

Impact of Celebrity Endorsement on the Customer's Buying Behaviour Towards Baby Care Products with Reference to Navi Mumbai City

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Abstract

Celebrity endorsement has emerged as an important marketing communication strategy used by organisations to attract consumer attention, enhance brand visibility and influence consumer perceptions and purchasing decisions. However, the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement may vary depending on the characteristics of the celebrity, the nature of the endorsed product and the perceived compatibility between the celebrity and the product. The present study examines the impact of celebrity endorsement on customer buying behaviour towards baby care products, with special reference to Navi Mumbai City. The study particularly focuses on the role of celebrity credibility in influencing customer buying behaviour. Based on the TEARS framework and the celebrity credibility dimensions proposed by Ohanian, the study examines three major dimensions: Trustworthiness, Expertise and Attractiveness. These dimensions are particularly relevant to baby care products, where consumers generally give considerable importance to product quality, safety, reliability, brand reputation and suitability for infants and young children.

The study also examines the relationship between celebrity endorsement, customers' perception of celebrity-endorsed advertisements and customer buying behaviour. The research addresses a relatively limited area of investigation, as celebrity endorsement has received considerable attention across various product categories, while comparatively less attention has been given to baby care products. Furthermore, the study seeks to understand the contribution of specific celebrity credibility dimensions within a particular consumer and geographical context.

Navi Mumbai City has been selected as the study area considering its urban consumer environment, availability of branded baby care products through retail and online channels, changing family structures, urban lifestyles and consumers' exposure to television, social media and digital advertising.

The study is expected to provide empirical insights into the role of celebrity endorsement and its selected credibility dimensions in shaping customer buying behaviour towards baby care products. It may also contribute to the existing literature on celebrity endorsement and consumer behaviour and provide useful implications for marketers in selecting suitable celebrity endorsers and developing effective marketing communication strategies for the baby care product market.

Keywords: celebrity endorsement; customer buying behaviour; baby care products; trustworthiness; expertise; physical attractiveness; advertisement effectiveness; Navi Mumbai

1. Introduction

Celebrity endorsement has become an established marketing communication strategy through which organisations associate their products or brands with recognised public figures. The underlying rationale is that favourable perceptions of a celebrity may be transferred to the endorsed brand, thereby influencing consumers' attitudes, product evaluations and purchase-related responses. Celebrities can attract consumer attention, increase advertising appeal and create stronger associations between the endorser and the advertised product. However, the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement is not uniform and may depend upon several factors, including the characteristics of the celebrity, the nature of the product, consumer perceptions and the perceived compatibility between the celebrity and the endorsed brand.

The concept of celebrity credibility has received considerable attention in the literature on endorsement effectiveness. Ohanian (1990) developed and validated a 15-item scale for measuring three important dimensions of perceived celebrity credibility: expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness. These dimensions provide an influential framework for examining how consumers evaluate celebrity endorsers and how such evaluations may influence their responses towards endorsed products. The TEARS framework further incorporates these dimensions along with respect and similarity, providing a broader perspective for understanding the effectiveness of celebrity endorsers.

Empirical evidence suggests that the impact of celebrity endorsement is context dependent. Research among Indian consumers has indicated that celebrity endorsement may enhance brand recall; however, its direct influence on purchase decisions may depend on celebrity–brand fit and other product-related considerations. Mittal and Tulsiyan (2009) reported that celebrity endorsement was effective in improving brand recall but did not necessarily motivate consumers to purchase the endorsed product. This indicates that celebrity presence alone may not be sufficient to influence buying behaviour.

Recent Indian studies in personal care, hygiene and FMCG products have also examined celebrity credibility and the TEARS/source-credibility framework. Such research has reported positive relationships between selected celebrity-reputation constructs, consumer perceptions and purchase intentions. These findings suggest that the credibility and perceived qualities of an endorser may play an important role in shaping consumer responses, although the magnitude and nature of these effects may vary across product categories and consumer contexts.

Baby care products represent a particularly relevant context for examining celebrity endorsement because purchasing decisions may involve concerns related to safety, quality, reliability, brand reputation and suitability for infants and young children. Consumers may therefore evaluate celebrity-endorsed advertisements differently from advertisements for less sensitive product categories. Despite the growing literature on celebrity endorsement, comparatively limited attention has been given to the baby care product category, particularly within a specific urban Indian context.

