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AN ANALYSIS OF CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT IN INDIA REGIONAL VS. NATIONAL CELEBRITIES

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ABSTRACT

Celebrity Endorsements, as a part of marketing communication strategy, is used by marketers for their brand. In India also, this strategy is gaining pace. The amazing fact is that each brand when endorsed by a national celebrities at a national level; the same brand is endorsed by a regional celebrity at regional level. A star appeal however needs to be perfectly blended intelligently and strategically to reap the benefits and make brands. This paper highlights the level of awareness of these celebrities at regional level. It also identifies the popularity level of regional and national celebrities. The research revealed that the impact of National (Bollywood) movie stars is more than Regional (Tollywood-West Bengal) movie stars.

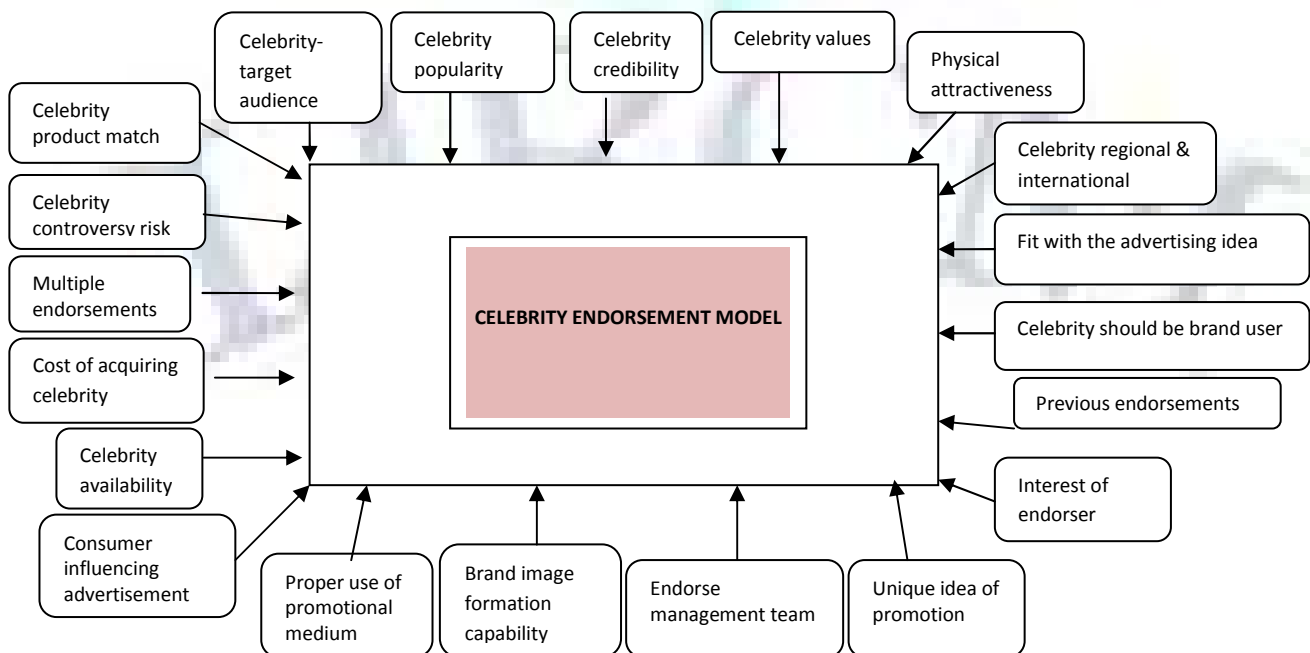
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KEYWORDS
 Celebrities, National, Popularity, Q Score, Regional.

