



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE AND MANAGEMENT

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EFFECTIVENESS OF ENDORSEMENT ADVERTISEMENT ON RURAL VS URBAN YOUTH BUYING BEHAVIOUR

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ABSTRACT

Organisations are increasingly learning the positive influence 'Celebrity endorsement' can have on the Marketed Brands. Approximately 20 percent of Advertisements feature celebrities and the numbers are growing. Several Studies have also been conducted to investigate the effectiveness of Celebrity advertising on Buyer behaviour. However not much work has been undertaken to identify the impact of celebrity endorsement on Youth across various locations like Rural and Urban. The Paper presents the results of the survey of 930 respondents from various towns and villages of the State of Haryana. Result of the analytical study based on Location- wise cross tabulation of data has been presented. Hypothesis are tested as to whether celebrity advertisement are effective for influencing Youth Buyer Behaviour and the comparative study of effectiveness of celebrity advertisement on Rural vs. Urban youth.

KEYWORDS

CELEBRITY ADVERTISEMENT, ENDORSEMENT ADVERTISEMENT.

INTRODUCTION

In today's highly competitive markets, big brands are at logger-heads when it comes to products being offered, each having a similar product to that of a rival. Where does one brand gain that quintessential advantage - advertising, service, promise of trust, or even the all important price factors? Advertising seems to be the best platform where brands prefer to compete on - right from hiring the best advertising agencies to getting the biggest celebrities. Celebrity endorsement is a special type of advertisement which includes a famous person from film fraternity, athletes, and sports, modeling world etc. It helps in promoting the Brand and also increasing the sales of the product. Celebrity endorsement has not developed in recent years, it is being used since the days of Lux and Dabur Amla Hair Oil. This type of marketing strategy is used to promote the Brand and has proved in itself a boon in advertising world. However, it is very expensive to endorse a celebrity for a product but in the long run it has helped in enhancing the Brand Image. Celebrities are also interested in endorsing themselves as they get highly compensated and their visibility also increase. Infact several celebrities from bollywood use these advertisements for Promoting their new releases and also vice-versa.

India is a country where people are star-struck. Why? Population of 1 billion and ticking everyday, people need something or someone to look up to. A sense of security, admiration, comfort, familiarity, and above all, someone they aspire to be at some hidden level in their lives. And clever marketers leverage this very celebrity appeal and are successfully carrying out their jobs by giving the bottom lines of all the brands what they want - profit, market share and even recall. But how much star power is too much? "Does Amitabh really use Boro Plus" and "Does Salman Khan really uses Wheel" asked a 6 year old to her mother. Her mother laughs and says, "No way, just a gimmick." What does that do to the brand?

Many companies have had considerable success using celebrities as spokesperson. Endorser image serve as mediators in the equity-creation process of celebrity product endorsement (*Seno and Lukas, 2007*). Product attitude was predicted by inferences about the endorser's liking for the product and by attitudes towards the endorser (*Silvera and Austad, 2004*). When however respondents are exposed to negative information about a celebrity endorser, a negative transference of affect in the endorsement relationship may also occur. When the situation is reversed and the respondents are exposed to negative information about the brand, the transference of affect is mitigated (*White et al., 2009*).

Businesses have long sought to distract the attention of the potential customers that live in a world of ever increasing commercial bombardment. Everyday consumers are exposed to thousands of voices and images in magazines, newspaper, and on billboards, websites, radio and television. Every brand attempts to steal a fraction of an unsuspecting person's time to inform him or her of the amazing and different attributes of the product at hand. Because of the constant media saturation that most people experience daily, they eventually become numb to the standard marketing techniques. The challenge of the marketer is to hook the subject's attention.

