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AN ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN ON “DISCOVERING PERSPECTIVES: ART BIENNALE AND ART THERAPY”

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Abstract:

The "Discovering Perspectives: Art Biennale and Art Therapy" advertising campaign aims to bridge the gap in awareness and understanding of the Art Biennale and art therapy practices among university students. By highlighting the significance of Art Biennale and the therapeutic benefits of art, this initiative seeks to foster enhanced well-being and broaden students' perspectives. Utilising a quasi-experimental research design, the campaign assesses its effectiveness in increasing participants' awareness and comprehension following program exposure. The campaign is structured around three core objectives: firstly, to raise awareness of the connections between Art Biennale and art therapy among students; secondly, to empower individuals to engage actively in Art Biennale and art therapy practices; and thirdly, to deepen students' understanding of the Art Biennale and art therapy's values and benefits. During the pre-production phase, the research team finalised the campaign's focus and established strategic collaborations with an expert in art education and a students' association. Production efforts included creating promotional materials, i.e. two posters, an infographic, and two videos (a teaser and an informational video) to introduce the campaign and its objectives. In the post-production phase, researchers gathered and analysed data from the quasi-experimental study to evaluate the campaign's impact on the treatment group. The campaign's output centres on assessing its effectiveness in addressing the initial knowledge gap regarding the Art Biennale and art therapy among participants. Overall, the "Discovering Perspectives" campaign contributes to a deeper appreciation of the Art Biennale and the role of art therapy, with its materials designed to enhance awareness and understanding among university students.

Keywords:

Advertising Campaign, Awareness, Understanding, Art Biennale, Art Therapy

Introduction

The "Discovering Perspectives: Art Biennale and Art Therapy" advertising campaign is designed to enrich students' understanding of art's transformative power. By raising awareness of Art Biennale and art therapy, this initiative underscores the vital role of art in fostering well-being and personal growth, encouraging active engagement in creative and therapeutic experiences. Arts engagement has behavioural, social, and psychological advantages (Clift, 2020). Participation in the arts also appears to help university students cope with mental health problems and those at risk (Chen et al., 2022), while Art Biennale offers unique platforms for cultural reflection and innovation (Kompatsiaris, 2019).

The awareness on Art Biennale varies depending on the specific biennale, its location, and the level of promotion and publicity surrounding it. The Art Biennale are international exhibition held every two years, showcasing contemporary art from around the world. Art Biennale can be defined as art exhibitions, that adopt an approach that is evocative of the classic gallery atmosphere, which frequently has a ceremonial or perhaps religious tone (Greenberg, Ferguson & Nairne, 1996). In addition, the term "biennale" is defined as the large or big-scale survey of contemporary art that is held every two years whereas "biennials" refers to the actual event itself. Events like the Venice Biennale, Documenta in Kassel, Germany, and the Istanbul Biennial are well-known and attract significant attention from the global art community. However, having an Art Biennale at schools and universities in Malaysia is yet to take place.

Besides, the researchers believe that the awareness may vary, depending on factors such as media coverage, cultural interest, and the accessibility of the event to the public. However, the growing influence of social media has made it easier for information about the Art Biennale to reach a wider audience. People interested in contemporary art or cultural events may come across information about biennale through online platforms, further increasing awareness.

The same goes for art therapy in which the existence of visual art can significantly contribute to the practice of art therapy. Art therapy is a form of expressive therapy that uses the creative process of making art to improve a person's physical, mental, and emotional well-being (Foa, Keane, Friedman, & Cohen, 2009). It is based on the belief that the creative process involved in artistic self-expression can be therapeutic and healing. Therapeutic art treatments offer the ability to free oneself from feelings, integrate emotion cognitively, and encourage the act of creating purpose (Smeijsters & Cleven, 2006).

The objectives of conducting the advertising campaign on 'Discovering Perspectives: Art Biennale and Art Therapy' are as follows:

- i) to increase the awareness of Art Biennale and art therapy among university students through the advertising campaign.
- ii) to empower individuals to take part in Art Biennale and art therapy.
- iii) to ensure students can accurately discover Art Biennale and understand the therapeutic benefits of art after exposure to campaign messages.

Thus, this advertising campaign is planned and implemented to further explore the Art Biennale and art therapy and how visual art connects with human value to improve their overall personal development. The meaning behind this title is basically for university students to discover deeply in visual arts and be open to learning visual art in the future. It is hoped that the

philosophy behind art therapeutic expression positively impacts an individual's emotions and perspectives in life.

