

ANTHROPOMORPHIC ANIMALS IN ADVERTISING: CREATING POSITIVE CONSUMER'S BRAND ATTITUDE

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Abstract: Advertisers use animal characters to attract attention or create a positive feeling about the products. The various animal characters created by the level of physical similarity to human; most of them are made very humanlike, and some are deliberately made more similar to the real animal. This study examines the effect of the level of similarity to human of anthropomorphic animal characters on consumer attitudes towards brands. We also examine consumer attitudes toward advertising, sincerity, and excitement of character as mediating variables. This research uses experimental methods using printed advertising media as a stimulus. Animal character in the ad was manipulated by the level of similarity with human. The results showed that anthropomorphic animal character in ad affects consumer attitudes towards brand, through the mediation of consumer attitudes toward advertising and the excitement of animal characters. Animal characters with highest level similarity to human have the most positive effect.

Keywords: anthropomorphic animal character, advertising, attitude toward brand

INTRODUCTION

Companies create a unique and creative advertising to attract consumers' attention. In the ad, some products use unique character (not human), as an icon or an agent of products to promote the product. The agents, which are not human beings, have a character and act just like a human endorser, and consumers can observe the similarity of the characteristics of the agent with themselves. One of the characters is animal characters that have human traits (anthropomorphic animal). Anthropomorphism is attributing the characteristics, motivations or emotions of real or imaginative human beings to the non-human characters. (Epley, Waytz & Cacioppo, 2007).

Humans have a tendency to see non-human objects as humans. In daily life, this tendency is like conversing with a pet, giving names to things, talking on the computer, or saying if the clouds in the sky look like a human body. As the human tendency, anthropomorphism utilized in the field of marketing because it is

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believed can be a positive influence on consumer purchasing behavior. By marketers, anthropomorphism may be triggered by creating objects that have human-like characteristics. In the ad, there are forms created with human characteristics such as products that have the characteristics of the human anatomy, the characters created has the shape, speak, and behave like a human, or using human scheme as the theme of the ad. When consumers see them, they think the objects look like human (anthropomorphism), so that the message can be understood more easily.

The use of nonhuman characters in advertising has long been recognized in the advertising, which is termed as spokescharacter. According to Callcott and Lee (1995), spokescharacter could take the form of human or nonhuman animation, like an animal. Some of the animal characters in ads created have many human characteristics: standing on two legs, using clothes and shoes, giving speech, expressing and behaving like humans. For example, an ice-cream product advertisement using an anthropomorphic lion character with the human body, but the head of a lion. There are also products that use animal characters which tend to be more similar to real animal, with a little human traits, such as the character of caterpillars on ads tea, which is shaped like a real caterpillar, green, vines on tea tree, but could speak like humans. In Indonesia, the phenomenon of the use of animal characters which is very similar and less like humans occurs mainly in low involvement product advertising.

Previous research in the field of marketing shows anthropomorphism has positive effect on consumer behavior. Pictures of products arranged with human scheme (Aggarwal and McGill, 2007), the design of the product with human emotions (Smith, 2008), various car design facade of with the manipulation of human faces (Miesler, 2011), each has positive effect on product evaluation. Cars with human-like face designs reduce the interest of consumers to replace their products (Chandler & Schwarz, 2010), and have positive effect on sales (Landwehr, McGill, & Herrmann, 2011). The risk of product design with the appearance a human face or a human intention is lowering consumers' perception of risk and therefore increasing the desire to use the product (Kim & McGill, 2011). Moreover, brand is imaged to behave like humans, affecting consumers to behave following the brand image (Aggarwal and McGill, 2012).

Anthropomorphic characters as elements of advertising have a positive effect on consumer attitudes toward advertising, attitudes toward the brand and intention to buy the brand (Heiser, Sierra, & Torres, 2008; Garretson & Niedrich, 2004). Anthropomorphic characters make the brand easier to remember so that more consumers are willing to buy their products (Peirce, 2002), increasing in the knowledge of consumers of the product (Wei Lin & June Wang, 2012), to have a positive effect on brand trust and willingness to pay a premium price (Folse, Netemeyer & Burton, 2012).

To trigger the anthropomorphism of consumers, marketers can create anthropomorphic shapes on advertising character, by activating the human representation, or by activating certain stereotypes associated with men. The goal is that the ad character is perceived similar to humans, triggering consumer anthropomorphism. Anthropomorphic characters can be made very similar to humans, or vice versa that just has human characteristics, but not similar. The more similar the ad character in appearance, the higher the anthropomorphism on such nonhuman agents (Epley *et al.*, 2007).

