A Preliminary Intellectual Scope of Research on Celebrity Endorsement from Bibliometric Study

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Abstract

This study uses bibliometric analysis software to provide conceptual insight into research on celebrity endorsement. The bibliometric data was retrieved from Sciencedirect.com. The results show five clusters of themes that relate to research on celebrity endorsement, and the most attention is being paid to consumer behaviors, which shows relevant constructs such as trustworthiness, credibility, attractiveness, brand attitude, congruence, and purchase intention. This study also presents the theoretical implications, which illustrate theories such as the theory of parasocial interaction, stimulus-organism-response, and as a suggestion for further research, the theory of planned behavior. The limitations are also discussed, and suggestions are provided.

Keywords: Celebrity Endorsement; Bibliometric Analysis

Introduction

Celebrity endorsement has been acknowledged as useful marketing means that can deliver significant economic value to firms, such as Tiger Woods had on sales of Nike golf balls (Chung, 2013). Widely acknowledged benefits of celebrity endorsement include enhancing the brand appeal of products and services (Al Mamun et al., 2023). Given the prevalence of promotions featuring celebrities and their endorsements, research on celebrity endorsement has gained significant attention of researchers in numerous areas, such as

marketing communication (Jun et al., 2023), live streaming e-commerce (Meng et al., 2021), and traditional e-commerce (Jin and Ryu, 2020). Nevertheless, the bibliometric analysis of the extant literature on topics relating to celebrity endorsement is not yet available, and thus, this study aims to fill the gap. Researchers such as Halder, Pradhan, and Chaudhuri (2021) have used the bibliometric analysis method on a specific issue of a celebrity endorser, namely celebrity credibility, which reveals themes such as corporate image, corporate identification, corporate philanthropy, corporate social responsibility, message quality or strength, message framing and sidedness, brand familiarity, and brand congruence. Indeed, a bibliometric study is a valid and useful tool to enable researchers to gain insights and deeper knowledge of the extant literature on specific research issues or topics (Abdelwahab et al., 2022), such as balanced scorecard (Suarez-Gargallo and Zaragoza-Saez, 2023). The VOSviewer software would be used in this study to examine the interrelationships of the citations of a correlated publication network.

Research Objective

As there is a lack of overall intellectual structure of the publications relating to celebrity endorsement in the extant literature, this study fills the gap using the bibliometric examination. Bibliometric analysis has gained popularity as a quantitative research methodology to evaluate scholarly productivity and identify trends within specific research issues (Koo and Lin, 2023).

Thus, this study aims to use bibliometric tools to examine the current intellectual structure of research relating to celebrity endorsement, with a particular focus on the interrelated themes that can be useful to research scholars in their research on topics relating to celebrity endorsement.

Literature Review

Celebrity endorsement research has been traditionally used to enhance marketing effectiveness, but its role in the Internet era, especially in the fast-shifting e-commerce environment of China is complex, and more research should be devoted. Meng et al. (2020) study how online celebrities can influence the organistic states of consumers in terms of pleasantness, arousal, emotional trust and admiration, which, further induce purchase intention. In a similar context but with a hotel live-streaming application, Shen et al. (2022) demonstrate that celebrity endorsers can make use of new advancements in social media- and e-commerce technology to form virtual parasocial relationships with consumers, which also shows the relevancy of self-

congruity that explains the consistency between consumers' self-image and their choice of products.

Different applications have utilized celebrity endorsement. Li, Liu and Xie (2022) compare the degree of effects of endorsement by a local celebrity versus a celebrity from tourist source countries in international destination marketing. Industries also make use of celebrity endorsement to signal the merits of pro-green behaviors (Ho et al., 2022). Due to the credibility effect of celebrity endorsers, organizations use them to raise awareness for, for instance, young-onset colorectal cancer (Lahooti et al., 23). Celebrity endorsement is particularly effective for promoting luxury brands because it has an effect on the psychological distance between the brand and the consumers, and thus, can influence consumer perceptions (Yu and Hu, 2020)

The extant literature shows a vast interest in antecedents-celebrity endorsement-consequence structure. For instance, Huo et al. (2022) examine the cultural background of celebrity endorsers as a significant antecedent factor in influencing the purchase of restaurant consumers. A similar cultural antecedent but a different variable, known as ethnicity, is studied in the celebrity endorsement effect (Chatzopoulou and Navazhylava, 2022).

