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FROM IMAGE TO IMPACT: HOW ENDORSER QUALITIES SHAPE CONSUMER CHOICES

Dr. P. Milinth [1] & Dr. P. K. Abdussalam [2]

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Author Details:
[1] Associate Professor,
Department of Commerce,
University of Calicut, Farook College,
Calicut, Kerala, India;
[2] Assistant Professor,
RDCMS, Farook College, Kerala,
India

Corresponding Author:
Dr. P. K. Abdussalam

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Abstract

Celebrity advertising has become a dominant strategy in modern marketing, leveraging the popularity, credibility, and aspirational value of celebrities to influence consumer behaviour. This paper explores the psychological and commercial impacts of celebrity endorsements on brand perception, consumer trust, and purchase intention. Now a days a good number of companies are adopting the services of celebrities to influence the various components of buying behaviour. The key agenda behind the introduction of celebrities as spokesperson is based on the huge potential influence. Compared to other endorser types, reputed people achieve a high degree of attention and recall. The paper made an attempt to analyze the influence of celebrities attributes on various buying behaviour factors. Structural Equation modeling was used to analyse the data and found that all the relationship is positive and establishes strong relationship between the variables.

Keywords: *Buying Behaviour, Celebrity, Endorsement, Expertise, Trustworthiness*

Introduction

In today's highly competitive and media-driven marketplace, brands are continuously seeking effective strategies to capture consumer attention and build strong emotional connections. One of the most powerful and widely used marketing techniques is celebrity endorsement, where public figures lend their image, voice, or persona to promote products and services. This form of advertising leverages the celebrity's popularity, credibility, and influence to enhance brand visibility, trust, and consumer appeal Companies usually use celebrities as spokespersons to deliver their advertising message and convince consumers of their brands. MacGracken (1989) pointed that a well-known person tends to have significant effect on the consumer buying behaviour. Celebrity endorsement plays a predominant role to penetrate the products into the target consumers. As the spoke persons, celebrities have the ability to influence and enhance the believability, credibility and brand recall. The message delivered by well-known personality will enhance a high degree of attention and popularity (Ohanian, 1991). The effectiveness of the message delivered by an endorser depends on the expertise, trustworthiness and credibility of an endorser (Hovland, Janis, and Kelley, 1953). Celebrity endorsement is effective due to their ability to tap in to consumers' symbolic associations to aspirational reference groups. Atkin and Block (1983) pointed out two reasons to use celebrities as spokespersons, first they are traditionally viewed as being highly dynamic, having both attractive and likeable qualities. Secondly their fame is said to bring attention to the product. Celebrity endorsement is proven to improve company's reputation by indicating that it offers high quality customer services. Celebrities as spokespersons provide many thrusts like, establishes credibility, attract attention, psychographic connect, demographic connect and mass appeal. Right choice of the celebrity for the product or service is the key to the success of celebrity endorsement. Endorsement by spokespersons has been used by the top brands in the world like Nike and Pepsi.

Research Problem

Advertising has become a universal practice in order to influence the buying behaviour of consumers in a highly competitive business environment. The strategy of using celebrities to endorse public awareness campaigns has been steadily increasing over the last few years. Utilization of celebrities in advertisement as spokespersons enhances brand recognition, brand recall, brand insistence, brand preference and brand loyalty. The ultimate aim of any endorsement program is to influence the buying behaviour of consumers. There are a number of factors influencing the buying behaviour of consumers. The immediate factors influencing the buying behaviour of consumers are price of the product, quality of the product, availability of the product, durability of the product and style of the product

It is realized from the literature that each attributes of the celebrity has the ability to influence the buying behaviour of consumers. In developed countries a good number of studies were conducted in the past regarding the celebrity endorsement and buying behaviour. No specific study has been done in India, especially in Kerala by incorporating the five key attributes of celebrity. Hence there is a gap in research regarding whether the attractiveness, expertise, trustworthiness, popularity and match up factor of the celebrities acts as a source of buying behaviour. It is quite relevant to discover this fact and the paper is designed to focus on these particular aspects. Hence the present paper is proposed. The following research question is highly worthwhile:

- Do attractiveness, expertise, trustworthiness, popularity and match up factor of celebrity have a significant role in influencing buying behavior.