Various levels of human similarity of anthropomorphic characters were likely to produce different responses from consumers (Brenton, Gilies, Ballin, & Chats, 2005), but the assessment of this case has not been included in previous studies. Garretson and Niedrich (2004) showed that the character should be relevant to the product, Callcott and Lee (1994) made the classification of advertising character, LeBel and Cooke (2008) examined the personalities of the characters, Heiser *et al.* (2008) compared the human characters and cartoon characters in the form of a human character sketches, while Neeley and Schumann (2004) examined the effects of anthropomorphic animal characters in children. Past researches have not considered consumer perception of diverse similarities to human. Because of the shape of anthropomorphic characters predictable influence the perception of the consumer, then the consumer perception of the similarity of characters with real human needs to be investigated. Thus, this study will examine how the effect of different levels of advertising character similarities with humans, especially animal characters.

LITERATURE BACKGROUND

Anthropomorphism

Anthropomorphism was derived from the Greek from the word *anthropos* which means human and *morph* which means form. The term anthropomorphism was first used by the philosopher Xenophanes (570 BC), and is defined as attribute physical characteristics such as humans to agents or other object (Waytz, Epley, & Cacioppo, 2010). Epley, Waytz, and Cacioppo (2007) defines anthropomorphism as “imbuing the imagined or real behavior of nonhuman agents with humanlike characteristics, motivations, intentions, and emotions” (p. 865). Understanding anthropomorphism according to Epley *et al.* (2007) is widely used in the discussion of anthropomorphism, particularly in the field of marketing. In terms of anthropomorphism by Epley *et al.* (2007), anthropomorphism includes human characteristics such as physical appearance, emotional, mental and motivation. While non-human agents include animals, nature, religious agents, equipment technology or mechanical tools.

Guthrie (1995) describes two reasons people do anthropomorphism, namely familiarity and comfort thesis. People tend to anthropomorphize objects because: Firstly, anthropomorphism creates familiarity. According to him, the easiest way to understand the world is to use the most familiar model, namely ourselves. Second, anthropomorphism creates a feeling of comfort, to make things become like us. Then this anthropomorphic form was studied in the social sciences, especially marketing. Anthropomorphic shape is associated with imitation of human form by the designer, which is embodied in the form of an anthropomorphic products they create (DiSalvo & Gemperle, 2003). Sculpture, painting, anthropomorphic animals in art, and animation in the film are also anthropomorphic forms (Guthrie, 1995).

The concepts of anthropomorphism had been developed and are widely used in a variety of disciplines. In the science of communication, technological advances in graphics and animation are possible to create visual images that resemble human or anthropomorphic, as many have done in the ad.

Animals Character in Advertising

On ad, Guthrie (1995) says the artist (in this case, the marketer) uses anthropomorphism explicitly and implicitly to illustrate inanimate objects. Marketers are using explicit anthropomorphism to entertain and sell, such as the use of Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck that are legendary in the world, or creating explicit anthropomorphic forms specifically for a brand like Chester the Cheetah of Cheetos brand. All anthropomorphic forms require anthropomorphism. The working of anthropomorphism in a person when he saw anthropomorphic elements in advertising encourages the message to be effective (Delbaere, McQuarrie, and Philips, 2011).

According to Callcot and Lee (1994), characters that have similar characteristics to humans could potentially change the outlook of consumers to a brand. Characters in an ad that are manipulated like human show a characteristic such as a human, therefore project a brand quality and could positively influence consumer attitudes towards brands. Darwin (1873) identified that animals and humans have the same emotions and instincts. Human anthropomorphism toward animal createssocial support which can improve physical health, emotional and quality of life (Serpell, 2003); it creates social interaction between humans and animals in the form of direct response to one another, causing the intention to interact, togetherness, and interdependence (Horowitz & Bekoff, 2007). The emotionallinkage between human and animal causes the animals to be often used as figures or models in the pictures, movies, or advertising.

