



NICHE MARKETS AND CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS UNDERSTANDING CROSS-CULTURAL DYNAMICS IN SPECIALIZED INDUSTRIES

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Abstract

This research paper delves into the dynamics of celebrity endorsements in niche markets, considering cross-cultural variations. Niche markets, by their very nature, cater to specific consumer segments with unique preferences, needs, and behaviors. Effectively reaching these audiences demands tailored strategies that resonate with their particular interests. Celebrities, as influential figures, have the potential to play a pivotal role in shaping perceptions and building trust in these specialized markets. This study aims to investigate how celebrities contribute to establishing and enhancing credibility in niche industries, examining the impact of their endorsements on consumer attitudes and behaviors. To achieve a comprehensive understanding, this research will employ a multifaceted approach. Case studies will be analyzed to glean insights from real-world instances where celebrities have endorsed products or brands in niche markets. By delving into these cases, the research aims to identify patterns, successes, and challenges associated with celebrity endorsements in specific industries. Consumer perceptions will be a key focal point, as understanding how individuals from different cultural backgrounds interpret and respond to celebrity endorsements is paramount. Qualitative and quantitative data will be gathered to assess the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements in building credibility and trust within diverse niche markets. Industry-specific data will also be scrutinized to uncover trends and nuances related to celebrity endorsements. This may include examining sales figures, market share, and other relevant metrics to gauge the impact of celebrity endorsements on the overall performance of niche market products.

Keywords: Markets, Endorsements, Cross-Cultural

Introduction

In the ever-evolving landscape of marketing and commerce, the intersection of niche markets and celebrity endorsements has emerged as a compelling focal point. This convergence not only highlights the strategic deployment of influential figures but also underscores the intricate interplay of cultural dynamics within specialized industries. The introduction of this discussion sets the stage for an exploration into the nuanced relationship between niche markets and celebrity endorsements, delving into the underlying mechanisms that drive consumer behavior and shape industry trends. By examining these phenomena through a cross-cultural lens, we aim to uncover the subtle yet profound influences that transcend geographical boundaries and resonate with diverse audiences worldwide. As we navigate through this exploration, we will unravel the symbiotic connection between niche markets and celebrity endorsements, uncovering how the alignment of brand messaging with the values and aspirations of specific consumer segments can yield remarkable results. Moreover, we will delve into the complexities of cultural adaptation and localization, exploring how celebrities

serve as cultural ambassadors, bridging the gap between brands and their target demographics across different regions and demographics. Through a series of case studies, analyses, and theoretical frameworks, we will endeavor to elucidate the strategic significance of leveraging celebrity endorsements within niche markets, while also shedding light on the challenges and opportunities inherent in navigating cross-cultural dynamics in specialized industries. Ultimately, this discussion aims to provide valuable insights and actionable strategies for marketers and industry stakeholders seeking to effectively navigate the terrain of niche markets and celebrity endorsements in an increasingly interconnected world.

CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS FOR THE BRAND

It would seem that celebrity endorsement is prevalent in today's society, and there is a solid explanation for this. There is a correlation between the presence of a trustworthy personality representing a product or service and an increase in the value of that product or service. These endorsements are used by marketers with the expectation that a good image would be sent to the business and the brand, so improving the image of the company and the brand. The late 18th century saw the beginning of this particular technique of marketing. While Josiah Wedgwood and Sons was in the business of manufacturing chinaware and pottery, they used royal endorsements for their products in order to demonstrate that their business was valuable. Trading cards were sent to prospective customers around the turn of the 20th century, which proved to be the next significant development in the field of celebrity advertising. These things, which were distributed in a manner similar to the current baseball card, were distributed whenever an individual demonstrated interest in a product. As a means to fostering customer loyalty, cigarette companies started including them in the packaging of their products. When it comes to the benefits and negatives of celebrity advertising, the ones that companies encountered in the past are comparable to those that they confront now. This collaboration has the potential to provide remarkable outcomes, but it also has the potential to result in some failures.

