

Use of Humour, Celebrity Endorsement and Emotional Appeal in Advertising and its Impact on Consumer's Purchase Decision in FMCG Products

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Abstract

This research delves into the dynamic interplay of celebrity endorsement, emotional appeal, and humour in influencing Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) purchase decisions. In the contemporary consumer landscape, understanding the nuanced relationships among these variables is crucial for marketers seeking effective strategies. Celebrity endorsement emerges as a potent tool, wielding influence over consumer preferences. Emotional appeal, another critical factor, proves instrumental in creating a connection between consumers and FMCG products. The research highlights the pivotal role emotions play in shaping purchase decisions, underscoring the importance of brands eliciting positive emotional responses from their target audience. While often regarded as a persuasive element in advertising, humour surprisingly does not directly impact FMCG purchase decisions in this study. However, the findings reveal a nuanced perspective, emphasising that the effectiveness of humour is contingent on its interaction with gender. Moreover, the study identifies gender as a moderating factor in the relationship between celebrity endorsement, humour, and FMCG purchase decisions. While celebrities influence both male and female consumers, the study suggests that the nature of this influence may vary across genders. Understanding these nuances is critical for marketers tailoring their campaigns to resonate effectively with diverse consumer segments.

Keywords: Humour, Celebrity Endorsement, Emotional Appeal, Purchase Decision, FMCG products

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Introduction

Advertising is an ever-evolving realm that continually seeks innovative ways to capture consumer attention and influence purchase decisions. Within the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector, where competition is fierce and product differentiations are often subtle, specific advertising strategies have become a cornerstone in shaping consumer perceptions and driving sales (McCracken, 1989). This paper delves into the intricate dynamics of humour, celebrity endorsement, and emotional appeal in advertising and their profound impact on consumer purchase decisions in the FMCG sector.

India's Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector is a powerhouse, contributing significantly to the country's economy. As of recent data, the FMCG sector accounts for approximately 50% of India's total consumption expenditure and about 35-40% of the country's GDP. Moreover, the FMCG sector is expected to reach a market size of \$220 billion by 2025, propelled by increasing urbanisation, rising disposable incomes, and changing consumer lifestyles. (Agrawal et al., 1995).

Regarding advertising expenditure, the FMCG sector consistently ranks among the top categories in India. According to industry reports, FMCG companies allocate a substantial portion of their budgets to advertising, with expenditures reaching billions of dollars annually. For instance, in 2020, FMCG companies in India collectively spent over \$10 billion on advertising, with a significant portion allocated to television, digital, and print media campaigns. (Silvera et al., 2004).

These statistics underscore the importance of advertising in driving sales and market growth within the FMCG sector. Brands use humour, celebrity endorsements, and emotional appeals to capture consumers' attention and influence their purchasing decisions, contributing to the sector's robust performance in the Indian market (Shrum, 1995). This paper delves into the intricate dynamics of humour, celebrity endorsement, and emotional appeal in advertising and their profound impact on consumer purchase decisions in the FMCG sector.

Literature Review and Model Development

2.1. The FMCG Landscape: The Need for Effective Advertising Strategies

The FMCG sector is characterised by products consumed daily and frequently with a short shelf life. This includes a wide array of items such as food, beverages, personal care products, and household essentials. Due to the nature of these goods, FMCG brands must constantly vie for consumer attention in a crowded marketplace. With numerous brands offering similar products, advertising becomes crucial to establishing a unique identity, fostering brand loyalty, and ultimately influencing consumer purchase decisions. (Ehrenberg et al. 2002)

2.1.1. Key characteristics of the FMCG sector

The Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector, also known as the Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG) sector, is a dynamic industry characterised by several key features and characteristics. These characteristics set FMCG apart from other industries and influence the strategies and dynamics within the sector (Bisht, 2013).

FMCG products are everyday necessities, including food, beverages, personal care items, household products, etc. There is a constant and unrelenting demand for these products, as consumers consume them daily or frequently. FMCG products typically have a short shelf life. This characteristic necessitates efficient supply chain management, distribution, and frequent restocking on store shelves to ensure freshness and product quality. Consumers frequently purchase FMCG products as part of routine shopping trips (Dana et al., 2000). These purchases are regular, habit-driven, and often less influenced by long decision-making processes. FMCG products are generally priced at lower points than other consumer goods. This makes them affordable and accessible to a wide range of consumers. In the FMCG sector, brand loyalty and consumer preferences play a significant role. Consumers often have preferred brands for various FMCG products, and marketing efforts aim to foster this loyalty.

