

# The Impact of Advertising Appeals on Purchase Intention for Women's Fashion Products in Malaysia

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## ABSTRACT

This paper is mainly focused on analyzing the impact of four advertising appeals, namely love appeal, humor appeal, happiness appeal and excitement appeal on purchase intention for women fashion products in Malaysia. Primary data were collected from 303 respondents using self-administered online questionnaire that was distributed among social media users in Malaysia. The collected data went through an extensive process of screening and sorting to prepare for the analyses. Several important tests were conducted using analytical tools, namely IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and its added module, AMOS to reach the findings. Among them are a descriptive analysis, reliability tests, an exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, and hypothesis testing. In addition, two-stage structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to test for the fitness of the proposed model. The findings from the study revealed that two out of four advertising appeals, namely excitement appeal and love appeal, had significant positive impacts on consumers' purchase intention. Meanwhile, humor appeal and happiness appeal were found to have insignificant impacts. This research provides invaluable insights for marketers, especially those in women's fashion industry in Malaysia, in creating effective advertising campaign to promote their fashion products to consumers in Malaysia. A unique attempt to investigate the individual impact of love appeal, humor appeal, happiness appeal, and excitement appeal on purchase intention is the strength of this research. Further, this study is also invaluable because of its main consideration, which was women's fashion products.

JEL classification: D1, M1, M3

Keywords: Advertising appeals, fashion products, purchase intention, Malaysia

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Fashion is a dominant socio-cultural term (Mahfuzur et al., 2018) that has grown to become the most significant component of everyday consumption choices and a central part for everyday

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occurrences (Ahuvia & Wong, 2002). In an online article written by Ruth and Katrina (2019), fashion and beauty are the second most purchased items online in Malaysia after electronics items. According to Čiarnienė and Vienažindienė (2014), fashion can simply be described as the styles of clothing and accessories worn by certain groups of people at any given time. In addition, Jan and Kalthom (2015) explained fashion as a means of self-expression and beautification that can help people to enhance their social status and to be more accepted in a certain class of society (Mahfuzur et al., 2018). Furthermore, fashion products can be defined as all components of dressing from underwear to outerwear, shoes, bags, hats, belts, gloves, and other accessories, jewellery and makeup, fragrance, and bath products, sports gear and adventure wear as well as work and military gear (Anguelov, 2016).

In present days, there are numerous women's fashion brands competing in the Malaysian market ranging from the luxurious haute couture and designer fashion to ordinary everyday wear fashion or the mass fashion; be it local or international brands. This situation has led customers to a more complex decision-making process since they are exposed to various forms of advertisement. Besides, with abundant choices and explosion of advertisements, customers are becoming indifferent towards the brand and almost immune to advertisements. In the classic consumer decision-making process, there are five stages which customers follow in making a buying decision. The stages following the sequence are problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decisions and post-purchase decisions. Advertising is a promotional tool which involves the information search stage in which understanding how consumers search for product information and the way they evaluate the information can help marketers to design effective marketing messages (Clow & Baack, 2018). Effective advertising can be designed by selecting appropriate advertising appeals or themes of advertising (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012) based on rational or emotional arguments which aims to build a direct relationship between the product or service and the consumer's needs or wants (Yeshin, 1998).

In theory, there are six stages in the hierarchy of effects model that a consumer will go through upon seeing an advertisement. The stages following the sequence are awareness, knowledge, liking, preference, conviction and purchase (Clow & Baack, 2018). The authors also explained that the hierarchy of effects model highlights a similar basis with theories regarding attitudes and attitudinal change, including the theories of cognitive, affective, and conative elements. According to the authors, "the cognitive component refers to the person's mental images, understanding, and interpretations of the person, object, or issue while the affective component contains the feelings or emotions a person has about the object, topic, or idea and the conative component consists of the individual's intentions, actions, or behavior" (Clow & Baack, 2018, p. 145). Besides, there are many sequences in which attitude is formed for instance by the sequence of affective, conative and cognitive components. In this sequence, the advertising appeals are expected to prompt positive emotions or feelings of the consumers in the affective phase, which will lead them to the conative phase where an intention or action occurs. The understanding of the product or the cognitive phase comes after the purchase.

In addition, the current COVID-19 pandemic has brought a change to the landscape of consumer behavior in Malaysia. According to a summary of the Fashion E-Commerce Global Market Report 2020–30: COVID-19 Growth and Change (2020), the global fashion e-commerce market is predicted to decline from \$531.25 billion in 2019 to \$485.62 billion in 2020 due to several constraints imposed on the daily activities such as social distancing and remote working as well as the closure of industries and other commercial activities. These measures have impacted the entire supply chain from production to international trade. Fashion brands in Malaysia have also reported to suffer from the pandemic (Syahirah, 2020). Since a fashion product is known as a type of shopping good, this can probably mean that it will not be in the priority list of goods for consumers to buy in the time of the pandemic. In this situation, marketers must be clever to

design an effective advertising message that will attract the right target group of consumers to buy fashion products by selecting the right advertising appeal.

