"A Study on the Relationship between Celebrity Endorsement and Purchase Intention of Malted Milk Powders Special Reference to Trincomalee Divisional Secretariat Area in Trincomalee District"

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Abstract: *Advertisement by Involvement of celebrities becomes an essence in modern competitive marketing environment for high recognition and creation of strong purchase intention. Nowadays it has become a pervasive element of advertising industry in Sri Lanka. Malted Milk Powder marketers use celebrity endorsers to influence the purchase decision of consumers in order to increase their sales and extend their market shares. This study specially focuses on examining the Relationship between Celebrity Endorsement and Purchase Intention of Malted Milk Powder. The descriptive research was used with 200 respondents who resided in Trincomalee Divisional Secretariat Area as the convenient sample. Data was collected through closed ended questionnaires and the analysis was conducted by SPSS Statistics, which are Univariate, Bivariate, and Research Hypothesis. The findings of the present study suggest that the Celebrity Endorsement is having the strong positive relationship with Purchase Intention of Malted Milk Powders*

Keywords: Celebrity Endorsement, Purchase Intention, Malted Milk Powders

JEL Classification Number: M3 M31

1. Introduction

The use of celebrity endorsers is a fairly common practice in many organizations today. As we all know, the promotion plays an important role in achieving the organization's goals and strategies, especially in the market field. The biggest improvement in this field is the celebrity involvement as a promotional technique, which enhances the buying decision and loyalty. The modern world of marketing communication has become colorful with modern advertisements. It is a hard task to differentiate the advertisement from others and attract viewers' attention. In this jet age, people ignore all commercials and advertisements by switching the channels.

Capturing a position in the consumers' mind is extremely tough in this age. Celebrity endorsements give an extra edge to the companies for holding the viewers' attention.

Celebrity endorsement has been defined as: "Any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement" (McCracken, 1989). Celebrities are people who enjoy specific public recognition by a large number of certain groups of people. They have some characteristic attributes like attractiveness, extraordinary lifestyle or special skills that are not commonly observed. Thus, it can be said that within a

society, celebrities generally differ from the common people and enjoy a high degree of public awareness.

Celebrity endorsement is much effective when customer believe that endorser has actual attachment with the product or service. Most of the customers prefer celebrities those who are credible and trustworthy, and also some like those who are attractive with charming physical features. Studies have proved that companies who using celebrities to promote their product can easily increase the consumer awareness and make the advertisement more memorable.

Malted Milk Powder (milk with malt) has had a place as a consumer product in Sri Lanka for over a century. In Sri Lanka it is perceived as a good business opportunity. Horlicks, Viva, Nestomalt and Milo are four major Malted Milk Powder brands are available in the Sri Lanka market. Social and economic changes have been witnessed a higher demand for Malted Milk Powders. From the above four brand, three brands are using celebrity endorsements as a promotional method to advertise their product in Sri Lanka market. With use of attractive and credible celebrities in advertisements, customer purchase intention seems to be increased. So the purpose for this study is to investigate the Relationship between Celebrity Endorsement and Purchase Intention on Malted Milk Powders.

2. Literature review

"Celebrities are people who enjoy public recognition by a large share of certain Group of people" (Schlecht, 2003). A person, who does not need any introduction, gets regular attention of media and whose recognition is widespread can be called as celebrity. Create customer awareness about the products and services and make them to buy that product is the major objective of the advertisements. Advertisements are needed to introduce products in market and advertisements are giving the message about quality, price and feature of the product. In other words celebrity is a person who grabs greater recognition of the common segments of the people and due to this uses this recognition in coming in various advertisements and letting customers knew about product.

Celebrity endorsement is a type of communication that conveys the idea of the product to the consumer using the image of the endorser. The stronger the endorser the higher is the impact of the product in the minds of the consumers. Friedman & Friedman, (1979) stated that, in the promotion of products high in psychological and/or social risk, use of celebrity endorser would lead to greater believability, a more favourable evaluation of the product and advertisement, and a significantly more positive purchase intension.Celebrity endorsement is, "any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in advertisements" McCraken, (1989). In the same way that the celebrity endorsers entertains more positive attitude and greater intensions for purchases than a non-celebrity endorser (Atkin & Block, 1983)

Purchase intention was the probability of consumer to buy a product or one's conscious plan to make an effort to purchase a brand in the future (Spears & Singh, 2004). It was also a component of

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consumer cognitive behavior on how consumer intended to buy a specific product, service or brand (Kwek, 2010). On the other hand, customers' consideration and expectation in buying a brand were the variables which could be used to measure purchase intention. For example, customer's interest, attending, information and evaluation were the consideration factors which determined purchase intention (Laroche Zhou, 1996).

