

MODERATION EFFECT OF SOURCE CREDIBILITY ON OPENNESS TO EXPERIENCE AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT

Apoorva Bhatnagar*, Sidhi Verma**, Santosh Kumar Kanojeya***, V.K. Singh****

Faculty of Management Studies, Gurukul Kangri Vishwavidyalaya, Haridwar, Uttarakhand, India

*Correspondence: apoorva10.bhatnagar@gmail.com

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Abstract

The study aims at examining the direct impact of openness to experience on attitude towards celebrity endorsements in personal care segment. To analyse in depth the relationship between openness to experience and attitude towards celebrity endorsements, source credibility is used as moderating variable. Sample consisted of 350 respondents from eight metros of India collected using mall intercept method. Linear regression and hierarchical regression (Hayes Process) using SPSS 23 was used to analyse the data. Results showed that openness to experience is a significant predictor of attitude towards celebrity endorsements. Also, source credibility is found to moderate the relationship between openness to experience and attitude towards celebrity endorsements.

Keywords: Source credibility, Attitude towards celebrity endorsements, openness to experience, moderation, Hayes Process

Introduction

With the changing era, there has been huge amount of customization that companies are doing in advertising as a part of making the best move towards the customer. What is important is to understand how customer behaves, what it responds to and why it responds in such a manner. Therefore, customer being the centre of the universe for advertising world, it becomes essential for them to reach customer's psychological level and work the offer in such a way that it attracts the customer and induces them to purchase.

Decoding personality of the customer will help the marketer to device such an advertisement and helping the company to ultimately make desired effect in the customer. Celebrity endorsements are very popular technique of advertisement used for making the advertisement attractive by adding glamour quotient (Spielman, 1981). Moreover, it helps in attention and recall of the brand associated with it. Celebrity is any famous person who possesses some amount of persuasive power and uses it to associate themselves with some brand, cause or anything to promote it. Thus, brands use the influential power of celebrities to make their claims believable to the consumer.

Consumers associate themselves with the celebrity and therefore, it is very important to understand personality of the consumer as well how much credible a celebrity is perceived by the consumer. Openness to experience is such a trait which deals with novelty of ideas, unconventional approach, creativity, imagination and aesthetics (McCrae and Costa, 2003) and has been found to impact the attitude of the consumer. People who are low on this trait usually do not like to adapt to changes and accept new things. They are usually not interested in abstract ideas. It would be interesting to uncover if openness to experience impacts attitude towards celebrity endorsements.

Moreover, source credibility has been studied a lot in celebrity endorsements literature (Hovland & Weiss, 1951; Ohanian, 1990; Roy et al., 2013; Luo et al., 2015). Thus, making source credibility, an apt variable to understand, if there is more to the relationship between openness to experience and attitude towards celebrity endorsements in context of personal care products. Therefore this study aims to examine if source credibility moderates the relationship between openness to experience and attitude towards celebrity endorsements.

Theoretical Background

Openness to Experience and Attitude towards Celebrity Endorsements

Openness to experience has been associated with intellect (Goldberg, 1990) and people high on this trait are usually very creative, open to new ideas, adventurous and possess a sense for aesthetics (George and Zhou, 2001). Openness is found to be related to hedonic aspect of stimulus (Gohary and Hanzaee, 2014). People with this trait tend to be high on emotions and therefore, advertisements with stories and creating an emotional connect are more preferred by open people (Ozhan et al., 2018). Previous researches suggest that favourable attitude towards endorsements may lead to intention to purchase the product and further it may convert into actual purchase behaviour (Batra and Ray, 1986; Khairullah and Khairullah, 1999).

Personality helps in grasping the cues from the advertisement (Khairullah and Khairullah, 1999) which may be responsible for formation of the attitude towards celebrity endorsements. Roy et al., (2013) concluded in their study that conscientiousness, openness and agreeableness have a moderating impact on the relationship between source credibility and attitude of consumer towards advertisements.

Source Credibility

Source credibility has emerged from combining two theories by Ohanian (1990) namely source attractiveness theory (McGuire, 1985) and old credibility theory which constituted of two dimensions only trustworthiness and expertise (Hovland et al., 1953). This study uses the model by Ohanian (1990) which measures source credibility through three dimensions i.e. attractiveness, expertise and trustworthiness. Attractiveness is related to physical appearance of the celebrity which is found to highly impact the audience as it helps in gaining attention towards the advertisement (Kamins, 1990).

Trustworthiness refers to perceived feeling of trust on the celebrity which increases the dependability quotient helping brand to build trust. Expertise refers to the perceived knowledge of the celebrity in the domain of the product endorsed. These three dimensions help in understanding whether consumer thinks the celebrity to be credible because this directly impacts the perception about the product or brand endorsed (Ohanian, 1990). Hence this study argues that openness to experience would be an important factor in determining the attitude of consumer towards celebrity endorsements and further source credibility moderates the relationship between openness to experience and attitude towards celebrity endorsements. Thus, following hypotheses are proposed:

H₁: Openness to experience is a significant predictor of attitude towards celebrity endorsements.

H₂: Source credibility moderates the relationship between openness to experience and attitude towards celebrity endorsements.

METHODS

Sample

Sample was collected from eight metro cities of India namely Mumbai, Delhi, Pune, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai, Kolkata and Ahmadabad. Data was collected using Mall Intercept method from all the eight cities. After screening, of 350 responses, 300 questionnaires were used for data analysis and the effective response rate is 85.7 %. Sample consisted of 59.86% of female respondents.