Celebrity Endorsement Benefits

Create credibility to the brand

Employing a celebrity provides the company with the ability to extend the equity of the celebrity to the brand that is in need of marketing. One technique to start establishing trust in a product or service is to do so using this method. It is also possible that this may aid in ensuring prospective customers that the product or service that is being offered to them is of high quality. In the event that celebrities were to take the risk of supporting a product that did not live up to the standards set by the customers, they would have a negative impact on their reputation.

Helps the brand to stand out

An endorsement of this kind becomes an efficient method for a company to distinguish their brand from that of their rivals when the company uses the services of a celebrity to promote the goods or services that they provide. This advantage also provides other methods to differentiate oneself from the competition, such as improved advertising and brand memory in the future, maintaining a prominent position in the mind, and establishing relationships with a personality that is remembered and appreciated by prospective customers.

Creates or opens new markets

An opportunity for a company to move its brand in new directions may be found in the selection of a celebrity who is associated with a certain customer group or target market. One of the most illustrative instances of this advantage is provided by Nike, which, prior to the 1980s, largely sponsored athletes competing in tennis or track and field. After some time, they made the decision to collaborate with Michael Jordan in order to start working with basketball, and they established a collaboration that turned out to be of great success.

Saves Brand from failure

An opportunity for a company to move its brand in new directions may be found in the selection of a celebrity who is associated with a certain customer group or targeting market. Nike, which had a history of predominantly sponsoring athletes in the sports of track and field or tennis prior to the 1980s, is one of the clearest instances of this advantage. After that, they made the decision to form a collaboration with Michael Jordan in order to start working with basketball, and this cooperation ended up being quite successful due to its success.

Effective Brand Promotion

The findings of research conducted all around the globe constantly demonstrate that celebrities are the most effective endorsers that are now accessible to businesses. They are able to market the brand more effectively than any professional specialists, corporate management, or the average customer thanks to the message that they transmit to the consumers. It is possible that the consumer's perception of the brand will quickly improve as a result of this advantage. When the attitude of customers who hear both communications is compared to that of consumers who do not hear either message, the attitude of consumers who hear both messages is much greater when someone renowned is soliciting their business. In addition, having this benefit results in increased intents to make purchases.

Helps a business to overcome crisis situation

Celebrities have the ability to invest their stock in enterprises in order to assist them in overcoming any crisis circumstance that may otherwise bring them down. Because of their popularity, social position, and beauty, the firm is able to turn around a scenario in which it would otherwise be facing the possibility of layoffs, the withdrawal of products, or even outright bankruptcy. During the year 2010, Old Spice was able to capitalize on the famous power of Terry Crews by launching the Odor Blockers television series. It helped the brand become viral with their distinctive filmmaking and narrative, which resulted in some grassroots marketing and finally helped the brand go viral.

Boost in revenue

Companies take into consideration this marketing approach because of the quick good effect that may be achieved as a result of the celebrity's endorsement, despite the fact that the contract with the celebrity is expensive. Over the course of the last two decades, there have been several instances of this benefit. The worldwide sales of Chanel increased by thirty percent when Nicole Kidman signed a contract with the company in the year 2003. To generate billions of dollars in additional income over the course of two years, Jamie Oliver formed a partnership with Sainsbury. Activia yogurt went from being a relatively obscure brand to becoming

the most popular product in its category in the United States market thanks to the efforts of Jamie Lee Curtis, who collaborated with the company.

Makes the product feel familiar to the consumer

When a celebrity is featured on a certain product, it makes it simpler for customers to accept the concept of making a purchase. People from all across the globe are familiar with the mainstream professionals that are included on the "A List" of celebrities. Because of this, an image of that celebrity on anything from a beverage to a television might help remove the barriers that are there when one is contemplating making a purchase. Due to the fact that their favorite actor, artist, or athlete is featured on the product or service, die-hard fans will quickly rush to purchase it.

Personality Transfer

Through the use of celebrity endorsement, it is possible to establish a personality transfer, in which the brand takes on the personality of the celebrity for instance. This may be advantageous for the business if the celebrity has a good reputation, since the brand will be able to benefit from the excellent qualities that the celebrity has.