Animal character is used as a model in advertising to elicit a response from the consumer. There are some animals that portray human characteristics and are used

in advertising to promote the product. Lion and tiger are typically used to describe a strong impression and proud, while elephants and rhinos are the animals that have the characteristics of strong and handsome (Levy, 1985). Animals that describe the unique characteristics are koala and zebra. Horse reflects domestic animal (Levy, 1985). A feminine character of a brand reflects the beauty and elegance, for example: python, leopard, geese, panther, and the Persian cat. Finally, animals that reflect a sense of comfort or security are cats, poodles, ducks, puppies, bears and small birds (Levy, 1985).

Despite the tendency of anthropomorphism exists in everyone, people do not anthropomorphize all objects and people also do not anthropomorphize different objects with equal ease (Epley et al., 2007). Anthropomorphism ability depends on the presence of special features that reflect human traits. According to Lerner and Kalof (1999) in creating a character in advertising, at least one of the following four criteria must be met in order to cause anthropomorphism: the characters are able to communicate like a human (to speak), capable of expressing human emotions (smiling or sad), using clothing or accessories, and able to do things like human (driving a car, working).

Humans tend to anthropomorphize objects based on motion and the physical form of the object. In Connell (2013), the animal mascots that have physical similarities with humans (bear vs lion) are perceived like a human, and when the animal mascots are depicted anthropomorphic (playing basketball versus not doing anything), they lead to a positive evaluation in the form of a personal relationship with the brand, and positive affect.

Brand Attitude

Consumer attitudes towards brands are generally conceptualized as an overall evaluation based on the favorable or unfavorable reaction to the brand. (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975). The effectiveness of an advertisement by Lutz, MacKenzie, and Belch (1983) can be measured on how they affect consumer buying intention. When receiving the exposure of an ad, the consumer will build attitudes toward advertising, and consumer attitudes toward these ads affect his attitude toward the brand, and intention to purchase the advertised product (Petty & Cacioppo, 1983; Lutz et al., 1983). The attitude of the brand is a function of the belief that the brand has an attribute which is liked or disliked and attributes of the product are being evaluated (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Because of natural human tendency to anthropomorphize non-human objects, the consumers' tendency to see the advertising character similar to humans has a major role in the field of branding (Llyold & Woodside, 2012).

Aad is a tendency to respond to a particular pleasant or unpleasant advertisement stimulus during a particular exposure opportunity. The

previous model that was built by Mitchell and Olson (1981) also showed that consumer attitudes toward a brand is not only determined by the belief of the attributes of a product like the model Fishbein, but also affected by Aad. This means that consumers are able to convert the visual information of advertising where brand information is not explicit; it becomes semantic knowledge or beliefs about the attributes of the advertised brand (Mitchel & Olson, 1981). For consumers who have low motivation and ability, attitude toward the brand and intention to buy are more affected by the attractiveness of the ad (Lutz *et al.*, 1983). Consumers who have low involvement with the product will process advertising messages via the peripheral or her attitude toward the ad (Petty, Cacioppo, and Schumann, 1983).

Hypotheses

Ad character builds an emotional connection between the brand and the consumer, establishes specific social relationships (Fournier, 1998) and brand personality (Callcott & Lee, 1994). Ad character creates an identity for the brand, creates a positive feeling because consumers are happy to see it, and makes the brand easier to remember so that consumers have the intention to buy the product (Peirce, 2002; Wang Wei Lin & June, 2012). Ad Characters allow consumers to identify products (Neeley & Schumann, 2004) and have a positive effect on consumer attitudes toward the brand (Folse, Netemeyer & Burton, 2012). Because between humans and animals there is an emotional connection (Darwin (1873), the relationship with the animal improves the quality of emotion (Serpell, 2003) and creates social interaction (Horowitz & Bekoff, 2007).

The tendency of anthropomorphism exists because anthropomorphism creates a familiarity feeling (Guthrie, 1995). We (ourselves) are the most familiar models and the easiest way to understand the world, so anthropomorphism makes things that are not understood to be understood more easily (Guthrie, 1995; Epley, Waytz & Cacioppo, 2007). Therefore marketers use anthropomorphism in marketing communications. Familiarity feelings, experiences and knowledge about people help consumers understand what they see in the ad and respond the ad more easily (Delbaere, McQuarrie, & Phillips, 2011). Easiness to process messages can improve product preferences (Labroo, Dhar, and Schwarz, 2008), then the animal characters that have human characteristics will create a positive attitude toward the brand.

H1: brand attitude will be higher, if the ad is conveyed by anthropomorphic animal character compared to non-anthropomorphic animal character.

