

# Impact Of Celebrity Endorsements On Brand

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## ABSTRACT

In recent years, the plethora of use of celebrities in advertisements has become more prevalent than ever. Marketers have the perception that this technique of persuasion is a winning formula to build up brand image, to increase sales revenue, and to gain strong brand loyalty. Celebrities are easily chosen by marketers to peddle their products. We are bombarded by a variety of different advertisements in our everyday life without having a choice not to. Celebrity endorsement is very popular and widely used in advertising. From magazines to TV advertisements, from toothpaste to luxury goods, celebrity-endorsed products have penetrated almost every aspect in our life. Celebrity endorsement has been established as one of the most popular tools of advertising in recent time. It has become a trend and perceived as a winning formula for product marketing and brand building. It is easy to choose a celebrity but it is tough to establish a strong association between the product and the endorser. While the magnitude of the impact of celebrity endorsement remains under the purview of gray spectacles, this paper is an effort to analyze the impact of celebrity endorsements on brand. Celebrity endorsement is always a two-edged sword and it has a number of positives— if properly matched it can do wonders for the company, and if not it may produce a bad image of the company and its brand.

**Keyword:** Celebrity endorsement, brand loyalty.

## Purpose

To study the impact of the celebrity endorsement on effective brand management and evaluate associated factors that contribute to the success or failure of the endorsement.

## Approach

This work was done mainly as an exploratory research to find out the correlation between celebrity endorsement and brand image based on structured questionnaire and analysis is done on the outcome/response with the help of higher order statistical tools.

## INTRODUCTION

Celebrities are people who enjoy public recognition by a large share of a certain group of people. Whereas attributes like attractiveness, extraordinary lifestyle or special skills are just examples and specific common characteristics that are observed and celebrities generally differ from the social norm and enjoy a high degree of public awareness. The

term Celebrity refers to an individual who is known to the public (actor, sports figure, entertainer, etc.) for his or her achievements in areas other than that of the product class endorsed (Friedman and Friedman, 1979).

Endorsement is a channel of brand communication in which a celebrity acts as the brand's spokesperson and certifies the brand's claim and position by extending his/her personality, popularity, stature in the society or expertise in the field to the brand. In a market with a very high proliferation of local, regional and international brands, celebrity endorsement was thought to provide a distinct differentiation (Martin Roll, 2006).

McCracken's (1989) definition of a celebrity endorser is, "any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement (marcoms), is useful, because when celebrities are depicted in marcoms, they bring their own culturally related meanings, thereto, irrespective of the required promotional role." Ohanian stresses that to be truly effective, celebrities chosen as endorsers should be knowledgeable, experienced and qualified in order to be perceived as an expert in the category.

Two models were originally identified to explain the process of celebrity endorsement. As an endorser, one has to fulfill all the FRED objectives (Rajesh Lalwani, 2006), namely, Familiarity (target market is aware of him, finds him friendly, likeable and trustworthy); Relevance (which says that there should be a link between the endorser and the product as well between the endorser and the audience); Esteem (credibility to the mass); Differentiation (in all his projections, he is seen to be one among the masses, and yet he towers above them. He is different).

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Objective of this study was to reveal and re-establish the positive impact of celebrity endorsement on brand image and find out the most prominent factors those play the key role in the success of an endorsement. The research objective was to explore the link between brands and the consumer psyche and determine a model which can help any brand to identify the critical key areas to concentrate on while going for any celebrity endorsement. The newly

evolved model should lead any brand towards the success of strategic branding from endorsement aspect.

### BENEFITS OF CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT

**Quick saliency:** It gets cut through because of the star and his attention getting value.

**Quick connect:** There needs to be no insight but the communication connects because the star connects.

**Quick shorthand for brand values:** The right star can actually telegraph a brand message fast without elaborate story telling.