Define and refresh brand image and positioning

People are able to have a clear understanding of what the brand represents because of the characteristics of the celebrity, which contribute to the creation of an image for the brand in the market. In addition, some businesses make use of this notion in order to rebrand their image, seeing as how they may not have had a powerful brand image in the past. In order to establish a good relationship with the target market, a celebrity may assist in positioning the brand or product in the minds of the target market.

Influence consumer purchase

The celebrity will attract new customers as they continue to follow them. The customers are more likely to have the mindset that if a celebrity endorses a product, then they should give it a go as well. This attitude is beneficial to the marketing campaign. The fact that they want to be just like the celebrity has an impact on the amount of stuff that is sold.

Lasting Publicity

The customers continue to have a tendency to link the brand with the celebrity even after the endorsement contract has been terminated. The link between the brand and the customer will be established without the need for the brand to utilize the celebrity as an ambassador at the present time.

Disadvantages of Celebrity Endorsement

There is a possibility that consumers' perceptions of the celebrity endorser will shift as a result of the public's perception of the celebrity. A change in the celebrity's image may be the result of an accident, a change in their physical appearance, a change in their marital status, or a drop in their professional visibility. As a consequence

of this shift, the celebrity endorser may no longer be fit for the product or brand that they are doing endorsement work for.

Negative impact on the brand

It is possible for celebrities to act inappropriately at times. Under these circumstances, the acts that they do will become the embodiment of a particular brand. When a celebrity agrees to endorse a certain product, service, or brand, the organization is forming a partnership with the celebrity as well as with everything and everyone that is associated with that celebrity. In the event if the celebrity in question is highly valued for their achievements and does not have any controversies in their past, then the outcomes may be successful and remarkable. In addition to this drawback, it is essential to keep in mind that behaviors might shift or remain concealed. Through the support of its spokesman Jared Fogle, who dropped weight while eating Subway sandwiches on a daily basis, Subway was able to make significant advancements in the worldwide market thanks to his endorsement. In spite of the fact that he solicited juveniles and received child pornography, his employment with the firm was terminated promptly after he had been representing the company for more than 15 years. The harm to Subway's image had already been done, and it would have been far worse if they had just switched away from their celebrity sponsorship.

Expensive

With the possibility that the celebrity may give their services, it may be feasible to circumvent this disadvantage for a charitable organization, a non-governmental organization (NGO), or a charity. The exchange of millions of dollars will take place before to the launch of the campaign if a for-profit organization decides to employ a celebrity for the purpose of endorsement. Under the terms of a ten-year, fifty million dollar contract, Beyoncé has been working with PepsiCo.

Backfire due to non performance of the Brand

It is possible for the fallout to have an effect on the equity of the celebrity in the same way that it may have an effect on the equity of the firm if a brand does not perform well following the endorsement or investment of a celebrity. In 2016, Justin Timberlake became an investor in the Bhai Brands range of goods and joined the company as its Chief Flavour Officer. Timberlake was named directly in the lawsuit that was filed against the organization in June 2019 about its components. The lawsuit was filed because Timberlake's financial aid, creative contributions, and marketing helped enhance the brand's name recognition.

Promotion by the celebrity in an unauthorized way

Because of the power that is accessible in social media nowadays, celebrities may sometimes opt to promote products in a manner that is not allowed by an organization. This is because of the fact that social media is available. The current marketing campaign is comprised of a multitude of components that must be taken into consideration. These components include keywords, hash tags, and anything else that makes organic visitors more likely to see the material. It is possible that the results will be less successful if a celebrity begins advertising products on their platforms in a way that is distinct from the rest of the company.