This is true for the classic forms of celebrity, like Film Stars (eg. Amitabh Bachchan, Shahrukh Khan, Rani Mukherjee, Aamir Khan and Pierce Brosnan). Models (e.g., Malaika Arora, Lisa Ray, Naomi Campbell, Gisele Bundchen etc.), Sports Figures (e.g., Sachin Tendulkar, Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Virander Sehwag, Rahul Dravid, Zaheer Khan, Steve Waugh, etc). Entertainers (e.g. Cyrus Broacha, Oprah Winfrey, Conan O'Brien), and Pop-Stars (e.g., Madonna, David Bowie) – but also for less obvious groups like Businessmen (e.g., Donald Trump, Bill Gates) or politicians.

Celebrities appear in public in different ways. First, they appear in public when fulfilling their profession, e.g., Viswanathan Anand, who plays chess in front of the audience. Further, celebrities appear in public by attending special celebrity events, e.g., award ceremonies, inauguration or world premier of movies. In addition, they present themselves in news, fashion, magazines, and tabloids, which provide second information on events and the 'private life' of celebrities through mass-media channel (e.g., Smriti Irani being regular feature in various publications). Last but not the least, celebrities act as spokes-person in advertising to promote products and services, which is referred to celebrity endorsement.

For Instance:

Vodafone signed Irfan Khan for advertisement of Sim cards.

Tennis sensation Sania Mirza was appointed to increase the sales of 'Bournvita energy drinks'.

'ITC' roped in Deepika Padukone for promotion of its soap named 'Fiama di Wills'.

Famous Brand 'Veet' roped in Katrina Kaif as its Brand ambassador.

Shahrukh Khan has been chosen by Big Brands for their Advertisement which includes 'Dish TV' and 'Airtel'.

M.S Dhoni and Baichung Bhutia for 'Project Tiger of Aircel'.

Companies spend huge amount of money on Celebrities to sell anything from a candy, hair oil, soaps, colas, pens, paints, automobiles etc. Most companies know that celebrities have an appeal and a Brand can be best helped to reach out to the masses.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The use of testimonials by advertisers dates back to the 19th century when medicines were patented. Firms have been juxtaposing their brands and themselves with celebrity endorsers (e.g., athletes, actors) in the hope that celebrities may boost effectiveness of their marketing. The late '80s saw the beginning of celebrity endorsements in advertising in India. Hindi film and TV stars as well as sportspersons began encroaching on a territory that was, until then, the exclusive domain of models. There was a spurt of advertising, featuring stars like Tabassum (Prestige pressure cookers), Jalal Agha (Pan Parag), Kapil Dev (Palmolive Shaving Cream) and Sunil Gavaskar (Dinesh Suitings). Of course, probably the first ad to cash in on star power in a strategic, long-term, mission statement kind of way was for Lux soap always endorsing the latest hit actress. A brand which has, perhaps as a result of this, been among the top three in the country for much of its lifetime.

Today, the use of celebrity advertising has become a trend and a winning formula of corporate image building and product marketing. It provides empirical evidence demonstrating that attitudes can be affected in such a way.

The impact of Tiger Woods tournament performance on the endorsing firm's value subsequent to the contract signing was examined. No relationship was found between Tiger's tournament placement and the excess returns of Fortune brands. No significant relationship was found for American Express, suggesting the market does not view a golfer endorsing financial services as credible. However, a positive relationship and significant impact of tiger's performance on Nike's excess returns was found suggesting that the market values the additional publicity that Nike receives when Tiger is in contention to win (Farrell et al., 2000).

Some marketers choose to utilize multiple celebrities to promote their Brands. Fit between the endorsed product and various celebrities is a key factor for using multiple celebrity endorser in advertising (Hsu & McDonald, 2002). The use of celebrity endorser in advertising is wide spread – as much as 20 percent of all advertising use some type of celebrity endorser. Marketers invest significance dollars in securing the promotional support of well-known individuals (Till, 1998). Products which are ultimately sold by retailers are endorsed more frequently by celebrities in certain sports than others (Lear et al., 2009). The importance of fit between the endorser and the endorsed product has been described as the "Match-up Hypothesis", research has focused on physical attraction (Till and Busler 1998). Celebrities can be used to gain attention and maintain sales, while spokesperson's effectiveness is in establishing a lifelong link with the product (Tom et al., 1992).

