

Assessing the Celebrity Effects on Change in Brand Association and Consumer's Attitude in a Celebrity-Collaborated Fashion Brand in Hong Kong

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Abstract : Fashion industry is fast moving with intense competitions; it is hard for fashion retailers to stand out among their peers. In order to promote and enhance uniqueness, fashion retailers have collaborated with different brands or celebrity in their marketing campaign recently. As brand-celebrity collaboration is a growing phenomenon in the Hong Kong fashion industry, this research aims to investigate the effect of celebrity on altering consumer's brand association and the overall attitude towards the co-branded products. One of the popular celebrity-collaborated fashion brands was chosen for this study and a survey was conducted among university students in Hong Kong which yielded 222 responses. By using factor analysis, linear regression and bootstrap test for the mediation, the results show that three celebrity attributes namely "expertise", "trustworthiness" and "attractiveness" affect the evaluation of the co-branded products. In addition, the change in the association of the brand and co-branded product attributes mediates the relationship between the characteristics of the celebrity and the overall attitude of the co-branded product. The result shows "expertise" of the celebrity has a perfect mediation, while "trustworthiness" and "attractiveness" of the celebrity have partial mediation. This implies that expertise of the celebrity is capable in altering the association towards both the brand and core product attributes and bringing a positive attitude towards the co-brand. The trustworthiness and the attractiveness of the celebrity are able to alter the consumer association towards the brand, but do not guarantee a complete positive attitude towards the co-branded product. This means that change in brand attributes is not a definite mediator as direct relationship may happen or there may be other factors that can affect the relationship between the celebrity's persuasiveness and the overall attitude towards the co-branded collection.

Keywords : brand attribute, brand-celebrity collaborations, co-branding, fashion industry

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