

Celebrity Endorsement and Consumer Buying Behaviour; Enhancing the Promotion Function of Marketing in the Central Business Area of Accra, Ghana

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Abstract

This paper examines the phenomena of celebrity endorsement in advertising as part of marketing promotions. The concept is considered as a measure of positively influencing consumers' behaviour towards making a purchase of a company's offer. The major considerations in this paper were to unravel the factors or variables considered in selecting a celebrity or making a purchase; the extent to which a celebrity's endorsement influences consumers' purchase or re-buy behaviour; as well as its influence generally on marketing promotions. The reviewed literature and the data captured from about a hundred and forty-eight respondents covering management, internal customers and external customers gives the findings a high level of validity and reliability. The results indicate that company's select celebrities based on credibility, brand match and attractiveness while consumers are influenced by price, celebrity endorsement, quality and packaging. There was overwhelming agreement for a greater extent of influence on behaviour as well as marketing promotions. The paper concluded on the positive relationships celebrity endorsement has with consumer behaviour and marketing promotions in general. It recommended that companies using celebrities should ensure that the celebrities match the brand, that is, the celebrity must have the value and image required to advertise the brand. It is only when adverts are matched up by attractiveness and expertise that the brand attitude would be more favourable, and find greater purchase intentions. We study shall replicate this study in Togo and Nigeria to gauge the regional view of the influences of celebrity endorsement on consumers' purchase behaviour.

Key Words: Celebrity Endorsement, Consumer Behaviour, Marketing Promotions,

1. Introduction

In marketing promotions, most especially in advertising, a testimonial or an endorsement consist of a written or spoken statement, sometimes from a person figure or private citizen, extolling the virtue of one product or the other.

Celebrity endorsement according to Solomon (2009) is the use of famous athletes, movie stars, music icons and television stars in promoting or advertising of goods and services. It is also significant to know that celebrities can also play a devastating role that can lead to the collapse of the company or product. Recently, companies that have their products endorsed by Tiger Woods and Lance Armstrong in advertising their products have experienced a drastic decline in sales as a result of the negative moral questions that hanged over the necks. Indeed, the two personalities were named as the worst celebrity endorsement of year the 2010, a U.S study revealed. Therefore in choosing a celebrity to endorse, the credibility of the person should be considered since any mishap can affect the buying behaviour of customers (McCracken, 1989).

Central to every economic system are exchanges between suppliers and purchasers or consumers. The actual satisfaction of a want or need comes about through the exchange process, and occurs when suppliers and purchasers give to each other something else of value. It is in this light that marketing functions are inevitable.

Advertising is seen as the non-personal communication of information usually paid for and usually persuasive in nature about products, services or ideas by identified sponsors through the various media. Or a form of non personal promotion that is delivered through selected media outlets that, under most circumstances, require the marketer to pay for message placement (Belch & Belch, 2004).

Advertising has three main objectives; differentiating, reminding informing and persuading. Through advertising, potential buyers are informed about the availability and nature of a product. And when an existing product is being improved in any way, it has to be communicated to potential buyers. Once buyers have been informed, they need to be persuaded to purchase the product. This is accomplished by transmitting a positive set of beliefs about the key attributes of the product. Then, knowing that potential

buyers are not constantly thinking about its products and brands, marketers continually remind them of its existence and availability (Belch & Belch, 2004).

Research Questions

The study seeks to address the following questions;

- What is the influence of celebrity endorsements on consumers' buying behaviour?
- To what extent do other promotional variables are considered by companies and consumers?
- Does celebrity endorsement affect company's promotion and actual purchases?

2.0 Literature Review

This literature review employs a framework which provides a comprehensive account of consumer behaviour. It also reviews how celebrity endorsement affects consumers' buying decisions. The concept of consumer behaviour is critical in the marketing of goods and services. This is because; companies deal with consumers who vary in nature. Therefore, an understanding of consumers' behaviour, helps in identifying what is important to the consumers, and suggests the important influences on consumers' decision-making. This will enable marketers to provide goods and services that meet the needs of their target market.

Loudon and Bitta (1994), defined consumer behaviour as "the decision process and physical activity individuals engage in when evaluating, acquiring, using or disposing of goods and services". It encompasses concepts drawn from psychology, sociology, anthropology, history and economics. This means that, in developing products that consumers would obtain value, marketers requires good understanding of how consumers treat their purchase decisions.

2.1 How Consumers Buy

The understanding of decision – making process continues to be a significant variable in the study of consumer behaviour. This therefore makes the model proposed by Engel et al (1985) worthy of discussion. This model views consumers' purchase as a process that goes through several steps. However, depending on the purchase decisions faced by the consumer, each of the process is carried. Therefore, in presenting these steps marketers should realize that, depending on the circumstances surrounding the purchase, the importance of each step may vary.

Problem Recognition

Engel et al (1985) explained that, a consumer can be said to experience a problem when he or she perceives a discrepancy between an actual state and a desired state. For example, when someone is thirsty and needs water or car run out of fuel and needs to be fill. Problem recognition can originate inside the consumer, but can also be influenced by external sources, which includes marketing tools such as advertising and product displays.