However, selecting the appropriate theme for an advertisement is not as straightforward since there are variations of advertising appeals which can have different influence on customers in making purchase decision. In this study, the attitude model of cognition, affection and conation has become the inspiration for the researchers to analyze how affective or emotional advertising appeals impact the purchase intention of consumers when buying fashion products. The current study intends to investigate the impact of several emotional advertising appeals, namely, love appeal, humor appeal, happiness appeal and excitement appeal, on customers' purchase intention for women's fashion products in Malaysia based on a quantitative approach. This study hoped to provide vital information for marketers of women's fashion products in Malaysia to help them create an effective advertising campaign.

### 1.1. Objectives of the Study

The general objectives of the study are to extract the factors from the literature that are related to advertising appeals, to develop a hypothetical linkage based on the literature and to propose a conceptual model combining all the factors with their impacts on consumers' purchase intention for women's fashion products in Malaysia. The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To analyze the impact of love appeal in advertising on consumers' purchase intention for women's fashion products in Malaysia.
2. To analyze the impact of humor appeal in advertising on consumers' purchase intention for women's fashion products in Malaysia.
3. To analyze the impact of happiness appeal in advertising on consumers' purchase intention for women's fashion products in Malaysia.
4. To analyze the impact of excitement appeal in advertising on consumers' purchase intention for women's fashion products in Malaysia.

In the following sections, a hypothetical linkage based on the literature is put forward for empirical investigation followed by presenting the proposed model of the study, the research methodology, findings, and conclusion.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Purchase Intention and Advertising Appeals

According to Azjen and Fishbein (1975), purchase intention is a critical factor to predict consumer behavior. Tee et al. (2015) described purchase intention as the driving force for consumers to purchase a product from a certain brand (Tee et al., 2015). In addition, Priatna (2018) explained purchase intention as the desire of an individual who seems to make purchases of goods or services to meet their needs. Moreover, Azjen and Fishbein (1975) further explained that the intention or behavior of a person is determined by their attitude, which is influenced by their belief. In an article written by Jovanović et al. (2016), there are three ways in which a belief is formed, namely, experience and observation, an external source of information and processes of inference. Advertising appeals can be perceived as an external source of information that can influence the formation of belief and attitude of the consumers, which will eventually lead them to the product purchase intention. This theory is in line with the opinion of Lee and Hong (2016), who stated that advertising appeal can lead individuals towards the adoption of an attitude or behavior. Moreover, Nguyen (2014) also opined that advertising appeals can lead individuals towards positive evaluation of a certain product or service. Also, Wardhani and Alif (2018) found

in their study that advertising appeals, especially emotional appeals, shaped a positive attitude among the consumers towards the advertisement and the brand and hence have a greater influence on driving purchase intentions of consumers.

## 2.2. Love Appeal

Love appeal is an advertising appeal that focuses on a positive relationship or emotional bond between people. This appeal can be in the form of friendship, family bond and romantic relationship between two people. The emotion of love in an advertisement can capture viewers' attention, induce nice feelings, enhance liking for the brand and create a positive association with the brand (Kamran & Siddiqui, 2019). According to Khanna (2016), love appeal focuses on nurturing strong feelings that are inspiring to and admired by the audience. Moreover, love appeal is expected to work effectively to influence customers to purchase the product if the perceived value and quality of the brand advertised are extremely high (Kamran & Siddiqui, 2019). According to the study by Kamran and Siddiqui (2019) on the impact of emotional advertising on consumer buying behavior for home appliances in Pakistan, love appeal in an emotional advertisement is found to strongly influence customer buying behavior. Khanna (2016) also found in the study of content analysis of emotional and rational appeals in selected products advertising that love appeal used in a commercial is likely to affect consumers' buying decision. Thus, hypothesis one ( $H_1$ ) of this study is proposed as follows:

**$H_1$ :** Love appeal will have a positive impact on consumers' purchase intention for women's fashion products in Malaysia.

## 2.3. Humor Appeal

Humor appeal has been proven to be one of the best advertising approaches to breaking through clutter, grabbing the attention of viewers and maintaining it (Clow & Baack, 2018). Additionally, Clow and Baack (2018) opined that a successful humor ad contains these three elements; product attributes, a customer's benefit, or the personal value obtained from the product. Hameed et al. (2020) states that humor appeal can impact the viewers' thoughts and convictions toward the product or service that is being advertised. The study also found that there is a direct relationship between humor and purchase intention in which purchase intention is positively related with perceived humor (Hameed et al., 2020). Another recent study by Kamran and Siddiqui (2019) reveals that humor elements in home appliances advertisements in Pakistan are successful in cultivating a positive image of a brand and influence the customer to make purchase and even repurchase of the product. Moreover, in an earlier study done by Diaa (2017) on guerrilla marketing and purchase intention, the result showed that humor has a positive effect on consumers' purchase intention. Another study by Mehmood and Masood (2016) on the impact of humor in advertising on consumer purchase intention towards the network telecommunication sector in Pakistan also found that humor is very effective in changing the mind of consumers towards a certain product and drives purchase intention. Thus, hypothesis two ( $H_2$ ) of this study is proposed as follows:

**$H_2$ :** Humor appeal will have a positive influence on consumers' purchase intention for women's fashion products in Malaysia.

