

**THE CONCEPT OF ISLAMIC ADVERTISING FROM
THE PERSPECTIVE OF MUSLIM PRACTITIONERS**

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THE CONCEPT OF ISLAMIC ADVERTISING FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF MUSLIM PRACTITIONERS

by

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BC	Before Christ
SWT	Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala
SAW	Salallahu Alaihi Wasallam
PBUH	Peace be upon him
RA	Radiallahu anhu / May Allah be pleased with him
JAKIM	Department of Islamic development Malaysia / Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia

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KONSEP PENGIKLANAN ISLAM DARIPADA PERSPEKTIF PENGAMAL MUSLIM

ABSTRAK

Pengiklanan Islam, sebagai bentuk komunikasi, bertujuan untuk memberi maklumat dan mempengaruhi pengguna sambil mematuhi norma-norma Islam. Namun di kebanyakan negara Islam, amalan pengiklanan sering mengikuti paradigma Barat yang mencetuskan pelbagai isu tidak bermoral selain tidak selari dengan prinsip-prinsip Islam. Kajian ini terdiri daripada dua fasa iaitu fasa teori yang menjawab objektif pertama dan fasa empirikal yang menjawab objektif yang kedua dan ketiga. Kajian ini meneroka konsep pengiklanan Islam dari perspektif pengamal pengiklanan Muslim, perspektif mereka penting dikaji bagi menjawab tiga objektif iaitu mengenal pasti konsep, menganalisis kerangka kerja, dan menarik kesimpulan berdasarkan pandangan pengamal pengiklanan. Melalui temubual dengan pengamal pengiklanan Muslim, pandangan mereka tentang pengiklanan Islam dianalisis. Selain itu, kerangka konseptual dibangunkan untuk membimbing amalan pengamal pengiklanan Muslim. Untuk memastikan pemahaman yang seimbang, temubual juga dijalankan dengan sarjana dan akademik Muslim. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa pengiklanan Islam harus selaras dengan konsep tauhid dan mengambil prinsipnya dari Quran dan Hadith. Pengiklanan harus mematuhi syariah Islam, mengelakkan sumber yang dilarang, menyampaikan mesej yang benar, dan mempromosikan nilai-nilai moral yang baik secara bertanggungjawab. Peranan pengamal pengiklanan adalah penting dalam menghasilkan pengiklanan Islam yang sejajar dengan panduan Islam. Berdasarkan pendapat pakar dan temubual, empat

prinsip pengiklanan Islam dikenalpasti: Tauhid, moraliti (akhlak), penciptaan masalah (kepentingan awam), dan keadilan. Selanjutnya, kriteria untuk pengiklanan Islam dibangunkan, merangkumi suara dan bahasa, mesej pengiklanan, penampilan visual, dan tanggungjawab pengamal pengiklanan. Kajian ini memberi sumbangan kepada pemahaman teoretikal tentang pengiklanan Islam, merungkai lebih mendalam kerangka konseptualnya dan pandangan pengamal pengiklanan Muslim. Selain itu, ianya memberi wawasan empirikal yang boleh membantu pembangunan dan penambahbaikan dasar pengiklanan, dengan tumpuan pada isu-isu kemanusiaan dan masyarakat untuk meningkatkan kualiti hidup pengguna.

THE CONCEPT OF ISLAMIC ADVERTISING FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF MUSLIM PRACTITIONERS

ABSTRACT

Islamic advertising, as a form of communication, aims to inform and persuade consumers while adhering to Islamic norms. However, in many Muslim countries, advertising practices often follow western paradigms that have created numerous unethical issues inconsistent with Islamic principles. The research consists of two phases namely a theoretical phase addressing the first objective and the empirical phase addressing the second and third objectives. This study explores the concept of Islamic advertising from the perspective of Muslim practitioners. It has three primary objectives: firstly, to identify the concept; secondly, to analyze its framework; and thirdly, to draw conclusions based on the viewpoints of practitioners. Through interviews with Muslim advertising practitioners, their perspectives on Islamic advertising were analyzed. Additionally, a conceptual framework was developed to guide the practice of Muslim practitioners. To ensure a balanced understanding, interviews were also conducted with Muslim scholars and academicians. The findings reveal that Islamic advertising must align with the concept of tawhid (monotheism) and derive its principles from the Quran and Hadith. Advertisements should adhere to Islamic sharia, avoid forbidden sources, convey truthful messages, and responsibly promote good moral values. The roles of advertising practitioners are crucial in producing Islamic advertising that aligns with Islamic guidelines. Based on expert opinions and interviews, four principles of Islamic advertising were identified: Tawhid, morality (akhlak), creation of maslahah (public

interest), and justice. Furthermore, criteria for Islamic advertising were developed, encompassing voice and language, advertising message, visual appearance, and the responsibilities of advertising practitioners. This research contributes to the theoretical understanding of Islamic advertising, shedding light on its conceptual framework and the perspectives of Muslim practitioners. Moreover, it provides empirical insights that can inform the development and improvement of advertising policies, with a focus on addressing humanitarian and community issues to enhance the quality of life for consumers.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis in general aims to examine the advertising concept from an Islamic perspective of advertising practitioners by selecting few advertising players in the advertising industry as respondents. Generally, the concept of Islamic advertising needs to be built because current development of modern advertising is increasingly away from values of Islam mainly in Muslim-majority states. Advertisings are not just messages, but broader than that focus on pictures and people who convey the message as one of the attractions and give effectiveness which can feed the hearts of users. This matter is considered necessary for build an advertising criterion based on the Islamic values. If there is action in this matter it could allowed an impairment for future generations of Muslims. In particular, this thesis aims to identify the concept of Islamic advertising from the perspective of advertising Muslim's practitioners around the Kuala Lumpur and Klang valley area.

