

Students' Perception Regarding Celebrity Endorsed And It's Effect On Their Purchase Intention

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Abstract

This study is aimed at finding out the perception of students of University of Gujrat regarding celebrity endorsed television advertisements and its effect on their purchase intention. This study sheds light on perception of urban and rural population separately. Celebrity endorsement is an expensive tool to persuade consumer to buy products. It is useful to study its effectiveness. To investigate the perception regarding celebrity endorsement and purchase intention of students, survey method was used. The data was collected from 200 students using non-probability sampling method with the help of a questionnaire. The hypothesis regarding celebrity attractiveness and influence on purchase intention is approved. More the celebrity attractiveness more the influence on purchase intention. This study revealed in its findings that credible celebrities form a positive perception of students. It is proved that more the celebrity attractiveness more will be the influence on purchase intention. Female students intend to purchase celebrity endorsed brands more than male students.

Keywords: Celebrity Endorsement, University Students, Perception, Purchase Intention, Male, Female.

Introduction

Advertising is "a picture, short film, song etc. that tries to persuade people to buy a product or service." Cambridge (2015). In the modern marketing strategies of this day, most business firms rely heavily on advertising to promote their products to their target markets. The major goal of advertising strategy is to influence customers, who are becoming increasingly educated, sophisticated and selective. Competition is also getting more intense. Having a good product alone is not enough to compete in the markets of high standards. Ghani and Kakakhel (2011). It is not easy to make an advertisement stand out in the clutter. Advertising has become a billion

dollar industry. Advertisers are spending huge amounts of money to attract the target subjects.

According to Zabid et al. (2002) Advertisers often select endorsers as a promotional strategy to communicate the attributes of their product or brand. With increasing rivalry for consumer attention and new product launching, advertisers are forced to use attention-grabbing media stars. Muda, Musa & Putit, (2012).

Celebrities are people who are celebrated and recognized publically by a large share of people comprising of a certain group. Their characteristics can be special skills, extraordinary lifestyle, attractiveness and public recognition.

Here endorsement is a means of brand communication in which the celebrity certifies the claims of the brand and extends his/her popularity, personality or expertise in the field to the brand. Schlecht (2003).

There are two most important parts of guiding a brand to success in today's competitive environment, first is effective communication management and the second one is strategic positioning (Ohanian, 1991). For effective communication use of celebrities is being done extensively in TV advertisements. This indicates the importance of the topic.

The researcher is studying the perception of students regarding celebrity endorsement in advertising because it is a popular trend throughout these years so it is useful to check if people still like this tool. Whether it influences them or not? Purchase intention is also a very important point to be considered.

Research Hypothesis

H1: More the celebrity credibility more the positive perception of students.

H2: More the celebrity brand congruence more the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement.

Research Questions

- What is the consumer perception about the role of celebrity endorsement in advertising?
- What is the effect of trustworthiness of celebrity in the television advertisements on consumer perception?
- What is the effect of expertise of celebrity in the television advertisements on consumer perception?

Literature Review

According to Friedman & Friedman (1979) "a celebrity is a person such as an actor, sportsman, entertainer, etc., who is different from the general

public and is recognized by them, because of his or her achievements."

Roll (2014) defined endorsement as a brand communication channel where a celebrity certifies brands' position and claim by acting as its spokesperson through extension of his/her popularity, personality or expertise in the field to the brand. However according to him endorsement can be done by other people as well.

Rafique et al. (2012) investigated the customer perceptions about celebrity endorsements with respect to their physical attractiveness, source credibility and congruence on customers' brand perception and purchase intention. In her paper she tested the productiveness of this marketing tool. She collected data from 103 respondents in questionnaire form to be factor analyzed. ANOVA, Regression Analysis and CronBach's Alpha were used to verify the devised model. Results of her study revealed that celebrity endorsements do have impact on customer's perception and so the purchase intention. Celebrity endorsement results in sales hike.

