

# **INFLUENCE OF CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT ON THE BUYING PATTERNS OF DEMOGRAPHICALLY DIVERSIFIED CONSUMERS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The purpose of this study is to notify and analyze the attitudes of consumers from different age groups toward the characteristics of celebrities. Celebrity Endorsement is one of the marketing strategies practiced by brands and organizations that involve well-known and popular celebrities. Celebrities from all over the world use their high social status and popularity to promote the brands, as celebrities help create and build the image of the brand. Descriptive research was adopted for this research study. A well-designed questionnaire was fabricated to collect primary data from 300 respondents from different age groups. The scholarly literature was reviewed from authentic sources such as books by renowned authors and research articles from reliable and veridical journals. The hypothesis has been tested with SPSS to achieve the research objectives. A chi-square test was employed to analyze the responses. The findings illustrated that the attitudes of respondents belonging to different age groups are not identical to each other regarding the characteristics of celebrities.*

**Keywords:** *Celebrity; Celebrity Endorsement; Attractiveness; Expertise; Reliability; Popularity; Positive Image.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Celebrity endorsement has emerged as a ubiquitous attribute of contemporary marketing. The title “Celebrity” symbolizes a person who is well-known among the audience, such as actors, athletes, entertainers, etc. for his/her accomplishments in certain areas in contrast with non-celebrity endorsers (Friedman H.H. and Friedman L., 1979). In this hyper-competitive market of FMCG brands, celebrity endorsement has been embarked as one of the most prevailing contrivances of promotional campaigns globally. From beverages to bakery products, drugs to detergent, skin care to hair care, and confectionery to stationery products are endorsed by

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celebrities. Celebrities from different areas are in action to endorse the brands. These days world's leading brands take on national and international stars for brand endorsements considering it a predominant and cardinal factor for brand promotions.

Scholarly literature and analysis unveil the several characteristics of celebrities such as trustworthiness, popularity, likeability, and expertise that provide a base for the celebrities to stand as influential sources. The implementation of celebrity endorsement supports a brand strategy that embraces attention, image furnishing, brand introduction, brand positioning, and all the capabilities to forward global campaigns. Celebrities and their admirers carry a strong demographic and psychographic interdependency. A demographic connection showcases that different celebrities appeal differently to numerous demographic segments such as age, gender, education, occupation social class, etc. while a psychographic connection reveals to which extent viewers admire celebrities.

Celebrity endorsements are effective because they have the ability to tap into consumer's emblematic association with related reference groups. These reference groups facilitate consumers with some point of comparison through which consumers may assess their attitudes and behavior. Celebrities possess a wide range of elucidations, containing different demographic classifications. Demographic factors such as age, gender, income, education, etc. play a vital role in the process of a consumer's purchase decision. Celebrity endorsement can also manipulate the common pattern of buying behavior of demographically segmented consumers. Meanings affiliated with celebrities move towards brands, but the meanings transferred by celebrities are not perceived identically by all types of consumers. The diversity of consumers deviates from the interpretation of transferred messages. Marketing strategies regarding celebrity endorsements stand on the effectual segmentation, targeting, and positioning of a brand in specific markets. Demographic characteristics have become the key factor in providing some insights into the purchase intention of consumers.

One of the most significant segments that differentiate the consumer's buying process is the age of consumers. Consumers do not pursue the same products throughout their lives. Their preferences change over time. Many research studies have been carried out to examine the influence of celebrity endorsement on consumers of different age groups. Celebrity endorsement in general affects consumer buying behavior, but the level of influence varies from person to person, age to age, and area to area. Research studies concluded that young consumers are more likely to purchase products if the endorsers have attractive and pleasant personalities. But by this period consumers begin to understand celebrities have some

responsibilities towards society and they begin to consider the reliability and expertise of celebrities during their buying process.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

A celebrity is a person who enjoys huge recognition from the audience and avails this recognition to represent the brand by appearing in promotional events of the respective brand. The rise in the traction of celebrity endorsement can be accredited to the ability to attract the audience thus giving the organizations a better chance to promote their brands. They like celebrity endorsement because celebrities have professional skills to represent any kind of brand. (Khatri, 2013) stated in her study that advertisers agree with the statement that celebrities in promotional moves just create a buzz and grab the attention of the consumers towards the brand but do not directly affect the sales of the brand. He further illustrated celebrity endorsement as a strategic technique. An evaluation of the present market condition specified that promotional activities and celebrity endorsement are appropriately harmonized in terms of combining the forte of brands with the quality of celebrity vindicating the extortionate cost associated with this kind of promotional activity. Marketers have to identify the risks combined with the benefits of celebrity endorsement. Marketers also agree with the statement that celebrity endorsement does not itself assure sales of brands, but it can allure consumers towards the brands and can make consumers feel positive about the brand. The utilization of a well-known person for promotional purposes is a previously used and owned phenomenon and there is a lot of evidence that exists in this regard (Kamis, 1989). Celebrity endorsement symbolizes any person who enjoys huge recognition among the audience and who gives an appearance in advertisements of a brand intending to promote a respective brand. Exposure of a celebrity at a constant interval over some time substantially guarantees a return on investment for the volume of money allocated to assigning a celebrity for promotion. This continuous exposure reinforces the association between the brand and the celebrity (Till, 1998). So, organizations should be conscious while selecting a celebrity for a specific brand.

