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## Celebrity Endorsement And Its Impact On Sales: A Research Analysis Carried Out In India.

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*Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:*



# Celebrity Endorsement And Its Impact On Sales: A Research Analysis Carried Out In India.

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## I. BACKGROUND TO THE TOPIC

Marketers spend enormous amounts of money annually on celebrity endorsement contracts based on the belief that celebrities are effective spokespeople for their products or brands (Katy, 2007). Celebrity Endorsement is viewed as a billion dollar industry in today's era. (Kambitsis et al, 2002). Various companies are signing deals with celebrities in the hope that by using celebrities they can accomplish a unique and relevant position in the minds of the consumers. (Temperley & Tangen, 2006). Celebrity endorsement is increasingly being employed across various industries regardless of the product type. It is known to be playing the role of a signaling strategy. (Mustafa, 2005). Also According to Reynolds (2000) celebrity endorsement can give a brand a touch of glamour. Everything said and done, one have to weigh the potential risks vs. the potential rewards as celebrity endorsements are always a high-risk, high-reward situation and there is always a human element that you might not know about.

## II. RESEARCH AIM

The topic of celebrity endorsements and its elements is heavily documented in academic literature, but what makes this research interesting is that it enables us to understand the celebrity endorsement process from an Indian consumer's point of view.

Not much work has been seen in the Indian light despite the fact of it being perceived as a potential market for celebrity endorsed products. Indian consumer attitudes are changing at a rapid pace and they are becoming more aware of the products that they use to define their 'self'. The research is carried out to obtain a view amongst Indian Consumers about celebrity endorsement. Is it as positive as it is assumed to be? Most advertisements, be it of any form, majorly focuses on the young generation therefore their perception about the celebrity endorsed form of advertisement is of utmost importance, also getting to know the attitude the youth provides the knowledge of the most current incidents or attitudes of any country, hence the youth has been targeted in this research. The research undertaken on celebrity endorsement in this paper will be useful on both academic and professional platform, as it looks into the perception of Indian consumers on celebrity endorsement, providing theory for scholarly and directives for managers and professionals. Strategic Positioning and effective communication are the two most important "mantras" guiding brand success in today's competitive marketing environment. Corporate are ensuring all possible efforts to promote their brands and to grab the customer's mind share. The impetus is on attracting the customer's attention and developing positive associations not just to influence recall but also to induce trial and eventually effect purchase decisions. In a market where advertising plays a vital role in coordinating consumer purchases, it becomes pertinent for companies to induct all possible measures to influence motivate and inculcate desire to purchase, in the customer through an effective advertising campaign. Theory and practice proves that the use of superstars in advertising generates lot of publicity and attention. (Ohanian,1991). The billion of dollars spent on celebrity endorsement contracts show that celebrities like LIZ Hurley, Britney spears and Tiger woods play an important role in the advertising industry. (DaneShvary and Schwer,2000,Kambtsis et al.2002). It is estimated that the companies in US spent \$800 million in 1998 to acquire talent entertainers, athletes and other high profile personalities -to spot light in advertising, promotion and PR campaigns (Clark,Hastmann, 2003) In India advertisers pour crores of rupees every year into celebrity advertising. Think of Sachin Tendulkar -he means PEPSI in soft drinks, Boost

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in malted beverages, Fiat Palio in cars, TVS victor in two wheelers, Colgate Total in toothpaste, Britannia in Biscuits, Visa in credit cards, Airtel in mobile services and many more brands.

The underlying question is if and how the lively interest of the public in “ The rich and the famous “be effectively used by companies to promote their brands and consequently increase their revenues. (Schlecht,2003) As a first step to answer this question, this paper will examine the relationship between endorsements and brand there by unearthing risks and returns related to this strategy. In order to draw the relationship between celebrities, the brands they endorse and the perception of the people related to the two, models and concepts like source credibility, match up hypothesis ,model of meaning transfer and multi product endorsement would be discussed.

### III. WHO IS A CELEBRITY?

Celebrities are people who enjoy public recognition by a large share of a certain group of people whereas attributes like attractiveness, extraordinary lifestyle are just examples and specific common characteristics cannot be observed though it can be said that within a corresponding social group celebrities generally differ from the social norm and enjoy a high degree of public awareness (Schlecht, 2003).(Anonymous, Business Standard, Dec,2003)This is true for classic forms of celebrities like actors (ex Sharukh khan, Amitabh Bachhan), models ( John Abraham, Malaika Arora, Diya Mirza) Sports athletes (ex. Sachin Tendulkar, Sania Mirza) entertainers (Barkha Dutt, Shekhar Suman) And Pop Stars (Mika, Dailer Mehndi) but also for less obvious groups like businessmen (ex Dirubhai Ambani) or politicians (Laloo Prasad Yadav) Besides these there are fictional celebrities like Ronald McDonald, Fido dido, gattu, Amul Girl, Pillsbury doughboy and the like. Celebrities appear in public in different ways. First, they appear in public when fulfilling their profession ex Sachin Tendulkar is loved by millions for his wonderful performance in the cricket fields. Further more, celebrities appear in public by attending special celebrity events ex. filmfare star awards, Videocon screen awards etc. In addition they are present in News, Fashion magazines and tabloids, which provide second source of information on events and private life of celebrities through mass media channels. Last but not the least celebrities act as spokes people in advertising to promote products and services.(Kambitsis et al, 2002, Tom et.al. , 1992)

### IV. A FIRM THAT DECIDES TO EMPLOY A CELEBRITY TO PROMOTE ITS PRODUCTS OR SERVICES HAS A CHOICE OF USING THE CELEBRITY AS:

***Testimonial:*** If the celebrity has personally used a product or service and is in a position to attest its quality ,then he or she may give a testimonial citing its benefits. For instance Aishwarya Rai endorses Lux by testifying the quality of the product as it forms a part of her consumption basket.