INTRODUCTION

Every business has more or less same product with similar properties. Here, the crucial role of marketer comes. His main challenging task is to mark a presence in the minds of the consumers that will hold the subject’s attention and keep them from changing the channel or turning the page. One of the very promising approach for this differentiation strategy is Celebrity Endorsements. Celebrities are those dynamic individuals with likeable and attractive qualities. Celebrities are individuals who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement. (McCracken,1989). Kamins (1989) defines Celebrity endorsers as “an individual who is known to the public for their achievements in the areas other than that of the product endorsed”. During the past 100 years, the commercial use of celebrities has evolved from simple cigarette cards to multi-media messages with million dollar contracts (Agarwal & Kamakura, 1995). A variety of celebrity endorsers have been transformed from a few models and athletes and now encompasses men, women, boys and girls from the world of sports, films, television, radio, music and obscurity (McCracken, 1989). The use of celebrities in marketing communication especially in advertising has been a very common marketing strategy for companies for supporting their brand image. In 1979, celebrities have been used in approximately 16% of all advertisements in United States (Erdogan, 1999). In 2000, the percentage of commercials with celebrity endorsers is estimated at around 25% in the US (Shimp, 2000). Most of the advertisements creatively use the image of celebrities to get the attention of the audience. A celebrity product association can capture a viewer’s attention, increase the public awareness, and induce consumers to purchase the product endorsed. The utilization of celebrity endorsement in marketing programmes is far more effective than other types of endorsers like company manager, expert, or typical consumer (Seno & Lukas, 2007). Mukherjee (2009) had identifies 20 attributes of effective celebrity endorsement. The success of celebrity endorsement is dependent on these 20 factors. These factors basically speak of various parameters that define the suitability of celebrity with the brand he/she is endorsing.

FIGURE 1: 20 ATTRIBUTES OF EFFECTIVE CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT (Adapted: Mukherjee D., impact of celebrity endorsement on brand image, 2009)



MEASURING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CELEBRITY

Products are more or less similar nowadays. Therefore, the role of celebrities has become more challenging when it comes to endorsement. What matters is the effectiveness of the endorser. There are few models to analyse the effectiveness of the celebrities. These are:

▪ **THE MULTIPLIER EFFECT FORMULA**

Where, S= successful brand
 E= effective product
 D= distinctive identity
 AV= added values

$S = E * D * AV$ (MULTIPLIER EFFECT)

For a brand to be successful, it needs to have a proper combination of effectiveness of the product with certain Distinctive Features, to which the celebrities add values with their presence.

- **FRED ANALYSIS:** It stands for **F**amiliarity, **R**elevance, **E**steem and **D**ifferentiation. This analysis provides guidelines when selecting a spokesperson. It measures the effectiveness by taking into consideration:
 - firstly, the target market must be aware of the person
 - secondly, there should be a meaningful link between the product endorsed and the endorser
 - thirdly, consumers should have an utmost respect for the celebrity because of their distinguished careers
 - Lastly, target consumers must see the endorser above all others.
- **THE Q-SCORE METHOD:** This technique is usually used by companies to select the right celebrity for the product endorsement. It also enables the marketers to determine the ranking of the celebrities as per consumer's choice. It measures the credibility, believability, popularity and likeability of a celebrity. It is calculated by dividing percentage of respondents who have indicated the celebrity as one their favourite, i.e., popularity measure by the percentage of respondents who indicate that they heard of that celebrity, i.e., familiarity measure. However, the most accepted method to measure the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement is Q-Score method.

CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT IN INDIA

In India, Celebrity endorsement started gaining prominence since 1980's. The introduction of television added a variable effective medium of communication. Every region has its own celebrity system. Thus, a celebrity can easily and broadly be divided into three parts- global celebrity, national celebrity and regional celebrity. Global celebrity is one who is known all over the globe, or more than one country like Michael Jackson or sport stars. National celebrities as the name suggests are those whose recognition are restricted to a particular nation. Movie stars are generally national celebrities. Last but not the least, Regional Celebrities are those who belong to a particular region of a country and are not known or comparatively less known in other regions.

In India, we have a rich culture of diversity. Its every state has its own language, and has its local regional film celebrities. These celebrities play a very important role as brand ambassadors for certain brands in their specific regions. A single brand when endorsed in India by a national celebrity, the same brand is endorsed in other regions by their regional celebrity.

So, brands are now shifting themselves by localizing their campaigns to capture the local market. They are changing their attitude of 'one size fits all', and trying to adapt themselves in every region. In southern India, regional celebrity endorsement is very successful (Rao, 2007).