Loss of Popularity

This means that everything that the celebrity does will be connected with the brand since the brand is being associated with the celebrity. It is possible for a negative celebrity image to alter the image of the brand, which may lead to a decrease in popularity and, as a consequence, a loss of customers and the credibility of the business. After failing a drug test at the 2016 Australian Open, Maria Sharapova was dismissed by three of her main sponsors, including Nike. This is an illustration of what may happen when something like this happens. It is common for a business to experience a decline in market popularity when a celebrity declines in popularity, which in turn causes the celebrity to lose followers. The only way for customers to maintain their allegiance to the brand is for them to remain loyal to the celebrity it represents. Common celebrity scandals that include drink, drugs, sex, or incidents linked to criminal activity may have a detrimental impact on the image of the brand. This is because the bad opinions that customers have of the celebrity endorser may be transferred to the brand, which in turn has a negative impact on sales of the items that the company sells. The controversy that surrounded Tiger Woods in 2009 was one of the most significant controversies involving celebrity endorsements. There was a time when Tiger Woods held the position of brand ambassador for Nike golf gear and footwear. It has been believed that Nike lost anywhere between five and twelve billion dollars as a result of this controversy.

ANALYSIS

The research project included the selection of a sample of 633 respondents from Chennai. The background information of these individuals is presented in the form of a demographic profile via the use of percentage analysis. It is offered in the form of descriptive data that respondents have provided their perceptions on the aspects of fame, their attitudes towards advertisements that are supported by celebrities, and their purchasing behaviors about celebrities. For the purpose of investigating the components of fame, attitude toward celebrity-endorsed advertisements, and purchasing behavior, exploratory factor analysis is used. In order to determine the links that exist between celebrity variables, attitudes towards celebrity-endorsed advertisements, and purchasing behaviors, bivariate correlation is used.

An application of multiple regression analysis is used in order to determine the impact of celebrity factors on attitudes toward advertisements that are endorsed by celebrities, as well as the impact of celebrity factors and attitudes toward advertisements that are endorsed by celebrities on purchasing behavior. In order to determine the extent to which demographic factors have an impact on consumers' attitudes about celebrity-endorsed advertisements and their purchasing behaviors, a One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Duncan's Post-Hoc test are used. In order to categorize the customers according to the celebrity criteria, cluster analysis is carried out. To determine the criteria that differentiate celebrity-endorsed advertising from other types of advertisements, discriminant analysis is carried out. For the purpose of confirming the structures of celebrity factors, attitudes toward celebrity-endorsed advertisements, and purchasing behaviors, confirmatory factor analysis is used. The construction of a model for the influence of celebrity endorsement on consumer purchasing behavior is accomplished via the use of structural equation modeling. This chapter is broken down into the parts that are listed below:

- Demographic Profile
- Celebrity Endorsement and Purchase Intention
- Factors of Celebrity that influence Consumer Buying Behaviour

- Consumers' Attitude towards the Celebrity Endorsement
- Consumer Buying Behaviour
- Cluster analysis for classification of consumers based on celebrity factors
- Discriminant analysis for celebrity endorsed advertisements
- CFA and Model development

Demographic Profile

For the purpose of the research, a representative sample of 633 subjects from Chennai was chosen. The individuals who participated in the survey were questioned on their personal information, which included their age, gender, education, employment, marital status, monthly income, the kind of family they belonged to, and the number of people in family. Details of the respondents' personal information are included in Table 1.

Table 1 Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Particulars	Classification	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Age	Up to 25 Years	115	18.2
	25-35	140	22.1
	35-45	159	25.1
	45-55	128	20.2
	Above 55	91	14.4
Gender	Male	290	45.8
	Female	343	54.2
Education	Up to School level	76	12.0
	Graduate	205	32.4

	Post Graduate	162	25.6
	Professional Degree	141	22.3
	Other	49	7.7
Occupation	Employed	270	42.7
	Self Employed	83	13.1
	Profession	135	21.3
	Others	145	22.9
Marital Status	Single	196	31.0
	Married	437	69.0
Income per month	Up to Rs.30,000	294	46.4
	Rs.30,001 – Rs.60,000	134	21.2
	Rs.60,001 – Rs.90,000	114	18.0
	More than Rs.90,000	91	14.4
Type of Family	Nuclear Family	441	69.7
	Joint Family	192	30.3
Number of members in the family	1 or 2	59	9.3
	3 or 4	366	57.8
	5 or 6	154	24.3
	More than 6	54	8.6

Out of the total of 633 respondents, 25.1% of them belong to the age group of 35-45 years old, 22.1% of them belong to the age group of 25-35 years old, 20.2% of them belong to the age group of 45-55 years old, 18.2% of the respondents belong to the age group of up to 25 years old, and 14.4% of the respondents belong to the age group of above 55 years old.