Consumers respond to advertising messages, as well as the way the message is delivered, which then affected his attitude toward the product (Lutz *et al.*, 1983). Past research has shown that the way the message is delivered in advertisements influences consumers' evaluation of the product (McQuarrie & Phillips, 2005; Peracchio and Meyers-Levy, 1994), and the attitude toward the brand (Labroo,

Dhar & Schwarz, 2008; Bolzmann, Chakraborty & Mowen, 2000). Mackenzie et al. (1989) compared four theoretical models and the ad showed that attitude toward advertising has a direct effect on the attitude toward the brand.

Past research has shown a relationship between the attributes of personality and attitude toward the brand (Chang & Chieng, 2006). Characteristics of the brand personality can profitably be used as a heuristic cues and influences the overall brand attitude (Aaker, 1997; Garretson & Niedrich, 2004). According to Garretson and Burton (2012) in five dimensions of personality (Sincerity, Excitement, Competence, Sophistication, and ruggedness), sincerity and excitement are the most dominant on spokescharacter than the other dimensions. There is a positive relationship between sincerity and excitement with brand trust (Sung & Kim, 2010).

H2: anthropomorphic animal character has a positive effect on brand attitude through the mediation of the advertising attitude, sincerity and excitement.

According to the three factor theory of anthropomorphism, perceptual similarity to human toward a nonhuman object (target) affects a person's level of anthropomorphism toward these targets (Epley *et al.*, 2007). Human traits that are seen in the target trigger a person to activate the human knowledge in his mind (cognition), and then apply it to the target (anthropomorphism). According to Epley *et al.* (2007) at least two dimensional similarity is required to enable the anthropomorphism, namely the similarity in motion and the similarity in morphology (appearance). The more the target is similar in appearance, the more people will anthropomorphize the target (Epley, 2007).

Aggarwal and McGill (2007) showed that the product pictures with the human scheme (as if product is described as a family and as twins) made a more positive evaluation of the product. Physical resemblance to humans in the car (lights as eyes and the grille as mouth) affects the evaluation of the product (Aggarwal and McGill, 2007), as consumers do not want to change their products (Chandler & Schwarz, 2010). It also influences the perception of friendliness and aggressiveness, and then affects sales (Landwehr *et al.*, 2011). Some of these studies indicate that the similarity to human physical appearance will lead to anthropomorphism, and then positively affects product evaluation.

In the study of animal characters, Connell (2013) showed that the animal mascots that have physical similarities to human (bear vs lion) are perceived like a human, and when the animal mascots are depicted anthropomorphic (playing basketball versus not doing anything), they lead to a positive evaluation in the form of personal relationship with the brand.

H3: anthropomorphic animal character perceived human-like will result in a higher brand attitude compared to anthropomorphic animal character perceived less human-like.

METHOD

This research used experimental method with Atma Jaya Catholic University students as participants. The study consisted of two studies. The first study aims to test the hypothesis 1 and 2, while the second study aimed to test the hypothesis 3. Either in study 1 and 2, we used print advertising as a stimulus; with the manipulation of the level of similarity between animal characters with human. All ads stimulus used black and white fictitious brand, so that the existing brand perception and taste of color of participants did not affect the results.

Brand attitude as the dependent variable was measured, as well as advertising attitude, sincerity, and excitement as mediating variables. Attitude toward the brand ($\alpha = 0.878$) was adapted from Garretson, 2004, including statements of whether the participant likes / dislikes; happy / not happy; good / bad; positive / negative towards the advertised brand. Advertising attitude ($\alpha = 0,759$) is measured by a scale adapted from Henhorne, Latour & Natarajaan, (1993) including statements of whether the ad was interesting / informative / easily understood / good. Sincerity ($\alpha = 0.713$) was measured with the four items adapted from Garretson and Burton (2012), whether animal character is: modest; honest; sincere; cheers. The excitement ($\alpha = 0.759$) also used four items adapted from Garretson and Burton (2012), whether animal character is: brave; excited; imaginative; up-to-date. To test the difference between the experimental groups, we used one-way ANOVA, and to test the mediation model, we use OLS regression with the SPSS macros PROCESS (Hayes, 2013).