Search

After problem recognition has been stimulated, the consumer will usually begin the search process in order to solve the particular problem. The optimality of consumer's search strategy is reflected in the perceived benefit and cost of search Alba & Hutchinson, (1987). The benefit of search is driven by how a consumer perceived the uncertainty in choice environment, the importance given to the product category, and risk aversion (Moorthy, Ratchford & Talukdar, 1997). Hoyer and McInnis (1997) explained the search process as having two dimensions; internal search and External search.

Internal search involves retrieving stored information, feelings and previous experience from memory. **External search** involves acquiring new information about purchase options, their characteristics, and consequences.

Within external search, a further distinction can be made between *active* search and *passive* search. In active search, the consumer takes the initiative to acquire information – by asking a salesperson, obtaining a brochure, asking a friend. This type of search mostly occurs in the context of purchases that have some subjective importance for the consumer. Since many purchases are not of that nature, and sellers nevertheless want to inform consumers about their offerings, they have to find means where the seller takes

over the active role and channels information to the consumer, who remains mostly passive. Therefore, getting the consumer's attention is a major task in this type of market communication.

Evaluation of alternatives

At this stage, the consumer compares the various brands of products or services that are capable of satisfying or addressing the identified problem or needs. (OB Series, 2007, p32). In the simplest case, a consumer remembers what has been bought on earlier occasion and repeat purchase. In other cases, a real comparison between alternatives is involved. This again may be rather simple or rather complex.

Choice/ Purchase

According to Engel et al (1985), as an outcome of the alternative evaluation stage, the consumer may develop a purchase intention or predisposition to buy a certain brand. Purchase intention is generally based on a matching of purchase motive with brand attribute and consequence of decision. Once consumers choose which brand to buy, he or she must still implement the decision and make the actual purchase. Additional decision may be needed, such as when to buy, where to buy, how much money to spend etc. Often, there is a time delay between the formation of a particularly purchase intention or decision and the actual purchase, particularly for highly involved and complex purchases such as automobile, personal computer, a house and consumer durables. For non-durable products, which include many low-involvement items such as fast-moving consumer goods, the time between the decision and the actual purchase may be short.

Outcome/post-purchase

Outcomes are usually characterized by the degree of the consumer's satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the item bought. According to Kotler (2004), satisfaction is a person's feelings of pleasure or contentment resulting from comparing a product's performance to expectations. Expectations are influenced by advertising, packaging, the store where the product is sold, the price, and the physical appearance of the product. The performance of the product as perceived by the consumer is, of course, affected by the physical characteristics of the product. It is in the interest of marketers that the expectations created do not exceed how the product can be expected to perform once bought and used. Having satisfied customers is one of the main determinants of business success, because it has a major influence on whether the consumer will buy the product again.

2.1.2 Post-purchase dissonance

Victor Zalakos (2002) defines dissonance as the unpleasant feeling you get when you have just bought something and is not quite right. It might be that it doesn't do what the sales representative said it would or you found out that you paid too much or your friends don't like the colour of the product. This can be expressed in terms of bad feels, ashamed, silly, dumb, annoyed, furious, hurt, betrayed etc.

Hence marketers with the help of celebrity endorsement can alleviate post-purchase

Dissonance in three easy steps;

1. Selling only good stuff for fair price.
2. Being open and honest with our prospects.
3. Implementing a good follow up programmes.

2.2 Factors that influences Purchasing

Consumer behaviour involves much more than understanding what products a consumer buys. It embraces factors, which can affect the decision-making process as a person works through the purchase decision. The number of potential influences on consumer behaviour is limitless. However, marketers are well served to understand the key influences. By doing so, marketers are in a position to tailor their marketing efforts to satisfy the consumer and their organizations. The numerous factors that influence consumer's behaviour can be represented by the elements such as: Internal, External and Marketing.

Internal Influences

The discussion of internal influences explores the most important internal factors that affect how consumers make choices.

Perception

Perception is a process of giving meaning to sensory stimuli. People act and react on the basis of their perception. Consumers' perception is fundamental to understanding acquisition, consumption, and disposal of goods and services. The symbols used in writing marketing communication, and all its forms, gain meaning by reference to perception. Hence, in a basic way, perceptions underlie preferences (Armound & Zinkhan, 2004).

Again, Armound & Zinkhan (2004) suggest that, Perception begins with selective attention to perceptual stimuli in the marketing landscape. Through selective exposure and attention, consumers form basic images of brands, products and marketing communications. They draw basic perceptual inference about the attributes of these marketing stimuli. Through learning and experience, consumers eventually form summary perceptual judgment that links the sensory stimuli to outcomes they consider.

Attitude

Attitudes are a person's enduring favourable or unfavourable evaluation, emotional feelings, or action tendencies towards some object or data. As they form over time through individual experience and group contacts, attitudes become highly resistant to change (Boone & Kurtz, 1999). Consumers also hold attitudes towards a variety of objects that are important to marketers, including individuals (celebrities). Attitudes are important to marketers because, they theoretically summarize a consumer's evaluation of an object/brand or company (Belch & Belch, 2004). Marketers' keen interest in attitudes is based on the assumption that, they are related to brand preference and consumer's purchase behaviour. Considerable evidence supports the basic assumption of a relationship between attitudes and behaviour. Advertising and promotion are used to create favourable attitudes, towards new products or brands, reinforce existing favourable attitudes or change negatives attitudes. In fact, the decision to purchase a product is strongly based on currently held attitudes about the product, store and salesperson.