Objective of the Paper

- To Evaluate the Influence of various celebrity attributes on Consumer's buying behavior

Methodology and Data Base: The study is based on both secondary and primary data.

Secondary Data: The secondary data required for the study have been collected from the books, journals, magazines, reports and working papers.

Primary Data

The study mainly used primary data for drawing inferences collected from 180 sample customers of selected districts. The consumers of Kerala (male and female) have been identified as the universe of the study. A pre tested interview schedule is used to collect data from the respondents.

Sample Design

The population of the study consisted of the consumers of various products of Kerala namely, Fast Moving Consumer Goods, household durables, readymade garments and Jewelery items. As the population is infinite and spread throughout the state of Kerala, it is quite difficult to conduct a population survey. Hence multi-level sampling technique was adopted to select the required number of respondents from different parts of Kerala. In the first level, fourteen districts of Kerala were divided in to three regions namely, Southern Region, Central Region and Northern Region. Southern region consists of Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Alappuzha and Pathanamthitta districts. Central region consists of Palakkad, Kottayam, Eranakulam Idukki, Thrissur and Malappuram districts. Northern Region includes Kozhikode, Wayanad, Kannur, and Kasarkode. In the second level three metropolitan districts were selected. The districts selected for the study were Thiruvananthapuram from south, Ernakulum from central and Kozhikode from the north. Most of the villas, malls, flats and trade and industries are concentrated on these three districts of Kerala. More over Consumers of these districts show a diversified behaviour in purchase. In the third level, from the districts selected one corporation, municipality and panchayath each were selected on random basis. Trivandrum, Neyyattinkara and Vellarada from Trivandrum district, Ernakulam, Aluva and Edathala from Ernakulam district and Kozhikode, Ramanatukara and Mavoor from Kozhikode district were selected for data collection. The detailed sampling frame is presented below:

Table 1: Sampling Frame

Sl. No.	Zone & Sample District	Corporation	Municipality	Panchayath	Total
1.	South Zone Thiruvanathapuram	Trivandrum (30)	Neyyattinkara (30)	Vellarada (20)	60
2.	Central Zone Eranakulam	Cochin (30)	Aluva (30)	Edathala (20)	60
3.	North Zone Calicut	Calicut (30)	Ramanatukara (30)	Mavoor (20)	60
Total		**90**	**90**	**90**	**270**

Results and Findings

Attractiveness of the Celebrity and Factors of Buying Behaviour

Many studies proved that the attractiveness of the celebrity is highly influencing the buying behaviour of consumers. Attractiveness of the celebrity is considered as one of the prime attributes of an endorser to make the endorsement effective. In order to analyse the relationship between the attractiveness and different factors of buying behaviour, the following hypotheses were developed and tested by using Structural Equation Modeling.

1H0: There is no significant relationship between attractiveness of the celebrity and price, quality, availability, durability and style of the product.

Structural Equation Modeling was performed to analyse the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The result of the analysis is presented below:

Structural Equation Modeling – Attractiveness and Factors of Buying Behaviour

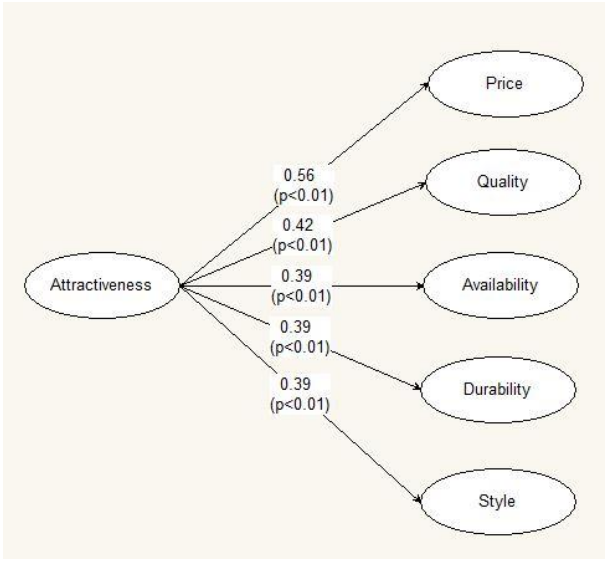

Figure 1: Attractiveness and Factors of Buying Behaviour

Attractiveness of the Celebrity and Price, quality, availability, durability and style of the Product