The perusal of above mentioned studies makes it very clear that endorsements advertisement does have strong impacts on consumers. The present paper has taken a leaf from these studies and has proceeded for an empirical investigation, into a Region-Wise Impact of Celebrity Endorsement which is presented subsequently.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research problems tend to be different from one another and so it requires own special emphasis and different approach. Since the entire research problem is unique in some ways, the research process has to be typically customized. All the steps adopted in the research have been elaborated in the following sections.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present paper aims at finding the extent to which endorsement advertising has been successful to influence the buyer behaviour across Urban and Rural groups. The research problem investigated herein has been precisely defined as- "Effectiveness of Endorsement Advertisement on Rural vs. Urban Youth buying behaviour".

OBJECTIVES

To study the likeability of the endorsement advertising.

To study as to what extent endorsement advertising impact the consumer behaviour towards endorsed Brands.

To comparatively study the impact of endorsement advertisement on Rural vs. Urban Buyer Behaviour.

HYPOTHESIS

In order to ensure effective analysis and understanding of data collected for the Purpose of this study, the following hypothesis have been framed:

1 H0: Celebrity endorsements do not affect the likeability of the Brands.

2 H0: There is no significant difference between the impact of Celebrity endorsement on Urban and Rural youth buying behaviour.

The two hypothesis have been checked through a series of Chi-square test administered on each statement of the questionnaire as shown in Table 1.4 with special attention to region-wise comparison as analysed in Table 1.3

RESEARCH DESIGN

The present research is descriptive in nature as it aims at comparatively studying whether endorsement advertising has an impact on Youth buyer behaviour. It also aims to find out as to what type of consumers in terms of locality is more influenced by endorsements. Information has been collected from the respondent with the help of a structured questionnaire. The universe of the study is the state of Haryana covering both cities and small villages. Since it was not feasible to study the entire region, the researcher drew a sample.

SAMPLING DESIGN AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Nine hundred eighty questionnaires were administered. Fifty questionnaires were found to be incomplete and hence were excluded in the final data. Therefore, data from nine hundred thirty respondents have been collected and analyzed. Due care has been taken to ensure that enough number of Urban and Rural respondents be included in the sample.

DATA COLLECTION METHOD

In the present study, Structured Questionnaire method has been used to collect the data. In some case, particularly in case of semi-literate/illiterate respondents, personal interview technique was used to draw out information as per the questionnaire.

SCALING OF ITEMS

A five point Likert's scale from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree" was used to measure the response to each statement (Items).

TOOLS OF DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected have been duly tabulated and classified. Thereafter it has been analyzed with the help of simple percentage technique to describe the present status of respondents. Chi-square test has been used by the researcher to study the association between various variables as well as to study the association between quantitative and qualitative variables.

Table 1.1
PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Sr.No	Profile of Respondents	Urban (587)		Rural (343)		Total (930)		
		N	%	N	%	N	%	
1)	Age (in yrs)	16-20	243	41.39	126	36.73	369	39.67
		20-24	184	31.34	116	33.81	300	32.25
		24-28	160	27.25	101	29.44	261	28.06
2)	Occupation	N	%	N	%	N	%	
		Students	197	33.56	99	28.86	296	31.82
		Self-Employed	141	24.02	78	22.74	219	23.54
		Business	144	24.53	88	21.28	229	24.62
		Housewife	105	17.88	78	16.90	183	19.67

Table 1.2
LOCATION & GENDERWISE BREAKUP OF RESPONDENTS

Sr.No	Profile	Urban				Rural			
		N		%		N		%	
1)	Location	587		63.11		343		36.89	
2)	Gender	Male				Female			
		N		%		N		%	
		530		56.98		400		43.02	

INTERPRETATION

The Profile of respondents as depicted in Table 1.1 shows that majority of them i.e. 369 respondents almost 40% fall in the category of age bracket of 16 to 20 years with 41% Urban and 37% Rural respondents.

