



## **Impact of celebrity endorsement on brand image among Sri Lankan adolescents: Special reference to Manmunai North of Batticaloa district**

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### **Abstract**

This paper converses with Sri Lankan adolescents' perceptions about how celebrity endorsement advertisements impact brand image. A quantitative survey method was constructed by issuing a self-administrated questionnaire among adolescents from 10 to 19 years in Manmunai North D.S of Batticaloa district. The convenience sample method was used to issue the questionnaires and 200 questionnaires were received back duly filled by the adolescents. Results revealed that celebrities endorsed advertisements are more attractive than the non-endorsed advertisements. Mostly, celebrities' attractiveness is a special attribute of celebrity endorsers, which is most memorable to adolescents in Sri Lanka. Moreover, the tested dimensions of celebrity endorsement show a positive relationship with the brand image. Moreover, overall celebrity endorsement shows a significant impact of celebrity endorsement on the brand image.

*Keywords: adolescents, brand image and celebrity endorsement*

### **Introduction**

These days, grappling the customers' attention is the most challenging task for marketers due to knowledge enhancement among the public. They are questioning each aspect of products are available in the markets. Therefore, marketers should carefully develop a better approach that impulses the consumers' attention, creates their interests, provokes their desires, and activates their purchase over the brand. Propitiously, advertisement is a common path that communicates about all valuable features regarding respective products. Further, most marketers have utilized this technique as a medium of gathering recognition for their brand through the recognition and admiration of celebrities. Dimed and Joulvana (2005) said that Celebrity endorsement makes the advertisement more unforgettable and the organization in a short-time makes high brand awareness among a broader audience. Particularly, a favourable response generated to a particular brand because of its association with a celebrity may remain stronger over time if the brand receives significant exposure with the association with the celebrity. These celebrity endorsement advertisements should fulfill the special features



such as Attractiveness, Expertise, Trustworthiness, respect, and similarity unified in TEARS model and other attributes like Entertainment value and celebrity-product congruency. However, a marketer should concentrate more on this while entering into different segmentation as an adolescent segment. These days, adults are very smart and knowledgeable than any others. Mostly, adults in urban areas are more embracing of celebrities and more motivated to adopt from those references. Additionally, most adult viewers of some television shows and films perceive those performers as their friend, sister/brother, lover, role model, or god. When adults have this kind of strong feelings and admiration for celebrity, it creates a demanding strategy as celebrity endorsement advertisement among marketers to showcase their brand and grip attention over their brand image.

In the Sri Lankan context, most households have cable connection and dish antenna connection that created commitment toward foreign channels than Sri Lankan channels. Especially Tamil ethnicity in the Batticaloa district committed towards India channels and admired Indian celebrities' advertisements. This brings an advantage for multinationals to capture the market of Tamil ethnicity of Sri Lanka. Therefore, this trend in the usage of celebrity endorsement by marketers has engineered the researchers' interest to critically examine the impact of celebrity endorsement on brand image among Sri Lankan adolescents.

### **Problem Statement**

Nowadays, most marketers deliver their products/ services to their desired customers through the shadow of celebrities. Celebrity is a person who has high eminence among the broad range of individuals considering higher visibility in their field. However, not all celebrity endorsement worked as much company imagined (Dissanayaka & Ismail, 2015). There is a necessity to measure celebrity endorsement advertisement's effectiveness by considering plenty of attributes under it. However, most previous studies that used only three attributes such as "attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise." Further, some studies adopted the TEARS model. However, fewer studies included "celebrity-product congruency" as an attribute. Conversely, not much research was incorporated to use "entertainment value" as an attribute to measure the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement in Sri Lankan context. Thus, this study aimed to combine the TEARS model and entertainment value and celebrity-product congruency to measure the celebrity endorsement.



Further, Sri Lanka's adolescent segment is a vast segment that provides more profits to the marketers. Anyhow, there is not many studies which individually study about adolescent's perception regarding celebrity endorsement. Celebrity endorsement has a certain level of impact over the brand image. However, most of the in Sri Lanka focused on Sri Lanka research focused on celebrity endorsement on other concepts rather than brand image. Even though there is an effect of celebrity endorsement towards other concepts such as purchasing intention and customer loyalty, it is not worth getting the brand image because every y's company spends most of its money on endorsing celebrity and there is the necessity to evaluate its worthiness toward increasing the brand image.

