

Influence of Celebrity Endorsement on Consumers' Buying Behavior of Fast Moving Consumer Goods in Kathmandu¹

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the influence of celebrity endorsement on consumers' buying behavior of Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG). It aims to analyze the influence of celebrities' attributes (attractiveness, expertise, trustworthiness, popularity) on the buying behavior of people living in Kathmandu valley. The entire information are collected using structured questionnaire from one hundred and fifty respondents in Kathmandu valley. The results of descriptive analysis reveal that celebrity endorsement does have positive impact on buying behavior of majority of people. It has also been identified from the study that respondents ranked brand as the most dominant factor influencing their buying behavior whereas they ranked celebrity endorsement as fourth priority. The result of inferential analysis reveals that significant relationship exists between celebrities' attributes and purchase intention of FMCG. Since Nepali FMCG companies are in dire need of good promotional strategy, this study provides useful insight to FMCG companies and marketers in Nepal.

Keywords: celebrity endorsement; consumer behavior; primary data; descriptive analysis and inferential analysis

1. Introduction

Celebrity endorsement can play an important role in FMCG industry. Several studies have indicated that celebrity endorsers can make positive effect on consumers' buying behavior (Till & Busler, 1998). The use of celebrities in promotions is traced back to nineteenth century and these general promotional practices have revealed a large quantity of intellectual as well as realistic considerations (Randhawa & Khan, 2014). Celebrity endorsement has become a multi-million dollar industry in the world. The concept of celebrity endorsement is very popular in FMCG industry. Advertising pays millions of dollars to celebrities, hoping that the stars will bring their magic to the products and services they

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endorse and make them more appealing and successful. Consumers feel more sympathetic towards a brand, if a celebrity they admire involves to promote their products (Randhawa & Khan, 2014).

Nepal is becoming the hub of many international FMCG brands and this business sector is gaining huge popularity. Eventhough Nepal is a developing nation and has a population of more than 30 million, it possesses a huge industry for FMCG business. Several global companies carry on their businesses from Nepal. Over the years, domestic FMCG companies have been successful in establishing a sizeable business in the country. The trend of using Nepali endorsers in promoting the FMCG manufactured in Nepal is increasing. Well known celebrities from Nepal belonging to music, modeling, and movie or sport industry are endorsing various FMCG brands in Nepal. Despite these efforts FMCG companies in Nepal are not able to make remarkable business compared to international brands. The companies in Nepal are in dire need of good promotional strategy. (New Business Age, 2017).

Thus, the motivation of the research is to explore the influence of celebrity endorsement on consumers' buying behavior of FMCG from Nepalese perspective and to provide useful insight to the marketers to create better promotional strategy. A considerable amount of research has been carried out on the phenomenon of celebrity endorsement and the topic of celebrity endorsements and its elements are heavily documented in academic literature. Yet, multiple questions remain that have not been addressed. As with the discipline of marketing and advertising, in general, celebrity endorsement, as an advertising technique, is not a static concept but in a constant process of development and change, additional new questions have arisen (Schimmelpfennig, 2015). The question seeks to answer the factors such as: attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise of the endorsers really influence the buying behavior of people living in Kathmandu valley while choosing FMCG or not. Similarly, researcher seeks to identify most dominant factors influencing consumers' buying behavior. This study seeks to answer those queries from the perspective of Nepalese consumers.

Although there is a study (Baniya, 2017) that investigates relationship of brand loyalty with celebrity endorsement in Nepalese context, this research is interesting and valuable in the sense that it further enables us to understand the celebrity endorsement process from the Nepalese consumer's point of view specifically FMCG products. This research can help to set new milestone in the discipline of marketing. The outcome of this research can provide very useful insight to the marketers to formulate better promotional strategy to develop Nepalese FMCG companies, which is one of the largest business sector in Nepal. Similarly, all other stakeholders can get benefitted by the outcome of this research.

The remaining sections of the paper are organized as follows. The second section contains with the review of literature that sheds light on research gaps. The third section presents the research methodologies. It highlights research design, sampling, nature and sources of data, validity and reliability test of data. Section four supports the - research with its results and discussion. This provides concrete facts and figures and helps the core objectives of the research. Section five provides the summary and conclusion.

