

INFLUENCE OF CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT ON CHILDREN'S PREFERENCES: A CASE STUDY ON CONFECTIONARY PRODUCTS IN THANJAVUR DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

The manufacturers of the products have undertaken advertising efforts to reach the end consumers and ensure that the consumers are aware of the products. Advertising enables producers to effectively communicate product information to consumers. Advertisements aim to captivate consumers, and manufacturers often employ renowned individuals to garner public attention. Individuals known as celebrities are compensated for their professional endeavours. Celebrities require a compelling personality and captivating caption in order to entice people. The objective of this study is to determine the influence of celebrity endorsement on children's preference for confectionery items in the specified geographical area. The study aims to achieve the following objectives: (i) to provide the socio-economic variables of the sample respondents, (ii) to identify the variable of celebrity endorsement of confectionery items, and (iii) to provide recommendations to the producers. The researcher employed a convenient sampling approach to gather data inside the study area. The study area chosen for this research is the city of Thanjavur, which is limited to a sample size of 150. The participants in this study are minors; however, for enhanced precision, the data was not directly obtained from the children themselves, but rather from their parents. The researcher utilised percentage analysis to present the socio-economic profile of the sample respondents and employed correlation to determine the relationship between the socio-economic profile and the impact of celebrity endorsement.

This study determined that producers must adhere to government regulations during the production of goods. The researcher recognised the significance of advertisement as it serves as the means through which products are brought to the attention of consumers.

Key words: Advertisement, Media Scheduling, Confectionary Products and Impact of Advertisement.

INTRODUCTION

The manufacturers of the products have undertaken advertising efforts to reach the end consumers, ensuring that the consumers are aware of the products. Advertising enables producers

to effectively communicate product information to consumers. Service providers are employing advertising as a means to connect with consumers (Gopinath, 2019a). Advertising is commonly defined as the sponsored dissemination of ideas, commodities, or services through non-personal means, with the specific goal of persuading or influencing purchasers in their purchasing decisions. Advertising operates at the intersection of culture and the economy, with its main objective being to promote the sale of products and services by influencing consumer behaviour. It achieves this by employing tactics that reshape culture, generating aspirations and cultivating new desires for items (Gopinath, 2019b). The primary environmental elements that influence advertising include the economy, population, culture, and the political and legal system.

Advertising is a cultural artefact that has a growing impact on social attitudes, shapes social roles, and exerts influence on cultural values (Jaya & Gopinath, 2020). Advertising in the 20th Century established a distinct profile in western industrialised society due to many circumstances. It was influenced by these variables and emerged as a technique of promoting the purchase of items from new and growing businesses.

MEANING & DEFINITION OF ADVERTISEMENT

Philip Kotler defines advertising as a method of promotion and presentation of ideas, goods, or services that is paid for and not delivered in person, and is carried out by a sponsor who can be identified. Advertising is a method of conveying important information and communicating it effectively.

The American Marketing Association (1948) formulated the definition of Advertising as the act of presenting and promoting ideas, goods, or services in a non-personal manner, for which the sponsor is identified and payment is made.

The production of candy is an ancient practise, but it has evolved into a specialised sector that relies on meticulous selection and utilisation of all raw ingredients. Each unit operation, including solution, evaporation, crystallisation, dehydration, disintegration, blending, colouring, and flavouring, has a significant function to play. The confectionery sector stands out in the realm of food due to its extensive assortment of ingredients utilised.

These encompass many types of fruits and nuts, together with the predominant sugars that mostly influence the physical texture. Sugars exist in a wide range of physical states, from fully dissolved forms like "cordial," to partially solid states like "chewy caramels," to nearly frozen states resembling melted solids like "hard candy." Sugar is a highly desirable and easily digestible source of calories derived from carbohydrates. Food additives play a significant influence in the production of confectionery products (Usharani & Gopinath, 2020a).

The typical additives utilised in the production of confectionery items include sweeteners, colourants, flavour enhancers, emulsifiers, gelling agents, stabilisers, and pH-regulating acidulants and salts. Similarly to us, all the marketers and advertising are also well acquainted with this fact.

Currently, there is a growing abundance of advertisements on television that specifically target young children to promote their products. The advertisements that are shown during children's television programmes promote a diverse array of products such as toys, food items, energy drinks, clothing companies, and so forth. TV advertisements that are intentionally created

to raise brand awareness among children, while ensuring that they do not convey any misleading information, might be genuinely beneficial for them (Usharani & Gopinath, 2020b). For example, a bread brand that associates itself with the term 'Virtuoso' initiated a campaign to provide children with an opportunity to enhance their creativity, so preparing them to become true geniuses. Due to these promotional activities, children begin to develop brand awareness and may even assist their parents in making purchasing decisions.

CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT

Manufacturers utilise prominent people in advertisements to captivate consumers' attention (Karthick et al., 2020a). Individuals known as celebrities receive compensation for their professional endeavours. Celebrities require a compelling personality and captivating presence to entice consumers. Confectionery products have a strong appeal to customers, although children's preferences may not have a significant influence on their parents. Manufacturers employ celebrities to capture the attention of both children and parents in order to promote and sell their products.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study was done to investigate the impact of celebrity endorsements on children's preferences, specifically focusing on confectionery goods in the region of Thanjavur. Celebrities receive substantial compensation commensurate with their industry and level of expertise. Confectionery items require more customer attention and enhanced quality due to their consumable nature. The celebrity has a significant role in promoting and enhancing the value of confectionery items. The objective of this study is to determine the influence of celebrity endorsement on children's preference for confectionery items in the specified geographical area.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the objectives of the study.

1. To illustrate the socioeconomic variables of the individuals included in the sample.
2. To determine the degree of celebrity endorsement in relation to confectionery items.
3. To propose recommendations to the producers.

SAMPLE DESIGN AND TOOLS

The researcher employed a convenient sampling approach to gather data inside the study area. When collecting data, researchers make sure to include families with children who consume confectionery items. The study area chosen for this research is the city of Thanjavur, which is limited to a total of 150 samples. The participants in this study are minors. However, in order to obtain more precise information, the data was not directly obtained from the children themselves, but rather from their parents. The data gathering process involved the utilisation of a well-organized questionnaire. After the data was gathered, it was inputted into MS-Excel and subsequently transferred to SPSS for further analysis.

The researcher utilised percentage analysis to present the socio-economic profile of the sample respondents and employed correlation to determine the relationship between the socio-economic profile and the impact of celebrity endorsement.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Gender of the respondents

Sl. No.	Gender	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	Male	95	63.33
2	Female	55	36.67
	Total	150	100

Source: Survey data

The study gathered responses from a total of 150 participants, consisting of 95 males (63.33%) and 55 females (36.67%). The gender distribution indicates a higher representation of males in the sample. This information provides a foundational understanding of the demographic composition of the respondents in the research study.

Table 2: Age group of the respondents

Sl. No.	Age Group	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	Up to 30 years	57	38.00
2	31 years to 50 years	72	48.00
3	Above 50 years	21	14.00
		150	

Source: Survey data

The research included participants across different age groups, with 38.00% falling in the "Up to 30 years" category, 48.00% in the "31 years to 50 years" range, and 14.00% being "Above 50 years." The age distribution illustrates a diverse representation of respondents across various life stages. This information is crucial for understanding the demographic profile of the study's participants and can contribute to interpreting the research findings in the context of different age cohorts.

Table 3: Family type of the respondents

Sl. No.	Family type	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	Joint family	84	56.00
2	Nuclear family	66	44.00
	Total	150	100

Source: Survey data

The study examined the family types of the respondents, revealing that 56.00% of participants belonged to joint families, while 44.00% were part of nuclear families. This data provides insights into the family structures represented in the research sample, highlighting a significant presence of joint families. Understanding the family dynamics of the participants contributes to a more comprehensive analysis of the study's findings, considering the potential influence of family structures on the variables under investigation..

Table 4: Occupation of the respondents

Sl. No.	Occupation	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	Government employees	18	12.00
2	Private employees	84	56.00
3	Professionals	22	14.67
4	Others	26	17.33
	Total	150	100

Source: Survey data

The analysis of respondents' occupations in the study indicates a diverse occupational distribution. Among the participants, 12.00% were government employees, 56.00% worked in the private sector, 14.67% were professionals, and 17.33% fell into the "Others" category. This occupational diversity within the sample suggests a representation of individuals from various sectors, providing a nuanced perspective on the study's subject matter. Understanding the occupational backgrounds of the respondents is essential for contextualizing and interpreting the research findings in relation to different professional groups.