***Endorsement:*** celebrities often lend their names to ads for product or services for which they may or may not be the experts For instance Sachin Tendulkar has been endorsing the Palio brand of Fiat.

***Actor:*** A Celebrity may be asked to present a product or service as a part of character enactment rather than personal testimonial or endorsement. For instance Sweta Tiwari of “Perna fame” (Kasuatl Zindagi ki ) enacts as a housewife for Nirma’s ad campaign. It has nothing to do with her on screen or off-screen image In fact she just enacts the character and expectations of a normal housewife from a detergent bar.

***Spokesperson:*** A celebrity who represents a brand or company over an extended periods of time often in print and TV ads as well as in personal appearances is usually called a company’s spokesperson. (Schiffman and Kanuk,1997)

The reason for using celebrities a spokesperson goes back to their huge potential influences. Compared to other endorsers, types, famous people achieve a higher degree of attention and recall. They increase awareness of a company’s advertising create positive feelings towards brands and are perceived by consumers as more entertaining (Solomon, 2002) Using a celebrity in advertising is therefore likely to positively affect consumer’s brand attitude and purchase intentions. Cyber media research study published in business world unearthed different truths about celebrity endorsement. The study spread over 3 phases in different cities of India (Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkota, Nasik, Coimbatore, Meerut) 12 focus gp interviews, 6 expert instruments and 8 expert interviews with ad agencies were conducted. Besides this survey of 480 respondent in 4 cities and 3375 respondent in 8 cities helped to develop different insights on celebrity endorsements that are given as under:

- Over 80% of the people remembered the celebrity but forget about the brand.
- Different stars appealed to different geographic groups of customers (eg., Aishwarya Rai had highest recall in down south as against ShahRukh Khan who had little appeal there.

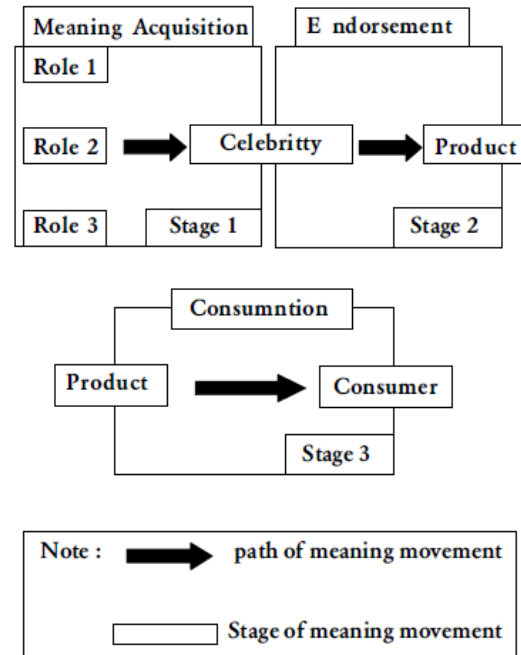
- Research emphasized that ads without celebrity had a good a chance of working as one with them. For instance, Hutch ad did better jobs of building a brand then coke which had many big celebrity names associated with it.

### V. THE MATCH-UP HYPOTHESIS :

Several Research studies have examined the congruency between celebrity endorsers and brands to explain the effectiveness of using famous persons to promote the brands (Till and Buster, 1998), (Till and Shimp, 1998) Results show that a number of celebrity endorsements proved very successful, whereas other completely failed. The match-up hypothesis specifically suggests that the effectiveness depends on the existence of a “fit” between the celebrity spokesperson and endorsed brand (Till and Buster, 1998). Though Oharian (1991) acknowledges a popular person’s ability to create awareness and initial interest for an advertisement she concludes that this may not necessarily change consumer’s attitude towards the brands. The model emphasises that the physical attractiveness of a celebrity endorser will enhance evaluations of the products characteristics only if the characteristics of the product “match up” with the image conveyed by the celebrity. Hence an extension beyond attractiveness and creditability towards a consideration has to be done in terms of making the entire image of the celebrity with the endorsed brand

### VI. MODEL OF MEANING TRANSFER

Mc Cracker (1989) explain that the celebrity spokesperson would be effective only if clarity is achieved in assessing the meanings consumers associated with the endorser which are eventually transferred to the brand. Mc Cracker explains this meaning transfer model in 3 stages.



Meaning Transfer in the endorsement process (Adopted from Mc Cracker, 1989)

First, the meaning associated with the famous persons makes them the endorser to the product or brand. Thus, the meanings attributed to the celebrity become associated with the brand in the consumers. Secondly, in the consumption process, the customer acquires the brands meaning. The third stage of the model explicitly shows the importance of the consumer's role in the process of endorsing brands. This can be well explained through an example. Aishwarya Rai as a celebrity has acquired a cultural meaning of beauty, elegance, attitude, sophistication and charisma. This meaning is then transferred to Nakshatra Diamonds endorsed by Aishwarya as Apsara or the beauty par excellence. The fit is indeed impeccable.