In advertising there can be two forms of celebrities' involvement: celebrity license and celebrity endorsement. Mistry (2006). Celebrity license is not used often since it is a long term co-branding commitment by both the corporation and the celebrity, the celebrity directly adds his/her name or likeness to a product. The crux of this relationship is the direct association of the celebrity and the product with each other. This can either be strength or a weakness depending on the quality of the brand or product and the status of the celebrity. The most widely used strategy of using celebrities as a promotional tool for brands is celebrity endorsements. In such endorsements celebrities can be giving expert opinions, being a spokesperson for the product or just being associated with a product. McCracken (1989)

Defining Purchase Intention

According to Richard J. Lutz et al. (1983) Purchase intention is the probability assessment of the recipient about the in future purchase of the brand. It is an individual's intention to buy a specific brand selected after certain evaluation. Here purchase intention can be measured through variables such as 'consideration of brand for purchasing' and/or 'expectation of in future purchase of the brand'. Making intention to purchase a specific brand requires assessing all the available brands in the market.

Dimensions of Celebrity Endorsement

Physical Attractiveness

"Beauty is a greater recommendation than any other letter of introduction". Ohanian (1991). Celebrity endorser's physical attractiveness always gets huge social appraisal and acceptability. It acts as a tool to capture attention of subjects both in print and electronic media. Physical attractiveness has positive effect on consumer's behavior toward the product or service while comparing the product with the one with unattractive endorser. Ohanian, (1991). The products which are linked with person's physical attractiveness or looks e.g. facial creams, dresses, beauty soaps, hair colors and shampoos etc. are much influenced by physical attractiveness of the endorsing celebrity. Physically attractive celebrities can also be useful for the principle of match up theory at the time of selecting celebrity; where attractiveness could be more influential. Kamins, (1990).

So, it can be said that physical attractiveness is a powerful source to gain the attention of people and thus influence them to purchase intention.

Trustworthiness

In the context of endorsement; trustworthiness refers to the "honesty, integrity and believability of an endorser". Erdogan, (2001). According to Erdogan (1999) celebrity endorser's credibility is not merely a single source but a valuable source

with cognitive and positive effects on the intent to purchase. Consumer generally has a perception that celebrities are trustworthy source of communication of information. Goldsmith et al., (2000).

Celebrity Congruence

Celebrity congruence is a matchup principle with the product endorsed. It is as important as all other attributes pertaining to celebrity; for high social acceptability and for strengthening the credibility of the celebrity. Kamins, (1990).

Effect of celebrity congruence is interconnected with the celebrity and the brand. It creates strong perception for audience about expertise. Ohanian, (1991).

Fortini-Campbell (1992) found that people consume the brands having some association with personalities e.g. relate the brand with own personality, colleagues, fellows, family members or a celebrity. Match up of source and endorser is supported by the study of Misra and Beatty (1990). According to them "recall and affect" is improved if there is some similarity between source endorser and brand.

Celebrity Expertise

According to Hovland et al., (1953) the term expertise is defined as "the extent to which a communicator is perceived to be a source of valid assertions". In order to persuade recipients of message conveyed; endorser's expertise has an encouraging effect on the receivers. (Ohanian, 1990). Belch and Belch (1994) said that information receivers have strong belief upon the person who is practical and has related knowledge and expertise in the advocating area. Endorser with high knowledge and skills has stronger power of recommendation as compare to those endorsers who have low expertise. Ohanian, (1990).

Celebrity Endorsement in Advertising

Celebrities like actors, models or sportsmen are often seen endorsing various brands. For example in Pakistan, Shahid Afridi a famous Cricketer is seen in various advertisings like ‘Head and Shoulders’ and ‘Dettol’. Rosca (2010) in his paper ‘‘Celebrity Endorsement in Advertising’’ discusses the endorsement of sports celebrities in advertisement. According to him sportsmen earn through endorsement which helps them bear their costs of training. The better the performance the more will be the sponsorship contracts. Celebrity endorsement can be analyzed from two points of views for the case of sports. In marketing through sport, the image of player is used with the aim to benefit from positive image transfer and thus increase the awareness of their brand and product purchases. In marketing for sport, the players use marketing to get supporting success chance and to increase their incomes.