Through this chapter, the background of the study, the problem statement, the objectives of the study, the research questions of the study, operational definitions of the study, scope and limitations of the study, the importance of the study, contribution of the study and thesis organization as a whole are discussed.

1.2 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

The conventional advertising is fall under traditional marketing were defined as a social and decision-making process by individuals and groups acquire what they need and want over creating and exchanging goods and value with others (Kalthom Abdullah, 2008). Advertising is a form of communication activation. It is informative and compelling in nature. Use mass or new media to persuade consumers to purchase goods or services. Advertising may be intended to promote new products or promote existing products. Advertising by the British Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA); conveying the most compelling message of your product or service to the right prospects at the lowest possible cost (Jefkins, 1992). It is any form of impersonal presentation and promotion of an idea, product or service, usually paid for by a particular sponsor (Dominic, 2013).

There are several sub themes to be discussed here such as history of the advertising, history of the advertising industry in Malaysia, development of the advertising industry globally and development of the advertising industry in Malaysia.

1.2.1 History and Development of Advertising

The earliest evidence of advertising is found in the ancient Babylonian empire and dates back to 3000 BC. The first advertisement in English was printed in 1472 for the sale of a prayer book. The advertising profession began in the United States in 1841, and although it has changed a lot, it still exists today. There is no doubt that the media has become a

very present force in the American way of life, and any form of "free" media will be accompanied by a multitude of advertisements (Hayko, 2010).

In Rome era there was an important media called albums. The album featured white-walled panels with edicts and laws, as well as advertisements for gladiatorial battles and theatrical performances. Another medium was the Liberus, made of papyrus, a kind of poster announcing the sale of possessions, shipments, and losses of various objects. Painted announcements were also important. For example, a goat can represent a milk storehouse, and a bakery can be identified as a mule with a mill behind it (Daymette, 2012).

In the Middle Ages, alongside street callers, brands in products appeared to identify the maker, giving them a sign of individuality from one manufacturer to the next, allowing to differentiate, for example, wines and geographical areas such as Osnabruck and Westphalia. A large number of people cannot read at this time. Signs that say cobbler, miller, tailor, or blacksmith today would use an image associated with their trade, such as a boot, a suit, a hat, a clock, a diamond, a horse shoe, a candle, or even a bag of flour. The invention of the printing press by Johannes Gutenberg in 1438 marked the beginning of the period of mass communication since it allowed for the mass production of printed materials; previously, books and other printed materials had to be prepared by hand. The first English newspaper was published in 1622 by a Londoner, and the first advertisement debuted in 1625. (Daymette, 2012).

Advertising was used throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries promoting a variety of products. Notices of slave sales or pleas for the arrest of escaping slaves were particularly unsettling forms of early American advertising. These advertisements have been utilised as a resource by historians to investigate methods of resistance and escape, the health, abilities, and other traits of enslaved men and women, as well as slaveholders' impressions of the people they held in bondage (Pope, 2003).

In the Middle Ages, along with the call of the street, brands appeared on products to identify the producers, giving each producer signs of individuality and being able to distinguish between wines and geographical regions such as Osnabrück and Westphalia, for example. During this time, many people cannot read. Thus, signs such as shoemakers, millers, tailors, and blacksmiths now use images associated with their profession, such as boots, suits, hats, watches, diamonds, horseshoes, candles, and even sacks of flour. Gutenberg's printing press (1438) ushered in the era of mass communication. Before the advent of letterpress printing, books and other printed matter had to be made individually, but now that printed matter can be mass-produced. The Londoner printed his first English-language newspaper in 1622, and his first advertisement appeared in his 1625 (Daymette, 2012).

The Better Business Bureau was founded in 1916 as a self-regulatory body by the advertising. To increase the efficacy of advertising, marketers established other organisations, such as the American Association of Advertising Agencies in 1917. The majority of agencies are still members of The 4 A's, making it the most inclusive group.

By the middle of the 1930s, "hard sell"¹ tactics including sex, violence, and threats were popular in advertisements. Products were promoted as necessities rather than as indulgences, with accessories like hats or mouthwash positioned as essential weapons in the fight to advance and maintain that position. Advertisings played on consumers' worries rather than assuaging them in order to capitalise on their target market's limited disposable cash. The emergence of the capitalist system has pushed the economic system free to the user making decisions. In addition, most manufacturers are focused on obtaining profits (Rice, 1999), although users have a wide range of references and behaviors make a purchase. According to Kotler (2003), the behavior and desire of a person is based on Culture. Cultural factors consist of several interrelated dimensions of necessity life, language, social interaction, religion and ethics. These dimensions can be used to know the features that guide us as well as the usage patterns of the person meet its needs (Kotler, 2003).

