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IMPACT OF BRAND CELEBRITY ON CONSUMER PURCHASE INTENTIONS: A STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO SELECTED MOBILE SERVICE PROVIDERS IN HYDERABAD CITY

NAGUNURI SRINIVAS
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
ST. JOSEPH'S PG COLLEGE
KINGKOTI

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the consumers attitudes toward the Brand celebrity advertisement and their intent to purchase the advertised product. Participants were asked to answer a questionnaire and in-depth Interview that corresponded with Selected Brand advertisements and celebrities. The dependent variables purchase intentions, attitude toward the ad and celebrity were measured against the independent variables Source of information, essential features and Celebrity qualities using one-way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) and Chi-square χ^2 Test. Findings indicated that celebrity endorsements generated higher purchase intentions, positive attitudes toward the ad and positive attitudes toward the brand.

KEYWORDS

Brand celebrity, advertisement, consumes attitudes, purchase intention.

INTRODUCTION

In these days it is essential for every company to use the celebrity in advertisement to increase the company market share, Brand Image and in India celebrities are idolized as Gods and marketers have been trying their best to tap on this emotional connect of the people with the celebrities. Today, most of the popular brands are being endorsed by a famous personality either from entertainment industry or sports arena. Due to the competition among the various companies from different segments and places everyday consumers are exposed to thousands of voices and images in magazines, newspapers, and on billboards, websites, radio and television. Every brand attempts to steal at least a fraction of a person's time to inform him or her of the amazing and different attributes of the product at hand. The challenge of the marketer is to find a hook that will hold the subject's attention. In helping to achieve this, use of celebrity endorsers is a widely used marketing strategy.

In 1995, the Indian cellular industry looked very promising. With ever increasing globalization and expanding business activities, cell phones became a necessity for business on the move. The younger generation also began to flaunt the cell phone as a status symbol. Soon cell phones were being used not only as a tool for communication but also as a source of entertainment.

India's telecom industry is emerging as one of the biggest advertising spenders every year. In a country that has emerged as the biggest ad spenders in Asia-Pacific region, advertising has become a mainstream activity for most telecom operators. The industry witnessed an annual growth of 27% over May 2009 in advertising expenditure (Website, IndianTelevision).

DEFINITION: "Any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of the consumer good by appearing with it an advertisement" (McCracken 1989)¹.

"Celebrities can make people take notice of what they are endorsing and create an immediate identity or person for a product" (Cooper, 1984)².

"Celebrities increase your odds of getting attention, make the copy more memorable, humanize the company, add glamour to the product, and make it more desirable, credible and trusted. For these reasons advertisers seek out celebrities to promote their products" Spielman (1981)³.

"A celebrity endorser is an individual who is known to the public (actor, sports star a entertainer, etc) for his or her achievements in areas other than that of the product class endorsed" (Friedman 1979)⁴.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Due to the availability of variety of channels, many entertainment programmes and remote control devices, the reach of advertisement is very poor. To make the advertisement more attractive, advertising agencies and companies are using celebrities. Purpose of this study was to investigate the influencing factors on consumers buying behaviour, Attitude towards the celebrity advertisements and purchase intentions of the endorsed product and what all qualities required to make the celebrity advertisement more colorful.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the consumer perception towards Brand celebrity Advertisement
2. To analyse the factors influencing on consumer Purchase intentions
3. To identify the influence of celebrity endorsement on consumer Purchase intentions.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study will facilitate in understanding the consumer attitude towards the advertisements, their choice of celebrities. This study is confined to selected brands of prepaid mobile services in Hyderabad.

The study offers an extended scope for further research will give new information about brand ambassador's selection in advertisements. With the help of the findings of the study the cellular companies can formulate the appropriate new strategies in selecting the brand ambassadors to change the customers buying decisions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study exploratory research design is adopted with special emphasis on brand celebrity impact on consumer buying decisions with reference to selected prepaid mobile services. This study involves carrying out original research in order to meet the organizations continual need for new information for forward decision making. The analysis of the research findings should take place, resulting in proposals about how to manage relevant aspects of the organization's future.

