is worthwhile to further investigate into the extent of this surprise degree towards the video. To address this, we used 5-point Likert scale to measure the level of surprise in quantifiable data (Bryman and Bell, 2007). This is to measure the variability from different personal attitudes and expectations towards the surprise, which a surprising content may arouse some respondents more easily than the others.

Question 3 also employed Likert scale to assess the respondent's attitude and willingness to pass on the video. The response was compared to the individual social media activity, in order to evaluate the success of viral marketing campaign in term of sharing. However, the success of viral marketing is not limited to the number of shares, but also the advertised product or service recognition. There are cases that the viewers may remember the video, but they do not recognize the advertised product or service (Petty and Cacioppo, 1981). It is particularly true with prankvertising where the content is mostly far from being informative

and presenting the product or service logo. *Question 4*, thus, was created to address this concern by asking the respondents the name of the product or service, and/or the brand presented in the video. It was an open-ended question. However, respondents had a choice of checking “I don’t remember” box, if they did not remember the name. Those who checked “I don’t remember” were directed to question six, skipping the question 5. *Question 5* asked the respondents whether they were aware of the advertised product, service or brand before seeing the video. If the answer was yes, they would be asked further whether their perceptions towards the brand changed after watching the video. Similarly, Likert scale for collecting the responses was applied.

Another criterion to the ‘true success’ of prankvertising and viral marketing campaign is the result in consumer buying decision. *Question 6*, thus, explored whether the respondent would be MORE or LESS willing to buy the product or service after watching the video, alternatively, whether the video has NO effect on the respondent’s decision. However, it could be an immediate response, which might force the respondents to make a bias decision in reality (Chater, 2010). In order to counter such drawback, *question 7*, included a situation where a respondent already had the need for this kind of product or service. The question asked whether the viral video affected the respondent buying decision in reality, when there were other alternatives presented in the market. The question links to the ‘information search’ and ‘evaluation of alternatives’ stages in the Consumer Information Processing model described in Section 2.3.1. In the case where the consumers find themselves having low-involvement with the product or service, their responses to *question 6* and *question 7* should be coherent. *Question 7*, however, also offered an open-ended reason for the respondents to justify their buying decision; whether they are going to buy, maybe, or not going to buy the advertised product or service.

Unlike other normal advertising, prankvertising uses normal people to be in the video, unsuspectingly. *Question 8*, thus, was asked to explore the respondent buying decision, whether there could be potential difference in the assumed situation that the respondents were the ones who were pranked. The question might not directly answer the research question, but it was aimed to possibly lead to the new finding relating to this phenomenon.

In summary, realizing the importance of validity, the questionnaire was developed on the ground of the theoretical construct. It also has tried to address the issue of lack of

prankvertising academic ground by resembling the shared characteristics of prankvertising with well-established theoretical concepts of advertising and viral marketing in order to layout the questionnaire. However, there exists a limitation for the questionnaire to investigate into consumer culture and value, which could influence consumer perception or buying decisions. Therefore, in-depth interviews were used after the quantitative questionnaire in order to gain qualitative access to provide a more detailed discussion.

Design of Self-completion questionnaire

When designing the questionnaire, we kept in mind Bryman and Bell's (2007) suggestions, such as to avoid cramping the presentation, to make the presentation clear, to build up a friendly layout and to provide clear instructions of how the respondents can respond to the questions. For the study, we followed vertical answer arrangement. It does not only provide clear distinguishes between questions and answers, but it also avoids confusion, which could lead to quitting the questionnaire before finishing it (Bryman and Bell, 2007). With the clear structures in mind, we selected Google form as an online survey platform. This is because it provided sufficient features to create a survey that satisfied our requirements.

Google form is a free platform, which supported the use of video in the survey and allowed all of our questions to be asked. Moreover, the respondent answers could be readily exported to Microsoft Excel form, which allowed further filter and categorization. Google form facilitated with a variety of embellishments in terms of appearance, which could result in an increased rate of response. Most importantly, all the submitted surveys were completed, because Google form has a function of making the questions compulsory, meaning a respondent could not skip a question at his/her will.

In addition, Dillman (2007) discusses five strategies that are essential in conducting effective survey research. The three of which were found relevant to our case, which is based on online platform. These three strategies include the use of *respondent-friendly questionnaires*, *initiating multiple contacts with potential respondents*, and *personalized correspondence*. Dillman's (2007) first suggestion for increasing effectiveness of the survey research is to make *respondent-friendly questionnaires*. This includes paying attention to the appearance of individual pages as well as the overall design, the ordering of questions, and the use of questions that are salient to the research inquiry (Dillman, 2007). Therefore,

questionnaires should be easy to read, comprehend, and answer. In our study, we implemented the videos, which were easy to access and able to show up clearly on the screen.

The survey for the study gained advantage from the online platform that enables schematized, customizable design for the appealing appearance. The ordering of questions, as discussed above, followed a logical structure which is easy to comprehend. Our survey design also followed the suggestion that the most interesting questions should be at the beginning. The prank videos are interesting in their nature. Therefore, the four videos were located at the beginning of each set of 8 questions. Each video is 2-3 minutes long, which the whole survey took about 20 minutes to complete. Although there was feedback that the survey was too long, the respondents stated that they enjoyed the videos.

Dillman's (2007) second suggestion was to *initiate multiple contacts* with the sample participants. The purpose for attempting multiple contacts is intended to express the level of desire researchers have for communicating with potential respondents and convey the sense of importance. Dillman (2007) suggests making five contacts to inform and remind the potential respondent. However, due to time and resource constraints, this study proposed two contacts with members of the sampling frame. A first contact was a private message via potential participants' Facebook. After introducing ourselves, we informed the purpose of the research and asked for their participation. A link to the survey was attached together with the message. The language used in the message was polite colloquial in order to establish the relationship with the potential respondents. The second contact was attempting to encourage participation from those members of the sample population; for example, the Facebook group members who had not completed and returned a survey (Dillman, 2007). After the first time frame had passed, the potential participants were informed through the private message and the message was posted to the Facebook group timeline.

Dillman's (2007) third strategy is to *personalize correspondence* between researcher and potential respondents. The aim is similar to initiate multiple contacts with the sample participants to help establish a relationship between researcher and respondent. The personalization of the correspondence made the respondents aware of the importance of the research. It further communicated that the researcher was interested in valuable information acquired from the respondents. Correspondence can be personalized in a number of ways. For this study, the direct pronouns, such as 'you' and 'we', were used in the message, including

colloquial language such as ‘hi/hey’. The use of emoticons allowed the tone of the message to be less formal. Furthermore, the questionnaire only asked for personal information that is useful in grouping and analyzing. Such data and also the respondents’ answers would be kept as anonymous. In this regard, the participants would feel safe and more willing to provide the truthful answers without any bias.

Step 5: Sampling and data collection

The data used in this research is primary data gathered from the mixed methods of quantitative self-completion questionnaire and qualitative semi-structured interview. Using mixed methods of data collection allows triangulation which increases the reliability of the study. The quantitative empirical data collection was conducted over a period of 2 weeks in May 2014. The in-depth interviews were conducted at the interviewee’s convenient in 1 week. Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour. The interviewees were selected based on their availability and convenience for the face-to-face interview.

The first data collection method is quantitative self-completion questionnaire, administered by the Google form of web survey. Web survey is appropriate for the study which involves a large group of online users, or specifically, prankvertising viewers (Sheehan and Hoy, 2000). The sampling method adopted for the quantitative research was simple random sampling, where every member of the population had an equal chance of being selected. Two hundred (200) self-completion questionnaires were sent to the members of the Facebook group ‘*Global Friends and Cultures of the World*’ via private message. The purpose of our study is directly related to the social media users or specifically, viral video viewers, which are mostly Gen Y. Therefore, it is appropriate to administer the surveys through Facebook groups member’s private message. In general, it is an advantage to include respondents from a diverse cultural background to avoid criticism in the context of cross-cultural generalization (Den Hartogetal, 1999). However, the study views consumer culture as to “a family of theoretical perspectives that address the dynamic relationships between consumer actions, the marketplace, and cultural meanings” (Arnould and Thompson, 2005). Hence, despite the geographical diversity, the participants share the commonality in being a social media user. Gen Y is the generation that is extremely adept with technology, and is a primary target for viral marketing (Swanepoel, et al., 2009). Moreover, Gen Y is one of the largest consumer groups, with spending power in excess of \$150billion a year within the US (Krotz, 2007). Therefore, Gen Y’s attitudes towards an emerging prankvertising are of

significant value to the marketing industry and organizations seeking to penetrate this lucrative market.

The number of received questionnaire was one hundred and ten (110), which was accounted for 61% response rate. Lyberg, et al. (2012) mentioned that 66% response rate from a web survey could be expected for the surveys with prizes such as *win a weekend for two to Nice*. This study did not offer any prizes. However, we received up to 61% response rate. According to the respondents, they stated that they enjoyed completing the survey due to the interesting videos. This could partly justify the high response rate of the survey.

Moreover, at the end of the questionnaire, we asked for the respondents' volunteer for the follow-up interview. From one hundred and ten (110) responses, thirty four (34) respondents volunteered for the interview. This accounted for 31% of all the responses. However, twenty seven (27) of the total volunteers were either not replying to our message or were not available for the scheduled time period. Therefore, we made seven (7) appointments for 7 volunteers who were available for the Skype interview. However, only five (5) of them turned up at the appointed time. Prior to the interview, the interviewees' answers in the questionnaire were reviewed and analyzed for the interview preparation of the guiding questions.

Five (5) semi-structured interviews were conducted to seek justification and socio-cultural reasons behind the respondents' answers. As suggested by May (2001), these interviews were used in order to "probe beyond the answers and thus enter into dialogue with the interviewee". Semi-structured interviews were, thus, carried out with a reasonably open framework that allows focused, conversational, two-way communication. Bryman and Bell (2007) also mentions that semi-structured interview would allow "a great deal of leeway [for the interviewee] in how to reply". Hence, it helped elicit the respondents' answers to the choices in the questionnaire, if they found it not sufficiently explanatory or not well-aligned enough with their responses. The semi-structured interview was based on their responses to the survey. The basic guiding questions can be found under Appendix II.

Step 6: Data Analysis

The first set of the data collected from quantitative self-completion questionnaires was recorded, calculated, and analyzed on the basis of Excel application. Quantitative data

was analyzed using descriptive statistics and effect sizes to answer the quantitative research question (Bryman and Bell, 2007). This is to connect the respondents' emotion to the buying decision after watching a prank video. The participants have used Likert type 5-point scale to measure the level of interest they have after watching the video, the likelihood in sharing the video, as well as the buying behavior. Therefore, we would be able to identify which emotional attachment and the level of emotional engagement to the buying decision. In addition, the responses from the survey facilitated the grouping as well as the selection of the interviewees in the second research phase. The quantitatively significant results will be analyzed and further investigated in the qualitative research phase (Curry, et al., 2009; Morse, 1991).

For the second phase of the research, the qualitative data from the interviews were partly transcribed. The survey already included compulsory open-ended questions which allowed the respondents to describe the reasons behind their choices. Therefore, the interviews were transcribed only for the parts that brought out a consumer behavioral decision. Moreover, it also included the parts that showed their cultural influences on buying decision, which could not be explained deeply in the questionnaire. In addition, features such as interviewees' attitudes, values and opinions were obtained, particularly how they explained and contextualized their buying decision with emotional connections. The interview results were used for the follow-up of quantitative survey answers and buying culture justification behind the respondents' choice of answers.

3.5 Trustworthiness of Research Findings

To underpin the trustworthiness of research findings, the two emphases on research design of reliability and validity must be focused (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2008).

Reliability

According to Epistemology philosophy that our knowledge of reality is a result of social conditioning, this represents the critical realist's position which can contribute the *researcher bias* (Dobson, 2002). As the self-completion questionnaire is more likely a one-way communication, there is a potential that the researcher interprets the questionnaire result differently from what the true answers should be. Thus, it can unavoidably imply that the data collected from the questionnaire tend to be subjective. The mixed methods research was, thus,

implemented as a mean to cross-checked against the other research strategy (Bryman and Bell, 2007). Semi-structured interview was conducted to minimize the researchers' bias towards the questionnaires. By discussing the prankvertising effects on consumer behavior with the selected respondents, the flexibility of in-depth interview also provided a room for us to ask similar questions to the interviewees. However, it was done in a more interactive communication to help confirm our understanding (Bryman and Bell, 2007). Nonetheless, during the interview, *research error* might occur that not all questions are completely asked. By undertaking the semi-structured interview, it provided us an interview guide and question list to be asked, such as an interesting point regarding prankvertising reaction conflict we gained from the questionnaire result. This was to ensure that we were still on track with our set goal (Bryman and Bell, 2007). A high degree of structure to the interview schedule would lessen this threat to reliability (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2008).

The potential risk of reliability from the respondent side associates with the self-completion questionnaire, we were aware that we might come across the *respondent error* in filling the form such as leaving the answer blank (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2008). In order to prevent the problem, our questionnaire was implemented online with the control system from Google form. We activated all fields as compulsory, meaning that the system would not allow the respondents to submit the questionnaire, unless all required questions were answered. Moreover, another problem of the respondents misinterpreting the questions was minimized by our pilot study. A draft set of questionnaires was sent to a small sample size to test the respondents' mutual understanding of the questions. The received feedback towards unclear questions was used to improve the quality of the questionnaire. Another area of *respondent bias* arises from the fact that the respondent does not want to express their true feeling to the questionnaire, which is the received answers do not reflect the reality (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2008). The solution is that we communicated to the participants under both questionnaire and interview regarding their anonymity. However, this mostly happens for the questionnaire distributed in an organization that the respondent may have been saying what they thought their bosses wanted them to say (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2008). Therefore, this potential risk was not significant in our research, as it involved less organizational study but more on consumer study, which is rather personal.

Validity

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2008), “a concern you may have in the research design is the extent to which your research results are generalizable, which means whether your findings may be equally applicable to other research settings.” As the deployed research strategy was experiment, it allowed us the gain generalization. The experiment is aimed to develop the literature that discusses the prankvertising phenomenon, by providing a research of what affects consumer behavior with various examples of prank videos. However, the findings of this research could serve as an inspiration for research in other industries. This is because it offers a practical tool to analyze the new tool of consumer-generated advertising (CGA) for marketers in large and small companies. The typology that was used in this thesis was generic and the instruments that were used to compare them could apply to other industries as well. In addition, the overall consumers’ reaction engaged in a certain prankvertising could be driven by the same motivations across industries. Therefore, this can provide a basis for a better understanding of linkage activities from different actors.

4. Empirical Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will detail our findings elicited from the triangulated approach explained in our methodology in Chapter 3. The empirical data from quantitative self-completion questionnaire was the main resource for the research; meanwhile, the data from qualitative semi-structured interview was presented to support the results from the questionnaire. The demographic summary of the respondents will be presented first to briefly provide a profile of the respondents and the interviewees in terms of their ages, career, and social network interaction. Subsequently, the empirical data collected from the self-completion questionnaire and semi-structured interview will be presented in accordance with the research question.