Moreover, studies related to Tamil ethnicity and Tamil people's perceptions regarding celebrity endorsement are scarce in the research context. Therefore, it is necessary to explore the audience's mindset in particular ethnicity to trigger the marketers to grip the market. Additionally, Dissanayake and Weerasiri (2017) had mentioned in their study that there is a necessitating research gap in the Sri Lankan context to examine the impact of celebrity endorsement on brands. In this regards, this research involves analyzing the "Impact of celebrity endorsement on brand image among Sri Lankan adolescents."

### **Research Objectives**

- to explore the impacts of celebrity endorsement dimensions such as trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, respect, similarity, entertainment value, and celebrity-product congruency on brand image among adolescents.
- to explore the impact of celebrity endorsement on brand image among adolescents.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Celebrity endorsement**

Based on Mccracken (1989), Celebrity endorsement is an action undertaken by the famous person to use their status on selling a branded product/services to the general public. Shimp (2003) developed the model called "TEARS Model," which facilitates to determine the endorser characteristics; the acronym TEARS represents five separate attributes: trustworthiness and expertise are two dimensions of credibility, whereas physical



attractiveness, respect, and similarity are components of the general concept of attractiveness.

### **Attributes of effective celebrity endorsement**

This study considered the TEARS model introduced by Shimp (2003), which includes five factors: trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, respect, and similarity. Further, it considered celebrity-product congruency (Kamins & Gupta, 1994; Chan, Ng & Luk, 2013) and entertainment value (Hung, Chan & Caleb, 2011) to measure celebrity effectiveness endorsement.

#### **Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness is a special attribute related to morality, honesty and credibility. The target audience must trust a celebrity who carries a particular image and it must match with the product.

#### **Expertise**

Expertise means knowledge, skills and experience someone has in a particular field of interest.

#### **Attractiveness**

Attractiveness is a quality that creates interest, desire and affection over something or someone.

#### **Respect**

Respect is a quality of appreciation or esteem due to the endorser's general deeds.

#### **Similarity**

Shimp (2003) defined the similarity as a quality to which an endorser matches the target audience on some characteristics related to the endorsement relationship such as gender, and age.

#### **Entertainment value**

Entertainment value is defined as a kind of pleasure given by the celebrity to the public that creates casual admiration (Udo & Nwulu, 2015).

#### **Celebrity-product congruency**

Celebrity-product congruency refers to the right matching of the endorser's image and the endorsed product or brand.



## **Brand image**

Brand image can be stated as a perception that comes to the consumer's mind when considering a particular brand. Based on Keller (1993), Brand image is perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand association held in consumer memory.

As per previous studies, Kotler et al., (2005) stated that, when a company decides to use celebrity endorsement, its main focus falls into promoting its brand. Choosing the best celebrity for promoting a brand is one of the most critical decisions made by every company related to how consumers will perceive the brand (Pringle, 2004). Other research such as Agrawal and Kamakura (1995); Kamins et al., (1989) have shown that celebrity endorsement helps create a positive effect on the consumers' brand awareness, brand trust, and brand preference. Based on Anderson (1983) when a consumer thinks about a brand, their bond with the celebrity is animated to a certain level through spreading activation. Thus, negative information about the celebrity activates the celebrity's bond, which then activates the brand's bond to some degree and it allows reduced evaluation of the celebrity to transfer to the brand. Moreover, this finding was supported by the studies of Noffsinger et al., (1983) and Judd et al., (1991). According to the study of "Impact of Celebrity Endorsement on the image of the brand on Customer's mind" (Saeed & Bhatia, 2014), 83% of customers said celebrity endorsement affects the brand's image.

## **Methodology**

In this Quantitative method of study, a close-ended questionnaire was used to assess celebrity endorsement's impact on brand image among Sri Lankan adolescents. However, particular reference has been made on adolescents who are living in the Batticaloa district. For this study, 220 questionnaires were issued based on a convenience sampling method to measure the study area. However, 200 questionnaires were received back duly filled by the adolescents.

## **Sampling**

The study population of this study is defined as the adolescents who fall between the ages of 10 to 19 years in the Manmunai North Divisional Secretariat area of Batticaloa district, Sri Lanka. Furthermore, the sampling method of this study is convenience sampling under the non-probability sampling method.