In order to analyze the influence of attractiveness on price, quality, availability, durability and style of the product, the null hypothesis formulated was that there is no significant relationship between attractiveness of the celebrity and the price, quality, availability, durability and style of the product. According to figure 1 depicted above the p value is less than 0.01. Hence the null hypothesis can be rejected at 1% level. So, it can be interpreted that the attractiveness of the celebrity is influencing the price (B= 0.56), quality (B=0.42), availability (B=0.39), durability (B=0.39), and style (B=0.39), of the product. It shows a positive significant relationship between the attractiveness and price, quality, availability, durability and style of the product.

It can be realized from the analysis that all the relationship drawn in the model is significant at 0.01 significant level. Hence it rejects the entire null hypotheses. In order to determine the relative importance, the beta co efficient is the indicator, which varies from -1 to +1. It indicates that the predicting factor (Attractiveness of the celebrity) has positive effect on price of the product, quality of the product, availability of the product, durability of the product, and style of the product. It can be concluded that the attractiveness, one of the key attributes of the celebrity influences price, quality, availability, durability and style of the product. It proves that celebrity endorsement plays a crucial role in influencing the buying behaviour of consumers. Attractiveness of the celebrity alone cannot guarantee success. The following table presents the details of the model fit indices:

Table 2: Model Fit and Quality Indices

Sl. No.	Model Fit Indices
1.	Average Path Coefficient (APC)=0.144, P<0.001
2.	Average R-squared (ARS)=0.021, P=0.161
3.	Average Adjusted R-squared (AARS)=0.019, P=0.170
4.	Average Full Collinearity VIF (AFVIF)=1.141, acceptable if <= 5, ideally <= 3.3
5.	Tenenhaus GoF (GoF)=0.136, small >= 0.1, medium >= 0.25, large > = 0.36
6.	Sympson's Paradox Ratio (SPR)=1.000, acceptable if >= 0.7, ideally = 1
7.	R-squared Contribution Ratio (RSCR)=1.000, acceptable if >= 0.9, ideally = 1
8.	Statistical Suppression ratio (SSR)=1.000, acceptable if >= 0.7
9.	Nonlinear Bivariate Causality Direction Ratio (NLBCDR)=0.700, acceptable if >= 0.7

Source: Output of Warp PLS

Table 2 shows the value of different model fit and quality indices generated from the output of the Warp PLS like APC ARS, AARS, AFVIF, GOF, SPR, RSCR, SSR, and NLBCDR. The Average R-squared (ARS) is found adequate with a significant p value. Average Path Coefficient is found adequate with significant p value. Average full collinearity is 1.141 which is acceptable if the value is less than 5. The Sympson's Paradox Ratio (SPR= 1.000), which is acceptable if greater than 0.7, is ideal and Statistical Suppression Ratio (SSR=1.00) is also ideal. Non Linear Bivariate Causality Ratio (NLBCDR=0.800) and which can be acceptable if the value is greater than 0.7.

Expertise of the Celebrity and Factors of Buying Behaviour

Expertise of the celebrity is very crucial in endorsement process. If the endorser is an expert in his or her own field, its impact will be higher. In order to analyse the influence of expertise on selected factors of buying behaviour, the following hypothesis is developed and tested by using structural equation modeling.

2H0: There is no significant relationship between Expertise of the celebrity and price, quality, availability, durability and style of the product.