**Quick means of brand differentiation:** In a category where no brand is using a celebrity, the first that picks one up could use it to differentiate itself in the market

### MAJOR FACTORS THAT HAVE MAXIMUM IMPACT OF SUCCESSFUL ENDORSEMENT

- **Consistency and long-term commitment:** As with branding, companies should try to maintain consistency between the endorser and the brand to establish a strong personality and identity. More importantly, companies should view celebrity endorsements as long-term strategic decisions affecting the brand. A global brand must respect local needs, wants, and tastes while endorsing.
- **Prerequisites to selecting celebrities:** Before signing on celebrities to endorse their brands, companies need to ensure that they meet three basic prerequisites, namely the endorser should be attractive, have a positive image in the society, and be perceived as having the necessary knowledge (although it might be difficult for a celebrity to meet all three prerequisites). Most of the prerequisites are already discussed in the previous section of the article.
- **Celebrity-brand match:** Consistent with the principles discussed earlier, companies should ensure a match between the brand being endorsed and the endorser so that the endorsements are able to strongly influence the thought processes of consumers and create a positive perception of the brand. Tiger Woods endorsing the Buick brand makes no sense at all. There is just no believability that Tiger is dying to drive a Buick. And without believability a celebrity endorsement is worthless. The \$40 million General Motors reportedly paid Tiger for his 5-year contract ending in 2009 is not money well spent. Kellogg's opted out of a contract extension

with Olympic swimmer Michael Phelps several weeks ago, the company simultaneously ripped Phelps' bong-hit photo as being inconsistent with its image. "Kellogg is a family brand. How does Mom, who does the family shopping, feel about Phelps?" said David Reeder, vice president of Green Light (2009), a brand and entertainment consulting firm.

- **Constant monitoring:** Companies should monitor the behavior, conduct and public image of the endorser continuously to minimize any potential negative publicity
- **Selecting unique endorsers:** Great brands represent great ideas. These brands express the uniqueness of position to all internal and external audiences. Companies should try to bring on board those celebrities who do not endorse competitors' products or other quite different products, so that there is a clear transfer of personality and identity between the endorser and the brand. The controversy related to the endorser's personal or professional life may hamper the associated brand image. Kobe Bryant's family-friendly endorsement deals with Nutella and McDonald's came to a quick end after he was accused of rape. Pepsi shied away from Madonna after her Like a Prayer video aired.
- **Timing:** As celebrities command a high price tag, companies should be on the constant lookout for emerging celebrities who show some promise and potential and sign them on in their formative years if possible to ensure a win-win situation.
- **Myopic endorsement strategy:** Most of the endorsement goes wrong due to myopic vision of endorsement. The real problem is that too many brands have a myopic focus on short term sales and 'awareness'. With this mindset they are logically driven towards ill conceived celebrity endorsement campaigns. Virgin is a classic example of a brand that hasn't thought about its brand personality before matching with a celebrity. Virgin Media, previously associated with the subtle Uma Thurman, has now opted for "in your face" (according to Virgin media Chief James Kidd) Ruby Wax. Virgin clearly hasn't distinguished between its product sales and brand strategy.
- **Brand over endorser (Vampire Effect):** When celebrities are used to endorse brands, one obvious result could be the potential overshadowing of the brand by the celebrity (Martin Roll, 2006). Companies should ensure that this does not happen by formulating

advertising collaterals and other communications. Examples are the campaigns of Dawn French-Cable Association and Leonard Rossiter-Cinzano. Both of these campaigns were aborted due to celebrities getting in the way of effective communication. So, while presenting the endorser, this should be kept in mind that Endorser is promoting the brand not the vice-versa. That's why Coca-Cola's idea of having Mean Joe toss his jersey to a young boy in exchange for a bottle of Coke was brilliant. The commercial made charming use of Mean Joe's image, but Coke was the star.

- **Celebrity endorsement is just a channel:** Companies must realize that having a celebrity endorsing a brand is not a goal in itself; rather it is one part of the communication mix that falls under the broader category of sponsorship marketing.
- **Over dependency on celebrity:** A celebrity is not a replacement for an idea. A brand without a focus will never find the correct celebrity to match the brand.
- **The celebrity trap:** Once into a celebrity, it is hard to get out of it. If the brand has done even moderately well after the break of a celebrity campaign, it becomes difficult to separate the role of message and the role of the celebrity in selling the brand.
- **Trademark and legal contracts:** Companies should ensure that the celebrities they hire are on proper legal terms so that they don't endorse competitors' products in the same product category, thereby creating confusion in the minds of the consumers.
- **Overall Management:** The organization's senior leadership must champion the brand, ideally with the CEO leading the initiative. A leader's continual articulation of the brand philosophy and the brand's view of the world is meant to give the celebrity endorsement strategy a recognizable face.
- **Investment:** Intangible assets, including brand, now comprise the majority of the value of a company. These assets require capital investment like any other. Progressive companies and enlightened management recognize the need for appropriate communications spending.
- **The Brand endorsement team:** Global brands demand a global brand management team. This regional and international organization is in place to maintain brand leadership through efficient and effective use of celebrity endorsement.

