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Perception Of Customers About Celebrity Endorsement Process And Its Subsequent Impact On Customers' Purchasing Decisions

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Abstract

Advertising is a key to log into a great exploit in business. It has been widely used with various methods by one business or the other to outshine one another. Celebrity endorsement stands tall as one the strategies of advertisement in this modern day business. However, taking right decision is essential. The study qualitatively interrogate the perception of consumer on celebrity endorsement process, the effect of celebrity endorsement on the attitude change of customer and its impact on purchasing decision. The paper revealed successful endorsement when there is link between the celebrity and the endorsed product, endorsed product will be of higher value and of higher demand, expensive products endorsed by expert stand chance to be purchased unendorsed product, celebrity endorsements are more of national than local market products, and highly educated customers are less influenced than less educated customer by any endorser among others. Low knowledge of perceptions, mix-match role of celebrity, no or little knowledge of the integration of celebrity endorsement and hidden performance decline were also noted as challenges that hinder customer from taken right purchasing decision. The paper recommended a critical study of perceptions by customers, maxing of celebrity assigned role with product, and understanding of integration of celebrity endorsement. Familiarity of selected celebrity with the market is also apt.

Keywords: Celebrity Endorsement, Customer, Perception, Purchasing Decision

INTRODUCTION

Customers' expectations are rising in today's dynamic, energetic, and fiercely competitive business climate (Alsmadi, 2006). They are constantly exposed to a wide

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range of diverse brands thanks to numerous marketing techniques. Given that everyone has a varied set of wants, consumer behaviour is another crucial and complicated issue for marketers. The ultimate objective of any organization is to satisfy customer needs. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the company to precisely identify client wants and create products that meet those demands. It is therefore crucial for companies to comprehend how customers actually behave when making purchases.

Nigerian consumers are not, by a significant margin, an easy demographic for advertising to reach. This is due to large population of the country, beliefs, cultures, languages, dialects, conventions, values and economic disparity across the nation. This reveals a significant discrepancy in purchasing power and influence over decisions. Recall and persuasion have both been given significant weight in Nigerian advertising as brand-differentiating messages. Celebrity endorsement is one of the many promotional methods that company frequently utilize to influence the brand-choice behaviour of consumers. Celebrity endorsement speeds up the process of product recalls and user reviews.

An ideal fit between the celebrity endorser and the product is essential since the congruence between the celebrity and the product in terms of qualities like image, knowledge, or attractiveness plays a significant influence in advertising (Till and Buster, 1998). A successful endorser strategy can increase consumer recollection of product details, strengthen consumer familiarity of endorsed brands, affect consumers' attitudes about low-commitment items favourably, and even increase consumers' buy intent and brand preference. The company is expected to choose a celebrity who will inspire the most positive response from clients in order to convey the correct meaning to the audience.

As a result, the celebrity endorser must possess the right set of characteristics such as maturity, intelligent, experience, knowledgeable, integrity and a leader of industry and of inspirational value. Other qualities are not limited to integrity, expertise, efficacy, and trustworthiness. The idea and underlying relations between the promoter and the message necessary for a successful campaign are driven by a good product.

Objective of the Study

The study sought to critically interrogate the perception of consumer on celebrity endorsement process, the effect of celebrity endorsement on the attitude change of customer and its impact on purchasing decision.

METHODOLOGY

The work adopts the historical method which is descriptive and analytical in nature. The process entails a chronological presentation of the work in line with the qualitative

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approach. However, the reality is that the title of the paper perception of customer about celebrity endorsement process and its subsequent impact on consumer's purchase decision affects major aspects of human interactions and has been well examined. This paper therefore draws insights from the approaches of subject matter and its related study. The work has utilized secondary materials as its source which includes archival materials and view from the various scholars that deal with the issue of modern method of advertisement.

Conceptual Analysis

The new wave of advertising is making competition among companies or business organisation almost inevitable. Various invention are thereby invent to business arena for one company to outsmart others. Celebrity endorsement is one of such latest development as a marketing strategy. Marketing, through communication or advertising functions in meeting the needs of customer (Adedeji, 2021).

The term "celebrity endorsement" is becoming commonplace in corporate management. It is one of the many different business entities that people all around the world have used and continue to use to support their business. Celebrity is a term used to describe those who have achieved success in their industry and are well recognized to a big audience (Schlecht, 2003; quoted in Adedeji, 2021). Further, Adedeji (2021) argued that celebrities are not limited to set of people but cut across all walks of life, contrary to myopic view of generality. They enjoy high degree of public awareness and public recognition.