External Influences

The consumer does not make purchase decisions in isolation. A number of external factors have been identified that may influence consumer decision making.

Cultural Influences

Cultural influences represent effects that are imposed on a consumer by other individuals in the society. It is a complex whole that includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by people as members of the same society over time (Ueltschy & Krampf, 2001). For example, when the images, concepts and signals of celebrities advertised by media are accepted by the general public, they tend to be symbol of a particular product culture (Mowen & Minor, 2003). Secondly, humans are inherently social animals and can be said to acquire information from others by teaching, imitation, and other forms of social learning. According to Solomon et al (2002), the desire to 'fit in' through identifying desirable people are the primary motivation for purchasing behaviour in relation to social status products.

Social Status

Social Status is an important concept to marketers, since consumers within each social stratum often have similar values, lifestyle, and buying behaviour. Thus, the various social class groups provide a natural basis for market segmentation. Consumers in the different social classes differ in the degree to which they use various products and services and their leisure activities. Advertisers often show how the benefits of their products help to perform certain roles. Most often, promotional messages suggest that, using the advertiser's product will help raise one's status in the eyes of others, while using a competitor's product may have a negative effect on state (Solomon et al, 2002).

2.3 Celebrity

McCracken (1989) defined a celebrity endorser as, "any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement, irrespective of the required promotional role." Advertisers recognize the value of using celebrities, and think; they draw attention to advertising messages in a much cluttered media environment. In the United States, about 20% of adverts feature celebrities (Solomon 2009). Moreover, stock price have been shown to increase when

companies announce celebrity-endorsement contracts (Agrawal & Kamakura, 1995). The use of celebrities in marketing communication can be explained based on the following;

- Celebrity endorsement increases the attention paid to an advert.
- Celebrities are generally attractive, which helps persuasion when the product is attractive-related.
- Celebrities are often well-liked, possibly leading to identification and consumer persuasion in an attempt to seek some type of relationship with the celebrity.
- Also celebrity endorsement may lead media weight to have an impact on sales.

How Celebrity Endorsements Influence the Consumer

The image celebrities' project to consumers can be just as important as their ability to attract attention. While brand marketers with positive experiences would tend to believe that celebrity endorsements work and some would disagree, one would be sure that the magnitude of its impact is difficult to measure even if sales figures are at our disposal.

An interesting perspective on celebrity endorsement and how they impact on consumers' was developed by McCracken (1989). According to this model, a celebrity's effectiveness as an endorser depends on the culturally acquired meaning he or she brings to the endorsement process. Each celebrity contains many meanings, including status, class, gender, and age as well as personality and lifestyle. In his study of thousands of media commercials, especially TV commercials that are viewed in the US, Europe and in Africa, it was mentioned that the most viewed adverts or in other word, which are most enjoyable to be viewed and can capture viewers attention has the following characteristics:

1. Humour: it is proved that humour in adverts increases viewer enjoyment and involvement.
2. Music: music is an important element in more than 50 percent of adverts that are categorized as watchable.
3. Celebrities: it was found out that celebrities are excellent in terms of attention-getters, as they attract both male and female, in addition to different age groups. "There is no doubt that advertisers everywhere continue to queue for the services of Celebrities hoping that some of their magic will tub off on the brand persona" In recent times, marketers in Ghana have made increasing use of celebrities in their advertisement. More and more brands, whether product or services are banking on the mass appeal of celebrities. As soon as new faces ascend the popularity charts, marketers queue up to have them endorse their products or services. One would ask, if advertising really influence consumer? And what influence do the celebrities' endorsements have on the consumers' behaviour? It is in this regard that, this study is worth undertaken.

Corporate Credibility

Central to the study of purchase intentions is the dual credibility model. The dual credibility model offers a causal sequence-attitude toward the advertisements, which leads to attitude toward the brand, which leads to purchase intentions (Goldsmith, Lafferty & Newell, 2000). The model as Goldsmith et al. (2000) presented, explains the influence of corporate and endorser credibility on the formation of brand attitudes and purchase intentions.

Goldsmith et al (2000) also argued that, corporate credibility plays an important role in purchase intentions, and so, companies should allocate money previously earmarked for celebrity endorsements to ensuring the company has a positive and credible image. They also stated that, consumers tend to be more influenced by corporate credibility than endorser credibility (Goldsmith et al., 2000).

2.4 Marketing Influence on Consumer Behaviour

Marketing Strategies are often designed to influence consumer decision making and lead to profitable exchanges. Each element of the marketing mix can affect consumers in various ways. It is in this regard that, Peter and Donnelly Jr. (2004) explain how the marketing mix (4Ps) affects consumer behaviour.

Product

Many attributes of a company's products, including brand name, quality, newness and complexity, can affect consumer behaviour. The physical appearance of the product, packaging and labelling information can also influence whether consumers notice a product-in-store, examine it, and purchase it. One of the key

tasks of marketers is to differentiate their products from those of competition and create consumer perceptions that the product is worth purchasing.