## 2.4. Happiness Appeal

According to Shaver et al. (1987), happiness appeal is considered as positive messages and is often implied by characters with smiling or laughing faces or images and portrayals of pleasant and happy sceneries. Kamran and Siddiqui (2019) explained happiness appeal as a means to connect

with people and create loyal customers by displaying a theme that touches the heart of customers and nurtures happy responses from them. Besides, the emotion of happiness in an advertisement also induces positivity towards a product, creates happy customers, helps to build memories of the brand and also induces customers to make a purchase (Kamran & Siddiqui, 2019). Moreover, Mogilner et al. (2012) stated that happiness can have a powerful influence on choice. The study by Kamran and Siddiqui (2019) also found that happiness appeal in an advertisement positively influences customers' buying behavior for home appliances in Pakistan. Hussain et al. (2020) in a study of the impact of emotional and rational advertising appeals on customers' purchase intention found that emotional advertising appeals are more effective in influencing consumer buying intention than rational appeal. Happiness is one of positive emotional advertising appeals and is related to the feeling of joy and hence it can be inferred that happiness appeal has a positive impact on customers' purchase intention. Thus, hypothesis three ( $H_3$ ) of this study is proposed as follows:

**H<sub>3</sub>:** Happiness appeal will have a positive effect on consumers' purchase intention for women's fashion products in Malaysia.

## 2.5. Excitement Appeal

Excitement appeal in fashion advertisement in Malaysia can be seen in many forms, for example, making a 'teaser' poster or video or social media post to introduce a new line of product. Maslow (1970) described excitement as an eager state or circumstance. Moreover, according to Muhamad Fazil (2015), among the associative terms that help to describe excitement are exciting, cool, awesome, imaginative, unique, up-to-date, independent and contemporary. Muhamad Izzuddin et al. (2019) in a study of Halal brand personality and brand loyalty among millennial modest fashion consumers in Malaysia stated that excitement has a significant relationship with brand loyalty. It can be inferred from the study that since excitement appeal in a brand leads to brand loyalty, it means that excitement has a positive influence on customers to repeat the purchase, which also means that the appeal has a positive impact on customers' purchase intention. Furthermore, according to Kamran and Siddiqui (2019), excitement appeal in an advertisement can motivate customers to buy the product from the brand to feel something unique and stirring. Thus, hypothesis four ( $H_4$ ) of this study is proposed as follows:

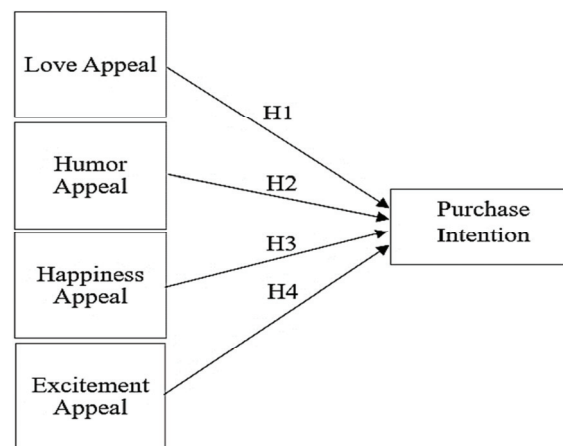
**H<sub>4</sub>:** Excitement appeal will have a positive impact on consumers' purchase intention for women's fashion products in Malaysia.

## 2.6. Proposed Model

The framework of this study as illustrated in Figure 1 is inspired by the attitude theory of cognitive, affective and conative components. The advertising appeals chosen in this study are expected to prompt positive emotions or feelings of the consumers which will lead them to have the intention to purchase and eventually make the purchase. Each of these independent variables, which are the advertising appeals, represent the affective advertising appeals that will have an impact on the dependent variable, i.e. customers' purchase intention for women's fashion products in Malaysia.



**Figure 1**  
Proposed Model



### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Sample of the Study and Data Collection

This study is quantitative in nature. A non-probability sampling technique, specifically the convenience sampling method, was employed in the study. The target respondents for this study are people who have seen women's fashion advertising or those who follow women's fashion brands on social media. Although it was expected that the main target would be female, there was a possibility that a minority of men would also be included in the sample. A self-administered online questionnaire in the form of Google Form was distributed among social media users in Malaysia. Screening questions had been imposed to screen out the respondents only to the target respondents. The minimum sample size was calculated following the normal distribution theory or 'rule of 10' (10 observations per parameter) as suggested by Bentler and Chou (1987). Given that there are 20 questionnaire items (excluding demographic questions) in the study, the minimum target sample size needed was 200. Overall, 316 responses were collected and out of them, 312 are target respondents. From 312 data, 9 responses were identified as outlier and not useful for the study since they were giving the same answers (either all neutral or all disagree) to all questions.

#### 3.2. Measurement Development

A set of structured closed-ended questionnaires was adapted from previous studies and a 5-points Likert scale (1- Strongly Disagree to 5- Strongly Agree) was used as a standard benchmark to measure the items (Maichum et al., 2017). The questionnaire mainly contains three parts which are screening questions, questions on the variables of the study and the demographic profile of respondents. The questionnaire items can be found in the Appendix.