SAMPLE DESIGN

For the purpose of the study, a sample of 250 consumers living in Hyderabad city was selected on Convenience sampling basis.

DATA SOURCES & COLLECTION METHODS

The primary data includes a comprehensive survey questionnaire and Interview administered to different consumers already using the mobile services. Questionnaire is designed to elicit data on impactation of Brand celebrities on consumer buying behaviour in Hyderabad. The questionnaire for the most part is structured, and most of the questions are combined with a set of possible answers to a question.

The secondary data was gathered from the published Literature surveys and magazines. A part of information has been collected from the web-sites and popular search engines.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chris (2003)¹ has analyzed 'Telecom advertising in print media.' This research attempted to investigate why Telecom theme are used in advertisement, and the motives that lead companies and advertisers to use sport celebrities and sport concept in advertisements. From study it has been revealed that the appearance of sport celebrities in advertising endorsement occurred more often in Telecom magazines than in other magazines, because their target group is more acquainted with athletes. The sport celebrities that dominated each printed media are related with their target group characteristics.

Subhadip Roy² "An Exploratory Study in Celebrity Endorsements" This study raises three questions and attempts to provide tentative explanations for them. The first two questions relate to locating, in the consumer's perceptual space, the relative position of Indian celebrities and brands on a set of personality attributes. The third question relates to determining the fit between the celebrity and the brands endorsed by her/him. The results suggest that consumers differentially rank both celebrities and brands. Specifically, Amitabh Bachchan ranks high on five personality attributes, and brands such as Pepsi and Coke rank high on four personality attributes. The study further shows that although celebrities may endorse several brands, their personality does not fit well with the personality of the brand they endorse. Evidence offered here supports the basic assumptions of the celebrity-product congruence model.

Smita Sharma³ "Celebrity Endorsement-is it the only Recipe for Marketers" in this study she concluded 4 important that 1.Using celebrities can increase consumers awareness of the ad, capture their attention and make ads more memorable,2.There should be a perfect fit between the brand and celebrity to create a proper association and clarity, 3.Unless accompanied by a powerful idea there's a good chance that the communication could sink into another clutter of celebrity-endorsed advertising, and 4.consumers now look at celebrities as entertainers also, not as mere models. So, the advertising campaigns should send a clear message of entertainment.

Kahle & Homer⁴ conducted a study using celebrities that measured their physical attractiveness, their likeability, and their involvement in the products they were endorsing, and then measured attitude and purchase intentions. Print advertisements were used, eleven real and one fictitious. Their results correspond with the previous studies showing that the more likeable and attractive the celebrity the more favorable attitudes consumers had toward the ad and the product; it also showed consumers. had greater purchase intentions for that product.

Atkin and Block⁵ proposed that a celebrity endorser will have a greater impact on responses, be more credible, and create more favorable attitudes toward the product than a non-celebrity. A whisky magazine ad featuring Telly Savalas, a newspaper beer ad featuring Happy Hairston and another whisky magazine ad featuring Cheryl Tiegs, were all compared to non-celebrity versions of the same ads. For all age groups the celebrity figure was perceived as more competent, trustworthy, and rated more positively than the non-celebrity versions.

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

Hypothesis: There is no significance association between the Gender of the respondents and the attitude towards the celebrity advertisement.

TABLE NO. 1.1: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS GENDER WISE

| S.No | Gender | Attitude Level | | | Total |
|-------|--------|----------------|----------|------------|-------|
| | | Negative | Neutral | Positive | |
| 1. | Male | 38(15.2%) | 7(2.8%) | 138(55.2%) | 183 |
| 2. | Female | 12(5.6%) | 17(7.6%) | 38(16.4%) | 67 |
| Total | | 50 | 24 | 176 | 250 |

The above table1.1 reveals that the majority of the respondents are falling under the Male category. The calculated χ^2 Value (26.44) is grater than the Table value (3.841) at 5% Level of significance for 1 Degree of freedom Hence the hypothesis that there is significant association between the sex of the respondents and attitude of the respondents towards Celebrity Advertisement.