- **Feel Cultural Sensitivity:** To go global with a brand, endorsement strategy should make sure you understand cultural sensitivities. **Celebrity ROI:** Even though it is challenging to measure the effects of celebrity endorsements on companies' brands, companies should have a system combining quantitative and qualitative measures to measure the overall effect of celebrity endorsements on their brands.

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF PRODUCTS THAT REQUIRE CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT

- High price-cost margins
- Large potential customer pools
- The need to co-ordinate across diverse sets of customers.

**This research also includes the endorser viewpoint of signing a contract with a brand. As suggested by Zafer & Baker (2001), even though building-up a whole marketing communication campaign around a celebrity(s) makes complete sense, most celebrities are reluctant to sign such deals for four reasons.**

- They are very concerned about their exposure. Should they sign a deal for more than the main media, they know their picture can be stuck all over the place and they would lose control over their exposure.
- They do not want to be too closely associated with a particular product that may cost them other potential deals.
- They are uncomfortable with some media, as they are motionless.
- They may be unable to sign for some media as their previous deals prohibit them.

#### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Questionnaire based sample analysis was the base of this study. The sample was believed to be quite representative of the population, but nonetheless it was a convenience sample which may be defined as 'a form of non-probabilistic or purposive sample drawn on a purely opportunistic basis from a readily accessible subgroup of the population (Baker 1990). A well framed set of

questioned were circulated through email to the target personnel or some interviews were conducted over telephone, even few of them were face-to-face. Table-1 lists the twelve participating companies where correspondents from different industries (IT, Telecom, Power, Paints, Education, Advertisements, and FMCG etc) are interviewed. Interviews took place at different agencies and at the icebreaking stage of every interview; managers were specifically informed that this research was concerned with any kind of celebrity utilization (i.e. actors, endorsements, testimonials, or spokespersons) in marketing communication activities. Interviews over phone or face to face, were lasting on average over half of an hour.

Table 1 **PARTICIPATING BRANDS**

Nerolac Paints	Scooty Pep+
Sony VAIO	Dabur Chyawanprash

### **MANAGERS' REASONS FOR UTILIZING CELEBRITY ENDORSERS**

- Standing out or shorthand
- Awareness or attention getting
- Celebrity values define, and refresh the brand image
- Celebrity add new dimensions to the brand image
- Instant credibility or aspiration
- PR coverage
- Desperate for ideas
- Convincing clients

According to managers, factors considered while selecting celebrities vary depending on how celebrities are utilized; celebrity as the central feature, or celebrity for the added interest.

### **SELECTION CRITERIA**

1. Celebrity-Product Match
2. Celebrity-Target Audience Match
3. Celebrity Popularity

4. Celebrity Credibility
5. Celebrity Values
6. Celebrity Physical Attractiveness
7. Celebrity Regional & international Appeal Factors
8. Celebrity Controversy Risk
9. Multiple Endorsements
10. Costs of Acquiring the Celebrity
11. Fit with the Advertising Idea
12. Celebrity Availability
13. Celebrity should be Brand User
14. Consumer Influencing Advertisement
15. Previous Endorsements
16. Use of promotional Medium
17. Brand Image Formation capability
18. Interest of endorser
19. Endorsement management team
20. Unique Idea of promotion

The research was conducted using a questionnaire designed to understand consumers views on celebrity endorsement, measuring their attitude toward ad, attitude toward brand and their intentions to purchase the given product or service. The demographic factors including Gender and age are taken as independent variables. The perceptual differences were measured with respect to single celebrity ads and multiple celebrities' ads. To measure consumer perception, three variables were studied, attitude toward advertisement, attitude toward brand and purchase intentions. The sample consists of 88% male while 12% female respondents, 21% were of age between 18 to 21, 49% were of age between 22 to 26 while 30% were of age between 27 to 30. 72% of respondents had bachelor's degree while 28% had professional degree.

### **STATISTICAL TOOLS USED**

The non response bias was measured applying two statistical techniques. Firstly, Statistical measure of higher order like Sample distribution analysis along with required regression technique for modeling numerical data consisting of values of a dependent variable or response variable of one or more independent variables are used. Secondly, telephonic conversations were made with those respondents who either did not respond or provided incomplete response. In most of these cases the reason for lack of response was low confidence level of participation (Rajagopal, 2009). A second test for Non response bias examined the differences between early and late respondents on the same set of factors (Armstrong, Overton 1977) & this assessment also yielded no significant differences between early and late respondents.

