



# Building Brand Identity In Fashion Industry: The Role Of Bollywood Women Celebrities

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**Abstract:** Consumers now view brands as more than just indicators of quality, trust, and reliability. They have become a part of consumer identity, allowing individuals to express themselves and realise their unique style, especially in the fashion industry. In particular, popular Bollywood actresses play a crucial role in shaping fashion brand identity. Their diverse personalities and immense popularity enable brands to connect with specific audiences and build a strong emotional bond, ultimately influencing consumer perception and brand image. Celebrity endorsements have emerged as a powerful communication tool, as celebrities carry more influence and relatability than anonymous models. Campaigns often highlight the significance of the celebrity in relation to the brand. The paper takes a conceptual approach, drawing upon a range of literature in the areas of branding, celebrity endorsements, and fashion marketing. The research concludes that fashion branding has adopted a new strategy for Bollywood celebrity advertising, one that reflects the need to move away from traditional campaigns and shift the focus from print media to social media with a change in consumer's attention span and brand preferences.

**Keywords:** Celebrity Endorsement, Branding, Fashion Marketing, Advertising, Brand Communication, Female Celebrity

## I. INTRODUCTION

Celebrity endorsements have become a powerful marketing tool in the fashion industry. Fueled by success stories, this trend has grown globally over the past two decades. Gone are the days of simple celebrity appearances in commercials. Today, celebrities often invest in the brands they endorse, ensuring a mutually beneficial partnership (Shimp, 2008). While research on celebrity endorsements is extensive, much of it focuses on effectiveness and the impact of positive or negative information about the celebrity or brand (Bailey, 2007; Edward and La Ferle, 2009).

India's booming fashion market, projected to be the world's third-largest, is attracting luxury brands. To entice affluent consumers and foster inclusivity, these brands are collaborating with popular Indian celebrities for advertising campaigns and photoshoots. Industry experts highlight the growing influence of Indian celebrities on the global stage, citing Deepika Padukone, Alia Bhatt, and Priyanka Chopra as prime examples. However, a deeper level of engagement, such as Dior's recent Mumbai fashion show featuring Indian artisans, is seen as even more impactful in attracting international attention to India's luxury fashion scene (DeccanChronicle, 2023)

## II. Methodology

The paper is conceptual in approach, drawing upon a range of literature in the area of branding, celebrity endorsement and fashion marketing and synthesising a diverse body of literature encompassing branding, celebrity endorsement, and fashion marketing. By assimilating insights from these fields, it navigates the complex interplay between consumer perceptions, brand identity, and celebrity influence within the fashion domain. This methodology allows for a comprehensive exploration of the evolving dynamics shaping consumer behaviour and brand strategies. By grounding its analysis in existing theoretical frameworks and empirical studies, the paper offers a nuanced understanding of the role of Bollywood woman celebrity endorsement in contemporary brand communications. It seeks to contribute to the scholarly discourse by offering fresh perspectives and insights into this dynamic intersection.

Advertisements considered to study:

YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JosWoVYnbKA> -Kiara Advan- Myntra

YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MaFeaJa4w54> - Deepika - Levis

YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q\\_BsAYrA64M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q_BsAYrA64M) -Sonam Kapoor - Zoya

YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pgpwma0QxZ0> - Katrina Kaif - Uniqlo

YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9e5wY1rRnM4>-AnanyaPandey- Lakme

## III. Evolution of Branding

Branding serves multiple purposes for manufacturers, acting as product identification, legal protection, and a key differentiator. As societies transitioned and consumer needs evolved, branding practices adapted as well. Beyond product identification, brands have fostered passionate communities and subcultures around shared values. These groups become loyal customers and dedicated targets for marketers. Branding has become a critical marketing tool and a valuable resource for consumers, offering numerous documented advantages.

The concept of branding has a long history, with some tracing it back to the Stone Age. However, the focus and strategies have shifted significantly over time. Until the 1970s, branding was primarily associated with mass production and communication. Companies relied on commercials to differentiate products based on quality and functionality. From the 1970s to 1990s, the focus shifted towards the service sector, and companies began emphasizing the unique benefits their products offered beyond function. During this time, brands evolved to become storytelling brands, creating meaning for consumers through their narratives (Roper & Parker, 2006).