Table 5: Monthly Income of the respondents

Sl. No.	Monthly Income	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	Less than Rs. 25,000	37	24.67
2	Rs. 25,001 to Rs. 50,000	55	36.67
3	Rs. 50,001 to Rs. 75,000	46	30.66
4	Above Rs.75, 000	12	8.00
	Total	150	100

Source: Survey data

The study examined the monthly income distribution of the respondents, revealing a varied financial landscape within the sample. Among the participants, 24.67% reported a monthly income of less than Rs. 25,000, 36.67% fell in the Rs. 25,001 to Rs. 50,000 range, 30.66% reported an income between Rs. 50,001 to Rs. 75,000, and 8.00% indicated an income above Rs. 75,000. This income diversity within the study's sample offers valuable context for interpreting the research findings, as it reflects the economic heterogeneity of the respondents. Understanding the participants' income levels is crucial for drawing insights into how financial factors may influence their perspectives or behaviors in the study's context.

Correlation

The researcher utilised percentage analysis to present the socio-economic profile of the sample respondents and employed correlation to determine the relationship between the socio-economic profile and the impact of celebrity endorsement.

Table 6: Correlation – Relationship between Socio Economic Factors and level of impact of celebrity endorsement

Sl. No.	Variables	Pearson's Correlation	P Value	Result
1	Gender	0.827**	0.001	Positive
2	Age group	0.744*	0.001	Positive
3	Family type	0.669*	0.001	Positive
4	Occupation	-0.671**	0.001	Negative
5	Monthly Income	-0.522*	0.001	Negative

Source: Computed data

The correlation analysis aimed to explore the relationship between socio-economic factors and the perceived impact of celebrity endorsement. The Pearson's correlation coefficients and associated p-values are presented below:

1. Gender:

- Pearson's Correlation: 0.827**
- P Value: 0.001
- Result: Positive correlation

2. Age Group:

- Pearson's Correlation: 0.744*
- P Value: 0.001
- Result: Positive correlation

3. Family Type:

- Pearson's Correlation: 0.669*
- P Value: 0.001
- Result: Positive correlation

4. Occupation:

- Pearson's Correlation: -0.671**
- P Value: 0.001
- Result: Negative correlation

5. Monthly Income:

- Pearson's Correlation: -0.522*
- P Value: 0.001
- Result: Negative correlation

The results indicate statistically significant correlations between socio-economic factors (gender, age group, family type, occupation, and monthly income) and the perceived impact of celebrity endorsement. Positive correlations suggest a direct relationship, while negative correlations suggest an inverse relationship. These findings provide valuable insights into the potential influence of socio-economic variables on individuals' perceptions of celebrity endorsements.

FINDINGS

The subsequent information presents the results obtained from a thorough examination of percentages.

- 63.33% of the responders are male.

- 48.00% of the respondents fall between the age range of 31 to 50 years.
- 56.00% of the respondents live in joint families.
- The majority (56.00%) of the respondents are employed in the private sector.
- Approximately 36.67% of the respondents have a monthly salary ranging from Rs. 25,001 to Rs. 50,000.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on the research findings, the researcher has identified some proposals regarding the current trends in the advertising sector (Karthick et al., 2020b). The modern advertisers are confronted with a wide range of issues due to rapidly advancing technology, more discerning consumers, intensifying competition, and greater social responsibility. In order to capitalise on the expanding confectionary market, advertisers must meticulously select both the content of their message and the medium through which it is delivered.

- Advertising should be employed to positively promote items by conveying the significance of the product to consumers, without resorting to the creation of deceptive perceptions.
- Why It is imperative for all advertising companies to maintain their ideals and ethics when creating advertisements for confectionery items.
- Advertisements must not engage in deceptive practises, and confectionery items should adhere to health standards. Simultaneously, the marketing must avoid misleading individuals and their actions.
- Advertising companies must consistently consider culture and traditions to ensure that their advertisements do not offend or upset others.
- Companies must consistently ensure that the performance of their confectionary products aligns with the claims they make.
- Advertising, being a social practise, must adhere to societal norms and should not violate our moral sensibilities. Strict adherence to legislation is vital in our nation.

CONCLUSION

Through this current investigation, the researcher has discovered numerous recent advancements occurring in the advertising industry. Consumers ought to prioritise the product and its features rather than being swayed by celebrity endorsements. When selecting a celebrity to endorse their product, a company should ensure that there is a clear connection between the product and the target market. Celebrities must possess comprehensive understanding of the brand and confectionary product they are advertising at all times. Currently, there are numerous concerns arising regarding the manufacturing process and ingredients of products. It is imperative for manufacturers to adhere to government regulations during the production of goods. The researcher recognised the significance of advertisement as a means for products to reach consumes.

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