### VII. MULTIPLE BRAND AND CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT

While surfing through the channels of TV one realizes that either some celebrities are endorsing several brands or a specific brand is endorsed by different spokesperson. For instance, Amitabh Bachhan is enacting Parker, Hajmola, Navrattan Oil, Cadbury



dairy milk and many more. On the other hand, Coke has been endorsed by Hritik Roshan, Aishwarya Rai, Aamir Khan, Virendra Sehwag and many more in the category. The following table provide a brief overview of different brands endorsed by:

promotion. Advertisers point out to the 3Cs that enjoy mass adulation in Indian sub continental, Cricket, Cinema and Curry. In fact Mr. Jaydeep Dasgupta, Associate branch Director-Mumbai, Mudra feels that

**Top 10 celebrities in India.**

The Big Endorser	The Brand
a) Sachin Tendulkar	Pepsi, Adidas, TVS, Britannia, MRF, ESPN
b) Shahrukh Khan	Pepsi, Santro, Videocon, LML
c) Amitabh Bachan	Pepsi, Cadbury, Dabur, Nerolac, Reid & Taylor
d) Aamir Khan	Coke, Titan
e) Saurav Ganguly	Emami, Hero Honda, Britannia, LG
f) Saif Ali Khan	Asian Paints, Yamaha, Frito Lays, Royal Stag
g) Virendra Sehwag	Boost, Badur, Coke, Team Samsung, Britannia, Adidas, Mayur
h) Rahul Dravid	Castrol, Samsung, Pepsi, Hutch, Britannia, Reebok
i) Aishwarya Rai	Nakshatra, Lu, L'oreal, longiones watches
j) Preety Zinta	Cadury, Godrej, TVS Scooty, Maggi, Head & Shoulders

Source: Top 10 celebrity endorsers, riding the wave, Prachi Raturi (2005), Brunch Hindustan Times Magazine.

The concerns of all marketing today is that whether this special form of celebrity endorsement affects consumers brand attitudes? Madhurkar Sabnavis, Country Manager- Discovery O & M points out that multiple endorsements affect the endorser credibility as people known that a celebrity is paid to sell the product. The endorsement of as many as four products negatively influence the celebrity spokesperson's credibility (expertise trustworthiness) and likeability. Reasons may be found in the lack of distinctiveness, with one famous person enduring several products instead of concentrating on and representing one specific brand. (Trippiet at, 1994) On the other hand, research has suggested that celebrity endorsed has potential positive effect like transfer of positive brand images and shaping of consumer's response when ore than four products are endorsed.

**VIII. SELECTING THE BEST ENDORSER**

Brand Endorsement is a way to get the brand noticed amidst the clutter that is there in the market place. Synergy is therefore required between brand and celebrity. The celebrity actually helps in accelerating the brand image formulation process. At the same time advertisement argue that celebrities come with loads of liabilities that are hard to ignore. The decision of selecting the best endorser is thus a pertinent issue fixed by marketers & adventures for their brand

branding plays a key role in creating a celebrity aura. Today Cricketer and Film stars are groomed to be brand themselves and hence are marketed well. In other words, the celebrity himself/herself should be a strong brand and the attributes of the celebrity brand should match the attribute of the product brand being highlighted. To help select a celebrity endorser, many companies and their advertising agencies rely on Q ratings that are commercially available from a New York based firm known as marketing, evaluates Inc. (Belch & Belch). This firm annually determines a familiarity and likeability rating of top male & female personalities (and carton characters) based on a mail questioners survey of the television viewer. The basic rating called a Q rating, is obtained by dividing the number who rated as "one of my favorites" by those who indicated that they were "totally familiar" with the personality. The survey is widely used by marketers and agencies to select celebrity endorsers and is used by T.V. Network and Hollywood producers to cast their shows & movies. All efforts to select an ideal celebrity as brand endorser who is able to infuse and bring about a change in the fortunes of a brand. Besides this it is important to judge the compatibility of the endorser with the product and acceptance of the individual buy the target audience before selecting the stage endorsers.

## IX. IMPACT OF CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT

The increasing number of endorsements throws a valid question to the consumers. Is there a science behind the choice of these endorsers or is it just by the popularity measurement? What are the reasons which lead to impact of celebrity endorsement on brands? Through research and analysis, this paper develops a 12 point model, which can be used as a blueprint criterion which 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 14 factors discussed in the model. The success of a brand through celebrity endorsement is a cumulative of the following 14 attributes. Greater the score of the below parameters, greater are the chances of getting close to the desired impact.

### 1) *Celebrity-Target Audience Match*

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.

### 2) *Celebrity Values*

Tabu endorsing Tetra Packed Milk, Shabana Azmi campaigning for AIDS Awareness, 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.

### 3) *Costs of Acquiring the Celebrity*

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 Sachin Tendulkar's price is believed to be between Rs. 2.0-2.5 crores per endorsement, and musician A. R. Rehman, who had signed up with AirTel, is believed to have picked up Rs. 1.75 crores. Film-star Hrithik Roshan was rumored to have picked up Rs. 2 crores for the Fly With Hrithik campaign to push Close-Up, and Shahrukh Khan's rate seems to be between Rs. 2.5-3.0 crores. Aishwarya Rai apparently picks up Rs. 1.25 crores for an endorsement and the Indian cricket captain Saurav Ganguly is believed to get between Rs. 90 lakh to Rs. 1.5 crores, while film-star Aamir Khan apparently makes Rs. 1.5 crores per endorsement.

### 4) *Celebrity Regional Appeal Factors*

R. Madhavan endorsing Pepsi in southern India or Sachin Tendulkar endorsing in India are few examples of how celebrities are chosen to reach out to target audiences for brands in regional markets.

### 5) *Celebrity-Product Match*

Cyrus Broacha is the brand ambassador for MTV since both the celebrity and the brand are considered as friendly, young, moodboosting, humorous and outspoken. MTV's brand personality overlaps Cyrus Broacha's image as a brand. Some more examples of compatible celebrity product match in which celebrity brand attributes get transferred to the brand and increases the brand equity is of Govinda & Navratan Tel, Aishwarya Rai & Nakshatra, etc.