#### 3.3. Data Analysis

The collected data went through an extensive process of screening and sorting to prepare for the analyses. After the cleaning process, only data from 303 respondents were found useful for the study. In this study, the analyses that were conducted in SPSS software were a descriptive analysis, a reliability analysis and an exploratory factor analysis. Meanwhile, a confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling (SEM) were run in AMOS software.

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

In this study, primary data were collected from 303 respondents representing people who have seen advertisements of women's fashion products in Malaysia or those who follow any fashion brands of women's fashion products on social media. As expected, the majority of the sample are women, making up 94.1 percent of the total respondents. Furthermore, the largest group of respondents are from the age group of 18 to 27 and the majority are Malay. Moreover, the analysis also reveals that among the respondents, a total of 83.6 percent of respondents come from the B40 income group with the monthly income of less than RM 1,000 to RM 5,000. This conclusion is roughly estimated based on the Household Income & Basic Amenities Survey Report 2019 by Department of Statistics Malaysia, which gives the guideline of the monthly income tiers for people in Malaysia. According to the report, the B40 group have a monthly income of less than RM 4,850 while for the M40 group, the income range is between RM 4,850 and RM 10,959 and on the other hand, the T20 group have an income of RM 10,960 and above. A detailed descriptive analysis is provided in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic Variables		Research sample (n = 303)	
		Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	285	94.1
	Male	18	5.9
Age Group	18–27	212	70
	28–37	42	13.9
	38–47	17	5.6
	48–57	32	10.6
Race	Malay	288	95
	Chinese	2	0.7
	Indian	5	1.7
	Others	8	2.6
Monthly Income	Below RM	126	41.6
	RM 1,000 – RM 3,000	82	27.1
	RM 3,000 – RM 5,000	45	14.9
	RM 5,000 – RM 10,000	46	15.2
	RM 10,000 and above	4	1.3
Fashion Product	Clothing	107	35.3
	Hijab	22	7.3
	Shoes, bags and other accessories	49	16.2
	Jewelry	14	4.6
	Skincare, makeup, fragrance and bath products	95	31.4
	Sportswear/Activewear	16	5.3

Besides, an additional question was asked to find out the type of women's fashion products that the respondents are most likely to spend more money on. It is found that 107 respondents responded that they were most likely to spend more money on clothing while 95 people revealed that they were most likely to spend more money on skincare, makeup, fragrance, and bath products. The third most popular women's fashion products are shoes, bags, and other accessories with 49 responses. The fourth choice of women's fashion products are hijab, followed by sportswear or activewear and the least popular choice is jewelry.

## 4.2. Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's alpha reliability test was performed to assess the stability and consistency of the research instruments. A total of 20 items were assessed for the internal consistency. Nunnally (1978) introduced a general rule of thumb which stated that the value of Cronbach's alpha closer to 1 indicates greater stability and consistency. However, for social science research studies, the threshold value is generally acceptable in the range of 0.60 to 0.70 (George & Mallery, 2003). In this study, the reliability tests for the items in each construct resulted in Cronbach's alpha value greater than 0.80, which can be translated as having good stability and consistency. This result is depicted in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
Reliability Statistics for Research Instruments in Each Construct

Factor	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No. of items
Love Appeal	.832	.833	4
Humor Appeal	.824	.827	4
Happiness Appeal	.872	.874	4
Excitement Appeal	.833	.834	4
Purchase Intention	.831	.830	4

## 4.3. Exploratory Factor Analysis

The exploratory factor analysis includes the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity. This test was run based on the principal component analysis (PCA). The analysis was conducted to investigate the underlying factors related with the items for each independent and dependent variable in the study. In other words, the aim of factor analysis is to reduce a large number of variables to extract the core variables known as factors (Kamran & Siddiqui, 2019). In order to analyze the strength of association among variables, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was employed. The KMO test was performed to determine which factor had to be taken out from the construct due to multicollinearity. Generally, the KMO value ranges from 0 to 1 and the rule of thumb says that it needs to be higher than 0.60 to be eligible for confirmatory factor analysis. Meanwhile, Bartlett's test of sphericity was run to see if there was a redundancy between the variables that could be grouped together under fewer factors. Bartlett's test is considered significant at  $p < 0.001$ . Based on Table 3, both KMO value and Bartlett's test are significant at 0.839 and  $p$ -value of 0.000, respectively.



**Table 3**  
KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.839	
	Approx. Chi-Square	2900.705
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	df	190
	Sig.	.000

Next, the criterion of an eigenvalue greater than 1 was used as the basis of factor extraction. Any factor needs to have an initial eigenvalue greater than 1, which indicates enough total variance explained to represent a unique factor. In other words, any factor that has an eigenvalue less than 1 was disregarded in this study. Based on the output, five factors were found to have eigenvalues greater than 1 resulting in a clean five-factor structure. The result of five extracted factors accounted for 68.638 percent of the total variance. Moreover, rotated component matrix was developed based on the Varimax orthogonal rotation method, which minimizes the number of variables that have high loadings on each factor. A higher loading means that the item is strongly related with the factor. Generally, the factor loading should be 0.50 and above to be considered as very significant. In this study, it can be seen from the result of the analysis that the factor loading for each item indicates a strong relationship with the underlying construct. Each item has a factor loading higher than 0.6. Besides, it is found that all four items for all five factors also remain under the same construct as before the extraction. In other words, no cross-loading of items happened in this study. The results are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4**  
Factor Loading Matrices and Total Variance Explained

