

EFFECTIVENESS OF CELEBRITY ADVERTISEMENTS – A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN PARKER AND REYNOLDS

Dr. K. TAMIZHJYOTHI

Assistant Professor

Department of Business Administration

Annamalai University

Abstract

More than seventy five thousand brands are competing in the Indian market to get acceptance from the consumers. Differentiation and niche marketing being the order of the day, product executives are finding it difficult to ensure success for their brands. Celebrities are widely used to endorse brands with an aim to increase the recall level and to differentiate from other competitive brands. Success of celebrity advertisement largely depends on factors like celebrity characters, fit between product association and celebrity association and congruence between celebrity and target customers. Gender of the celebrities also plays a vital role in arresting the attention of viewers. Perception towards celebrity endorsed advertisement can be augmented if celebrity with few endorsements is used.

Keywords: Celebrity, Endorsers, Advertisements, Personalities, Perception

Introduction

Corporate wants to capture the dynamic market by keeping this phrase in their mind. They face ups and downs in the business to attain their goal. They aim to establish a positive image in the minds of consumers about their firm and their brand. However, it is difficult for the audience to remember all brands except those they use regularly. Celebrity advertisements are widely used by companies to persuade, influence and enhance the recall level of the consumers. Celebrities are famous personalities who are considered to be highly dynamic, with attractive and engaging personal qualities.

Firms use celebrities to differentiate their advertisements from others. Studies show that the effectiveness of celebrity endorsed advertisement is more than a non-celebrity endorsed advertisement. Friedmen and Friedmen (1979) hypothesized and found that the use of a celebrity endorser would lead to higher believability, a more favorable evaluation of the product and advertisements and a significantly higher intention to purchase the product than advertisements using a non-celebrity endorser. This result is applicable for the products which are high in psychological and social risk whereas it is fairly poor for the products which are high in financial, performance and physical risks. Atkin and Block (1983) propose that a celebrity endorses for a brand of alcohol, produced consistently more favorable ratings for the advertisement and product than non-celebrities endorsers.

Review of Literature

Tamizhjyothi and Samudhra Rajakumar (2005) argued that Indian market is flooded with global brands which force the organizations to use celebrities, as they would easily arrests audience's attention and thereby enhance the awareness about the product. To accomplish this, they spend huge amount to make the endorsement contract with the celebrity. However it is essential to understand the effectiveness of celebrity advertisement over non celebrity advertisement. Their research showed that the celebrity advertisements are more effective than non-celebrity advertisements; still the product category is the main factor that influences the effectiveness of celebrity advertisements. Other dimensions of celebrity advertisements which includes celebrity loyalty, multi-product endorsement and purchase intention were also explored in this article.

To ensure success of any celebrity advertisements various factors are to be considered namely, likeability, believability, trustworthiness and expertise of the celebrity endorsers. An endorser should have all the qualities to persuade the consumers so that the meaning associated with him will be transferred to the product.

Likeability is an important factor to be considered for the selection of a celebrity endorser. According to Frieden (1984), celebrity advertisement for a television set generated higher mean values for the likeability of the spokesperson as opposed to advertisements featuring an expert, typical consumers or CEO (Non-celebrity endorsers).

Another factor is trustworthiness of the celebrity endorser. Trustworthiness refers to the honesty, integrity and believability of an endorser which depends on the perception of target audience. Dholakia and Sternthal (1977), Ohanian (1991) manipulated that the effectiveness of a message depends on perceived level of expertise and trustworthiness in an endorser. Advertisers capitalize on the value of trustworthiness by selecting endorsers who are widely regarded as honest, believable and dependable (Shimp, 1997). Frieden et al (1978) reasoned that the trustworthiness is the major determinant of source credibility and it is directly associated with purchase intention of the consumers. On the other hand, Ohanian (1991) found that trustworthiness of a celebrity was not significantly related to customers' intention to buy an endorsed brand. This shows that still much controversy exist regarding the trustworthiness of the celebrity endorser in advertisements which mainly depends on the endorsers' profession and nature of the product.