### 6) *Celebrity Controversy Risk*

The perfect example here is of Salman Khan and the controversy in which he crushed a man to death with his Pajero when he was driving under the influence of alcohol. Also, 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.

### 7) *Celebrity Popularity*

Celebrity Brand association like Garnier endorsed Tara Sharma & Simone Singh, Agni Diamonds & Riama Sen don't get much brand recall, and even if they do, its difficult to attribute it to the celebrities' endorsing the brand. On the other hand, HPCL has had increased popularity and share of voice due to the endorsement of the brand through Sania Mirza.

### 8) *Celebrity Availability*

In case of various brands, there are situations in which they prefer to go without a brand face, since there is no brand-fit between the celebrities available and the brand. Also, due to multiple endorsements by certain celebrities, brands refuse to adopt celebrity endorsement since they fear dilution of the brand image.

### 9) *Celebrity Physical Attractiveness*

John Abraham endorsing Wrangler and Timex Sunglasses are some examples which portray the celebrities' physical attractiveness that helps create an impact.

### 10) *Celebrity Credibility*

The most important aspect and reason for celebrity endorsement is credibility. In a research carried out 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. One of the most obvious reasons of Amitabh Bachchan

endorsing plethora of brands is the credibility of the celebrity and his recognition across consumers. 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. The campaign has won an award for the same.

**X. MULTIPLE ENDORSEMENTS**

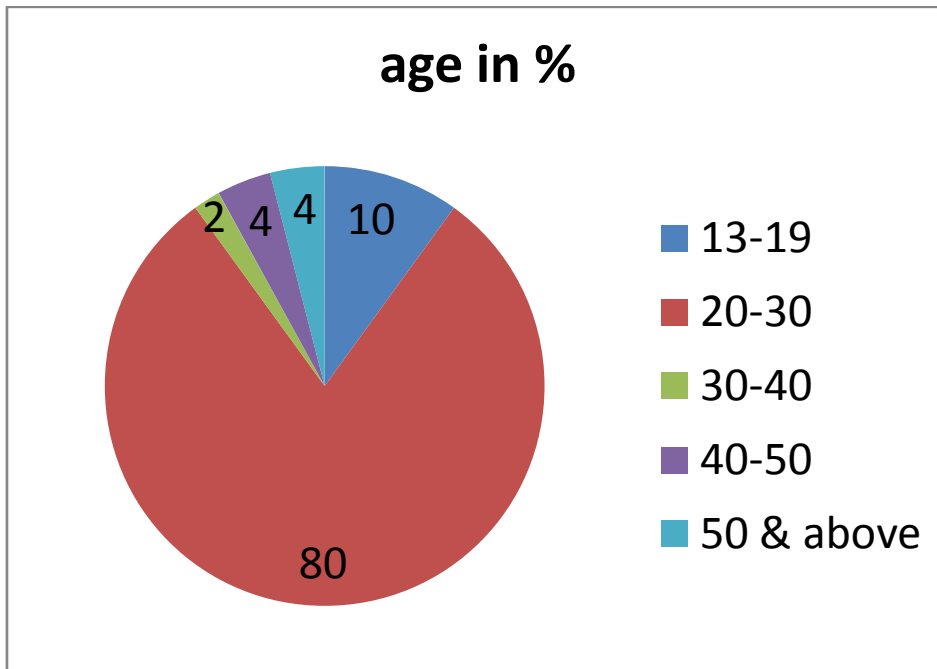
Not many people can remember all the brands that a celebrity endorses and the chances of losing brand recall increases if the celebrity endorses multiple brands. For example, in case of Sachin Tendulkar people recall Pepsi, TVS Victor and MRF, but might not remember brands like Britannia and Fiat. Similarly, for

Amitabh Bachchan, consumers remember ICICI, Pepsi, Parker Pens, Pulse Polio and BPL. They might get confused in the endorsement of Nerolac or Asian Paints. Thus, for multiple endorsements where the same celebrity endorses several brands, it boils down to the strength of the brand and the advertising content.

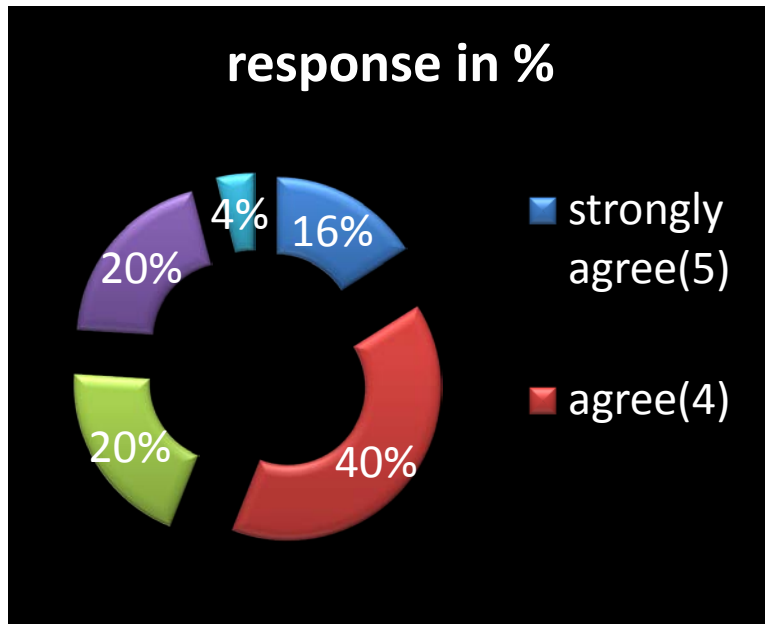
**XI. WHETHER CELEBRITY IS A BRAND USER**

Various celebrities endorse NGOs and social causes since they believe in the social message that they need to convey to the audience. One of the most successful campaigns has been executed by PETA in which celebrities like Shilpa Shetty, Amisha Patel, Yana Gupta, Sheetal Malhar, Mahima Choudhary claimed to believe in PETA's philosophy, and thereby endorse the brand.