Structural Equation Modeling – Expertise and Factors of Buying Behaviour

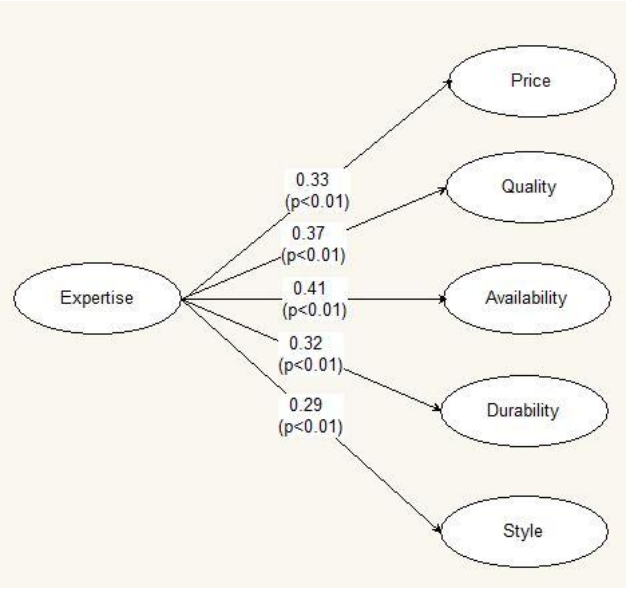

Figure 2: Expertise of the Celebrity and Buying Behaviour

Expertise of the Celebrity and Price, quality, Availability, durability and style of the Product

In order to examine how the expertise of the celebrity influences the price of the product the researcher formulated a null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between expertise of the celebrity and price, quality, durability, availability and style of the product.

All of the relationships drawn in the model are significant at 0.01 significant levels. Hence it rejects the null hypothesis. In order to determine the relative importance, the beta co efficient is the indicators, which varies from -1 to +1. The figure 2 shows that the beta value of all the variables are positive and it establishes a positive relationship between the independent and dependent variables. It indicates that the predicting factor or independent variable (expertise of the celebrity) has positive influence on the price (B= 0.33), quality (B=0.37), durability (B=0.32), availability (B=0.41) and style (B=0.29) of the product. The table depicted below shows the details of the model fit indices:

Table 3: Model Fit and Quality Indices

Sl. No.	Model Fit Indices
1.	Average Path Coefficient (APC)=0.136, P<0.001
2.	Average R-squared (ARS)=0.022, P=0.158
3.	Average Adjusted R-squared (AARS)=0.020, P=0.166
4.	Average Full Collinearity VIF (AFVIF)=1.130, acceptable if <= 5, ideally <= 3.3
5.	Tenenhaus GoF (GoF)=0.136, small >= 0.1, medium >= 0.25, large >= 0.36
6.	Sympson's Paradox Ratio (SPR)=1.000, acceptable if >= 0.7, ideally = 1
7.	R-squared contribution ratio (RSCR)=1.000, acceptable if >= 0.9, ideally = 1
8.	Statistical suppression ratio (SSR)=1.000, acceptable if >= 0.7
9.	Nonlinear Bivariate Causality Direction Ratio (NLBCDR)=0.800, acceptable if >= 0.7

Source: Output of Warp PLS

Table 3 indicates the value of different model fit and quality indices generated from the output of the Warp PLS like APC ARS, AARS, AFVIF, GOF, SPR, RSCR, SSR, and NLBCDR. The Average R-squared (ARS) is found adequate with a significant p value. Average Path Coefficient is found adequate with significant p value. Average full collinearity is 1.130 which acceptable if the value is less than 5. The Sympson's Paradox Ratio (SPR= 1.000), which is acceptable greater than 0.7, is ideal and

Statistical Suppression Ratio (SSR=1.00) is also ideal. Non-Linear Bivariate Causality Ratio (NLBCDR=0.800) and which can be acceptable if the value is greater than 0.7.

Trustworthiness of the Celebrity and Factors of Buying Behaviour

Trustworthiness implies endorsers' credibility, dependability, reliability and believability. So as to examine the influence of trustworthiness on selected factors of buying behaviour, the following hypothesis was developed and tested by using structural equation modeling.