‘What are the effects of prankvertising on consumer buying decision?’

According to the result, we categorized the effects of prankvertising into three types; emotional effects, consumer engagement, and memorability. These reflect the three themes of how the empirical data will be structured and presented in this chapter. In each of the theme, the data will be illustrated in accordance with the four prankvertising videos; Carrie Movie (Video 1), WestJet (Video 2), Her Deodorant (Video 3), and Samsung Galaxy S4 (Video 4). Relevant graphs and tables will be used to summarize the numerical data from self-completion questionnaire. Finally, the major findings from the empirical data will be presented under the ‘summary of the results’ section.

4.2 Demographic Summary of the Respondents

This section provides a brief demographic summary of the respondents. There were 110 respondents in total, taking part in this survey; 95% of the respondents were between the ages of 15 to 30 years old, which are considered members of Generation Y (Gen Y). Amongst them, 52 were students, 20 have a marketing-related career, and 38 have a non marketing-related career. Both male and female respondents were active social media users, with Facebook being the most frequently used social network. Female respondents, however, were more active than male respondents in ‘sharing’ and ‘posting’ news, videos, photos, or articles through social media, with 74% of female respondents do the ‘sharing’ or ‘posting’ at least every week. Meanwhile, only 50% of male respondents do so. The participants are diverse in terms of the country of origin and, to a large degree; the sampling reflects the Gen

Y's buying behavior and their decision making (see Section 2.3.2). This is because prankvertising is mostly viewed and shared by the social media users who are Gen Y.

Figure 4.1 Demographic Summary of the Respondents

	Male	Female	Total
<i>Age</i>			
15-30 years old	42	62	104
31-45 years old	6	0	6
<i>Career</i>			
Student	26	26	52
Marketing-related	4	16	20
Non marketing-related	18	20	38
<i>How often do you use Facebook?</i>			
Many times a day	40	48	88
Once a day	4	4	8
1-5 time(s) a week	2	6	8
Less than once a week	2	4	6
<i>How often do you "post" or "share" via social media?</i>			
Everyday	16	14	30
Every week	8	32	40
Every month	8	8	16
Once in several months	12	8	20
Once a year or less	2	0	2
Never	2	0	2

4.3 Prankvertising Effects on Buying Decision

Under this section, the empirical data will be presented into three themes; emotional effects, consumer engagement, and memorability. It is categorized according to the nature and characteristic of the participants' answers from the self-completion questionnaire and semi-structured interview. The presented data will be focused only on the effects arose from prankvertising, which leads to the participants' buying decisions. The results illustrated in each theme will be classified by the four prankvertising videos used in our research;

Telekinetic Coffee Shop Surprise to promote Carrie Movie (Video 1), *WestJet Christmas Miracle- Real time giving* to advertise WestJet Airlines service (Video 2), *Baby Kidnap Prank*, *Stress Test* to advertise Her Deodorant product (Video 3), and *All Eyes on S4* to promote Samsung Galaxy S4 (Video 4).

4.3.1 Emotional Effects

The empirical data reflecting emotional effects of prankvertising on the respondents' buying decision was firstly gathered from question 1 in the survey (see Appendix I). The respondents were asked which emotion they perceived after watching each video. From our methodology explained in Section 3.4, there are 9 emotions available for the respondents to select, which include *caring*, *positive thoughts*, *positive & forceful*, *quiet positive*, *negative & not in control*, *agitation*, *negative thoughts*, *negative & forceful*, and *negative & passive*. However, according to Douglas, et al. (2005), there are 10 categorized emotions. The missing emotion of *reactive* such as 'Interest/Surprise' will be asked in a separated question (question 2) using the 5-point Likert-type scale. The separation lies upon our justification presented in Section 3.4 that prankvertising videos generally contain the emotions of interest and surprise. By excluding *reactive* emotions from question 1, we would be able to explore into other emotions which have an effect on the respondents' buying decision.

In order to investigate prankvertising emotional effects, we linked the emotional results towards each prank video (question 1 of the survey) to the respondents' willingness to buy (question 6 of the survey). In question 6, the respondents were asked whether the particular prank videos create a MORE or LESS willingness to buy the advertised product or service. The summary of the results connecting the questions 1, 2, and 6 from the survey is presented in Figure 4.2 as below. The first row represents the total result of interest scale and the level of willingness to buy regardless of the emotions. The results for interest scale will be presented in an average scale (out of 5) classified by each video. The emotions generated from each video will be shown vertically by the number of respondents, with the percentage in the bracket.

Figure 4.2 Emotional Effects on the Respondents' Willingness to Buy presented by each Prank Videos

		Video 1 <i>Carrie Movie</i>	Video 2 <i>WestJet Airlines</i>	Video 3 <i>Her Deodorant</i>	Video 4 <i>Samsung Galaxy S4</i>	Total	Total Willingness to Buy (%)
Emotion	Average Interest Scale (Out of 5)	3.8	4.09	2.31	3.67		(MORE or LESS Willingness to Buy)/Total Emotional Responses
	<i>MORE willing to buy</i>	35%	67%	7%	11%		
	<i>LESS willing to buy</i>	7%	-	55%	4%		
	<i>NO effect</i>	58%	33%	38%	85%		
Caring	Friendliness/Love Interest Scale		62 [56%] 4.1		24 [22%] 4	86	
	<i>MORE willing to buy</i>		44 [71%]		6 [25%]	50	58.14%
	<i>LESS willing to buy</i>					0	0%
	<i>NO effect</i>		18 [29%]		18 [75%]	36	
Positive Thoughts	Hope/Pride Interest Scale		8 [7%] 3.5		10 [9%] 4.29	18	
	<i>MORE willing to buy</i>		4 [50%]		4 [40%]	8	44.44%
	<i>LESS willing to buy</i>					0	0%
	<i>NO effect</i>		4 [50%]		6 [60%]	10	
Positive & Forceful	Amusement/Joy Interest Scale	82 [75%] 3.93	30 [27%] 4.27	10 [9%] 3	64 [58%] 3.88	186	
	<i>MORE willing to buy</i>	30 [36%]	20 [67%]		22 [34%]	72	38.71%
	<i>LESS willing to buy</i>	4 [5%]		2 [20%]	2 [3%]	8	4%
	<i>NO effect</i>	48 [59%]	10 [33%]	8 [80%]	40 [63%]	114	
Quiet Positive	Relaxed/Relieved Interest Scale	4 [4%] 2.5	6 [5%] 4.33	4 [4%] 4	4 [4%] 3.5	18	
	<i>MORE willing to buy</i>	2 [50%]	4 [67%]	2 [50%]		8	44.44%
	<i>LESS willing to buy</i>					0	0
	<i>NO effect</i>	2 [50%]	2 [33%]	2 [50%]	4 [100%]	10	
Negative & Not in Control	Fear/Anxiety Interest Scale			6 [5%] 3.67		6	
	<i>MORE willing to buy</i>			2 [33%]		2	33.33%
	<i>LESS willing to buy</i>			2 [33%]		2	33.33%
	<i>NO effect</i>			2 [33%]		4	
Agitation	Shock/Stress Interest Scale	12 [11%] 4.5		12 [11%] 3		24	
	<i>MORE willing to buy</i>	6 [50%]				6	25.00%
	<i>LESS willing to buy</i>			6 [50%]		6	25.00%
	<i>NO effect</i>	6 [50%]		6 [50%]		12	

Negative Thoughts	Frustration/Shame	8 [7%]	2 [2%]	18[16%]	6 [5%]	34	
	<i>Interest Scale</i>	2.25	3.5	1.55	3.33		
	<i>MORE willing to buy</i>		2 [100%]			2	5.88%
	<i>LESS willing to buy</i>	2 [25%]		16 [89%]	2 [33%]	20	58.82%
	<i>NO effect</i>	6 [75%]		2 [11%]	4 [67%]	12	
Negative & Forceful	Irritated/Contempt	4 [4%]	2 [2%]	44 [40%]	2 [2%]	52	
	<i>Interest Scale</i>	3.5	2	1.77	3		
	<i>MORE willing to buy</i>					0	0.00%
	<i>LESS willing to buy</i>	2 [50%]		32 [73%]		34	65.38%
	<i>NO effect</i>	2 [50%]	2 [100%]	12 [17%]	2 [100%]	18	
Negative & Passive	Sadness/Despair			16 [15%]		16	
	<i>Interest Scale</i>			2.75			
	<i>MORE willing to buy</i>			4 [25%]		4	25.00%
	<i>LESS willing to buy</i>			2 [12%]		2	12.50%
	<i>NO effect</i>			10 [63%]		10	

Video 1: *Telekinetic Coffee Shop Surprise* to promote *Carrie* movie.

According to Figure 4.2, the emotion which was significantly perceived by the respondents was ‘Amusement/Joy’ under *positive & forceful*, comprising of 82 out of 110 respondents (75%). Other emotions perceived from the video were ‘Shock/Stress’ (11%), ‘Frustration/Shame’ (7%), ‘Relaxed/Relieved’ (4%), and ‘Irritated/Contempt’ (4%). Meanwhile, the emotions such as ‘Friendliness/Love’, ‘Hope/Pride’, ‘Fear/Anxiety’, and ‘Sadness/Despair’ were not generated from this video. Although ‘Amusement/Joy’ garnered the most significant emotion perceived from the video, it did not significantly affect the respondents’ MORE willingness to buy the movie tickets with the percentage of 39%, which was lower than ‘Relaxed/Relieved’ (50%) and ‘Shock/Stress’ (50%). Overall, it is interesting to see that from each of the 5 emotions generated from video 1, at least 50% of the respondents stated that the video has NO effect on their willingness to buy the movie tickets. From the first row of Emotion shown in Figure 4.2, the total average responses from all the participants of 35% said they would buy the movie tickets. Although the degree of interest in this video was 3.8 on average (out of 5), most of the respondents (58%) reported that the video had NO effect on their willingness to buy the ticket to the movie.

Video 2: *WestJet Christmas Miracle - Real time giving* to advertise WestJet Airlines service

Figure 4.2 indicates that the emotions the respondents perceived from the video were mostly cluttered in positive emotions; ‘Friendliness/Love’ (56%), ‘Amusement/Joy’ (27%),

‘Hope/Pride’ (7%), ‘Relaxed/Relieved’ (5%). Meanwhile, the percentage of negative emotions generated from the video was only 4% in total; ‘Frustration/Shame’ (2%) and ‘Irritated/Contempt’ (2%). The most significant emotion of ‘Friendliness/Love’ (56%) under *caring* evidently led to MORE willingness to buy with the percentage as high as 71%. The same ‘MORE willingness to buy’ percentage of 67% was resulted from the two positive emotions of ‘Amusement/Joy’ and ‘Relaxed/Relieved’. Overall, video 2 yielded a more precise result of the respondents’ willingness to buy, compared to the other four videos. In total, up to 67% of the respondents was MORE willing to buy WestJet service after watching the prank video. It is considered as the highest ‘MORE willing to buy’ percentage amongst the four videos. Moreover, none of the respondent reported that they were LESS willing to buy the airline tickets. This 0% in LESS willing to buy was also the lowest amongst all the four videos. With regard to the negative feeling from ‘Frustration/Shame’ (2%) and ‘Irritated/Contempt’ (2%) generated from this video, it is interesting to see that none of the respondents reported that they were LESS willing to buy the service. The average degree of interest in the video was 4.09, which indicates the highest interest scale amongst the four videos.

Video 3: *Baby Kidnap Prank, Stress Test* to advertise Her Deodorant product

On the contrary to video 2 (WestJet), video 3 showed the lowest interest scale of 2.31. As much as 87% of the respondents had negative feelings about the video, with 40% reported that the video generated ‘Irritated/Contempt’. 16% said it was ‘Frustration/Shame’, 15% stated that the video contained ‘Sadness/Despair’ emotion, with other negative emotions of ‘Shock/Stress’ (11%) and ‘Fear/Anxiety’ (5%) were also generated from the video. Out of all five negatively associated emotion categories, the *negative thoughts* category (denoted by ‘Frustration/Shame’) affected the respondents’ willingness to buy the product with the percentage of 89% LESS willingness to buy. Meanwhile, the significant emotion category generated from the video, *negative & forceful* (denoted by ‘Irritated/Contempt’), led to 73% of LESS willingness to buy. Overall, more than half of the respondents (55%) reported that they would be LESS willing to buy Her Deodorant product, as a result of the bad prank video which triggered negative feelings to the product. It is interesting to see that, in comparison to video 2 (WestJet) which contained a significant percentage of *caring* emotion (denoted by Friendliness/Love), none of the respondents had such emotion towards video 3.

Video 4: *All Eyes on S4* to promote Samsung Galaxy S4

Similar to video 1 (Carrie movie), video 4 was positively perceived as ‘Amusement/Joy’ with the percentage of 58%, followed by ‘Friendliness/Love’ (22%), ‘Hope/Pride’ (9%), and ‘Relaxed/Relieved’ (4%). Meanwhile, the video contained only 2 negative feelings of ‘Frustration/Shame’ (5%) and ‘Irritated/Contempt’ (2%). Overall, 11% of respondents mentioned that they were more persuaded by the video and were MORE willing to buy the product; whereas as low as 4% resulted from those with LESS willingness to buy. Although the video’s interest scale is 3.67, it received up to 85% NO effect on willingness to buy from the total respondents. By considering the willingness to buy level from each emotion generated from the video, more than half of the percentage shows NO effect on willingness to buy the smartphone; ‘Friendliness/Love’ (75%), ‘Hope/Pride’ (60%), ‘Amusement/Joy’ (63%), ‘Relaxed/Relieved’ (100%), ‘Frustration/Shame’ (67%), and ‘Irritated/Contempt’ (100%). In comparison to other videos, video 4 shows the highest degree of NO effect on willingness to buy regardless of the interest scale and emotions involved.

From the empirical data gathered from question 1,2 and 6 in the survey, which reflects prankvertising emotional effects on the respondents’ willingness to buy the product or service, the result depicted that respondents developed different types of emotions to each prank video. The effects on the respondents’ willingness to buy also vary differently; MORE willingness to buy, LESS willingness to buy and NO effect on willingness to buy. Figure 4.3 in the following page further provides a more focus on prankvertising emotional effects on the respondents’ willingness to buy. Thus, Figure 4.3 omits the data of NO effect on willingness to buy, and presents only the 9 emotion categories which can lead to the respondents’ willingness to buy, either MORE or LESS. It shows the summation of each emotional response affecting the respondents’ willingness to buy as a result of all the four prank videos.

