

Investigation of the Impact of Celebrity Endorsement on Consumer Behavior

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Abstract: *Over the years, the frequency of celebrity endorsements has increased. It is increasingly becoming a crucial component of the advertising sector, especially in India. Celebrity endorsement has evolved into a lucrative industry worth billions of dollars in India. Marketers employ celebrity endorsements to sway consumers' purchasing decisions with the aim of increasing sales and expanding market shares. This inspired the author to examine the impact of celebrity endorsements on client buying behavior.*

This article analyses the attitudes of Indian consumers towards celebrity endorsements, the specific celebrity characteristics that are most likely to influence consumer purchase intentions, and the effect of celebrity endorsements on customers' intents to make a purchase. The study illustrates that celebrity endorsements have a positive impact on client purchasing intent.

Keywords: Consumer behaviour, Celebrity endorsement, exposure, strategic approach

I. INTRODUCTION

Customers are regularly exposed to a multitude of voices and visuals through various media channels such as magazines, newspapers, billboards, the internet, radio, and television. Every company aims to capture even a small portion of an individual's time to communicate the exceptional and distinctive features of their product. The challenge for the marketer is to design a captivating hook that captures attention. The utilization of celebrity endorsements is a commonly employed marketing strategy to accomplish this goal.

In the contemporary period, individuals often ignore commercials and advertisements when they engage in activities such as reading magazines, newspapers, or watching television. Nevertheless, the allure of a celebrity is seldom disregarded. Hence, the utilization of celebrity endorsement in advertising and its impact on the overall brand have immense significance. This approach involves the recruitment of prominent figures from a certain industry to feature in the advertising campaigns of companies. Aligning the promotional attributes and visuals of a product with the image of a celebrity tends to influence a consumer's decision in favor of one brand over another. Businesses devote significant financial resources to establish associations between their brands and endorsers. These endorsers are perceived as enthusiastic and possessing both appealing and affable qualities, and companies aim to convey these characteristics to their products through marketing communications. In contemporary highly crowded settings, celebrities play a crucial role not only in attracting and maintaining attention, but also in achieving exceptional rates of remembering marketing messages.

Similarly, every product is accompanied by an image. The consumer seeks to acquire a brand that aligns perfectly with their personality or image. The celebrity endorser serves as a bridge between these two interactions. Their goal is to align the product's image with the consumer's expectations by transferring some of the cultural connotations connected with their own image to the product. Our study focused on analyzing the impact of celebrity endorsement on the overall brand-building process and aimed to determine strategies for creating a mutually beneficial relationship between the brand and the endorser. The brand of a corporation is its most valuable asset.

Advertisers commonly hold the belief that brand communication messages presented by celebrities and famous personalities are more effective in attracting, capturing attention, and being remembered compared to communications delivered by non-celebrities. In the current highly competitive environment, the swift distribution and impact of messages are of utmost importance. When a brand hires celebrities, it is important for them to be cautious in order to

ensure that their promise, legitimacy, and desired effect are fulfilled. Celebrities are highly sought after because of their ability to effectively stand out from the crowd and captivate the consumer's attention and concentration. Additionally, they effectively cultivate a strong inclination in the consumer's psyche to acquire the goods promoted by their beloved celebrity.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Approaching the Indian market is not a straightforward task for advertisers. The nation's population of one billion is characterized by a wide range of beliefs, ethnicities, states, cultures, languages, practices, and values. The country's economic disparity has led to a substantial separation between a large number of poor and upper middle class citizens, with a very small middle class population. This highlights a notable disparity in buying power and the ability to make decisions, which advertising should take into account. In Indian advertising, recall and persuasion have been given considerable importance as signals that distinguish brands from one another. (Dixit, 2005).

Advertisers often employ a range of advertising strategies to impact customer brand selection behavior, and celebrity endorsements are a particularly common choice. The source cited is Alsmadi (2006).

A celebrity is an individual who gains extensive public recognition from a certain group of people and leverages this fame to endorse a consumer goods through appearances in advertisements. The source is McCracken's work from 1989. They are generally renowned for their achievements in domains other than the goods they endorse. This applies not only to well-known figures like actors such as Shah Rukh Khan, models like Milan Somen, sportsmen like Sachin Tendulkar, and entertainers like Maliaka Arora Khan, but also to less prominent groups like businesses such as the Ambanis or politicians like Rahul Gandhi.(Schlecht, 2003).