Hypothesis: There is no significance association between the age of the respondents and the attitude towards the celebrity advertisement.

TABLE NO.1.2: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS AGE WISE

| S.No | Age | Attitude Level | | | Total |
|-------|-----------------|----------------|---------|-----------|-------|
| | | Negative | Neutral | Positive | |
| 1. | Below 20 years | 9(3.6%) | 3(1.2%) | 65(26%) | 77 |
| 2. | 21-30 years | 13(5.2%) | 7(2.8%) | 72(28.8%) | 92 |
| 3. | 31-40 years | 12(4.8%) | 4(1.6%) | 16(6.4%) | 32 |
| 4. | 41-50years | 7(2.8%) | 2(1.6%) | 19(7.6%) | 28 |
| 5. | 51years & above | 13(5.2%) | 3(1.2%) | 5(2%) | 21 |
| Total | | 54 | 19 | 177 | 250 |

It could be understood from table1.2 that the majority of the respondents are falling under the Age group of below 20years & 21-30 years category. The calculated χ^2 Value (35.14) is grater than the Table value (15.507) at 5% Level of significance for 8 Degree of freedom Hence the hypothesis that there is significant association between the Age of the respondents and attitude of the respondents towards Celebrity Advertisement.

Hypothesis: There is no significance association between the marital status of the respondents and the attitude towards the celebrity advertisement.

TABLE NO.1.3: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS MARITAL STATUS WISE

| S.No | Marital status | Attitude Level | | | Total |
|-------|----------------|----------------|----------|------------|-------|
| | | Negative | Neutral | Positive | |
| 1. | Married | 37(14.8%) | 13(5.2%) | 112(44.8%) | 162 |
| 2. | Unmarried | 11(4.4%) | 2(0.8%) | 75(30%) | 88 |
| Total | | 48 | 15 | 187 | 250 |

It is an evident from the above Table 1.3 that the majority of the respondents are falling under the Married category. The calculated χ^2 Value (8.16) is grater than the Table value (3.841) at 5% Level of significance for 1 Degree of freedom Hence the hypothesis that there is significant association between the marital status of the respondents and attitude of the respondents towards Celebrity Advertisement.

Hypothesis: There is no significance association between the Level of Education of the respondents and the attitude towards the celebrity advertisement.

TABLE NO.1.4: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS EDUCATION LEVEL WISE

| S.No | Education | Attitude Level | | | Total |
|-------|--------------|----------------|----------|-----------|-------|
| | | Negative | Neutral | Positive | |
| 1. | Below SSC | 0(0%) | 2(0.8%) | 11(4.4%) | 13 |
| 2. | SSC | 7(2.8%) | 1(0.4%) | 19(7.6%) | 27 |
| 3. | Intermediate | 11(4.4%) | 5(2%) | 18(7.2%) | 34 |
| 4. | Degree | 9(3.6%) | 16(6.4%) | 68(27.2%) | 93 |
| 5. | P.G | 13(5.2%) | 7(2.8%) | 51(20.4%) | 71 |
| 6. | Others | 1(0.4%) | 2(0.8%) | 9(3.6%) | 12 |
| Total | | 41 | 33 | 176 | 250 |

It is clear from the above table 1.4 that the majority of the respondents are falling under the Degree and Pg category. The calculated χ^2 Value (17.64) is less than the Table value (18.30) at 5% Level of significance for 10 Degree of freedom Hence the hypothesis that there is no significant association between the Education of the respondents and attitude of the respondents towards Celebrity Advertisement is accepted.

Hypothesis: There is no significance association between the Level of Occupation of the respondents and the attitude towards the celebrity advertisement.