Methods

Quantitative approach deals with numerical values or simply quantity. It studies causes and

effects. Close ended questions are asked in questionnaires to answer the question ‘‘what’’. In this study the researchers used the quantitative research method.

In this study the researchers used the face to face survey method where the questionnaire is directly handed over to the respondents and collected at the spot. Sample of respondents took from university of Gujrat’s students. Simple Random sampling technique is used since it is convenient and feasible for the topic. Stratification of the sample is done on the basis of gender. Sample is simply divided in to two stratum ‘female’ and ‘male ’from rural and Urban area of Gujrat. To conduct this research a sample of 200 respondents was taken by the researchers. After collection data researcher presented data in tables and graphs in analysis.

Analysis

Table 1 I think products endorsed by celebrities are quality products.

		Where is your residence?			
		Urban		Rural	
		What is your gender?		What is your gender?	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
		Count	Count	Count	Count
I think that products endorsed by celebrities are quality products.	Strongly agree	3	3	1	6
	Agree	16	20	24	11
	Neutral	20	20	17	13
	Disagree	8	7	5	20
	Strongly Disagree	3	0	3	0
	Total	50	50	50	50

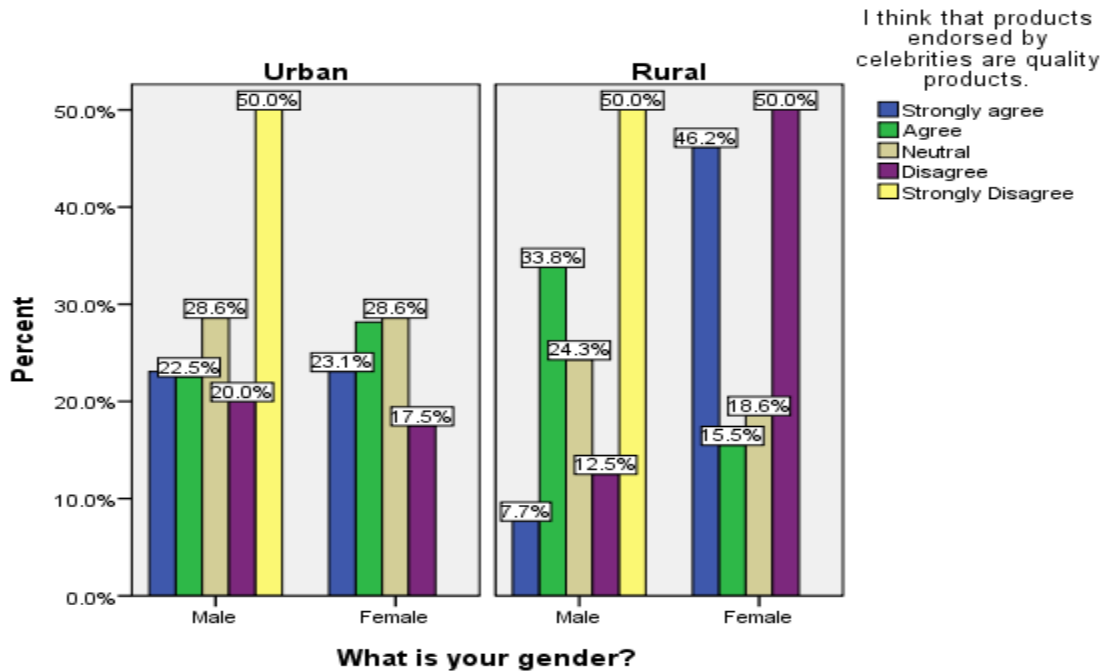


Fig.1 shows that 23% urban males and 23.1% urban females strongly agree that products endorsed by celebrities are quality products whereas 7.7% rural males and 46.2% rural females think the same. 22.5% urban males and 28% urban females agree that products endorsed by celebrities are quality products. 33.8% rural males and 15.5% rural females agree that products endorsed by celebrities are quality