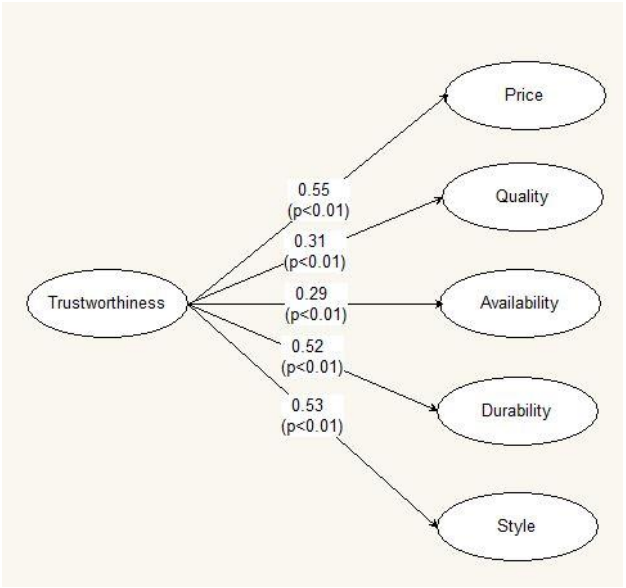

Figure 3: Trustworthiness of the Celebrity and Factors of Buying Behaviour

Trustworthiness of the Celebrity and Various Factors of Buying Behaviour

In order to analyse the influence of trustworthiness on the price of the product, the null hypothesis formulated was there is no significant relationship between trustworthiness of the celebrity and the price, quality, availability, durability and style of the product. All the relationships drawn in the model are significant at 0.01 significant level. Hence it rejects the null hypothesis. In order to determine the relative importance, the beta co efficient is the indicators, which varies from -1 to +1. The figure 3 shows that the beta value of all the variables are positive and it establishes a positive relationship between the independent and dependent variables. It indicates that the predicting factor (trustworthiness of the celebrity) has positively influencing the price of the product (B= 0.55), quality (B= 0.31), durability (B= 0.52), availability (B= 0.29) and style (B= 0.53) of the product. The following table shows the details of the model fit indices:

Table 4: Model Fit and Quality Indices

Sl. No.	Model Fit Indices
1.	Average Path Coefficient (APC)=0.190, P<0.001
2.	Average R-squared (ARS)=0.044, P=0.084
3.	Average Adjusted R-squared (AARS)=0.042, P=0.090
4.	Average Full Collinearity VIF (AFVIF)=1.147, acceptable if <= 5, ideally <= 3.3
5.	Tenenhaus GoF (GoF)=0.191, small >= 0.1, medium >= 0.25, large >= 0.36
6.	Sympson's Paradox Ratio (SPR)=1.000, acceptable if >= 0.7, ideally = 1
7.	R-squared Contribution Ratio (RSCR)=1.000, acceptable if >= 0.9, ideally = 1
8.	Statistical Suppression Ratio (SSR)=1.000, acceptable if >= 0.7
9.	Nonlinear Bivariate Causality Direction Ratio (NLBCDR)=0.700, acceptable if >= 0.7

Source: Output of Warp PLS

The table depicted above 4 indicates the value of different model fit and quality indices generated from the output of the Warp PLS like APC ARS, AARS, AFVIF, GOF, SPR, RSCR, SSR, and NLBCDR. The Average R-squared (ARS) is found adequate with a significant p value. Average Path Coefficient is found adequate with significant p value. Average full collinearity is 1.147 which acceptable if the value is less than 5. The Sympson's Paradox Ratio (SPR= 1.000), which is acceptable greater than 0.7, is ideal and Statistical Suppression Ratio (SSR=1.00) is also ideal.

Popularity of the Celebrity and Factors of Buying Behaviour

Popularity of the celebrity means reputations of the endorser. To study the influence of popularity on selected factors of buying behaviour, the following hypothesis is developed and tested by using structural equation modeling.
4H0: There is no significant relationship between popularity of the celebrity and price, quality, availability, durability and style of the product.