Problem Statement

Students' benefit in the arts is often influenced by several factors, including the quality of cultural arts education, access to learning facilities, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and social support (Nasihah, Istiqomah, & Wiyanto, 2024). Despite the variety of arts programs available at universities, many students remain disengaged or lack sufficient insight and experience in the discipline. Additionally, limited access to relevant activities, especially those adaptable to various settings, may restrict students' opportunities to explore the arts through diverse and accessible channels.

In navigating their university journey, students frequently face challenges such as academic pressure, social expectations, workload demands, and relationship issues. These stressors can hinder personal growth and, without healthy coping mechanisms, lead to negative thought patterns. Art therapy offers a valuable outlet yet understanding and awareness of both Art Biennale and therapeutic art practices remain limited within university environments. This advertising campaign was developed to address this gap by fostering greater awareness and understanding of Art Biennale experiences and the therapeutic benefits of art.

To engage students meaningfully, this advertising campaign implemented a quasi-experimental one-group design to evaluate its effectiveness in increasing knowledge and awareness. Through this research-based approach, the campaign aims to demonstrate how art therapy can serve as a constructive channel for self-expression and resilience, encouraging students to explore art as a means to confront and manage life's challenges. Thus, this campaign aims to raise awareness among university students and enrich the cope of visual arts and therapeutic art thoughts.

Literature Review

This section highlights the notions of advertising campaign, Art Biennale, art therapy, and the awareness of Art Biennale and art therapy.

Advertising Campaign

An advertising campaign is defined as "a series of advertisements (consumer communications) and the activities that help produce them which are designed to achieve interrelated goals (Parente, 2000). Though the campaign is conveyed through different media, it has a single theme and unified approach, thus the unified theme provides a psychological continuity. Among the famous and successful advertising campaigns are the "McDonald's: I'm Lovin' It", "Nike: Just Do It", and "Volkswagen: Think Small" campaigns (Weller, 2023). Belch and Belch (2021) highlight the importance of the strategic planning process for advertising campaigns, including defining objectives, audience targeting, message development, media selection, and budgeting.

Advertising campaigns can be divided into four categories, namely informative, persuasive, reminders and reinforcement (Weller, 2023), in which the informative campaigns aim to provide customers with essential details about products, services, promotions, and similar offerings. In contrast, persuasive campaigns are crafted to motivate the audience toward making a specific decision. Reminder advertisements serve to keep purchasing options top-of-

mind for customers, such as notifying them about approaching expiration dates for rewards or special offers. Finally, reinforcement advertisements are designed to affirm customers' purchase choices and offer tips on how to use or optimize their product experience effectively post-purchase. In the context of this project, the adoption of persuasive campaigns is most relevant as it intends to inspire the university students as the targeted audience toward deciding to join and be involved with the Art Biennale and art therapy campaign.

Art Biennale

'Biennale' is a periodic, independent, and internationally significant exhibition that assesses trends in modern, cutting-edge art since the 1990s and has multiplied at a stunning pace, taking on an essential function in how we perceive art today. The Venice Biennale, which began operations in 1895, was largely responsible for the word "biennale" becoming ingrained in the public's and art world's consciousness as a regular venue for art exhibitions. The creation, dissemination, and interpretation of contemporary visual art in settings that include scholarly publications and schools to museums and biennials prioritise societal problems over topics like aesthetics or art history, either overtly or covertly (Kompatsiaris, 2019).

The Art Biennale is normally placed in specific places and planned out once every two years. Because the word "biennale" originates from the Italian word "biennale," which means "every two years," it usually implies a situation that happens every two years. It is important to remember, though, that not every event or art exhibition that uses the word follows the biennial calendar to the letter. Art Biennale not just simple having an artwork hung up or display at a museum or any exhibition but it does entail experiencing and possibly even sharing, a sense of emotion with the artist with the artwork, in addition to cognitively identifying or deciphering the artist's intended emotional response (Kompatsiaris, 2019; Pelowski, Specker, et al., 2020).