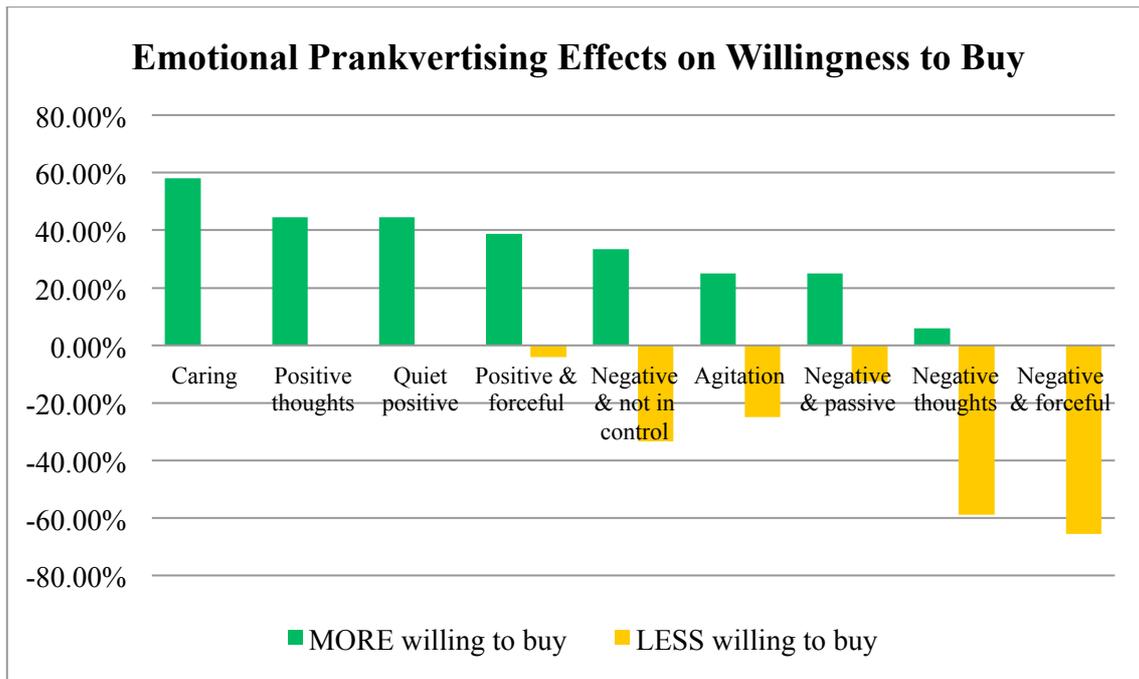


Figure 4.3 Emotional Prankvertising Effects on the Respondents' Willingness to Buy

Figure 4.3 shows the emotional effects of prankvertising videos on the willingness to buy, the summation of emotion resulting from the four videos showed that prankvertising had an effect on the respondents' decision making process. Different emotional content generates different buying behaviors, either MORE or LESS willing to buy. The figure shows that the respondents who developed the feelings of *caring* emotion category, 'Friendliness/Love' (58%), were MORE willing to buy the product or service. Similar to the emotion categories of *positive thoughts* ('Hope/Pride') and *quiet positive* ('Relaxed/Relieved'), all of the respondents' willingness to buy increased. It is interesting to see that *caring*, *positive thoughts*, and *quiet positive* emotions associated with prank videos were never resulted in LESS willingness to buy. *Negative & not in control* ('Fear/Anxiety') and *agitation* ('Shock/Stress') emotion categories received a comparable response for both 'MORE' and 'LESS' willingness to buy. For examples, participants, who perceived a *negative & not in control* emotions from the prank video, were both MORE and LESS willing to buy with the same percentage of 33%. Similarly, *agitation* emotion category also had an equal response of 25% MORE and 25% LESS willingness to buy.

On the other hand, the emotion category that extremely decreased participants' willingness to buy was *negative and forceful* category ('Irritated/Contempt'). It was also important to note that up to 65% of the respondents, who felt 'Irritated/Contempt' towards

the prank video would be LESS willing to buy the product or service being advertised. Such percentage of LESS willingness to buy is higher and, thus, has a stronger effect than those who developed *caring* emotion, which was only 58% MORE willingness to buy. Therefore, the negatively associated emotions would more significantly affect the respondents' decision making than positively associated emotions. Moreover, *negative & forceful* emotion category shows as the negative emotional extreme that was not able to develop MORE willing to buy the product or service advertised.

In summary, the positive emotions in prankvertising content that evoked the strongest MORE willingness to buy behavior was *caring*. Meanwhile, *negative & forceful* was the emotion category that had the strongest effect on the respondents' LESS willingness to buy. Although the results of willingness to buy show that prankvertising has an impact on the respondents' buying decision making process, the gather empirical data is not sufficient to answer our research question to the extent of buying. Therefore, we further investigate whether the respondents' MORE willingness to buy is able to result in the buying decision; alternatively, whether the respondents' LESS willingness to buy possibly results in not buying the product or service.

Question 7 in the survey involves the study into the respondents' buying decision, provided a situation where the respondents have the need for the type of the product or service advertised in each video. In the same question, the respondents were allowed to justify their buying decisions whether it resulted from the prank videos or from other influential factors. Figure 4.4 summarizes the empirical data collected from the respondents' answers in question 7 regarding the respondents' buying decisions after watching prank videos.

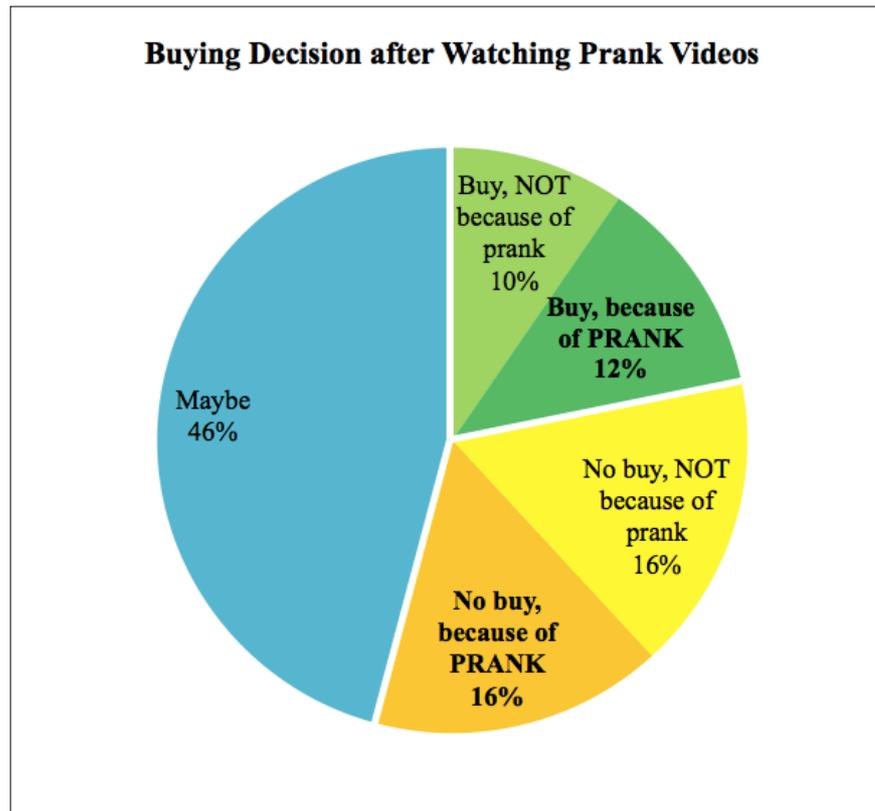


Figure 4.4 Buying Decision after Watching Prank Videos

From Figure 4.4, it can be seen that 12% of the buying decision comes from the effects of prankvertising (shown in dark green), whereas 16% of non-buying decision is induced by prankvertising emotional content (shown in orange). This shows the degree of influential emotional content of prankvertising that can contribute more than half of the stimuli for the respondents' buying decision. The prankvertising respondents gave comments to open ended questions regarding their buying or non-buying decisions. In the case of buying, the respondents justified their decisions as 'the video was convincing (Carrie movie)' or 'the video gave me a positive feeling about the airline (WestJet Airlines)'. Such rationales fall under buying decision resulting from prankvertising effects. However, the justifications such as 'I'm a moviegoer (Carrie movie)' or 'I personally love Christmas (WestJet Airlines)' fall under buying decision which is not resulted from prankvertising, but other influential factors. On the other hand, the respondents who answered as non-buying provided the reasons such as 'the prank is terrible, playing with mother's feeling (Her Deodorant)' or 'it's not the brand I have used before (Her Deodorant)'. Such comments indicate the prank effects and non-prank effects on the respondents' non-buying decision, respectively. As our research question focuses on the prankvertising effects on consumer buying decision, we, thus, did not

take into account the justifications which were not resulted from prankvertising. According to Figure 4.4, such non-prank effects represent in ‘Maybe’ (46%), ‘Buy, not because of prank’ (10%), ‘No buy, not because of prank’ (16%).

Our study further details the respondents’ buying and non-buying decisions in relation to the perceived emotions as an effect from prankvertising. It is shown in Figure 4.5 for buying decision and Figure 4.6 for non-buying decision.

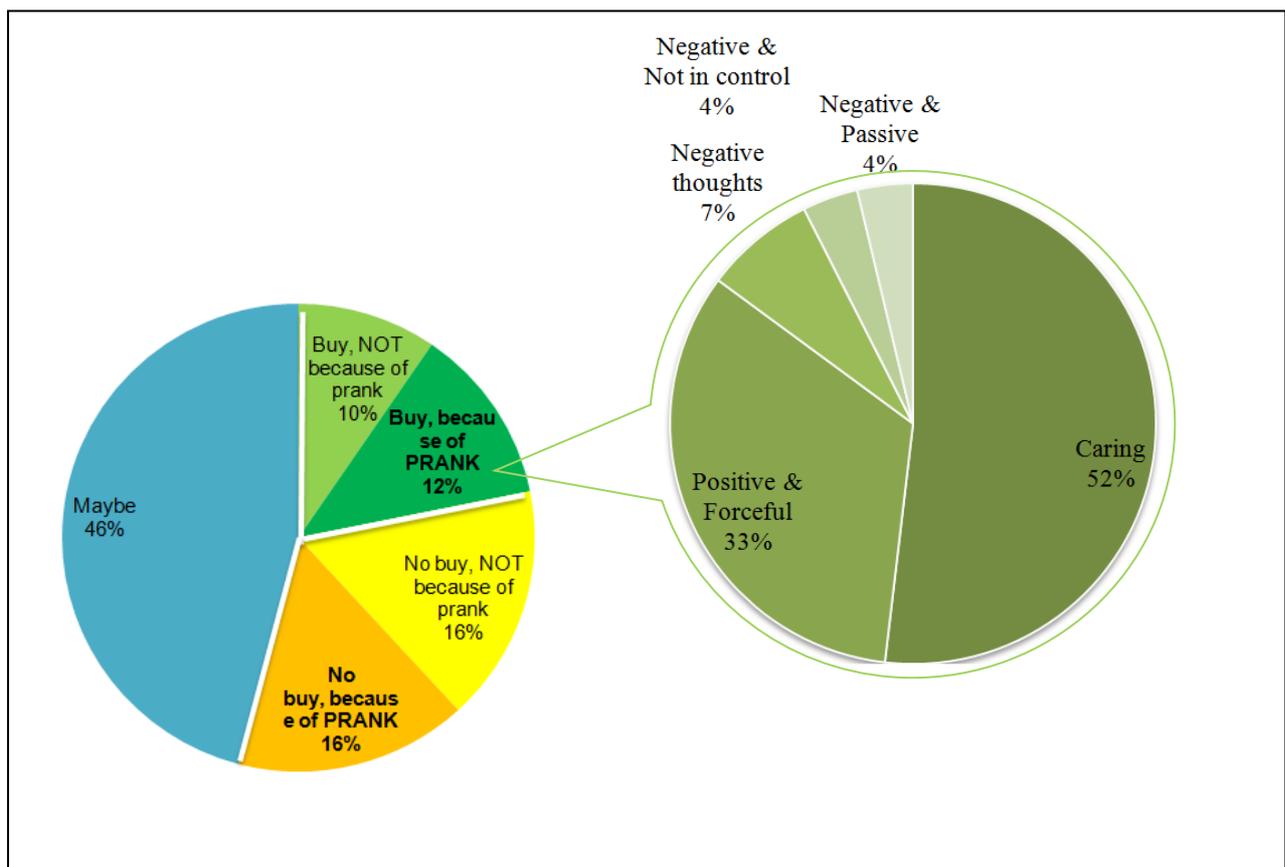


Figure 4.5 Buying Decision after Watching Prank Videos in relation to Emotional Effects from Prankvertising

From Figure 4.5 of buying decision, *caring* emotion, which contributes up to 52%, was still the highest influence to buy, similar to the willingness to buy presented earlier. This reflects the fact that the feelings of ‘Friendliness/Love’ can stimulate both respondents’ willingness to buy and their buying decision. Such emotions were mostly illustrated in video 2 of WestJet prankvertising. Comments from the survey stated the reason for a respondent’s buying decision that ‘WestJet prankvertising was convincing and he even cried while watching the video’. However, *positive forceful* emotion such as ‘Amusement/Joy’ shows as

the second emotion of 33% which can positively affect the respondents' buying decision. This is represented by video 1 of Carrie movie prankvertising. The respondents stated that 'the video was convincing and they will buy the movie tickets'. However, it is also interesting to see that negative emotions such as *negative & not in control*, *negative & passive*, and *negative thoughts* are able to create buying decisions from the respondents.