Tamzhjyothi and Samudhra Rajakumar (2011) concluded that organizations use celebrities from different professions to endorse their brands. They use multiple celebrities with a hope to impress different segments of customers. However, the effectiveness of using different celebrities from different professions is the question to be probed. This study has been performed to analyze the effectiveness of multiple celebrity endorsement by considering profession as the key factor. A 2 x 2 x 2 factorial design was developed that represents gender of the respondents, celebrities from different professions and gender of the celebrity. The interactions of these variables were studied with respect to consumers' attitude towards advertisement, attitude towards celebrity and purchase intention. Their result showed that the consumers like advertisements featuring both cinestar and sportspersons and their purchase intention has a positive relationship with the multiple celebrity endorsements.

Expertise is defined as the extent to which a communicator is perceived to be a source of valid assertion. Consumers perceive a product as good quality if it is endorsed by an expert source. Celebrity who is viewed as expert has been found to be more persuasive (Aaker and Myer, 1987) and generate more intention to purchase the brand (Ohanian, 1991). Speck et al (1988) clarifies that expert celebrity produced higher recall of product information than non-expert celebrity. Since expertise and trustworthiness are the elements of credibility, both must have some association with each other and the deviation of any one will affect the other so that the credibility of the celebrity endorser will reduce. This paper explains the credibility of the celebrity endorser for the endorsed advertisements over non celebrity advertisements.

In the present situation where competition is more, firms are forced to use celebrities in the advertisements to arrest the attentions of the audience immediately. Since the number of celebrities are subsequently less, corporate use pre-endorsing celebrities for their product/brand. Another issue is that celebrity greed and subsequent overexposure when a celebrity becomes an endorser for many diverse products. If celebrities' image is tied in with many brands, impact and identity with each product may lessen since the relationship between the celebrity and a particular brand is not distinctive (Mowen and Brown, 1981). It make consumers overtly aware of the true nature of endorsement which has less to do with brand/product attributes, and more to be with generous compensation for the celebrity, leading consumers to overt cynicism about their motives (Cooper 1984, Tripp et al, 1994). Due to these facts, the attitude of consumers towards multi-product endorsement of celebrity endorsers and the endorsed products was analyzed in this paper.

It has been argued that the female celebrities have greater influence than male celebrities for certain categories of product. Attractive female celebrity can easily attract the audience and has better chances of influencing the customers to purchase the product. For some Pen advertisements female models are featuring whereas there is no female celebrity endorser for pen. This induces the authors to test whether female celebrities can be used for the pen advertisements by asking opinion from the consumers.

Intention to purchase a product arises due to many reasons for the consumers. It depends on the nature, quality of the product, need for the products, circumstances, etc. among which celebrity's influence can also be included. The purchase intention of consumers may differ for the products which are endorsed by celebrities, non-celebrities, multiple celebrities and multi-product endorsing celebrities. This paper elicits information regarding the purchase intention of the consumers towards celebrity endorsed advertisements.

Objective

In order to find the solutions to the above discussed problems, the study was conducted with the following objectives

1. To study the effectiveness of celebrity advertisements over non-celebrity advertisements
2. To elucidate the gender opinion about the female celebrities in advertising
3. To measure the purchase intention of consumers towards the celebrity and non-celebrity advertisements

Methodology

Sample design

The study is conducted through survey method from a reputed university in Tamil Nadu. A sample size of 153 (Male – 117 and Female – 36) have been collected from the respondents who are studying final year MBA course. During the working hours, with the prior permission from the authorities, the researchers explained to the students about the concept and need of the study and seek their co-operation. They distributed the questionnaires to them and their views were collected. Studies show that the celebrity advertisements are more applicable to the fast moving consumer goods rather than other categories. This makes the authors to select writing pen as product for this study, by keeping the respondents' nature in mind. Two brands have been selected: one Parker pen endorsed by Hindi film celebrity Amithab Bachchan and another brand Reynolds endorsed by a non-celebrity.