products. 28.6% urban males and 28.6% urban females whereas 24.3% rural males and 18.6% rural females are neutral about this statement. 20% urban males, 17.5% urban females and 12.5% rural males and 50% rural females disagree to it whereas 50% urban males and 50% rural males strongly disagree to the statement that celebrity endorsed products are quality products.

Table 2 A celebrity gives a positive image to the endorsed brand.

		Where is your residence?			
		Urban		Rural	
		What is your gender?		What is your gender?	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
		Count	Count	Count	Count
A celebrity gives a positive image to the endorsed brand.	Strongly Agree	5	8	13	11
	Agree	29	19	18	15
	Neutral	11	14	3	15
	Disagree	3	6	14	7
	Strongly Disagree	2	3	2	2
	Total	50	50	50	50

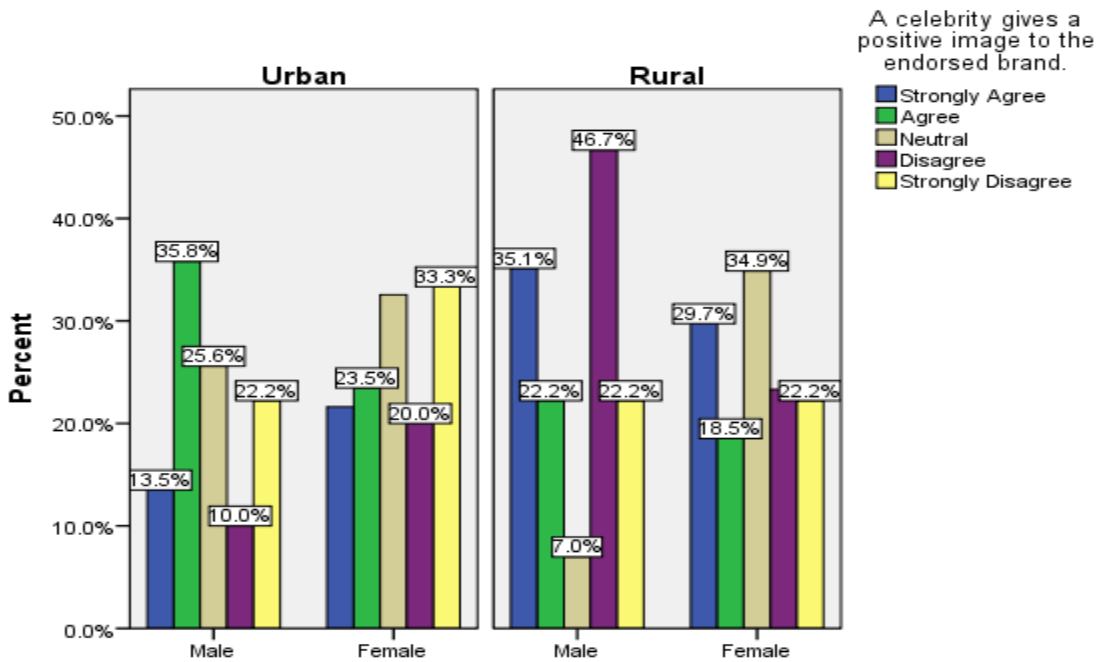


Fig.2 illustrates that 13.5% urban males, 22% females and 35.1% rural males, 29.7% rural females strongly agree that a celebrity gives a positive image to the endorsed brand. 35.8% urban males, 23.5% females and 22.2% rural males, 18.5% females agree that celebrities give a positive image to the brand. Whereas 10%

urban males, 20% females and 46.7% rural males, 22.5% females disagree that celebrities give any positive image to the brand. 22.2% urban males and 33.3% urban females strongly disagree that celebrities give positive image to a brand whereas 22.2% rural females and 22.2% rural males strongly disagree to it.