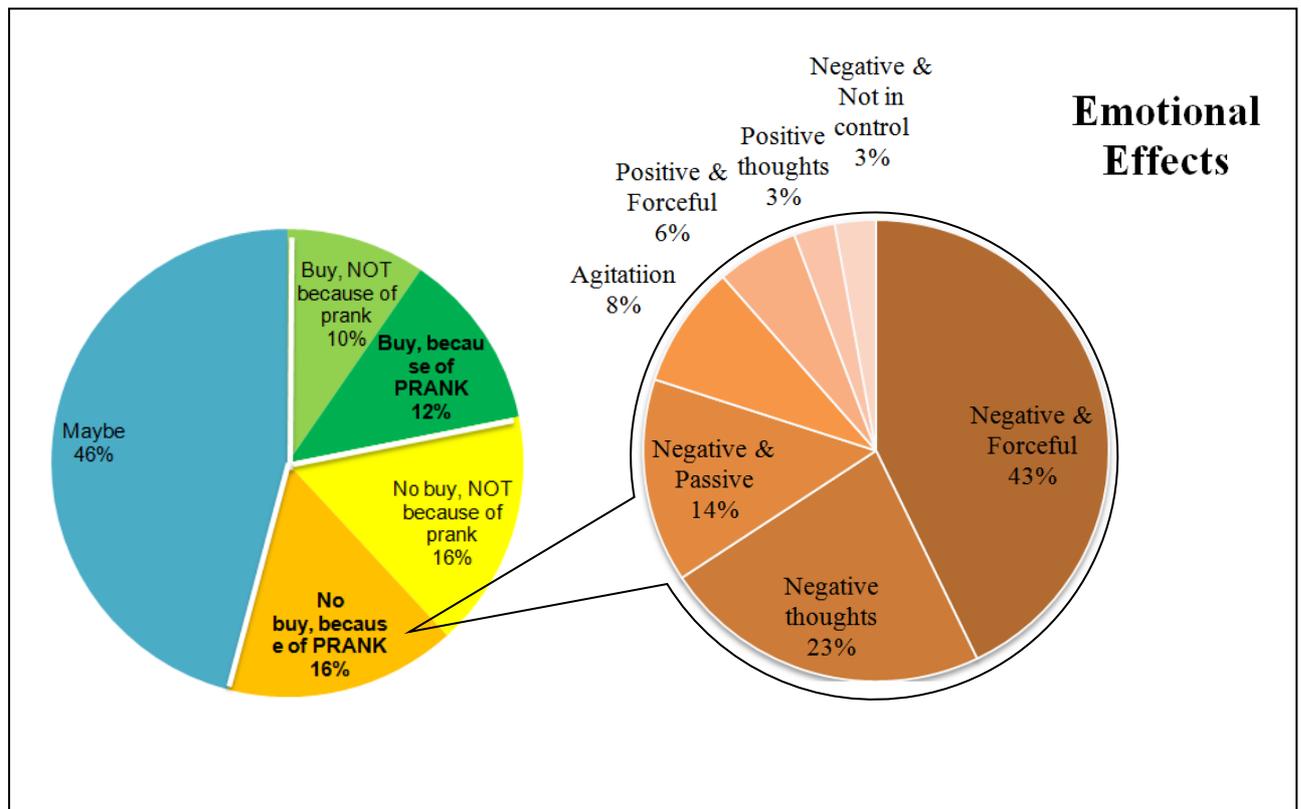


Figure 4.6 Non-Buying Decision after Watching Prank Videos in relation to Emotional Effects from Prankvertising

Similar to emotional effects on the respondents' buying decision, *negative & forceful*, which was ranked first as the emotion that triggered LESS willingness to buy, also consistently reflects as the most negative influential emotion in the respondents' buying decision. The feeling such as 'Irritation/Contempt' appeared in video 4 of Her Deodorant prank of baby kidnapping. The comments provided in the survey regarding this video were that 'it was not funny', 'the prank is too mean', 'the idea is not creative at all', and 'the prank has gone wrong'. The feelings such as 'Frustration/Shame' under *negative thoughts* represents 23% of emotions which led to the respondents' non-buying decision. Meanwhile, *negative & passive* emotion category, including the feeling of 'Sadness/Despair', indicates

14% that can generate non-buying decision. Likewise, positive emotions such as *positive & forceful* and *positive thoughts* were able to discourage the respondents' buying decision.

By comparing Figure 4.3, 4.5 and 4.6, there seems to be an inconsistency between the emotional effects on the respondents' willing to buy and the respondents' buying decision. In Figure 4.3, the emotion category of *quiet positive* was ranked as the second emotion that could affect the respondents' MORE willingness to buy. However, such emotion did not appear in either Figure 4.5 or Figure 4.6 to reflect emotional effect on the respondents' buying decision, either buy or non-buy. This reflects the fact that even though the emotion of *quiet positive* could potentially generate the respondents' willingness to buy, it was not strong enough to influence their buying decision.

With regard to the first theme of emotional effect from prankvertising, the empirical data collected from self-completion questionnaire suggests that prankvertising has an effect on the respondents' willingness to buy and their buying decision through the emotions generated from the prank videos. *Caring* emotion category, which contains 'Friendliness/Love', showed the highest influence degree to encourage MORE willingness to buy and buying decision. Meanwhile, *negative & forceful* emotion category, which comprises of 'Irritation/Contempt', presented the highest degree of effects that led to the respondents' LESS willingness to buy and their buying decision. However, *quiet positive* emotion category such as 'Relaxed/Relieved' could stimulate the respondents' MORE willingness to buy, but it was not able to constitute the respondents' buying or non-buying decision.

4.3.2 Consumer Engagement

Under this section, the empirical data will present the degree of prank video sharing by the respondents in relation to their willingness to buy and their buying decision. The level of engagement to an advertised message is also reflected upon the survey questions and the responses from the interview. The quantitative empirical data from the survey will be illustrated in relation to consumer engagement from prankvertising on buying decision. Question 3, 6 and 8 are selected to present the empirical data relating to consumer engagement resulted from prankvertising. In question 3, the respondents were asked about the video sharing degree by using the 5-point Likert-type scale, which the data will be presented in an average scale (out of 5). Meanwhile, question 6 shows the respondents' change in their willingness to buy after watching the prank video; whether the video creates a MORE or LESS willingness to buy the advertised product or service. In question 8, it presents the

respondents' buying behavior in the case that they were pranked themselves. The qualitative empirical data is partly transcribed in accordance the engagement responses to each video.

The quantitative results from question 3, 6 and 8 and interview responses will be presented simultaneously by each prank video; *Telekinetic Coffee Shop Surprise* to promote Carrie Movie (Video 1), *WestJet Christmas Miracle- Real time giving* to advertise WestJet Airlines service (Video 2), *Baby Kidnap Prank, Stress Test* to advertise Her Deodorant product (Video 3), and *All Eyes on S4* to promote Samsung Galaxy S4 (Video 4).

Video 1 – Carrie Movie's *Telekinetic Coffee Shop Surprise*

- Quantitative Results from the Survey

Figure 4.7: Video 1 - Carrie Movie Prankvertising's Effect on Consumer Engagement in Buying Decision

a) With respect to the sharing scale

Question	Video 1								
	MORE willing to buy			LESS willing to buy			NO effects on decision		
Effects of video on willingness to buy (%)	34.5			7.3			58.2		
Sharing scale (out of 5)	3.1			4.0			2.4		
Buying decision (%)	Buy 31.6	No Buy 10.5	Maybe 57.9	Buy -	No Buy 75	Maybe 25	Buy 3.1	No Buy 59.4	Maybe 37.5

b) With respect to the prank experience

Buying decision	Buy 12.7		No Buy 43.6		Maybe 43.6	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
More willing to buy if you were pranked yourself (%)	100.0	0.0	45.8	54.2	75	25

Figure 4.7a shows that 34.5% of the respondents were convinced (MORE willing) to buy movie tickets after they have watched prankvertising. Meanwhile, only 7.3% of the respondents reported that prankvertising discouraged them from buying (LESS willing). The majority of 58.2%, however, reported that the prank did not stimulate buying (NO effects on decision), and they were not likely to share the video (2.4 out of 5 on the sharing scale). The

respondents who were convinced by the video (MORE willing), however, are more likely to share it (3.1 out of 5 on the sharing scale). In addition, the respondents that were discouraged from buying (LESS willing) are those who are most likely to share the video (4.0 out of 5 on the sharing scale). In video 1, it reflects that the respondents, who were affected by the prank videos in terms of their willingness to buy, either MORE or LESS, are likely to share the video.

However, not all of the respondents who were convinced to buy by the video will result in the buying at the end. In fact, up to 57.9% of those who were more convinced to buy by the video still could not decide whether or not they should buy the movie ticket. In other words, they need to be further persuaded in order to make a buying decision. A part of the persuasion is to give a situation where the respondents were those people in the video who were pranked, rather than a general viewer of the video.

Figure 4.7b illustrates the result of the respondents' buying decision with regard to a higher degree of engagement with the video. Question 8 of the survey assumed a situation where the respondents were the ones who were pranked and reflect whether this direct prank experience would encourage or discourage them from buying. None of the respondents, who answered that they would buy the movie ticket in question 7, changed their minds if they were prank themselves (shown in green in Figure 4.7b). In other words, the higher level of engagement, the MORE willingness to buy from the respondents, which 100% of them are more encouraged to buy. On the other hand, 45.8% of the respondents who reported that they would not buy a movie ticket in the first place were more encouraged to buy in the assumed Telekinetic Coffee Shop Surprise prank situation.

A stronger result could be observed from the respondents who reported 'Maybe' to the buying decision beforehand (shown in orange in Figure 4.7b). 75% of them are encouraged (MORE willing) to buy by assuming that they were pranked.

- Qualitative Data from the Semi-structured Interview

Figure 4.8: Interviewee’s survey responses to Video 1- Carrie movie’s *Telekinetic Coffee Shop Surprise* (Demographic data of the interviewees is shown in Appendix III)

Effects of the video on...	Interviewee 1	Interviewee 2	Interviewee 3	Interviewee 4	Interviewee 5
Emotion	Positive & forceful	Agitation	Positive & forceful	Negative & forceful	Positive & forceful
Interesting (out of 5)	4	3	5	2	3
Sharing (out of 5)	4	1	4	3	3
Correctly remember the movie?	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Willingness to buy	More	No Effect	More	Less	No Effect
Buying Decision	Maybe	Maybe	Buy	Maybe	No Buy
Encouraged to buy, if they were pranked	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes

Interviewee 1 developed ‘Amusement/Joy’ feelings (*positive & forceful*) after watching the video. She found the video very interesting and likely to share it through social network. She was able to correctly remember the name of the movie and reported that she was encouraged to buy a movie ticket resulting from the video. However, the video did not encourage her much enough to buy the ticket, she said in the interview that *‘If it’s not an already famous movie like Harry Potter or Iron Man, I’d normally listen to the opinions of others who have watched it before deciding whether the movie is worth watching’*. *‘If my friends say the movie is boring I wouldn’t buy a ticket for it, but I might download and watch it in my free time’*. We further asked what kind of movies she usually watches in the cinema and she replied *‘Actually, I’d watch the movies that my friends recommend or watch it with someone who really want to see that movie. I like romantic comedy movies the most but I also watch something like Spiderman and Lord of the Rings, they are famous and many people talk about them.’* Then we asked how it could encourage her to buy the movie ticket if she was pranked, she reported *‘Of course, I’d buy a ticket to the movie if I were pranked but actually I expect the company who set up all these would give me a free ticket (laugh).’* [I’d

buy because] *It's a special experience and it's fun. I can brag to my friends about this, like I'm in a Youtube's top view video of the month yolo!*'

Interviewee 2 reported that he was shocked by the video; however, it did not encourage or discourage him from buying the ticket movie. *'I watched the video and I automatically assume myself in that situation. If I were the coffee shop's guest, I'd be shocked and ran away.'* We asked that why he would not share the video to his friends, he replied *'I don't normally share anything on Facebook anyways. The video was creative but I have seen similar ones before.'* He further said *'I'm not a movie addict, I only watch the ones that I'm particularly interested in, or with someone I'm particularly close to.'*

Interviewee 3 reported a *positive & forceful* emotion after watching the video. She found the video very interesting and would share it. She also reported that she would buy the movie ticket. *'I surely will share this video, if I have watched soon enough after it was released. Also, if I have seen this video when the movie was still being showed in the cinema, I'd definitely go to watch it. I like the prank a lot'* However, her response to the survey showed that she could not remember the name of the movie, so we asked her about this issue. *'True, I did not remember the movie's name; actually I did not even recognize that it was made to promote a movie.'* We then asked if the video has interested her enough to encourage a further information search, she replied *'Actually, I'm quite an effortless kind of person. I will still remember what happened in the video but wouldn't bother look for more information.'*

Interviewee 4 reported a *negative & forceful* emotion with regard to the video. The video also discouraged her to buy the movie ticket. *'I don't think it's laughable if you were the customer at the shop. I'd be embarrassed and I might even sue the company who put up this prank!'*

Interviewee 5 reported *positive & forceful* emotion towards the video. He mentioned that the video had no effect on his buying decision. He further clarified that he would not buy the ticket to this movie. *'I normally watch one or two movies every month with my girlfriend who normally prefers a romantic comedy movie. I have seen a lot of prank videos before. I think this one is very similar to the Japanese one. So I'm not sure if I see the authenticity here.'* He added his comment that *'I did not even recognize the purpose of the video. I don't know what brand it was made for, so how can I buy it?'*

Video 2 – WestJet’s *WestJet Christmas Miracle: real-time giving*

- Quantitative Results from the Survey

Figure 4.9: Video 2 - WestJet Prankvertising’s Effect on Consumer Engagement in Buying Decision

a) With respect to the sharing scale

Question	Video 2								
	MORE willing to buy			LESS willing to buy			NO effects on decision		
Effects of video on willingness to buy (%)	67.3			-			32.7		
Sharing level (out of 5)	3.8			-			2.1		
Buying decision (%)	Buy	No Buy	Maybe	Buy	No Buy	Maybe	Buy	No Buy	Maybe
	52.8	-	47.2	-	-	-	10.5	21.1	68.4

b) With respect to the prank experience

Buying decision	Buy		No Buy		Maybe	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
More willing to buy if you were pranked yourself (%)	100.0	0.0	75.0	25.0	93.3	6.7

Figure 4.9a shows that 67.3% of the respondents were convinced (MORE willing) to buy the airline tickets after they have watched prankvertising. Meanwhile, none of the respondents reported that the prankvertising discouraged them from buying (LESS willing). 32.7% of the respondents reported that the prank did not stimulate their buying (NO effects on decision), and they were less likely to share the video (2.1 out of 5 on the sharing scale). The respondents who were convinced by the video, however, were more likely to share it (3.8 out of 5 on the sharing scale).

Nevertheless, not all of the respondents who were convinced to buy by the video will result in the buying decision at the end. In fact, 47.2% of those who were more convinced to buy by the video still could not decide whether or not they should buy the airline ticket.

Figure 4.9b illustrates the result of the respondents’ buying decision with regard to a higher degree of engagement with the video. All the respondents, who stated that they would buy the airline ticket beforehand, reported that they were even further encouraged to buy if

they were in the prank experience themselves (shown in green in Figure 4.9b). On the other hand, 75% of the respondents who reported that they would not buy airline tickets in the first place were more encouraged to buy by the assumed WestJet Christmas Miracle prank situation.

Similar to video 1, an evident encouraging pattern could also be observed from the respondents who reported as ‘Maybe’ to the buying decision beforehand. 93.3% of them were encouraged (MORE willing) to buy by assuming that they were pranked.