The history of celebrity endorsements in India boasts a long lineage, with the first instance featuring an Indian actress endorsing a product in 1929 (details about actress and product can be added here). However, the trend truly boomed in the late 1990s, likely fueled by factors like increased television penetration and a growing middle class. Cricketers and Bollywood film actors, revered figures in Indian society, became the go-to faces for brands. A 2008 report by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) revealed a staggering increase in celebrity endorsements, with 60% of Indian brands leveraging their star power compared to just 25% in 2001. This significant rise highlights the powerful influence celebrities hold over consumer behavior in India. The obsession with celebrities is so great that even small brands with limited marketing budgets are willing to pay for celebrity endorsements (Shashidhar, 2008). After completing a purchase, traditional expectations suggest that the buyer's ties with the manufacturer and retailer would cease. However, modern consumers display brand promiscuity, interacting with various brands through unconventional media channels beyond the control of manufacturers and sellers. They constantly evaluate and expand their brand choices, even after making a purchase. These customers remain highly engaged, openly expressing opinions, both positive and negative, about the products they buy. They actively contribute to shaping and questioning the significance of brands while contributing to their evolution. (Harvard Business Review 2010).

#### IV. The image (impression) of the celebrity

Celebrities are individuals who achieve a high level of public recognition within a particular social group or even globally. This recognition often stems from exceptional skills or achievements in fields like entertainment, sports, or business. While some celebrities gain fame through their captivating personality or strong social media presence, many others achieve it through years of dedication and mastery in their chosen field. The rise of mass media, particularly television and social media, has significantly impacted how celebrities are created and how their fame is spread. These celebrities are constantly in the public eye, making appearances at professional engagements, as well as in news, fashion shows, magazines, tabloids, and advertisements (Brian & Busler, 1998). In India, celebrity endorsement has become a widely adopted marketing strategy, with celebrities being used in television commercials and social media to promote a variety of products and services. For instance, Levi's, the world's largest apparel company and a global leader in jeans, has chosen Deepika Padukone as its global brand face to promote its fashion offerings of quality and comfort (The Economics Times, 2021).

The impact of celebrity endorsements on consumer buying behavior, particularly in relation to clothing brands, is a topic of great interest to researchers. This is because fashion trends, defined as popular styles in clothing and jewelry that change over time, are often seen as reflections of social and economic status (Widiastuti et al, 2022). Celebrity endorsements can significantly influence fashion trends and consumer behavior. By associating themselves with a brand, celebrities add an element of glamour and recognition (Belch & Belch, 1995). This familiarity can generate excitement and create demand for the endorsed products. Furthermore, celebrities can build trust with consumers, especially for new products, and their endorsements help brands stand out from the advertising clutter (Arun Kumar et al, 2006).

A celebrity's support for a brand sends a persuasive message, and since the celebrity benefits from the brand, the consumer will also benefit. There is a demographic and psychographic connection between celebrities and their fans. According to "Brand perception by celebrity endorsement" by Saumendra Das and P. K Padhy, the management's decision to pursue an endorsement relationship is the starting point for creating brand equity through celebrity endorsement. The management must consider three sets of factors: celebrity attributes, cultural dimensions, and celebrity endorsement factors. These factors include credibility, expertise, popularity, attractiveness, affordability (Silvera and Austad, 2004), celebrity profession, celebrity life cycle (Erdogan et al., 2001), and personality (Keller, 2003). "Celebrity endorsements vis-à-vis brand equity of high fashion products: a cross-cultural perspective" by Amir Jafar, Phani Tej Adidam, and Musunuri V. Rama Prasad provides further insight into this process.

These celebrities are highly popular and renowned for their fashionable choices. Consumers are well aware that these celebrities are often seen wearing designer clothes and frequently appear on "best dressed" lists. They rely on their physical attractiveness and ability to look good in designer clothing to sell products. As a result, consumers have a higher intent to purchase products from the second and third advertisements. This could be due to the fact that these celebrities are constantly in the public eye, and consumers feel as though they already know them, so there is no need for them to prove their trustworthiness or expertise in fashion.

In the world of celebrity endorsements, major fashion brands have enlisted A-list Bollywood actresses to showcase their styles. Myntra has tapped into Kiara Advani's youthful charm and trendsetting fashion sense, while Levi's has secured Deepika Padukone's timeless beauty and edgy charisma or Katrina Kaif's brings national and international images to Uniqlo. This strategic move by these brands leverages the immense influence of these celebrities to connect with their target audiences and elevate their brand image. It is expected that Kiara Advani's partnership with Myntra will resonate with fashion-forward youth, while Deepika Padukone's embodiment of the Levi's brand will solidify its legacy of classic, rebellious denim.

The study highlighted the significant impact Bollywood celebrities have on consumer perceptions of advertisements and brands, as well as their intent to purchase. It emphasised that the choice of celebrity can greatly influence consumer attitudes and buying decisions, ultimately contributing to increased sales and brand profitability, crucial for business survival. Utilising celebrities in advertisements has proven effective in capturing consumer attention and driving sales. However, the study revealed variations in consumer responses to different celebrities, underscoring the importance for advertisers and retailers to recognize and adapt to these nuances in their marketing strategies.