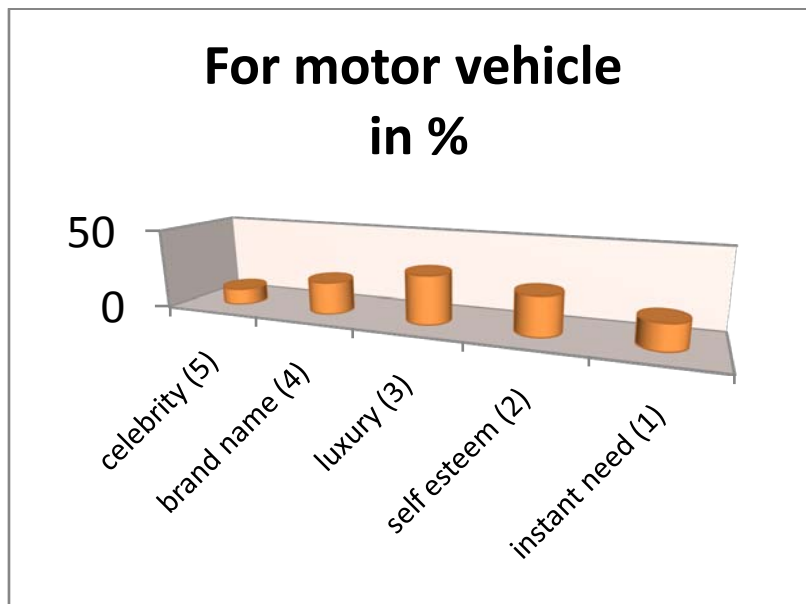
*Findings of the study*



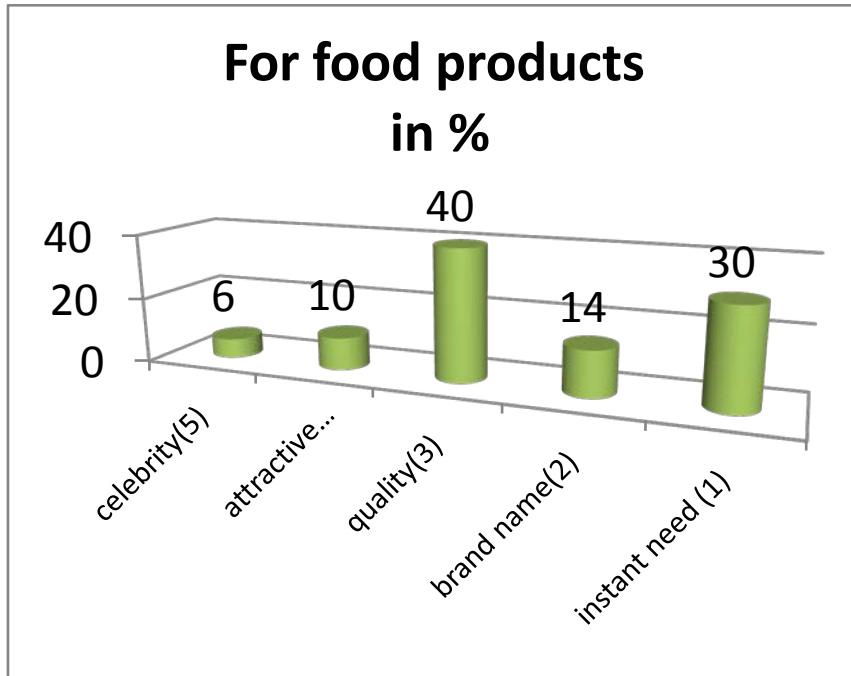
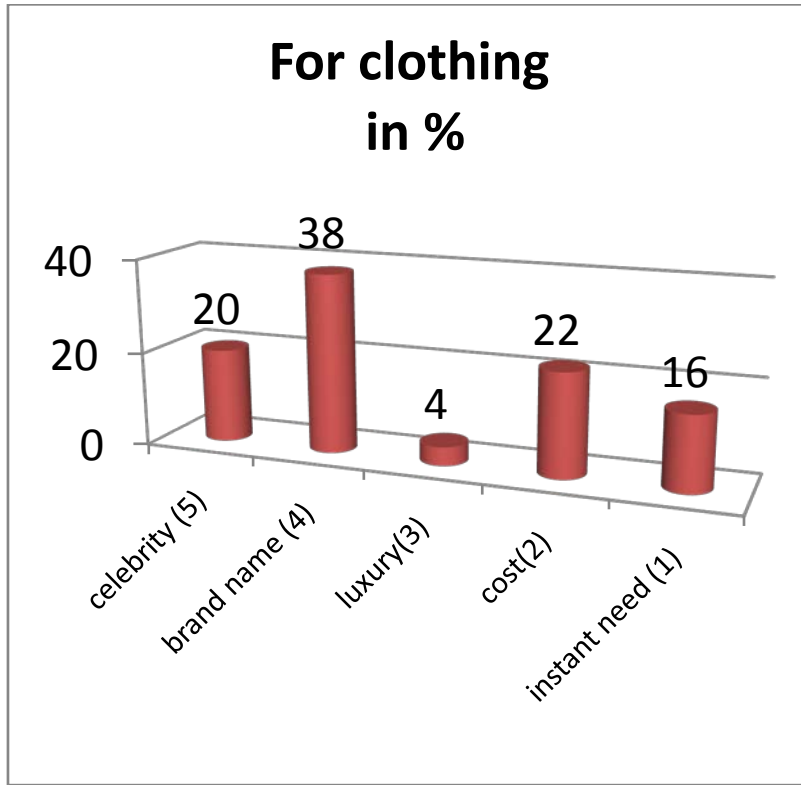
**Celebrity endorsed products are of good quality?**