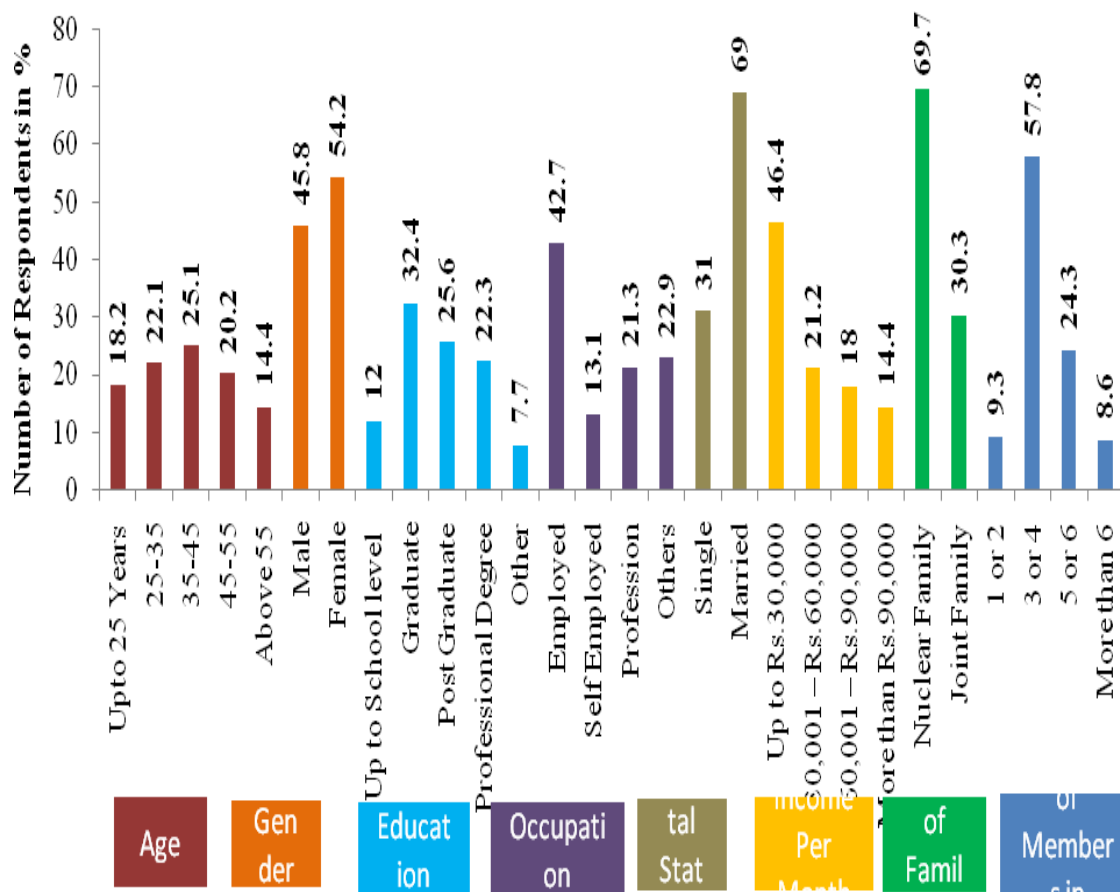


Figure 1: Demographic Profile of the respondents

Six hundred and thirty-three people participated in the survey, and the majority of them were female, accounting for 54.2% of the total. The remaining respondents were male, making up 45.8% of the total. No. 103 In terms of education, 32.4% of the respondents had completed their high school education, 25.6% of the respondents had completed their post-graduate studies, 22.3% of the respondents had earned professional degrees, 12% of the respondents had completed their education up to the level of a high school diploma, and 7.7% of the respondents came from a different educational background. In terms of employment, around 42.7% of the respondents were employed, 22.9% of the respondents were engaged in a variety of professions, 21.3% of the respondents were engaged in professional positions, and the remaining 13.1% of the respondents were self-employed. 69% of the respondents were married, while 31% of them were not married. This information was based on the respondents' marital status. 46.4% of the respondents have an income category that falls up to Rs.30,000 per month, 21.2% have an income that falls between Rs.30,001 and Rs.60,000 per month, 18% of respondents have an income that falls between Rs.60,001 and Rs.90,000 per month, and 14.4% of respondents have an income that is greater than Rs.90,000 per month. The total number of respondents is 633. Around 69.7% of the respondents were from nuclear families, while the remaining 30.3% of the respondents came from joint families. The majority of the respondents came from nuclear households. According to the data shown in table 1, 57.8 percent of respondents have three or four people in their family, 24.3% of respondents have five or six members in their family, 9.3 percent of respondents have one or two members in their family, and 8.6 percent of respondents have more than six members in their family.

CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT AND PURCHASE INTENTION**Aspects that made consumers to notice a Brand**