Research Methodology

This study employs a bibliometric analysis tool (Ye and Tan, 2022), and uses VOSviewer software for constructing and visualizing bibliometric networks of the extant literature searched using the keyword "celebrity endorsement" in Sciencedirect.com. As noted in Simsek and Kalipci (2023), the bibliometric study is a kind of quantitative evaluation of publications and citations used in almost every discipline today. Bibliometric map illuminates not only the constructs and variables, which explain the different themes of research of the research interest, but most importantly, they group them into different clusters, and researchers can also zoom into identifying the interrelationships of the constructs and variables (Xiao et al., 2023).

For this study, the VOSviewer software is used. The bibliometric data is generated by searching the Sciencedirect.com databases using the keyword, "celebrity endorsement". Using the built-in mathematical and statistical methods for analyzing the bibliometric data using the VOSviewer software (Tamala et al., 2022), it generates a bibliometric map, which depicts the different clusters of research focus, and the web of details of the interrelationships of the citations of research themes.

Research Results

The bibliometric data was retrieved from the Sciencedirect.com database, which yields 2645 articles, but direct relevancy is 200 articles. Thus, 200 articles are used for the bibliometric examination. The bibliometric result is computed by VOSviewer software. Five clusters of themes are shown in Fig. 1.
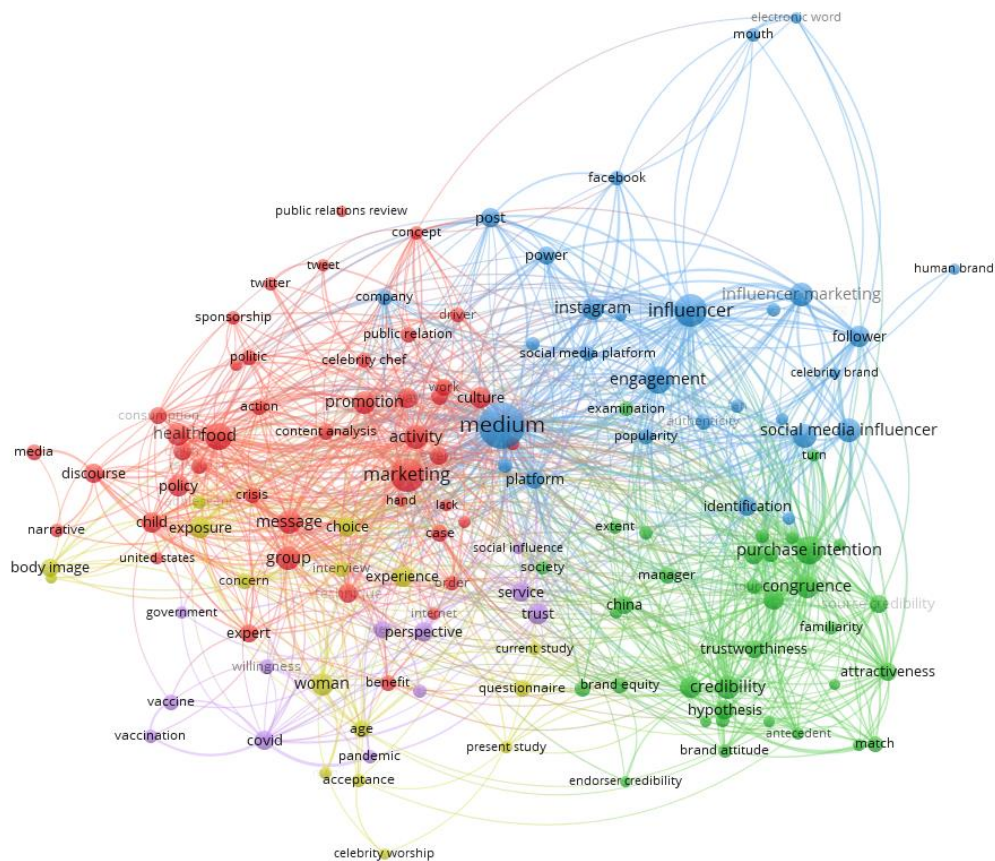

Fig. 1. The Bibliometric Map of Celebrity Endorsement Publication in Sciencedirect.com

The five clusters of themes are illustrated using different colors:

- Blue – medium and influencer, engagement and authenticity.
- Red – Marketing and message, benefit and activity.
- Yellow – Body image and exposure.
- Purple – COVID and government influence.
- Green – Consumer behavior.