Table 3 I think celebrities themselves use the product they endorse.

		Where is your residence?			
		Urban		Rural	
		What is your gender?		What is your gender?	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
		Count	Count	Count	Count
I think celebrities themselves use the product which they endorse.	Strongly Agree	2	1	2	4
	Agree	12	6	17	10
	Neutral	15	13	12	9
	Disagree	16	21	13	19
	Strongly Disagree	5	9	6	8
	Total	50	50	50	50

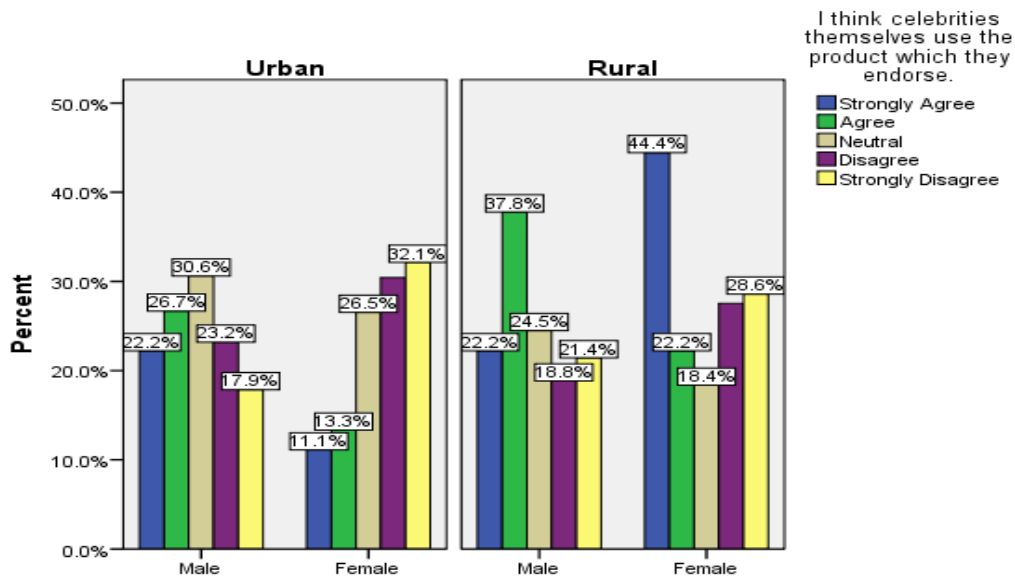


Fig.3 shows that 22.2% urban males, 11.1% females and 22.1% rural males, 44.4% rural females strongly agree that celebrities themselves use the products which they endorse. 26.7% urban males, 13.3% females and 37.8% rural

males, 22.2% rural females agree that celebrities themselves use the products which they endorse. 23.2% urban males, 30% females and 18.8% rural males, 26% rural females disagree that celebrities themselves use the products which they endorse.

Table 4 Presence of celebrities in an advertisement makes it credible.

	Where is your residence?				
	Urban		Rural		
	What is your gender?		What is your gender?		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
	Count	Count	Count	Count	
Presence of celebrities in an advertisement makes it credible.	Strongly Agree	7	3	10	8
	Agree	29	23	20	21
	Neutral	9	18	15	13
	Disagree	3	6	5	8
	Strongly Disagree	2	0	0	0
	Total	50	50	50	50

