RACISM ISSUES IN NIKE BRAND ADVERTISEMENT

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ABSTRACT
Racialism is a social issue that has become a culture in major countries. Many protest movements against social issues, starting from the community, an organization, to a well-known brand, one of which is Nike. Nike is one of the most well-known and successful sports brands in terms of products and athletes in all sports. This is one of the keys to the success of the Nike brand in awakening the world to the issue of racism, which is widely shown through its visual campaign in the form of an official Nike poster advertisement entitled “Believe in something. Even if it means sacrificing everything "Colin Kaepernick," Speaking up doesn’t always make life easier. But easy never changed anything "Raheem Sterling, and George Floyd's official video ad" For once, Don't do it ". The three controversial official Nike advertisements are an interesting topic to discuss in this journal. The method used is a descriptive qualitative method that aims to find out what visual forms the Nike brand is trying to raise in raising the issue of racism by describing the context surrounding the event, describing how the process happened to become an official advertising campaign in the form of a visual object using the technique. semiotics in describing it. The results of this study are to find out how the visual form of Nike's official brand advertisements in conveying the current issue of racism and with a semiotic approach we can find out how Nike is in delivering campaigns about the issue of racism in order to form understanding and sensitivity to the social issues of racism around us.

Keywords: racism, advertisement, poster, video, brand, Nike

INTRODUCTION
Racism is a notion that thinks one race itself is the highest race than any other race. This racism is usually associated with the notion of discrimination of ethnicity, religion, race, tradition, class, or physical characteristics of a person.

15
Liliweri (2005:21), racism is an ideology that is based on discrimination towards a person or group of people, because of race, they even become a political doctrine (Nugroho, 2020). Racism often occurs in the United States, the wave of protests and chaos that occurs in America is the accumulation of black people’s anger that reaches a climax. Aside from Americans on the other hand, sometimes we frequently do racism to those who have different skin colors, whereas bad behavior is not a matter of ethnicity. The casuistic bad behavior is irrelevant to justify that all people of a certain ethnicity are the same which causes a social conflict and the occurrence of an anti-racism movement. (Hidayatullah, 2020).

The resistance movement towards racism that emerged in 2013 has reappeared to claim justice and has gained global support. In Indonesia, some people compare this issue with the Papua issue, one discussion that occurs is that there are double standards in Indonesian people who show great concern for racism in the United States but tend to be silent regarding the discrimination issue related to indigenous Papuans. Most of the racism that occurred in Indonesia was not far different from that that occurred in the United States, this occurrence of discrimination is because race places indigenous Papuans and African Americans socially and economically under the majority group in their respective countries (Dewi, 2020). Both of them have experienced violence both by other community members and by the government. From the social conflicts that occurred, various important momentums in responding and countering racism frequently showed up and were carried out starting from the community, organizations, as well as a big brand that took part in responding to the racism issue that occurred, one of which was Nike. Nike is the largest manufacturer of sports clothing and shoes.

The Nike brand is rapidly gaining popularity around the world, from its products to its famous athletes, The Nike brand is quickly famous around the world, from its products to its famous athletes, especially the Swoosh logo and the slogan “Just Do It” which is Nike’s tagline which is very popular and globally known. The company was founded in Oregon in 1964 with the name of Blue Ribbon Sports by Bill Bowerman which was finally changed to Nike in 1971. (Britannica, 2016). Aside from the producer and athletes, Nike is also famous for its controversial campaigns. Nike tries to create a myth by promoting the value of
equality through sports, that the world of sports is an activity that is more than just a physical competition or winning-loss. Nike wants to create a myth that sports reflect the values of social life such as mutual respect, brotherhood, and equality which later on, this myth can persuade people to consume this brand (Assegaf, 2018). Most of the campaigns created by the Nike brand use a lot of visual objects such as video advertisements and poster advertisements.

The official advertisement from the Nike brand that succeeds to gain the world’s attention nowadays is a campaign that discusses the racism social issue. Nike's official poster advertisement entitled “Believe in something. Even if it means sacrificing everything” Colin Kaepernick, and "Speaking up doesn't always make life easier. But easy never changed anything" Raheem Sterling, as well as an official video advertisement entitled "For once, Don't do it" George Floyd has a simple visual with color and typography that are basic and monochrome that gives an unobtrusive impression but has an attractive meaning.