Someone asked the responders what it is about a brand that makes them take notice of it. The respondents have provided their replies on the factors that brought them to notice the brand, and the results of these responses are shown in Table 2.

Table 2Aspects that made consumers to notice a Brand

Classification	Number	Percentage
Quality	361	57.0
Advertisement	101	16.0
Celebrity	22	3.5
Price	58	9.2
Offers	16	2.5
Experience	55	8.7
Packaging	4	0.6
Reference	16	2.5
Total	633	100.0

Table 2 reveals that 57% of respondents focus on the quality of a product as the most important aspect, while 16% of respondents pay attention to the advertisement of a brand, 9.2% pay attention to the price of a brand, 8.7% pay attention to the experience, 3.5% pay attention to the fact that a celebrity endorses a brand, 2.5% pay attention to the brand that offers attractive offers, 2.5% pay attention to a brand through references, and 0.6% also pay attention to product packaging.

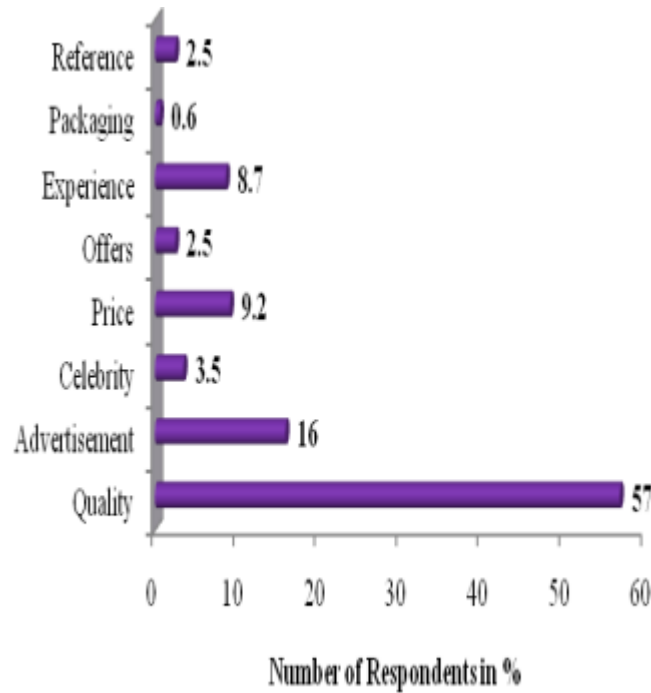


Figure 2: What makes notice a Brand

TIME SPENDS IN WATCHING ADVERTISEMENTS

A question was posed to the respondents on the amount of time they spend viewing advertising. It has been determined that the respondents have provided information on the amount of time spent viewing commercials, and this information is shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Time spend in watching advertisements

Classification	Number of	Percentage
Up to 10 Minutes	407	64.3
10-20 Minutes	135	21.3
20-30 Minutes	8	1.3
More than 30 Minutes	13	2.1
Never	70	11.1
Total	633	100.0

According to the data presented in the table above, approximately 64.3% of respondents spend up to ten minutes watching advertisements, 21.3% of respondents spend ten to twenty minutes, 11.1% of respondents have responded that they never watch advertisements, 2.1% of them spend more than thirty minutes watching advertisements, and 1.3% of respondents spend only twenty to thirty minutes in a day watching advertisements.