From another review, a history of advertising from the first 300,000 years devided the evolution of advertising from its earliest forms in ancient civilizations to the modern era. Firstly, Ancient advertising era where advertising can be traced back to ancient civilizations such as Egypt, Greece, and Rome, where merchants used various forms of advertising to promote their goods and services. This included the use of signs, symbols, and public notices. Secondly, the era of emergence of modern advertising whereby the

¹ Hard sell in marketing refers to an aggressive sales approach that focuses on persuading the customer to make a purchase through a high-pressure sales pitch, often using tactics such as urgency, scarcity, and fear of missing out. Hard sell techniques can include tactics such as repeatedly contacting the customer, using strong language, and making exaggerated claims about the product's benefits or the consequences of not purchasing it.

modern advertising has begun to emerge in the 19th century, with the growth of mass media such as newspapers and magazines. Advertising became an important tool for businesses to reach out to consumers and create brand awareness. Thirdly, the era of the evolution of advertising techniques, where advertising techniques and strategies have evolved, with new media channels such as radio, television, and the internet providing new opportunities for advertisers to reach consumers. Advertising has also become more sophisticated, with the use of market research, data analysis, and targeted advertising. Lastly, the impact of advertising on society. In this era advertising had a significant impact on society and culture, shaping consumer behavior, attitudes, and values. Advertising has been criticized for promoting materialism, consumerism, and unrealistic beauty standards, but it has also been praised for promoting social causes and raising awareness about important issues (Witkowski, 2022).

While in other hand, Islamic advertising also growth with the demand from the Muslim worldwide. As known, Islamic advertising agencies are marketing firms that specialize in developing campaigns and strategies that cater to the needs of Muslim consumers, who represent a significant global market. These agencies aim to create advertising content that aligns with Islamic values and beliefs while also promoting the products or services of their clients (Elnour, A.A., & Tosin, M.A. 2016).

The concept of Islamic advertising agencies emerged in the 1990s in response to the growing demand for products and services that meet the needs of Muslim consumers. The first Islamic advertising agency was established in Malaysia in 1994. Since then, similar

agencies have been established in other Muslim-majority countries and also in countries with significant Muslim populations, such as the United Kingdom and the United States (Mat Saad, N., Hassan, A., & Omar, N. A., 2012).

In recent years, Islamic advertising agencies have gained more prominence as Muslim consumers have become an increasingly important demographic for many businesses. These agencies help companies to create advertising campaigns that resonate with Muslim consumers and address their unique needs and values. Islamic advertising agencies also play a role in promoting products and services that are compliant with Islamic principles, such as halal food and Islamic finance products (A.J. Wilson, 2010).

1.2.2 History and development of Advertising Industry in Malaysia

The history of early advertising development in Malaysia is the same as in England (Senn, 1971). This is somewhat coinciding with Malaya when it was a British colonial state. In Britain, by the 18th century, advertising agencies were linked to poster publishers and poster contractors (Preston, 1971). In the early advertising in Malaysia back to the early 20th century when British colonial companies used advertisements in newspapers and posters to promote their products and services. Early advertisements were focused on imported goods such as textiles, tobacco, and household items (Rahim, M. H. A., 1996). The same thing happened with Malaya, that advertising concentration has made

newspapers, posters, spreadsheets and sandwich boards² in place of the main media of advertising. The development of advertising in Malaysia is the same as the traditions of trade in the country (Senn, 1971).

In duration of 1800 – 1830, the press is a supporter of advertising history in the Malaysia. The first newspaper was published in Malaya named; “The Prince of Wales Island Gazette” in 1806 is already filled with an advertisement. In this early stage, the advertisement was consisting of government announcements together with announcements made by the proponent of the newspaper itself. Loading in newspapers is limited on the front only. It is seen in English-language newspapers. Advertisings take about one channel front page. From the side of form terms, most ads are displayed in the easy form of text instead of letters type (Mohd. Dhari, 1989).

During that time, the print media, radio and rediffusion were the main advertising media. Then, the agencies in Singapore began opening their offices in Kuala Lumpur to service clients in peninsular Malaysia. Other pioneering firms included Cathay, Grant, Master, Benson, and Young. The Malaysian government developed schemes to draw international investors to the nation's manufacturing and economic sectors after gaining independence from the British in 1957. A rise in advertising activities followed the execution of marketing activities. The establishment of more agencies and the prominence of advertisements in the media accessible led to these changes in Kuala Lumpur. The most

² A sandwich board is a type of advertisement that consists of two boards (each holding a message or graphic) that are either set up (for instance, next to a store advertising its goods) in a triangle shape, hinged along the top, or carried by a person with one board in front and one behind, creating the illusion of a "sandwich." The advertising material can be viewed on both sides simultaneously in this fashion.

popular media among advertisers were newspapers and magazines, but the cinema also developed into a powerful medium with still slides of 30 and 60 second per advertising. Jingles were a common method of advertising on radio and rediffusion. With the advent of commercial television to the nation in 1964, the number of foreign advertisers and advertising firms that established facilities in Malaysia surged. Ogilvy and Mather, Ted Bates, Lintas, and Mc Cann-Erickson are a few of the firms that were around back then and are currently among the top ten firms in the nation. Following the country services when Singapore and Malaysia separated to establish two separate nations, the agencies that had previously operated as one entity did so independently (Iskandar Abdullah, 2012).