The visual format displayed by Nike's official brand advertisement to deliver certain messages in a campaign has overall characteristics and similarities, that creates a problem formulation regarding how the visual form of Nike's official brand advertisements in conveying the current issue of racism. With a semiotic approach, we can find out how Nike is delivering campaigns about the issue of racism which aims to raise public awareness of the social issues of racism that frequently occur nowadays to increase public awareness that racism does not only occur in the United States but also in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this case study is the descriptive qualitative method. According to Saryono (2010), the Qualitative method is research that is used to investigate, find, describe, and explain the quality or features of social influences that cannot be explained, measured, or described through a quantitative approach (Hidayat, 2012). According to Sukmadinata (2006), descriptive research is a research characteristic that can reveal various social and natural phenomena in people's lives specifically (Evita, 2020). In this research, the descriptive qualitative method was used to find out everything about racism issue that occurs in Nike's official brand advertisements how the visual form of
Nike's official brand advertisements in conveying the current issue of racism by presenting a complete description of a social setting or to be intended for exploration and clarification of a phenomenon with a process to explain, describe, explore, interpret, construct theory through words, explanations, and quotes.

The data collection method is a technique or method used by a researcher to collect data. Data collection was carried out to obtain the information needed in order to achieve the research objectives (Ciputra Ceo, 2016). The data collection technique used for this research is data observation and literature study by collecting secondary data obtained through medium or indirectly to obtain research objects namely posters and videos obtained through journal reference sources and official Nike brand social media. Data observation and Literature studies were conducted to find out what meaning and message of the visual form of Nike's official brand advertisement was in delivering the current racism issue and literature studies to clarify the problems and theoretical basis of research on racism issues in the Nike brand advertising.

Data analysis techniques are methods or ways to get data into information, therefore that data characteristics become easy to understand and also useful to find problem solutions to research. According to Patton (1980), the data analysis technique is a process of arranging the data sequence, organizing it into a pattern, category, and basic description unit (Hayati, 2019). In this research, the data analysis technique that is used is a qualitative data analysis technique that applies visual semiotics to discuss the basic elements of posters and videos such as layout, typography, and color arranged into widened text, and does not use mathematical calculations or statistics as an analysis tool. The qualitative data analysis techniques used include data collection, data reduction, data interpretation, verification, and confirmation of conclusions which can then be drawn into a conclusion.

Charles Sander Pierce's Visual Semiotics is a record regarding symbolization, representation, reference, and signification that includes three typologies of signs, namely icons, symbols, and index (Apollo, 2019). Icon, index, symbol in this study are used to analyze the visual meaning of Nike's official brand advertisements in conveying the racism issue through a study from the
aspect of basic elements of posters and videos, namely layout, color, and typography.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

A poster is a publication media that contains some content consisting of images and text. Visually attractive, posters have been designed to attract the attention of people passing by, make us aware of a political viewpoint, persuade us to attend a certain event or encourage us to buy a certain product or service (Gallo, 2002). Nike is one of the brands that utilized poster media as a way to expand its campaign. The Nike brand campaign is in the form of official poster advertisements entitled “Believe in something. Even if it means sacrificing everything” Colin Kaepernick, and "Speaking up doesn't always make life easier. But easy never changed anything” Raheem Sterling, is a visual object that discusses the racism issue that frequently occurs recently.

Nike's official poster advertisement entitled “Believe in something. Even if it means sacrificing everything” Colin Kaepernick was published on September 4th, 2020, Nike launched the Colin Kaepernick edition of the Nike “Just Do It” poster campaign published through Kapernick's personal Twitter account. The Colin Kaepernick edition of the poster became one of the most controversial and successful in the campaign. Former American Football athlete who was fired from the NFL after doing an action of kneeling during the national anthem at several games. He protested racial injustice and police brutality towards African Americans in the United States. Although he was ostracized by the community where he expected to be loved and praised, he has a lot of followers for his courage to stand up for the truth, and Nike as Kaepernick's long-term partner also looked at this controversial incident and recorded it. (Essays, 2020).
Figure 1. Colin Kaepernick Poster Published On Kaepernick's Personal Twitter.

The second poster is an official Nike poster advertisement which is also a successful campaign from the Nike brand in discussing the racism issue, that is "Speaking up doesn't always make life easier. But easy never changed anything" Raheem Sterling. Nike has shown their support for Raheem Sterling with the launch of an official Nike poster ad on December 16th, 2018 which was published on Raheem Sterling's Instagram account similar as used in Colin Kaepernick's official Nike ad campaign. Sterling, a Nike athlete, who posted a statement on Instagram has changed the format of sports journalism. He called out the newspaper, quoting two Daily Mail articles, for facilitating to trigger racism and aggressive behavior with unfair coverage regarding the private lives of black players compared to white players. His statement occurred after he was harassed by Chelsea fans at Stamford Bridge during Manchester City's first defeat of the 2018 season (Baines, 2018).