2. Review of Literature

Most academic investigations of celebrity endorsement have been contextualized in the realm of source credibility and attractiveness models, and suggest that celebrities exert their influence on consumers through perceived attributes such as expertise, trustworthiness, attractiveness, familiarity and likeability (Ohanian, 1991). In order to find out the impact of celebrity endorsements on consumers' ad perception Gupta, Kishore and Verma (2015) have made similar research that used Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to retest the previously validated scale and to assess reliability and validity. The results of the study have revealed that celebrity endorsements have a significant impact on consumers' ad perception. Ranjbarian, Shekarchizad & Momeni (2010) have conducted research with an objective to analyze the celebrity endorser influence on attitude toward advertisements and brands. Biswas et al. (2006) have conducted research to examine the differential effects of celebrity and expert endorsements on consumer risk perception via three studies lying within the context of the product's technology orientation, consumer knowledge and congruency between the endorser and the product.

Tanvir and Arif (2012) have done research on impact of cartoon endorsement on children impulse buying of food. The major objective of this study is to find out whether cartoon forces children to buy more impulsively. Researcher has used quantitative research approach to carry out this research study. This research has contributed to understand the role of children in influencing buying behavior of parents.

To observe the change in attitude and purchase intention of customers influenced by the celebrity source endorser Kahle and Homer (1985) have conducted a research on physical attractiveness of celebrity endorser. Supporting social adaptation theory is used to interpret result of the research. This study draws a conclusion that participants who see an attractive endorser like the product more than participants who see an unattractive source. Maddux and Rogers (1980) have done similar research on the effect of source expertness, physical attractiveness and supporting arguments on persuasion. Findings show that the physically attractive

source is rated more effective than the unattractive source and demonstrated a positive relationship between expertise and persuasion when expertise is measured in relation to the topic of the communication. Kamins (1990) have made study with the major objective to test the attractiveness aspect of the “match-up” hypothesis of celebrity selection. The findings of this research suggest that characteristics of a spokesperson interact with the nature of products advertised. To investigate the effect of celebrity’s attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise on purchase intention with reference to the respondents living in Singapore, Pornpitakpan (2004) has conducted similar research and found that more consumers are familiar with the athlete the more likely they will believe the athlete is a credible source.

To the best of researcher’s knowledge, very limited study has been conducted to measure the influence of celebrity endorsement on the buying behavior of consumer regarding the purchase of FMCG in Nepalese context. FMCG industry is huge industry but enough research in Nepal for the development of this sector is still lacking. We believe that the outcome of the research helps to minimize the existing gap of the literature.

3. The Methodology

The study tries to find out the influence celebrity endorsement on customer buying behavior of FMCG in Kathmandu valley. The study focuses on understanding the consumers buying behavior based on different factors like age, gender, income, occupation and many other variables associated. For the research, various approaches have been used to keep research on track for effective and relevant outcomes. In order to collect primary source of information from people living in Kathmandu valley a formally structured questionnaire is designed and divided into classification and objective part. Researcher has used convenience sampling to choose the respondents for the research. Qualitative analysis has been done referring to existing concepts, theories, data, articles, and various other research works related with the influence of celebrity endorsement on purchase of FMCG.

There are some limitations in the study regarding a small sample size of 150. The samples are also collected using convenience method, and it is conducted within a limited time frame.

3.1 The Conceptual Framework

The Benchmark Model provides an edge to the research work within which it can be looked at. The research paper examines the influence of celebrity endorsement on consumers’ buying behavior of FMCG from Nepalese perspective. The use of celebrity endorsements in advertising has become a trend and a perceived winning formula of corporate image building and product marketing. The relationship

between dependent and independent factors is demonstrated through theoretical framework.