The advertising sector expanded to become a sizable industry, and numerous foreign advertising agencies started opening operations in Malaysia and Singapore. Grant International Incorporated, a Chicago-based advertising firm, was the first to open a branch in Malaysia. In Singapore, which was then a part of Malaya, the Associate of Accredited Advertising Agents (4As) was founded in 1945. Malayan Advertiser's Association (2As) was also established in 1952. The creation of these two organisations was intended to protect the advertisers' business interests. Even though the 4As and 2As were established, it wasn't until the middle of the 1950s, when seasoned advertising professionals from abroad started establishing bases in Singapore, that real professionalism in advertising methods began (Iskandar Abdullah, 2002).

A review about development of advertising in Malaysia, discussed about the growth of the advertising industry in Malaysia grew rapidly in the post-independence era, with the establishment of local advertising agencies and the growth of mass media such as newspapers, television, and radio. The 1970s and 1980s saw the emergence of multinational advertising agencies in Malaysia. Then the role of Malaysia government played an important role in the development of the advertising industry, with the establishment of government-owned advertising agencies such as Balai Berita and the Information Ministry's Advertising Division. The government also introduced policies to promote the growth of the advertising industry, such as the liberalization of the media industry in the 1980s. The impact of globalization on the advertising industry in Malaysia, with the influx of foreign advertising agencies and the adoption of international advertising standards and practices. This led to increased competition and the need for local agencies to adapt to changing trends and consumer preferences (Rahim, M. H. A., 1996).

The global advertising venture is evolving from the traditional communications of advertisements to digitally led content advertisements. The industry is seeing new growth that extends beyond traditional revenue streams. This is in regards to the inclusion of the online medium of the Internet or new media, which is taking content to mass audiences using digital media communications channels and devices. Industry observers predict that by year 2010, the Internet will become the world's third-largest advertising medium, overtaking most of the other media, but as the time pass by in 2019, worldwide digital ad

spending will rise by 17.6% to \$333.25 billion. That means the digital ads has roughly dominated half of the global advertising market (eMarketer, 2019).

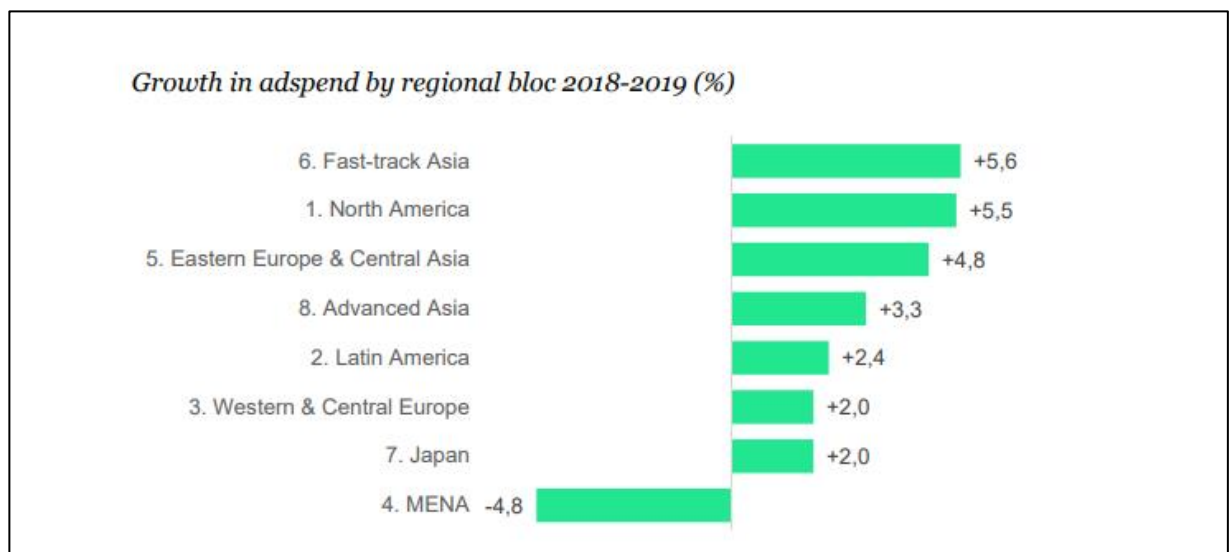


Figure 1.1: The growth in advertising spends by regional bloc 2018-2019
Source: Zenith (2019)

Figure 1.1 shown the growth of adspends from different regional advertising markets. Comparison between 2018 and 2019 show ad spending are increasing from all regional except MENA³ decreasing -4.0. Regions are used to separate entirely based on geography, such as Western Europe, Central & Eastern Europe, and Asia Pacific.

³ Acronym that stands for the Middle East and North Africa. It is a region encompassing countries located in the western part of Asia and the northern part of Africa. The specific countries included in the MENA region can vary depending on the context, but they generally include countries such as Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

Fast-track Asia⁴ is characterized by economies that are growing extremely rapidly as they adopt existing technology and practices and innovate new ones, while benefiting from the rapid inflow of funds from investors hoping to tap into this growth. Fast-track Asia has enjoyed high single-digit or double-digit growth since 1996, and barely noticed the 2009 downturn. Growth is slowing, however, now that some of the region's markets, notably China, have achieved substantial scale. Zenith forecast 4.6% average annual growth from 2018 to 2021. This is less rapid than the growth in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, but Fast-track Asia is ten times larger, it contributes a lot more toward global adspend (advertising spending) growth in dollar terms.

Out of the various blocs⁵, MENA is the clear underperformer, and Eastern Europe and Central Asia the outperformer. The other blocs range gradually from growing slowly (Japan and Western & Central Europe) to the firm growing (North America, Fast-track Asia and Latin America).