Price

The price of products and services often influence whether consumers will purchase them, and what competition offering should be selected. Stores such as Wal-Mart, which is perceived to charge lowest price attract many consumers. For some offerings, higher prices may not deter purchase because consumers believe that, the products or services are higher quality or are more prestigious. However, many of today's value-conscious consumers may buy products merely on the basis of price than other attributes.

Promotion

Advertising, sales promotion, sales people, and publicity can influence what consumers think about products, what emotions they experience in purchasing and using them, and what behaviours they perform including shopping in particular stores and purchasing specific brands. Marketing communication play a critical role in informing consumers about products and services, including where they can be purchased, and in creating favourable image and perceptions.

Place

The marketer's strategy for distributing products can influence consumers in several ways. Products that are convenient to buy in a variety of stores increase the chances for consumers finding and buying them. When consumers are seeking low-involvement products, they are unlikely to engage in extensive search. Therefore, availability becomes very important. Second, products sold in exclusive outlets, may be perceived by consumers as higher quality. In fact, one of the ways marketers create brand equity is by selling them in prestigious outlets. Third, offering products by non-store methods such as on the internet or in catalogues, can create consumer perceptions that the products are innovative, exclusive, or tailored for specific target market.

2.5 Consumer behaviour and Advertisement

Lee (1997) in Solomon (2003) pointed out that, although consumer's perceptions of price, quality and value are considered as vital determinates of shopping behaviour and product choice; research on these concepts and their linkages has provided few conclusive findings.

On the other hand, there is marketing literature which has developed a group of models known as Persuasive Hierarchy Models that predict the opposite. These models conclude that if advertising is to promote sales, it must inform and then persuade consumers. The underlying pattern of these models is that, consumer buying intentions are affected by advertisements.

It is generally recognized that, consumers rely on various information 'cues' or characteristics of product in their evaluations of product quality (Dick and Jain, 1994). In fact a considerable amount of research in consumer behaviour has been devoted to examining what consumers use most often when evaluating products. The research results suggest that, most consumers often rely on brand name, the price of the product. Much of the information very often comes from advertising. Since advertisement use celebrity endorsers quite frequently, the extent to which this information effects consumer's judgment must be related to the credibility of the endorsers presented in the advert (Jacoby, Sybille & Busato-Schach, 1977).

2.6 EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

Several research studies have examined the congruency between celebrity endorsers and brands to explain how celebrities help in promoting brands. Although, there are few empirical estimates of the effect of celebrity endorsement on consumers buying behaviour; it is clear that celebrities have the ability to influence the behaviour of their fans in other arenas.

In one experiment, an advertisement for a fictitious brand of Sangria wine featured an endorsement attributed to a celebrity, a professional expert, a Company President, a typical consumer and a college student read the ad and gave the ad 0-10 scales of believability, probable taste, and intent to purchase. Across these three measures, the celebrity condition produced the highest scores Friedman, et al (1997)

Friedman and Friedman (1979) found empirical evidence that, in the promotion of products high in psychological and/or social risk, use of celebrity endorser would lead to greater believability, a more favorable evaluation of the product and advertisement, and a significantly more positive purchase intention. Thus, companies use celebrities to endorse their products; however, there are deeper attributes that are involved in celebrity endorsement.

Another study by Mathur and Rangan (1997) examined the effect of Michael Jordan's 1995 return to the National Basketball Association (NBA) on the stock portfolios of the companies for which he endorse products. The study found evidence that the announcement of Jordan's return to the NBA significantly

increased the stock portfolios of those five Michael Jordan endorsed companies (Mathur & Rangan, 1997). This clearly shows the direct economic impact of the celebrity endorsement.

3. The Methodology

This research adopts a survey research strategy and a hybrid of quantitative and qualitative research approaches. The population for the study was the customer, workers and marketing managers of corporate organisations within the Central Business area of Accra.

The researchers applied three sampling techniques Snowball, Judgmental, and Simple Random sampling. Snowball technique which is a non-probability technique required to select people with the requisite knowledge in the subject area. This technique began with an identification of a customer who was able to pinpoint another customer who he/she believes has the influence to purchase or re-buy depending on celebrity endorsement of an offer. This technique was used to select a sample size of ninety (90) customers. Purposive or Judgmental sampling technique was employed as an additional non-probability technique tool to settle on fifteen (15) organizations or companies. These companies that feature prominently in Ghana's prestigious Club 100 were Globacom, MTN, Samsung, Sikkem Paint, Unilever, Interplast, Fan Milk, Tropical Cable and Conductor Limited, PZ Cussons, Kinapharma Camelot Ghana Limited. Others are; Kama Health Services, Kasapreko Company, Produce Buying Company and Vanguard Assurance.

The purposive technique was also used to select twelve (12) marketing managers. The simple random, a probability technique was used to select sixty (60) employees of the selected organizations. This brings the sample to One hundred and sixty-two (162). However, the questionnaires retrieved and the interviews granted reduced the sample size to 148

The data captured was used to test the influence celebrity endorsement has on consumers' purchase behaviour as well as marketing promotions/purchase.