Figure 2. Raheem Sterling Poster Published On Sterling’s Personal Instagram.

Aside from the visual object in the form of a poster, Nike also created a campaign that raised the racism issue in the form of videos. Video is an electronic signals transmission technology from a moving image or typography. Common applications of video signals such as television and digital media, however, it can
also be used in other applications in the engineering, science, production, and security sectors. (Materi, 2020). Nike's official video that is popular in discussing the racism issue is entitled "For once, Don't do it" by George Floyd. Nike uploaded the video on Friday, May 30, 2020, which was published via Nike's official Twitter. In that video, Nike wrote a sentence countering towards racism after protesters in the United States went down to the street to protest the death of George Floyd, an American citizen of African descendant who was killed at the hands of Minneapolis police. (Lain, 2020).

![Image of Nike video](https://www.forbes.com/sites/sethcohen/2020/05/30/for-once-dont-do-it---the-powerful-idea-behind-nikes-new-anti-racism-ad/?sh=37581c522fdb)

Figure 3. Video “For once, Don’t Do It.” Published on Nike Official Twitter.

The death of George Floyd afterward went viral on all social media and spread all over the world. Floyd's death was caused by a white police officer who press on Floyd's neck, who was laying facing down with his knee. Floyd, who was sighing and suffocated then sentenced died after police pinned him on his neck for almost 9 minutes (Lain, 2020). Nike's official 1-minute video, which showed Nike which is famous for the slogan "Just Do It", is now using a new slogan, "Don't Do It", to show its objection towards racism. Those three official Nike brand advertisements have a discussion that carries out the racism issue in them.
From those three official Nike brand advertisements, the whole visual form displayed by Nike also has similarities in terms of layout, color, and typography.

The layout is a part of the design and plays an important role which refers to the arrangement of elements on a poster or video which usually refers to the placement of certain images, text, and styles. Layout in the poster design is very important. Because this matter determines in delivering the message to the audience. A well-made can enhance the appearance of certain objects and objects as a whole design to create a strong composition. In the two Nike official brand poster advertisements, the visuals that Nike tries to highlight are close-ups of the faces of Colin Kapernick and also Raheem Sterling. The two faces of those athletes dominate the overall poster to become an important image from that visual as seen in Figure 4 with a green line.

The text that reads “Believe in something. Even if it means sacrificing everything” and "Speaking up doesn't always make life easier. But easy never changed anything" are placed in the middle position in a simple style and not dominating the poster as seen in Figure 4 with purple lines. And for the logo of the Nike brand is placed under the text with a visual that is rather small and they do not dominate as in Figure 4 with a blue line. This is nearly similar to the official Nike brand video advertisement layout.

Figure 4. Colin Kapernick and Raheem Sterling on Nike Official Brand Advertising Poster Layout.
Source: https://www.nbcnews.com/business/consumer/nike-takes-heat-new-kaepernick-ad-n906311
In the official Nike brand video advertisement, the layout of the typographic text becomes the focal point in the video. This 1-minute duration video only displays text in the form of sentences with simple typography that is clearly positioned in the middle without any additional design or graphic that aims purely to highlight and focus the existing sentences to the audience. Text containing sentences, "For once, don’t do it. Don’t pretend there’s not a problem in America. Don’t turn your back on racism. Don’t Accept Lives being taken from us. Don’t make any more excuses. Don’t think this doesn't affect you. Don't sit back and be silent. Don't' think you can't be a part of the change. Let's all be part of the change." is the focal point that Nike tries to convey to the audience to get them to spend all their time focused on the text.


Typography on posters as well as videos refers to the type of font and style used. One of the most neglected however is the key aspect of posters and videos is the use of the font. The font used in the three official Nike brand advertisements is Palatino Regular (Bodkin, 2019). As a whole, it's a font that the Nike brand
uses very often in their campaigns. The use of these fonts helps to convey the message in a less flashy way. In the three Nike official brand advertisements, the typography in the Nike official brand advertisement is in the form of a text sentence: “Believe in something. Even if it means sacrificing everything” and “Speaking up doesn't always make life easier. But easy never changed anything” and “For once, don't do it. Don't pretend there's not a problem in America. Don't turn your back on racism. Don't Accept Lives being taken from us. Don't make any more excuses. Don't think this doesn't affect you. Don't sit back and be silent. Don’t think you can’t be a part of the change. Let’s all be part of the change.”. The quantity of text is limited to a few words, in order to leave a lasting impression, the text uses a simple look with the help of colour nuances that support effective communication and fonts that are easy to read.

