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Influence of Personality Traits of Celebrity Endorsers on Buying Decisions of Gen-Z Girls: A Study

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Abstract

The significance of celebrity endorsement for advertisements and brands cannot be underestimated. In order to encourage consumers to choose a specific brand over other options, the marketing attributes and imagery of the brand are complemented by celebrities. The study targets to identify the various personality traits of celebrities endorsing beauty and cosmetic products and to compare how these select personality traits of celebrity endorsers influence the buying decisions of Generation-Z girls in Silchar town of Assam. To perform the study, 330 girl students attending government-funded colleges in Silchar town were surveyed using the convenience sampling technique. The findings reveal that the traits Trustworthiness, and Expertise of celebrities influence the buying decision of Gen-Z girl students under consideration.

Keywords: Attractiveness, Cosmetic Product, Extraversion, Marketing, Trustworthiness

JEL CODE: M3, M30, M31, M37

Introduction

The popularity and acceptance of cosmetic industries in India are largely due to their beauty and skin care products (Banerjee, 2014). Various Indian brands create a huge presence in both domestic and global markets (Akwas, 2014). Some big branded cosmetic companies are Mac, Huda Beauty, L'Oreal, Lakme, Lotus, Pac, Faces Canada, Maybelline New York, Sugar and so on. Similarly, there are enormous smaller brands like Colorbar, Forest Essentials, Kay Beauty, Charmacy, Coloressence, Plum, MyGlamm, etc. that also perform well in the domestic market. The increase in consciousness about appearing more beautiful and handsome among both women and men has resulted in the inclusion of diverse types of cosmetic products, including skin care, hair care, fragrances, make-up and more (Kwan et al., 2019). This indicates a significant increase in the cosmetic industry in India (Serban, 2020). This growth has been extreme in the past few years (Alsmadi, 2006). Many cosmetic industries have proven their efficiency in emerging markets throughout the world (Fatima and Lodhi, 2015). Likewise, the rapid launch of new products in this industry is adding some more fuel to the growth of cosmetic industries (Horsky and Simon, 1983). The interest of every individual in grooming and beauty is the reason why the cosmetic industries have grown so much (Bechan and Hoque, 2016). The cosmetic industry in India is highly competitive, with challenges coming from both domestic and foreign brands (Thakur, 2020). Due to the high competition in cosmetic products, it becomes extremely challenging to establish a special place in the minds of consumers (Fatima and Lodhi, 2015). Marketers are employing various tactics to expand their sales and attract more consumers (Singh and Banerjee, 2018).

In India, advertising products and services with the help of celebrities or famous personalities is considered to be the most effective and useful strategy (Anandarajan and Sivagami, 2016). As these celebrities are seen as idols by today's youth because of their social status and fame (Erdogan, 1999). These celebrities' lifestyles, including their clothing and physical appearance, are often imitated by Generation-Z (Ibitayo & Tejumaiye, 2015; Fauzee and Dada, 2021). When celebrities (such as movie stars, players and social media influencers) act as the brand's spokesperson and validate the brand's claims and position by entrusting their personality, popularity, stature in society or expertise in the field, it is known as celebrity endorsement or celebrity branding (Zipporah & Mberia, 2014). Endorsement from such celebrities is not only effective as it captures the attention of the targeted audience and creates a long-lasting memory in the minds of the consumers (Desai, 2014), but it also influences them to purchase the products being endorsed (Ibitayo & Tejumaiye, 2015). Companies spend enormous amounts of money on celebrities to endorse their products in the hope that such endorsements will influence favourable attitudes towards the brand (Khalid & Siddiqui, 2018; Alsmadi, 2006), ultimately resulting in increased sales and profits (Atkin and Block, 1983). The process of choosing celebrities to endorse cosmetic products is a delicate task (Mazzini et al., 2014). Different factors (such as celebrity-brand match-up, popularity, loyalty, past history of celebrity, controversies, etc.) need to be considered while selecting celebrities as endorsers (Breen et al., 2003; Maran & Rani, 2013). Personality traits of celebrities are one of those factors that play a significant role in endorsing cosmetic products (Majeed et al., 2020). Therefore, the present study is

designed to analyse the amount to which celebrity personality traits, such as Expertise, Extraversion, Physical Attractiveness and Trustworthiness, are influencing the buying decisions of cosmetic products among Generation-Z girls' students of four government-funded colleges at Silchar town of Assam, India.