	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5
<b>Love Appeal</b>					
Create association	84				
Enhance liking	81				
Induce nice feelings	78				
Retain information	67				
<b>Humor Appeal</b>					
Recognize brand		87			
Increase brand recall		85			
Prompt word of mouth		73			
Increase recommendation		70			
<b>Happiness Appeal</b>					
Create happy customer			84		
Positive association			83		
Build memories of brand			80		
Appeal to senses			79		
<b>Excitement Appeal</b>					
Achieve communication goal				83	

continued Table 4

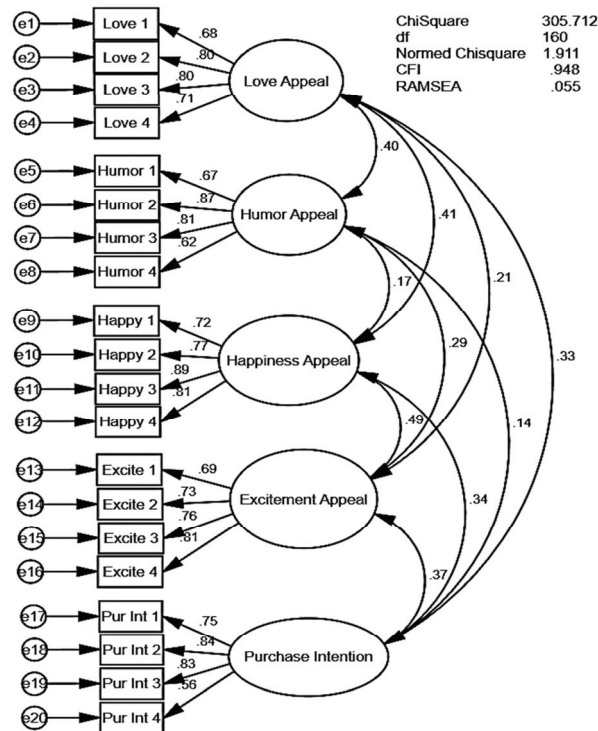
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5
Trigger excitement				79	
Enhance message comprehension				76	
Grab attention				75	
<b>Purchase Intention</b>					
Will purchase					86
Plan to purchase					84
Intend to purchase					80
Likely to purchase					64
<b>Initial Eigenvalues</b>	5.804	2.629	2.091	1.963	1.241
<b>% Variance</b>	29.022	13.143	10.453	9.817	6.203
<b>Cumulative %</b>	29.022	42.165	52.618	62.435	68.638

Notes: Extraction method: principal component analysis. Based on eigenvalue > 1. Rotation method: oblique (oblimin – SPSS) with Kaiser normalization. All numbers in the table are magnitudes of the factor loadings rounded to two decimal places and multiplied by 100.

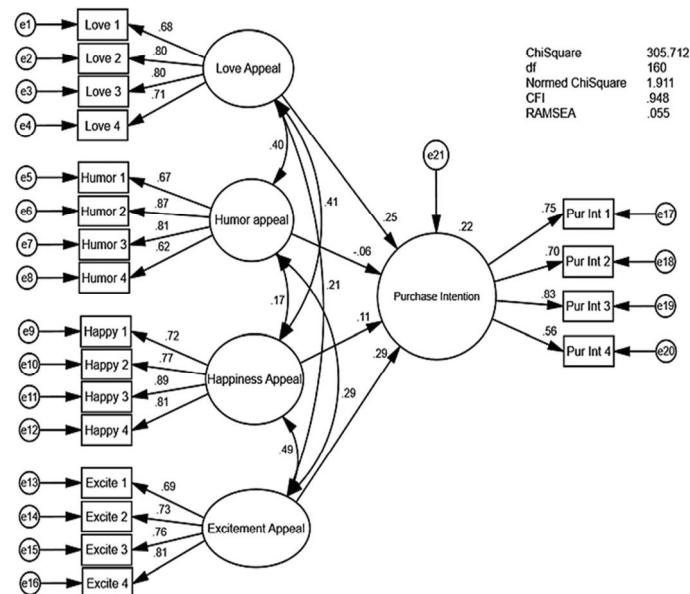
#### 4.4. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

In this study, the same data were split into two sets where the first set was used to conduct the exploratory factor analysis (EFA), and the second set was used to perform the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). In EFA, the main purpose was to see if the collected data resulted in the same number of constructs, as envisaged, and the items loaded on the same constructs (factors) as planned. CFA was conducted to confirm the factors extracted in EFA. The fitness of the measurement model was tested using CFA by adopting maximum likelihood estimation (MLE). According to Hooper, Coughlan and Mullen (2008), in order to conduct a confirmatory factor analysis, a few indices need to be taken into consideration which are chi-square, normed chi-square (CMIN/DF), the comparative fit index (CFI) and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). Due to the limitation in using chi-square as a means to interpret the model fit, in this study, the chi-square value is interpreted by using normed chi-square following the recommendation of Wheaton et al. (1977) where the value of chi-square was divided by the degree of freedom value. The result of the analysis resulted in the CMIN/DF value of 1.911, which is closer to the recommended value of at least 2. The comparative fit index (CFI) in the study is 0.948, which is a good value since it is closer to the recommended value of 0.95. Besides, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) is lesser than 0.06 at 0.055, which also signifies a good model fit. Meanwhile, the factor loading of each item resulted in a range of 0.56 to 0.89, which signifies a reasonable to strong relationship of the underlying factors. The results are depicted in Table 5 and Figure 2.