Based on the insights gained from the key paper of Gupta, Kishor and Verma (2015), and review made from other literatures, a conceptual framework, as shown in figure 1, has been created. This key paper has aimed at identifying the main factors suggested by Ohanian consists of: attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise of the endorsers that influence buying behavior. The contents and attributes used in key paper are similar to that of the present research being conducted. Moreover, general consumer behavior of Nepalese and Indian consumers are more or less similar. The study on Nepalese consumer behavior can help marketers in formulating and implementing strategies to reach the Nepalese consumers effectively. -

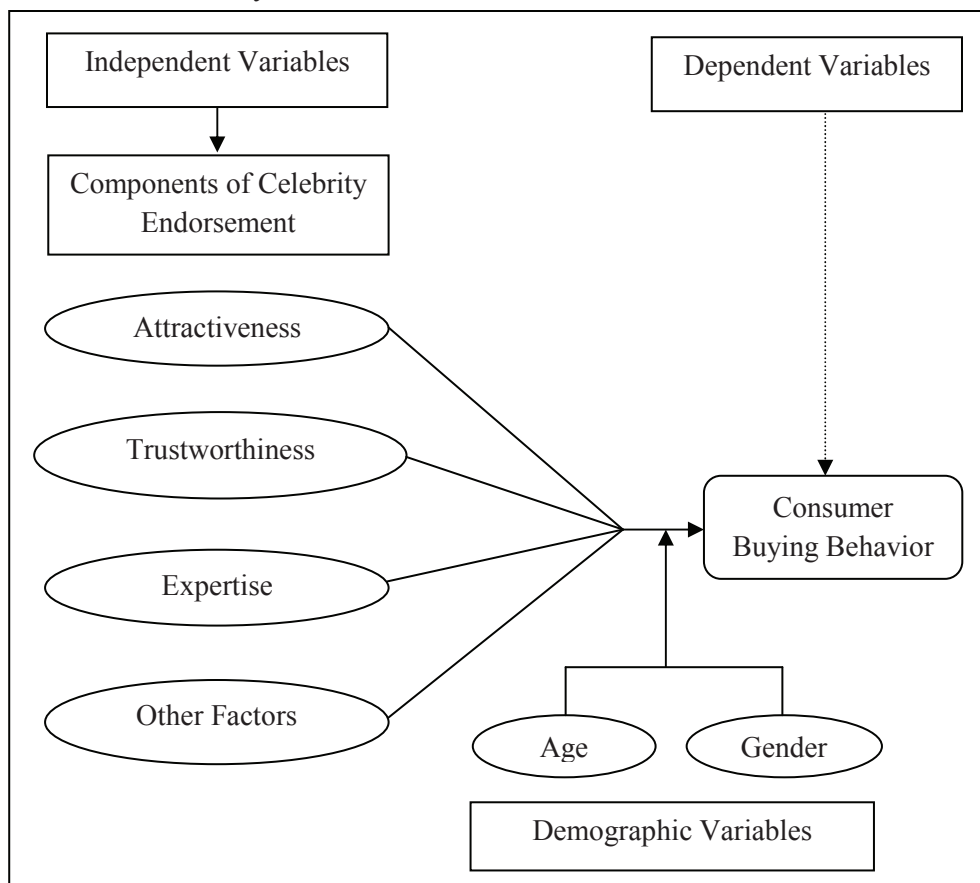


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

Dependent Variable: The dependent variable considered for this research study is “Consumer Buying Behavior”.

Independent Variables: The independent variables are qualitative factors, such as components of celebrity endorsement, attractiveness, trustworthiness, expertise and other factors. Multiple choice questions, ranking and Likert scale are used to measure the influence and satisfaction level of users and consumers.

Moderating Variables: These variables are the demographic variables, or personal statistics, that include information such as age, gender, income and occupation that are considered for this research study. These moderating variables influence other independent variables.

3.2. The Data

Data are collected from both primary and secondary sources. For the collection of primary data, a structured questionnaire is designed and distributed among people of Kathmandu valley. A sample size of 150 respondents is taken, owing to the need for relatively moderate sample size while at the time, considering research cost down. The respondents represent Nepali people of Kathmandu valley. Researcher has used convenience sampling to choose the respondents for the research. However foreigners are excluded from this study to avoid any confusion in findings. The samples are the regular purchase of the FMCG products and also the ones exposed regularly to celebrity endorsement advertisement. The secondary data are collected from the sources such as online articles, journals, related research works and publications.