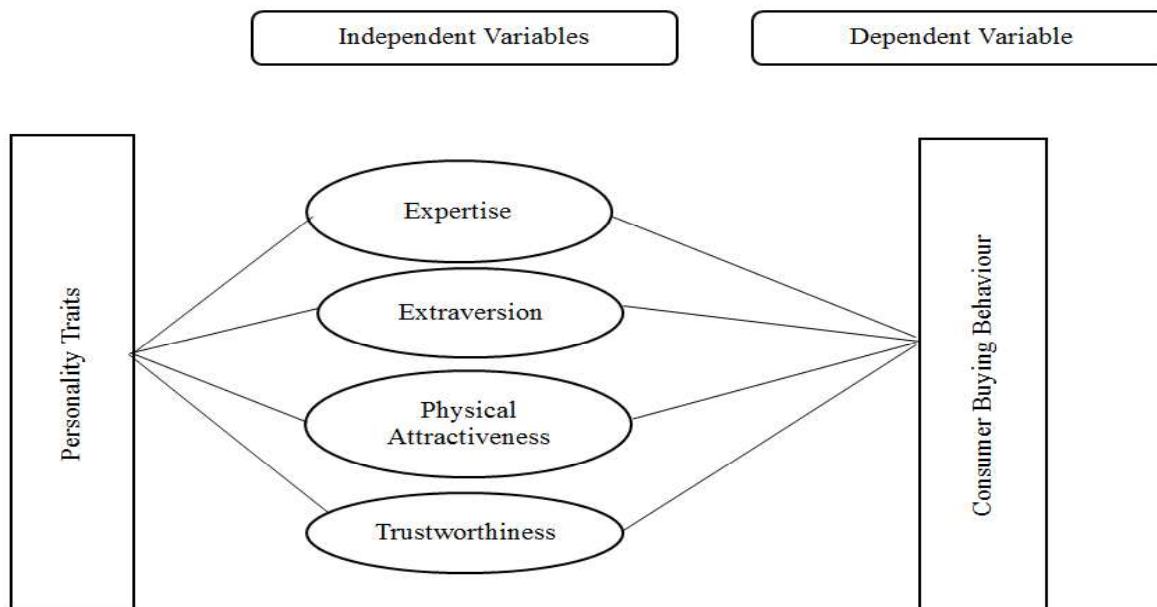


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework showing the influence of Personality Traits on Consumer Purchasing Behaviour Source: Developed by Researchers

Review of Literature

Endorsement is a method of brand communication in which a celebrity serves as the brand spokesperson and validates the brand's claims and position by utilizing their name, personality, popularity, status in society to endorse the brand (Fleck et al., 2014). Celebrity endorsement is the most prevalent technique of advertising today. Advertisers can use celebrities to attract and charm their audience by stimulating their buying behaviour. In India, where Bollywood stars, cricketers, and social media influencers are adored, advertisers perceive this obsession as a chance to expand their markets and promote their brands (Bansal, 2023). McCracken (1989) stated that Celebrity endorsement is used to improve a product's image by transferring the symbolism of the celebrity to it. Different categories of celebrities are employed as endorsers for marketing campaigns. The majority of celebrities come from Bollywood and sports industries because their popularity reaches a wider audience. Bollywood stars are commonly employed as endorsers and have been the dominant players in all product categories (Abdussalam and Johnson, 2016). The purchase intentions of consumers can be greatly impacted by celebrity endorsements for a product or service. Such feelings have made it necessary to identify the specific qualities of celebrities that have the most positive impact on an advertiser's target audience (Willing and Fruchter, 2013). In India, TV commercials are highly appealing to young people, particularly teenage girls, who tend to purchase the products featured in those commercials (Vyas & Parmar, 2019). Baker and Churchill, (1977) stated that advertisements featuring models are more preferred by viewers who have a high preference for commercials than viewers who don't have a high preference for advertisements featuring models. Individuals who are fond of commercials tend to retain more information about brands and celebrities, but there is no distinction between those who do and those who do not have the desire to recall information presented in commercials. To get the most out of celebrity endorsements on Gen-Z consumers, businesses should ensure that their partners are selected carefully and their campaigns are relatable (Satria et al., 2019). To be successful in a consumer-oriented market, a service provider needs to employ a psychological approach to attract consumers. Acknowledging the influencing factors may lead to improve things and achieve consumer satisfaction. Successful market outcomes can be achieved by studying consumer buying behaviour (Chandan, 2019). Rojhe and Hosaini, (2020) stated that there are four primary factors that affect consumers' buying behaviour, including personal, psychological, social and economic factors. Therefore, understanding consumers' behaviour is one of the most difficult and challenging tasks for marketers. Marketing experts have recognized the significant positive impact of celebrities on influencing consumer buying behaviour. Celebrities are able to change consumer attitudes, expand purchasing intentions and increase profits. So, it is important to select the right celebrity for the right company. Using a celebrity with unique characteristics that can truly affect consumers'