**Figure 2**  
Confirmatory Factor Analysis



**Figure 3**  
Full Structural Model



**Table 5**  
Measurement Model Fitness

Model Fit	Resultant Value	Threshold	Reference
CMIN/DF	1.911	2 to 1	Tabachnick and Fidell (2007)
CFI	0.948	0.95 and above	Hu and Bentler (1999)
RMSEA	0.055	< 0.06	Hu and Bentler (1999)

#### 4.5. Full Structural Modeling

The fitness of the full structural model as illustrated in Figure 3 above was evaluated based on similar parameters in the CFA. As indicated in the figure, the CMIN/DF value resulted in the value of 1.911, which is less than 2. This value indicates a good model fit. The comparative fit index (CFI) in the study point up a good fit value of 0.948, which is closer to 0.95. Besides, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) is lesser than 0.06 at 0.055, which signifies a good model fit. Next, four hypotheses were tested in this study based on the regression weight outputs. The important parameters that were used as the basis to evaluate the hypotheses are the estimate value or beta coefficient, critical ratio and p-value. Each independent factor results in an unstandardized and standardized beta coefficient which predicts the positive or negative impact of each variable (Kamran & Siddiqui, 2019). Meanwhile, the p-value estimates the significance of data at 95 percent confidence interval. In addition, a critical ratio (CR) greater than 1.96 indicates that a path is significant at the 0.05 level. In other words, a path or a hypothesis is significant if it fulfills the criteria of CR greater than 1.96 and p-value less than 0.05 (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1992) while the estimate value or beta coefficient value determines whether a path has a positive or negative impact. Table 6 illustrates the impact of advertising appeals on consumers' purchase intention for fashion products, specifically women's fashion products in Malaysia.

**Table 6**  
Regression Weights (Hypotheses Testing)

Hypotheses	Estimate	SE	CR	P	Result
Purchase Intention←Love	.253	.051	3.267	0.001	H1 Supported
Purchase Intention←Humor	-.065	.047	-.906	0.365	H2 Not Supported
Purchase Intention←Happiness	.106	.052	1.335	0.182	H3 Not Supported
Purchase Intention←Excitement	.286	.051	3.650	***	H4 Supported

\*\*\* indicates  $p < 0.001$

**Testing H<sub>1</sub>:** The estimate value for H<sub>1</sub> resulted in a positive value of 0.253, which indicates a positive impact of love appeal on purchase intention. Furthermore, the critical ratio also resulted in a positive value of 3.267, which signifies a significant path. Besides, the p-value resulted in a significant value of 0.001. Hence, it can be concluded that love appeal has a significant positive impact on consumers' purchase intention. Thus, H<sub>1</sub> is supported. This result is coherent with a previous study by Kamran and Siddiqui (2019), who found that love appeal in an emotional advertisement strongly influences customer buying behavior. Moreover, Khanna (2016) in the study of content analysis of emotional and rational appeals in selected products advertising also revealed that love appeal used in a commercial is likely to affect consumers' buying decision.

**Testing H<sub>2</sub>:** The estimate value for H<sub>2</sub> resulted in a negative value of 0.065, which indicates a negative impact of humor appeal on purchase intention. Furthermore, the critical ratio also resulted in a negative value of 0.906, which implies a non-significant path. Besides, the p-value is 0.365, which signifies a non-significant value greater than 0.05. Hence, it can be concluded that humor appeal does not has a significant positive impact on consumers' purchase intention. Thus, H<sub>2</sub> is not supported. According to Clow and Baack (2018), a successful humor ad contains these three elements: product attributes, a customer benefit, or the personal value obtained from the product. It is also found that humor appeal can impact the viewers' thoughts and convictions about the product or service that is being advertised, hence there is a positive relationship between humor and purchase intention (Hameed et al., 2020). However, in this study, humor appeal proves to have no significant impact on consumers' purchase intention for women's fashion products in Malaysia.

**Testing H<sub>3</sub>:** The estimate value for H<sub>3</sub> resulted in a positive value of 0.106, which indicates a positive impact of happiness appeal on purchase intention. However, although the critical ratio also resulted in a positive value of 1.335, it does not meet the threshold value greater than 1.96, which signifies a non-significant path. Besides, the p-value resulted in a non-significant value of 0.182. Hence, it can be concluded that happiness appeal does not have a significant positive impact on consumers' purchase intention. Thus, H<sub>3</sub> is not supported. This result is contradictory with a study by Kamran and Siddiqui (2019) which found that happiness appeal in an advertisement positively influences customers' buying behavior for home appliances in Pakistan. Moreover, Mogilner et al. (2012) also stated that happiness can have a powerful influence on choice. However, in the case of fashion products, happiness appeal in an advertisement does not influence the purchase intention nor does it affect the choice of customers in Malaysia. Hussain et al. (2020) in a study of the impact of emotional and rational advertising appeals on customers' purchase intention found that emotional advertising appeals are more effective in influencing consumer buying intention than rational appeal. Although happiness appeal does not yield a significant result, it was discovered from the survey analysis that happiness appeal can create happy customers, helps build memories of the brand, appeals to the consumers' senses and generates a positive association with the brand.

