

Exploring the Role of Celebrity Endorsements in Shaping Impulse Buying Behaviour

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Abstract

Today, celebrity endorsements have become a powerful tool as far as modern marketing strategies which impact the behaviour of consumers across various demographics are concerned. The fact that celebrity endorsements play a significant role in shaping up the impulse buying behaviour amongst consumers has gained notable attention from marketers as well as researchers. Impulse buying is when the decision to make a purchase is spontaneous and impromptu and is fueled by emotional triggers. The current paper studies how celebrity endorsements lead to impulse buying by targeting the perceptions, emotions and purchase intentions of the consumers. The current study, which is based on various secondary data sources such as market reports and academic research, shows that celebrity endorsements are well-efficient in increasing brand recall, shaping emotions and forming immediacy. The research also studies the psychological tools essential to the impulse buying behaviour, which include emotional connect with the celebrities, social influence and trust. The findings of the study point towards the suggestion that the efficiency of celebrity endorsements changes as the product type, the conformity between the product and the celebrity and the demographic features of the target group change. The study presents perceptions and suggestions for marketers to further enhance the way they utilise celebrity endorsements to trigger the impulse buying behaviour amongst consumers.

Keywords: Celebrity Endorsement, Impulse Buying Behaviour, Brand Recall, Consumer Psychology, Social Influence, Emotional Influence, Marketing Strategy, Emotional Appeal, Consumer Demographics, Secondary Data.

Introduction

The current market is highly competitive with short spans of consumer attention; hence, in such a marketplace, celebrity endorsements act as a powerful mechanism for marketers to capture the attention of consumers at large with an aim to influence their buying behaviour. Using famous personalities to promote products and services is what is known as celebrity endorsements. Brands consider it to be of great potential as far as standing out in this fiercely competitive market is concerned. The impact of such endorsements by celebrities is clearly visible in the light of impulse buying behaviour, where in there is impromptu decision to buy which lacks proper planning and thoughtfulness.

Impulse buying is usually motivated by various emotions like social influence, excitement, or a sense of urgency and is greatly affected by celebrity endorsements as an external factor. The process goes like combining a product with a celebrity so as to target the emotional triggers of the consumers, thereby forming a sense of desire and urgency, leading to an impulse purchase by the consumer. This is what the brands do. This research studies the connection between

impulse buying behaviour and celebrity endorsements, throwing light on the psychological variables which support this relationship and thereby exploring the efficiency of this marketing approach across different consumer demographics.

The study is based on secondary data available through past works of literature, market and industry reports and surveys to examine the influence of endorsements through celebrities on the consumer's buying behaviour. The aim of the research is to give a deep and clear understanding of how celebrity endorsements lead to impulse buying and thereby provide applicable suggestions to marketers so that they can make effective use of this approach.

Objectives of the Study

The given study carries the following research objectives:

1. To understand the impact of celebrity endorsements on the impulse buying behaviour of consumers: The main objective of the study is to learn how celebrity endorsements result in impulse buying by studying the behaviours and responses of consumers.
2. To find out the psychological variables that establish the relationship between celebrity endorsements and impulse buying: The research study will examine the psychological variables like trust, emotions and social influence, all of which affect the decision-making processes of consumers, especially when celebrities are involved in product endorsements.
3. To study the efficiency of celebrity endorsements across various categories of products and consumer demographics. The research will identify how the efficiency of celebrity endorsements changes as the product type (namely beauty, electronics, fashion) and consumer demographics (gender, age, income) of the consumers change.
4. To give useful suggestions to marketers to enhance their use of celebrity endorsements in driving impulse buying: Based upon the findings, the research study will lay out practical suggestions for marketers to optimise the impact of celebrity endorsements on impulse buying.