Advertising expenditure in Malaysia reached RM5.8 billion in 2018, driven by increased spending by government ministries & agencies and political parties, according to Nielsen Ad Intel⁶, which monitors traditional media in the country.

Figure 1.2 shown traditional media, cinema adex (advertising expenditure) carry 52% continued to be the strong performer posting an increase of RM86.5 million compare from

⁴ Fast-track Asia: China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam. Source: Zenith Adspend report.

⁵ A group of countries or political parties with common interests who have formed an alliance. Source: Zenith Adspend report.

⁶ Media types monitored on Nielsen Ad Intel: Free-To-Air Television, Newspapers, Magazines, In-Store Media, Cinema, Radio (excluding RTM stations)

2017, while 48% free-to-air television (FTA) decreased in spending compare to previous year (up RM2.1 million year-on-year) (Nielsen Malaysia, 2018).

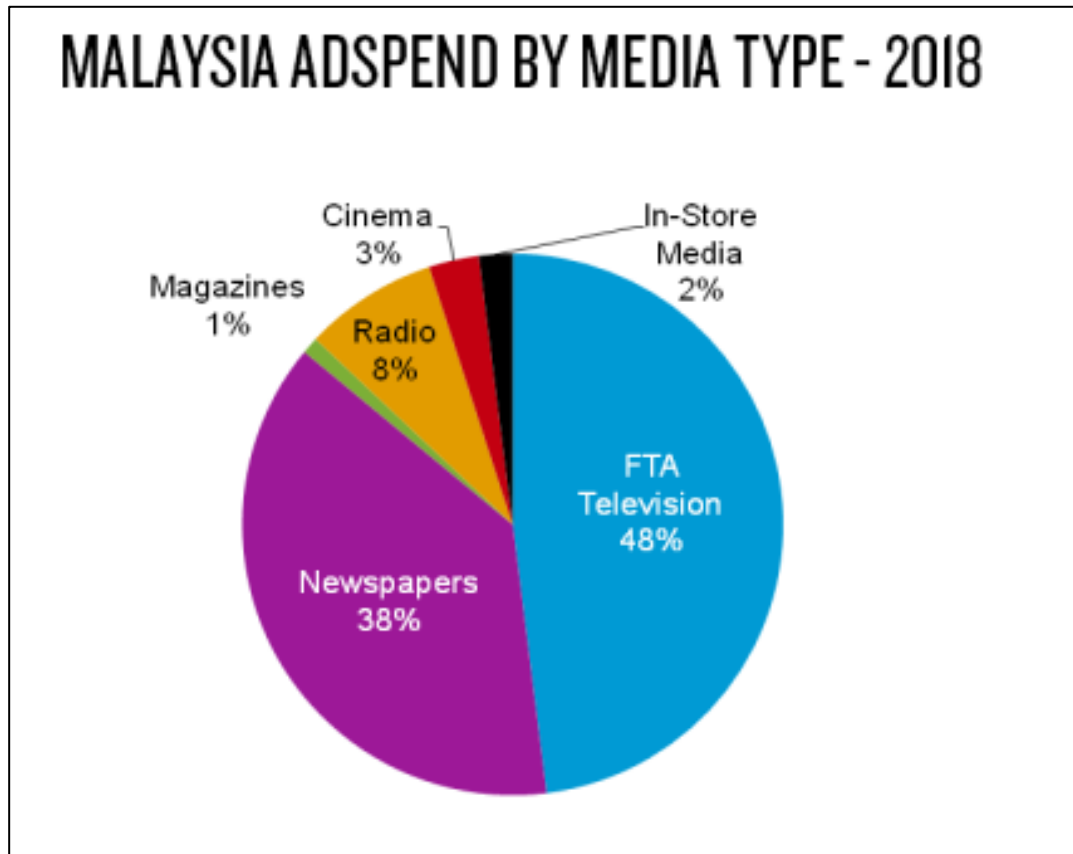


Figure 1.2: Malaysia Adspend by media (%) 2018
Source: Nielsen Malaysia (2018)

1.2.3 Islamic Advertising

The primary characteristic of Islamic advertising is its adherence to Shariah principles, which are taken from the Quran and Sunnah, the two basic sources of Islamic teachings. The maintenance of faith (din), life (nafs), intellect (aql), prosperity (nasl), and wealth (maal), also known as the fundamental goals of Islamic teachings (maqasid al-shari'ah),

is the goal of these rules, according to Muhamed Umer Chapra (1992). It is intended to mitigate harm and provide benefits. These would also serve as a moral compass for advertising endeavours.

Islam establishes rules for designers, sponsors, ad agencies, and the mass media sector to observe in order to carry out their roles and responsibilities appropriately (Behravan, Jamalzadeh & Masoudi, 2012). Islam emphasizes the importance on ensuring that businesses are free from any potential sources of harm, particularly to customers.

In principle, Islamic advertising concepts are not different of the traditional advertising concepts described above. The difference is only the application of the principles of Islamic law in terms of form and content. In short, Islamic advertising is the same as the usual advertising practices but based on the Islamic *syariah*. This is due to the fact that Islamic advertising also involves the practise of offering information services that develop messages intended to spur demand for a certain brand (Mohd Helmi Abd Rahim, 2009).