Given the long-standing fascination of Indians with movie stars, it is unsurprising to witness the increasing prevalence of celebrity endorsements in commercials, especially in India. Undoubtedly, certain individuals are seen to hold great admiration for, imitate, and develop a strong liking towards their preferred superstars. This is precisely why celebrity endorsement has emerged as an immensely successful advertising strategy. The citation is from McCutcheon et al. (2013).

Comparison between celebrities Efficacy of endorsements by non-celebrities

The presence of celebrity endorsements in marketing campaigns is not accidental. Research suggests that celebrities are significantly more effective as endorsers compared to other sorts of endorsers, such as firm executives, regular consumers, and professional experts. The reference "Seno & Lukas, 2007" is provided.

Tom et al. (1992) found that, according to the classical conditioning model, endorsers who were not celebrities were more successful than celebrity endorsers in establishing a connection with the product. This argument was grounded on the premise that companies possessed enhanced authority over the endorsers they created, tailoring these characters to align with their brand and target audience. Additionally, these characters were restricted from endorsing several brands. Conversely, the celebrity endorsers had cultivated their own distinct identities over a period of time, resulting in the firm relinquishing its authority over them.

According to Mehta (1994), there were variations in cognitive responses between the situations where celebrities supported the product and where non-celebrities endorsed it. However, there were no significant statistical differences in attitudes towards advertising or the willingness to buy the recommended brand.

However, Atkin and Block (1983) and Petty et al. (1983) shown that celebrity endorsers generated more favorable attitudes towards advertising and more purchase intentions compared to non-celebrity endorsers.

The utilization of celebrity endorsement as a strategic approach

Enlisting famous individuals to promote products is a well-established strategy that has been effectively utilized by top-tier corporations like Nike and Pepsi. Since the 1950s, HLL has employed Hindi film stars to endorse their beauty soap Lux in India. Vimal, Thums Up, Gwalior, and Dinesh are further brands that employed celebrity endorsements during the initial stages of mass advertising.

Marketers believe that celebrity endorsements offer several advantages, with the primary ones being the establishment of legitimacy, the promotion of trust, and the attraction of attention. These factors can ultimately lead to higher sales for

the company. How does one ascertain whether or not to incorporate a celebrity in an advertisement? It is preferable for this to be regulated by the communication concept. According to Parmeswaran, the Executive Director of FCB Ulka, celebrity endorsements are advocated by advertising experts when appropriate. There are several situations where it is necessary to use a celebrity to overcome overcrowding in a certain category. At times, celebrity endorsement is used to bolster the credibility of a brand's product or service.

The consensus among analysts is that employing celebrity endorsements carefully may be a highly effective marketing strategy. Mohammed Khan, Chairman of Enterprise Nexus, stated that employing a celebrity alone is not a disastrous idea if executed well. There are several instances of both favorable and unfavorable celebrity utilization.

While several firms, like Parker Pens and ICICI Home Loans, have effectively utilized Amitabh Bachchan's Big B persona, others have been unsuccessful in doing so. According to Parmeswaran, we hired athletes such as Rahul Dravid to work for Castrol in order to differentiate ourselves from others and instill a feeling of reliability in the brand. Nevertheless, there are individuals who have minimal confidence in celebrity endorsements. Adrian Mendonza, the Executive Vice President and Creative Director of Rediffusion DY&R, does not support the use of celebrity endorsements. He holds the belief that in order for a company to achieve genuine success, it must establish its own unique character. It is advisable to avoid seeking success by leveraging the popularity of a celebrity.

The utilization of celebrity endorsements is a crucial factor in achieving marketing success

Individuals may exhibit varying degrees of belief or scepticism towards your assertion that a product or service has the potential to aid them. Ultimately, it is advantageous for you to market and offer your services. Nevertheless, individuals tend to be more inclined to listen to and trust celebrities when they assert that a particular product or service has benefitted them and can benefit others as well. Ultimately, most people hold the belief that "he would not make such a statement if it were not factually accurate."

Melissa St. James, a doctoral fellow and marketing instructor at The George Washington University, conducted research on the impact of celebrity endorsements. Her findings indicate that including celebrities in advertisements can increase consumers' awareness of the ad, capture their attention, and enhance the memorability of the advertising.