STUDY 1

We designed Study 1 to test the idea that anthropomorphic animal character has more positive effect on brand attitude than non-anthropomorphic animal character (H1), and to test the mediating role of advertising attitude, sincerity, and excitement (H2). The experiment had two treatment conditions (animal character: anthropomorphic vs. non-anthropomorphic) between participants design. One hundred and nineteen undergraduate students (47 male and 72 female) from Universitas Katolik Indonesia Atma Jaya (UAJ) Jakarta, Indonesia, participated in an exchange for partial fulfillment of a course requirement. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the two conditions.

Stimulus development. In order to create the experimental stimuli, we conducted five pilot studies. Each of our pilot studies was conducted among 40 different undergraduate students at UAJ, Jakarta. The first pilot study aimed to select the advertised product. The second pilot study had the purpose of obtaining suitable animal and fictitious brand. Based on the result of the pilot studies, two different versions of a print ad were created (Appendix 1).

Procedure. Participants participated in the experiment in groups of six to eight. Participants were told that the purpose of the study was to obtain their evaluation of a new product advertisement that was being tested by a corporation, and then they signed informed consent. Participants had advertising exposure; and then participants completed dependent measures, finally responded to the anthropomorphism scale, attention to the ad, and standard demographic questions. Attention to the ad was measured by two statements: "I paid a lot of attention to the ad", and "My mind was somewhere else" (6-point scales, 1 = strongly disagree; 6 = strongly agree).

Manipulation Checks. To assess whether the anthropomorphic animal character had triggered higher anthropomorphism, the participants indicated whether the ad character had human traits. Anthropomorphism was measured by four statements ($\alpha = .805$) including: "In the ad, monkey "OxiFruit" is like a person, monkey "OxiFruit" comes alive. ANOVA result showed there were significant differences among anthropomorphic condition and non-anthropomorphic condition ($F(1,118) = 8.512, p = .004$). The participants significantly anthropomorphize ad character more in the anthropomorphic condition than in the non-anthropomorphic condition ($M_{\text{anthropomorphic}} = 4.0169, M_{\text{non-antrop}} = 3.5389$), suggesting the manipulation was successful.

Brand Attitude. A one-way ANOVA was performed using the average of the four questions on brand attitude as the dependent variable. The result showed that the anthropomorphic condition expressed a higher brand attitude than in the non-anthropomorphic condition ($t = 5.719, p = .018, M_{\text{anthropomorphic}} = 4.0847, M_{\text{non-antrop}} = 3.3500$). These results support H1.

Mediation Analysis. We performed the mediation analysis with brand attitude as the dependent variable, anthropomorphic animal character as the predictor, and the advertising attitude, sincerity and excitement as the mediating variables, using the OLS regression PROCESS SPSS macro model 4 and bootstrap analysis (Hayes 2013).

The effect of anthropomorphic animal on attitude toward ad ($t = 2.1804, p = 0.0312$) was significant (Table 1). Advertising messages using anthropomorphic animal generated more positive attitude toward the ad than non-anthropomorphic one. The effect of anthropomorphic animal on excitement ($t = 3.1827, p = 0.0019$) was significant. However, the effect of anthropomorphic animal on sincerity ($t = 1.6322, p = 0.1053$) was not significant. Anthropomorphic animal generated more excitement than non-anthropomorphic animal. Attitude toward the ad has a significant effect on brand attitude ($t = 5.3350, p = 0.0000$), as well as sincerity ($t = 2.6487, p = 0.0092$) and excitement ($t = 2.6487, p = 0.0092$). Indirect effect of anthropomorphic animal on brand attitude through attitude toward the ad was significant (95% CI 0.113; 0.1665). Similarly indirect effect of anthropomorphic

Table 1
Test of Hypotheses Study 1

Model = 4 Y = AB X = Animal M1 = Aad M2 = sincerity(SC) M3 = excitement(EX)
Sample size 119

Outcome: AAD

Model Summary

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.1976	.0390	.6403	4.7542	1.0000	117.0000	.0312

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.2033	.3106	10.3146	.0000	2.5883	3.8184
Animal	.1743	.0799	2.1804	.0312	.0160	.3325

Outcome: SC

Model Summary

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.1492	.0223	.5030	2.6640	1.0000	117.0000	.1053

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.8449	.2753	13.9682	.0000	3.2998	4.3901
Animal	.1156	.0708	1.6322	.1053	-.0247	.2559

Outcome: EX

Model Summary

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.2823	.0797	.6828	10.1294	1.0000	117.0000	.0019