Intentions are type of judgments about how in the present context, a consumer will behave towards a particular brand" (Biehal et al., 1992). Intentions may be based on processing all relevant and available brand information (Biehal et al. 1992). A close relationship between intentions and choice may not always occur; consumers may make choices without completely processing all brand information (Biehal et al. 1992). Woodside & Taylor, (1978) found that consumers viewed products that are nationally advertised to be higher in quality, and therefore, its purchase intentions increase. Ohanian (1991) found that the expert

celebrity endorser elicited higher purchase intentions.

3. Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework is use to demonstrate the relationship between the variables, which are involved in the study. Based on literature review following conceptual framework was developed. The diagram gives conceptualization framework to determine the Relationship between Celebrity Endorsements and Purchase Intension.

According to the conceptual framework which is presented on figure 3.1 on the left hand side of the framework show the independent variable 'Celebrity Endorsement' and it's three dimensions. Those are 'Attractiveness', 'Trustworthiness', and 'Expertise'. On the right hand side it shows the dependent variable of the study. The purpose of developing this conceptual framework is to identify the relationship between Celebrity Endorsement and Purchase Intention. It also facilitated the hypothesis setting.

Figure 1: Conceptual Model
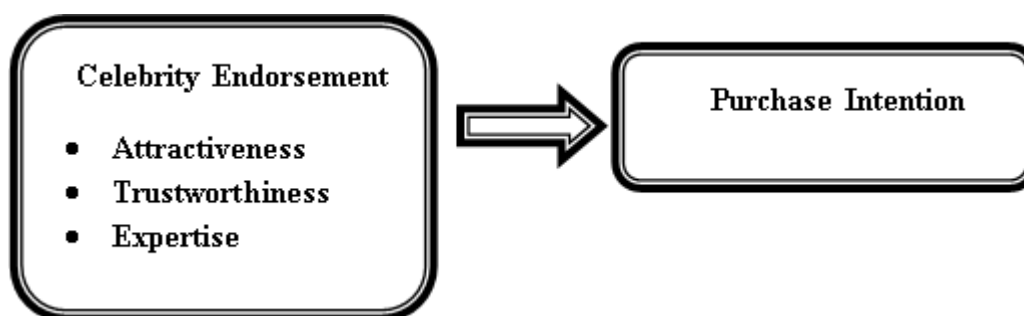
(Source: Adopted from Ohanian, 1990)

4. Methodology

4.1 Study Setting, Study Design and Method of Survey

This study mainly focuses on whether there is a Relationship between Celebrity Endorsements and Purchase Intension. Malted Milk Powder customers in

Trincomalee Divisional Secretariat area in Trincomalee District are selected for the study purpose. Specially, for the research purpose we have taken into consider few brands and their respective ads listed below,

1. Nestomalt (Actress ChathurikaPeris)
2. Viva (Cricketer Kumar Sangakkara)
3. Milo (Cricketer Angelo Mathiws)

Data collected through 200 customers who are purchasing Malted Milk Powder in the market. These numbers of respondents are selected by convenience sampling.

4.2 Type of the Study

This is a descriptive study to understand whether there is a relationship of identified variables (Attractiveness, Trustworthiness and Expertise) on building customer purchase intension for Malted Milk Powder market.

4.3 Research Techniques

For the study purpose, quantitative technique is used in order to measure the Relationship between Celebrity Endorsements and Purchase Intension of Malted Milk Powders. Quantitative research is an approach which provides the numerical representation and manipulation of observation for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena that those observations reflect. Therefore this approach helps to find out the answer to the research questions.

4.4 Target Population

Target population is an entire group of people, events of interest that need to be investigated and surveyed in research. The respondents of this research were the consumers who purchase Malted Milk powders in Trincomalee Divisional Secretariat area in Trincomalee District.

4.5 Sample Size

Due to manageability of the study, the sample size is limited to 200 customers. The 200 people are the customers of Malted Milk Powders in Trincomalee Divisional Secretariat area in Trincomalee District.