Structural Equation Modeling – Popularity of the Endorser and Factors of Buying Behaviour

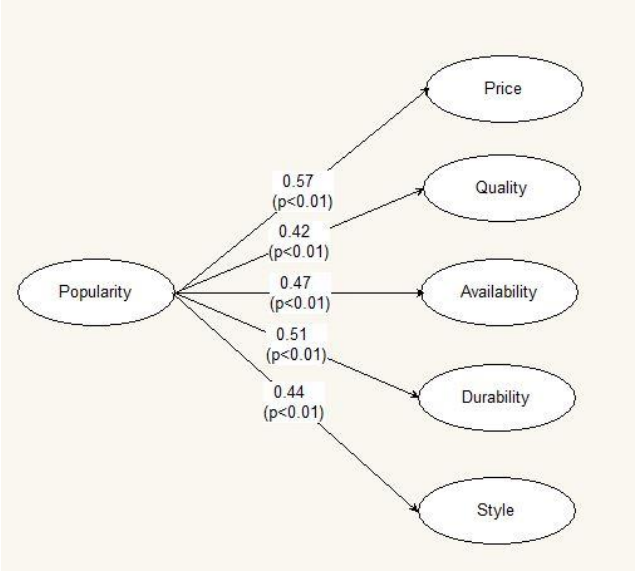

Figure 4: Popularity of the Endorser and Factors of Buying Behaviour

Popularity of the Celebrity and Price, quality, availability, durability and style of the Product

The null hypothesis formulated in this case was that there is no significant relationship between popularity of the celebrity and the price, quality, availability, durability and style of the product. It can be interpreted from the analysis that all the relationships drawn in the model are significant at 0.01 significant levels. Hence it rejects the entire null hypotheses. So as to determine the relative importance, the beta co efficient is the indicators, which varies from -1 to +1. The figure 4 depicted that the beta value of all the variables are positive and it establishes a positive relationship between the independent and dependent variables. It indicates that the independent variable (popularity of the celebrity) has positive influence on the price of the product (B=0.57), quality (B=0.42), durability (B=0.51), availability (B=0.47) and style (B= 0.44) of the product. The table presented below shows the details of the model fit indices:

Table 5: Model Fit and Quality Indices

Sl. No.	Model Fit Indices
1.	Average Path Coefficient (APC)=0.218, P<0.001
2.	Average R-squared (ARS)=0.052, P=0.063
3.	Average Adjusted R-squared (AARS)=0.050, P=0.068
4.	Average Full Collinearity VIF (AFVIF)=1.162, acceptable if <= 5, ideally <= 3.3
5.	Tenenhaus GoF (GoF)=0.209, small >= 0.1, medium >= 0.25, large >= 0.36
6.	Sympson's Paradox Ratio (SPR)=1.000, acceptable if >= 0.7, ideally = 1
7.	R-squared Contribution Ratio (RSCR)=1.000, acceptable if >= 0.9, ideally = 1
8.	Statistical Suppression Ratio (SSR)=1.000, acceptable if >= 0.7
9.	Nonlinear Bivariate Causality Direction Ratio (NLBCDR)=0.700, acceptable if >= 0.7

Source: Output of Warp PLS

Table shows the value of different model fit and quality indices generated from the output of the Warp PLS like APC ARS, AARS, AFVIF, GOF, SPR, RSCR, SSR, and NLBCDR. The Average R-squared (ARS) is found adequate with a significant p value. Average Path Coefficient is found adequate with significant p value. Average full collinearity is 1.162 which acceptable if the value is less than 5. The Sympson's Paradox Ratio (SPR= 1.000), which is acceptable greater than 0.7, is ideal and Statistical Suppression Ratio (SSR=1.00) is also ideal.

Match up Factor of the Celebrity and Factors of Buying Behaviour

Match up factor implies the product -celebrity match and celebrity- target audience match. In order to analyse the influence of popularity on selected factors of buying behaviour, the following hypothesis were developed and tested by using structural equation modeling.

5H0: There is no significant relationship between match up factor of the celebrity and price, quality, availability, durability and style of the product.