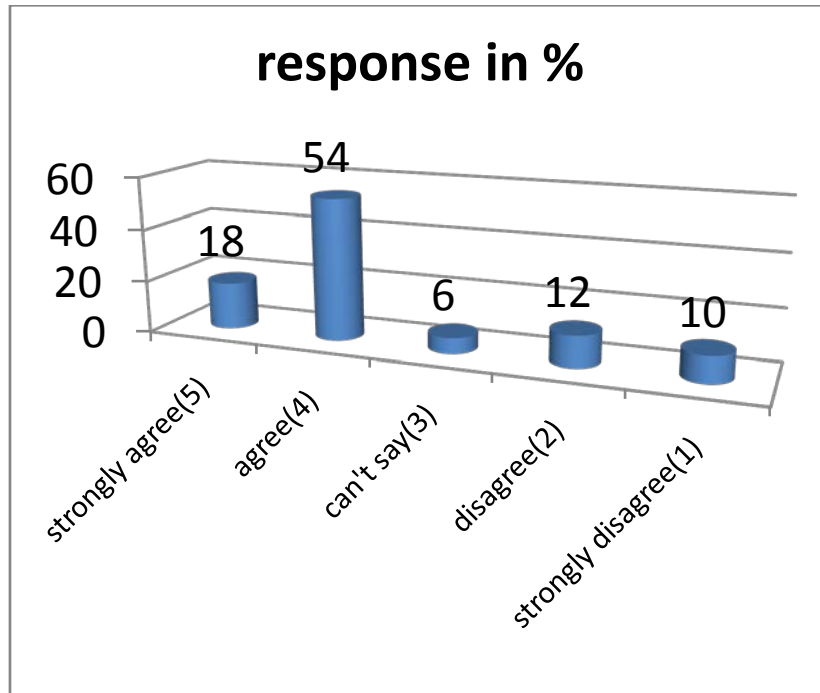
**Factors influencing buying decisions**