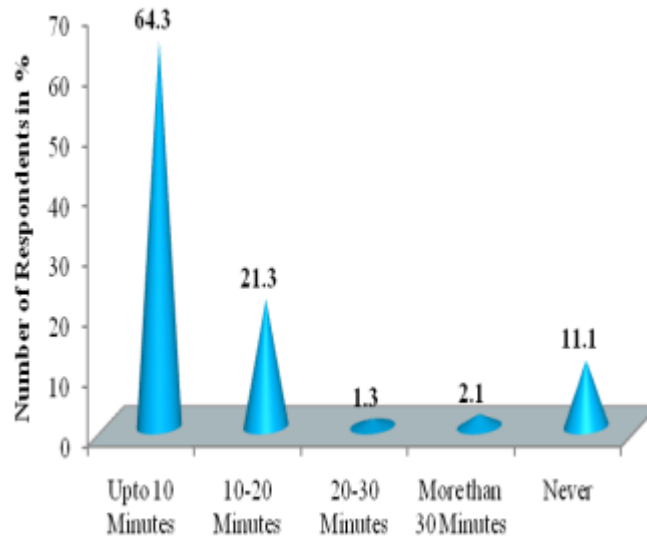


Figure 3: Time spend in watching advertisements

Advertisements attract the more

There was a question posed to the respondents on the advertising that they find most appealing. Individuals who participated in the survey have provided their feedback about the commercials that they find most appealing, and this information is shown in Table 4.

Table 4 Advertisements attract the more

Classification	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Celebrity Endorsed Advertisements	397	62.7
Non-Celebrity Advertisements	236	37.3
Total	633	100.0

In accordance with the data shown in Table 4, about 62.7% of respondents are drawn to commercials that include celebrities, whilst 37.3% of them are drawn to advertisements that do not feature celebrities.

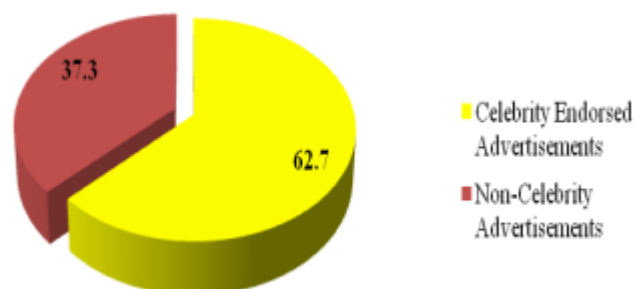


Figure 4 : Advertisements attract the more

CONCLUSION

When it comes to the likeability element of celebrities, the most important feature is that they have a favorable image on the company that they represent. The respondents were in agreement that a celebrity's endorsement of a brand may increase one's impression of that brand; they have a tendency to advocate famous people's products to other people and they like seeing celebrities endorse businesses. It is important to note that the respondents are in agreement that they are unable to purchase a product only because celebrities endorse it, and they have said that they would continue to purchase the brand even if the celebrity suddenly ceases recommending it. One of the most essential aspects of a celebrity's attractiveness is the ease with which they can attract the attention of customers via advertisements that are sponsored by celebrities. The respondents were in agreement that celebrities generate interest in commercials, that endorsements by celebrities enhance the image of the company, and that celebrity endorsement generates interest in the brand. A number of respondents agreed with the statement that the attractiveness of a celebrity has an effect on the efficacy of endorsements, that the beauty of celebrities has a direct affect on the product, and that the physical attractiveness of celebrities has an effect on the purchasing behavior of consumers.

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