

Exploring the Effectiveness of Celebrity Endorsement on Sri Lankan Fashion Industry

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Celebrity Endorsement (CE) strategy can be an effective competitive measure to differentiate a firm's products from that of its competitors. However, there is a serious lack of prior research on assessing the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements on Sri Lankan fashion industry. Given this background, the current research seeks to explore the effectiveness of CE on the Sri Lankan fashion sector. Adopting a mixed research approach, both qualitative and quantitative data were used to fulfill this research aim. During the qualitative phase of this research in-depth interviews were conducted with six fashion retailers in Sri Lanka. The seven key themes emerged from the thematic analysis were celebrity endorsement in local fashion brands; choosing the right celebrity; increasing sales; celebrity advertising drawbacks; types of celebrities; overall brand strategy of CE and building a brand with a celebrity. The subsequent survey phase was devoted to gathering data from 85 local consumers. The analysis strongly suggested that celebrity endorsement indeed has an impact on the Sri Lankan fashion retail sector. Thus, this research contributes to the existing theoretical understanding of CE. From a practical point of view this research shows the effectiveness of CE on the Sri Lankan fashion industry, thereby suggesting that fashion marketers would benefit by the use of CE in their advertising and branding.

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