## V. Brand and Customer Relationship

To delve into the connection between brands and the consumer psyche, Belk (20) introduces the concept of the extended self, which encompasses both the individual self (me) and possessions (mine). This suggests that, often unconsciously, intentionally, or unintentionally, we consider our belongings as reflective of ourselves and an integral part of us. Our possessions serve as a sort of shield that allows us to showcase our identities and gather feedback that might not be as readily given by others to our core selves.

Consequently, consumers view brands not merely as utilitarian packages but as symbols that convey societal significance and possess the capacity to cultivate social approval. The act of consuming brands has evolved into a means of self-reference, self-identity, and self-expression. In the era of social media, actors from the Millennial and Gen Z generations are perceived as possessing a greater social media quotient, which gives them a natural edge. As a Gen Z creative with millions of social media followers, Ananya Pandey is a highly sought-after candidate for marketers as the brand ambassador for Lakme Academy. A pivotal element in this interaction is the notion of self-concept. We reinforce self-consistency by engaging in brand consumption, opting for brands that we perceive as aligned with our self-concept. This phenomenon, known as the image congruence hypothesis, implies that brands serve a function of self-enhancement. Consumers form perceptions about brands and juxtapose them with their own value systems, ultimately selecting brands that closely match their own.

Moreover, the self-concept is multi-dimensional, encompassing the actual self, subjective self, ideal self, and social self. This can result in a significant gap between how an individual truly is and how they perceive themselves. Therefore, brand consumption presents an avenue for individuals to express not their present state but their aspirational identity or how they wish to be perceived. Fashion companies have transformed social media into engaging runways, employing visual storytelling to captivate viewers and forge emotional connections. Gone are the days of static, meticulously staged product shots. Today, top-notch images and videos transport viewers to aspirational yet relatable settings. Lifestyle imagery features models wearing the clothing in cafes, parks, or city streets, enabling viewers to visualise themselves in the garments. Glimpses of the creative process offer a sense of connection with a brand's passion and craftsmanship. Short, trendy videos on platforms like Instagram showcase outfit ideas in a fun and fast-paced manner. This dynamic visual storytelling not only highlights the clothing itself, but also brings the brand's identity, values, and target audience to life, making fashion feel less like a product and more like a captivating tale waiting to be shared.

## VI. Bollywood women celebrity endorsement

The intersection of Bollywood glamour and brand marketing has ushered in a potent era of celebrity endorsements. Bollywood actresses, with their widespread appeal and multifaceted personas, wield significant influence in the advertising realm. This strategic alliance enables brands to reach expansive audiences while forging emotional bonds with consumers. At the forefront of this trend are actresses who embody specific brand identities. For example, the dynamic Deepika Padukone, renowned for her bold style and independent spirit, seamlessly embodies the rebellious ethos of Levi's. Similarly, global icon Priyanka Chopra Jonas, a vocal advocate for women's empowerment, resonates with brands championing social causes.

Meanwhile, youthful and relatable figures like Kiara Advani are well-suited for brands targeting a younger demographic, such as Myntra. However, the efficacy of celebrity endorsements hinges on authenticity. Actresses who genuinely align with a product and reflect its values contribute to a more convincing narrative. In today's digital age, social media serves as a pivotal platform for actresses to directly engage with their vast followings. Figures like Sonam Kapoor Ahuja leverage their fashion expertise to shape online trends and cultivate brand loyalty through personalised campaigns, enhancing the brand-consumer relationship.

Yet, navigating the realm of celebrity endorsements presents challenges. A misalignment between the actress and the brand can lead to consumer disengagement, while the emergence of influencer marketing provides brands with alternative voices to consider. Nevertheless, Bollywood actresses remain formidable allies for brand promotion. Their star power, diverse personas, and ability to forge deep connections with audiences solidify their status as indispensable partners in the ever-evolving marketing landscape. Indeed, the reign of Bollywood's leading ladies as brand ambassadors shows no signs of waning.

## VII. Conclusion

Study concludes that there should always be a positive relationship between marketers and the celebrities so that they reach their customers in an effective way. There are many people who find celebrity endorsement more attractive and influential as compared to non celebrity endorsements. Majority of the people do not believe in the false claims of negative publicity of a celebrity and it does not affect their purchasing behaviour of any brand. Most of the branded companies use the star powers to influence the target customers to give a boost to their products and services. It can be concluded that celebrities always add a brand value on any product. Major celebrity endorsements have a positive impact on the youth. The celebrity who is endorsing a product should always go with the product/ brand.

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