4.6 Sampling Technique

Convenience sample attempts to obtain a sample of convenient elements. Therefore, convenience sampling method has been selected for the sample taking for this study. It has the least expensive, least time consuming of all sampling techniques and sampling units are accessible, easy to measure and cooperative. In this study, the data was collected based on the questionnaire and there was a limitation to define the study population. Due to this reasons the researcher selected this convenience is most appropriate one for this study.

4.7 Method of Data Collection

The reliability and credibility of the research is depending on the data collection the research used in primary data and secondary data. This study considers both primary and secondary data. This behavioral study heavily depends on primary data. Primary data were collected for address both dependent and independent variables by based on closed structured questionnaire. Secondary data collected from past research papers, literature, reports, and internet.

4.4 Method of Data Analysis and Assessment

Correlation measure how variables or rank orders are related. Pearson's correlation coefficient is a measure of linear association. In this study, the Pearson's correlation coefficient with two-tailed test

of significance was considered since the data was quantitative.

4.4.1 Univariate Analysis

Univariate analysis is the simplest form of quantitative (statistical) analysis and these techniques are applied to explore the levels of study variables. This analysis is carried out with the description of a single variable in terms of the unit of analysis. In addition to frequency distribution, Univariate analysis commonly involves reporting measures of central tendency (location) which is an average of a set of measurements and interpreted as (arithmetic) mean, median, mode or another measures of location depending on the context.

In this context, the respondents are considered as unbiased with the Likert's scale and to devise the levels of variable attributes as lower, moderate and upper levels, the following decision criteria has been used.

Table 1: Decision Criteria for Univariate Analysis

Range	Decision Attributes
$1 \leq Xi \leq 2.5$	Low level
$2.5 < Xi \leq 3.5$	Moderate level
$3.5 < Xi \leq 5.0$	High level

Where Xi= mean value of indicator/dimension/variable.

4.4.2 Bivariate Analysis

Bivariate analysis is the one of the simplest form of quantitative (statistical) analysis. It involves the analysis of two variables for the purpose of determining the empirical relationship between them. In order to see if the variables are related to one another, it is common to measure how those two variables simultaneously change together. This can be helpful to assess to what extent the independent variable predict a value of dependent variable. Therefore this study used this analysis to assess the impact of independent on purchase intention.

Table 2: Decision Criteria for Bivariate Analysis

Range	Decision attributes
r = 0.5 to 1.0	Strong Positive Influence
r = 0.3 to 0.49	Medium Positive Influence
r = 0.1 to 0.29	Weak Positive Influence
r = -0.10 to -0.29	Weak Negative Influence
r = -0.3 to -0.49	Medium Negative Influence
r = -0.5 to -1.0	Strong Negative Influence

4.4.3 Hypothesis Testing

A hypothesis is a statement that test one or two measureable variables. Hypothesis testing is the strategy for deciding whether a sample data offer such a support for a hypothesis, that generalization can be made. Thus, hypothesis testing enables

making probability statement about population parameters.

To evaluate the truth of a hypothesis, conduct a hypothesis test. The output of each hypothesis test has a Sig. Value (also known as a p-value) which measures the probability of such results occurring by random chance. When the p-value is large (i.e., greater than 5%), we consider the result something that can easily happen by chance, while p-value that is small (i.e., less than 5%) gives us reason to doubt our hypothesis. Based on this following hypothesis test were formulated

- H1: There is a significant relationship between Celebrity Attractiveness and Purchase Intention.

- H2 - There is a significant relationship between Celebrity Trustworthiness and Purchase Intention.

- H3

- There is a significant relationship between Celebrity Expertise and Purchase Intention.

- H4 - There is a significant relationship between Celebrity Endorsement and Purchase Intention.

5. Findings

5.1 Identify the Level of Purchase Intention of Malted Milk Powders

Univariate analysis is performed to evaluate the respondent's view with respect to purchase intention of Malted Milk Powders. Frequency distribution analysis has been used to present this data. The mean values and standard deviation of the indicators was taken in to consideration.

			Customer Preference	Information Seek	Current Usage	Post Purchase	Encouragement	Recommend	Purchase Intention
N	Valid		200	200	200	200	200	200	200
	Missing		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean			3.95	3.79	4.02	4.13	4.09	3.91	3.98
Standard Deviation			1.346	1.403	1.093	0.981	1.146	1.234	0.818

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Purchase Intention of Malted Milk Powders

The mean value of purchase intention is 3.98. According to decision rule, the mean shows the high level of purchase intention regard to Malted Milk Powders (Mean value is 3.98). The Standard Deviation of 0.818 shows that the individual responses, on average, 0.82 point away from the mean.