#### DATA ANALYSIS

Through this research, we found that the success of a brand through celebrity endorsement is a cumulative of the following 20 attributes which were presented in the questionnaire as selection criteria. While analyzing the major factors that should be kept in mind while selecting an endorser, the following results came out from the research.

The US has a popular index, called the Q score, that summarizes various perceptions and feelings that consumers have in the form of likeability measurements. The index could be based on a rating that takes into account agreed parameters/attributes, past-present media coverage/favourability and relevance, ground situation in terms of successful/unsuccessful seasons/tenures, future prospects, etc. The closest thing to this exist in more advanced manner in Davie-Brown Index, developed by Davie-Brown Entertainment and i-think Inc. This index evaluates the worth of celebrities through a systematic and controlled method that resembles financial brand valuation and forecasting. The Davie-Brown Index uses eight criteria in its evaluation:

1. Appeal
2. Notice

3. Trend setting
4. Influence
5. Trust
6. Endorsement
7. Aspiration
8. Awareness

#### MAJOR FINDINGS

At the theoretical level, the research finds that the celebrity endorsement strategy has become an important component of marketing communications strategy for firms in today's competitive environment. For practitioners, the findings highlight some of 'dos and don'ts' of celebrity endorsement strategy. In a way, these findings provide guidelines for managers planning to utilize and execute celebrity-based campaigns.

Through analysis and research, the following factors are revealed:

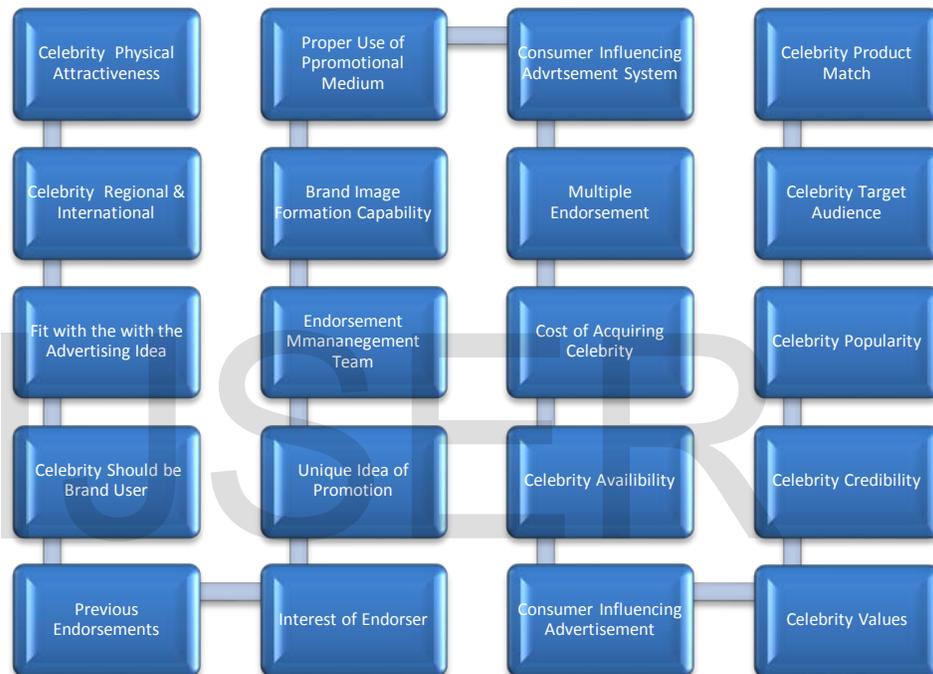
- The celebrities' acceptability, availability, regional appeal factors, popularity, attractiveness, image, belief system are some other important factors on the impact of celebrity endorsement on brands.
- The customer wants a variety of aspects from the endorsement like the credibility and acceptability of the endorser.
- Multiple endorsements create cluttering the minds of the consumer.
- In case of multiple endorsements by a celebrity, the success of celebrity endorsement for a particular brand depends entirely on the power of the brand.
- Apart from financial gains from the endorsements, brand and own image matching is also vital from celebrity's point of view.
- Professional & planned performance of the endorser is important in deciding the success of the endorsement.