buying behaviour is crucial for grabbing consumers' attention and interest among similar advertisements (Adam and Hussain, 2017).

During the review of existing literature, it was observed that although perception-based studies on celebrity endorsement have been conducted from various viewpoints and encompassed different expectations, very few studies have been conducted on the personality traits of celebrities who endorse beauty and cosmetic products. Furthermore, no research has been conducted in the eight states of North-East India related to the subject of this study so far. So, it is possible that this gap will be addressed by this research work, and it could be viewed as a groundbreaking work on the subject in the North-Eastern states of India.

Table 1: Select Personality Traits of Celebrity Endorsers

Traits	Authors
Physical Attractiveness	Araabi, Hickman and McClymont (2022), Britton and Marie (2012), Baranczuk (2019),
Expertise	Dolan (2017), O'Neill (2002), Dimitrov and Kroumpouzos (2023)
Extraversion	Baranczuk (2021), Widiger and Crego (2019)
Trustworthiness	O'Doherty (2022), O'Neill (2002), Dimitrov and Kroumpouzos (2023)

Source: Extracted from Literature

Need of the Study

In this study, the authors aim to analyse the influence of celebrity personality traits on the buying decision of consumers regarding various categories of cosmetic products. The study will analyse the perception of young female college students, identified as Generation Z, based on their selected personal backgrounds. As marketers allocate a significant amount of funds towards this marketing strategy, known as celebrity endorsement, the purpose of this study is to analyse whether this strategy is genuinely effective or not.

Objectives of the Study

- To compare how the personality traits of celebrity endorsers influence Generation-Z Girls in buying decision of cosmetic products based on their colleges.
- To compare how the personality traits of celebrity endorsers influence Generation-Z Girls in buying decision of cosmetic products based on their streams.
- To compare how the personality traits of celebrity endorsers influence Generation-Z Girls in buying decision of cosmetic products based on their monthly family income.

Hypotheses of the Study

- Celebrities' personality traits have no influence on Generation-Z girls in buying decision of cosmetics products based on their colleges.
- Celebrities' personality traits have no influence on Generation-Z girls in buying decision of cosmetics products based on their streams.
- Celebrities' personality traits have no influence on Generation-Z girls in buying decision of cosmetics products based on their monthly family income.

Research Methodology

The present study is descriptive in nature. The population of the study is 3782 Generation-Z girl students of four government-funded colleges i.e., Cachar College, Gurucharan College, Radhamadhab College, and Women's College at Silchar, Assam. Using Yamane (1967) formula, the sample size has been initially decided at 362 with a confidence interval of 5%. However, after a scrutiny of the responses, it has been found that some of the questionnaires are not completely filled up and some important information is missing. After rejecting those responses, the final sample size for the present study is 330. The convenience sampling technique is used for the study. The respondents' opinions have been collected through a well-structured questionnaire with five-point Likert type scale. Statistical tools, such as mean and standard deviation have been used. Since the data set does not follow normal distribution, non-parametric approach has been adopted and accordingly Kruskal Wallis Test has been employed.