5.2 Identify the Extent of Attractiveness, Trustworthiness and Expertise of Celebrity Endorsement on Purchase Intention of Malted Milk Powders

The following table shows the levels of each dimensions of celebrity endorsement based on descriptive statistic using mean value and standard deviation. This can easily assist to compare the means and standard deviations of dimensions of independent variable. The mean value of celebrity endorsement is 3.73. According to decision rule, the mean shows the high level of celebrity endorsement regard to Malted Milk Powders. The Standard Deviation of 0.733 shows that the individual responses, on average, 0.73 point away from the mean.

All dimensions falls in higher level category based on the decision criteria. When comparing with each other, this shows the higher mean (Mean = 3.75) in attractiveness and lower mean (Mean = 3.71) in trustworthiness. And mean value of expertise is 3.74.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistic of Dimensions of Celebrity Endorsement

		Attractive	Trustworthiness	Expertise	Celebrity Endorsement
N	Valid	200	200	200	200
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.75	3.71	3.74	3.73
Median		4.14	4.00	4.00	3.94
Standard Deviation		0.868	0.803	0.851	0.733

The following figure shows the comparison of means of three dimensions of celebrity endorsement in the mean plot. This indicates the higher mean for attractiveness and expertise 3.75 and 3.74 respectively. And the lower mean as 3.71 for trustworthiness.

Figure 2: Comparison of Dimensions of Celebrity Endorsement
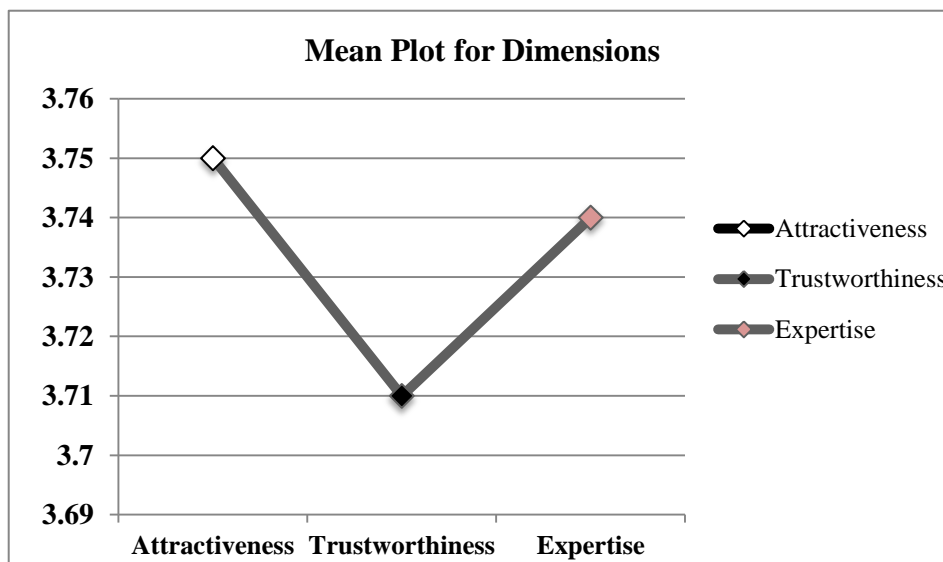
5.3 Hypothesis Testing

5.3.1 H1: There is a significant relationship between Celebrity Attractiveness and Purchase Intention.

Table 5: Summarized Regression on Purchase Intention and Attractiveness

R	R^2	F	Standardized Coefficient Beta	Sig.
0.695[a]	0.487	.000	0.695	.000
a.Predictors: (Constant), attractiveness				

The summarized regression results for hypothesis 1 are presented in Table 5. This table gives the model summary of H1 which shows that F < 0, meaning it was significant. Moreover, all the P values were less than .05, further confirming there is a relationship in the model.

The R^2 was 0.487, which indicated that 48% of the variance in Purchase Intention by Attractiveness. For 'Malted Milk Powder', the coefficient of attractiveness is significant and has strong positive relationship with the dependent variable 'Purchase Intention' by being the beta as 0.695. Hence, H1 is accepted and can conclude that there is a significant relationship between Celebrity Attractiveness and Purchase Intention.