- Association of the celebrity with a controversy or ill-behavior can cause negative impact to the endorsements.
- A celebrity endorsement is useful in the Indian scenario. The amount of impact of the effect varies with the celebrity and the product profile.

Celebrity endorsements cannot replace the comprehensive brand building processes.

The paper emerges with a 20-point model which can be used as blue-print criteria and

can be used by brand managers for selecting celebrities, and capitalizes the celebrity resource through 360 degree brand communication since our research proposes it as the foundation brick of the impact of celebrity endorsement. Our study reveals that the impact of celebrity endorsement is proportional to the 20 factors discussed in the model. This analysis is based on the model prescribed by Neha Taleja (2005) and Infilmarena.



## **20 ATTRIBUTES OF EFFECTIVE CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT**

### **1.CELEBRITY-PRODUCT MATCH**

The match-up hypothesis proposes positive effects of a congruent association between a celebrity and a product being promoted (Kahle and Homer 1985) & posits that the level of celebrity/product congruence will influence celebrity endorsement effectiveness through (1) the process of consumer attributions of the celebrity's motive for associating him or herself with the particular product and (2) the subsequent

effects of these attributions on the consumer evaluations of the endorser, the ad and the brand involved in the endorsements. Cyrus Broacha is the brand ambassador for MTV since both the celebrity and the brand are considered as friendly, young, mood-boosting, humourous and outspoken. MTV's brand personality overlaps Cyrus Broacha's image as a brand.

## 2. CELEBRITY-TARGET AUDIENCE MATCH

Celebrity is the mouthpiece for a brand in communicating messages to target audiences rather more effectively than any other voice (Zafer, Baker, 1999). The personalities of celebrities are very strong and they can rapidly change perceptions of a brand. Endorsers who have demographic characteristics similar to those of the target audience are viewed more viable and persuasive (Kamins, 1994). Indian TV star Smriti Irani endorsing the WHO recommended ORS Campaign in India. Indian mothers can associate with Smriti Irani through the facets she projects on screen or in regular life which helps develop a connect with the target audience since mothers medicate their children with ORS. The basis for the effectiveness of celebrity-endorsed advertising can be linked to Kelman's processes of social influence as discussed by Friedman and Friedman.

**Compliance** infers that another individual or group of individuals influences an individual cause he or she hopes to achieve a favorable reaction from this other group.

**Identification** applies to the situation wherein the individuals emulate the attitudes or behavior of another person or group, simply because they aspire to be like that person or group.

**Internalization** as a process of social influence is said to occur when individuals adopt the attitude or behavior of another person because that behavior is viewed as honest and sincere and is congruent with their value system. Celebrities are well-liked, but the techniques that can be used to enhance their credibility as spokespeople, and therefore, tie-in more closely with the internalization process needs to be looked into.

## 3. CELEBRITY POPULARITY

Empirical findings support the fact that celebrities have positive effect on both attitude toward ad and brand (Ohanian, 1990). These results are in favor of celebrity endorsers because they are widely

recognized, are perceived to be more credible and produce greater influence on evaluation of brand and its purchase intentions (Cohoi and Rifon, 2007; Atkin and Blok, 1983; Ohanian, 1990; Ohanian, 1991). The lifecycle of celebrity popularity varies a lot. People tend to commensurate the personalities of the celebrity with the brand thereby increasing the recall value Celebrity. Brand association like Garnier endorsed Tara Sharma & Simone Singh, Agni Diamonds & Riama Sen don't get much brand recall. On the other hand, HPCL has had increased popularity and share of voice due to the endorsement of the brand through Tennis star Sania Mirza..

## 4. CELEBRITY CREDIBILITY

The most important aspect of celebrity endorsement is credibility. In a research carried out by Infilmarena, a brand and advertisement group, among 43 ad agencies and companies, most experts believed that the most important dimensions of credibility are trustworthiness and prowess or expertise with regard to the recommended product or service (Miciak and Shanklin, 2002). The credibility components are interconnected with other traits of the celebrity and the image dimension which reflects good qualities e.g. pleasant, wise, educated etc. produce sincere and positive perception of the celebrity in consumer minds (Choi & Rifon, 2007). Credibility is the most important criteria in choosing a celebrity endorser by the firm which is followed by familiarity and likeability and at last we have gender, and in credibility expertise is the most important piece which is followed by trustworthiness and than attractiveness (Knott & James, 2004). The celebrities that were perceived as having constant media coverage are trusted more than the celebrities who are not in the constant spotlight (Friedman, Santeramo, & Traina, 1978). To cite one of the most successful campaigns in which the celebrity's credibility has had an indelible impact on the brand and has saved the brand is of Cadbury's. After the worm controversy, Amitabh Bachchan's credibility infused into the brand through the campaign, helping it to get back on track. Research conducted by

social psychologists over the past 30 years demonstrates that a source perceived as highly credible is more persuasive than a low credibility sender (Hovland and Weiss, 1951; McGuire, 1969; Hass, 1981). The sources that companies use to present their advertising message typically attempt to project a credible image in terms of competence, trustworthiness or dynamism.