Operationalization of variables

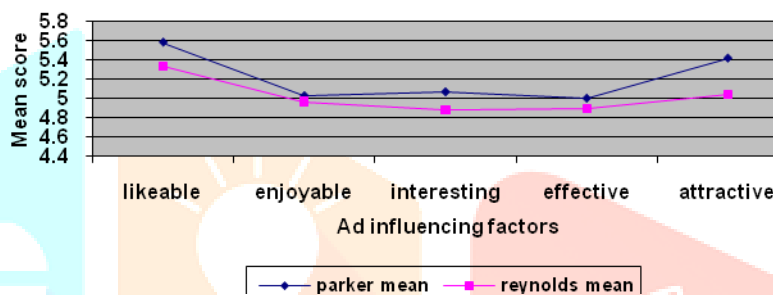
The factors considered for the study are Ad rating which is measured using 7 point Likert scale (1 refers to least and 7 refers to high), Likeability, Trustworthiness and Expertise of endorsers were measured by using 5 point Likert scale (5 – strongly agree and 1 – strongly disagree). To measure ad rating, likeable, enjoyable, interesting, effective and attractive are the factors considered which are used by Atkin and Block (1983). The purchase intention, consumers' perception and usage of female celebrities in the advertisements were also measured using 5 point Likert scale. The opinion about multiple product endorsement was measured by asking questions like multiple product endorsement create confusion about celebrity, reduces the trust of the celebrity and irritated on seeing the celebrity advertisement using 5 point Likert scale. The data were collected and analyzed using statistical tools like t-test, ANOVA and Correlation analysis.

Results

Table 1: 2 x 5 ANOVA (Mean ratings for Parker and Reynolds ads)

Factors	Parker		Reynolds	
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation
Likable	5.5752	1.6768	5.3268	1.7161
Enjoyable	5.0261	1.7916	4.9608	1.7009
Interesting	5.0654	1.5831	4.8758	1.6276
Effective	5.0000	1.8389	4.8889	1.6041
Attractive	5.4118	1.8408	5.0392	1.6258

Fig.1: Mean ratings for parker and reynolds



With regard to Parker ad the mean score for all the factors are around 5.00 and for Reynolds ad the mean score is similar as of Parker pen advertisement. Hence the ratings given by the respondents for both the advertisements are similar (Fig 1).

Table 2: 2 x 5 ANOVA Results (Both the variables are repeated measure)

Source	F – value	p -value
MAIN EFFECT		
Pen Advertisement	1.837	0.177(NS)
Factors (likeable, enjoyable, interesting, effective and attractive)	9.171	<0.001
INTERACTION EFFECT		
Pen Advertisement X Factors	0.685	0.602(NS)

Main effect

A 2 X 5 ANOVA test is used to find any variations occurred between the two advertisements.

The overall rating between the two advertisements is similar i.e. the respondents are giving equal importance to both the advertisements.

To find out the most influencing factors of the advertisement, ANOVA result infers a significant result. The multiple contrast test result indicates the likeability and attractiveness of the advertisements are much important factors of both the advertisements than other factors.

Interaction Effect

The interaction effect infers that there is no significant difference exists between advertisements rating and the factors of the advertisements i.e. in both advertisements the influence of the characters are similar.

**Table 3: Mean and Standard deviation of endorsers' characters by advertising rating
Parker pen**

Endorser Characters	Groups' Nature	No. of Res.	Mean	Standard deviation	F-value One-way ANOVA	p-value
Likeability	Low	25	9.9200	2.4489	14.512	<0.001
	Medium	108	11.5926	1.9529		
	High	20	13.1000	1.4473		
Trustworthiness	Low	25	10.0400	2.2635	5.973	0.003
	Medium	108	11.0370	1.7874		
	High	20	11.9500	1.6694		
Expertise	Low	25	9.0800	2.9850	6.682	0.002
	Medium	108	10.2778	2.3792		
	High	20	10.9935	2.3306		

In this study, based on the ad rating, the respondents were divided into three groups namely low, medium and high rating groups. One-way ANOVA test was performed to find out any significant difference between the celebrity characteristics and the advertisement rating given by the respondents.