Table 2: Profile of the Respondents

Variables	Distribution	Frequency	Percentage
College	Cachar College	83	25.15
	Gurucharan College	83	25.15
	Radhamadhab College	82	24.85
	Women's College	82	24.85
Stream in Under-graduation	Arts	110	33.33
	Commerce	110	33.33
	Science	110	33.33
Monthly Family Income (in Rupees)	Up to 40,000	103	31.21
	40,001 to 80,000	217	65.76
	80,001 and above	10	3.03

Source: Field Survey

Scope of the Study

- The respondents' responses are based on their personal experiences.
- The present study relies on the opinion of college-going girl students at Silchar town, Assam.

Results and Discussions

In this section, the influence of celebrities' personality traits on buying decisions of cosmetic products has been analysed.

Table 3: Influence of Celebrities' Personality Traits on Buying Decision according to Respondents College

Traits	College								Kruskal Wallis Test	
	Cachar College		Gurucharan College		Radhamadhab College		Women's College			
	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Chi-square	p-value
Physical Attractiveness	2.92	1.25	2.32	1.14	1.89	1.18	2.38	1.16	11.561	.006
Expertise	2.98	1.10	1.92	1.27	1.90	1.23	3.12	2.17	7.618	.034
Extraversion	1.76	1.26	2.02	1.25	1.80	1.32	3.37	2.22	2.149	.657
Trustworthiness	1.88	1.18	2.73	1.27	2.71	1.17	2.71	1.27	1.269	.736

Source: Field survey

Table 3 shows the respondents' perceptions across their colleges. The purchase decisions of Generation-Z girls attending Cachar College are influenced by 'Physical Attractiveness' of celebrities. 'Expertise' and 'Extraversion' of celebrity endorsers influence the buying decision of girls enrolled in Women's College. The 'Trustworthiness' of celebrity endorsers influences the buying decisions of girl students belonging to Gurucharan College the most out of all the respondents categorized under four different colleges. The computed value of chi-square and its corresponding p-value clearly depicts that there is no statistically significant influence of the select personality traits of celebrities on the purchasing decision of Generation-Z girls.

Table 4 shows the respondents' perceptions across their stream of education. In this scenario, the purchase decisions of generation-Z girls enrolled in the Science stream are influenced by 'Physical Attractiveness' and 'Trustworthiness' of celebrities. Whereas, 'Expertise' and 'Extraversion' play a major role in the buying choices of female students who are enrolled in the commerce stream at different colleges in Silchar town.

Table 4: Influence of Celebrities' Personality Traits on Buying Decision according to Respondents Stream

Traits	Stream						Kruskal Test	Wallis
	Arts		Commerce		Science			
	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Chi-square	p-value
Physical Attractiveness	2.13	1.06	2.22	1.08	2.87	1.14	.658	.609
Expertise	3.16	2.08	3.83	2.05	1.87	1.31	3.343	.065
Extraversion	2.17	1.17	3.76	2.29	1.89	1.06	4.707	.061
Trustworthiness	2.73	1.10	2.74	1.26	2.88	1.39	.406	.816

Source: Field survey

The computed value of chi-square and its corresponding p-value Clearly depicts that there is no statistically significant influence of the select personality traits of celebrities on the purchasing decision of consumers.

Table 5: Influence of the Personality Traits of Celebrities in Buying Decision of Cosmetic Products according to Respondents Monthly Family Income

Traits	Monthly family income (in Rupees)						Kruskal Test	Wallis Test
	Up to 40,000		40,001 to 80,000		80,001 and above			
	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Chi-square	p-value
Physical Attractiveness	2.13	2.11	2.22	2.08	2.31	1.11	.658	.719
Expertise	2.17	1.43	1.83	1.03	1.86	1.02	3.343	.114
Extraversion	1.28	1.19	3.07	2.37	1.76	1.03	4.707	.062
Trustworthiness	2.73	1.10	2.74	1.26	2.88	1.39	.406	.816