Some of the smarter brands have realised that they need a local brand ambassador if they have to improve the brand connect. For this, they are having a national brand ambassador and a separate regional ambassador to appeal to their local consumers.

TABLE 1: SHOWING THE DIFFERENT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL BRAND ENDORSERS FOR THE SAME BRAND

Brand	National brand ambassador (or for northern belt)	Regional or South India brand ambassador
Fair and Handsome	Shahrukh Khan	Surya
Pepsi	Ranbir Kapoor	Ram Charan Tej
Kurkure	Juhi Chawla	Simran
Navratna Oil	Amitabh Bachchan	Suriya, Mahesh Babu
Tata Indicom	Kajol	Trisha
Fanta(previous campaign)	Rani Mukherjee	Trisha
Perk (previous campaign)	Preity Zinta	Trisha
Idea Cellular	Abhishek Bachchan	Siddarth
ThumsUp	Akshay Kumar	Mahesh Babu
Vivel Shampoo	Hrithik Roshan	Trisha
7Up	MallikaSherawat (previously)	Allu Arjun

Source: Celebrity endorsements in South India – the next 'Big thing' by Allu Shirish. (part-I) Retrieved on 23/02/2012 from <http://www.indiaglitz.com/channels/telugu/article/56031.html>

Celebrity branding both in regional and national level is done nowadays to overcome this problem, wherein a celebrity uses his status to promote a product, service or charity.

SCOPE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In today's trend of advertising, we witness the usage of celebrity endorsement is a real strategy to win the race. The association of brand to celebrity is very crucial aspect. In a country like India, which is heterogeneous by nature, there is a need of research about the popularity of regional and national celebrities, which leads to our main objective of the study. By the help of such an analysis, a marketer can develop his strategy accordingly.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To determine the level of awareness of regional and national celebrities
2. To compare the popularity of these celebrities as brand endorsers.

HYPOTHESES

Popularity measure of a national celebrity as compared to other types of celebrities is usually higher because of their wider reach. On the basis of this, I formulate following hypotheses-

H1: popularity score of national celebrity is higher than a regional celebrity.

DETAILED METHODOLOGY

The methodology comprises of both primary and secondary research.

The study has been carried out in Kolkata city (capital of West Bengal). Secondary research was undertaken to prepare a list of 20 celebrities consisting of 10 national and 10 regional celebrities who are endorsing at least one brand and who have achieved substantial name and fame. The Overall rankings of 20 celebrities are found using 'Q' score technique.

SAMPLE SIZE: A sample size of 100 individuals, both male and female in the age group of 19-39 years was considered. The consumer of this age group is majorly student, so universities/colleges in the Kolkata were targeted.

SAMPLING TYPE: Judgemental and convenience sampling is done to select the respondents.

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT: Data was collected by getting a questionnaire filled from the universities of the said city. The questionnaire was divided into two (2) parts. In the first part respondents were given a list of 10 regional and 10 national celebrities followed by series of related questions. In the second section, questions related to their demographics were asked. This part was constituted for the classification purpose only.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Primary data collected during the course of the study was analysed using simple percentages. Then 'Q' scores of the selected celebrities were found out to determine the awareness level in terms of Familiarity, Suitability and Popularity of the selected celebrities and determining their potential as probable brand endorser.

FAMILIARITY MEASURE: A celebrity is said to be familiar if he/she is correctly identified by the respondent. If not so, the respondent is said to be unaware about the celebrity.

The study shows that all the National (Bollywood) Celebrities have 100% familiarity among the respondents. However, regional celebrity Payel Sarkar has least familiarity among respondents, i.e., 94%. Other celebrities namely Dibyendu Mukherjee, Soham Chakraborty, Koel Mallick, Ananya Chatterjee have 97, 99, 96 and 99 score respectively.