TABLE NO.1.5: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS OCCUPATION WISE

| S.No | Occupation | Attitude Level | | | Total |
|-------|--------------|----------------|---------|-----------|-------|
| | | Negative | Neutral | Positive | |
| 1. | Business | 10(4%) | 7(2.8%) | 17(6.8%) | 34 |
| 2. | Employed | 9(3.6%) | 3(1.2%) | 43(17.2%) | 55 |
| 3. | Professional | 22(8.8%) | 3(1.2%) | 14(5.6%) | 39 |
| 4. | Students | 2(0.8%) | 4(1.6%) | 29(11.6%) | 35 |
| 5. | Others | 48(19.2%) | 15(6%) | 24(9.6%) | 87 |
| Total | | 91 | 32 | 127 | 250 |

The above table 1.5 reveals that the majority of the respondents are falling under the Employed category. The calculated χ^2 Value (60.49) is grater than the Table value (15.507) at 5% Level of significance for 8 Degree of freedom Hence the hypothesis that there is significant association between the Occupation of the respondents and attitude of the respondents towards Celebrity Advertisement.

Hypothesis: There is no significance association between the Level of Income of the respondents and the attitude towards the celebrity advertisement.

TABLE NO. 1.6: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS INCOME WISE

| S.No | Income | Attitude Level | | | Total |
|-------|--------------------------|----------------|----------|-----------|-------|
| | | Negative | Neutral | Positive | |
| 1. | Below Rs.5, 000/- | 12(4.8%) | 3(1.2%) | 32(12.8%) | 47 |
| 2. | Rs.5, 000/- to 10,000/- | 13(5.2%) | 12(4.8%) | 68(27.2%) | 93 |
| 3. | Rs.10, 000/- to 15,000/- | 7(2.8%) | 1(0.4%) | 11(4.4%) | 19 |
| 4. | Rs.15, 000/- to 20,000/- | 17(6.8%) | 6(2.4%) | 34(13.6%) | 57 |
| 5. | Rs. 20, 000/- above | 3(1.2%) | 4(1.6%) | 27(10.8%) | 34 |
| Total | | 52 | 26 | 172 | 250 |

It could be inferred from the above Table 1.6 reveals that the majority of the respondents are falling under the income level of Rs.5, 000/- to 10,000/- category. The calculated χ^2 Value (13.73) is less than the Table value (15.50) at 5% Level of significance for 8 Degree of freedom Hence the hypothesis that there is no significant association between the income of the respondents and attitude of the respondents towards Celebrity Advertisement is accepted.

TABLE NO. 7: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BRAND PREFERENCE WISE

| S.NO | Brand | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------|----------|-------------------|------------|
| 1. | Airtel | 122 | 48.8% |
| 2. | Vodafone | 67 | 26.8% |
| 3. | Idea | 32 | 12.8% |
| 4. | Reliance | 18 | 7.2% |
| 5. | Bsnl | 11 | 4.4% |
| Total | | 250 | 100% |

It could be observed from table 1.7 that out of 250 sample respondents 122(48.8%) prefer Airtel as their favorite brand of the mobile service followed by Vodafone 67(26.8%) and Idea 32(12.8%), Reliance 18(7.2%) and Bsnl 11(4.4%).

TABLE NO. 1.8: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO SOURCE OF INFORMATION WISE

| S.No | Sources of Information | No of Respondents | % of Respondents |
|-------|------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 1. | TV Advertisement | 150 | 60% |
| 2. | Friends/Relatives | 31 | 12.4% |
| 3. | Dealers | 19 | 7.6% |
| 4. | Family Members | 12 | 4.8% |
| 5. | Banners and Hoardings | 15 | 6% |
| 6. | News papers | 11 | 4.4% |
| 7. | Magazines | 11 | 4.4% |
| 8. | Personal observation | 0 | 0% |
| 9. | Sales Persons | 1 | 0.4% |
| 10. | Others | 0 | 0% |
| Total | | 250 | 100% |

From the above table 1.8, It could be inferred that out of 250 sample respondents, 150(60%) respondents got the information from TV Advertisement, 31 (12.4%) friends/relatives, 19(7.6%) Delars, 12(4.8%) family members and 15(6%)Banners & Hoardings, 11(4.4%)Newspapers, 11(4.4%) magazines and 1(0.4%) sales persons.