The response collected from the respondents is coded and entered into the SPSS worksheet. All the different questions like ‘Multiple response’ and ‘Likert scale’ are coded as per the rules. After the coding, the appropriate analysis is done.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. General Profile of the Respondents

The brief description of the sample used in this survey has already been discussed in research design and methodology. However, the descriptive analysis of total respondent taken under study is described in detail in this section. Respondents are categorized according to their age, gender, occupation and income of the respondent.

Table 4.1: Demographics of Respondents

Respondents Profile (n=150)		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	79	53
	Female	71	47
Age	15 to 25	38	25
	26 to 35	36	24
	36 to 45	31	21
	46 to 55	23	15
	56 and above	22	15
Occupation	Student	39	26
	Business	36	24
	Private Employees	26	18
	Service	24	16
Monthly Income	Others	24	16
	Below 15, 000	53	35. 3
	15, 000 to 30, 000	17	11. 3
	30, 001 to 45, 000	27	18
	45, 001 & 60, 000	33	22
	More than 60, 000	20	13

Respondents for this study are from Kathmandu and are aware about celebrity endorsement. Out of total respondents, 53% are male respondents whereas 47% are female respondents. The maximum number of respondents fall into the age group 15-25(25%), 24% of respondents belong to the age group of 26-35. 21% of respondents are of the age group of 36-45. 15% of respondents are of the age group 46-55 and another 15% belong to the age group of 56 and above. The result of occupation categorization of respondents reveals that 24% of respondents are involved in business. 18% of respondents are employed as private employees. 16% of people are involved in service sector. Similarly, other 16% of respondents are engaged in other occupations. The analysis of study regarding distribution of monthly income depicted that 35. 5% of respondents belong to the income level less than NPR 15000. 11. 3% of respondents are earning between NPR 15000 to 30000. 18% of respondents are earning around NPR 30001 to 45000. 22% of respondents belong to the income level of NPR 45001 NPR 60000. 13. 3% of respondents are earning more than NPR 60000.

4.2. Descriptive Statistics

The respondents are asked if their purchasing behavior is positively influenced by celebrity endorser. Out of total respondents 61. 3% of population have responded that their purchasing behavior is positively influenced by celebrity endorsers.

19.3% of population have responded that their purchasing behavior is not positively influenced by celebrity endorsers. Whereas rest 19.3% of people could not say surely whether their purchasing behavior is influenced by celebrity or not. Similarly, the respondents are asked the question if they purchase product endorsed by their favorite celebrity? 47.3% of population have responded that they purchase product endorsed by their favorite celebrity, 28% of population have responded that they do not purchase product endorsed by favorite celebrity. Similarly, 24.7% of population could not say surely whether they purchase the products endorsed by celebrity or not.

The different attributes comprising brand, cost, quality, experience and celebrity endorsement are ranked by respondents. From the ranking result it is found that people have ranked brand as first priority, quality as second priority, cost as third priority, celebrity endorsement as a fourth priority and experience as fifth priority. Out of total respondents, 46% of respondents have given celebrity brand as a first priority, 22% of respondents have given quality as a first priority, 17.3% of respondents have given cost as a first priority, 10.7% of respondents have given celebrity endorsement as a first priority and other 4% of respondents have given experience as a first priority. The findings of the research show that people perceive brand as most dominant factor influencing their buying behavior. Similarly, the study also shows that majority of respondents are positively influenced by celebrity endorsement in an advertisement.

4.3. Inferential Analysis

This segment consists of the results of t-test and ANOVA test, correlation of factors affecting consumers' buying behavior of FMCG. In this study relationship between demographic variables (age, gender, income, occupation) and purchase intention of FMCG has been analyzed. Similarly the influence of celebrities' attributes (attractiveness, expertise, trustworthiness, other factors) on the buying behavior of people living in Kathmandu valley has been analyzed in this part.

Under the inferential analysis, hypotheses test is done using the mean of all the items of each corresponding individual variables as follows:

4.3.1. Correlation analysis

Correlation analysis has been used in this study to measure the strength of a relationship between the impacts of celebrities' attributes (attractiveness, expertise, trustworthiness, popularity) and purchase intention of consumers in Kathmandu valley. Table 1, table 2, table 3 and table 4 given below show result of correlation analysis.