Majority of the respondents who were a part of this survey constituted of 296 students (31.82%), followed by 229 Businessman (24.62%) and 219 Self-employed (23.54%).

As the study was done to take the opinion of both Urban and Rural audience the data collected revealed 587 (63.11 %) respondents from urban areas as compared to 343 (36.89%) respondents from rural areas and suburb have been studied.

Due importance was given to take response from both male and female respondents and hence 400 (43.02%) females participated in this survey as against 530 (65.98%) male respondents.

Table 1.3
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS AS PER ATTITUDE INDICATORS

Sr. No	Indicators	Strongly Agree				Agree				Neutral				Disagree				Strongly Disagree			
		Urban		Rural		Urban		Rural		Urban		Rural		Urban		Rural		Urban		Rural	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1)	Celebrity Advertisement is more noticeable	214	36.5	170	49.6	97	16.5	48	13.9	87	14.8	48	13.9	88	15	46	13.4	101	17.2	31	9.0
2)	Celebrity Advertisement have high recall rate.	140	23.9	100	29.2	144	24.5	113	32.9	127	21.6	60	17.4	95	16.2	30	8.7	81	13.8	40	11.6
3)	Celebrity Advertisement positively motivates audience for product purchase.	147	25.0	103	30.0	123	20.9	102	29.7	114	19.4	34	9.9	100	17.0	50	14.5	103	17.5	54	15.7

4)	Audience enjoys watching Celebrity Advertisement.	130	22.1	100	29.2	124	21.1	105	30.6	120	20.4	40	11.6	110	18.7	44	12.8	103	17.5	54	15.7
5)	Audience have positive attitude towards product having Celebrity Advertisement.	140	23.8	103	30.0	114	19.4	102	29.7	118	20.1	34	9.9	108	18.3	50	14.5	107	18.2	54	15.7
6)	Celebrity Advertisement are remembered for a long time.	120	20.4	110	32.1	120	20.4	83	24.1	118	20.1	55	16.0	100	17.0	60	17.5	129	21.9	35	10.2
7)	Use of Celebrity Advertisement enhances the credibility of Brands.	213	36.3	170	49.6	98	16.6	48	13.9	86	14.6	49	8.3	90	15.3	45	13.1	100	17.0	32	9.3
8)	Celebrity Advertisement is used when brand performance is poor.	194	33.0	95	27.7	131	22.3	70	20.4	102	17.4	78	22.7	95	16.2	40	11.7	65	11.1	60	17.5
9)	Celebrity Advertisement ignores	150	25.6	20	5.8	120	20.4	105	30.6	110	18.7	128	37.3	100	17.0	40	11.6	107	18.2	50	14.5

	product quality/feature.																					
10)	Customers only remember celebrities & not brands in Adv.	150	25.6	135	39.4	126	21.4	94	27.4	120	20.4	50	14.5	95	16.1	25	7.2	96	16.3	39	11.3	
11)	Use of Celebrity in advertisement increase the cost of brand sold in market.	200	34.1	115	33.5	145	24.7	80	23.3	90	15.3	40	11.6	77	13.1	43	12.5	75	12.7	65	18.9	
12)	Poorly performing celebrity affects the brand perception negatively.	194	33.1	103	30.0	131	22.3	76	22.2	100	17.0	60	17.5	95	16.2	62	18.1	67	11.4	42	12.2	
13)	Social ideas may be promoted by celebrities.	146	24.8	109	31.7	132	22.4	104	30.3	133	22.6	57	16.6	91	15.5	33	9.6	85	14.4	40	11.6	

Table 1.4
TABLE OF INTERPRETATION

Level of Significance - .05

NULL HYPOTHESIS	Calculated Value of Chi-Square	Tabulated value at 4 d.o.f	Hypothesis
1) There is no significant difference between Urban and Rural Youth with respect to noticeability of Celebrity advertisement.	20.54	9.48	Rejected
2) There is no significant difference between Urban and Rural Youth with respect to Celebrity	19.4	9.48	Rejected