As far as the Parker pen advertisement is concerned, there is a significant difference between the celebrity characteristics and the advertisement rating. Respondents who rate low to the Parker advertisement, rated less for all characteristics of celebrity namely, likeability ($p < 0.001$), trustworthiness ($p = 0.0003$) and expertise ($p = 0.002$) which means that the celebrities' individual characteristics has more association with the success of any advertisement. Also the mean of each group for each celebrity characteristics is increasing (Ex. For likeability, low rating groups' mean = 9.9200; medium's mean = 11.5926; high's mean = 13.100) which means that the respondents who rated low, medium and high to the advertisement, valued all the characteristics viz. likeability, trustworthiness and expertise of celebrity endorsers in the same manner.

**Table 4: Mean and Standard deviation of endorsers' characters by advertising rating
Reynolds pen**

Endorser Characters	Groups' nature	No. of Res.	Mean	Standard deviation	F-value One-way ANOVA	p-value
Likeability	Low	29	7.8629	2.2972	13.533	<0.001
	Medium	99	9.6768	2.3379		
	High	25	11.0800	2.1393		
Trustworthiness	Low	29	7.7241	1.8879	9.546	<0.001
	Medium	99	9.0606	2.2352		
	High	25	10.4000	2.3979		
Expertise	Low	29	7.7241	2.2662	6.384	0.002
	Medium	99	9.0909	2.5358		
	High	25	10.1600	2.3791		

As far as Reynolds pen advertisement is concerned, there is a significant difference exist between the respondents advertisement rating and the celebrity characteristics (likeability, $p < 0.001$; trustworthiness, $p < 0.001$; expertise, $p = 0.002$) which is proved by One-way ANOVA model. It means that the respondents who perceive less in all characteristics of the celebrity has low attitude towards the advertisement. Moreover low, medium, and high ad rating groups have given less, moderate and high scores for each characteristics of the endorser (ex. For likeability, low rating groups mean = 7.8621, medium's mean = 9.6768, high's mean = 11.0800)

Table 5: Gender opinion about female celebrities for pen advertisement

Gender	No of Res.	Mean	S.D	t-test	p-value
Male	117	9.7607	2.2309	1.653	0.201(NS)
Female	36	9.8056	2.7445		

The above table denotes the gender opinion about the female celebrities to endorse the product. The respondents are asked to give their opinion about the female celebrities to endorse pen in a 5-point scale. (5-strongly agree and 1-strongly disagree). The overall mean score was 9.7830 which indicates that irrespective of the gender, there is a neutral opinion (mean for male = 9.7607 and for female = 9.8056) about using female celebrities in pen advertisements. In order to find out any significant difference among the gender towards the female celebrities, t-test was performed. The result shows that there is no significant difference ($p=0.201$) between male and female respondents towards the female celebrities to endorse pen.

Discussion

Celebrity advertisements are more popular now-a-days. Corporate use different celebrities to endorse different products. Pen is one among the product categories where varieties of brands are available in the market. Parker, which is a high priced product, has high value among the consumers (endorsed by Amithab Bachchan). Reynolds is another brand in the market which is a low priced product, endorsed by a non-celebrity. The effectiveness of celebrity advertisement over non-celebrity advertisement was found and the results show that the consumers view the celebrity ad and non-celebrity ad in a similar manner. Irrespective of the endorser, there is no difference of opinion about these advertisements. Hence using celebrity for the pen advertisement is not effective because pen is a low involvement product and need less time to purchase. Considering various factors influencing the effectiveness of the advertisement namely, likeable, enjoyable, interesting, effective and attractive, respondents give similar rating to both the advertisement but comparatively less for Reynolds. In these stimuli advertisements, likeability and attractiveness dominate other factors. The result shows that in order to enhance the recall level, the basic ingredient of any advertisement is, it should be more likeable by the audience and attractive in nature.

As far as believability of the advertisement is concerned there is no significant relationship exist between the respondents rating and the advertisement, which shows that the respondents' opinion is neutral for believability of the advertisement.