TABLE NO.1.9: SHOWING THE ESSENTIAL FEATURES INFLUENCING BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF THE CONSUMER

| S.No | Essential Features | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------|----------------------|-------------------|------------|
| 1. | Call Rates | 37 | 14.8% |
| 2. | Clarity of voice | 35 | 14% |
| 3. | Good signals | 27 | 10.8% |
| 4. | Network Coverage | 14 | 5.6% |
| 5. | Value added services | 21 | 8.4% |
| 6. | Roaming Facility | 13 | 5.2% |
| 7. | Technical Expertise | 9 | 3.6% |
| 8. | Attractive plans | 24 | 9.6% |
| 9. | More Talk time | 32 | 12.8% |
| 10. | Status | 9 | 3.6% |
| 11. | Brand Image | 17 | 6.8% |
| 12. | Availability | 12 | 4.8% |
| 13. | Others | 0 | 0% |
| Total | | 250 | 100% |

It could be observed from table 1.9 that out of 250 sample respondents giving the importance to the essential features as 37(14.8%) call rates, 35(14%) clarity of voice, 32(12.8%) more times and 27(10.8%) Good signals, 24(9.6%) Attractive plans, 21(8.4%) value added services and remaining respondents are purchasing due to the Brand image, availability, Status and roaming facility, technical Expertise.

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between Advertisement Attributes.

TABLE NO. 1.10: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY THEIR OPINION ON ADVERTISEMENT

| S.No | Advertisement Attributes | No. Of Respondents | | | | | Total |
|-------|-------------------------------|--------------------|------|---------|-----|----------|-------|
| | | Very High | High | Neutral | Low | Very Low | |
| 1. | Reach of Product message | 9 | 39 | 0 | 12 | 2 | 62 |
| 2. | Motivation to buy the product | 5 | 57 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 62 |
| 3. | Attractiveness | 4 | 41 | 0 | 17 | 4 | 66 |
| 4. | Reliability | 3 | 21 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 24 |
| 5. | Remembrance | 3 | 33 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 36 |
| Total | | 24 | 191 | 0 | 29 | 6 | 250 |

Table 1.10 reveals that the calculated ANOVA Value (0.61) is Less than the Table value (3.36) at 5% Level of significance for n1=4, n2=11 Degree of freedom Hence the hypothesis that there is no significant difference between Brand Advertisement attributes.

TABLE NO.1.11: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ATTRACTED BY THE BRAND CELEBRITY IN THE ADVERTISEMENT

| S.NO | Attracted By celebrity Advertisement | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| 1. | Yes | 143 | 57.2% |
| 2. | No | 66 | 26.4% |
| 3. | Occasionally | 41 | 16.4% |
| Total | | 250 | 100% |

Table 1.11 shows that 143(57.2%) of the respondents are responded that they are attracted Brand celebrity, 66(26.4%) respondents are not attracted by the celebrities in the Advertisement and 41(16.4%) of the respondents are attracted occasionally.

TABLE NO.1.12: MOST INTERESTING TYPE OF CELEBRITY

| S.NO | Celebrity Type | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------|----------------|-------------------|------------|
| 1. | Film Star | 32 | 12.8% |
| 2. | Sports Star | 183 | 73.2% |
| 3. | Spokes person | 22 | 8.8% |
| 4. | Others | 13 | 5.2% |
| Total | | 250 | 100% |

The above table clearly states that out of the 250 respondents majority 183(73.2%) of the respondents are responded that sports stars are created more interested, 32(12.8%) of the respondents said that they are attracted by the Film stars in the Brand Advertisement and 22(8.8%) are with sports stars and remaining 13(5.2%) are attracted by the others.