Advertisement having high recall rate.			
3) There is no significant difference between Urban and Rural Youth with respect to Celebrity Advertisement positively motivating audience for product purchase.	22.4396	9.48	Rejected
4) There is no significant difference between Urban and Rural Youth with respect to enjoying watching Celebrity Advertisement.	26.87	9.48	Rejected
5) There is no significant difference between Urban and Rural Youth with respect to Audience having positive attitude towards product having Celebrity Advertisement.	29.466	9.48	Rejected
6) There is no significant difference between Urban and Rural Youth with respect to Celebrity Advertisement being remembered for a long time.	23.754	9.48	Rejected
7) There is no significant difference between Urban and Rural Youth with respect to Use of Celebrity Advertisement enhancing the credibility of Brands.	20.09	9.48	Rejected
8) There is no significant difference between Urban and Rural Youth with respect to the use of Celebrity Advertisement when brand performance is poor.	16.4391	9.48	Rejected
9) There is no significant difference between Urban and Rural Youth with respect to Celebrity Advertisement ignoring product quality/feature.	83.4698	9.48	Rejected
10) There is no significant difference between Urban and Rural Youth with respect to remembering only celebrities & not brands in advertising.	37.745	9.48	Rejected
11) There is no significant difference between Urban and Rural Youth with respect to Use of Celebrity in advertisement increasing the cost of brand sold in market.	8	9.48	Accepted

12) There is no significant difference between Urban and Rural Youth with respect to poorly performing celebrity affecting the brand perception negatively.	2.5154	9.48	Accepted
13) There is no significant difference between Urban and Rural Youth with respect to Social ideas being promoted well by celebrities.	19.764	9.48	Rejected

From the table above, one may see that out of total 13 statements, to comparatively study the effect of endorsement advertisement on rural and urban youth, we reject 11 hypotheses and accept only two. Thus it may be safely concluded that there is a significant difference between the two segments and Rural Segment is more likely to be affected by celebrity advertisements as against urban segment.

ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

According to the analysis shown in the table 1.3 it was found that majority 529 (56.88%) of the respondents including 311 (52.98%) from Urban segment and 218 (63.56%) from Rural segment held that Celebrity advertisements are more noticeable. It may be observed that 64% of rural as against 53% of Urban respondents agreed to this statement. Hence it was proved that celebrity advertisement is more noticeable by Rural segment as compared to the Urban segment. The Chi-square value of Table 1.4 also indicates the same.

Analysis of second indicator shows that majority of the respondents 497 (53.44%) believe that celebrity advertisement do have high recall rate. From analysis it was also proved that majority of 62% Rural segment believe that they have high recall rate and only 48 % of Urban respondents believe so. Chi-square value also proves the same and so this hypothesis is rejected.

As can be analyzed in table 1.4 it is seen that 475 (51.07%) respondents feel that if the product is being endorsed by any celebrity it motivates the audience for purchasing that product. Looking closely at it 60% of rural respondents as against only 46% of Urban respondents feels this. Chi-square value also supports this statement.

Analysis shows that 459 (49.35%) respondents including 254 (43.27%) from Urban segment and 205 (59.77 %) from Rural segment enjoys watching celebrity advertisement. Also it is evident from the above interpretation that Rural segment enjoys watching celebrity advertisement more as compared to Urban segment. Chi-square value of table 1.4 also favours this statement by rejecting the Null Hypothesis.

However, it was also seen that a total of 459 (49.35%) respondents which included only 254 (43.27%) from Urban Segment and a majority of 205 (59.77%) from Rural segment have a positive attitude towards the product having celebrity advertisement. There is a big difference between the two segments on this statement. Chi-square value supports this statement too.

Study revealed the fact that a total of 433 (46.56%) respondents including just 240 (40.88%) from Urban Segment and a majority of 193 (56.27%) from Rural segment felt that celebrity advertisements are remembered for a long time. The Rural segments are more likely to have a strong appeal in their minds of their favorite celebrity by remembering the advertisements also. Chi-square value of table 1.4 also indicates the same.