Many Muslim nations, engage in advertising techniques (Akhtar et al, 2011). However, Islam explicitly prohibits deceptive practices, as mentioned in the Quranic verse:

“Give just measures and cause no loss. And weigh with scales true and upright and withhold not things justly due to men”

(Ash-Shu'araa (26):181-182).

Allah commanded them to give full measure, and forbade them to give short measure. He said: (Give full measure, and cause no loss.) meaning, `when you give to people, give them full measure, and do not cause loss to them by giving them short measure, while

taking full measure when you are the ones who are taking. Give as you take, and take as you give (Ibn Kathir, 2017).

In Islamic business ethics honesty is the key to all business practices. As in hadith;

*"When honesty is lost, then wait for the Hour." It was asked,
"How will honesty be lost, O Allah's Messenger?" He said,
"When authority is given to those who do not deserve it,
then wait for the Hour."*

(Sahih, al-Bukhari: Hadith 85)

This hadith serves as a powerful reminder in Islamic business ethics, emphasizing that honesty is a cornerstone of ethical business conduct. It warns against the consequences of allowing dishonesty, particularly in positions of authority, and underscores the broader societal impact of such actions. Islamic business ethics, as outlined in this hadith, call for business practices that are not only economically sound but also ethically and morally upright. The fairness of the advertisement is also an important thing in the Islamic ethical system. By fairness it means that the features and quality that is being advertised and perceived by the people, should be there in the product. Islam believes in equality of rights where justice has a key importance, misleading the people by showing them the overrated features are considered as injustice. Islam does not tolerate to do injustice with the people even if there is a risk of loss in the business. It is clearly mentioned in the book of Allah that,

*"Standout firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even
though it be against yourself, or your parents, or your kin,
be the rich or poor...."*

(An-Nisaa (4):135).

In verse 135, *Surah An-Nisaa*, Allah commands His believing servants to stand up for justice and fairness and not to deviate from it, right or left. They should not fear the blame of anyone or allow anyone to prevent them from doing something for the sake of Allah. They are also required to help, support and aid each other for Allah's sake (Ibn Kathir, 2017). Selling a product by telling a lie is totally against the Islamic way of doing business. The prophet of Allah said, the sign of a hypocrite is three;

“Whenever he speaks, he tells a lie, whenever he promises, he always breaks it. If you trust him, he proves to be dishonest”.

(Sahih, Al-Bukhari, hadith 26)

In addition to further consideration of Islamic values, some advertisers utilized Islamic elements to produce a favorable feeling among Muslims. For example, some advertisement utilized Qur’anic words to enhance the influence of the ad and make it more appealing to Muslim consumers. Examples are the words *“Bismillah”* (in the name of God; a phrase used by Muslims before beginning any action) or *“Allahu akbar”* (literally, God is greater) (Rice & Al-Mossawi, 2002).

1.2.4 Attitude towards Advertisement

A favourable response to a particular advertising stimulus and a positive view of the advertisement would result from positive perception (Veloutsou & Shaista Riaz Ahmed, 2005). This positive view may affect purchase intentions (Severn *et al.* 1990) and it enables the retrieval of an overall judgement with minimal processing, it may even influence audience brand choice without considering beliefs on particular features

(Dotson & Hyatt 2000). Advertisers must examine where perception originates, what influences perception, and make sure that no elements in an advertisement may lead to a negative attitude in order to ensure that a stimulus produces a favourable response.

Evidence reveals that people absorb ads subjectively and based on their membership in a group (Subodh Bhat *et al.* 1998). Cultural groups have different shared values, attitudes, and prejudices, each will read the advertising differently and come up with its own reactions, interpretations, and meanings. A communication transmitted is not always a message received in a world with various cognitive abilities. Because tailored advertisements may be more effective than generic "one-size-fits-all" ones, advertising may be more effective when it gives information and employs "language" that is congruent with the preferences of the audience (LaBarbera, 1998). The overall level of standardization seems to be more prevalent in advertisements conveyed between Western markets than in messages conveyed between Western and Eastern markets (Mueller, 1991), and cultural It emphasizes that greater diversity means fewer opportunities for standardization.

Most of the criticism of advertising relates to its anti-social impact. Ads are designed to promote materialism (Pollay & Mittal, 1993; Shah & Xianhong, 2011; Clow & Baack, 2012; Arens *et al.*, 2013). It also falsely encourages unnecessary spending (Dubinsky & Hensel, 1984; Schlegelmilch, 2001; Shimp, 2010; Clow & Baack, 2012; Kumar, 2012; Arens *et al.*, 2013; Fullerton *et al.*, 2013). In society, advertising fosters false values (Schlegelmilch, 2001; Shimp, 2010; Kumar, 2012) in the form of moral and intellectual sludge (Eze & Lee, 2012). Andrews (1989) claimed that advertising appeals to fear,

shame, anxiety, inferiority, sadness, and inadequacy through premeditated efforts on behalf of big companies, preying on customers' unaware psyches. In this sense, a highly contentious issue is one's appearance and self-image, which drives one to go to excessive lengths to imitate celebrities (Wells *et al.*, 2008; Clow & Baack, 2012; Arens *et al.*, 2013). When they spend a fortune but still don't achieve their dream to resemble celebrities, it worsens their unhappiness (Kumar, 2012).