The FMCG sector is highly competitive, with numerous brands vying for market share. Due to the low entry barriers, new products and brands are continually introduced, intensifying competition. FMCG companies often have strong relationships with retailers, as their products are core to a store's inventory. These relationships influence product placement, promotions, and negotiations. FMCG companies focus on maintaining efficient supply chains to ensure the availability of products to meet consumer demand (Dwivedi et al., 2015). Timely distribution and inventory management are crucial. Some FMCG products may experience seasonality, with demand spiking during specific times of the year (e.g., ice cream in the summer and holiday-themed products in the winter).

2.2. Humour in FMCG Advertising

Humour is a potent and versatile tool in advertising that can significantly influence consumer behaviour. Leveraging humour effectively can enhance brand recognition, engagement, and emotional connection with consumers. Humorous advertisements are attention-grabbing (Hakimi et al., 2011). They stand out in a sea of content and have a better chance of being noticed and remembered by viewers. The element of surprise or wit piques curiosity. Humour increases ad recall. People are more likely to remember an advertisement that made them laugh, leading to better brand recognition and recall when they encounter the product in stores or online. Humour creates a positive emotional response. When consumers associate positive emotions with a brand, they are more likely to view it favourably and consider it in their purchase decisions. Humour can help define a brand's personality (Spry et al., 2011). It can make a brand seem approachable, relatable, and down-to-earth, which is particularly valuable in industries like FMCG, where brands aim to connect with everyday consumers. In crowded markets, humour can be a differentiating factor. It helps brands stand out by presenting their products or services uniquely and memorably.

Humorous advertisements can create emotional bonds between consumers and brands. When people laugh, they experience positive emotions, leading to feelings of affinity and loyalty toward the brand. Funny ads are shared more on social media

and through word of mouth. (Edell & Burke, 1987). Viewers are more likely to share content that they find entertaining, amplifying the reach of the advertising campaign. Humour can be a universal language that transcends cultural boundaries. When executed effectively, it can be understood and appreciated by diverse audiences.

According to Gelb & Zinkhan (1986), humour lacks a substantial impact on comprehension and "playback" ability, even when the ad is serious. Other research suggests that humour can reduce comprehension due to distraction (Bergeron & Vachon, 2008), shifting focus from material to context (Spielmann, 2014). Some research suggests that humour enhances memory and recall (Alden et al., 1993; Miller, 1996; Alden et al., 2000) and ad attention.

While humour is a valuable asset in advertising, it's essential to use it thoughtfully. The appropriateness of humour depends on the target audience, the product or service, and the cultural context. Inappropriate or offensive humour can have detrimental consequences. Moreover, the humour should be aligned with the overall brand message and values to ensure consistency and authenticity. When used judiciously, humour can be a compelling and memorable strategy to capture consumer attention and drive engagement and purchase decisions in the FMCG sector (Campbell et al., 2003).

Though numerous methods exist to define humour, incongruity seems essential (Suls, 1972). Shimp (2010) found that humorous ads use incongruity resolution. The study was based on a sample of television advertising from four countries: Germany, Korea, Thailand, and the United States. Tellis (1998) defines humour as "painless incongruity between two things brought together by the communicator." The target audience's response is astonishment because of the unusual and unexpected combination of the two elements. Puns, words with two meanings, unpredictable events and imagery, and other situations can all lead to incongruity.

2.2.1. Building brand affinity through humour

Building brand affinity through humour is a strategic and creative approach many brands have successfully employed. When effectively integrated into branding and marketing efforts, humour

can foster strong emotional connections with consumers, making them more likely to support and advocate for the brand. Understanding your target audience is paramount. Different humour styles resonate with other demographics. Tailor your humour to match the preferences and sensibilities of your ideal consumers. Consider factors such as age, gender, interests, and cultural background (Olaosebikan, 2020). Humour should align with your brand's personality and values. Consistency in your brand's voice is crucial for building trust and affinity. Ensure that the humour is harmonious with your brand's identity and messaging. Create a narrative that incorporates humour into your brand's story. A humorous storyline can engage consumers and leave a lasting impression.

A well-crafted story adds depth to your brand's identity and creates an emotional connection. Use humour that people can relate to. Highlight everyday situations, challenges, or quirks your audience can empathise with. Consumers who see themselves in your humour are more likely to connect with your brand. Incorporate elements of surprise in your humour. Unexpected twists and clever punchlines can delight consumers, making your brand memorable and shareable. Visual elements can enhance the impact of humour (Fugate, 1998). Creative and funny visuals in advertising and marketing materials, including images, videos, and memes, can effectively build brand affinity. While humour is a valuable tool, one must use it wisely.

An over-reliance on humour can dilute its effectiveness and lead to brand fatigue. Balance humorous content with other messaging and storytelling. Leveraging current events and trends for humorous content when appropriate. Staying relevant in real-time can demonstrate a brand's agility and cultural awareness. Social media platforms provide a fertile ground for humour (Goldman & Glantz et al., 1988). Responding to current events, sharing witty content, and interacting humorously with followers can enhance your brand's likability. Authenticity is key to building brand affinity. Consumers can sense when humour is genuine and when it's contrived. Be true to your brand's identity and values, and ensure that humour aligns with these principles. Hence, our first hypothesis is

H1 = Humour impacts consumers' purchase decisions of FMCG products.