Research Methodology

The study employs a qualitative research methodology, derived from the secondary data from relevant past and current literature, market reports and surveys, and case studies. The study undertakes a systematic review approach, studying relevant research papers, industry and market reports, surveys and case studies to know the connection between celebrity endorsements and impulse purchasing behaviour of consumers. The research methodology includes the following main steps:

1. Data Collection: Secondary data from relevant past and current literature, market reports, case studies and surveys of consumer behaviour are studied to collect data on the impact of celebrity endorsements on immediate, unthoughtful buying.
2. Data Analysis: The data thus collected are examined to understand common trends, patterns, and relationships between celebrity endorsements and impulse buying behaviour. Special emphasis is laid on how factors like credibility of the celebrity, consumer demographics and emotional appeal influence the efficiency of endorsements.
3. Case Study Review: The research studies real-world scenarios of celebrity endorsement campaigns that are flourishing in order to know how impulse buying behaviour is driven through these endorsements and thereby understand the optimal approach of marketers.
4. Interpretation of Findings: The findings of the study are then explained so as to arrive at conclusions about the psychological variables backing impulse buying and the role of celebrity endorsements in driving consumer buying decisions.

Literature Review

I. Celebrity Endorsements and Consumer Behaviour

There are large studies on the relationship between consumer behaviour and celebrity endorsements. There has been an agreement by research scholars that celebrity endorsements play a crucial role where in buying decisions, are influenced and consumer perceptions are shaped. McCracken (1989) gave the “match-up hypothesis,” which recommends that the celebrity endorsement effectiveness is increased when there is a match between the image of the celebrity and the product being endorsed. For instance, a celebrity like Dwayne Johnson (The Rock), known for his fitness and bodybuilding, would be more effective in promoting a sports product than a beauty product.

Celebrity endorsements have been agreed upon to enhance brand recall and awareness and build trust among consumers. As per the views of Keller (2003), brand recall is significant for bringing in the impulse buying factor, as there are more chances that a consumer would purchase a product he/she easily remember when facing an immediate buying opportunity.

II. Psychological Variables Behind Impulse Buying

Impulse buying behaviour is defined by impromptu, unplanned and unthoughtful purchases by consumers resulting from emotional triggers instead of making a rational decision. Piron (1991) has put forth various psychological variables that lead to impulse buying, where, in a sense of urgency to buy, emotional response and social influence are all part of it. Celebrity endorsements play a key role in enhancing these psychological aspects. Celebrities can bring about strong emotional arousal in consumers, like admiration, excitement or even jealousy, which can result in impromptu buying decisions.

Coulter and Punj (2007) in their research work found out that when there is a feeling of a personal connect with the celebrity, there are more chances that the consumers make immediate or impulse purchases. The emotional connect between a celebrity and the consumers results in the creation of a feeling of trust, making impulse buying more frequent and easier for the consumer.

III. Celebrity Endorsement and Social Influence

Celebrity endorsements also hold the power of social influence. Social influence theory says that people are affected and influenced by the opinions and behaviours of others, especially of those whom they like, admire or respect. Kelman (1958) has stated three categories of social influence, namely, identification, compliance and internalisation. Celebrity endorsements result in this type of influence by motivating consumers to imitate the behaviours of the celebrities they like.

Ohanian (1990) in their research found that the credibility of a celebrity plays a crucial role in driving the effectiveness of the endorsements. When a consumer feels that a celebrity is attractive, trustworthy and knowledgeable, there are more chances that he/she make spontaneous purchases by being influenced by the endorsement.

Table 1: Key Psychological Triggers of Impulse Buying Influenced by Celebrity Endorsements

Psychological Trigger	Description	Celebrity Endorsement Impact
Emotional Appeal	Creates admiration, excitement, or aspiration	Celebrities create strong emotional connections through their lifestyle and personality.
Social Proof	Influence through the observed behaviour of others	Consumers mimic celebrities' purchasing behaviour.
Trust & Credibility	Believability of the product or message	Endorsements from trustworthy celebrities increase product credibility.
Product-Celebrity Fit	Relevance between celebrity image and product	A high match improves authenticity and increases purchase chances.
FOMO (Fear of Missing Out)	Urgency due to scarcity or limited-time offers	Celebrity-led flash sales create impulsive buying conditions.