According to Perner (2009), consumer behavior is the study of people, groups, or organizations and how they choose, acquire, use, and discard goods, experiences, or ideas to meet their needs, as well as the effects that these actions have on the consumer and society. Perner (2009) continued by stating that understanding customer psychology and buying behavior aids marketers in creating effective marketing strategies.

Like other concepts, perception has been defined in a number of ways. According to a layperson's definition, perception is the act of becoming aware of what is happening in one's environment using the information that is readily available and one's own capacity for comprehending (Chambers-Dictionary, quoted in (Unumeri, 2009). Perception is to have an insight or intuition about something or generally way of viewing something by an individual. It an idea, knowledge, consciousness, image, notion, thought conceived by an individual about a particular situation or things. It is unique to an individual based on one experience or conclusion.

Perception can be understood to be the process of attaining awareness or understanding of sensory information (Wikipedia, 2008) cited in MacDonald (2011). The definitions clearly informed that, the opinions is formed based on the amount of

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information available to the opinionist and the level of interpreting the available information. Hence, perception can be said to be the process whereby people select, organise, and interpret sensory stimulations into meaningful information.

Approach is essentially our propensity to look at things. An approach considers our level of agreement or disagreement with various ideas. Three mechanisms make up attitudes: emotional, behavioral, and cognitive. Affective is related to our feelings of affection or perspective about something. Cognitive refers to our opinions on an object, and behavioral refers to the actions we take to deal with it (Severin and Tankard, 2001). Attitude toward commercial is defined as a trained predisposition to oppose in a consistently requisite or unwanted way toward advertising in general.

Whether a consumer loves or dislikes an advertisement depends on their attitude toward it. Influences on Attitude toward the commercial includes attitude toward the marketer, assessment of how the promotion was executed, the atmosphere it generated, and the degree to which it affected viewers' encouragement. Attitudes about advertising may affect how brands are evaluated. Regarding the advertisement's role as a conduit for the advertiser's knowledge of the product outlook and purchasing intentions, attitude is aware.

Selecting the Right Celebrity for Endorsement

It is clear that academic research and perspectives are conflicting and unable to give marketers an accurate guidance. However, a small error in the choosing process can ruin the product's essence. The right celebrity can still be chosen, maintained, and managed when the marketing tool is being used, all while there are several competing options. Care should be taken in the selection of the celebrity endorser. The "Performer Q-Ratings" are one instrument to aid in the selection. It is a survey selection approach that is commercially available from marketing assessments, according to Shimp (2000).

Performance Q-Ratings can be computed by divide the percentage of the audience who rate the celebrity as "one of their favorites" by the percentage of the audience who are familiar with the celebrity (Shimp, 2000). In a nutshell, the Q-rating reveals the level of the celebrity popularity. Rossiter and Percy (1987) maintained that q-rating is beneficial in cases where particular audiences are targeted as well as enable companies to hire a celebrity who is popular among target audiences. Shimp (2000) and McCracken (1989) put forward performance q-rating factors that are considered more appropriate when making celebrity-selection decisions on the following:

Celebrity Credibility: Ohanian (1991) looked into how attractiveness, trustworthiness, and competence related to purchase intentions and discovered that only a celebrity's perceived expertise was a major influence in increasing purchase intentions. However, a

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celebrity needs to be knowledgeable, skilled, and qualified to discuss the product in order to be truly effective. Furthermore, Till and Buster (1998) shown that an endorser's knowledge influences attitudes toward a brand more so than physical appeal. When sophisticated or expensive products are recommended by experts, consumers are more likely to buy them. Therefore, it can be said that the skill and independence of the celebrity endorser are more crucial to changing consumer attitudes than the credibility of the celebrity spokesperson.

A message presented by a person who is regarded as an expert will significantly increase the message's credibility and may have an impact on consumer behavior. Additionally, using a person who is closely connected to the product might increase trustworthiness, which is a part of credibility. Since it has been demonstrated that knowledge has a large and direct impact on attitudes and behavioral intentions, source credibility has become a crucial consideration when choosing endorsers.

Matching of Celebrity and Audience in Product Selection: The celebrity, the audience, and the product must all make sense. When a celebrity endorses a product, their image is more closely aligned with that of the product, which elevates their status as an advertising (Kotler 1997). According to the Product Match-Up Hypothesis, celebrity images should transmit meanings that are consistent with those of an effective advertising. There is always congruence between an audience and a product. Without a clear and explicit connection between the celebrity and the product, the vampire effect is probably a risk, according to Evans (1988). According to the match-up theory, attractive celebrities are more persuasive when recommending goods that increase one's beauty (Kamins 1990). Based on these results, it can be concluded that celebrity endorsement works best when the public can relate to the endorser.