Art Therapy

Art therapy may provide patients with an alternate, suitable form of treatment because considering traumatizing events are frequently silent and non-verbal (Avrahami, 2006). Among artistic art treatments are music therapy, dancing therapy, and theatre therapy. Another treatment is art therapy. The immersive and visual nature of creative art treatments sets them apart from other forms of therapy. The meticulous use of artistic mediums to create and convey memories, feelings, and thoughts, such as painting, collage, and sculpture, is a defining feature of art therapy (Drozdek & Bolwerk, 2010). Art therapy also proved to be effective for adult clients (Regev & Cohen-Yatziv, 2018).

The Awareness in Art Biennale and Art Therapy

Every person's and community's awareness of Art Biennale is different. Notable global Art Biennale, such as the São Paulo Art Biennial, Documenta, and Venice Biennale, are highly recognized in the artistic and cultural communities. Globally, critics, curators, artists, and art aficionados frequently take notice of these events (Kompatsiaris, 2019; Markin, 2016). Yet, variables including location, cultural involvement, and individual interests can affect awareness levels. A higher number of people may be interested in the Art Biennale in areas where cultural events and the arts are highly valued. However, awareness might be less in places where artistic endeavours are not as prominent. For example, in a university setting, the awareness and implementation of art therapy may not be widely recognized, as many universities do not focus on art disciplines.

In addition, art therapy has received recognition and acceptability as a form of therapy, and its popularity has grown in recent years. Art therapy is becoming more recognized and applied in mental health, counseling, and health, even though it may not be well-known because the general public knows it. Young people, many of whom have complicated trauma and cognitive distortions only made this form of art therapy gain popularity (Smeijsters & Cleven, 2006). Next, Uttley et al. (2015) carried out a thorough analysis of studies evaluating the benefits of art therapy in the treatment of young adults who are who have non-psychotic mental illnesses, such as phobias, depression, and anxiety.

Art biennial, as a particular type of event that is becoming an increasingly important aspect of the cultural sector, explains the linkages between art and economy, society, and culture (Nadarajan, 2006). For example, Art Biennial is viewed as a way to foster local cultural creativity and innovation with creative and intellectual cooperation, dialogue, and exchange of ideas as formerly peripheral worldwide and locale centres, like Shanghai, Lyon, and Istanbul, grow more important hubs of cultural production (Tang, 2007). Sharing beliefs, customs, ideas, and other facets of culture among individuals from various backgrounds is known as cultural exchange. It is a chance for people to educate one another and deepen their appreciation of many cultures. Whenever we take art lessons no matter at any place, of course, there must be people who question or are curious about what art courses could bring for us in life even if art may not be everyone's top priority (O'Connor, 2014).

Methodology

This methodology section is divided into three parts, namely the pre-production phase of the advertising campaign, followed by the production or implementation of the advertising campaign, and lastly the post-production of the advertising campaign.

Pre-Production

Preliminary Study

The preliminary study is a research analysis conducted to examine questionnaire items, often known as validity and reliability testing. In our preliminary test, we run a group debriefing assessment by giving participants a set of questionnaires that consists of 16 questions generally about the campaign, where research will test participants individually at first and collect the whole data individually and analyse it into a group summary by understanding the interests of participants for joining the campaign before running the actual quasi-experimental research one-group design pretest and post-test.

Based on our research, it is used in a type of interval scale to provide information about the relative positioning of values but also allow for comparisons of the intervals or differences between values. In this research, all the items were measured on a Likert scale to measure participants' opinions, attitudes, and motivations in different categories of scales. Furthermore, in the demographic section, we applied a nominal scale to measure gender, race, semesters, and also if the participants enjoy art. Gender will be measured into two categories which are male and female, races are Malay, Chinese, Indian, and others, while the semester involves semester 1 until semester 7 and others, lastly, a yes-or-no option is provided for the question on whether the participants enjoy art. The sampling for this study is twenty Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) students, from semester 1 until 7 and above, and the participation is subjected to a voluntary basis.

Data Analysis of Preliminary Study

The questionnaire consists of four sections with a total of 16 questions. Section A gathers the demographic profile of the participants, namely gender, race, field of study, semester of study, and whether the participants enjoy art. Section B discusses the current level of awareness among the target audience regarding the Art Biennale and its potential therapeutic aspects, with four questions related to the section. Next, Section C consists of three questions about whether they will be inspired and participate in activities regarding Art Biennale and art therapy. Lastly, Section D, which contains four items, is about how effective they consider the initiatives of the campaign aimed at enriching knowledge about the Art Biennale and art therapy among UUM students. Four questions are prepared for the section. All the questions for the preliminary study were prepared in Google Form.