Source: Compiled from findings by Ohanian (1990), Parmar et al. (2020), and Li et al. (2021).

Discussion

The following are the various crucial psychological variables through which one can understand the impact that celebrity endorsements have on spontaneous buying behaviour:

1. Brand Recall and Recognition: Better brand recall is one of the most crucial results of the use of celebrity endorsements. It has been proven in various research works that products that are endorsed by celebrities stay with the customer for longer. And when it comes to making impulse purchases, this enhanced brand recall proves to be significant because it is a general tendency of consumers to make instant purchases that are based on recognition, remembrance and familiarity. Ezeanya et al. (2022) argue that the chances of making an impulse purchase of a product by a consumer significantly go up due to celebrity endorsements, and this is because the association of a celebrity with the product makes it easier to remember the product.

2. Emotional Appeal: Celebrity endorsements usually play with the emotions of consumers, which forms a sense of aspiration, admiration and excitement. And this emotional trigger further enhances impulse buying, because it motivates the consumers to react to emotions instead of thinking rationally. Parmar et al. (2020) concluded that when a consumer is emotionally connected to the celebrity who is promoting the product, there is a greater chance that they will make an impromptu purchase.

Table 2: Factors Influencing Impulse Buying in Celebrity-Endorsed Products

Factor	Percentage (%)
Emotional Appeal	35%
Brand Recall	25%

Social Influence	20%
Product-Celebrity Fit	15%
Packaging and Visual Cues	5%

Source: Adapted from Parmar et al. (2020), International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research.

3. Social Influence and Trust: When a consumer has a social connection with the celebrity promoting the product, there are more chances that they will make a spontaneous, unthoughtful purchase. Consumers have a certain respect, admiration, and trust for their favourite celebrities, and this social influence can largely impact their buying decisions. Somasundaran Chakkambath et al. (2024) found that the social influence created by celebrities can lead to a sense of urgency in consumers, thereby pushing them to make an instant purchase so as to imitate their favourite personalities.

4. Product-Celebrity Congruence: The efficiency of an endorsement hugely depends on how well the product being promoted matches the image of the celebrity. When there is a good match between the product being endorsed and the celebrity endorsing it, there are greater chances that consumers might consider the endorsement to be trustworthy and authentic, resulting in impulsive buying. Li et al. (2021) argue that the match between the personality of a celebrity and the product increases the reliability of the endorsement, resulting in greater engagement of the consumers and impromptu buying behaviour.

Case Studies of Successful Celebrity Endorsement Campaigns

Below are a few real-life case studies which will shed light on how impulse buying behaviour is driven by celebrity endorsements:

1. Nike and Michael Jordan: The association between Nike and basketball star Michael Jordan is one of the most amazing celebrity endorsement projects. The endorsement of the Air Jordan brand has resulted in huge impulse buying, especially amongst young, sports-loving consumers. The emotional connection between Nike's products and Jordan's brand led to a feeling of desire, contributing to greater levels of impromptu purchases.

2. Pepsi and Beyoncé: Beyoncé being featured in Pepsi's campaign is another great example of how endorsements by celebrities can lead to impulse buying behaviour. The huge popularity that Beyoncé carries and the cultural influence have resulted in enhanced brand appeal, particularly among the younger population. The excitement feeling and the social proof attached to her endorsement motivated the consumers to buy Pepsi products spontaneously, particularly in moments of emotional bonding.

3. Kylie Jenner and Kylie Cosmetics: As we already know, Kylie Jenner is a worldwide recognised social media influencer and reality TV star. She started her own beauty brand, Kylie Cosmetics, in the year 2015. Taking advantage of her huge social media followings, Kylie promoted her products through various social media platforms such as Snapchat, Instagram and Twitter, largely using her own personal stories and behind-the-camera content so as to connect with her followers. Kylie's limited-edition product categories formed a feeling of urgency and fear of missing out (FOMO), leading to impromptu buying from her followers and fans. Also, her well-built personal branding and recognised authenticity led to winning consumers' confidence, thereby leading to impulse buying. As per a 2019 Forbes report, in less than one minute, her first product line was out of stock, contributing to sales worth millions in

an instant. This case study shows the potential of associating celebrity endorsement with emotional appeal, urgency and influence of social media to trigger impulse buying.