### Theoretical framework

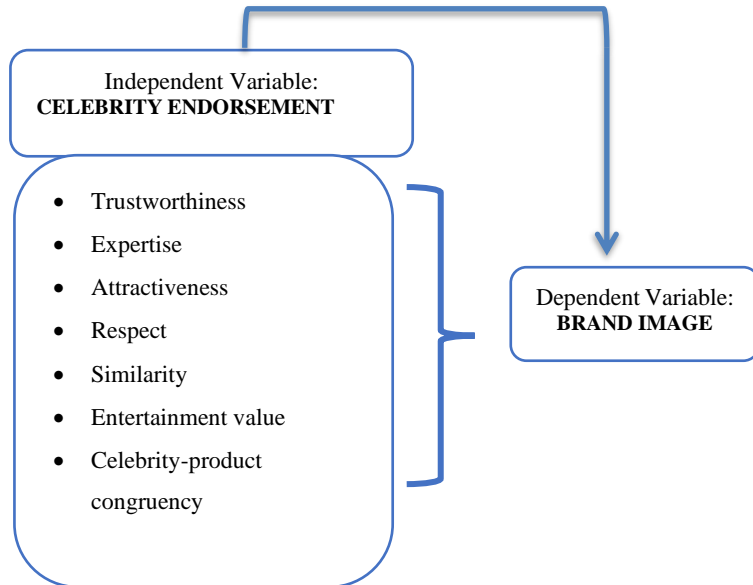


Fig 1. Conceptual Framework

### Results and Discussions

Table 1. Model Summary of impacts of celebrity endorsement dimensions' on brand image

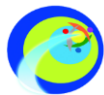
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.862 <sup>a</sup>	.743	.734	.18626

a. Predictors: (Constant), celebrity-product congruency, entertainment value, expertise, similarity, attractiveness, trustworthiness, respect

The multiple regression analysis was tested to explore the impact between variables. The result shows that 74.3% of the brand image variability can be predicted by the dimensions of independent variable such as celebrity-product congruency, entertainment value, expertise, attractiveness, trustworthiness, and respect.

Table 2. Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
Constant	.876	.161		5.455	.000
Trustworthiness	.093	.044	.118	2.124	.035



Expertise	.141	.042	.190	3.336	.001
Attractiveness	.152	.045	.169	3.340	.001
Respect	.243	.040	.336	6.022	.000
Similarity	-.053	.054	-.049	-.984	.327
Entertainment value	.071	.024	.132	3.009	.003
Celebrity-product congruency	.132	.035	.213	3.765	.000

a. Dependent Variable: brand image

The coefficient table shows that there is no significant impact of similarity on brand image. Because its significant value is more than 0.05. However, other dimensions such as trustworthiness, respect, similarity, entertainment value, and celebrity-product congruency positively impact brand image. Therefore, it can be concluded that the similarity in terms of age, gender and ethnicity between celebrities and adults was not there in Sri Lankan advertisements. Adolescents also believe that similarity between them with celebrities is not essential to be passionate toward the brands consumed by them.

Table 3. Model summary of impact of celebrity endorsement on brand image

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.846 <sup>a</sup>	.715	.714	.19320

a. Predictors: (Constant), Celebrity endorsement

Table 4. Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
Constant	.838	.140			5.980	.000
Celebrity endorsement	.845	.038	.846		22.310	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Brand image

The result shows that celebrity endorsement has a strong positive impact on brand image and 71.5% of the variability in the brand image can be predicted by celebrity endorsement. Further, every unit increase in celebrity endorsement can increase the brand image by 0.845. Therefore, the researcher can be concluded that, celebrity endorsement has a significant impact on brand image among Sri Lankan adolescents. Moreover, if the marketers around Sri Lanka concentrate more on celebrity endorsement and include useful contents with suitable endorsers, it will enhance the brand image.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

According to the findings, it was concluded that marketers should consider more on advertisements to attract various geographical areas and target segmentation. Particularly in adult segmentation, celebrity attractiveness is



essential and the way they appear in advertisement means a lot to adults and that will impulse the adult to attract to the brand.

Likewise, a good reputation of celebrity, honesty while delivering the message and capability in their field of interests also has a concern in adults' minds while watching an advertisement. Therefore, it is important that companies make sure the celebrity endorser should match the product being endorsed by them and should possess all the best qualities with similar features with adults to enhance the brand image among adolescents in Sri Lanka.

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