- Qualitative Data from the Semi-structured Interview

Figure 4.10: Interviewee’s survey responses to Video 2 - WestJet Airlines’ *WestJet Christmas Miracle- Real Time Giving*

Effects of the video on...	Interviewee 1	Interviewee 2	Interviewee 3	Interviewee 4	Interviewee 5
Emotion	Caring	Positive thoughts	Caring	Positive & forceful	Caring
Interesting (out of 5)	4	5	5	5	4
Sharing (out of 5)	4	2	5	3	4
Correctly remember the airline?	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Willingness to buy	More	More	More	More	No effect
Buying Decision	Maybe	Buy	Buy	No Buy	Maybe
Encouraged to buy, if they were pranked	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Interviewee 1 claimed that she was impressed and felt the ‘Friendliness/Love’ about the video. She could correctly remember the name of WestJet Airlines and she was encouraged to buy an airline ticket. However, the encouragement from the video was not enough for her buying decision. She said in the interview ‘*Yes, the video was very nice and I liked it a lot but it doesn’t imply a good service. I tend to be picky and only fly with well-known airlines. I don’t know, at least WestJet is not so well-known in my country. If WestJet*

has an equal amount of reputation with my frequent airline, I'd definitely try WestJet next time.'

Interviewee 2 reported that he felt the pride after watching the video. He mentioned *'I have seen other good pranks from WestJet and I'd be very proud of my job if I were a part of those who make this happened. The working atmosphere looks nice and I think it does reflect on the quality of service.'* He also commented on his buying decision that *'if there is WestJet in my country I would want to fly with them, especially during Christmas, who knows the next lucky passenger could be me!'*

Interviewee 3 reported that she could connect to *caring* emotion of the video. She also responded that she would definitely share the video and buy the airline ticket if there was a flight available for her next trip. *'I feel good when I share a cool video and I like to receive a lot of likes and comments from my friends. I want to be the first one to share it. I feel trendy.'* She further explained her buying decision that *'Yeah, I want to buy one of their tickets, take a picture and post in on Facebook, maybe with a caption like hope I get lucky on this flight!'* However, it is important to note that this respondent mentioned in the survey that she remembered the airline's name as *'JetBlue'*, which is completely a different airline.

Interviewee 4 reported *'it was such a surprise, I almost cried during the video. Although I did not know this airline before but it's definitely a good first impression.'* We then asked for her justification as why she would not buy this airline ticket. *'As I said, I know nothing about this airline but it certainly will become an important candidate once it's recognized. To me, an impressive ad does not really mean that the service will be good'*

Interviewee 5 reported that he felt the love and care from the airline, presented through the video. However he claimed that the video did not encourage him enough to buy the ticket. *'I love the creativeness of the marketer here. Like I said, I have seen a lot of marketing campaign, this one though was very clever.'* We asked him precisely, what the airline could do to make him buy the ticket; he replied *'convince my company.'* He further explained *'well, for non-work related travels, I might fly with them but I'm kind of an unorganized person I don't plan my trips well ahead. So, if WestJet happens to have a seat available for my intended departure time, it would be amongst my top priority airline choices.'* He also mentioned regarding his memorability of the airline that *'this video was much better than the first one that it repeats the name of the airline frequently, in the dialogue, the theme, the symbol, and so on.'*

Video 3 – Her Deodorant’s *Baby kidnap prank, stress test*

- Quantitative Results from the Survey

Figure 4.11: Video 3- Her Deodorant Prankvertising’s Effect on Consumer Engagement in Buying Decision

a) With respect to the sharing scale

Question	Video 3								
	MORE willing to buy			LESS willing to buy			NO effects on decision		
Effects of video on willingness to buy (%)	5.5			54.5			40.0		
Sharing level (out of 5)	3.0			2.0			1.8		
Buying decision (%)	Buy 33.3	No Buy -	Maybe 66.7	Buy 3.3	No Buy 80	Maybe 16.7	Buy 4.5	No Buy 54.5	Maybe 40.9

b) With respect to the prank experience

Buying decision	Buy 5.5		No Buy 65.5		Maybe 29.1	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
More willing to buy if you were pranked yourself (%)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	12.5	87.5

Figure 4.11a shows the majority of the respondents (54.5%) who were discouraged (LESS willing) to buy the product, after they have watched the prankvertising. Only 5.5% of the respondents reported that video 3 encouraged them to buy (MORE willing). 40.0% of the respondents reported that the prank did not either stimulate or discourage their buying (NO effects on decision); this group of respondents was least willing to share the video (1.8 out of 5 on the sharing scale). In contrast, the respondents who were convinced by the video were those who were most likely to share it (3.0 out of 5 on the sharing scale).

However, only 33.3% of the respondents who were convinced to buy as an effect of the prank video resulted in the buying decision at the end. In fact, 66.7% of those who were more convinced to buy by the video still could not decide whether or not they should buy the product. Meanwhile, 80% of the respondents who were discouraged to buy, however, have decided not to buy the product.

Likewise, Figure 4.11b illustrates the result of the respondents' buying decision with regard to a higher level of engagement with the video. All the respondents that would buy the product in the first place changed their minds, if they were in the prank situation themselves. It is interesting to see that all of them reported that they were discouraged to buy after being in the baby kidnapping prank situation (shown in green in Figure 4.11b). Similar reaction could be seen from the respondents who reported that they would not buy the product in the first place. All of them were even more discouraged to buy if they were in the prank situation.

In addition, a strong discouraging pattern could be observed from the respondents who reported 'Maybe' to the buying decision beforehand. As a result of the assumed prank situation, 87.5% of them were discouraged (LESS willing) to buy.

- Qualitative Data from the Semi-structured Interview

Figure 4.12: Interviewee's survey responses to Video 3- Her Deodorant's *Baby Kidnap Prank, Stress Test*

Effects of the video on...	Interviewee 1	Interviewee 2	Interviewee 3	Interviewee 4	Interviewee 5
Emotion	Positive & forceful	Negative & forceful	Negative & forceful	Negative & forceful	Negative thoughts
Interesting (out of 5)	3	2	4	1	3
Sharing (out of 5)	3	1	2	1	2
Correctly remember the product?	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Willingness to buy	No effect	Less	Less	Less	Less
Buying Decision	Maybe	No Buy	No Buy	No Buy	No Buy
Encouraged to buy, if they were pranked	No	No	No	No	No

Interviewee 1 reported *positive & forceful* emotion with regard to the video. However, she mentioned in the interview that *'just like other videos, I don't find this one particularly interesting. I don't know what I feel about this one but it's still fun to see the creativity coming out.'* She also reported regarding her buying decision that *'again, the ad does not*

really affect my decision whether to buy or not to buy. Maybe I'm not so reactive to the ads stimulation. I normally buy something because I either have used it before or someone I trust recommended it.'

Interviewee 2 reported that the video was contempt and he would not want to share it. *'The ad was not appropriate. Even I'm a guy, I'm sure the mothers would ban this product.'* He commented on his buying decision that *'I don't know this brand before and I did not remember it, good for them because if I could remember, I would ban this brand as well'*

Interviewee 3 reported the video was *'disgusting, it's the worst prank anyone can think of.'* She could remember the name of the product from this video correctly but she could not remember the products in the previous videos (video 1 and video 2). *'This particular prank was so bad that I pay extra attention to make sure I remember the brand so I wouldn't buy it.'* She further explained *'If I were the mother, I would sue whoever came up with this prank'*

Interviewee 4 said *'this is the worst prank. Not interesting at all.'* She clarified her choice of emotion that *'I felt real bad for the mothers in the video, they must feel like they are losing everything they have. I don't know how to describe this emotion but it's bad, bad, bad.'* As a reflection of the negatively associated emotions, she decided not to buy this brand. *'I even went back to check the brand that put up this prank, to make sure I'm not using their products'*

Interviewee 5 reported that he was frustrated by the baby kidnap idea (*Negative thoughts*). He also explained regarding the branding prospect *'I think the prank have gone too far. It is definitely a mistake for whichever brand that creates this kind of campaign, playing with mother's feeling is not funny. I doubt if anyone would buy this idea.'* He further commented that *'if I've seen this video shared on Facebook, I might click to watch but surely I wouldn't be able to keep watching it till the end. It's too annoying'*

Video 4 – Samsung Galaxy S4’s *All Eyes on S4*

- Quantitative Results from the Survey

Figure 4.13: Video 4- Samsung Galaxy S4 Prankvertising’s Effect on Consumer Engagement in Buying Decision

a) With respect to the sharing scale

Question	Video 4								
	MORE willing to buy			LESS willing to buy			NO effects on decision		
Effects of video on willingness to buy (%)	10.9			-			89.1		
Sharing level (out of 5)	3.2			-			2.6		
Buying decision (%)	Buy 66.7	No Buy -	Maybe 33.3	Buy -	No Buy -	Maybe -	Buy 8.2	No Buy 22.4	Maybe 69.4

b) With respect to the prank experience

Buying decision	Buy 14.5		No Buy 20.0		Maybe 65.5	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
More willing to buy if you were pranked yourself (%)	75.0	25.0	63.6	36.4	55.6	44.4

Figure 4.13a shows that the video did not discourage the respondents from buying. The majority of the respondents (89.1%) reported that the video had no effect on their buying decisions. Only 10.9% of the respondents reported that the video 4 encouraged them to buy (MORE willing), which this group of the respondents was most likely to share the video (3.2 out of 5 on the sharing scale). In contrast, the respondents, whose buying decisions were not affected by the video, tended to be less likely to share it (2.6 out of 5 on the sharing scale). However, not all the respondents who were encouraged to buy would indeed make a buying decision. In fact, 33.3% of this group of the respondents still could not decide whether or not they should buy the product.

Figure 4.13b illustrates that whether or not the respondents were encouraged or discouraged to buy, provided a higher level of engagement with the video, with a situation where the respondents assumed themselves to be those people in the video who were pranked. Most of the respondents regardless of their prior buying decision making were

encouraged to buy the product after being introduced to the assumed prank situation. 55.6% of the respondents, who could not make a decision beforehand and answered as ‘Maybe’, were more encouraged to buy as a result of the assumed prank situation.

- Qualitative Data from the semi-structured interview

Figure 4.14: Interviewee’s survey responses to Video 4- Samsung Galaxy S4’s *All Eyes on S4*

Effects of the video on...	Interviewee 1	Interviewee 2	Interviewee 3	Interviewee 4	Interviewee 5
Emotion	Positive & forceful	Positive thoughts	Positive & forceful	Negative thoughts	Positive & forceful
Interesting (out of 5)	4	4	5	3	3
Sharing (out of 5)	4	3	4	2	3
Correctly remember the product?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Willingness to buy	No effect	No effect	More	No effect	No effect
Buying Decision	Maybe	Maybe	No Buy	Maybe	Buy
Encouraged to buy, if they were pranked	Yes	No	No	No	Yes

Interviewee 1 reported that she was amused by the video. *‘I liked it as much as the first one [video 1] but again, I couldn’t make a decision to buy it just because I liked the ad.’* She further clarified how the assumed prank situation affected her buying decision. *‘If I were the participant in the contest, I think I’d be more likely to search about the phone. I heard that Samsung also has many cool functions, so maybe if my iPhone broke I might consider a Samsung’*

Interviewee 2 also found that the video was interesting and joyful. *‘If I were him [the prize winner] I’d be really happy. The video is definitely fun to watch, but I might fast-forward it because I rather want to see the winner.’* He further justified the reasons for his response to the survey that she would not be more encouraged to buy if he was pranked. *‘If I were the contestant, I’m sure I won’t be able to win the prize. So, it’s kinda sad.’*

Interviewee 3 mentioned *'the video reminded me of when I was in high school. We also hosted a similar kind of contest; it was fun and really crazy.'* This respondent was encouraged to buy a Samsung Galaxy S4, but she reported that she would not buy it. *'I have been using iPhone since the first model till the 5S and I wouldn't change unless Samsung can prove that it's better.'*

Interviewee 4, however, reported her opinion towards the video that *'it's weird. I like the idea but it must be embarrassing if you did not win the prize. To me, the video looks too much like a set up. Really, at the train station, who would have time to stop by and stay till the contest is finished?'* Therefore, *'it doesn't encourage me to buy at all. I mean, everyone knows Samsung and we know that they have one of the coolest phones. Actually, I never own a Samsung phone myself but have seen beautiful quality photos taken by it. Who knows, I might buy it in the future.'*

Interviewee 5 reported that the video was fun to watch and he would buy the product. *'It's interesting to see an honest reaction of the participant. I must say I'm personally a Samsung fan. Without seeing the video before, I have bought an S4 and still using it.'* Moreover, he was even more encouraged to buy a Galaxy S4 assuming he was pranked. *'If I were that guy who won an S4, I would brag about it and convince my friend to buy it too'*

In conclusion, with regard to the second theme of consumer engagement effect from prankvertising, the empirical data suggests that prankvertising has an effect on the respondents' willingness to buy and hence their buying decisions. The first measure of level of consumer engagement with the video was to ask how likely they would share the video through social networks such as Facebook. We found that the sharing scale varied with different videos. WestJet's prank video received the highest score on the sharing scale of 3.8 from the respondents who were persuaded by the message of the video. Meanwhile, Her Deodorant's prank received the lowest score (3.0) from the group of respondents who were encouraged to buy. The general trend regarding the sharing of the video could be observed across all the four videos. The respondents, who reported that prankvertising had NO effect in persuading them to buy or not to buy, were the least likely to share the video comparing to those who found the video persuasive (either MORE willing to buy or LESS willing to buy).

Another question is raised to provide the respondents with a more engaged situation by assuming they were pranked. Across all the four videos, the interviewee reported that by imaging themselves in the prank situation, they tended to be able to make their buy or no buy

decisions more easily. For example, those who were unable to make a decision (responded as 'Maybe'), are more encouraged to buy Carrie movie ticket if they were pranked because the situation was considered a special event in her life. However, by engaging in an assumed situation, it can also completely change the buying decision. For example, the respondents who reported 'Buy' after watching Her Deodorant's prank suddenly switched their decision choice to 'No buy' by assuming the prank situation.

4.3.3 Memorability

To reflect on the memorability of the product or service, the empirical data was collected from the survey question 4 which employed an open-ended question. The participants were asked to state the name of the product or service they have seen in the prank video. The results will be presented according to each prank video; *Telekinetic Coffee Shop Surprise* to promote Carrie Movie (Video 1), *WestJet Christmas Miracle- Real time giving* to advertise WestJet Airlines service (Video 2), *Baby Kidnap Prank, Stress Test* to advertise Her Deodorant product (Video 3), and *All Eyes on S4* to promote Samsung Galaxy S4 (Video 4). Figure 4.15 illustrates the percentage of the respondents who were able to correctly remember the product or service in the video.

Figure 4.15 Percentage of respondents who can remember the product or service advertised in each video accurately, in relation to their buying decision

	Video 1			Video 2			Video 3			Video 4		
Remember Correctly (%)	32.7			70.9			34.6			90.9		
Remember upon Buying Decision (%)	Buy	No Buy	Maybe	Buy	No Buy	Maybe	Buy	No Buy	Maybe	Buy	No Buy	Maybe
	28.6	34.8	37.5	85.7	25.0	87.5	33.3	44.4	25.0	94.2	91.1	92.7

Video 1- *Telekinetic Coffee Shop Surprise* to promote Carrie Movie

There were only 32.7% of the total respondents who could correctly remember the name of the movie. Since the respondents had to type the name of the movie to answer the open-ended question in the survey, we allowed minor misspelling of the name of the movie. For example, a 'Carie' response reflected the memorability and would be regarded as correct; whereas responses such as 'Cassi' or 'Telekinetic Coffee' would not be regarded as correct.