## 5. CELEBRITY VALUES

Celebrity branding is all about the transfer of the value from the person to the product he endorses or stands for. There are two concerns here. The first is how long this could last. Can the person maintain his popularity? Another concern is his private life - personal integrity. If he is implicated in any kind of scandal, that would ruin the brand. "Who would want to use Michael Jackson to brand their product?" (brandchannel.com). Amitabh Bachchan & Shahrukh Khan campaigning for Pulse Polio or Aishwarya Rai appearing in the Donate Eyes campaign are few examples, which reflect the transfer of celebrity values to the brand, creating an impact that generates recall.

## 6. CELEBRITY PHYSICAL ATTRACTIVENESS

Physical attractiveness of the endorser may be central in context with change in attitude of the customer (Kahle & Homer 1985). The celebrity endorsements based on the attractiveness of the endorser most of the time produces positive effect on consumers. In general attractive endorsers are more effective promoters than unattractive endorsers (Till & Busler, 1998). The target audience is more familiar to the attractive celebrities and these celebrities are more likable (Miciak & Shanklin, 1994). Most advertisements use attractive celebrities and the consumers are accustomed to see pretty people in ads that is why the physical attractiveness and trustworthiness of a celebrity were not significantly related to the purchase intentions but the expertise is (Ohanian, 1991). Involvement enhances the recall of the product and it also enhances the recall of the brand (Petty & Cacioppo, 1980). There is a strong effect of celebrity

attractiveness as well as interaction of likeability, involvement, and sex on the recall of the product.

## 7 . CELEBRITY REGIONAL & INTERNATIONAL APPEAL FACTORS

In a market with a very high proliferation of local, regional and international brands, celebrity endorsement was thought to provide a distinct differentiation. While selecting an endorser its regional effect always comes into play. Where as while going global, the celebrities should be chosen in such a way that can create a global overall impact. In this respect, a planning director believed that celebrities with international recognition were more valuable internationally than nationally as the need for instant shorthand is greater in the international arena. For example, Jack Dee and John Smith's no nonsense straight-talking pint of beer campaign would not make sense in countries where Jack Dee is not known due to the fact that Jack Dee would be seen as an ordinary consumer. Developing international campaigns was deemed to be a difficult task because of cultural differences. An interesting example would be of Steve Waugh campaigning for Tourism Australia in India since he was one of the popular celebrities from Australia and could carry the message of Australia as a tourist destination. Other celebrities like Kylie Minogue.

## 8. CELEBRITY CONTROVERSY RISK

Association of the celebrity with a controversy or ill-behavior can cause negative impact to the endorsements. Any act on the part of the endorser that gives him a negative image among the audience and goes on to affect the brands endorsed. The brand, in most instances, takes a bashing. Siyaram Silk Mills Ltd. (Siyaram), one of India's leading textile companies, was also affected badly by South African Cricket Captain Hansie Cronje match fixing controversy. Ann Green (2009), senior vice president at Millward Brown, said, "In the past few years, we have seen a slight decline in the use of celebrity endorsements and that is in part due to the risk associated as well as the necessary investment."

## 9. MULTIPLE ENDORSEMENTS

The case of multiple endorsements, both in terms of a single brand hiring multiple celebrities and that of a single celebrity endorsing multiple brands, is often debated. At times, consumers do get confused about the brand endorsed when a single celebrity endorses numerous brands. The recall then gets reduced and reduces the popularity of the brand. For example, in case of Sachin Tendulkar people recall Pepsi, TVS Victor and MRF, but might not remember brands like Britannia and Fiat. Thus, for multiple endorsements where the same celebrity endorses several brands, it boils down to the strength of the brand and the advertising content. As per Zafer & Baker, Using multiple celebrities or a single celebrity partially depends on the time scale a campaign is using to have impact.