4. Main Findings

This study identified the following variables considered by the surveyed companies in their promotional campaigns. Celebrity endorsement has being considered an important promotional variable after price. These findings are presented below;

4.1 Factors Considered by Companies for Promotion and Consumers' for a Purchase

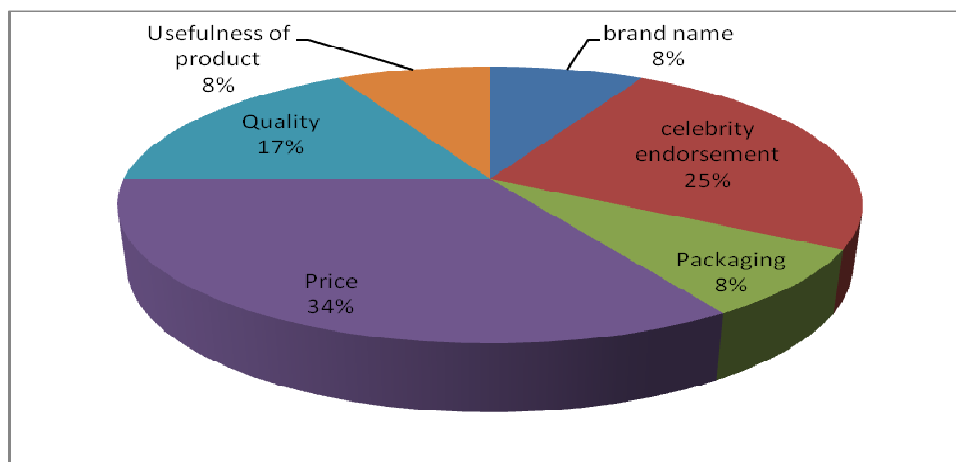


Figure 4.1.1: Promotional Attributes Considered by Companies

The results show that, majority of respondents 17% consider Quality, 8% consider Usefulness of product, 34% based their purchase on Price, 8% indicated Brand name. Celebrity endorsement represented 25%, thus, considered the second most important after price. This therefore indicates that apart from price of the product, celebrity endorsement is a powerful influential factor considered by firms in promoting their products and services. Celebrities demonstrate a number of dynamic qualities which can be transferred to products through Advertising. Celebrities have the ability to attract and maintain attention by their presence in advertising. Celebrities are able to achieve a high recall status, due to their popularity in the media

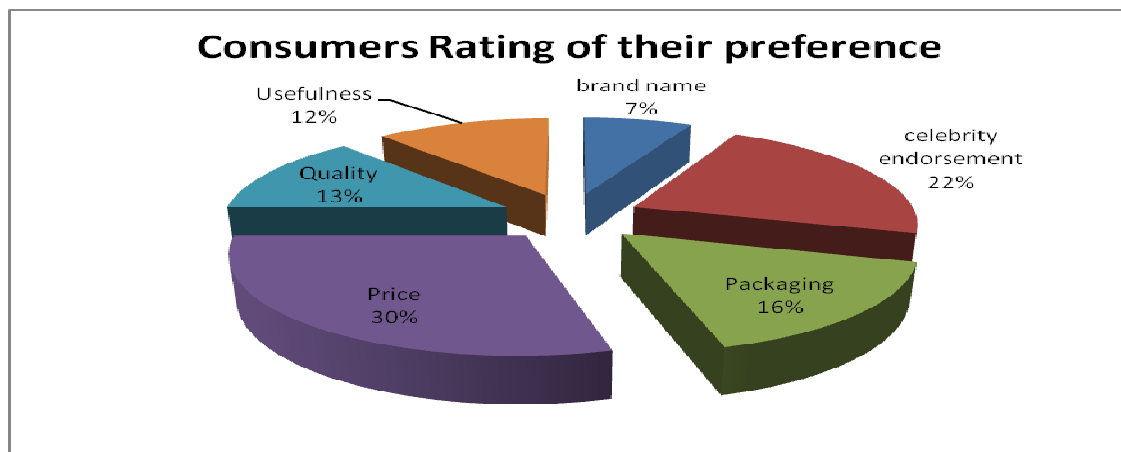


Figure 4.1.2: Consumer Preferences

The figure above shows proportions of factors that consumers consider most, when buying a product or service. The results did not vary that much from what the marketing managers consider to be their interest area of promotion. The data show that, majority of respondents 14% consider Quality, 12% consider Usefulness of product, 30% based their purchase on Price, 7% indicated Brand name. Celebrity endorsement represented 22%, while 16% of respondents buy based on packaging. Belch and Belch (2008) wrote on the power of celebrities' to influence consumers' preferences of product or service choices.