From all the respondents who reported that they would buy the movie tickets, only 28.6% can remember the name of the movie. However, a higher percentage (34.8%) of those who reported that they would not buy the movie tickets could remember the movie's name. Lastly, 37.5% of the respondents who had not yet made a buying decision (Maybe) could remember the name of the movie. In video 1, the majority of the respondents could not remember the name of the movie from this prankvertising.

Video 2- *WestJet Christmas Miracle – Real time giving to advertise WestJet Airlines service*

There were 70.9% of the respondents who could correctly remember the name of the airline. Responses such as 'West jet' or 'WestJet air' would be regarded as correct. However, responses such as 'Webjet' and 'JetBlue' did not reflect the memorability and, therefore, they were disregarded as correct. In fact, *Webjet* and *JetBlue* were the names of other airline service providers. The majority of the respondents can correctly remember the name of the airline. As high as 85.7% of those who would buy the airline ticket can correctly remember WestJet's name from the prank video; compared to only 25% of those who were not buying. Moreover, 87.5% of the respondents who had not yet made a buying decision ('Maybe') could remember the name of the airline.

Video 3– *Baby Kidnap Prank, Stress Test to advertise Her Deodorant product*

The video received only 34.6% memorability percentage. The responses such as 'Deo...something' without mentioning the brand's name (*Her*) did not reflect the memorability and were disregarded. Figure 4.15 shows a low percentage of the respondents who would buy the product that could remember the product's name, compared to those who would not buy the product (33.3% and 44.4%, respectively). The group of the respondents who reported that the prank video did not lead to their buying decision (Maybe) reflects the least percentage of 25% that could remember the name of the product.

Video 4 –*All Eyes on S4 to promote Samsung Galaxy S4*

The video reflects the highest memorability amongst all the four videos with 90.9%. All of the buying, not buying, and undecided (Maybe) groups of respondents show a similar product memorability of 94.2%, 91.1%, and 92.7% respectively.

4.4 Summary of the Results

In this chapter, we have explored prankvertising effects on buying decision in accordance with the research question. We structured how the empirical data were presented into three main sections, in accordance with the three themes of emotional effects, consumer engagement, and memorability.

Under Section 4.3.1 of emotional effects from prankvertising, the result depicted that respondents developed different types of emotions to each prank video. The empirical data suggested that prankvertising had an effect on the respondents' willingness to buy and their buying decision through the emotions generated from the prank videos. *Caring* emotion category, which contains 'Friendliness/Love', showed the highest influence degree to encourage MORE willingness to buy and buying decision. Such emotion was significantly perceived by the respondents watching video 2 of WestJet Airlines. Meanwhile, *negative & forceful* emotion category, which comprises of 'Irritation/Contempt', presented the highest degree of effects that led to the respondents' LESS willingness to buy and their buying decision. The emotion was explicitly founded in video3 of Her Deodorant. However, *quiet positive* emotion category such as 'Relaxed/Relieved' could stimulate the respondents' MORE willingness to buy, but it was not able to constitute the respondents' buying or non-buying decision.

In Section 4.3.2 of consumer engagement, by considering from all the four videos, the respondents whose willingness was affected by the prankvertising, either MORE or LESS, tended to share the videos accordingly. However, those who were not affected by the prank videos were not likely to share the videos. Meanwhile, it is obvious to see from the result that some respondents changed their buying decision from 'Yes' to 'No' after they were assumed to be in the prank situations themselves, especially in the video 3 of Her Deodorant. In addition, under video 2 of WestJet, in this assuming prank situation, the respondents' buying decision was strengthened by the level of engagement. From those who already stated 'Yes' to their buying decision, all of them (100%) further emphasized their responses by answering 'Yes' to the willingness to buy, if they were pranked themselves.

With respect to Section 4.3.3 of memorability, the respondents were able to remember the product or service advertised in the prank videos differently, which the higher level of memorability did not always lead to the buying decision. However, it is interesting to focus

on the group of the respondents who answer as 'Buying'. Although they stated as '*Buy*', less than half of this group of the respondents were able to remember the advertised product. The situations were reflected in video 1 and video 3.

In the following section, we will more closely elaborate on how the findings can be analyzed and discussed, which will lead us to answer the research questions of prankvertising effects on consumer buying decision.

5. Data Analysis and Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to critically explore the analysis and discussion towards the findings in Chapter 4 of prankvertising effects on consumer behavior. It is to answer the research question of ‘*What are the effects of prankvertising on consumer buying decision?*’ From the analysis, we concluded that there are three effects generated from prankvertising which can play role on consumer behavior. They are emotional effects, consumer engagement, and memorability. Similar to Chapter 4, we, thus, consistently structured the analysis and discussion into three themes; emotional effects, consumer engagement, and memorability. The analysis will be carried out with the help of extension from the existing theories and models presented in Chapter 2. Some consumption models will be used to explain and modified to reflect the nature of prankvertising phenomenon and its effects on consumer buying decision.

5.2 Discussion on Prank Effects on Consumer Buying Decision

5.2.1 Emotional Effects

Referring to Section 2.2.3 under prankvertising phenomenon literature review, prankvertising requires the ‘right message’ to generate a successful campaign. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2011), the ‘right message’ should also contain an emotional attachment to ensure a video success in term of sharing. However, from our empirical data with regard to emotions in prank videos, we explored into the extent of consumer buying decision. We explored relationship between the emotions generated from the videos and consumer willingness to buy and their buying decisions.

Under Section 4.3.1, the result depicted that respondents developed different types of emotions to each prank video. *Caring* emotion category, which contains ‘Friendliness and Love’, shows the highest influence degree to encourage buying (MORE willingness to buy) and buying decision. Meanwhile, *negative & forceful* emotion category, which comprises of ‘Irritation and Contempt’, presents the highest degree of discouragement (LESS willingness

to buy) and leads to a no buy decision. However, *quiet positive* emotion category such as ‘Relaxed and Relieved’ can encourage the respondents to buy, but it is not able to constitute the respondents’ buying or non-buying decision. In other words, quiet positive emotion category is not strong enough for the respondents to make a buying decision.

The presented empirical findings reflect that prankvertising in combination with a particular emotion could lead to different consumer buying decision. It also means that the emotions embedded in prankvertising are able to affect consumer buying decision. The controversy to Hierarchy of Effects (HOE) model pointed out by Matsuno (1997) in Section 2.3.1 supports our argument. Such controversy states that consumers often develop cognitive judgment (knowledge or thinking) towards brands ‘after’ forming liking and preference (an emotional response or feeling), then, they may proceed to the behavioral phase. Figure 5.1 re-presents the original HOE model explained earlier under Section 2.3.1, which reflects that the cognitive phase emerges before the affective phase. However, we propose an adapted model for prankvertising phenomenon relating to its emotional effects towards consumer buying decision in Figure 5.2.

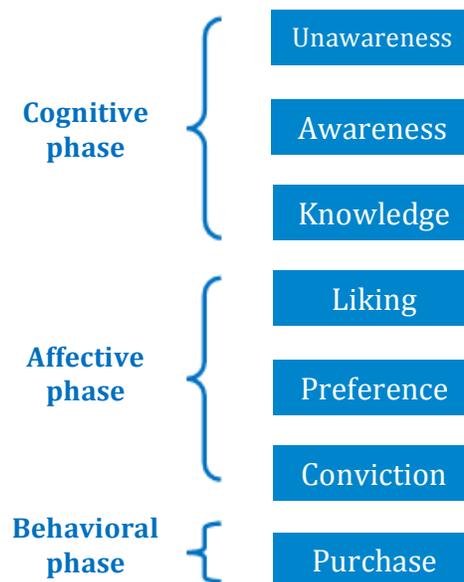


Figure 5.1 Hierarchy of Effects Model (HOE) (adapted from Delozier, 1976)

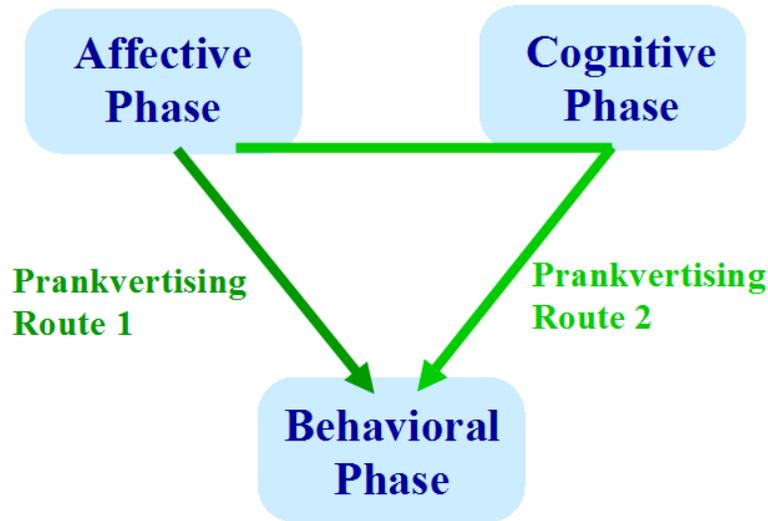


Figure 5.2 Adapted HOE Model with Prankvertising Phenomenon

Figure 5.2 illustrates a macro level of consumer decision making under prankvertising phenomenon. The adapted model consists of 2 routes of how prankvertising phenomenon can be applied; route 1 and route 2. Under route 1, consumers start from the affective phase of emotion then directly proceed to behavioral phase of buying decision, either buy or no buy. According to Section 4.3.1, *Caring* emotion category results in buying decision, whereas *negative & forceful* results in non-buying decision. Such decision making process, thus, did not need to pass the cognitive phase. The consumers perceive the emotions and make a buying decision right away.

Under route 2, consumer also starts from the affective phase of emotional effects, but pass through the phase of cognitive before proceeding to behavioral phase or purchase. Route 2 is used by those consumers who do not feel the effects of prankvertising as strong enough to buy the product. In other word, the consumers need to learn more about the product or service before deciding whether to buy or not to buy. As explained in Section 4.3.1 about emotional prank effects on buying decision, the interviewee respondent required more knowledge about the movie information, factors such as friends' recommendation and movie reviews are important for decision making. Consumers need to gain sufficient knowledge and learn more about a particular product or service, before further processing their purchase decision. Therefore, under route 2, consumers' decision making is processed

through both the affective and cognitive phases.

We further detail into prankvertising emotional effects on a specific product or service category. This was done through the use of Foote, Cone and Belding (FCB) grid (Ratchford, 1987), which was used as a base for prankvertising videos selection. Under Section 2.3.1 Ratchford (1987) illustrates on Foote, Cone and Belding grid (FCB) in the light of decision making and attempts to categorize consumers according to their levels of involvement and their attitudes. The FCB grid is re-presented here in Figure 5.3. Each quadrant represents a combination of consumer thought and involvement. Brands and products can be assigned in one of the four quadrants depending on the reasons behind its selection, either emotional or its functional benefits. Each quadrant has a different sequence including the elements ‘think’, ‘feel’ and ‘do’, which is accounted for each consumer decision-making process and the processing of advertisements about the products or services (Teng, Huang and Hsieh, 2010). Prankvertising that involves emotional content tends to be more visible in both the *Affective* and *Satisfaction* quadrants such as in airline industry and movie industry. Such quadrants are fostered by ‘feel’ (Ratchford, 1987). The consumer groups of ‘feeler’ and ‘reactor’ prioritize their decision making process on feeling before learning, and tend to base their buying decision upon the emotion.

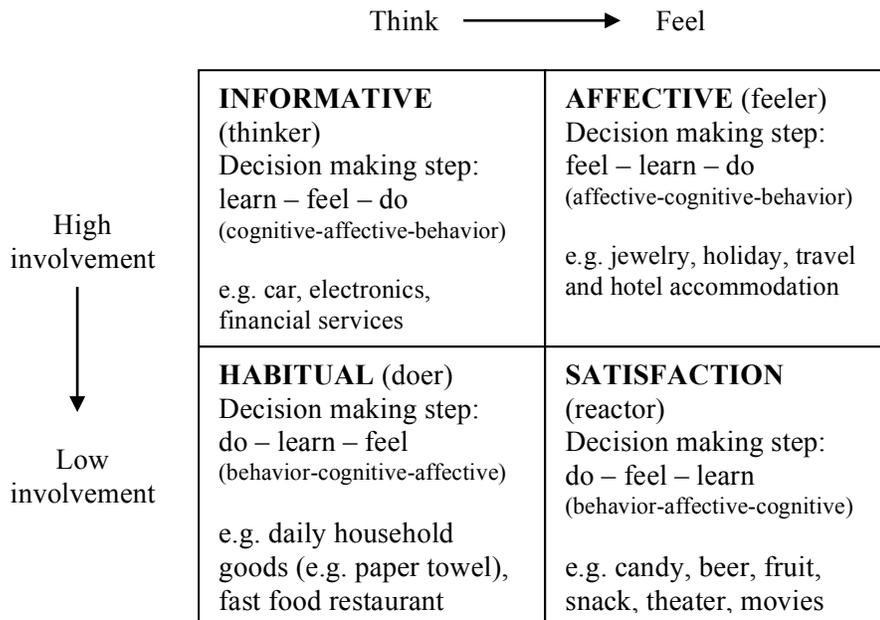


Figure 5.3 FCB Grid (Ratchford, 1987)

The empirical data involving prankvertising emotional effects have shown that video

2 (WestJet) is consistent with the *Affective* quadrant of the FCB grid. The products and services such as jewelry and airline service provider are contained in this quadrant (Ratchford, 1987). The consumer group of this quadrant is called the ‘feeler’ because their buying decision starts from ‘feel’. The research result supports the consumption theoretical framework of the *Affective* quadrant. Under the *Affective* quadrant, the decision making process follows ‘feel-learn-do’. The product and service categories in this quadrant are high involvement and affected by the association of ‘feel’. Therefore, we propose that prankvertising phenomenon falls under the *Affective* quadrant in the FCB grid. Moreover, the adapted HOE model (Figure 5.2) also reflects similar decision making process in prankvertising phenomenon route 2 of affective-cognitive-behavioral.