Results of the Preliminary Study

Overall, 20 participants have filled out the preliminary test, majority are female (85%) and most of them (95%) do enjoy arts. Even though many of them were not aware about the concept of art therapy and Art Biennale, it appears that they appreciate arts.

Production

Campaign Execution

The campaign, which targets 20 UUM students who have previously completed a Google Form, took place on 7th May 2024 at the UUM campus. Students from all semesters are in attendance, with a particular interest in Art Biennale and Art Therapy. The campaign interacts directly with the target participants during physical sessions. The campaign also has strategic collaborations with an expert, Mr. Hasrul Hisyam who is an art educator, and the Media Technology Students Association (PERMEDIA UUM) as the co-organiser of the event.

Participants were requested to answer the quiz containing 10 questions related to the Art Biennale and Art Therapy via Google Form for a pretest to test the quasi-experimental research one-group design before attending the campaign as a treatment group. Following the program, participants are involved in relevant activities. Additionally, the participants were also involved with a post-test quiz conducted afterward using similar questions to evaluate any changes in understanding the topic. Following the program, participants received merit points and free meals as a token of appreciation.

Quasi-Experimental Research Design

Studies that seek to assess interventions but do not employ randomisation are called quasi-experiments. Quasi-experiments seek to establish the causal relationship between an intervention and a result, much like randomised trials (Chiang, 2015). Pre-intervention and post-intervention measures, as well as control groups that are not chosen at random, can be used in quasi-experimental research (Siedlecki, 2020). In this advertising campaign methodology, we focus on a one-group pretest-post-test design where the same dependent variables are measured in one group of participants before (pretest) and after (post-test) where the treatment is administered. Before comparing the difference between the pretest and post-test scores, scores are measured twice after therapy. The advantage is that we can compare the post-treatment scores to the pre-treatment scores on the same measure for the same people.

Questionnaire for Pretest and Post-test

The questionnaire for both the pretest and post-test used the research uses the quantitative method with the combination of analysis data by the distribution of questionnaires. Right before the "Discovering Perspectives: Art Biennale and Art Therapy" campaign commences, a questionnaire or quiz was distributed to the selected 20 participants after filling out the preliminary questionnaire. This information enables the researchers to tailor the difference of understanding of the group towards Art Biennale and art therapy and ensure the campaign content runs effectively. Additionally, the 20 participants were also involved in a quasi-experimental research design with post-test surveys conducted afterward using similar questions to gauge any changes in perspectives or attitudes.

Results of Pretest

The quiz was completed by 20 participants (treatment group) before the campaign started. Each question is worth 10 points, for a total of 100. According to the quiz summary, two participants had the highest marks of 70%, while a majority of participants obtained below-average results (14 participants) falling into the 50% to 40% range. Only one participant received the lowest score of 20%, the other two participants received scores of 30% and 60%, respectively. The questions evaluating knowledge and familiarity with Art Biennale and Art Therapy have very low summarised scores, i.e. 45.5% out of 100%. The observed score, which is only 45.5%, is below the passing mark of 70%. This indicates that while participants do enjoy art, they are not well-understood and familiar with the concepts of art therapy and Art Biennale.

Results of Post-Test

The treatment group's post-test findings, involving the 20 participants who finished the quiz after attending the campaign, show a noteworthy outcome. The majority of participants, i.e. 17 participants, received a perfect score of 100%, demonstrating a wider knowledge about Art Biennale and art therapy. Three individuals achieved a slightly lower score of 90%, but their performance was still over the passing mark.

The quiz total summarized results, which measured post-campaign knowledge and familiarity with the topic were reached an impressive 98.5% out of 100%. The results show a considerable increase in participants' awareness and understanding after the campaign, with each question worth 10 marks, for a total of 100.

Post Campaign

After the campaign, the researchers created and edited a comprehensive infographic that highlights the main ideas and results of the event. Furthermore, researchers also created one informative campaign video highlighting the benefits of joining the art therapy campaign. In addition, the campaign's actual expenses were less than the budgeted amount. A thorough report was also prepared, explaining the campaign's implementation, results, and impacts, including the participant feedback, pre-and post-event quizzes, and the campaign's overall success in increasing students' knowledge of Art Biennale and Art Therapy.