5.3.2 H2 - There is a significant relationship between Celebrity Trustworthiness and Purchase Intention

Table 6: Summarized Regression on Purchase Intention and Trustworthiness

R	R^2	F	Standardized Coefficient Beta	Sig.
0.653[a]	0.426	.000	0.653	.000
a.Predictors: (Constant), trustworthiness				

The summarized regression results for hypothesis 2 are presented in Table 6. This table gives the model summary of H2 which shows that F < 0, meaning it was significant. Moreover, all the P values were less than .05, further confirming there is a relationship in the model. The R^2 was .426, which indicated that 42% of the variance in Purchase Intention is explained by predictor variable.

For 'Malted Milk Powder', the coefficient of Trustworthiness is significant and has strong positive relationship with the dependent variable 'Purchase Intention' by being the beta as 0.653. Hence, H2 is accepted and can conclude that there is a significant relationship between Celebrity Trustworthiness and Purchase Intention.

5.3.3 H3 - There is a significant relationship between Celebrity Expertise and Purchase Intention.

Table 7: Summarized Regression on Purchase Intention and Expertise

R	R^2	F	Standardized	Sig.

| | | | Coefficient | |
			Beta	
0.617[a]	.381	.000	0.617	.000
a.Predictors: (Constant), expertise				

The above table summarized regression results for hypothesis 3. This gives the model summary of H3 which shows that F < 0, meaning it was significant. Moreover, all the P values were less than .05, further confirming the relationship of the model. The R^2 was .381 which indicated that 38% of the variance in Purchase Intention predictor variable. For 'Malted Milk Powder', the coefficient of Expertise is significant and has strong positive relationship with the dependent variable by being the beta as 0.617. Hence, H3 is accepted and can conclude that there is a significant relationship between Celebrity Expertise and Purchase Intention.

5.3.4 H4 - There is a significant relationship between Celebrity Endorsement and Purchase Intention.

Table 8: Summarized Regression on Purchase Intention and Celebrity Endorsement

| R | R^2 | F | Standardized Coefficient | Sig. |
			Beta	
0.752[a]	.565	.000	0.752	.000
a. Predictors: (Constant), celebrity endorsement				

The above table summarized regression results for hypothesis 4. This gives the model summary of H4 which shows that F < 0, meaning it was significant. Moreover, all the P values were less than .05, further confirming the relationship of the model. The R^2 was .565 which indicated that 56% of the variance in Purchase Intention predictor variable.

For 'Malted Milk Powder', the coefficient of Celebrity Endorsement is significant and has strong positive relationship with the dependent variable by being the beta as 0.752. Hence, H4 is accepted and can conclude that there is a significant relationship between Celebrity Endorsement and Purchase Intention.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

Finding the right celebrity endorser for product is crucial matter for many firms. Ohanian, (1990) developed an instrument in order to assess the impact of these endorsers through the measurement of their credibility. Her study (1991) revealed that celebrities' perceived expertise on the product was related to the purchase intention for American respondents. Even though the results indicated that dimensions of attractiveness and trustworthiness did not affect the purchase intention; Pornpitakpan, (2004) showed that all these three dimensions (expertise, attractiveness and trustworthiness) are positively related with purchase intention for Singaporean consumers. These questionable results and the need for investigating relationship between these dimensions and purchase intention and it accepted as the starting point of this study. It should be stated that the results support the findings in Pornpitakpan's study (2004) which claim that all the dimensions are positively and significantly related with intention to purchase.

This study also includes the analysis of differences between the perceived attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise levels of celebrity endorsers and purchase intention. To that end, all three dimensions are analyzed as well as overall purchase intention level. According to the results, celebrities are perceived as more attractive, trustworthy and having more

expertise regard to Malted Milk Powders. These results can be regarded as being inconsistent with the study of Atkin and Block (1983) who claimed that celebrity endorsers are perceived to be more attractiveness, trustworthy and expert.

Further the study concludes the followings,

The purchase intention of Malted Milk Powders indicates the high level in this study. According to the analysis, mainly post purchase, encouragement and customer preference indicators contributed highly for the purchase intention than other indicators. Therefore marketers can specifically focus on the post purchase, encouragement and customer preference to increase the purchase intention of Malted Milk Powders.

The celebrity endorsement indicates the high level mean value and it shows the level of celebrity endorsement for Malted Milk Powder is high. The celebrity endorsement measured through three dimensions such as attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise. Attractiveness has high level contribution to the celebrity endorsement than other dimensions. Trustworthiness and expertise also highly contribute to the celebrity endorsement but the contribution is less than attractiveness.