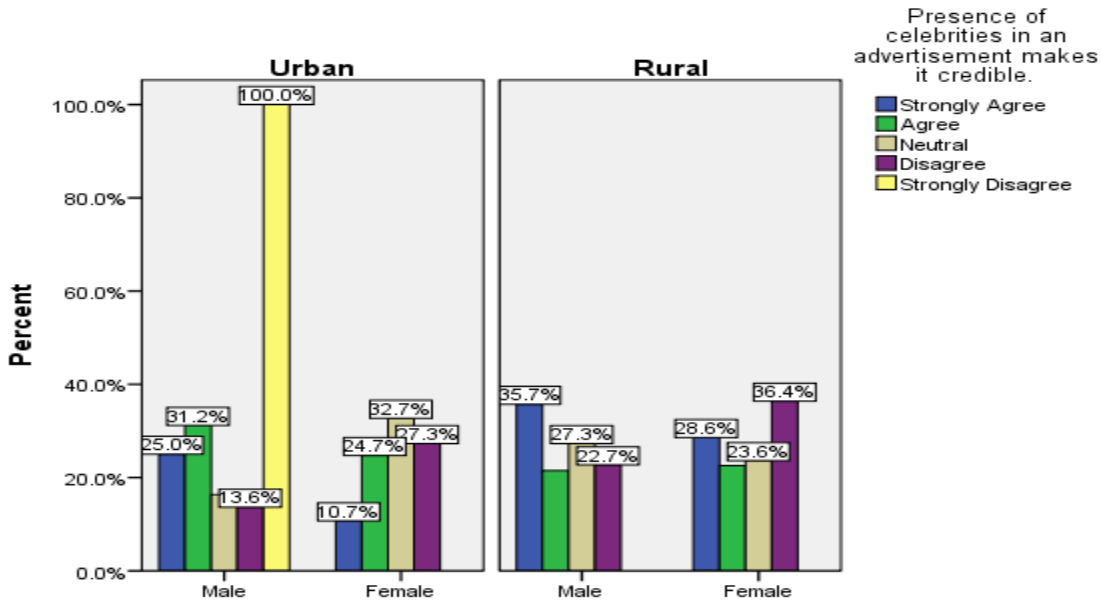


Fig 4 shows that 25% urban males, 10.7% urban females and 35.7% rural males strongly agree that presence of celebrity in an advertisement makes it credible. 31.2% urban males, 24.7% urban females and 23% rural males,

23% females agree that presence of celebrity in an advertisement makes it credible. 13.6% urban males, 27.3% urban females and 22.7% rural males, 36% females disagree that presence of celebrity in an advertisement makes it credible.

Table 5 Celebrities are trustworthy source of product endorsement.

		Where is your residence?			
		Urban		Rural	
		What is your gender?		What is your gender?	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
		Count	Count	Count	Count
Celebrities are trustworthy source of product endorsement.	Strongly Agree	5	3	4	2
	Agree	15	22	27	13
	Neutral	20	14	13	18
	Disagree	9	9	6	12
	Strongly Disagree	1	2	0	5
	Total	50	50	50	50