Out of these five clusters of themes, consumer behaviors have gained the most attention. For instance, celebrity endorsement is shown to have the ability to leverage brand association (Jun et al., 2023). In Liu et al. (2023), the roles of celebrity endorsement, from the host country

and the country of origin, are shown to arouse the attention and emotional states of consumers. Celebrity-consumer fit or congruence is also a significant factor, as shown in Saridakis et al. (2023). Nevertheless, the consumer behavior structure is not straightforward, and researchers should also consider moderating variables such as destination crowding and gender (Pradhan, Moharana, and Malik, 2023). The extant literature also shows that celebrity endorsement is effective for novelistic products and services, such as bitcoin acceptance (Ullah et al., 2023) and green phones (Raj, Singh, and Lascu, 2023).

Discussions

The bibliometric study using the database of publications in Sciencedirect.com on the keyword, "celebrity endorsement," yields five significantly interrelated clusters of themes in the research relating to celebrity endorsement. The five clusters of research themes are (1) consumer behaviors (green color in the bibliometric map), (2) medium and influence, engagement and authenticity (blue), (3) marketing and message, and benefit and activity, (4) body image and exposure (yellow), and COVID pandemic and government influence (purple color).

Consumer behaviors list the most cited constructs studied, and they are trustworthiness, credibility, attractiveness, expertise, brand attitude, and congruence, which can influence consumers' purchase intention. Credibility could be fostered and enabled by many means, such as marketing and message (the red color of the bibliometric map) and credible influencer (blue color) to enhance the clarity of message and to alleviate the ambiguity often associated with brand and products (Mishra and Mishra, 2014). Signalling theory principally explains the role of the credibility aspect of the endorser to influence consumer purchase intention, such as by reducing the asymmetric information acquisition and knowledge of products and services, and the brands, between the provider and consumers (Schmitz, 2023).

The relationship-themed cluster in the blue highlights the popular works of researchers using parasocial interaction theory (Ak Mamun et al., 2023). The overall consumer behavior structure can be explained using the theory of stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R), which explains the stimulating attributes of celebrity endorsers that can significantly and positively influence consumers' cognitive and emotional responses, resulting in favorable attitudes and forming purchase intention (Al Mamum et al., 2023).

Conclusion

This study aims to use bibliometric tools to examine the current intellectual structure of research relating to celebrity endorsement, with a particular focus on the interrelated themes

that can be useful to research scholars in their research. Five clusters of research themes are identified, and the most focused one is relating to consumer behaviors, which makes use of, for instance, parasocial interaction theory, and stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) theory. Consumer behaviors structure considers, for example, the following factors: trustworthiness, credibility, attractiveness, brand attitude, and congruence. These factors show the works of the stimulus-organism-response structure.

Implications

The bibliometric examination of the extant literature on celebrity endorsement shows the utility of the following theories: the stimulus-organism-response theory that explains the external factors (stimulus) that can affect consumers' cognitive and emotional state (organism), and thus, leads to favorable responses, such as purchase intention (Al Mamun et al., 2023). Parasocial interaction theory highlights that celebrity endorsers make use of marketing and social context to influence virtual relationships with the consumers, which also illustrates the relevancy of consumer congruence with the celebrity endorsers, such as personality and communication styles (Jin & Ryu, 2020).

The role of attitude is obvious in the bibliometric map, and further research can also use the theory of planned behavior (TPB) for examining the relationship between celebrity endorsement and purchase intention.

Limitation and Suggestion

This study is not without limitations. Nevertheless, using bibliometric study has a significant advantage in that it expediently provides a general intellectual scope and structure of knowledge for the researchers, enabling the research to form a preliminary but comprehensive understanding of the research issues.

Obviously, the bibliometric analysis does not cover the subtleties of the factors and issues. For instance, the control variable such as the endorser's cultural background is not obvious, and some researchers have identified that the effectiveness of the endorser depends, in part, upon the meanings he or she brings to the endorsement process – in other words, the cultural background of the endorser (MaCracken, 1989). This suggests to researchers not ignore the control variables or demographics, or psychographics variables in their research on celebrity endorsement. It is also suggested to use an interviews-based approach to complement quantitative surveys (Tan, 2018; Tan, 2019).

The current bibliometric data was retrieved only from the Scopus database with one keyword, "celebrity endorsement," and thus is not intellectually representative, and further research can expand using databases from, for instance, Web of Science and Emerald.

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