When considering attractiveness, it measured by similarity, likeability, familiarity, beautiful, classy, elegant and attractive. All indicators have the high level of contribution to the celebrity endorsement of Malted Milk Powders. But classy, beautiful and attractive contributed high than other indicators. Trustworthiness measured by dependable source, honest, trust and straightforward. All indicators have the high level of contribution to the celebrity endorsement of Malted Milk Powders. But honest, straightforward and dependable source contributed high than other indicators. Expertise measured by expertise, Knowledgeable, qualified,

skillful and experience. All indicators have the high level of contribution to the celebrity endorsement of Malted Milk Powders. But qualified, experience and knowledgeable indicators are contributed high than other indicators.

Based on the correlation and regression analysis, study found that there were a strong positive relationship between the celebrity endorsement and purchase intention of Malted Milk Powders, attractiveness and purchase intention, trustworthiness and purchase intention and expertise and purchase intention. Finally to answer the main research question there is a Relationship between celebrity endorsement and purchase intention of Malted Milk Powders.

There is no relationship between purchase intention with respect to gender, age group and income level. It shows if there is any change in gender, age or income level it will not impact to the purchase intention. But according to this study educational factors make some changes in purchase intention.

Finally this study concludes attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise of the celebrity endorsement positively impact the purchase intention of Malted Milk Powders and there is a high level purchase intention towards Malted Milk Powders.

7. Recommendations

The selection of celebrity endorsers with the right attributes is crucial to the success of celebrity endorsement. It is because celebrity endorsements can help to create and reinforce the value and image of the product and brand. Thus the markets must carefully evaluate the celebrities and make sure the image which perceived by the target customers are positive. For instance consumers think that attractiveness is the most important dimension that the celebrity endorsers must possess, so the prerequisite of the Malted Milk Powder companies is to select the celebrity endorsers who are highly attractiveness.

However, celebrity with plain-looking or ordinary looking can also promote the malted product effectively but the companies must focus more on the trustworthiness and expertise of the celebrities as well as the products.

The markets must consider the trustworthiness of the endorsers as well as the expertise also. Malted milk powders are not like fashionable products. Mostly for the fashionable products it is enough to have attractiveness, but when it comes to this industry there should be high level of trustworthiness and expertise. So when selecting the celebrity endorses marketers have to consider the trustworthiness and expertise.

In Sri Lanka, most of the celebrity endorsers are for malted milk powders are sport persons. They possess different attributes which are suitable to endorse malted milk powder products. Most of the Sri Lankans love the cricket and the players. So the study strongly recommends using the cricketers and sporting person as endorsers.

Finally, the company must have thorough consideration and sufficient research before the endorsement takes place. They must understand the preference and purchase behaviour of their target customers. So that the marketers can react to customer and market changes rapidly

8. Limitations of the study

No research is complete without admitting the limitations that was faced while conducting a study which will contribute to present learning. This study too like the others have certain constrains which has been mentioned below.

1. Cannot collect data from all malted milk powder customers due to its inability to collect within a large sample. The chosen sample size is small and hence not sufficient enough to make concentrate recommendations. The limited sample makes it difficult to generalize the data. There may be variations of the results in generalizing the findings, since the research was conducted in Trincomalee district.

2. Previous research finding on the impact of celebrity endorsement in building customer preference for malted milk powder market to Sri Lankan context could not be found.

3. Limited time; time was not enough for me to study this topic as to be. In the short durations of only 3 months it was not possible to cover the varied sections of the society because of which this research has been restricted only the Trincomalee district.

9. Assumptions of the Study

- There is no change in the organizations policies and government ideas and regulations.

- All selected respondents of this study provide fullest corporation for this study.

- All the gathered data from the respondents are true and fairly answered by them.

- It is assumed that Celebrity Endorsement highly influences the Purchase Intention.

- Population follows normal distribution in relation to each of the variables, dimensions and indicators in the questionnaire.

- Univariate and Bivariate analyses have been carried out to explore the results and findings of the study. It is assumed that these analyses are

fairly enough to conclude and explore such findings.

10. Recommendations for Further Research

Further research on this topic should include measuring a celebrity advertisement versus a non-celebrity advertisement within the same brand. This would be important because it would show how effective or ineffective celebrity endorsements are. In addition, it is also advisable to extend this study by considering other products and brands for further understanding of celebrity endorsement and purchase intention.

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