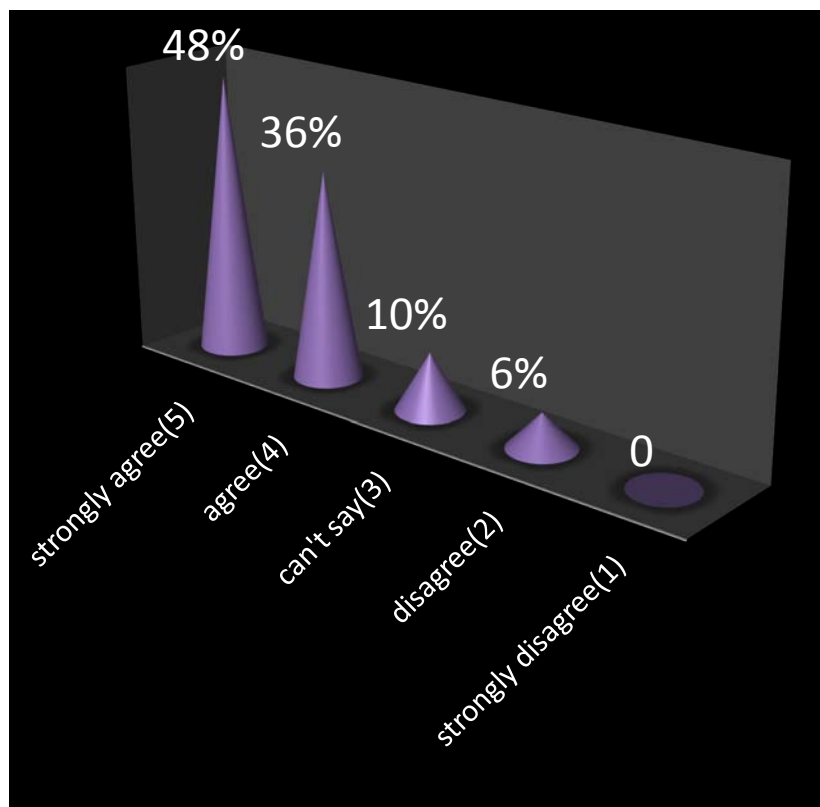




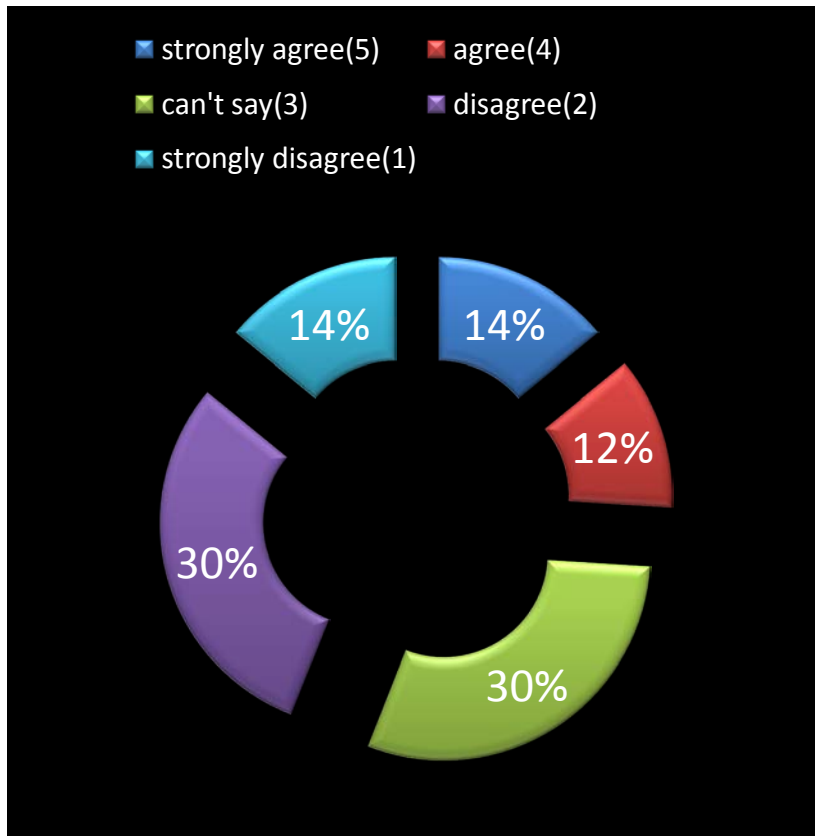
Total revenue increases when brands are endorsed by celebrities



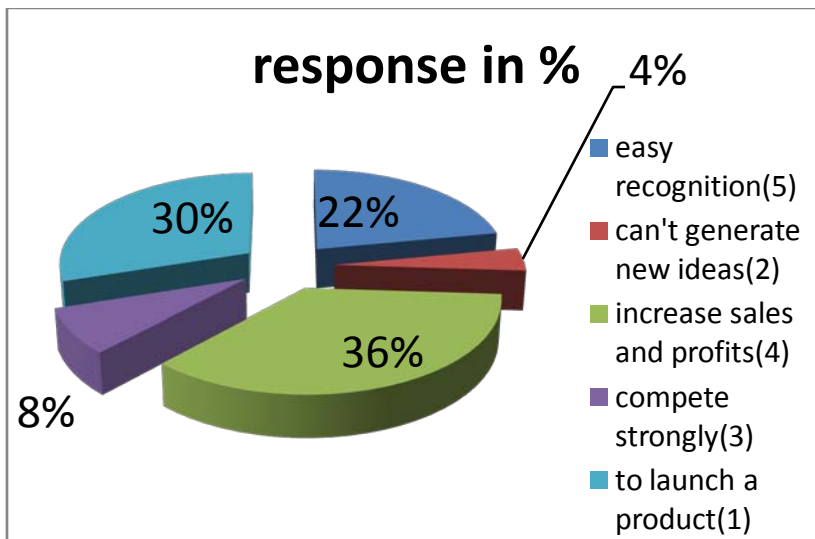
Are people motivated by celebrity endorsement?



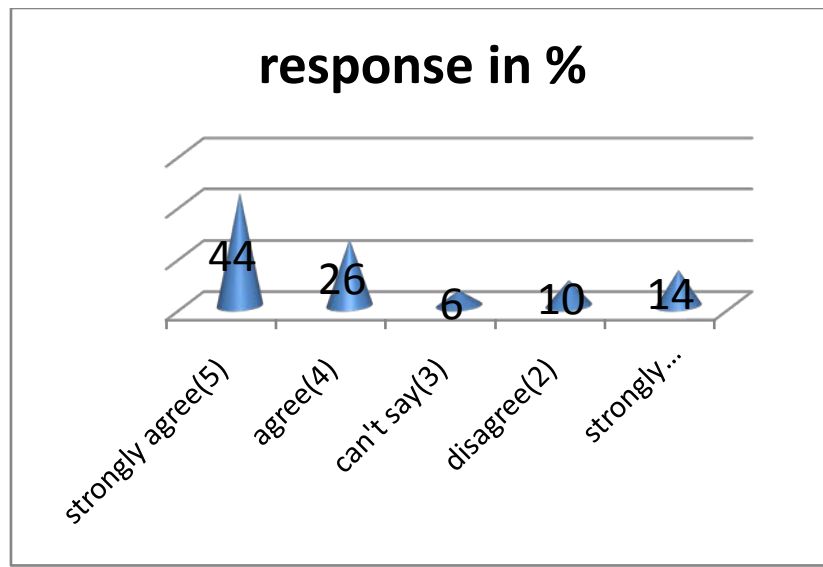
Are Celebrity endorsed brands used by celebrities themselves?