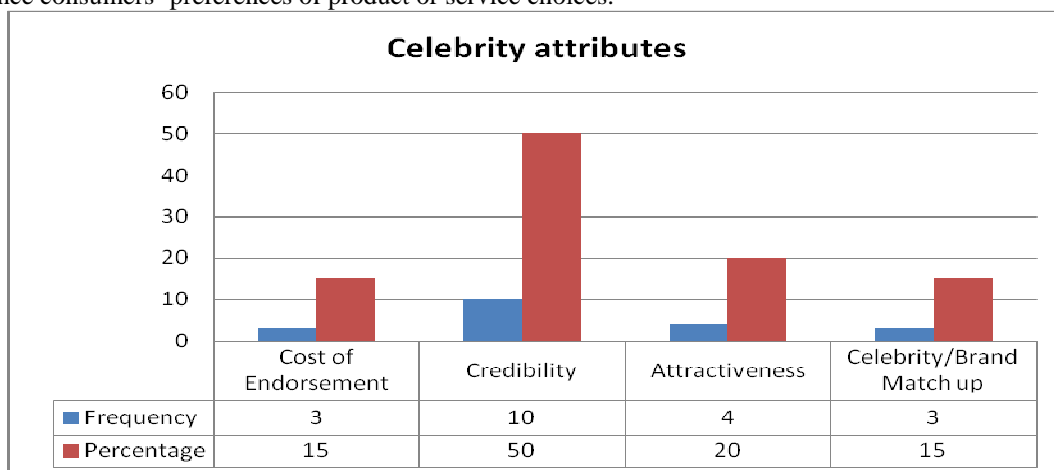


Figure 4.1.3: Attributes considered in using Celebrity

The figure above shows the proportion of attributes, marketing managers consider most when employing celebrities. Three companies consider cost of endorsement, representing 15%; another ten considers celebrity credibility (50%), three other companies also considers the celebrity/brand match up (15%), and four companies consider celebrity attractiveness representing 20%. The choice of credibility over the others connotes that just being a celebrity is not enough but building a strong credibility is paramount. This did not depart from the literature where Friedman and Friedman (1979) found empirical evidence that, in the promotion of products high in psychological and/or social risk, the use of celebrity endorser would lead to greater believability and a more favorable evaluation of the product. This evidence provide the inference that credibility is crucial in people believing in the celebrity hence inducing a high rating of customers evaluation of the offer to be high

4.2 The Extent to which Celebrity Endorsement Influences Consumers' Behaviour

In order to ascertain whether celebrity usage influences customers' behaviour, a number of questions were asked and the results depicting a relationship are presented below;

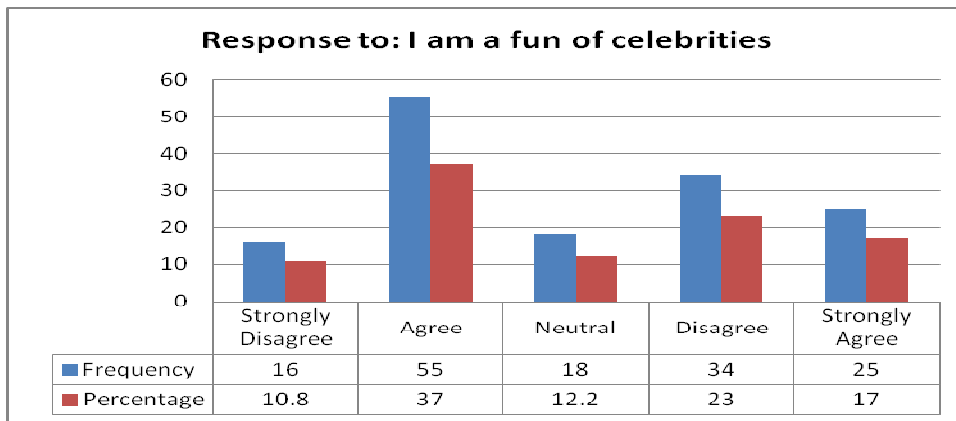


Figure 4.2.1: Response to the question: I am a fun of Celebrity

The table above shows that, 54% of respondents are fan of celebrities either strongly or otherwise, 12.2 % were not decisive, while 33.8% are not fan of celebrities. Interestingly, when the percentage of those who stood neutral, disagree and strongly disagree are added together, the result still proved that respondents liked celebrities usage in marketing promotions.

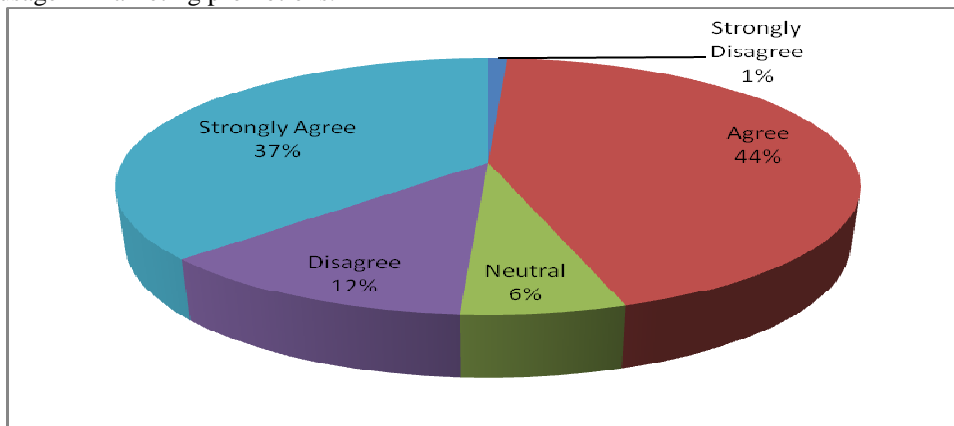


Figure 4.2.2: Response to: Celebrity Endorsement influences consumer behaviour

The figure above shows the response by all the 148 respondents to the statement that: celebrity endorsement influences consumer behaviour. In total, 44% of the respondents agreed, 37% agreed strongly resulting in over 80% agreement. This figure left less than 20% of respondents dissenting out of which 6% remain neutral. This goes to indicate the vital role of celebrities in marketing promotions. However, Lee (1997) pointed out that, although consumer's perceptions of price, quality and value are considered as vital determinates of shopping behaviour and product choice; research on these concepts and their linkages has provided few conclusive findings. Early research results suggest that, most consumers often rely on brand name and the price of the product (Jacoby, Sybille & Busato-Schach, 1977). However, much of the information very often comes from advertising. Since advertisements use celebrity endorsers more frequently, the extent to which this information effects consumer's judgment must be related to the credibility of the endorsers presented in the advert. Hence, we can say that the credibility of celebrity also influences consumers' behaviour to purchase.