## 10. COSTS OF ACQUIRING THE CELEBRITY

Companies must have deep pockets to be able to afford the best available celebrities. Recently, a newspaper report showed how cola firms had gone beyond their advertising budgets to get the best celebrities. Small firms that use celebrities' services run greater risks if they invest large amounts. Although nobody is willing to say exactly how much celebrities get paid, industry sources say Indian cricketer Sachin Tendulkar's price is believed to be between Rs. 2.0-2.5 crore per endorsement, and Oscar winning musician A. R. Rehman, who had signed up with AirTel, is believed to have picked up Rs. 1.75 crore.

## 11. FIT WITH THE ADVERTISING IDEA

Marketers now seek to adopt 360 degree brand stewardship in which the brand sees no limits on the number of contact points possible with a target consumer. Advertising ideas, thus, revolve around this approach, and the celebrity endorsement decisions are

made through these strategic motives. One of the most successful celebrity endorsement campaign which reflects the fit between the brand and the 360 degree advertising fit is Richard Gere's recent endorsement for VISA in India has gained acclaim due to its innovativeness and consumer connect. Brand marketers say that research reveals that Richard Gere was the most popular face across the Asia Pacific region, and would also fit into the persona of the brand meeting their communication objective to enhance VISA's brand leadership and consumer preference, and the motive to continue the "All it Takes" empowerment platform featuring international celebrities. Celebrities do have some common characteristics which include their recognition, their status or their popularity but each celebrity may have his or her own unique image or cultural meaning which has been identified by McCracken (1989).

## 12. CELEBRITY AVAILABILITY

Due to multiple endorsements by certain celebrities, brands refuse to adopt celebrity endorsement since they fear dilution of the brand image. So, prior to the endorsement, availability should be judged.

## 13. CELEBRITY SHOULD BE BRAND USER

To make an endorsement successful, the customer should believe in the endorsement. If the endorser using a brand and promoting a different brand in the advertisement, may create a nonsense image to the customer. One of the most successful campaigns has been executed by PETA in which celebrities like Shilpa Shetty, Amisha Patel, Yana Gupta, Sheetal Malhar, Mahima claimed to believe in PETA's philosophy, and thereby endorse the brand. On the other hand, while some would understand that Amitabh Bachchan would have never used Navratan Tel. Britney Spears who endorsed one cola brand and was repeatedly caught drinking another brand of cola on tape.

## 14. CONSUMER INFLUENCING ADVERTISEMENT

The advertisement also should be well made and designed to portray the actual image of the brand and to convey the message intended to transfer to target audience. Generally, workshops are arranged to train the endorser to act as desired by the director. Sometimes due to poor performance in the advertisement, the promotion attempt fails although the celebrity was perfect for the brand.

#### **15. PREVIOUS ENDORSEMENTS**

While endorsing a celebrity, his/her prior endorsements should be monitored carefully. This will help in analyzing celebrity's dedication, professionalism and credibility as well as will help in evaluating the impact. Endorser campaigning for the similar line of products should not be endorsed. Even for an endorsing brand, its prior engagements with same or different celebrities should be kept in mind.

#### **16. PROPER USE OF PROMOTIONAL MEDIUM**

The most preferred medium for celebrity endorsement strategy was television although using several media was seen as an effective way to get good return on investment since celebrity fees are usually high. Using multiple celebrities or a single celebrity depends on the time period over which a campaign is planned to have impact, campaign budget, and variance in target audience characteristics. Other medium like radio, hoarding, poster, news paper etc can also be used to promote the advertisement. While using audio medium, the celebrity voice should be well known. If Indian Cine star Amitabh Bachchan promotes something on air, most of the Indian can identify where as very few can identify the voice of Indian soccer captain Bhaichung Bhutia if he is endorsed for the same.

#### **17. BRAND IMAGE FORMATION CAPABILITY**

Both theoretical and empirical research on the subject clearly indicates that celebrity product endorsement is a form of co-branding, which influences brand image

through meaning transfer from the endorser to the endorsed brand. Celebrity-product congruence has a positive impact on brand image, which in turn has a positive impact on brand equity. Baran and Blasko (1984) explained, "Since most products aren't special, most advertising does all that so-called image stuff. There's no information about the product, there's only information about the kind of people who might be inclined to use the product." (p.13). This view is echoed by Feldwick (1991) who has suggested that the subjective experience of using a brand can be different from the subjective experience of using an identical product without the brand reassurance. In the case of using celebrity advertising to build brand image, the effects are examined with a social psychological framework.