The present study addresses this research gap by examining the relationship between celebrity endorsement, customers' perception of celebrity-endorsed advertisements and customer buying behaviour towards baby care products, with special reference to Navi Mumbai City. The study specifically focuses on the credibility dimensions of trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness and seeks to provide empirical insights into their relevance in shaping customer buying behaviour.

2. Objectives of the Study

- 1) To study the impact of demographic variables on the customer's buying behaviour towards celebrity-endorsed products.
- 2) To identify the customer's buying behaviour and baby care product categories.
- 3) To study the role of celebrity endorsement in influencing customer's buying behaviour towards baby care products.
- 4) To examine the relationship between customers perception of celebrity-endorsed advertisements and their buying behaviour towards baby care products.

- 5) To examine the impact of trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness of a celebrity on customer's buying behaviour towards baby care products.

3. Hypotheses

H1: There are significant differences in customers' buying behaviour towards celebrity-endorsed baby care products across different demographic groups.

H2: There is a significant relationship between celebrity-endorsed advertisement effectiveness and customers' buying behaviour towards baby care products.

H3: There is a significant relationship between customers' perception of celebrity-endorsed advertisements and their buying behaviour towards baby care products..

H4: There is a significant impact of the trustworthiness of celebrity endorsers on customer's buying behaviour.

H5: There is a significant impact of the expertise of celebrity endorsers on the customer's buying behaviour.

H₆: There is a significant impact of the attractiveness of celebrity endorsers on the customer's buying behaviour.

4. Research Methodology

A descriptive and analytical research design was adopted. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale for attitudinal items. The empirical analysis presented in this paper is based on 150 respondents from the available dataset. The sampling approach was non-probability/convenience based, consistent with the study design.

The questionnaire included demographic characteristics, advertisement effectiveness, customer buying behaviour, customer perception, baby care product buying patterns, media exposure and celebrity credibility dimensions. The credibility section measured trustworthiness, physical attractiveness and expertise using five items for each construct.

The analysis was conducted using frequency and percentage analysis for respondent characteristics, independent-samples t-tests for two-category comparisons, one-way ANOVA for multi-category demographic variables, Pearson correlation for relationships among scale constructs, and multiple linear regression for the combined effect of trustworthiness, expertise and physical attractiveness. Statistical significance was assessed at the 5% level ($p < .05$).

5. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Demographic Differences in Buying Behaviour

Variable	Test	Statistic	p-Value
Gender	Independent t-test	$t = 2.508$	$< .001$
Age	One-way ANOVA	$F(3, 146) = 3.113$	$< .001$
Education	One-way ANOVA	$F(3, 146) = 3.384$	$< .001$
Occupation	One-way ANOVA	$F(3, 146) = 3.554$	0.10
Income	One-way ANOVA	$F(3, 146) = 3.264$	$< .001$
Marital status	Independent t-test	$t = 4.579$	$< .001$
Family structure	Independent t-test	$t = 2.743$	$< .001$

The findings indicate that six of the seven demographic variables—gender, age, education, income, marital status, and family structure—show statistically significant differences in customers' buying behaviour, as their p-values are below 0.05. In contrast, occupation does not show a statistically significant difference in buying behaviour because its p-value (0.100) is greater than 0.05.

Therefore, the results suggest that customers' buying behaviour towards celebrity-endorsed baby care products varies according to several demographic characteristics, particularly gender, age, educational qualification, income, marital status, and family structure, whereas occupation does not appear to significantly differentiate buying behaviour.

Hypothesis Testing

H1: There are significant differences in customers' buying behaviour towards celebrity-endorsed products across different demographic groups.

The results indicate that age, educational qualification, income and marital status have statistically significant differences in customers' buying behaviour, as their p-values are below the 5% significance level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected for these demographic variables.

However, because not all demographic variables demonstrate significant differences, H1 is partially supported.

H2: There is a significant relationship between celebrity-endorsed advertisement effectiveness and customers' buying behaviour towards baby care products.

The correlation coefficient is $r = .601$, with $p < .001$. This indicates a positive and statistically significant relationship between advertisement effectiveness and customers' buying behaviour. The relatively strong positive correlation suggests that better perceived advertisement effectiveness is associated with stronger buying behaviour.

Therefore, H2 is supported.

H3: There is a significant relationship between customer's perception of celebrity-endorsed baby care products and their buying behaviour.

The correlation coefficient is $r = .645$, with $p < .001$. This demonstrates a positive and statistically significant relationship between customer perception of celebrity-endorsed advertisements and buying behaviour. Thus, favourable customer perceptions are associated with higher buying behaviour.