![Image](https://www.nbcnews.com/business/consumer/nike-takes-heat-new-kaepernick-ad-n906311)

![Image](https://iamkomex.com/nike-spotlights-soccer-star-raheem-sterling-for-his-outspokenness-in-new-advert/)

![Image](https://www.designboom.com/design/for-once-dont-do-it-nike-anti-racism-ad-01-06-2020/)

Figure 6. The Sentences Text on the Three Official Nike Brand Advertisements.

Source:
https://www.nbcnews.com/business/consumer/nike-takes-heat-new-kaepernick-ad-n906311

Colour is a universally appreciated language and can communicate many things. Colour can be used to demonstrate a certain meaning or simply to create a unifying background (Jenskins & Frasher, 2019). that regard is because each colour has a different category and specific meaning. In these three official Nike
brand advertisements, the nuances used are grayscale or black, grey, and white. Taking advantage of the absence of intense colours and the prevalence of grayscale to enhance the impact of posters and videos. It increases the chances of the advertisements being seen and read more (Essays, 2020)

![Figure 7. Black and White Grayscale Color Palette. Source: https://www.schemecolor.com/wallpaper?i=37498&desktop](https://www.schemecolor.com/wallpaper?i=37498&desktop)

**Visual Semiotic Analysis**

To obtain the meaning and visual message of the three official Nike brand advertisements in conveying the current racism issue, the discussion regarding aforementioned the basic elements of posters and videos will be developed through a visual semiotic approach, which includes three typologies, namely icons, indexes, and symbols.

According to Pierce, the icon is a sign that resembles the shape of the original object. It can also be referred to as the relationship between signs and objects that are similar. The purpose of the icon is to give a message of its original form (Thabroni, 2018). The icons in the two official Nike brand posters are the faces of Kaepernick and Sterling who become the main characters with expressions of showing seriousness and determination, the original faces of the two athletes as icons of human figures with serious expressions that show the importance of the message conveyed by the poster. These two posters emphasize their facial expression as an icon by showing the clarity of those features. Kaepernick and Sterling are having controversial backgrounds corresponding to
the racism issue. They are known as anti-racism athletes since the protest movements were carried out by each athlete towards the issue. With the appropriate background, and also as athletes from the Nike brand, Nike also made these two athletes the right icons to be the faces of Nike's official brand posters.

Posters are focused on reducing textual content by using only simple text in the middle of the poster and images to become several signs, because the greater the information quantity in the poster, the lower the quality. That brand doesn’t focus on logo and slogan to highlight the importance of a social view, as a means to inform the audience that’s all they need to focus on.

![Figure 8. Kaepernick and Sterling Face as Icons.](https://www.nbcnews.com/business/consumer/nike-takes-heat-new-kaepernick-ad-n906311)

In the advertisement video of the official Nike brand, what becomes the icon in that video is the sentence text "Don't do it". This sentence is a famous Nike slogan, namely "Just Do It", that is spoofed by Nike to describe an expression of the voice of Nike as a big brand that shows the rejection of racism. The slogan "Just Do It" itself is a slogan that is often used by Nike in making sports campaigns as a motivation and an invitation for the audience to keep the spirit of doing things to be done, therefore Nike changed their iconic slogan to "Don't do it", Nike for the first time invited the audience not to do the things mentioned in the official advertising video in sentence text format. The use of simple text and fonts by changing the important slogan that is as the icon of the
Nike brand is a serious depiction towards information to be conveyed which explains that the racism issue is not an issue that can be underestimated.

Figure 9. Nike Slogan Text “Don’t Do It.” as an Icon.

The index is a sign that is related to the thing that has causal nature, or cause and effect. In this regard, the sign has a causal relationship with the object. That sign implies the consequence of a message to be conveyed (Thabroni, 2018). The index in the three Nike official brand advertisements is to take advantage of the absence of intense colours and the prevalence of grayscale to increase the impact of the three Nike official brand advertisements. The significance of colour generates an emotional response through the association and interpretation of colour. Grayscale is a variety of monochromatic colour nuances from black, grey, and become white. The black colour has a meaning of strength and calmness, grey colour has a meaning of safety and conventionality, while white means purity and cleanliness (Graphie, 2020).