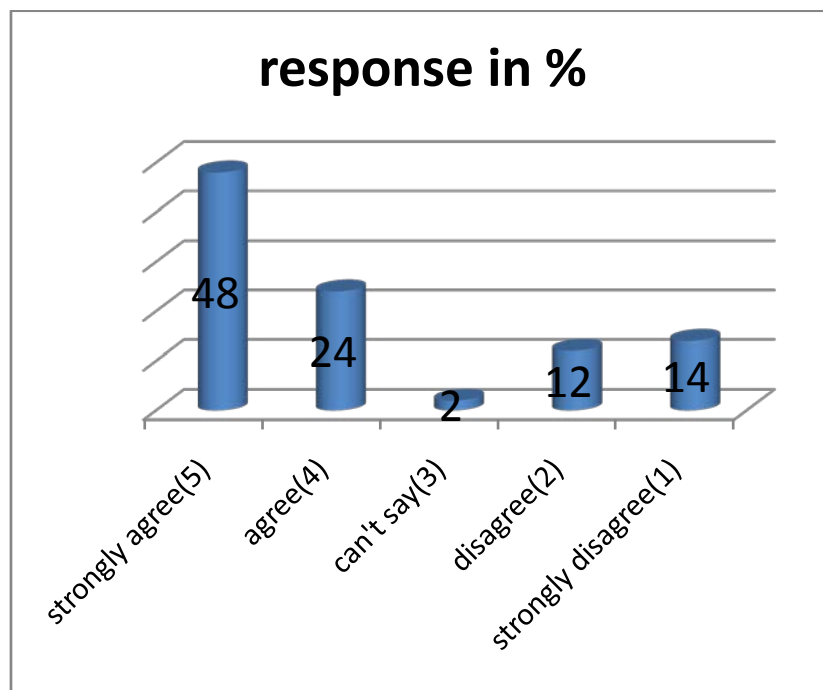
Reason for choosing celebrities



**Celebrity endorsement helps in brand promotion**



**Celebrities bring brand equity to the product**





age	No. of respondents (x)	%	Weight (w)	(w*x)	MEAN
13-19	5	10			
20-30	40	80			
30-40	1	2			
40-50	2	4			
50 & above	2	4			
	50				
<b>celebrity endorsed products are of good quality</b>					
strongly agree(5)	8	16	5	40	
agree(4)	20	40	4	80	
can't say(3)	10	20	3	30	
disagree(2)	10	20	2	20	
strongly disagree(1)	2	4	1	2	
	50			172	3.44
<b>most persuading factor (weightage)</b>					
	motor vehicle				
celebrity (5)	5	10	5	25	
brand name (4)	10	20	4	40	
luxury (3)	15	30	3	45	
self esteem (2)	12	24	2	24	
instant need (1)	8	16	1	8	
	50			142	2.84





	clothing				
<b>celebrity (5)</b>	10	20	5	50	
<b>brand name (4)</b>	19	38	4	76	
<b>luxury(3)</b>	2	4	3	6	
<b>cost(2)</b>	11	22	2	22	
<b>instant need (1)</b>	8	16	1	8	
	50			162	3.24
	food products				
<b>celebrity(5)</b>	3	0	5	15	
<b>attractive package(4)</b>	5	10	4	20	
<b>quality(3)</b>	20	40	3	60	
<b>brand name(2)</b>	7	14	2	14	
<b>instant need (1)</b>	15	30	1	15	
	50			124	2.48
<b>total revenue increases when brands are endorsed by celebrities</b>					
<b>strongly agree(5)</b>	9	18	5	45	
<b>agree(4)</b>	27	54	4	108	
<b>can't say(3)</b>	3	12	3	9	
<b>disagree(2)</b>	6	12	2	12	
<b>strongly disagree(1)</b>	5	10	1	5	
	50			179	3.58
<b>people are motivated by celebrity endorsement</b>					

<b>strongly agree(5)</b>	24	48	5	120	
<b>agree(4)</b>	18	36	4	72	
<b>can't say(3)</b>	5	10	3	15	
<b>disagree(2)</b>	3	6	2	6	
<b>strongly disagree(1)</b>	0	0	1	0	
	50			213	4.26
<b>celebrities use themselves?</b>					
<b>strongly agree(5)</b>	7	14	5	35	
<b>agree(4)</b>	6	12	4	24	
<b>can't say(3)</b>	15	30	3	45	
<b>disagree(2)</b>	15	30	2	30	
<b>strongly disagree(1)</b>	7	14	1	7	
	50			141	2.82
<b>reason for chosing celebrities</b>					
<b>easy recognition(5)</b>	11	22	5	55	
<b>can't generate new ideas(2)</b>	2	4	4	8	
<b>increase sales and profits(4)</b>	18	36	3	54	
<b>compete strongly(3)</b>	4	8	2	8	
<b>to launch a product(1)</b>	15	30	1	15	
	50			140	2.8
<b>celebrity endorsement help in brand promotion</b>					
<b>strongly agree(5)</b>	22	44	5	110	
<b>agree(4)</b>	13	26	4	52	

can't say(3)	3	12	3	9	
disagree(2)	5	10	2	10	
strongly disagree(1)	7	14	1	7	
	50			188	3.76
celebrities bring brand equity to the product					
strongly agree(5)	24	48	5	120	
agree(4)	12	24	4	48	
can't say(3)	1	2	3	3	
disagree(2)	6	12	2	12	
strongly disagree(1)	7	14	1	7	
				190	3.8
	50			total of	33.02
				mean	
				average	3.302
				mean	

## XII. CONCLUSION

1. The study suggests that the mean of the findings is somewhere between 3 to 4 i.e 3.022
2. Our study results in the conclusion that Celebrity Endorsement is legible only to an extent that the respondent's answer ranges between **agree and can't say**.
3. This implies that Celebrity Endorsement has an impact on sales on to a little extent and that Celebrities should not always be used to endorse Brands of various products.
4. Although, our study has a positive inclination towards the belief that people are motivated to buy products as a result of celebrity endorsement.
5. Moreover the respondents also **strongly agree** that **celebrities bring brand equity** to the products.

6. The research also indicates that celebrity endorsement helps in brand promotion.
7. Finally we conclude that there's no harm in using celebrities for the endorsements, none the less everything has its own pros and cons.

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