Table 1: Correlation among purchase intention and mean trustworthiness

		Mean Purchase intention	Mean Trustworthiness
Purchase intention	Pearson Correlation	1	.753**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	150	150
Trustworthiness	Pearson Correlation	.753**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	150	150

The correlation between statements “Mean trustworthiness and Mean Purchase intention” is 0.753 and the corresponding p value is 0, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between two statements.

Table 2: Correlation among purchase intention and mean attractiveness

		Mean Purchase intention	Mean Attractiveness of Celebrity
Purchase intention	Pearson Correlation	1	.790**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	150	150
Attractiveness	Pearson Correlation	.790**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	150	150

The correlation between statements “Mean attractiveness and Mean Purchase intention” is 0.790 and the corresponding p value is 0, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between two statements.

Table 3: Correlation among purchase intention and expertise of celebrity

		I perceive that products endorsed by celebrities who are experts in their field are of high quality	Purchase intention
I perceive that products endorsed by celebrities who are experts in their field are of high quality	Pearson Correlation	1	.634**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	150	150
Purchase intention	Pearson Correlation	.634**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	150	150

The correlation between statements “Mean expertise of celebrity and Mean Purchase intention” is 0. 634 and the corresponding p value is 0, which is less than 0. 05. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between two statements.

Table 4: Correlation among purchase intention and mean of other factors

		Mean Purchase intention	Mean of Other Factors
Mean Purchase intention	Pearson Correlation	1	.680**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	150	150
Mean of Other Factors	Pearson Correlation	.680**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	150	150

The correlation between statements “Mean of other factors and Mean Purchase intention” is 0. 680 and the corresponding p value is 0, which is less than 0. 05. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between two statements.

4.3.2. Independent sample t test

A t-test is any statistical hypothesis test in which the test statistic follows a t-distribution if the null hypothesis is supported. It can be used to determine if two sets of data are significantly different from each other, and is most commonly applied when the test statistic would follow a normal distribution if the value of a scaling term in the test statistic is known. Independent Sample t test has been used in this study to determine whether there is statistical difference between Gender and Mean purchase intention.

Table 5: Analysis of mean of purchase intention between gender

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper	
Purchase intention	Equal variances assumed	.049	.826	-.767	148	.444	-.08403	.10956	-.30055	.13248
	Equal variances not assumed			-.765	144.543	.446	-.08403	.10984	-.30114	.13308

P-value in the table 5 is 0. 826 which is more than 0. 05 so we do not reject the Ho5a . There is no significant difference between the mean responses among

gender with relationship to purchase intention of FMCG. Hence we can infer that gender has no association with the purchase intention.

4.3.3 One -way ANOVA

The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) is used to determine whether there are significant differences between the means of two or more independent group. In this study One-way ANOVA is used to determine whether there are any statistically significant differences between the means of different age groups and use of national celebrity.

Table 6: Analysis between age group and use of national celebrity

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	F value	P value
15-25	38	3.82	.652	2	5	3.801	0.006
26-35	36	3.86	.639	2	5		
36-45	31	3.58	.765	2	5		
46-55	23	3.30	.703	2	4		
56 & above	22	3.32	.894	2	5		
Total	150	3.63	.747	2	5		

Table 6 shows the one way ANOVA test between age group and use of national celebrity encouraging to purchase FMCG of Nepalese brand. Since p value (0.006) < significance level (0.05), null hypothesis is rejected. As per above table population of age group 26-35 are likely to purchase FMCG if endorsed by celebrity with the maximum mean value (3.89) in comparison to population of age group 56 & above having minimum mean value (3.27) with standard deviation of 0.465 and 0.741 respectively.

Thus, there is significant relationship between age group and use of national celebrity encouraging to purchase FMCG of Nepalese brand.

