The Effect of Personality (Brand Ambassadors) on Advertisement and Consumers Purchase Intentions in the Telecommunication Industry

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ABSTRACT

Celebrity advertisement is a popular method adopted by companies, and NGO’s to increase the awareness of their product or service, sales and profit margin. The notion behind this strategy is that consumers and the general public usually endorse the lifestyle and personality of these celebrities. To this effect they tend to patronize the goods and services endorsed by such celebrities. The advertising literature does not mention much about these celebrity advertisement, therefore this research will bridge the gap by empirically testing to find out if celebrities have any influence on such advertisements and if they influence consumers purchase intentions. A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to 290 Ghanaians, using Glo Mobile Ghana Ltd as a case study. After analyzing the data received, the findings affirmed that celebrity advertisement does not always have a positive influence on products and consumers’ purchase intentions. Conclusions and managerial implications are discussed

KEYWORDS

Celebrity Advertisement, Consumer Dissatisfaction, Consumer Purchase Intention, (CPI), Ghana, Globacom, Mobile Network

INTRODUCTION

Celebrities over the years have helped in advertisements in several companies and non-governmental agencies. Muda, Musa and Putit affirmed that when celebrities are used advertisements become very effective as they aid the channel of communication (Muda, Musa, & Putit, 2012). In his paper, J Sridevi described celebrities as the population who are perceived by the public as “extraordinary” (Sridevi, 2014). Most people envy the lives of celebrities in one way or the other. They are perceived to have a special kind of skill or a kind of lavished lifestyle. Generally, people tend to have a positive attitude towards a particular brand because of the celebrities they use advertising such products and services. This has been confirmed by several studies (Atkin & Block, 1983; La Ferle & Choi, 2005; McCracken, 1989; Petty, Cacioppo, & Schumann, 1983). More often than not, consumers apportion a certain level of plausibility to goods and services that are advertised by celebrities. This is because these celebrities are expected to know better and have a particular choice of goods or services. Therefore, as long as they use these products, the consumer can quickly endorse it, thereby increasing the purchasing intentions. In terms of quality, consumers usually regard products and services endorsed by celebrities to have a

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level of good condition and this idea plays a vital role in their purchasing decisions (Sridevi, 2014). This research is based on Globacom Ghana, otherwise known as Glo. As the growing population of Ghana needs to daily get in touch with families, friends, business partners and so on, the need for mobile phones and mobile networks keep rising. Celebrity advertisement over the years has become very popular in Ghana and the celebrities used are mostly called brand ambassadors. It has become an obvious phenomenon that companies invest a lot in celebrity advertisement because of its enticing nature (Kamins, Brand, Hoekke, & Moe, 1989)

Therefore, the main aim of this research is to test empirically if celebrity ambassadors have a positive effect on why consumers in Ghana tend to use Glo network as against other networks in Ghana. Glo was chosen because it was the last network to come into the Ghanaian mobile network. Some celebrities are both entrepreneurs and promote other company’s brands. Though literature on this area is very limited, Hunter affirms that there are similarities in these two areas (Hunter, 2009). Celebrity entrepreneurs and promoters are mostly seen in the western world where technology is far advanced and the general population, especially the youth are greatly captivated about such celebrities. This idea has been affirmed by several researchers (Douglas, 2003; McCutcheon, Lange, & Houran, 2002). There have been other researches on customers MTN and Vodafone Ghana, but none so far on Glo Ghana. This paper is set to bridge the gap in this regard (Boateng, 2016; Goni, 2011; Kpodoh, 2009). Glo is a private company and one of the growing telecom networks in Africa. They began in Nigeria, then to the republic of Benin and extended their territories to Cote d’Ivoire and Ghana in mid-2009 as the sixth entrant in the mobile network sectors in Ghana (Abeku, 2009). Their mission statement is “Building Africa’s biggest and best telecommunications network” (facebook.com /pg/ GloWorldGH/about).

As part of Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR), Glo gives back to the community by being the major sponsor of the Ghana premier league. By the end of 2015, Glo had about 1.2 million customers. In March 2016, Glo has to close some of their customer service shops due to inability to deliver quality service to their customers. This led to a significant reduction in their customers. They lost over 500,000 customers within a period of 11 months from January to November 2016 (Saridey, 2017).

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND HYPOTHESES**

This section discusses the framework in finding out what motivates consumers’ purchase intentions in relation to brand ambassadors. Farrell et al., in their research asserted that celebrity advertisers play an outstanding role that cannot be overlooked (Farrell, Karels, Montfort, & McClatchey, 2000).

**Celebrity Advertisement and Credibility**

Several companies use celebrities as brand ambassadors in advertising their products so as to create awareness on a larger scale. Compared to the ordinary population, celebrities are considered as having a certain level of credibility (Muda, Musa, Mohamed, & Borhan, 2014). As long as the society at large look up to such celebrities in a way, companies are sure of success in utilizing the services of brand ambassadors and many companies invest a lot in this regard. McGuire (1989) explains a celebrity advertiser as one who is well known by the public and therefore takes advantage of that to market goods and services (McGuire, 1969). Speck, Schumann & Thompson (1988) also describes a celebrity as a person who is popular (Speck, Schumann, & Thompson, 1988).

When celebrities are used as brand ambassadors, it can increase the awareness of the product or services being advertised, particularly when the product or service is new in the system (De Pelsmacker, Geuens, & Van den Bergh, 2007). Dyson and Turco (1998) affirmed to this statement. Their research concluded that organizations will make a lot of profit when they make use of celebrities, especially those who are into sports because consumers will prefer such goods and services as opposed to those without celebrities (Dyson & Turco, 1998). Research has confirmed that credibility has a greater influence on advertisement especially when celebrities are involved (Pornpitakpan, 2004). Consumers
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