In contemporary marketing where advertising and promotion are playing a vital role in enhancing consumer purchases, it has become necessary for organizations to induct all feasible standards to convince, manipulate, and motivate the purchase desire in consumers through productive promotional practices. Assael (1987) suggests that the usage of celebrities in advertisements is effective because they have the ability to tap into consumers' emblematic association with related reference groups. These reference groups facilitate consumers with some point of comparison through which consumers may assess their attitude, intention, and

behavior (Kamins, 1990). In proceeding to reason why celebrities are proven to be influential, (Atikin & Block, 1983) proclaims that celebrity endorsements may be more influential than other genres because celebrities are considered more dynamic, with all of their alluring qualities. Various theories and practices prove that the appearance of celebrities in advertisements originates from lots of awareness and recognition (Ohanian, 1991). Celebrity embodies a host of certain characteristics.

The source attractiveness model proposed by (McGuire, 1985) contends that the efficacy of communication is based on the source's likeability, familiarity, popularity, and attractiveness to the respondent. The attractiveness of a source has become one of the cardinal factors due to which the use of celebrities as endorsers for brands, services, and social causes has increased. Most advertising media use spokespersons who have pleasant personalities. Since the early eighties, different literature has shown that an attractive communicator is more effective in changing attitudes and behavior than an unattractive communicator.

Most businesses these days are engaging celebrities to represent their brands and services; this is because the publicity of a brand done by a celebrity catches the attention of the audience. Moreover, the consumer tends to recall the brands more quickly which are represented by celebrities rather than those brands that are endorsed by any unknown person. One of his studies (Wenqian, 2007) explores that consumers focus on celebrity endorsement instead of non-celebrity communication. A consumer who reads messages for two different products from different firms, one product's message having celebrity endorsement and the other not, is convinced that the product presented by the celebrity has more purchases so the value will also be higher (Balakrishna, 2011). Theoretically, celebrities have been proven as the most effective endorsers for the reason that the appearance of their emblematic desirable reference group (Solomon, 1987). Celebrity endorsement in general helps in creating the certitude of existing and future customers, enlarging the possibility of being memorable, and alluring to different types of viewers. An attractive personage intensifies the brand image and may be more influential in transferring the message than an unattractive person. There is a noticeable difference in understanding and insight which associate the attractive person with pleasant features and facets, whereas the unattractive person is considered invariably from a negative viewpoint.

The efficacy of the promotion of a particular brand highly depends on the recognition of celebrities with related expertise. According to (Till, 2008) the experience of celebrity should be a key variable for brand owners in understanding the value of celebrities. Perceived expertise

provides value to customers by giving them the reasons to purchase and to acknowledge the brand. In his research study (Thompson, 1988), claims that celebrities who have expertise in a specific area possess a higher brand recognition than celebrities who are not experts in the particular area. Source credibility directs to the level at which a source is perceived to be rational considering expertise and trustworthiness (Mowen, & Minor, 1998). A prominent researcher (Erdogan, 1999) stated about the expertise of a celebrity: “the extent to which an endorser is perceived to be a source of valid assertions”. Expertise is not about the celebrity should be the expert in a certain area, but the important thing is what customers think and believe about the celebrity. The greater the expertise of a celebrity, the more likely the audience will perceive that the celebrity is credible. In brand communication, when celebrities appear to represent a brand and accredit the brand’s assertion by proffering their personalities, popularity, and prestige in society or expertise in the related field called Celebrity Endorsement (Kotler, 2009).

Celebrity trustworthiness points to the degree to which the information provided by the celebrity is considered to be unbiased and genuine. Various research studies endorse the effectiveness of trustworthiness on the change of attitude and perception. For instance, (Miller, & Baseheart, 1969) examined the influence of the trustworthiness of a spokesperson on the effectiveness of communication. The result provides a favorable relationship between the perceived trustworthiness of the communicator and a change of attitude and perception. Findings of various research studies support the argument that the expertise and trustworthiness of a celebrity make an independent contribution to the effectiveness of a celebrity. In this study (Friedman & Friedman, 1979) the trustworthiness of a spokesperson was the cardinal factor underlying source credibility. The research study proposed by (Sereno & Hawkins, 1967) ascertained that, without reliability, other qualities held by the celebrity would not be very effective in changing the perception or attitude of the audience. Thus, a brand representative who is likely to stimulate the consumer’s attitude and perception should possess a trustworthy profile.