Celebrity Attractiveness: It has been discovered that consumers frequently acquire favorable stereotypes about attractive people, and that physically appealing communicators are more successful than their less attractive counterparts at influencing views and generating buy intentions. According to Erdogan (1999), attractiveness encompasses a wide range of qualities that customers may find appealing in a celebrity endorser, such as intelligence, personality traits, and lifestyles. Attractiveness is not just defined as physical attractiveness. According to Shimp (2000), attractiveness alone is secondary to credibility and audience and brand fit in terms of importance. Attractive celebrity endorsers have been shown to have a beneficial impact on consumers' perceptions toward advertising and companies, according to Johnson and Harrington (1998). According to McCracken (1989), celebrities contribute their own symbolic connotations to the endorsement process. They also provide a different approach.

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The Meaning Transfer Model: DeSarbo and Harshman (1985) cited in Erdogan (1999) asserts that attractiveness encompasses a wide range of characteristics that customers may find appealing in a celebrity endorser, including intellectual prowess, personality traits, and lifestyles. Appearance is not just defined in terms of physical attractiveness. According to Shimp (2000), credibility and audience fit are more important than just being physically appealing. Attractive celebrity endorsers enhance attitudes toward advertising and brands, according to Johnson and Harrington (1998). McCracken (1989) presents an alternate paradigm and contends that a celebrity brings their own symbolic connotations to the endorsement process.

Other Considerations: According to Shimp (2000), companies choose celebrities based on a variety of factors, including the cost of hiring a celebrity, the likelihood that the celebrity will get into trouble after endorsing a contract, how easy or difficult it will be to work with them, and the number of brands they are currently endorsing. Numerous studies have revealed that famous people can influence consumers' purchase intentions. It is safe to say that, when celebrities are used who have public personas that complement the products and target audiences, as well as celebrities who have never advocated things before, celebrity endorsement is more effective than non-celebrity endorsement in producing desired results.

An Analysis of Influence of Celebrity Endorsement in Customer Purchasing Decision

Exclusive contracts with celebrities are crucial since the risk associated with endorsement deals increases with celebrity popularity. Similar to this, celebrity endorsements usually involve a human aspect and are high-risk, high-reward situations; as a result, it is important to analyze the potential dangers and rewards. According to McCracken (1989), endorsement is effective when the characteristics of the celebrity are made the characteristics of the promoted product.

Celebrity endorsements serve as a reliable method of "burning money." We live in a society where purchasers like to get a deal on any particular flavor. Specifically, a consumer who notices advertisements from two distinct companies for the same product, one of which has celebrity endorsement and the other does not. It is anticipated that the celebrity-endorsed item will have a higher price tag and greater demand (Clark and Horstman, 2003). The likelihood of a celebrity endorsing a product increases with price, production cost margin, and client base.

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According to Friedman & Friedman (1979), buyers are more likely to buy pricey and/or complicated things that are recommended by knowledgeable celebrities. According to Lafferty and Goldsmith (1999), customers are more likely to buy a product if they have a high rate of perceived company credibility and a high rate of perceived purchase intention as a result of endorser credibility. However, once the consumer has the product in hand, the design, quality, and price of the product rather than the association with the celebrity are what ultimately drive product sales. This informs the target audience of the reality that celebrities encourage people to try products but do not always lead them to make a purchase.

Additionally, according to Newsom, Turk, and Kruckeberg (2000), it's critical that any earlier promotion campaign supported by a celebrity not clash with the desired image. Thus, it is important to carefully research the symbolic significance of the celebrity endorsement before implementation. However, Walker, Langmeyer, and Langmeyer (1992) pointed out that because celebrities can contain a complex array of cultural values and meanings, examining the symbolic connotations of the celebrity may be theoretically viable but challenging in practice.

Promoters of specific items must coordinate efforts across a variety of clientele with varying demographics, including age, income, education, and region. This advancement makes messages aimed at different client groups with different messages less successful and coordinated than messages shared by all customers in a common set of advertising messages. Petty, Cacioppo, and Schumann (1990) examined the idea and practice of celebrity endorsement and found that consumers tended to value the product more than the average person when it was endorsed by a well-known celebrity.

In addition, it was discovered that when a relevant celebrity promoted a product, subjects tended to rate it as better and of higher quality. According to Prachi Raturi (2005), a celebrity endorsement helps a brand stand out from the competition. The brominate might even turn into a roar if the celebrity and the brand have the right kind of synergy.