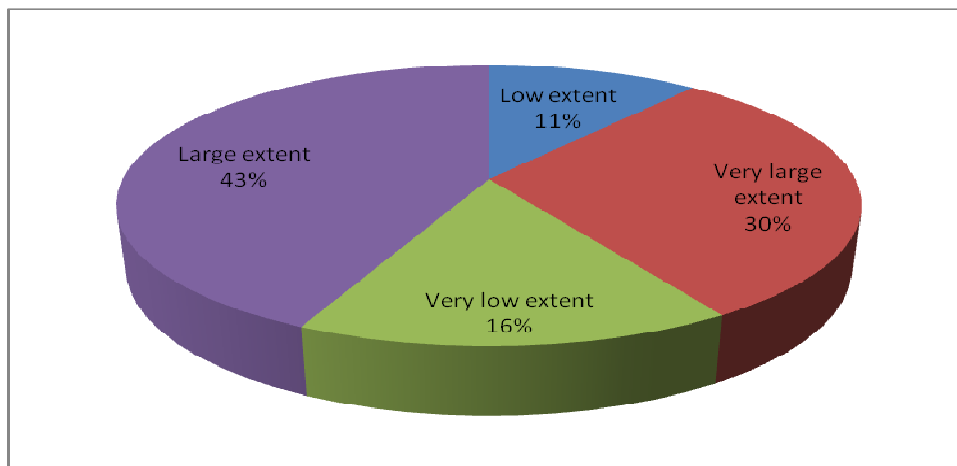


Figure 4.2.3: The Extent of Celebrity Endorsement on Consumer Buying Decision

Figure above shows the extent of celebrity endorsement on consumer buying decisions. Thus, out of 148 respondents the 91 per cent who indicated that, they are influence by celebrity endorsement in Figure 4.2.2, Sixteen per cent (16%) indicated that, the extent of the celebrity influence is very low, 11% indicated low extent, 30% very large extent, and 43% indicated that they were influenced to a large extent. Although, there are few empirical estimates of the effect of celebrity endorsement on consumers buying behaviour; it is clear that celebrities have the ability to influence the behaviour of their fans in a buying decision.

4.3 Celebrity Endorsement and its Influence on Company's Promotions/purchases

This section relates to the organizations using celebrities in their promotions. Therefore, the data presented here relates only to the respondents working within the selected companies surveyed in this study. That is the twelve managers and the sixty employees. The result of this data is to indicate the extent to which celebrity endorsement influences marketing promotions and actual purchases.

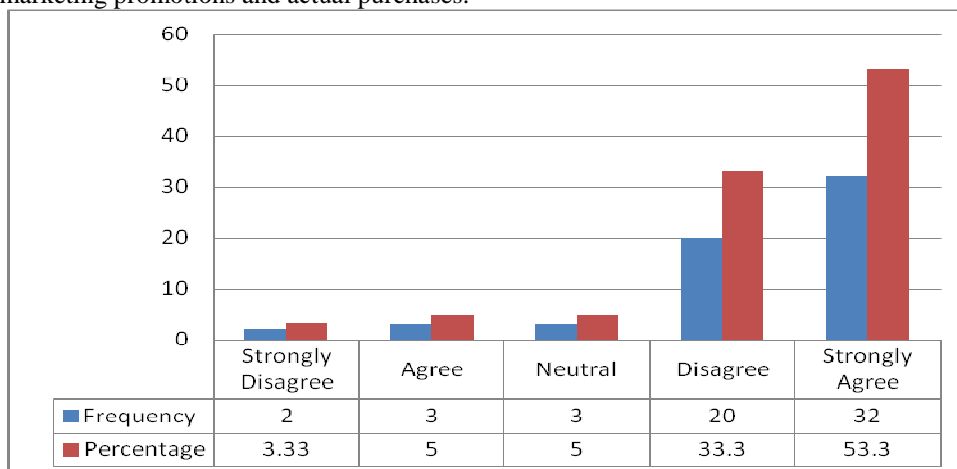


Figure 4.3.1: Employees' response to: The influence of Celebrity Endorsement on Marketing Promotions is Positive

The figure above indicates the responses of only employees hitherto referred to as the internal customers. The data shows the agreement to the statement that: celebrity endorsement positively influences marketing promotions. In all, almost 58% of the respondents agreed, either strongly or otherwise. On the other hand, those in disagreement recorded 36.7% with 5% remaining.