Table 7: Summary of the test hypothesis

HoP	Statements	Remarks
Ho1	There is no significant influence of celebrities' trustworthiness upon consumer buying behavior related to FMCG	Rejected
Ho2	There is no significant influence of celebrities' attractiveness upon consumer buying behavior for FMCG.	Rejected
Ho3	There is no significant influence of celebrities' expertise on consumer buying behavior related to choice FMCG.	Rejected
Ho4a	There is no significant influence of celebrities' popularity on consumer buying behavior related to choice FMCG.	Rejected
Ho4b	There is no significant influence of sense of similarity on consumer buying behavior related to choice FMCG.	Rejected
Ho4c	There is no significant influence of origin of celebrity on buying behavior related to choice FMCG	Rejected

Ho5a	There is no significant influence of gender upon consumer buying behavior related to choice FMCG.	Accepted
Ho5b	There is no significant influence of age upon consumer buying behavior related to choice FMCG.	Rejected
Ho5c	There is no significant influence of income upon consumer buying behavior related to choice FMCG.	Rejected
Ho5d	There is no significant influence of occupation upon consumer buying behavior related to choice FMCG.	Rejected

From table 7, it is observed that all other hypothesis except Ho5a is rejected showing the significant relationship between demographic variables and purchase intention.

The study shows that celebrity endorsement is not the topmost reason for purchase intention. Brand is the most popular reason. Thus the question is whether to invest in brand building or celebrity endorsement. In order to be in the safer side, brand building along with celebrity investment might be used in conjunction.

5. Concluding Remarks

Using celebrities for endorsing brands has become a trend for building the brands as well as the company's image. After mulling over the analysis it is evident that all the participants are very much aware of the trend of celebrity's endorsing products. The study reveals that majority of respondents are positively influenced by celebrity endorsement in an advertisement. The different attributes comprising brand, cost, quality, experience and celebrity endorsement are ranked by respondents. From the ranking result it is found that people ranked brand as first priority, quality as second priority, cost as third priority, celebrity endorsement as a fourth priority and experience as fifth priority. The study reveals that brand is most dominant factor influencing consumers' buying behavior of FMCG. Similarly the entire null hypotheses that are assumed for the research are rejected except Ho5a. It is found from the study that gender does not have any significant relationship with the purchase intention of FMCG. The major attributes of the celebrity endorsers comprising attractiveness, trustworthiness, expertise and some other factors are evaluated. From the research it is found that there exists significant relationship between mean purchase intention and all attributes comprising attractiveness, trustworthiness, popularity, expertise and other factors. This study confirms to most of the western study (Ohanian, 1991). It also confirms to the study (Baniya, 2017), except that the earlier study did not find the celebrity to be trustworthy. A plausible explanation of this can be that in FMCG products, which are every day products, trust is not highly important.

Based on the findings of this research it can be concluded that celebrity endorsement as a marketing communication activity is viewed in a positive light

and its influence over the purchase intention of the consumers has been effective. Because of the increasing competition in FMCG industry, nowadays it becomes very difficult for those companies to hold consumers' attention towards an advertisement. A better understanding of applying celebrity endorsement indisputably triggers managers to pursue a more effective policy by which a more adequate consumer attitude will be engendered. It is important that firms that have tarnished images turn to this sort of promotion because celebrities aid advertisement stand out effectively from the other surrounding clutter. Since consumers' buying behavior is positively influenced by celebrity endorsement, it can be creatively used to hold attention of consumers and to create awareness. Celebrity endorsement can be used as an effective tool to promote FMCG in Nepal. The right celebrity endorser can play an immense role in creating added value, synergy and visibility to the brand, but the celebrity endorsement can not be and should not be taken as brand. So brand building along with celebrity investment might be used in conjunction can help to be in safer side.

It has also been identified from this study that brand is most dominant factor influencing consumers' buying behavior. Thus, companies can be recommended to have keen interest in enhancing the brand value of their FMCG products rather than focusing only on celebrity endorsement. However celebrity endorsement can be creatively used to enhance brand value of the FMCG Company. Regulators should make provisions for protecting consumers from irregularities concerning the quality, quantity and prices of FMCG brand endorsed by celebrities since consumers have tendency of having more faith on product endorsed by them. The future researchers are recommended to take more sample size and of specific age group and income level. Only four major factors have been taken into account to determine the influence of celebrity endorsement on purchase of FMCG. The future researchers are recommended to consider additional variables for further analysis.

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