Since celebrity endorsement is the most short-term tactic since celebrities are by definition ephemeral and a celebrity deal's aftertaste lingers, there are no longer any "win-win" circumstances in marketing. Shimp (2000), on the other hand, advocated using endorsements from late-life celebrities. According to him, since deceased celebrities cannot engage in actions that would damage their reputations or negatively influence the brands they posthumously promoted, their usage in advertising is essentially risk free because they are well known and revered by the target audiences. Another opinion, however, held that a deceased celebrity should not be associated with a place unless the celebrity was the primary motivation for traveling there.

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Daneshvary and Schwer (2000) suggested a third party endorsement as a different endorsement option. They argued that consumers who identify with an association are more inclined to embrace the behavior it promotes. It is further argued that customers are more inclined to buy the product if they view the source as reliable and knowledgeable about the products it recommends. For instance, "The Independent" selected the Glo network as the top service provider among its countrymen a few years ago.

Additionally, through travel reports, customers have the chance to communicate with the source, and there is a fit or congruency (the match-up hypothesis) between the source and the product. Due to their perceived competence, objectivity, and fame, a reputable travel writing group could be seen as a beneficial endorsement tool for the advertising of a place. Due to the marketing manager's incapacity to exert direct influence on the third party because of the distance, the marketing experts did not consider this alternative to be a powerful endorsement tool.

Customers with higher levels of education may be less influenced by advertising in general than those with lower levels of education, according to Daneshvary and Schwer (2000). The idea is that consumers with higher levels of education have the analytical skills necessary to interpret data from multiple sources before making a purchase, which reduces their propensity to base their decision solely on one source.

Young people are also more influenced by celebrities than older generations because they frequently view their admire celebrities as role models. Celebrity endorsement, in particular, is considered as inspiring young people to accept their uniqueness by highlighting their modern icons and role models

Challenges Confronting Customer from Taking Right Purchasing Decision

Every attempt one makes in life is met with obstacles, and customers throughout the world similarly struggle to make the best purchasing decisions. The study identified the following obstacles:

1. Inadequate or absent consumer impression research. This has led to misunderstanding of the perceptions of the target audience and their activities. The result of this unavailability of variable to interpret celebrity endorsers and thereby evaluate the implementation has frequently led to wrong purchasing decision.
2. Most of the time, the role assigned to celebrity to play is not true nature of the good and service advertising, customer could be led to make wrong choice because of the interest he has on the celebrity. This interest can lead to sentiment in making grave mistake.
3. From fact available and marketing point of view, there is little or no knowledge of the integration of celebrity endorsement prescriptively into advertising process by the customer. This can radically limit endorser to take right decision.

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4. Management expects that the celebrity will continue to perform at the peak of his/her performance so that he/she continues to be on top, while the company enjoy his/her service. It is not usually known to customer when the performance begins to decline. This it becomes a dilemma for the customer which can lead him to make a wrong choice
5. The level of exposure's rigidity might also cause customers to make poor decisions. Since it has already been demonstrated that highly educated individuals could not be easily swayed by any celebrity endorsements. Customers in this group will choose listening to their minds as guided by their academic instinct. Therefore, academic rigidity may influence a customer to make poor purchasing decisions.

CONCLUSION

The study did the evaluation of the customer's perception about celebrity endorsement process and how this perception influences their purchasing decision. Consumer holds by and large a positive attitude towards celebrity endorsements. Researches have substantiated that the celebrity endorsement could have an impression on the clients attentions and purchase intentions. The study also established that consumers might have a favourable disposition towards celebrities due to perception and attitude role. However, complex processing in celebrity endorsement needs to be taken into consideration in advertising by gaining clarity on the concepts of celebrity endorsement and their selection procedure. The paper concluded that it is necessary for companies to consider that the benefits outweigh the risks associated before selecting the celebrity to endorse any product.

Recommendations

After critical analysis of the study under review, the following recommendations are therefore put forward for celebrity endorsement to be effectively choosing in advertising:

1. There is also need to have a critical study of the perceptions of the customers. Without an understanding of the perceptions of the target audience activities, there will be no variable to interpret celebrity endorsers and thereby evaluate the implementation.
2. Company or business enterprises should make it as a point of duty to always let their product match with the role assigned to celebrity to play, otherwise customer interest in the icon (endorser) will be betrayed. To avoid a grave mistake which can tarnish the image of company or business, truth must be the watchword.

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3. Understanding the prescriptive integration of celebrity endorsement into the advertising process is important from the perspective of destination marketing in practice.
4. Celebrities must be chosen based on their marketability, the type of their attraction, and their perceived credibility by the general public. Through this customer will able to monitor the performance of endorser thereby save him/her from taking wrong choice.
5. The highly educated customer need to be flexible in their decision making. Occasionally, theory can be different from practical. Listen to other is an added advantage in making purchasing decision. This common saying, "whoever does not buy lie cannot buy truth" is relevant to this argument.

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