Measures

The study referred to previous literatures to design questionnaire items on source credibility (Ohanian, 1990), openness to experience (Donnellan et al., 2006), and attitude towards celebrity endorsement (Onley et al., 1991). The validity of the instrument came out to be 0.706 checked using Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test of sphericity. KMO established sample adequacy as the value was above 0.50 (Kaiser, 1974; Field, 2009). The Cronbach's alpha value of 0.771, indicates that the internal consistency of the scale is satisfactory. The Cronbach's alpha values are in the acceptable range of 0.5–1 (Field, 2009).

Result

The objective of the study was to understand if openness to experience is the predictor of attitude towards celebrity endorsements. Further to decode this relationship further source credibility was used as moderating variable. Hierarchical multiple regression was conducted using the process developed by Hayes (2012). In the first step, two variables were included: openness to experience and source credibility. To avoid potentially problematic high multi-collinearity with the interaction term, the variables were centred and an interaction term between openness to experience and source credibility was created (Aiken et al., 1991).

In the first step of the moderation process, the regression of openness to experience on attitude towards celebrity endorsements—ignoring the moderator, source credibility was checked. It came out to be significant, $b = -.373$, $t(298) = 4.84$, $p < 0.05$ (Table 1 and 2). Result showed that the first hypothesis is accepted, that is, openness to experience is a significant predictor of attitude towards celebrity endorsements.

Table 1 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.270 ^a	.073	.070	7.31901	.073	23.516	1	298	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), OPEN

Table 2 Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	9.828	1.093		8.991	.000
	OPEN	.373	.077	.270	4.849	.000

a. Dependent Variable: ATTI

Next, the interaction term between openness and source credibility was added to the regression model and the impact of this was checked on attitude towards celebrity endorsements. It came out to be significant, $b = .059$, $t(296) = 3.34$, $p < 0.05$. Result showed that the second hypothesis is accepted, that is, source credibility moderates the relationship between openness to experience and attitude towards celebrity endorsements.

Run MATRIX procedure: **Table 3**

***** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 3.5 *****

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D. www.afhayes.com
 Documentation available in Hayes (2018). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

Model : 1
 Y : ATTI
 X : OPEN
 W : CRED

Sample
 Size: 300

OUTCOME VARIABLE:
 ATTI

Model Summary
 R R-sq MSE F df1 df2 p
 .3277 .1074 51.9390 11.8662 3.0000 296.0000 .0000

Model	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	17.1388	2.4767	6.9201	.0000	12.2647	22.0129
OPEN	-.2030	.1907	-1.0643	.2881	-.5782	.1723
CRED	-.7830	.2433	-3.2183	.0014	-1.2619	-.3042
Int_1	.0594	.0178	3.3437	.0009	.0244	.0943

Product terms key:

Int_1 : OPEN x CRED

Covariance matrix of regression parameter estimates:

	constant	OPEN	CRED	Int_1
constant	6.1339	-.4275	-.5415	.0372
OPEN	-.4275	.0364	.0371	-.0031
CRED	-.5415	.0371	.0592	-.0039
Int_1	.0372	-.0031	-.0039	.0003

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):

	R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p
X*W	.0337	11.1802	1.0000	296.0000	.0009

Focal predict: OPEN (X)

Mod var: CRED (W)

Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator(s):

CRED	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
6.0000	.1533	.1029	1.4902	.1372	-.0492	.3557
9.0000	.3314	.0788	4.2069	.0000	.1764	.4865
14.0000	.6283	.1074	5.8522	.0000	.4170	.8396

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:

95.0000

W values in conditional tables are the 16th, 50th, and 84th percentiles.

----- END MATRIX -----

General Discussion

The study aimed at finding if openness to experience is a predictor of attitude towards celebrity endorsements. It also adds to the marketing literature by examining the moderating effect of source credibility on the relationship between openness to experience and attitude towards celebrity endorsements. The findings of the study suggest that openness is a significant predictor of attitude towards celebrity endorsements, thus accepting the first hypothesis. Open people tend to try new things, adapt to changes, and make a bond with other people, making them the segment which may get influenced through celebrity endorsements as they have a positive attitude towards celebrity endorsements (George and Zhou, 2001; John & Srivastava, 1999).

Moreover, moderation also came out to be significant which suggests that source credibility is important to people who are high on openness to experience. Further, it suggests that customer makes a certain perception regarding the expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness of the celebrity. And this perception is an important factor in forming an attitude towards celebrity endorsements (Sternthal et al., 1978; Goldsmith et al., 2000; Bhatnagar and Verma, 2019).

Theoretical and Practical Implications

The study has immense theoretical and practical implication. This study adds to the personality as well as marketing literature as it analysis the significance of personality in determining the attitude towards celebrity endorsements. Source credibility being an important variable in celebrity studies, this research establishes a

positive significant moderating impact of source credibility on the relationship between openness to experience and attitude towards celebrity endorsement. It is important for managers to understand how the celebrity is perceived by the consumer. If celebrity is credible, then it would create a positive influence on the attitude of open consumer, towards celebrity endorsements. This would lead to positive attitude towards brand and in turn may also impact the purchase intention for the product.

Limitations and Future Research

A small sample size of 300 could be one of the limitations of the study as more the sample size more generalizable would be the results. Moreover, this study was based in India, it would be interesting to unravel the comparative effects of similar research in other parts of the world. Further this study was mainly conducted for personal care segment. Future research could be conducted for other segments also. Source credibility is one factor that moderates the relationship between openness to experience and attitude towards celebrity endorsements but there could be other factors such as product involvement, advertisement type, medium used which could impact this relationship.

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