Advertising is criticised from a variety of angles, including its negative effects on competitors as well as customers (Kumar, 2012). Comparative marketing is one source of these outcomes (Wells *et al.*, 2008). Advertising is blamed for driving up costs and wasting resources on the economic front (Schlegelmilch, 2001; Shimp, 2010). (Kumar, 2012). According to Wells *et al.* (2008), it creates an artificial demand for goods that are not actually necessary.

1.2.5 Roles of Advertising Practitioner

The advertising industry is a cultural community, a group of people who share similar training and similar conventions as they create (Giaccardi, 1995). Professionals learn formally through education and training. Practitioners also learn informally through shared agency norms, language, routines and stories (McLeod *et al.*, 2011). Advertising practitioners hold unique insights into how advertising works because they are responsible for developing and executing creative strategies and ideas. Understanding practitioners' models of advertising helps to understand the two-sided relationship between consumers, who select and use products, sometimes incorporating brands into their self-concept and

practitioners, who use their cultural knowledge and consumption resources to provide meaning to brands (Nyilasy et al., 2013).

The role of the advertising agent is a complex dilemma on two sides of an inter-organizational dyad; the company hiring the agency vs. the agency taking on the client company. Often, global companies strive for standardization in their advertising strategies but at the same time recognize a need for adaptation under certain conditions (Aygul Isayeva, 2011). Therefore, advertising practitioners should act based on social responsibility (Mohammad Noorizzuddin Nooh, 2013). It is good if the practitioner should act conscientiously by giving and portraying the truth, assimilating social values, and by not focusing only on the aspect of profit implication.

Therefore, generally most of the advertising practitioners are tied with the professional advertising body where a part of their responsibilities as practitioners is to ensure all forms of abuses such as misleading statements, spurious testimonials, visual and verbal exaggerations, misleading offers, suggestion or pictures offensive to public decency, etc. are avoided. As a Muslim advertising practitioner, they have a responsibility in promoting and practicing ethical advertising, acts with the morality for the society in the matters of commercial communications and as a regulator for consumers. So, it is important to understand the perspective of advertising practitioners especially from Muslim practitioner's perspective about Islamic advertising.

1.3 STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

Above discussions has shown the growth of advertising, background of Islamic advertising, attitude towards advertisement and roles of the practitioners in the global and Malaysia. It explains that advertising is one way to increase sales by providing information to users. But in Muslim-majority countries, advertising has become a problem because it does not fit with Islamic values (Teuku Meldi, 2015). It is because of cultural insensitivity and disregard for social norms prevalent in Muslim-majority countries can be viewed as disrespectful and offensive. Islamic values emphasize the protection of societal coherence and the avoidance of practices that may lead to moral corruption or social disruption.

The use of media, especially new media, to market goods and services has grown significantly, enabling anyone to create advertising without considering moral considerations. This matter leads to harmful advertising prevalent in the public. Generally, products that could harm the public moral/physical health or considered socially indecent and unmentionable in public are considered controversial to be advertised (De Run *et al*, 2010). Unmentionable's ads also can be defined as "offensive, embarrassing, harmful, socially unacceptable or controversial to significant segment of the population" (Katsanis, 1994).

As known, Malaysia is Muslim majority country, where in the Malaysia constitution; Islam is federal official religious while other religious are freely to be practice. Tun Salleh

Abas (1988), former Lord President of Federal Court of Malaysia in interpreting meaning of Islam itself as a whole way of life that encompasses all facets of human activity, whether they be private or public, legal, political, economic, social, cultural, moral, or judicial. It is not only a collection of dogmas and rituals. Thus, adopting the Islamic marketing ethics ensures that the seeds of harmony are planted and a proper order in society is provided, thereby enhancing the dignity of, and upholding the rights of human beings are also part of the Islamic practices (Hassan *et al*, 2008).

As recognized, advertising practitioner has play biggest roles in producing many types of advertising. Despite the rapid development of advertising worldwide generally, and specifically in Malaysia, there are three issues related with advertising has arisen in the process of application and implementations Islamic advertising in Malaysia.

Firstly, Malaysia has a lot of guidelines and acts such as guidelines from the Advertising Standards Authority Malaysia (ASA)⁷ is a self-regulatory body responsible for overseeing

⁷ The Advertising Standards Authority Malaysia (ASA Malaysia) is a self-regulatory body established to oversee and maintain ethical standards in advertising across Malaysia. Its main function is to ensure that advertisements adhere to a set of guidelines and principles, promoting responsible and honest advertising practices in the country.

The key functions of ASA Malaysia include:

- 1) Reviewing Advertising Content: ASA Malaysia reviews and evaluates advertisements to ensure they comply with the advertising standards set by the organization. It assesses the content of advertisements to ensure they are truthful, accurate, and do not mislead consumers.
- 2) Addressing Consumer Complaints: ASA Malaysia serves as a platform for consumers to voice their concerns and complaints regarding misleading or unethical advertisements. It investigates these complaints and takes appropriate action against advertisers found in violation of the standards.
- 3) Code of Advertising Practice: ASA Malaysia develops and enforces a Code of Advertising Practice that sets out guidelines and rules for advertisers to follow. This code covers various aspects of advertising, including content, presentation, and targeting.
- 4) Promoting Responsible Advertising: ASA Malaysia aims to promote responsible advertising practices among advertisers and agencies. It encourages the use of ethical advertising techniques and discourages the dissemination of false or misleading information.