The use of grayscale colours was used which aimed to provoke an emotional response that connected through the entire background of the official advertisement, which encourages the controversial aspect behind the image, that is the racism issue. The strength of the grey colour between black and white has a message that means the grey area is a neutral between the black and white races as a merging point between the two, on the other hand, the grey colour also depicts the peace between the black and white races. A poster or video advertisement that displays the nuance of black, grey, and white are more concerned with the message content of the advertisement compared to a poster or
video that uses more colour. Take advantage of the lack of colour, this matter can increase the advertisement to be seen and read more.


A symbol is a sign that is related to the signifier. That something is symbolized through a sign that is agreed by the signifiers as a general reference (Thabroni, 2018). The symbol in the three official Nike brand advertisements is the logo of the Nike brand itself which is displayed in the three official advertisements. The Nike logo symbol is a copyright form of these three campaigns and is also a method of Nike's brand to promote its brand. The Nike logo shown also clearly depicts that Nike has proven that the brand has sympathy towards the racism issue that occurs. This logo symbol doesn't take up visual width, is assisted by text, and images, fulfil space and promotes visual simplicity. To leave a lasting impression, posters and videos use a simple display to communicate effectively and fonts that are easy to read.

![The Nike Logo in the Three Official Advertisements as a Symbol](image-url)
The following is a table of the analysis results of the visual semiotics meaning according to Charles Sander Pierce, which summarizes the theory and discussion of the icons, indexes, and symbols above:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Num.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Visuals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Icon</td>
<td>The faces of Kaepernick and Sterling who are the main characters in the poster, with expressions of seriousness and strong determination. Kaepernick and Sterling have a controversial background related to the issue of racism. They are known as anti-racism athletes since the protest movements were carried out by each athlete towards the issue, As well as this sentence is a famous Nike slogan, namely “Just Do It”, that is spoofed by Nike to describe an expression of the voice of Nike as a big brand that shows the rejection of racism.</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Icon Visual" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>index</td>
<td>Black, gray and white colors and the absence of intense colors, and the prevalence of grayscale colors to increase the impact of posters that cause emotional background responses, namely racism through color associations and interpretations. The strength of the gray color between black and white has a message that the gray area is a neutral meaning between the black and white races as a merging point between the two. A poster or video advertisement that displays nuances of black,</td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Index Visual" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

gray, and white is more concerned with the message content of the advertisements.

3.

Symbol

The Nike logo symbol is a copyright form of these three campaigns and is also as a method of Nike brand to promote its brand. The Nike logo shown also clearly depicting that Nike has proven that the brand has sympathy towards the racism issue that occurs

Table 1. Visual Analysis

**CONCLUSION**

The protest movement towards the racism issue has received attention and criticism from the public and various organizations in the world, one of which is the Nike brand. has received attention and criticism from the public and various organizations in the world, one of which is the Nike brand. Nike is one of the most famous and successful sports brands in terms of products and athletes in all kinds of sports. Apart from the producer and athletes counterpart, Nike is also famous for its controversial campaigns. Campaign posters and videos from the Nike official brand advertisements that are successfully played by Colin Kaepernick and Raheem Sterling as well as the video "For Once, Don't Do It", have a strong message to be conveyed which is based on a strong background and history.

Based on the analysis of the meaning and visual message of the Nike brand poster “Believe in something, even it means sacrificing everything.” Colin Kaepernick, and "Speaking up doesn't always make life easier. But easy never changed anything" Raheem Sterling, as well as the video "For Once, Don't Do It" that has been collected, the poster has an important visual meaning and message that can be described using Charles Sanders Pierce's visual semiotics that is, although the font and color are simple, the posters and videos tells a lot. The visual form and the sentences presented indicate the association between Nike
and its two athletes as well as the occurrence of invitation video by educating the audience to be aware of the importance of the movement to support Anti-Racialism and be sensitive to these social issues.

Posters and videos from Nike’s official brand advertisements are very simple, simple typography, colour schemes that only use grayscale, as well as brand logos that do not dominate, all of which are done to effectively bring awareness to the social issue of racism around the world community, including those around us in Indonesia. Provided by Nike’s official brand advertisement. Most of the racism that occurred in Indonesia does not have many differences from what happened in the United States, the presence of discrimination because race places indigenous Papuans and African-Americans socially and economically under the majority group in their respective countries. From the social conflicts that occurred, various important moments were carried out in responding to and countering racism. Irrelevant bad behavior to justify that all people of a certain ethnicity have similar characteristics which cause a social conflict and the occurrence of the anti-racism movements.

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