The *Habitual* quadrant contains the product such as personal care; Her Deodorant (video 3) comes under this consumer category. However, the research result in Section 4.3.1 suggested negative emotion was generated from this video strongly leads to non-buying decision by the respondents. This reflects that emotion or feeling can play an important role in consumer decision making for this type of product and eventually affect consumer buying decision. Therefore, this example of personal care product can possibly be defined under the *Affective* quadrant. We, thus, further develop from this finding that a product or service under each quadrant can be rotated amongst the four consumer categories. This is dependent on how the consumers process their decision making upon a particular product or service. Precisely, if consumer decision making process follows ‘feel-learn-do’, the particular prankvertising could be applied to the *Affective* consumer category, regardless of the product or service type. Therefore, we propose the adapted FCB grid applied to prankvertising phenomenon in Figure 5.4 as below, showing the *Affective* consumer category is the target for the prankvertising phenomenon.

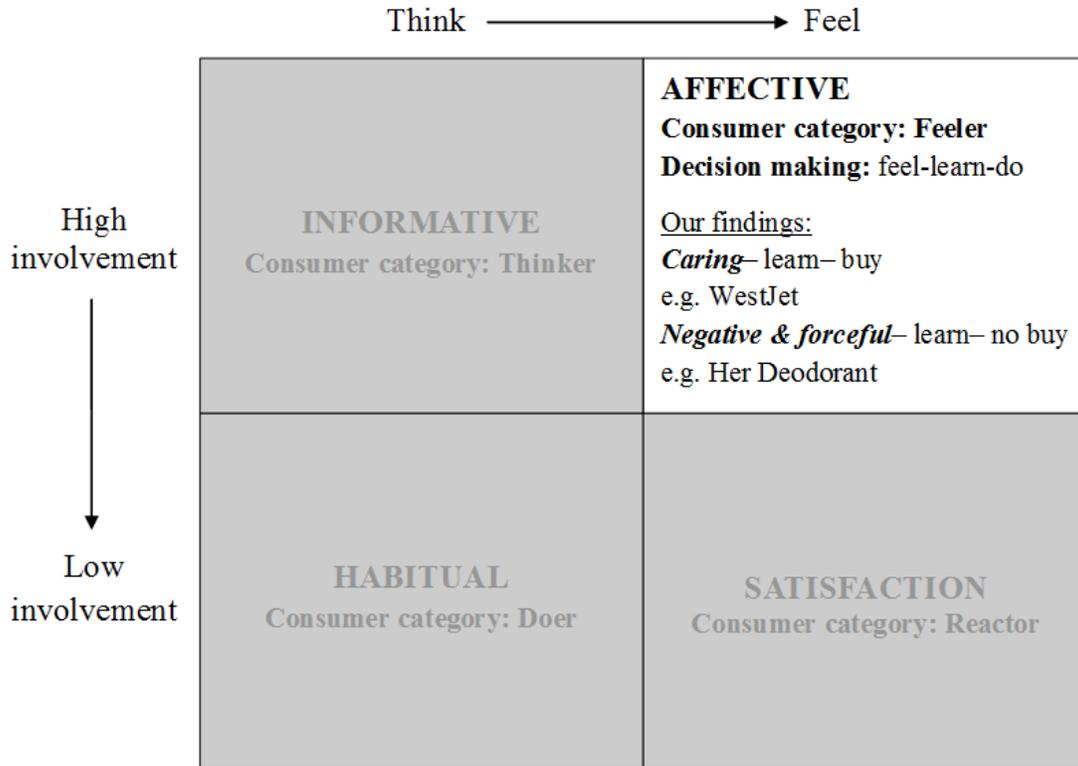


Figure 5.4 FCB grid applied to Prankvertising Phenomenon

5.2.2 Consumer Engagement

The relevant empirical data of consumer engagement was presented in Section 4.3.2. The results involve the degree of sharing and the effects of direct prank experience on consumer buying decision. The data used for our analysis and discussion is from both quantitative self-completion questionnaire and qualitative semi-structured interview. The results suggested, the higher the degree of sharing, the MORE willingness to buy. Meanwhile, the respondents whose decision is not affected by the prankvertising (NO effect) were less likely to share the video. However, in term of buying decision, higher degree of sharing does not always lead to consumer buying decision, as illustrated in video 1 and video 3. The quantitative empirical data, although showing that the degree of sharing did not directly relate to consumer buying, interview responses, however, discusses socio-cultural factors regarding the sharing. Moreover, by an assumed situation of prank in that the respondents were pranked themselves, their buying decision is affected, some with a significant shift from the decision made in the first place.

With regards to the degree of sharing in relation to consumer buying decision, Elliot and Wattanasuwan (1998) stated that advertising could be recognized as one of the major sources portrayed the symbolic meanings to construct, maintain and express their multiple identities through their choice of consumption. Successful symbolic resources such as advertising should be able to signify the message that the majority of people can relate to. People then are willing to get involved in sharing and potential adopting the brand or product presented in the video. Moreover, Livingstone (1995) mentioned that everybody does not share the video for the same symbolic meaning, nor does everyone buys the product to satisfy only themselves, but also take into account the society aspect.

From the empirical data under Section 4.3.2, Interview responses provided us with an interesting point about the interviewees' buying decisions towards WestJet airline ticket. An interviewee added that her buying decision could be resulted from the video sharing on Facebook, if the sharing received many 'Likes' and positive 'Comments' by her Facebook friends. She would perceive that the buying as cool and trendy. According to Section 2.3.2, Hansen (2010) stated that consumer decisions are made in relation to others, the reference groups, which are "a group of people who significantly influences an individual's behavior". The responses gathered from the interviews reflect a relationship between the development of individual self identity and collective socio identity with regard to the choice of consumption of products or services. This means that the respondents take into account the socio factor of their culture and their social expectations, such as the reactions of their friends towards the shared prank video. Such collective socio identity subsequently affected their decisions regarding buying.

Therefore, prankvertising can be regarded as a part of social symbolic resource in term of the video sharing. Consumers buying decision can possibly be stimulated by socio factors such as friends' opinion towards the shared prank video. Meanwhile, normal advertising tends to appear from the self symbolic side according to Consumption and the Symbolic Project of the Self introduced by Elliott and Wattanasuwan (1998) (see Section 2.3.2). From the model, normal advertising initiates through mediated experience, which subsequently contributes to self-symbolism. The self-symbolism would be then transferred

to be a part of social-symbolism. With respect to our argument mentioned earlier, prankvertising could be considered as a social phenomenon especially in an online world. This social phenomenon contributes to social symbolic resource with the spread of the message (video sharing). Unlike normal advertising which tends to have a prominent effect on self-symbolism, popular prankvertising and the sharing constitute of socio factors, thus, making a social phenomenon. Figure 5.5 presents this social phenomenon which could also be targeted delivery from the social-symbolism side.

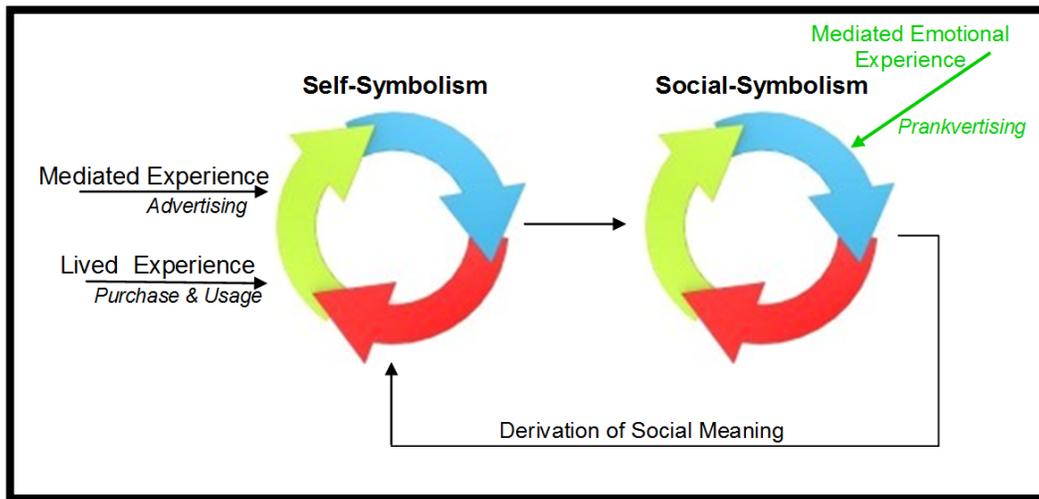


Figure 5.5: Model of Consumption and the Symbolic Project of the Self applied to Prankvertising Phenomenon

Under consumer engagement's qualitative empirical data, we found another interesting result. According to the interview, the viewer reported that he could absorb a more direct experience through the eyes of the people who were pranked. He felt more engaged with the prankvertising than watching normal advertising on the television that only gives him a persuasive message. Moreover, another interviewee added that he found prankvertising more influential than normal advertising, as while watching prankvertising, he imagined himself to be the ones who were pranked. Furthermore, he also claimed that as prankvertising contains an authentic reaction from people, he was engaged to the video and would like to continue watching it. This is to see what would happen in the end.

With the quantitative data from the questionnaire, we have further explored into the

situation when the respondents were pranked themselves. It is important to note, from Section 4.3.2, that there was a shift in consumer buying decision from ‘Yes’ to ‘No’, or vice versa, in the cases of the assumed situation given that the respondents were pranked. According to Section 2.2.3, prankvertising exploit a small number of unsuspecting target individuals by performing a prank on them and filming their reactions. The recorded authentic reactions will then be distributed online and get viewed and shared by a larger group of target consumers (Gianatasio, 2013). Our findings suggest that the viewers assumed themselves to be those who were pranked. Therefore, the direct impression of those who were pranked could be transferred to and could be felt by the viewer. The results prove that a higher level of consumer engagement, assumed by imagining themselves as those who were pranked could affect their buying decision.

According to Elliott and Wattanasuwan(1998), mediated experience is formed through advertising, while lived experience is constituted from consumer purchase and usage of the product or service. Moreover, Smith and Swinyard (1988) stated that consumer’s attitude and buying behavior derived from mediated experience, such as advertising, is not as strong and predictable as those formed through lived experience. With regards to the consumer engagement result, it is suggested that prankvertising can enhance mediated experience to be closer to lived experience. Consumers are able to form a closer relation to lived experience through the eyes of the people who were pranked in the video. Moreover, from the empirical data, consumer engagement created by prankvertising could lead to a strong result in term of consumer buying decision. Prankvertising phenomenon, thus, can possibly be placed between the mediated experience, as it shares similar characteristics with advertising, and the lived experience, as a response to direct experience through the eyes of those who were pranked.

Unlike normal advertising which tends to target and contribute to self-symbolism, prankvertising creates social-symbolism via socio factors. Prankvertising can be placed between the mediated experience and the lived experience, as a direct experience through the eyes of those who were pranked. With regards to the Model of Consumption and the Symbolic Project of the Self, prankvertising phenomenon could be applied as shown in Figure 5.5. The figure shows that prankvertising can generate from the social-symbolism

side, through factors such as peer pressure. Instead of simply feeding the product or service information through mediated experience in the same way as other advertising, prankvertising rather form mediated emotional experience embraced from the social-symbolism and subsequently shapes consumer self-symbolism. This reflects that prankvertising can accelerate the buying process and bypass the need of lived experience and the stage of forming self-symbolism.

5.2.3 Memorability

This section discusses further into the buying action with regard to memorability of the prank video. As presented in Section 4.3.3, the respondents were able to remember the product or service advertised in the prank videos differently. The higher level of memorability does not always lead to the buying decision. However, we found some conflicts regarding the respondents' buying decision that less than half of them were able to remember the advertised product correctly, even though they would like to buy the product or service in the end.

According to Williams (2000), "memory plays a critical role in consumer buying decisions". If the consumer cannot correctly remember the name of the product or service they would like to buy, then the buying action tends to be impossible. Otherwise, consumers need to put more effort in searching specifically for the name of the product or service. The interview regarding video 1 (Carrie movie) reflects that the video content was too strong and that the viewer did not recognize the prankvertising was intended to promote a movie. Therefore, they were not able to remember the movie name in the end. In this case, regardless of how much consumers would like to buy the product, they are not able to do so, as they do not even remember the brand or the product name.

Therefore, in term of memorability, prankvertising can affect consumer buying decision when the prank video's *content dominated* the primary objectives of the video. Too strong prank content can dominate the primary advertising message that the companies intended to deliver. Such primary advertising message includes the name of product or service, and the brand name. Without remembering the primary advertising message,

consumers are not able to process to buying action. However, too weak of prank content might not be able to capture consumer attention; meanwhile, too strong prank content could distract consumers' ability to remember the advertised product or service.

We found prankvertising's content domination poses a challenge for the phenomenon. By attempting to create a new, unique, and interesting advertising content, prankvertising tends to be more focused on strong prank content. As a result, it might have lost the relevance to or the reminder of the product or service being advertised. In the case of prankvertising's content domination, consumers remember the prank story, but have no idea what was being advertised.

5.3 Conclusion

We have shown that prankvertising can affect consumer buying decision through its emotional effects, consumer engagement, and memorability. In emotional effect, consumers can start from the affective phase of emotion then directly proceed to behavioral phase of buying decision. Alternatively, before making a buying decision, consumers can be involved in cognitive phase after being engaged in affective phase of emotion. This group of consumers tends to search for more information before entering behavioral phase. Therefore, we claimed that prankvertising also falls under *Affective* consumer category in FCB grid with the decision making process steps of 'feel-learn-do'. With the effect from prankvertising's consumer engagement, the degree of sharing and the direct prank experience have an effect on consumer buying decision. With the degree of sharing, consumer buying decision can be influenced by other people in the social networks or a socio factor. Prankvertising, thus, is considered as a social-symbolism. Moreover, with the direct prank experience, the buying decision can also be encouraged from a higher degree of lived experience. In term of memorability, consumer buying decision can be discouraged by prankvertising's content domination, which the consumers might be unable to remember a product or service advertised, even they would like to buy it.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of the study has been to provide critical insight into consumer behavior towards the new marketing phenomenon of prankvertising. Prankvertising has been introduced to marketing area with an impressive statistical data of consumers' reach, attracting both small and large organizations to utilize the phenomenon. Gaining marketing attentions, there has been an increase in prankvertising's argument whether it actually leads to favorable consumers' reaction in terms of their buying decision, or whether it could create negative reactions in term of buying. The argument brings significant complications to prankvertising and calls for more theoretical research attention on this phenomenon. With the abductive research approach, the study was built from an in-depth literature reviews of the theories relating to prankvertising and consumer buying decision. Subsequently, the study was done through a triangulated method approach incorporating quantitative self-completion questionnaire, with the supporting data from qualitative semi-structured interview. The analysis and discussion were also based on consumer theoretical frameworks from both Behavioral Decision Theory and Consumer Culture Theory perspectives. With regard to our research question of

“What are the effects of prankvertising on consumer buying decision?”,

we found that there are three main factors affecting on consumer decision making and their buying behavior. These effects include emotional effects, consumer engagement, and memorability.