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.0019	.3207	9.3602	.0000	2.3667	3.6370
Animal	.2627	.0825	3.1827	.0019	.0992	.4261

Outcome: AB

Model Summary

	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.6996	.4895	.4306	27.3268	4.0000	114.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	-.0581	.4519	-.1286	.8979	-.9534	.8372
Aad	.4249	.0796	5.3350	.0000	.2671	.5827
SC	.2669	.1008	2.6487	.0092	.0673	.4665
EX	.3380	.0884	3.8211	.0002	.1628	.5132
Animal	.0024	.0688	.0352	.9720	-.1338	.1387

Direct effect of X on Y

	Effect	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
	.0024	.0688	.0352	.9720	-.1338	.1387

Indirect effect of X on Y

	Effect	Boot SE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
TOTAL	.1937	.0758	.0511	.3610
Aad	.0740	.0386	.0113	.1665
SC	.0309	.0269	-.0038	.1115
EX	.0888	.0453	.0260	.2114

Number of bootstrap samples for bias corrected bootstrap confidence intervals: 1000

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output: 95.00

animal on brand attitude through excitement (95% CI 0,0260; 0,2114) was significant, but not through sincerity 95% CI (-0,0038; 0,1115). Direct effect of anthropomorphic animal on brand attitude was not significant ($t = 0,0352$, $p = 0,9720$). These results showed that the effect of anthropomorphic animal character on brand attitude was mediated by attitude toward ad and excitement, but was not mediated by sincerity. Thus, H2 was supported.

STUDY 2

The results from study 1 showed that anthropomorphic animal character in ad arouses excitement and joy of the ad, and then had a positive effect on consumer attitudes towards brands. To strengthen the results of study 1, we replicated study 1 in the study 2 by extending the stimulus ads manipulation into three conditions. Condition 1 is low level of similarity to humans (standing with the four legs and without apparel), condition 2 is medium level of similarity to human (standing on two legs and clothed like humans), condition 3 is high level of similarity to human (standing with the two legs, clothed, and performing activities such as humans). One hundred and fifty undergraduate students (64 male and 86 female) from UAJ participated in this study and were randomly assigned to one of the three conditions.

Stimulus. We conducted a pilot study to determine the fictitious brand and the appropriate animal character. From five print ads which were created, we did a pilot study to select the three ads that will be used for the stimulus, based on the level of similarity to human (Appendix 2). The procedure and measurement of study 2 were similar to study 1.

Manipulation Checks. We conducted ANOVA (similarity to human: low, moderate, high) among participant design using anthropomorphism perception as a dependent variable. *Dunnett-test* ($>$ control) showed that participants in the high similarity condition ($M_{\text{high}} = 3.6750$, $M_{\text{low}} = 2.5050$, $p = 0.000$) and in the medium similarity condition ($M_{\text{medium}} = 3.0300$, $M_{\text{low}} = 2.5050$, $p = 0.001$) expressed a higher anthropomorphism than in the low similarity condition. The contrast test showed that the high similarity condition expressed a higher anthropomorphism than in the medium condition ($p = .000$), suggesting the manipulation was successful.

Brand Attitude. The ANOVA result showed that the high similarity condition expressed a higher brand attitude than in the medium and low condition ($F = 4.050$, $p = 0.019$; $M_{\text{high}} = 3.8300$, $M_{\text{medium}} = 3.5200$, $M_{\text{low}} = 3.3300$). These results support H3.

Mediation Analysis. To get a better understanding of the indirect effect of advertising attitude, sincerity, and excitement, we conducted mediation analysis again. The result supported the result of study 1 (Table 2). Anthropomorphic animal did not have a significant direct effect on brand attitude ($t = 0.3532$, $p = 0.7245$). Indirect effect of anthropomorphic animal on brand attitude was significant

Table 2
Indirect Effect Study 2

PROCESS Model = 4 Y = Brand attitude X = Condition
M1 = Aad M2 = Sincerity M3 = Excitement
Sample size 150

Direct effect of X on Y

	Effect	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
	.0230	.0650	.3532	.7245	-.1056	.1515

Indirect effect of X on Y

	Effect	Boot SE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
TOTAL	.2270	.0672	.1004	.3604
Aad	.1431	.0515	.0505	.2507
Sincerity	.0201	.0196	-.0047	.0776
Excitement	.0638	.0265	.0214	.1315

through attitude toward the ad (95% CI 0.0505; 0.2507) and through excitement (95% CI 0.0214 ; 0.1315), but was not significant through sincerity (95% CI -0.0047; 0.0776).