Table 3: Top Celebrity-Endorsed Products Driving Impulse Purchases

Celebrity	Brand	Product Category	Sales Impact
Kylie Jenner	Kylie Cosmetics	Beauty	\$420M revenue in 18 months
Virat Kohli	Puma	Sportswear	30% sales boost during campaigns
David Beckham	H&M	Men's Fashion	12% quarterly increase in sales
Deepika Padukone	L'Oréal	Beauty	15% jump in product line sales

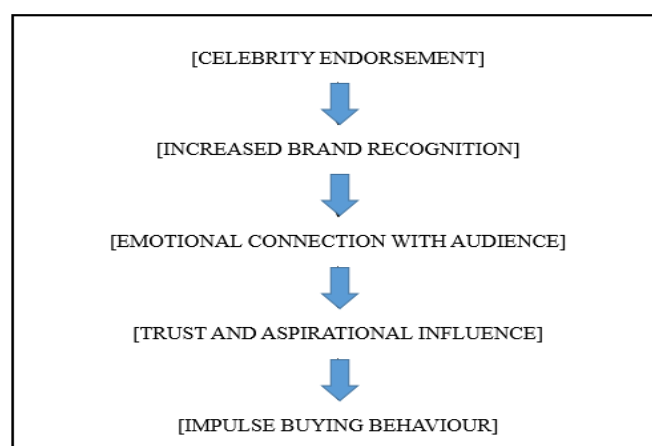
Sources: Forbes (2019), Nielsen (2014), Business Today (2021), L'Oréal Annual Report (2022)

Conclusion

Celebrity endorsements greatly impact the impulsive buying behaviour, where in it influences the purchasing decisions of the consumer through various psychological variables such as brand recall, emotional appeal and social influence. By using the potential of celebrity endorsements, marketers can efficiently grab the attention of consumers, thereby leading to impromptu purchases. But the prosperity of celebrity endorsements is dependent on various factors like the emotional bond between the celebrity and the consumer, the celebrity-product fit, and the demographic profile of the consumer.

Marketers can enhance their celebrity endorsement utilisation by finalising celebrities with care, seeing to it that their image is in line with the brand or the product to be promoted, by generating emotional connections with the help of storytelling, and targeting the correct consumer demographic segment. In the current era of social media, where the behaviour of consumers is continuously changing and evolving, celebrity endorsements continue to be a tool holding huge potential, leading to impulsive buying, thereby shaping the preferences of consumers.

Table 4: Model Showing How Celebrity Endorsement Triggers Impulse Buying



Source: Synthesised from literature review (McCracken, 1989; Keller, 2003; Li et al., 2021)

Recommendations

1. Aligning Celebrities with Product Values: Marketers should make sure that the celebrity promoting their product holds the characteristics and values that match the product in order to maintain originality and build consumer trust.

2. Focusing on Emotional Connections: Brands should focus on making campaigns that bring out strong emotional reactions from consumers, motivating impulse buying decisions that are aspiration and desire-based.

3. Targeting the Younger Audiences: Celebrity endorsements affect the younger consumers more as compared to other consumer segments. Thus, brands should concentrate their efforts on targeting Gen Z and Millennial audiences.

Table 5: Age-Wise Responsiveness to Celebrity-Endorsed Impulse Buying

Age Group	Impulse Buying Likelihood (%)
13–19 (Gen Z)	78%
20–29 (Millennials)	69%
30–45	51%
46–60	33%
60+	20%

Source: Nielsen Consumer Survey (2022), “Consumer Purchase Behaviour by Age.”

4. Utilising Social Media Platforms: With the increasing use of social media, marketers should use the online presence of celebrities to interact directly with consumers and thus, make more connected, relatable and personal endorsements.

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