On the other hand, (Ohanian, 1991) has given his arguments regarding this claim. She admitted that characteristics such as reliability and attractiveness have notable significance in persuasive communication, but they also emerge to have less impact on the source credibility dimension. Most celebrities are attractive, but consumers do not always consider the attractiveness of a celebrity as a deciding factor. Furthermore, with the massive appearance of celebrities in paid

advertisements, the viewers do not affiliate their perception of trustworthiness with celebrities who get a handsome amount of money to promote a brand.

The fondness for the celebrity as a result of his/her personality and behavior can be called the likeability of the celebrity (McGuire, 1985). Furthermore, he added that when people have affection for a celebrity, they will also get closer to the brand accompanied by that celebrity, and therefore advertisers use celebrities for the promotion of brands. If the customer likes the celebrity, then the image of the brand will surely be positive in the mind of the customer because the brand has been represented by that celebrity and if the customer dislikes any of the celebrities, then the brand endorsed by that celebrity will not be able to create the positive impact in the mind of the consumer. Hence, the image of the celebrity in the mind of the consumers is an important thing to discuss and with the help of this managers can also analyze the current situation of the market. To explain the phenomenon of celebrity endorsement (McCracken, 1989) proposed the Meaning Transfer Model. He illustrated that the celebrity transfers the specific meaning to the brand and in the consumption phase, this meaning gets transferred from the brand to consumers. He further illustrated that celebrity possesses a set of meanings that moves from celebrity to brand and then from brand to consumer.

Celebrity endorsement is flourishing in the industry as the most successful promotional tool and research studies have revealed that celebrity endorsement has an influential impact on the buying behavior of customers of different demographic setups. Demographic factors such as income, social class, gender, age, education, etc. play a vital role in the process of a customer's purchase decision and can deviate from the common pattern of consumer buying behavior (Lee, 2005). According to a study published by (MECMediaEdge: CIA, 2009) celebrity endorsement has more impact on young consumers rather than older consumers. The age of consumers is determined by the type of clothes, music, food, and other activities which he/she likes. A consumer does not buy the same products or services at 20 or 70 years. Children commonly tend to purchase the brands that are promoted by their favorite stars. With the increase in age group, they begin to understand that celebrities have some responsibilities towards society and hold a strong influence, they should considerably promote good quality brands instead of sub-quality products which can be harmful to society directly or indirectly. The study proposed by (Pughazhandhi & Ravindra, 2012) which was based on the primary data collected from 150 children and 150 parents, the study shows that most children were aware of confectionary products like biscuits, chocolates, wafers, and health drinks because these products were endorsed by the popular celebrities.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Descriptive research was adopted for this research study. For this research, secondary data has been gathered from different authentic sources such as books of renowned authors and research articles from reliable and authentic journals. A well-designed questionnaire was fabricated to collect primary data from 300 respondents from different age groups. The questionnaire consists of Likert-Scale questions that concern the consumer's attitude toward the characteristics of celebrities. The consumer's responses have been carried out through a 5 Likert Scale from very high to very low (very high=1, high=2, neutral=3, low=4, and very low=5). Data analysis is done by employing the Chi-square test.

*H0: The attitude of consumers towards the characteristics of celebrities varies in different age groups.*

*H1: The attitude of consumers towards the characteristics of celebrities does not vary in different age groups.*

The above hypothesis possesses the relationship between the characteristics of celebrities and consumer's attitudes toward brands. Characteristics of celebrity hold trustworthiness, attractiveness, expertise, popularity, likability and positive image of the celebrity among the audience are the independent variables as well as the age of consumers is considered as the dependent variable.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

The detailed and précised analysis in the following table demonstrated that the popularity of a celebrity holds a p-value greater than 0.05 which indicates that there is no significant difference in the level of involvement of consumers of different ages. Expertise of a celebrity holds a p-value less than 0.05 which signifies that there is a significant difference in the attitude of consumers of different age groups. The positive image of a celebrity possesses a p-value greater than 0.05 which enlightens that there is no significant difference in the attitude of consumers from different age groups. However, deeper segmentation reveals that younger age groups are more influenced by visually appealing and relatable personalities, while older age groups show greater interest in the professional accomplishments and reliability of celebrities,

The attractiveness of a celebrity obtains a p-value less than 0.05 which notifies that respondents from all age groups have different perspectives regarding the attractiveness of celebrities. The likeability and reliability of a celebrity carry a p-value greater than 0.05 which reveals that