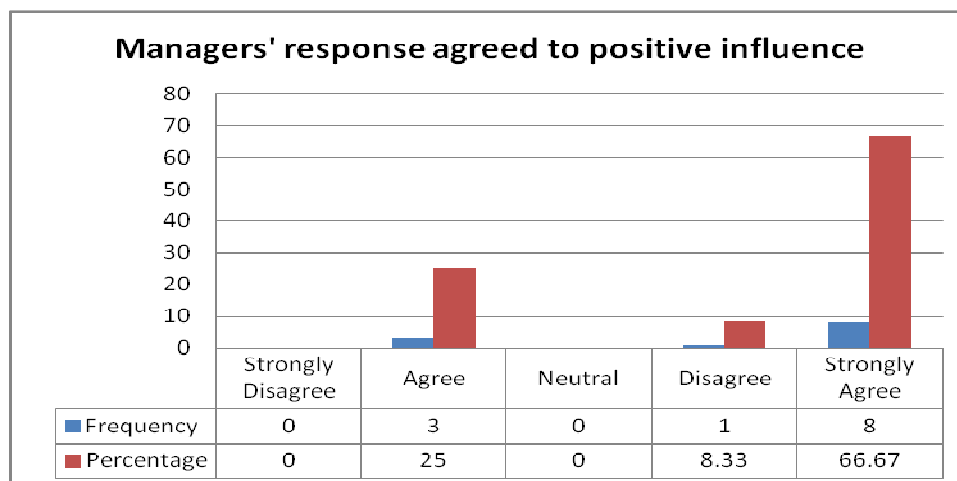


Figure 4.3.2: Response to Positive Influence

The rating by managers is overwhelmingly over 90% with only one (1) dissenting voice representing 8.3%. The difference in the response of the managers and employees is not significantly different. However, it shows that some of the employees are not that enthused with celebrity usage. This apathy could be for further research.

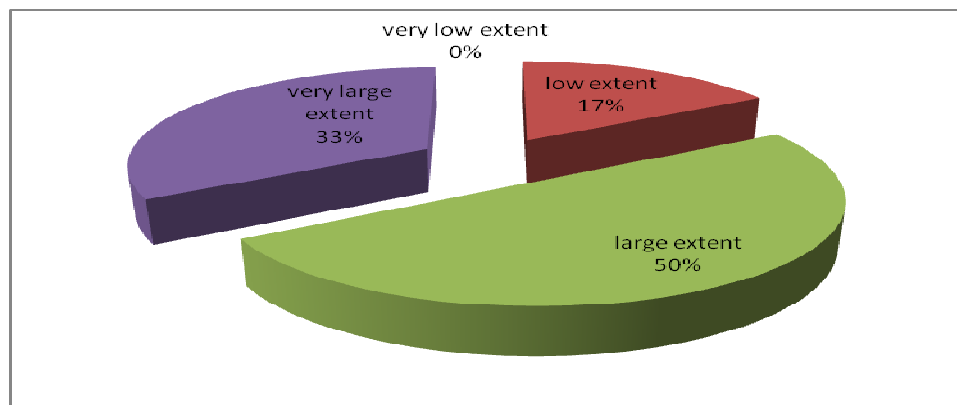


Figure 4.3.3: Managers' Responses to: The Extent of Influence On Company's Promotion/purchase

Almost all the organizations that are surveyed in this study admitted that celebrities did bring some influence in their promotional gains. There was no very low ranking signifying a sizeable return on the promotional budget. 17% rated their influence to a low extent. Fifty (50%) per cent agreed that the influence is to a large extent and for a very large extent represented 33%. These findings cumulatively did not deviate from the one by Mathur and Rangan (1997) which examined the effect of Michael Jordan's 1995 return to the National Basketball Association (NBA) on the stock portfolios of the companies for which he endorse products. The study found evidence that the announcement of Jordan's return to the NBA alone significantly increased the stock portfolios of those five companies he endorsed. These findings are overwhelming signifying a positive influence of celebrity endorsement on marketing promotions of companies.

5. Conclusion

From this study, it becomes clear that the use of celebrities to endorse a marketing offer creates a very favourable influence on the consumers and it creates a connection which forces a consumer to patronize a product. However, as several failures show, it is essential for advertisers to be aware of the complex processes underlying celebrity endorsement.

It has been proved from the discussion that celebrity endorsements are a powerful and useful tool that magnifies the effect of a campaign but the word of caution to be followed seriously; celebrities alone do not guarantee success nor does a great advertising campaign or the best possible product. It is the combination of several factors especially the price and other elements that work together for the success of a brand and its acceptance in the minds of consumers as well as for its market offering.

Modern day consumers are well educated and smart, they know celebrities are being paid for these endorsements and this knowledge makes consumers, especially internal customers as shown in the data, rather more cynical about the product and celebrity endorsements.

Despite the obvious economic advantage of using relatively known personalities as endorsers in advertising campaigns, the choice of celebrities to fulfil that role has become common practice for brands competing in today's cluttered media environment. There are several reasons for such extensive use of celebrities. Because of their high profile, celebrities may help advertisements stand out from the surrounding clutter, thus improving their communicative ability.

To achieve this, the marketer needs to be really disciplined in choice of a celebrity. Hence the need to consider critical factors that will make celebrity selection less problematic. Obviously, the right choice and use of celebrity can escalate the unique selling proposition, that is. It can act as a source of building a brand to new heights when it is replicated within the entire West African region.

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