Source: Field survey

Table 5 shows the respondents' perceptions across their monthly family income. In this scenario, the purchasing decisions of girls with monthly family income of Rs. 80,000 and above are influenced by 'Physical Attractiveness' and 'Trustworthiness' of celebrity endorsers. On the other hand, the 'Expertise' and 'Extraversion' of celebrity endorsers highly influence the purchasing decisions of Generation-Z girls with a monthly family income of up to Rs. 40,000 and Rs. 40,001 to Rs. 80,000 respectively. The computed value of chi-square and its corresponding p-value Clearly shows that there is no statistically significant influence of the select personality traits of celebrity endorsers and purchasing decision of Generation-Z girls.

Summary of Key Findings

- The study reveals that the physical attractiveness and expertise of celebrities have a significant influence on the buying decision of cosmetics products by Generation-Z girls across the colleges selected for the study. However other personality traits of celebrities considered in this study have no significant influence on the buying decision of cosmetics products by Generation-Z girls across the colleges under consideration.
- The study reveals that the personality traits of celebrities have no significant influence on the buying decision of cosmetics products by Generation-Z girls across the stream of education. This implies that there is no divergent response of Generation-Z girls hailing from Art, Science and Commerce backgrounds.

- The study reveals that the personality traits of celebrities have no significant influence on the buying decision of cosmetics products by Generation-Z girls across their monthly family income. This implies that the response of Generation-Z girls hailing from different economic background by and large move in the similar direction.

Recommendation and Conclusion

In India, celebrity endorsements are now a common strategy for marketers to endorse products or services. The present study focuses on the influence of celebrity endorsers' personality traits on consumer purchasing decisions. After conducting the study, it is recommended that before making any endorsement related to cosmetic products, the company must give a careful thought and conduct adequate research. Companies need to be aware of the preferences and purchasing habits of their intended clients. In order to capture the attention and interest of the target market, advertising agencies must hire appropriate celebrity endorsers, keeping the personality traits of the celebrity in mind.

It has been concluded that their personalities have a considerable impact on the decision-making process of Generation-Z girls. Personality traits such as physical Attractiveness, Expertise, Extraversion, and Trustworthiness of celebrity endorsers all have a significant influence on the consumers buying decisions. Cosmetic products can be perceived as more trustworthy and credible when celebrities endorse them. Gen-Z girls hold the belief that if celebrities they adore have agreed to associate their name and image with a certain brand, the product needs to be trusted and of superior quality. Therefore, marketers should employ celebrities who possess the skills to present the product in a way that can entice their targeted consumers and increase the sales of cosmetic products.

Implications of the Study

The findings of the study can assist marketers in understanding Generation-Z girls' reactions to celebrity endorsements and identifying which personality traits of celebrity endorsers of cosmetic products genuinely influence the buying decisions of Generation-Z girls. Understanding the influence of celebrity personality traits on Generation-Z consumers can assist cosmetic companies in predicting consumer behaviour and preferences, thereby enabling these companies to create more effective advertising campaigns. The study will additionally serve as a foundation for future research examining the influence of celebrity's personality traits on consumer buying behaviour in various industries or contexts.

Limitations of the Study

- The study relies on consumer responses and purchasing decisions that may change over time.
- The study incorporated a specific gender, sample size, and area, its findings cannot be applied to the entire Gen-Z populations.

Scope for Future Study

Celebrity endorsement is a highly controversial and diverse topic. Single research would not be able to provide comprehensive findings. Hence, there is always a room for more research. As the study is focused only consumers who are college going girl students, also considered as Gen-Z; future research can be undertaken targeting consumer from different occupations and age groups, which would probably bring to light different perceptions regarding the topic in hand. Also, the study is limited to only cosmetic products, therefore future studies should attempt to examine broader areas across different categories of products and services. While celebrity endorsements can be influential, but they are not the only factor that influences Gen-Z girls' purchasing habits. The significance of factors like price, quality, quantity, brand reputation and ethical considerations cannot be overstated. Therefore, in order to achieve long-term success, marketers must ensure that the products they endorse matches the value and preference of Generation-Z girls.

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