**Testing H<sub>4</sub>:** The estimate value for H<sub>4</sub> resulted in a positive value of 0.286, which indicates a positive impact of excitement appeal on purchase intention. Furthermore, the critical ratio also resulted in a positive value of 3.650, which implies a significant path. Besides, the p-value is less than 0.001, which signifies a very significant value. Hence, it can be concluded that excitement appeal has a significant positive impact on consumers' purchase intention. Thus, H<sub>4</sub> is supported. This result is supported by Muhamad Izzuddin et al. (2019), who in a study of Halal brand personality and brand loyalty among millennial modest fashion consumers in Malaysia discovered that excitement has a significant relationship with brand loyalty. It was inferred from the study that since excitement appeal in a brand leads to brand loyalty, it means that excitement has a positive influence on customers to repeat the purchase, which also means that the appeal has a positive impact on customers' purchase intention. The result of this study is also validated by Kamran and Siddiqui (2019), who revealed that excitement appeal in an advertisement can motivate customers to buy the product from the brand to feel something unique and stirring.

## 5. DISCUSSION

In present days, there are numerous women's fashion brands competing in Malaysia market ranging from the luxurious haute couture and designer fashion to ordinary everyday wear fashion or the mass fashion; be it local or international brands. This situation has led customers to a more complex decision-making process since they are exposed to various forms of advertisement. Besides, with abundant choices and explosion of advertisements, customers are becoming indifferent towards the brand and almost immune to advertisements. Besides, the current COVID-19 pandemic has also brought changes to the landscape of consumer behavior in Malaysia. Since fashion products are known as a type of shopping goods, this can probably mean that they will not be in the priority list of goods for consumers to buy in the time of the pandemic. Thus, marketers must be clever to design an effective advertising message that will attract the right target group of consumers to buy fashion products by selecting the right advertising appeal. However, selecting the appropriate theme for an advertisement is not straightforward since there are variations of advertising appeals. This study has been conducted to help marketers to select effective advertising appeals that can influence consumers to purchase women's fashion products in Malaysia.



The objective of the study, which was to analyze the impact of advertising appeals, namely, love appeal, humor appeal, happiness appeal and excitement appeal on consumers' purchase intention for women's fashion products in Malaysia, has been fully achieved. In this study, it was found that excitement is the most prominent advertising appeal that has a significant positive impact on consumers' purchase intention. Consumers need to feel "something unique and stirring" to influence them to buy fashion products. This appeal can be implemented in ads, for example, by making a 'teaser' poster or video or social media post to introduce a new line of product. Maslow (1970) described excitement as an eager state or circumstance. Moreover, according to Muhamad Fazil (2015), exciting, cool, awesome, imaginative, unique, up-to-date, independent, and contemporary are among the phrases that help to illustrate excitement. In addition, it was found in the study that excitement appeal can achieve the communication goal, trigger excitement, enhance message comprehension and grab the attention of consumers to see women's fashion advertisements in Malaysia.

The next effective advertising appeal is love appeal, which focuses on a positive relationship or emotional bond between people in the form of friendship, family bond and romantic relationship between two people (Kamran & Siddiqui, 2019). In this research, it was discovered that love appeal in an advertisement of women's fashion products is memorable, can create a pleasant association between consumers and fashion brands, and helps customers to remember and retain the information contained in ads for a longer time. Besides, it was also found that love appeal can induce a nice feeling towards the ads.

On the other hand, happiness appeal was discovered to have a non-significant positive impact as it does not influence customers in Malaysia to purchase women's fashion products. However, the results from this study revealed that happiness can increase liking for the ads, help build memories of the brand and create a positive association with the brand. Happiness appeal can be injected in an advertisement through focusing on positive messages and portraying characters with smiling or laughing faces or images and portrayals of pleasant and happy sceneries (Shaver et al., 1987).

Similarly, although it was found that humor appeal is effective in helping consumers to distinguish the brand from the competing brands, increases brand recall, encourages people to recommend fashion products from the brands that show humorous ads or, in other words, prompts word of mouth among consumers, in the case of women's fashion products in Malaysia, it was found to have no significant impact on consumers' purchase intention. According to Clow and Baack (2018), a successful humorous ad contains these three elements: product attributes, a customer benefit, or the personal value obtained from the product. This could mean that humor in an advertisement brings no benefit or value to consumers in Malaysia with regard to the purchase of women's fashion products. In other words, humorous fashion ads may be likeable and are effective in grabbing the attention of consumers as well as increase brand recall; however, these criteria do not have any influence on persuading consumers to purchase fashion products.