Contributions of the Advertising Campaign Project

This advertising campaign featured multiple media materials consisting of three posters, i.e. an event poster titled "Discovering the Perspective: Art Biennale and Art Therapy," a Speaker's Background poster, and an infographic summarising the speaker's talk post-event. Moreover, two promotional videos were produced which were teaser and informative videos.

Posters

The campaign has executed three digital posters, with the event title "Discovering the Perspectives: Art Biennale and Art Therapy". It is mainly to promote and blast in WhatsApp and as a backdrop during the actual event day. Besides, a Speaker's Background poster and it is to showcase the main strategic collaborator in the campaign. Lastly, the infographic particularly summarises the speaker's talk on the actual event.

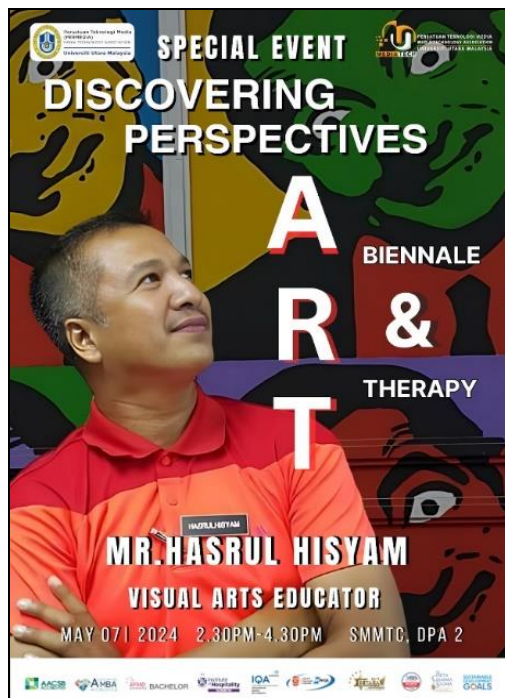


Figure 1: Speaker's Background Poster



Figure 2: Event Poster

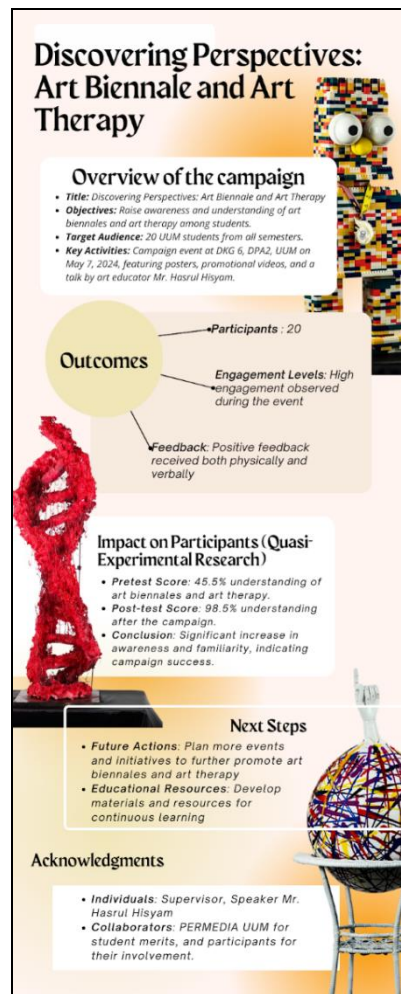


Figure 3: Actual Event Infographic

Promotional Videos

Two promotional videos were produced to captivate and inform the audience about the campaign. The first video, a 40-second teaser, aims to raise awareness for the event "Discovering Perspectives: Art Biennale and Art Therapy." Following that, a 1-minute informative video highlights the key benefits of attending the event for the audience. The videos can be accessed via the teaser link: <https://youtu.be/IXtwdwbHcCk> and the informative video link: <https://youtu.be/tkaSLocYsIQ>.

Conclusion

Consequently, participants from different semesters were effectively involved in the "Discovering the Perspectives of Art Biennale and Art Therapy" campaign, which also improved their understanding of Art Biennale and Art therapy through focused pre- and post-campaign assessments. The collaborative efforts with the expert, who is an experienced art educator, and the student association have contributed significantly to the campaign's success. The inclusion of strong design materials, such as posters and promotional videos, has contributed tremendously towards an expanded comprehension of the topic.

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