DISCUSSION

The results of the study 1 and 2 showed that the more similar to human the animal characters in the ad, the more positive consumer attitudes toward the brand. According to Epley (2007), the more an object looks like and resembles human, the more familiar these objects will be in human perception. Familiarity has a positive effect on consumer attitudes towards brands. The results of this study are consistent with the Connell (2013) that the consumer prefers animal characters which more like human than the original animal.

This form of anthropomorphic character mimics the action of the human individual, quality, or habits that portray individual characters, drawn from the knowledge of social customs in a society where individuals are involved (DiSalvo, Gemperle, & Ferlizzi, 2004). In the ad, a character was created as animated object that is a living frictional and powerful imagination, to promote a product, service or idea (LeBel & Cooke, 2008). We expect that by using the anthropomorphic animal character in the ad, the emotional relationship between the brand and consumers can be built (Fournier, 1998), and a brand personality will be created (Callcott & Lee, 1994).

As well as these previous studies, the results of our study showed that the animal character creates excitement. Our study also shows that the excitement created in turn creates a positive brand attitude. Character creates an

identity for the brand, creating a positive feeling because consumers are happy to see it, and make the brand easier to remember so that it has the intention to buy the product (Peirce, 2002). Beautiful shape and behavior of anthropomorphic character bring excitement, while uniqueness of this character increases consumer's recognition of the product and purchase intention (June Wei Lin & Wang, 2012). Research also proves that character has positive influence on consumer attitudes toward the brand, brand trust, and the willingness of consumers to pay a premium price (Folse, Netemeyer & Burton, 2012). Similarly, in children, although character does not affect the selection of products and intentions, it makes the child can identify the product (Neeley & Schumann, 2004). The uniqueness of the animal characters creates a positive attitude toward advertising.

Further than that, we also show that the animal characters are more like humans were the one which create more positive response. Animal characters that are made more humanlike make advertising more preferable and lead to more positive excitement. Nevertheless, anthropomorphic animal characters cannot create the perception of sincerity. Perception of similarity in a three-factor theory of anthropomorphism / SEEK theory is a cognitive factor, namely elicited agent knowledge (Epley *et al.*, 2007). This variable is expected to affect the level anthropomorphism through cognitive factors. Someone who perceives an object like a human would tend to turn human knowledge and apply it to the object. In order to make anthropomorphism occurs, there is at least twodimensional similarity required, namely the similarity in movements and similarity in morphology (appearance, face and body). The more similar non-human agents to human in appearance, the higher the anthropomorphism will be. Similarities can influence anthropomorphism by activating the human representation, or by activating certain stereotypes associated with human. If the target appears the same as him, people tend to be more reliant on knowledge centered on him when judging others. But when the target appears not like him, people will rely on alternative forms of information, such as stereotypes. The higher the morphologic similarity to human, the more people give mental attribution on the nonhuman agent (Epley *et al.*, 2007).

CONCLUSION

This study examines that animal character given human characteristic: get dressed, and has activity as a human can trigger consumers' anthropomorphism. The more human-like animal characters, the higher the sense of excitement and attitudes toward advertising, which at the end has a positive effect on the attitude toward the brand.

The contribution for advertising is to examine that creating figure of animal character to promote product will generate a positive attitude toward the brand, especially if the figure are given many attributes of human. The perception that

animal characters figure similar to them makes consumers believe that brands have mental characteristics of human. The nature of the brand that wants to be imaged can be contained in human attributes inherent in the animal characters. The challenge for advertisers is about creating human-like animal characters, but does not eliminate the uniqueness of the animal.

This study fill out a gap on the perceptions of similarity which did not examined in previous studies on spokes character. In addition, this study also enriches the study of the character of advertising, especially regarding animal characters. Noting that the various kinds of animals used in advertising, future research may examine the selection of the type of animal that is suitable for the product. Each type of animal has a specific image, but is it still relevant today? Is the uniqueness of the animal characters more important than matching animal characters?

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Appendix 1
Stimulus Study 1



(a) non-anthropomorphic animal (b) anthropomorphic animal

Appendix 2
Stimulus Study 2



(a) Low similarity

(b) medium similarity

(c) high similarity