In finding out any significant difference between the endorser characters and respondents' ad rating for both the brands, ANOVA result shows that there is a significant difference exists among them. It shows that the audiences who like the characters of endorser like the advertisement more. Hence irrespective of the endorser, the effectiveness of advertisement increase as endorser characteristics increases. It means that firm should select the endorser who is high in all characters viz. likeability, trustworthiness and expertise to have effective communication. Compare to Reynolds ad the mean rating of the endorsers' characters for Parker pen is high, which shows that consumers like the celebrity endorser in all aspects than non-celebrity endorser.

Debevec (1984) found that male react more favorable to the female model than to the male model and vice versa. In contrast to the above statement, Cabellero (1989) argues that male respondents have a greater intention to purchase from male spokesperson and female respondents have a greater intention to purchase from female spokesperson. In this research irrespective of the gender, there is a neutral opinion about using female celebrities in pen advertisement. It may be due to nature of the product. Since pen is a low involvement product, celebrities have insignificant role to endorse pen.

It has been found that the consumers perceive the celebrity advertisements more favorable manner than non-celebrity advertisements. In this study, it has been established that there is no relationship between the perception towards the celebrity advertisement and the rating given by them for both the advertisements, whereas purchase intention has a significant relationship with ad rating of both the advertisement. It is clear

that the consumers who rate high towards the advertisement are influenced by celebrities in purchasing the product.

With regard to perception and purchase intention, there is a significant relationship exist. It shows that those who perceive the celebrity advertisements in a favorable manner are likely to purchase the product due to celebrities. There may be some factors of celebrities which have influenced the consumers in purchasing other products. It may vary from product to product and celebrity to celebrity. The celebrity must have good rating for all his characters, so that consumers like them and purchase the endorsed product. Another interesting information is found from the study is that those who purchase the product due to celebrity are loyal to the celebrity i.e. they will not purchase the product if the existing celebrity is changed. Celebrity loyalty may not occur individually rather it occur along with the nature of the product. Even though consumers are loyal to the celebrity, the need of the product may force them to purchase the other brand which could not be endorsed by a celebrity.

Suggestions and Managerial Implications

The effectiveness of the celebrity advertisement is almost nil compared to non-celebrity advertisement. Being the product is Pen, which belongs to low involvement category, it does not require any celebrity to endorse for it. Corporate should consider the product involvement before deciding the need to use a celebrity. Considering various characteristics, a celebrity should have high rating in all his characters namely he must be likeable by the consumers, more attractive, the consumers should have trust on him, he must be experienced in the endorsing field, he should be honest and reliable in his profession. Corporate should check all the characters of the celebrity before signing the contract. Also importance should be given to the usage of celebrity for both print and television advertisements, so that the perception of the consumers towards the advertisement will be high and leads to purchase decision. Since there is neutral opinion about the usage of female celebrities in pen advertisements, brand managers should concentrate on female models to endorse pen, with a view to reduce the amount invested on endorser.

The usage of pre-endorsing celebrity is a critical thing for any manager. Sometimes the celebrity may leads to confusion and creates vampire effect where the product could not be recalled by the consumers except the endorsing celebrity. If the company wants to involve pre-endorsing celebrities, they should select the celebrities who could be recalled by the consumers provided the usage of these celebrities in the advertisement must not dominate the product. Product executive should use the celebrities who can be uniquely identifiable with their product and it is better to avoid engaging multi-product endorsing celebrity. This study would help the managers in maximizing the recall level and obtaining better value for the money invested.

Conclusion

Seventy five thousand brands are competing in the Indian market to get acceptance from the consumers. Differentiation and niche marketing being the order of the day, product executives are finding it difficult to ensure success for their brands. Celebrities are widely used to endorse brands with an aim to increase the recall level and to differentiate from other competitive brands. Success of celebrity advertisement largely depends on factors like celebrity characters, fit between product association and celebrity association and congruence between celebrity and target customers. Gender of the celebrities also plays a vital role in arresting the attention of viewers. Perception towards celebrity endorsed advertisement can be augmented if celebrity with few endorsements is used.

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