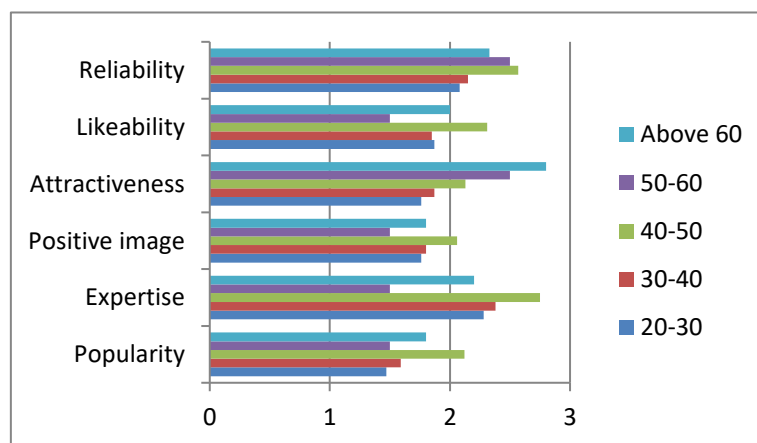
there is no significant difference in the purchase attitude of respondents from different age groups.

Furthermore, cross-tabulation analysis highlights a regional variation among respondents. Urban consumers tend to respond more positively to global celebrities, while rural consumers favor local or national figures who represent cultural familiarity. This segmentation provides marketers with deeper insights into audience preferences, enabling tailored celebrity endorsements based on demographic factors.

**Table 1.** Pearson Chi-Square Tests

	Popularity of a Celebrity	Expertise of a Celebrity	Positive Image of Celebrity	Attractiveness of a Celebrity	Likeability of a Celebrity	Reliability of a Celebrity
Chi-square	15.949	26.688	10.583	42.118	13.635	20.825
Df	16	16	16	16	16	16
Sig.	.457	.045	.834	.000	.626	.185

Mean scores also show that consumers from all age groups are positively influenced by the popularity of a celebrity. The mean score helps in detecting that the age group of 40-50 has fewer concerns regarding the expertise of a celebrity. The mean score manifests that all the age groups are positively influenced by the positive image of a celebrity. Mean values highlight that the age group 50-60 and above 60 are less concerned with the attractiveness of a celebrity but influence the younger age groups 20-30, 30-40, and 40-50. Mean values clarify that likeability and reliability have a positive impact on respondents of all age groups while making purchase decisions (Figure 1).



*Figure 1. Mean Values*



## **CONCLUSION**

This research study has been conducted to analyze the attitudes of consumers from different age groups toward the characteristics of celebrities. The characteristics selected for this attractiveness are expertise, positive image of celebrity, popularity, likability, and reliability of a celebrity. Celebrities' characteristics are considered the independent variable and consumers' age is the dependent variable respectively.

The findings attained from the analysis determined that responses from different age groups are not identical which leads to the null hypothesis being accepted. Yet all characteristics of celebrities acquire positive attitudes of consumers from different age groups except the expertise and attractiveness of celebrities. The younger age groups carry positive feelings for these characteristics and the older age groups are less concerned regarding the expertise and attractiveness of celebrities.

The study also highlighted that consumer preferences are shaped by a combination of demographic and cultural influences. Younger consumers are more attracted to celebrities who embody aspirational lifestyles and modern trends, while older consumers prioritize credibility, professional achievements, and societal contributions of endorsers.

Furthermore, the research revealed that localized endorsements by celebrities who are culturally familiar resonate more strongly with rural and older demographics compared to global celebrity endorsements. This underscores the importance of aligning celebrity characteristics with the values and expectations of specific consumer segments to enhance brand trust and loyalty.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The organizations should identify the demographic profiles of the target audience such as age, social class, income, gender, etc. They should also consider the characteristics of celebrities very critically. For instance, if the target audience comprises young consumers, then the marketers should select a celebrity with an attractive and pleasing personality. However, older consumers do not go by physical appearance but by the expertise of a related field and the reliability of a celebrity.

Marketers should consider a data-driven approach to select celebrities who align with their brand values and resonate with specific demographics. For example, celebrity personas with strong social responsibility or environmental initiatives can attract mature audiences seeking ethical brand associations.

The marketers have to select celebrities that are familiar to the target population so that the viewers can easily recall the specific brands. The advertisers should appoint celebrities who have been popular over time or are at the heights of their careers. Such celebrities can create a buzz and grab lots of attention from the brands.

Additionally, marketers should leverage digital platforms to maximize the reach of celebrity endorsements. Collaborations on social media with influencers and micro-celebrities can supplement traditional endorsements and engage younger, tech-savvy consumers. Brands should continuously monitor the impact of their campaigns using real-time analytics to ensure their chosen celebrity maintains a positive public perception.

Organizations should keep in mind that brand/celebrity matches can have multiple effects on consumers' purchase intentions. If the personality of a celebrity fails to fit with the brand's personality it can damage the brand's position. However, the rightly matched celebrity can improve the brand positioning in the minds of the consumers.

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