6.2 Summary of Significant Findings and Implication

Prankvertising can affect consumer buying decision through its emotional effects, consumer engagement, and memorability. With respect to emotional effects, prankvertising begins to influence consumer's buying decision from the affective phase of emotion then directly proceeds to behavioral phase. Alternatively, before making a buying decision, consumers can involve in cognitive phase after being engaged in affective phase of emotion. Moreover, the feeling such as 'Friendliness/Love' reflects the right emotion of *caring*, which

can encourage the consumer and lead to buying decision. Meanwhile, the feeling such as ‘Irritated/Contempt’ under *negative & forceful* emotion category indicates the effects to non-buying decision. In this regard, with the right message embedded by the right emotion such as *caring*, prankvertising can positively encourage consumer buying decision.

From the analysis and discussion on prankvertising effects on consumer engagement, it is suggested that although the degree of sharing might not have a direct impact on consumer buying decision, it had potential effects on consumer decision making. As prankvertising operates in social media world, factors such as friends’ reaction towards the shared prank videos could possibly influence consumer buying decision. Therefore, by having an interesting prankvertising content which can lead to massive sharing, it allows prankvertising to receive positive reaction in term of consumer buying decision. Moreover, consumer buying decision can be dependent on the prank content. Consumers who view the prank videos tend to relate themselves to the prank content by imagining that they were pranked. Implementing the right prank content is necessary to trigger buying. This means that if the prank is too mean, it could lead to non-buying decision. Companies might perceive the small group of people who are pranked as the messenger, who only deliver the prank message and the emotions to entertain the larger audience (targeted consumer). However, people who were pranked seem to be important and have effects on consumer buying decision. If people were being pranked badly, it does not only affect their buying decisions, but such effect can also be extended to the many potential consumers. This is because the viewers tend to connect their feeling to those who were pranked.

In term of memorability effects, the analysis and discussion point towards prankvertising’s *dominating content*. Too strong prank content can dominate the primary advertising message that the companies intended to deliver in the first place. Such primary advertising message includes the name of product or service, and the brand name. Without remembering the primary advertising message, consumers are not able to process their buying decision. We see prankvertising’s *content domination* as a challenge for the phenomenon. Too weak prank content might not be able to gain consumer attention and could result in an ignorant or not remembering the brand; meanwhile, too strong prank content could reduce consumers’ ability to remember the advertised product or service.

In conclusion, by attempting to produce a prankvertising that lead to consumer buying decision, the *prank content* should be the main focus. As explained earlier, we summarize the prank contents that could affect consumer buying decision as below.

- *Prank content that contains ‘caring’ emotional message.*
- *Prank content that can gain a significant number of sharing.*
- *Prank content that is not too mean.*
- *Prank content that does not dominate the primary advertised message.*

Therefore, companies who aim to implement a successful prankvertising in term of encouraging consumer buying decision should have a careful planning and sufficient research prior to produce a prankvertising. It does not only allow companies to gain a huge success of the video sharing, but also the ‘true success’ in consumer buying.

6.3 Limitations

This thesis was confronted by a number of limitations that should be pointed out. Firstly, with the time constraint that the study had to be completed within 10 weeks, this could impact the depth of data collected and the variety of analysis methods used. Prankvertising operates in social network, which involves million of audience that could be the potential consumers. A bigger data set, exploring a higher number of online consumers or a larger amount of industries implementing prankvertising, would potentially have fostered the reliability and validity of the results generated from the study. Moreover, in our conception of the thesis, we had aimed to conduct an advanced stage of emotional analysis based on such collected data under Section 4.3.1. However, we found that these empirical data relating to consumer emotions and opinions were difficult to access and might not be solid enough to constitute valid theoretical conclusions. We, thus, wish to acknowledge here that we cannot claim that the effects such as emotional effects, consumer engagement, and memorability from prankvertising were the sole reasons that could lead to consumer buying behavior. In addition, although we tried to ensure transparency and trustworthiness as detailed in the method Section 3.5, the study is arguably limited by its subjectivity in data collection and analysis. As the self-completion questionnaire is a one-way communication (Bryman and Bell, 2007), data

interpretation was unavoidably implemented. If there was a conflict in the respondents' answer between different questions, the researchers needed to interpret such conflict by themselves. This also reflects the issue of lack of transparency, as there are barely any standard procedures to be followed (Bryman and Bell, 2007). We, thus, expect that the supporting data from qualitative semi-structured interview could help minimizing the issue of lack of transparency. However, as the interviews were not done to all the respondents, the issue could be reduced to only a certain extent. We had aimed to have 10 interviewees to gain qualitative data regarding the prankvertising effects on their buying decision, in order to support the quantitative data. However, we received 34 respondents who were willing to be interviewed. Nonetheless, when we conducted interview appointments, there were only 5 respondents who were available and convenient.

Despite the limitations above, this thesis is aimed to explore into the new marketing phenomenon of prankvertising. We expect the study is most useful as the explanatory look at consumer buying decision from the effects from prankvertising. This study is believed to have the capacity to critically inform practitioners, academics, and wider marketing professions in their approach to executing and examining prankvertising phenomenon. Moreover, the study could be used as a point of departure for further research into this new phenomenon from various perspectives.

6.4 Directions for Further Research

This thesis has provided an in-depth study of the effects from prankvertising on consumer buying decision. However, we only best explored consumer buying decision through the extent of consumer 'intention' to buy, which was done through a question in the survey. It is important to note that, this study rely upon what the respondents answer and say, and what they say might be quite different from what they actually do in the buying situation. There is a potential that consumers might not actually buy the product or service in the end. This sheds the light to the future research of consumer 'actual' buying decision resulting from prankvertising effects. Significant research resources might be required to explore into 'actual' consumer buying. As the research tends to involve the tracking and follow-up of 'actual' consumer buying behavior, sufficient time and budget are necessary. However, the derived

result is expected to benefit companies, and provides a deeper and richer critical understanding of the effects of prankvertising on consumer buying behavior.

Moreover, the empirical data gathered from quantitative self-completion questionnaire and qualitative semi-structured interview suggests the effects of prankvertising on brand. They stated that although they were not persuaded to buy and might not make an immediate buying decision towards the advertised product or service in the prankvertising, they developed an association to the brand. The effects might not be that strong to create the buying decision, but a good impression of the brand was perceived in their minds. These insights may be used for future research to further illuminate this concept. As the consumer buying decision tends to lead to sales, it could be considered as temporary result and, thus, creates only a short-term outcome. However, with regards to the concept of brand equity, brand is perceived as a valuable asset for the company and, so, contributes to a long-term outcome (Kapferer, 2008).

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Appendix I: Survey



LUND UNIVERSITY

The Effects of Prankvertising

Hi. We are two MSc students from Lund University majoring in Marketing. This anonymous survey is part of our Master Thesis and we would be very happy if you could take 15 - 20 minutes to participate. Please read the instructions given in each section before start answering the questions. Your responses are complexly anonymous.

Age

- Less than 15 years old
- 15 – 25 years old
- 26 – 35 years old
- 36 – 45 years old
- 46 – 55 years old
- 56 – 70 years old

Sex

- Female
- Male

Occupation

- Student
- Marketing related career
- Non-marketing related career

Which are the social network you used and how frequent do you use (or view) each one?

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook | <input type="checkbox"/> Many times a day |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Once a day |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 times a week |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 2 times a week |
|
 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Instagram | <input type="checkbox"/> Many times a day |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Once a day |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 times a week |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 2 times a week |

- Twitter
 - Many times a day
 - Once a day
 - 2-5 times a week
 - Less than 2 times a week

- Not using social network

How often do you share interesting news, video or article through social media?

- Everyday
- Every week
- Every month
- Once in several months
- Several times a year
- Less than once a year
- Never

Show video 1 (Telekinetic Coffee Shop Surprise):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VlOxlSO3_M

Question

1.1 Now that you've watched the video, please tell us how do you feel by selecting one most applicable choice

- Irritated /contempt
- Sadness / despair
- Fear / anxiety
- Shock / stress
- Frustration / shame
- Amusement / joy
- Friendliness / love

- Hope / pride
- Relaxed / relieved

1.2 You find this video interesting and/or exciting

- Strongly Agree Agree Moderate Disagree Strongly disagree

1.3 You will share the video

- Strongly Agree Agree Moderate Disagree Strongly disagree

1.4 What is the name of the movie advertised?

- I don't know (direct to 1.6)

1.5.1 Are you aware of this movie before seeing the video?

- Yes (direct to 1.5.2)
- No (direct to 1.6)

1.5.2 Your perception of this movie changed (either positive or negative) after watching the video

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Moderate
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

1.6 Does the video affect your willingness to see the movie?

- Yes, I'm MORE willing to see the movie
- Yes, I'm LESS willing to see the movie
- No, it doesn't affect my decision

1.7 You will buy a ticket for this movie?

- Yes reason the prankvertising is
- Maybe reason other, _____
- No reason (please specify) _____
- If I have time, money and/or company
- other, _____

1.8 If you were the one who got prank in the video, would you be more likely to watch the movie (comparing to the fact that you are an audience)?

- Yes
- No

Show video 2 (*WestJet Christmas Miracle: real-time giving*):

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zIEIvi2MuEk>

2.1 Now that you've watched the video, please tell us how do you feel by selecting one most applicable choice

- Irritated /contempt
- Sadness / despair
- Fear / anxiety
- Shock / stress
- Frustration / shame
- Amusement / joy
- Friendliness / love

- Hope / pride
- Relaxed / relieved

2.2 You find this video interesting and/or exciting?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Moderate
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

2.3 You will share the video?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Moderate
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

2.4 What is the name of the airline in the video?

- I don't know (*direct to 2.6*)

2.5.1 Are you aware of this brand before seeing the video?

- Yes (*direct to 2.5.2*)
- No (*direct to 2.6*)
- I don't remember the brand from the video (*direct to 2.6*)

2.5.2 Your perception of the brand changed (either positive or negative) after watching the video

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Moderate
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

2.6 Does the video affect your willingness to use their airline service?

- Yes, I'm MORE willing to use their service
- Yes, I'm LESS willing to use their service
- No , it doesn't affect my decision

2.7 If there is a flight from the airline in the video available for your next trip, would you buy their tickets?

- Yes reason the prankvertising is
 other, _____
- Maybe reason If I have time, money and/or company
 other, _____
- No reason (please specify) _____

2.8 If you were the one who got pranked in the video, would you be more likely to use their service (comparing to the fact that you are an audience)?

- Yes
- No

Show video 3 (Baby kidnap prank, hilarious stress test):

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4HJSqsV1Mfc>

3.1 Now that you've watched the video, please tell us how do you feel by selecting one most applicable choice

- Irritated /contempt
- Sadness / despair
- Fear / anxiety
- Shock / stress
- Frustration / shame
- Amusement / joy
- Friendliness / love

- Hope / pride
- Relaxed / relieved

3.2 You find this video interesting and/or surprise?

- Strongly Agree Agree Moderate Disagree Strongly disagree

3.3 You will share the video?

- Strongly Agree Agree Moderate Disagree Strongly disagree

3.4 What is the name of the product advertised?

- I don't know (*direct to 3.5*)

3.5.1 Are you aware of this brand before seeing the video?

- Yes (*direct to 3.5.2*)
 No (*direct to 3.6*)
 I don't remember the brand from the video (*direct to 3.6*)

3.5.2 Your perception of the brand changed (either positive or negative) after watching the video

- Strongly Agree Agree Moderate Disagree Strongly disagree

3.6 Does the video affect your willingness to buy their product?

- Yes, I'm MORE willing to buy their product
 Yes, I'm LESS willing to buy their product
 No, it doesn't affect my decision

3.7 If you come across the situation where you need to buy the kind of product promoted in the video, would you choose the brand being advertised in the video?

- Yes reason the prankvertising is
 Maybe reason other, _____
 No reason (please specify) If I have time, money and/or company
 No reason (please specify) other, _____

3.8 If you were the one who got pranked in the video, would you be more likely to buy their product (comparing to the fact that you are an audience)?

- Yes
 No

Show video 4(Carlsberg puts friends to the test):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vsIwMp84_BA

4.1 Now that you've watched the video, please tell us how do you feel by selecting one most applicable choice

- Irritated /contempt
- Sadness / despair
- Fear / anxiety
- Shock / stress
- Frustration / shame
- Amusement / joy
- Friendliness / love

- Hope / pride
- Relaxed / relieved

4.2 You find this video interesting and/or surprising?

- Strongly Agree Agree Moderate Disagree Strongly disagree

4.3 You will share the video?

- Strongly Agree Agree Moderate Disagree Strongly disagree

4.4 What is the name of the product advertised?

- I don't know

4.5.1 Are you aware of this brand before seeing the video?

- Yes (*direct to 4.5.2*)
- No (*direct to 4.6*)
- I don't remember the brand from the video (*direct to 4.6*)

4.5.2 Your perception of the brand changed (either positive or negative) after watching the video

- Strongly Agree Agree Moderate Disagree Strongly disagree

4.6 Does the video affect your willingness to buy their product?

- Yes, I'm MORE willing to buy their product
- Yes, I'm LESS willing to buy their product
- No, it doesn't affect my decision

4.7 If you come across the situation where you need to buy the kind of product promoted in the video, would you choose the brand being advertised in the video?

- Yes reason the prankvertising is
 other, _____
- Maybe reason If I have time, money and/or company
 other, _____
- No reason (please specify) _____

4.8 If you were the one who got pranked in the video, would you be more likely to buy their product (comparing to the fact that you are an audience)?

- Yes
- No

5. Please leave us your email address if you would like to provide more insights regarding the topic. We will get in touch with you shortly.

Thank you very much. Your help is greatly appreciated 😊

Appendix II: Basic interview questions

1. What do you feel about the company that launched the video?
2. Were there too much or not enough branding? How do you feel about that?
3. Are you inspired by the video? Does the video make you feel that you want to buy their product or does it motive you to look for more information?
4. How do your perception towards the brand changed after watching the video?
5. What is the reason why you would share this on your personal network?
6. What do you expect to hear from your personal network friends who see your post?
7. How would you react to their responses?
8. Did you have favorite prank video? Which one and why?
9. Did you have a prank video that you dislike? Which one and why?
10. Would you like to use or recommend the products that you saw in these videos? Why?

Appendix III: Interviewee Demographic

	Interviewee 1	Interviewee 2	Interviewee 3	Interviewee 4	Interviewee 5
Age (years old)	15-30	15-30	15-30	15-30	15-30
Sex	Female	Male	Female	Female	Male
Occupation	Non marketing-related	Student	Student	Non marketing-related	Marketing-related
Most used social media and frequency of use	Facebook, many times a day	Facebook, many times a day	Facebook, many times a day	Facebook, once a day	Facebook, many times a day
Second most used social media and frequency of use	Instagram, once a day	Twitter, once a day	Instagram, many times a day	Pinterest, once a day	Twitter, many times a day
Online sharing frequency	Everyday	Every month	Everyday	Every week	Everyday