The result of the structural Equation Modeling is presented below:

Structural Equation Modeling – Match up Factor of the Endorser and Factors of Buying Behaviour

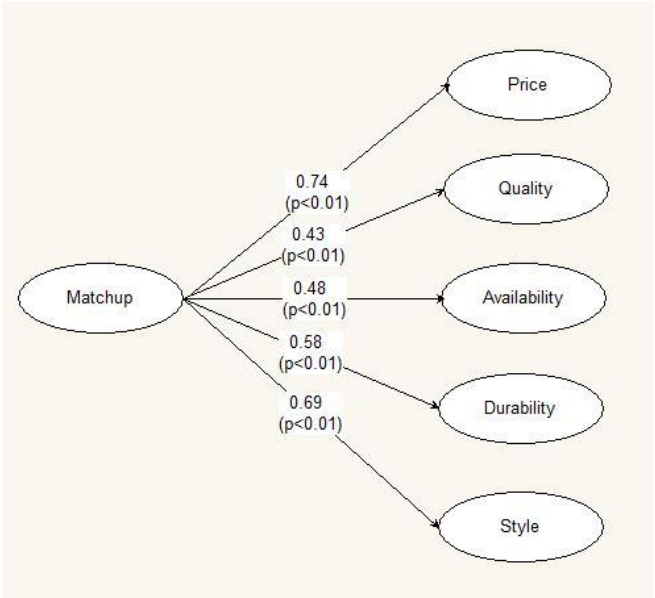

Figure 5: Match up Factor of the Endorser and Factors of Buying Behaviour

Match up Factor of the Celebrity and Factors of Buying Behaviour

It can be inferred from the analysis that all the relationships drawn in the model are significant at 0.01 significant levels. Hence it rejects the null hypothesis. In order to determine the relative importance, the beta co efficient is the indicator, which varies from -1 to +1. The figure 5 showed that the beta value of all the variables is positive and it establishes a positive relationship between the independent and dependent variables. It indicates that the predicting factor or independent variable (match up factor of the celebrity) has positive influence on the price (B= 0.74), quality (B= 0.43), availability (B= 0.48) durability (B= 0.58) and style (B= 0.69) of the product. The table presented below shows the details of the model fit indices:

Table 6: Model Fit and Quality Indices

Sl. No.	Model Fit Indices
1.	Average Path Coefficient (APC)=0.130, P=0.001
2.	Average R-squared (ARS)=0.022, P=0.158
3.	Average Adjusted R-squared (AARS)=0.020, P=0.166
4.	Average Full Collinearity VIF (AFVIF)=1.146, acceptable if <= 5, ideally <= 3.3
5.	Tenenhaus GoF (GoF)=0.135, small >= 0.1, medium >= 0.25, large >= 0.36
6.	Sympson's Paradox Ratio (SPR)=1.000, acceptable if >= 0.7, ideally = 1
7.	R-squared Contribution Ratio (RSCR)=1.000, acceptable if >= 0.9, ideally = 1
8.	Statistical Suppression Ratio (SSR)=1.000, acceptable if >= 0.7
9.	Nonlinear Bivariate Causality Direction Ratio (NLBCDR)=0.400, acceptable if >= 0.7

Source: Output of Warp PLS

Table 6 shows the value of different model fit and quality indices generated from the output of the Warp PLS like APC ARS, AARS, AFVIF, GOF, SPR, RSCR, SSR, and NLBCDR. The Average R-squared (ARS) is found adequate with a significant p value. Average Path Coefficient is found adequate with significant p value. Average full collinearity is 1.146 which acceptable if the value is less than 5. The Sympson's Paradox Ratio (SPR= 1.000), which is acceptable greater than 0.7, is ideal and Statistical Suppression Ratio (SSR=1.00) is also ideal.

Conclusion

Celebrity endorsement plays a predominant role in shaping the behaviour of consumers. Adoption of a prestigious celebrity to endorse a product or service is considered as a powerful marketing strategy. The above analysis is an attempt to examine the influence of celebrity's attributes on various buying behaviour factors namely, the price of the product, quality, availability, durability and style of the product. The study reveals that the attractiveness of the celebrity, expertise, trustworthiness, matches up factor and popularity of celebrity plays a predominant role in shaping the buying behavior of consumers.

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