The impact of celebrity branding on consumers

An established fact is that the most impactful endorsements achieve a harmonious equilibrium between the product (brand) and the celebrity. Bestowing a brand with a 'face' extends beyond a mere marketing strategy aimed at generating sales or capturing market dominance; it is a pivotal choice that holds the power to permanently transform the trajectory of the brand. Therefore, the selection of the celebrity is crucial and usually depends on various factors such as attractiveness, look, fame, or even a fictional character to promote a brand.

In the current highly competitive markets, leading brands directly compete with each other by offering items that are equivalent to those of their rivals. From which source does a brand get its competitive advantage - advertising, service, or a commitment to trust? Advertising is considered the optimal medium for companies to engage in competition, by utilizing top-tier advertising agencies and enlisting highly influential celebrities. What would be the precise formula for achieving success? A robust creative agency, a substantial promotional budget, and a renowned celebrity promoting your brand would instill a brand management team with a feeling of assurance, triumph, and superiority over a competitor's brand. This method has gained momentum in the previous decade, as seen by the importance of a celebrity-brand pairing and their varied roles as brand ambassadors.

In India, individuals are greatly fascinated by cinema stars, cricketers, politicians, and even criminals. What is the reason? With populations surpassing 1 billion and continuing to grow, regular individuals require a source of inspiration or a role model to admire. Individuals seek a feeling of safety, respect, ease, recognition, and, above all, a person they aspire to emulate in secret. An astute marketer leverages the allure of celebrities to effectively achieve his objectives by delivering profitable results, capturing market share, and fostering brand recall. Nevertheless, what is the threshold for an excessive amount of star power? A young child inquired of her mother, "Does Amitabh truly utilize Tide laundry detergent?" Her mother laughs and responds, "Definitely not; it's a mere marketing ploy." What is the impact of this on the brand?

Although celebrity endorsements have the potential to bring rewards, they also raise the level of risk for marketers and therefore require careful and skillful management. When a brand uses celebrities to confirm the truthfulness of its claims and the success of its desired impact, it should be careful and cautious. A celebrity's endorsement does not guarantee success. The utilization of celebrity endorsements must be synchronized with the characteristics of the target market and the other elements of the marketing mix, such as product design, branding, packaging, and pricing. Furthermore, it is imperative that the celebrity's message delivery is unambiguous and concentrated. This can be achieved by aligning the essence of the brand with the product or by leveraging the influence of a celebrity, as this guarantees that individuals will take notice and ideally retain the company's message.

In order to have a deeper comprehension of how celebrity endorsements enhance sales and impact brands in the long run, it is crucial to take into account the social and cultural environment of the customer. Celebrities often serve as a prime example of the appeal of reference groups. This offers a significant benefit for a marketer and brand that can leverage the star's success to promote their brand. Thus, individuals who idolize their celebrities possess an inherent affection for the industry that their idols promote. Over time, individuals tend to believe that by embracing the brand that their celebrity promotes, they might become more similar to the celebrity. There are four primary roles that celebrities can fulfill: testimonial, endorsement, actor, and spokesman.

III. CONCLUSION

Individuals in India have a predilection for residing within the realm of their aspirations. They hold celebrities in high esteem. This may encompass sports players such as Sachin Tendulkar and Mahendra Singh Dhoni, or cinema stars like Shah Rukh Khan and John Abraham. They perceive them as godlike. Marketers utilize this preposition to influence whether their target clients are existing or potential. To achieve this, they recruit these exceptional individuals and compensate them with exorbitant amounts of money. They believe that by doing this, their products will be linked with their intended customers. This phenomenon is commonly referred to as celebrity endorsement.

Although celebrity endorsements have the potential to bring significant advantages, they can significantly amplify the risks for marketers and therefore require meticulous handling and expertise. A brand should be cautious when using celebrities to validate the truthfulness of its promises and the success of its desired impact. The growing prevalence of legendary figures as public figures and their impact on specific demographics provide sufficient proof of the people's need for influential role models. As celebrities shift from being solely focused on commercial endeavors to endorsing public welfare messages, a new layer is introduced to this process, enabling us to gain a thorough comprehension of the impact celebrities have on various areas and demographics through their familiar endorsements.

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