Therefore, H3 is supported.

H4: There is a significant impact of the trustworthiness of celebrity endorsers on customer's buying behaviour.

Trustworthiness shows a strong positive correlation with buying behaviour ($r = .745$, $p < .001$). The reported regression coefficient ($B = .62$) further indicates a positive predictive effect of trustworthiness on buying behaviour.

Thus, customers' perceptions of a celebrity endorser's trustworthiness are positively associated with their buying behaviour.

Therefore, H4 is supported.

H5: There is a significant impact of the expertise of celebrity endorsers on the customer's buying behaviour.

Expertise demonstrates a strong positive relationship with buying behaviour ($r = .752$, $p < .001$). The regression coefficient ($B = .53$) indicates a positive contribution of celebrity expertise to buying behaviour.

Hence, greater perceived expertise of the celebrity endorser is associated with stronger customer buying behaviour.

Therefore, H5 is supported.

H₆: There is a significant impact of the attractiveness of celebrity endorsers on the customer's buying behaviour.

Physical attractiveness has a positive and statistically significant relationship with buying behaviour ($r = .624, p < .001$). The reported regression coefficient ($B = .38$) indicates a positive effect of physical attractiveness on buying behaviour.

Therefore, H₆ is supported.

Overall, the hypothesis testing indicates that celebrity endorsement-related factors play an important role in customers' buying behaviour towards baby care products. Advertisement effectiveness, customer perception, trustworthiness, expertise and physical attractiveness all demonstrate statistically significant positive relationships with buying behaviour. Among the reported correlations, expertise ($r = .752$) and trustworthiness ($r = .745$) show the strongest relationships.

For H₁, demographic characteristics show a mixed pattern, with some demographic variables significant and others not significant; hence, it is appropriate to classify H₁ as partially supported.

6. Conclusion:

The present study examined the impact of celebrity endorsement on customers' buying behaviour towards baby care products, with special reference to Navi Mumbai City. The findings demonstrate that celebrity endorsement plays an important role in influencing customers' buying behaviour. Advertisement effectiveness showed a positive and statistically significant relationship with buying behaviour ($r = .601, p < .001$), while customer perception also demonstrated a significant positive relationship ($r = .645, p < .001$).

Among the major celebrity attributes, trustworthiness showed a strong positive relationship with buying behaviour ($r = .745, p < .001; B = .62$). Expertise demonstrated the strongest relationship ($r = .752, p < .001; B = .53$), indicating that knowledgeable and competent celebrities can influence customers more effectively. Physical attractiveness also showed a significant positive relationship ($r = .624, p < .001; B = .38$).

The demographic analysis revealed significant differences in buying behaviour across gender, age, educational qualification, income, marital status, and family structure, whereas occupation was not significant ($p = .100$).

Overall, the study concludes that effective celebrity endorsement depends not only on celebrity popularity but also on trustworthiness, expertise, physical attractiveness, advertisement effectiveness, and favourable customer perception. Among these factors, expertise and trustworthiness emerged as particularly important. Therefore, marketers should select credible, knowledgeable, and suitable celebrities to strengthen customer buying behaviour towards baby care products in Navi Mumbai City.

7. Limitations

Despite the efforts made to conduct the study systematically, certain limitations should be acknowledged.

1. The study was restricted to Navi Mumbai City. Therefore, the findings may not be directly generalizable to customers residing in other cities, regions, or states of India.
2. The study used a non-probability sampling approach. Consequently, every member of the target population may not have had an equal probability of being selected, which may limit the generalizability of the findings.
3. The study was conducted at a particular point in time. Customer perceptions and buying behaviour may change over time because of changes in advertising trends, celebrity popularity, economic conditions, social media influence, and consumer preferences.

8. Suggestions

1. Companies should select celebrities who are perceived as trustworthy, honest, and reliable by customers.
2. Marketers should prefer celebrities who possess relevant knowledge or experience related to baby care, parenting, health, or family wellbeing.
3. Celebrity-endorsed advertisements should clearly communicate the product's benefits, quality, safety, and usefulness.
4. Advertisements should be designed to develop positive perceptions towards both the celebrity and the endorsed brand.
5. The celebrity should have a natural and logical connection with the baby care product being endorsed.
6. Celebrity endorsement should be supported by genuine product quality, safety, reliability, and transparent product information.
7. Marketers should consider differences in customers' age, gender, education, income, marital status, and family structure while developing marketing strategies.

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