TABLE 2: FAMILIARITY SCORE OF THE CELEBRITIES

S.No.	Name of Celebrities	No. of familiar Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Dev	100	100
2	Victor Banerjee	100	100
3	Pooja Bose	100	100
4	Dibyendu Mukherjee	97	97
5	Soham Chakraborty	99	99
6	Mimi Chakraborty	100	100
7	Jeet	100	100
8	Koel Mallick	96	99
9	Payel Sarkar	94	96
10	Ananya Chatterjee	98	99
11	Ranbir Kapoor	100	100
12	Salman Khan	100	100
13	Amitabh Bachchan	100	100
14	Akshay Kumar	100	100
15	Shahrukh Khan	100	100
16	Deepika Padukone	100	100
17	Priyanka Chopra	100	100
18	Sonam Kapoor	100	100
19	Katrina Kaif	100	100
20	Kareena Kapoor	100	100

SUITABILITY MEASURE: Respondents were asked to rate the Celebrities depending on their suitability of the brands endorsed by them.

The celebrity who scored highest in suitability measure percentage is Amitabh BACHchan (82%) followed by Dev (81%), Ranbir Kapoor (80%), Katrina Kaif (79%), and Salman Khan (77%).

TABLE 3: SUITABILITY SCORE OF THE CELEBRITIES

S.No.	Name of Celebrities	Degree of Suitability of Celebrity image with the brand		
		High	Medium	Low
1	Dev	81	7	12
2	Victor Banerjee	34	51	15
3	Pooja Bose	63	4	33
4	Dibyendu Mukherjee	28	57	15
5	Soham Chakraborty	53	34	13
6	Mimi Chakraborty	57	39	4
7	Jeet	67	24	9
8	Koel Mallick	74	17	9
9	Payel Sarkar	72	18	10
10	Ananya Chatterjee	71	9	20
11	Ranbir Kapoor	80	13	7
12	Salman Khan	77	5	18
13	Amitabh Bachchan	82	11	7
14	Akshay Kumar	33	62	5
15	Shahrukh Khan	59	11	30
16	Deepika Padukone	75	6	19
17	Priyanka Chopra	69	14	17
18	Sonam Kapoor	20	77	3
19	Katrina Kaif	79	13	8
20	Kareena Kapoor	43	52	5

POPULARITY MEASURE: Popularity score of the celebrity is measured by the respondents who have rated the celebrity as "One of my Favourite". Popularity Percentage is calculated by the number of respondents who have rated the celebrity as one of my favourite divided by the number of respondents who are familiar with the celebrity and then multiplying the figure by 100.

The celebrity who scored highest in popularity measure percentage is Amitabh Bachchan (67%) followed by Salman Khan (63%), Shahrukh Khan (60%), Dev (58%) and Ranbir Kapoor (54%). The study shows that 8 out of top 10 popular celebrities are national (Bollywood) celebrities. Only 2 regional celebrities got place in top 10 rankings of popularity measure.

TABLE 4: POPULARITY SCORE OF THE CELEBRITIES

S.No.	Name of Celebrities	Popularity Score	Percentage
1	Dev	58/100	58%
2	Victor Banerjee	14/100	14%
3	Pooja Bose	26/100	26%
4	Dibyendu Mukherjee	9/100	9%
5	Soham Chakraborty	19/100	19%
6	Mimi Chakraborty	21/100	21%
7	Jeet	28/100	28%
8	Koel Mallick	42/100	42%
9	Payel Sarkar	30/100	30%
10	Ananya Chatterjee	33/100	33%
11	Ranbir Kapoor	54/100	54%
12	Salman Khan	63/100	63%
13	Amitabh Bachchan	67/100	67%
14	Akshay Kumar	12/100	12%
15	Shahrukh Khan	60/100	60%
16	Deepika Padukone	39/100	39%
17	Priyanka Chopra	34/100	34%
18	Sonam Kapoor	4/100	4%
19	Katrina Kaif	51/100	51%
20	Kareena Kapoor	36/100	36%

CALCULATING 'Q' SCORE: It is the Quotient score. It is generally used by firms to understand the popularity scores of the celebrities. It is measured by dividing popularity score percentage by familiarity score percentage, and then multiplying it by 100.

$$Q \text{ SCORE} = \frac{\text{POULARITY \%}}{\text{FAMILIARITY \%}} \times 100$$

