

A Study on the Influence of Celebrity Endorsement over the Perception and Purchase Intention of College Students

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ABSTRACT

Currently in India the use of celebrity advertising for companies has become a trend and also become a winning formula of corporate image building and product marketing. It can create linkages with the stars appeal, thereby adding refreshing and new dimensions to the brand image. The celebrity endorsement business has become a multi-million industry. Companies spend lot of money in hiring celebrities from film industry and sports for endorsing products. Competition for hiring high notched celebrity is increasing among the companies and so also the remuneration paid for the celebrities for endorsement. The economic benefits and other benefits associated with the celebrity endorsements have to be gauged.

Since the attitude of the Indian college students towards celebrity endorsement is different from that of those who belong to the developed countries, perception of college students about celebrity endorsement is a concern for the firms targeting youth market. Hence this study's objectives were to find the association between demographic attributes and buying behaviour of consumers and to analyze the consumers' perception of cricket and film industry celebrity endorsement and to measure the influence of Cricket and film celebrities on purchase intention of consumer.

This research also focuses to study the influence of match-up factors of celebrities with the products on purchase intention. This research was done in two stages. In the first stage the colleges in Coimbatore city were selected. There are 82 colleges in Coimbatore city region out of which 36 are Arts & Sciences, 44 are Engineering and 2 are Medical colleges. By Quota sampling method 20 colleges were chosen for the data collection, which included 9 Arts & Science colleges, 9 Engineering colleges and 2 Medical colleges. In the second stage, 60 students were chosen using random sampling method from each category. The sample size totaled to 1200 out of which hundred and twenty five samples were rejected because of data incompleteness and errors.

In order to analyze the data, analysis methods like Frequency distribution, Likert's Scaling, Weighted Average, Chi-Square Test, ANOVA Test, Multiple Regression, Reliability Analysis, Rotated Factor Analysis, Pearson's correlation and Visual PLS (Structural Equations Model) were used. SPSS Version 16 was used for data analysis.

In the analysis of measuring the association between the demographic attributes of the college students and their purchase behavior, the study concludes that there exists a strong association

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between gender and price consciousness. Moreover, it was found that gender and age of the college students attributed to the quality consciousness behavior and age and current status of the college students affected the importance given by them to the social values. But for the status of the college student, all the other factors like age, gender, level of graduation and discipline of study seemed to affect their attitude towards celebrity endorsement.

Analysis of the Coimbatore college student's perception of cricket celebrity and film star endorsement revealed that, they strongly believe that both the cricketers and the film stars use the product they endorse and it indicates their

trust over them. Both film star and cricketer endorsement are proved to affect the college students purchase intention. In cricket celebrity matchup factor analysis, factors like celebrity's success, appearance and competence were found to affect the college students' perception which in turn affects their purchase behavior. In film star matchup factor analysis factors like reliability, expertise in the product, competence, performance over time, superiority, dependability, reconcilability and hard working affect the college students' purchase intention. This study concludes that both the cricket and film celebrity endorsement have only positive effect on the purchase intention of the college students.