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between Celebrity Qualities.

TABLE NO.1.13: DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS BASED ON RESPONSE AND BRAND CELEBRITY QUALITIES

| S.No | Response Level | Celebrity Qualities | | | | |
|-------|----------------|---------------------|-------------|-----------|----------|-------------|
| | | Credibility | Likeability | Energetic | Charisma | Recognition |
| 1. | Very High | 8 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 7 |
| 2. | High | 40 | 55 | 17 | 52 | 29 |
| 3. | Neutral | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 4. | Low | 14 | 0 | 11 | 0 | 1 |
| 5. | Very Low | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | | 62 | 62 | 35 | 54 | 37 |

Table 1.13 reveals that the calculated ANOVA Value (0.06) is Less than the Table value (3.36) at 5% Level of significance for n1=4, n2=11 Degree of freedom Hence the hypothesis that there is no significant difference between Brand celebrity qualities.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The research identified the following Findings on the basis of analysis and interpretation of the data from respondents.

- Majority of respondents 73.2% are male and 64.8% of the total respondents are married and the Educational Qualification, Major portion of the respondents 37.2% is with Degree Level and 28.4% of them are post-graduates.
- Most of the respondents who are belong to the age group below 30years and The majority of the people served are Employed, students and the income levels as followed (37.2%) 5,000/- to 10,000 and (22.8%) respondents 15,000/- to 20,000.

3. All most 150(60%) of the respondents feel that TV is the most suitable media to create the Awareness about the Brand.
4. Reach of the product message, Motivation to buy and attractiveness, remembrances are High in the case of celebrity advertisement compared to the ordinary advertisement.
5. As far the qualities of celebrities are concerned, the respondents (62 out of the 250) indicated that Credibility, likeability with highest rank followed by the charisma, energetic Recognition.
6. Most of the respondents giving the importance to the essential features like Low call rates, clarity of voice, more times and Good signals, Attractive plans.
7. From the research identified that most of the respondents preferring the 3 Brands as Airtel, idea and Vodafone due to their call rates, Attractive plans and Network coverage.
8. Through in-depth personnel interview identified that the most of the Business people are using the more than one mobile service because of the call rates and talk time.
9. All the respondents feel that sports celebrities creating high interest in the brand advertisement and followed by the Film stars, Spokes persons.
10. The other interested findings are that the respondents are interested to see Politicians & Socially active people as Brand celebrities for these mobile services.
11. Form the study observed that All-most all the respondents are having the positive opinion on the Brand Celebrities so The Brand celebrity Advertisement is positively increasing the purchasing intentions of the consumers.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Frequently change the Band Celebrity Advertisement with New ideas and innovative way for quick consumer connect.
2. Companies can use Multiple Celebrity Endorsement for gaining the more attention in consumers.
3. Generally consumers get confused with the advertisement when a same celebrity is endorsing two or more brands. To avoid this, the advertisement focus should be on the celebrity and the brand together.
4. Select a celebrity who can suppose to lend instant celebrity as well as aspiration values to the brand.
5. Age and sex of the respondents have some impact on their choice of the celebrity. There fore companies can select the celebrity based on the product category, celebrity's image, target consumers and suitability of the celebrity with the product.
6. While selecting a celebrity to endorse a product, the company and the advertising agency could give the more importance to the Credibility, Likeability and recognition of the celebrity.
7. Companies can select the Regional or local stars as brand celebrities because of their recognition and fame in that geographic area.

CONCLUSION

A brief assessment of the current market situation indicates that celebrity endorsement advertising strategies can under the right circumstances. There is no doubt about a celebrity's power in popularizing brands. Celebrities attract the attention, create interest to see the particular advertisement, can provide a point of differentiation, increase the advertising impact and if delivered in the correct manner, can be quite effective. The most crucial issue related to celebrity endorsements is the choice of the right celebrity for the company and celebrity - audience match. For a successful celebrity advertisement, the focus should be on the celebrity and the brand together.

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