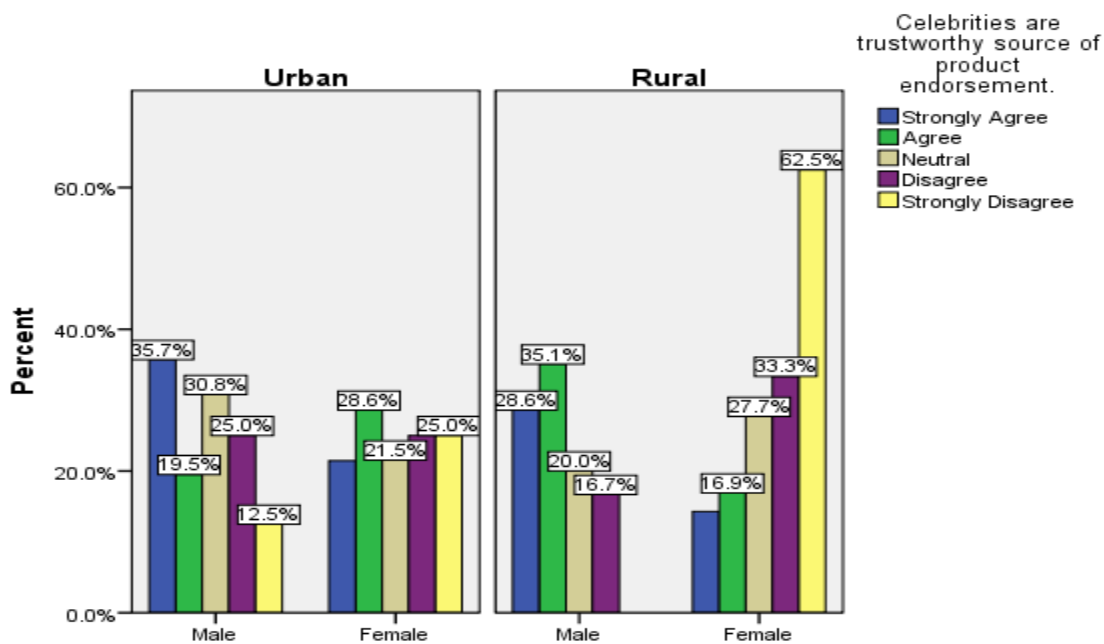


Fig.5 shows that 35.7% urban males, 21.5% females and 28.6% rural males, 12.5% females strongly agree that celebrities are trustworthy source of product endorsement. 19.5% urban males, 28.6% females and 35.1% rural males, 16.9% females agree that celebrities are trustworthy source of product endorsement. 25% urban males, 21.5% females and 16.7% rural

males, 33.3% females disagree that celebrities are trustworthy source of product endorsement. Whereas 12.5% urban males, 25% females and 52.5% rural females strongly disagree that celebrities are trustworthy source of product endorsement.

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings show that rural females think that products endorsed by celebrities are quality products. Most of the urban females also think that products endorsed by celebrities are quality products whereas this trend is higher in rural male as compared to urban male by this we can analyze that they find celebrities credible. Amongst all, the trend is higher in rural female.

More than urban and rural females, rural male think that presence of celebrities in an advertisement makes it credible. This trend is higher in urban male than urban females and the same trend exists in rural population i.e. more males as compared to females think celebrity presence make advertisements credible, and rural female has this trend more than urban females.

From the results it came to light that more than urban females, urban males think that celebrities gives a positive image to endorsed brand. Similar trend is found in rural students. More urban males than urban females think that celebrities give a positive image to endorsed brand. Most of all urban males think celebrities give positive image to endorsed brand.

Findings revealed that more than urban males, urban females think that celebrities themselves use the product which they endorse. This shows their trust level on the celebrities. More than rural males' rural females think that celebrities use the endorsed products themselves. The trend is higher in rural population as compared to urban population. Most of all rural females hold this perception.

Celebrities are a trustworthy source of product endorsement. Urban males believe this statement more than urban females. More than rural females, rural male think that celebrities are a trustworthy source of product endorsement. Most of all rural male have this trend. Trend is least in rural females.

H1: More the celebrity credibility more the positive perception of students.

This hypothesis is approved based on the results of the study. Most of the students agreed that credibility of celebrities is a good source to make positive perception of students to endorse brands.

H2: More the celebrity brand congruence more the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement.

The results of research proved that Majority of the students responded that presence of appropriate celebrity in an advertisement makes good matchup with brand features and thus it influences the perception of students positively.

In the light of findings of this study it can be stated that celebrity credibility has a positive effect on the perception of students regarding celebrity endorsement. It is proved that more the celebrity credibility more will be the positive perception of students. Most rural and urban students agreed that celebrities are a trustworthy source of endorsing. Rural students show greater trust on celebrities. Female students trust celebrities more than male students. It is proved that more the celebrity attractiveness more will be the influence on purchase intention. Female students intend to purchase celebrity endorsed brands more than male students. Celebrity endorsed advertisements positively affects the purchase intention of rural students more than urban students. But urban students tend to buy celebrity endorsed products more than rural students. Affordability can be a potential reason.

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