#### **18. INTEREST OF ENDORSER**

An endorsement became most successful when the endorser is also interested in the association with the brand not only for financial benefit, but also for his/her own image building also. Several celebrities have ventured into the fashion and accessories businesses and more are on the way. Jennifer Lopez, Sean Combs, and Jessica Simpson all have clothing lines; Victoria Beckham designs jeans; Elizabeth Hurley has launched a swimwear brand while Kylie Minogue already has a flourishing lingerie brand, called Love Kylie. In addition, the list of celebrities that have launched perfumes named after them is steadily increasing: Jennifer Lopez, Britney Spears, Paris Hilton, Celine Dion, Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen, Cindy Crawford, etc. Major stars do not really work for the endorsement fee, but are motivated by genuine affection for the product (Kamen et al, 1975).

#### **19. ENDORSEMENT MANAGEMENT TEAM**

Global brand endorsements demand a global brand management team. This regional and international organization is in place to maintain brand leadership through proper effective celebrity endorsements. Companies with large brand portfolios tend to have separate managers for each brand and its

promotion. Regardless, global brand managers have the authority and resources necessary to implement key decisions based on performance measurement. The brand management team reports to a senior executive officer of the company.

## 20. UNIQUE IDEA OF PROMOTION

Great brand endorsement represents great ideas at right time. These brands express the uniqueness of position to all internal and external audiences. They effectively utilize all elements in the communications mix to position themselves within and across international markets. Apple has creatively addressed its marketing mix while ensuring its people embody its most ownable and beneficial brand attribute: innovation. The innovative advertisement planning, promoting, selection of animation, identification of media – all contribute to the success of the celebrity endorsements.

## LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This Study is conducted in India and all the questionnaire based analysis that is done are all from Indian professionals. This research was exploratory and had a relatively small sample size; there is a need for confirmatory research with a larger sample testing hypotheses derived from the findings presented in this paper. Another limitation for research is that our findings for non-aspirational celebrities are not significant. Another primary limitation is related to the generalization of the research results. Most important generalization issue is related to sample.

## SCOPE FOR FUTURE WORK

The study was exploratory in nature and suffered from certain constraints and limitations such as geographic limitation (mainly Indian scenarios are taken into account), strategic brand management taken in a limited sense (i.e., limited discussion on financial aspect) and neglecting e-marketing/branding aspect. Nevertheless, the above study leaves an immense scope for carrying out further research in the following areas:

- To carry out similar study from the advertiser' perspective and comparing that with the customers' perspective
- To establish a more definite correlation between celebrity impact on brand equity and relation with customer's psychology.
- To carry out study on other possible aspect of endorsements.
- To carry out studies in other geographic areas i.e., in other nations and include all possible industries to find out whether there is any significant difference in the impact on the customers who are geographically separated.
- To carry out more detailed study and statistical research on the overall brand equity building mechanism with the help of celebrity endorsement

## CONCLUSION

Advertising is seen as playing a manipulative and merciless role in the emerging brandscape, seeking to transform customers into the personification of brand identity. Keller emphasizes the need for a structured approach based on sound research in order to manage brands strategically and to generate optimum value both in terms of asset valuation and marketing efficiency. To achieve this effectively, value for the brand has to be created and managers must have the knowledge and expertise to exploit this value by developing profitable brand strategies. Overall research points to accumulated positive influence over the audience's recall and purchase intentions, with celebrities deemed more effective than using a typical consumer or expert. Successful celebrity/brand partnerships have resulted in significant gains in income for brand owners. The micro factors such as the need for interactivity, the degree of control exercised by consumers over messages received and increasing media

fragmentation render celebrity endorsement a valid strategy.

This study shows that consumers report higher self-brand connections for brands with images that are consistent with the image of a celebrity that they aspire to be like, particularly in the case when the image of the celebrity and the brand match. Study also examines how self-brand connections are formed. Celebrity endorsement effects are moderated by brand symbolism, such that brands that communicate something about the user yield stronger

effects than brands that do not. In the case of aspirational celebrities, the positive effect of image congruency is stronger for those brands that are perceived to communicate something symbolic about the brand's user compared to those brands that do not. This finding is an important demonstration that consumers are motivated by their self-needs to utilize brand associations derived from celebrity endorsement in a contingent fashion to construct and present their self-identities.

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