advertising practices in Malaysia. It reviews and enforces ethical standards in advertisements, addresses consumer complaints, promotes responsible advertising, and collaborates with industry stakeholders to maintain the integrity of the advertising industry, The Advertising Committee under section 84A, part XIA, Ministry of Domestic Trade, Co-operative and Consumerism, publishing guidelines screening of content materials Islamic broadcasting under the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) and the communication and multimedia act (1998) under the Malaysian Communication and Multimedia commission (MCMC) has been set up by government and related body, but its seem does not effective in projecting and creating advertising message towards end consumers. It shown when misleading⁸ advertising still in a placed of five highest categories out of 10 highest complaints⁹ in comparison of complaint issued by Ministry of Domestic Trade, Co-operative and Consumerism (KPDNKK) in September 2021, specifically misleading advertising, product quality, customer service, billing and pricing disputes, delivery and shipping issues. These issues should be brought up to the advertising practitioner as they are the industrial players in the market in order to develop complete and solid guidelines and framework.

5) Educating Advertisers and Consumers: ASA Malaysia conducts educational programs and workshops to raise awareness among advertisers, agencies, and consumers about ethical advertising practices. It helps stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities in upholding advertising standards.

Collaboration with Industry Stakeholders: ASA Malaysia collaborates with various industry stakeholders, including advertising agencies, media organizations, and consumer groups, to address advertising-related issues and foster a responsible advertising environment.

ASA Malaysia plays a crucial role in maintaining the integrity and credibility of the advertising industry in Malaysia by upholding ethical standards and ensuring that advertisements are truthful, fair, and respectful to consumers.

⁸ According to Act 599, Consumer Protection Act 1999, Part II No 9, No person shall engage in conduct that— (a) in relation to goods, is misleading or deceptive, or is likely to mislead or deceive, the public as to the nature, manufacturing process, characteristics, suitability for a purpose, availability or quantity, of the goods; or (b) in relation to services, is misleading or deceptive, or is likely to mislead or deceive, the public as to the nature, characteristics, suitability for a purpose, availability or quantity, of the services.

⁹ Another complaint was no price tag, motor vehicle workshop, scams scratch and win, fraudulent, hire purchase agreement and malpractice of direct selling

Secondly, there is a lot of unethical business practice essentially start from the advertising. In a particular case, the arose of these issues make Ministry of Health (MOH) has issued press release on 11 April 2015, stating consumer should be cautious of illegal advertisements that offer false promises such as 100% cancer cure, diabetes fast treatment, weight loss in continuous, sexual performance enhancement, and often load impolite or obscene word simply to influence the users to buying their products. In this case, MOH has controls the advertising of health products and services through the Medicines Advertising Board (LIU) established under the Medicines (Advertising & Sales) Act 1956. For medicines, only registered products (with MAL¹⁰ number), which have been rated safe for consumption or use are allowed to be advertised. The awareness needs to be improved in Malaysia, Malaysia should endorse advertising that only appealed to consumers' hearts and feelings as a cultural identity that represents the country and also adhered to Islamic values as it is a Muslim country.

Thirdly, recent arose issue whereby Kuala Lumpur Hall City (DBKL) has instructed through their press release on 18 December 2019 to drop of LED¹¹ advertising display of “*sugarbook*” immediately, which has been advertised in the area of the Bangsar and Bukit Kiara. Although the advertisement was not approved by DBKL, it shown that the advertising operators with the placate displaying such unethical ads which against

¹⁰ All pharmaceutical products including health supplements and traditional preparations must be registered with the Drug Control Authority (DCA) of Malaysia before being marketed in Malaysia. Evaluation of the products' quality, safety and efficacy (except for traditional preparations and health supplements) are carried out to ensure safety to the public. The registration number starts with 'MAL', followed by eight numbers, and ending with the letter T, A, X or N. (<https://www.pharmacy.gov.my/v2/en/faq/how-identify-registered-drugs-or-pharmaceutical-products.html>)

¹¹ A semiconductor light source called a light-emitting diode (LED) produces light when current passes through it. Recombining electrons and electron holes in the semiconductor results in the release of energy in the form of photons. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Light-emitting_diode)

Malaysian norm and culture. The cultures of the Malaysian community are still worried about the discrimination against women, and there are advertising rules in place to prevent women from being viewed like things. Additionally, because it is explicitly forbidden in the Al-Quran, the majority of Muslims in Saudi Arabia and Malaysia may reject any forms of sexuality and other gender-related issues (Yusairah & Al-Hasan, 2015). Advertising agencies must standardise their campaigns in order for them to match Malaysian culture.

Due to certain issues arose as mentioned, it is clearly shown that most of the unethical issues in advertising arose because of the unethical and exaggerating by the advertiser or advertising agency. The roles of advertising agency are currently becoming broad and multiple function of services like media planning and buying, research, market information, sales promotion assistant, campaign development, creations of advertisement; services created to help advertiser achieve marketing objectives (Aygul Isayeva, 2011). In other word, advertising practitioners has been exposed with a lot of information regarding the client, including the culture, norm, law and constitution in one and other countries.

The Association of Accredited Advertising Agents Malaysia (4As) notes in its council report for 2021 that ethical advertisers overwhelmingly supported their publics' fight against an unethical and unfair claim. As a result, unethical advertising should not occur anywhere. Advertising claims that are unethical and unfair, as mentioned in 4A's standard practise that neither verbal nor visual exaggerations nor false or misleading assertions should be used in advertising; testimonies that do not accurately represent the participants'