TABLE 5: Q SCORES OF THE CELEBRITIES

S.No.	Name of Celebrities	Familiarity		Popularity		Q Score
		Score	Percentage	Score	Percentage	
1	Dev	100	100	58/100	58%	58
2	Victor Banerjee	100	100	14/100	14%	14
3	Pooja Bose	100	100	26/100	26%	26
4	Dibyendu Mukherjee	97	97	9/100	9%	9.28
5	Soham Chakraborty	99	99	19/100	19%	19.2
6	Mimi Chakraborty	100	100	21/100	21%	21
7	Jeet	100	100	28/100	28%	28
8	Koel Mallick	99	99	42/100	42%	42.42
9	Payel Sarkar	96	96	34/100	34%	35.42
10	Ananya Chatterjee	99	99	33/100	33%	33.33
11	Ranbir Kapoor	100	100	54/100	54%	54
12	Salman Khan	100	100	63/100	63%	63
13	Amitabh Bachchan	100	100	67/100	67%	67
14	Akshay Kumar	100	100	12/100	12%	12
15	Shahrukh Khan	100	100	60/100	60%	60
16	Deepika Padukone	100	100	39/100	39%	39
17	Priyanka Chopra	100	100	30/100	30%	30
18	Sonam Kapoor	100	100	4/100	4%	4
19	Katrina Kaif	100	100	51/100	51%	51
20	Kareena Kapoor	100	100	36/100	36%	36

FINDINGS

The analysis of the Q Score signifies that higher the Q score of the celebrity, higher will be the popularity and awareness among the respondents. It also shows that the celebrities with high score are able to communicate the message correctly and also establishes a connection in the mind of the target consumer. Through this analysis, table 4 has been generated. It clearly shows that among the selected celebrities from national as well as regional level, Amitabh Bachchan has the highest score (67%) followed by Salman Khan (63%), Shahrukh Khan (60%), Dev (58%), Ranbir Kapoor (54%). Among the top 10 celebrities, 6 places have been captured by national celebrities. However, the remaining 4 were regional celebrities. The lowest Q score are of Dibyendu Mukherjee (9%) and Sonam Kapoor (4%). It clearly revealed that the National (Bollywood) celebrities are popular than the regional celebrities.

TABLE 6: RANKING OF CELEBRITIES AS PER Q SCORE

S.No.	Name of Celebrities	Q Score	S.No.	Name of Celebrities	Q Score
1	Amitabh Bachchan	67	11	Ananya Chatterjee	33.33
2	Salman Khan	63	12	Priyanka Chopra	30
3	Shahrukh Khan	60	13	Jeet	28
4	Dev	58	14	Pooja Bose	26
5	Ranbir Kapoor	54	15	Mimi Chakraborty	21
6	Katrina Kaif	51	16	Soham Chakraborty	19.19
7	Koel Mallick	42.42	17	Victor Banerjee	14
8	Deepika Padukone	39	18	Akshay Kumar	12
9	Kareena Kapoor	36	19	Dibyendu Mukherjee	9.27
10	Payel Sarkar	35.42	20	Sonam Kapoor	4

CONCLUSION

Featuring Celebrities in advertising is such a marketing strategy that will continue for a very long. Which celebrity should be used, this question has to be analysed properly when it comes to a diversified place like India. Celebrities get the viewers' attention, but whether they work to sell the product depends on proper celebrity casting. The use of celebrity for brand promotion is increasing day by day but it cannot be treated as an assured strategic tool to enhance market share, demand of the product or even profit because it mainly depends upon suitability of celebrity with a product and brand as well. Further, celebrities with least familiarity and popularity rates with consumers are not able to establish a meaningful connection with audiences. The Q score technique provides a solution to find the level of acceptability of the celebrity by the audience. From the study it is evident that the celebrities who are able to make right association with their brands endorsed are able to make the right connect with the target audience, thereby communicating the message more effectively. Further, it was revealed from the data that impact of Bollywood stars is higher than the Regional Stars.

SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study compares two regions of India. Similarly other regions can also be compared. Moreover, to give international appeal to such a kind of study, comparison between national and international celebrities can also be done. Such a kind of study will help the marketers to understand the perception of customers regarding different endorsers to a same brand in a single market arena. Moreover, it is right to say that when the decision regarding the celebrity endorsement is planned intelligently and strategically by having a proper focus on the market, then only a marketer will be able to reap the benefits and build a successful brand.

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