According to the study conducted it was found that a majority of 529 (56.88%) respondents including only 311 (52.98 %) from Urban segment and 218 (63.56%) from Rural segment believe that generally celebrity advertisements enhance the credibility of the brands. According to the study Rural segment strongly supported this statement which was also evident from the Chi-square value.

Analysis revealed that 490 (52.69%) respondents felt that companies generally used celebrity advertisements when their brands performance is poor and it is difficult for them to sustain their brand in the market. But majority of Urban segment i.e. 325 (55.37%) support this statement as against only 165 (48.10%) of rural respondents sharing this statement and Chi-square value also conclude that there is a significant difference between Urban and Rural Youth with respect to this statement.

It was evident from the study that 395 respondents (42.47%) felt that Celebrity Advertisement ignores product quality or any kind of features in it. But majority of the Rural segment i.e. 63.56% as against 54.01% of Urban respondents do not support this statement. Chi-square test also supports that Rural respondents trust the celebrity endorsements in terms of product quality.

Accordingly it was found that a majority of 505 respondents (54.30%) including 276 (47.02%) from Urban segment and 229 (66.76%) from Rural segment remember the celebrity in that advertisement and not the Brand endorsed by them. Rural segment strongly feels that somehow they tends to forget the brand. This shows the peripheral route adopted by audience of Celebrities which generally overshadows the Brand. Chi-square test also supports the same.

According to the study conducted it was found that majority of the respondents 540 (58.06%) including 345 (58.77%) from Urban segment and 195 (56.85%) from Rural segment felt that if a celebrity is used to advertise a product it however means that it will increase the cost of brand in the market. Chi-square also concludes that there is no significant difference between Urban and Rural Youth with respect to this statement.

However with reference to the study conducted majority of the respondents 504 (54.19%) including 325 (55.37%) from Urban segment and 179 (52.19%) from Rural segment felt that a poor performing celebrity does affect the brand perception negatively even if it is their favorite actor, actress or sports star. Chi-square value also supports this by accepting the hypothesis.

According to the study conducted majority of the respondents 491(52.79%) felt that social idea are well promoted by the celebrities. A higher majority of Rural segment 213 respondents (62.09%) felt that the celebrities are perfect alibi when it comes to promoting social ideas. Chi-square value also indicate that Urban segment do not support this statement as compared to Rural segment.

N.B- All the figures mentioned in the above Analysis & Interpretation is the accumulation of Strongly Agree and Agree Variables.

CONCLUSION

From the above analysis it may be concluded that the Celebrity Endorsement does have a positive impact on the Youth Brand perception. The Brands endorsed by celebrities are more noticeable and the recall rate of such Brands is higher. Majority of the respondents held that watching a celebrity in the advertisement is enjoyable, tends to create a positive attitude towards a brand and enhances the credibility of the brands thus endorsed. However, at the same time, most of the respondents also feel that the use of celebrity makes the audience ignore the features and quality of the product while also sacrificing the recall of the brand name being endorsed. There is awareness amongst the respondents that use of celebrity in a brands promotion increases the cost of the Brand. Respondents maintained that as positive so does negative information about a celebrity affects the brand being endorsed. It was pointed out that during the ongoing IPL 2010 Series; the poor performance of any cricketer affected the reaction to any of the Brands endorsed by him. At the same time there is a significant difference between the Rural and Urban perception on the issue. While the Rural youth is more likely to be affected by the celebrity power, the Urban youth enjoys watching celebrities but have a relatively less influence on their purchase behaviour. However, the youth is also confused as to whether to buy a Samsung mobile as endorsed by Aamir Khan or a Micromax handset as endorsed by Akshay Kumar or to decide on buying a Karbonn mobile as featured by Sehwaag or a Maxx mobile as endorsed by MS Dhoni.

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