## 6. CONCLUSION AND IMPLEMENTATION

The main purpose of this study was to analyze the impact of love appeal, humor appeal, happiness appeal and excitement appeal on consumers' purchase intention of women's fashion products in Malaysia. The results from the study revealed that among four advertising appeals tested and analyzed, excitement is the most prominent advertising appeal that has a significant positive impact on consumers' purchase intention. Consumers need to feel "something unique and stirring" when buying fashion products and this kind of appeal can be implemented in the form of teaser or preview ads. The next effective advertising appeal is love appeal, which focuses on a positive relationship or emotional bond between people in the form of friendship, family

bond and romantic relationship between two people. Apart from enhancing consumers' liking and inducing a nice feeling towards an ad, love appeal was found to be most memorable, and consumers tend to retain information from the ads that portrays love appeal. However, happiness appeal was discovered to have a non-significant positive impact on consumers' purchase intention although it can influence them to feel happy, increase liking for the ads, help build memories of the brand and create a positive association with the brand through portraying happy smiling faces or pleasant moment in the ads. Similarly, humor appeal, although it was found to be effective in breaking through clutter and increasing brand recall, in the case of women's fashion products in Malaysia, it was also found to have no significant impact on consumers' purchase intention. It is hoped that marketers of women's fashion products in Malaysia can make use of this information to help them create effective advertising campaigns to promote their fashion products among consumers in Malaysia.

In the academic world, this study presents new insights in the field of advertising through analyzing the impact of love appeal, humor appeal, happiness appeal and excitement appeal on consumers' purchase intention of fashion products, specifically women's fashion products in the context of Malaysia. The knowledge on how to grab the attention of consumers and motivate them to purchase proved to be a valuable insight for both marketers and academicians. This study adds value in the academic field by analyzing the impact of advertising appeals through the quantitative method. Besides, this study also provides a structural model which is developed through structural equation modeling in AMOS. However, there are gaps in the present study. This study only focused on the quantitative examination of the impact of four emotional appeals on purchase intention of consumers in Malaysia as regards buying women's fashion products in general. The results of the present research mainly represent the view of Malay young women in the B40 income group in Malaysia. Potential research can be done in the same downstream of fashion industry with different scopes of study. Researchers can adopt or adapt the model in the present study to research a particular fashion product such as clothing, skincare, makeup and fragrance, accessories and so on. Future researchers may also focus on a particular fashion market such as luxury fashion, modest fashion, fast fashion, and sustainable fashion. Besides, researchers can also segment the market by demographic profiles such as gender, age, race, and income. Another interesting area of study would be to investigate the interrelationship of culture, religion, and lifestyle with advertising appeals. In other words, culture, religion, and lifestyle can be studied as a moderating or mediating effect between advertising appeals and purchase intention. On the other hand, in terms of advertising appeals, there are variations of advertising appeals and in this regard researchers can choose to study a particular product or service in a particular market and industry. In addition, researchers may also consider another method of study such as a qualitative approach to obtain more in-depth information about the types of advertising appeals and their impact on consumer purchase intention or buying behavior.

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## APPENDIX

### SCREENING QUESTIONS

Note: Only those who answer yes to either one of these two questions can proceed to answer the questionnaire.

1. Have you seen any advertisement of women's fashion products in Malaysia?
2. Do you follow any fashion brand of women's fashion products on social media?

Adapted Questionnaire Items:

Variable	Questions	Source
Love Appeal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fashion advertisement showing love and relationships put me in a good mood and I immediately have a nice feeling about the ad.</li> <li>2. Love appeal in an advertisement enhances my liking of the fashion product advertised.</li> <li>3. Ads with love emotion are the most memorable and create a pleasant association with fashion brands.</li> <li>4. I remember and retain the information contained in ads with love appeal for a long time.</li> </ol>	Kamran & Siddiqui (2019)
Humor Appeal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I strongly recommend buying fashion products from the brands that show humorous ads.</li> <li>2. Humorous ads make me recognize particular brands among competing brands.</li> <li>3. Fashion brands with humorous ads help me to recall the brands before shopping.</li> <li>4. I discuss the variety of products offered by the fashion brands that show humorous ads with others.</li> </ol>	Kamran & Siddiqui (2019)
Happiness Appeal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fashion ads focusing on happy images of people appeal to my senses.</li> <li>2. Fashion ads showing a positive connection and engagement of people give me a positive feeling about the brands.</li> <li>3. Fashion ads that express a tone of joy and happy moments makes me a happy customer.</li> <li>4. I can easily relate happy memories with fashion ads that use happiness appeal.</li> </ol>	Kamran & Siddiqui (2019)
Excitement Appeal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Exciting fashion ads are entertaining and manage to grab my attention.</li> <li>2. Fashion ads with excitement appeal enhance my understanding of the message the brands intend to deliver.</li> <li>3. I usually pay attention to the ads that trigger feelings of excitement in me.</li> <li>4. Excitement appeal is a more successful way of communication between brands and customers.</li> </ol>	Kamran & Siddiqui (2019)
Purchase Intention	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I intend to purchase women's fashion products that I see in advertisements in the near future.</li> <li>2. I plan to purchase women's fashion products that I see in advertisements next time.</li> <li>3. I will purchase women's fashion products that I see in advertisements in the future.</li> <li>4. I am more likely to purchase women's fashion products that I see in advertisements someday.</li> </ol>	Hong & Rhee (2016)