H2 = Gender moderates the relation between humour and purchase decision of FMCG products.

2.3. Celebrity Endorsement in FMCG Advertising

Celebrities play a significant and influential role in advertising, contributing to brand recognition, credibility, and consumer engagement. Their involvement in advertising can profoundly impact brand perception and consumer behaviour. Celebrities are often seen as credible and trustworthy figures. Their endorsement of a product or brand can lend credibility to the offering, reassuring consumers about its quality and effectiveness. Celebrity endorsements capture consumer attention (Spry et al., 2011). Celebrities are recognisable and hold a certain level of fascination for the public, making their presence in advertisements attention-grabbing. Celebrities can elevate brand awareness by associating their fame with the product. Consumers may be more likely to remember and recognise a brand when it is endorsed by a well-known figure (Elberse & Verleun, 2012). The choice of a celebrity endorser should align with the product's target audience. Celebrities often have specific demographics that follow them, and this alignment can increase the effectiveness of the endorsement.

Celebrities can personify the values and qualities that a brand wishes to convey. For example, an athlete endorsing a sports drink embodies athleticism and performance. Celebrity endorsements can create emotional connections between the brand and consumers. (Kaikati, 1987). This uniqueness can be a crucial selling point for consumers. Celebrities bring their star power to advertising campaigns, which can boost the impact of marketing efforts and draw widespread attention. (Gupta et al., 2015).

Some celebrities have international appeal. Their endorsements can influence global markets, helping brands reach a diverse and widespread audience. Advertising featuring celebrities is often more shareable and likely to go viral on social media, expanding its reach and impact (Mackenzie & Lutz, 1989). Celebrity endorsements can generate

media coverage and public relations opportunities, increasing brand exposure. Consumers tend to trust celebrities and find them relatable, which can facilitate positive consumer-brand relationships.

2.3.1. Impact on consumer perceptions and purchase intentions

Celebrity endorsements can have a significant impact on consumer perceptions and purchase intentions. When a well-known and respected figure promotes a product or brand, it can influence how consumers view the product and whether they are inclined to purchase it. Celebrity endorsements can enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of a product or brand. Consumers tend to trust the judgment and expertise of celebrities, and when they endorse a product, it can instil confidence in its quality and effectiveness.

Celebrities often bring positive associations with them. These positive attributes can be transferred to the product when the company endorses it. For example, if a famous athlete endorses a sports drink, consumers may associate the drink with qualities like athleticism, fitness, and performance. Celebrity endorsements can significantly increase brand and product awareness. The endorsement generates attention and media coverage, ensuring more consumers become aware of the product's existence. Consumers may develop an emotional connection with a product through a celebrity endorsement. This connection can stem from their admiration for the celebrity, translating into a positive emotional response to the product. Celebrity endorsements can influence purchase decisions (Shimp, 1997). When consumers see a trusted celebrity using or endorsing a product, they are more likely to consider purchasing it. Celebrity endorsements can contribute to brand loyalty. Consumers who have a positive experience with a product endorsed by a celebrity may become loyal to the brand, leading to repeat purchases.

Celebrity endorsements can differentiate a product from its competitors in a competitive market. This distinction can make a product more appealing to consumers with many options. Consumers often discuss products and endorsements by celebrities with their friends and family. This word-of-mouth marketing can further influence others' purchase decisions. The choice of a celebrity endorser can be

tailored to appeal to a specific target audience. For example, a celebrity popular among young adults may be used to target that demographic, aligning with their preferences. Celebrity endorsements are particularly influential in specific industries, such as fashion, beauty, and luxury goods. Consumers look to celebrities for fashion and beauty trends, making endorsements in these sectors highly effective.

In the current dynamic and competitive market, consumers are constantly exposed to a wide range of brands that offer a wide range of goods and services promoted through various marketing methods to sway their behaviour and affect their ultimate purchase decision (Kumar et al., 2017). This is because consumer behaviour is a significant and intricate field for marketers since various individuals have distinct demands, and meeting those needs is a challenge for most marketers (Kumar et al., 2017). Because of this, marketers all over the world began employing celebrities—first from the movie business, then from sports—to promote their goods starting in the late 19th century to increase their consumer base (Roy, 2006).

When these models were used (singly or in combination) in numerous Indian research, it was discovered that seven celebrity qualities were generally in charge of the shift in purchase intention. According to Kumar et al. (2017), these are the celebrity's credibility (knowledge and dependability), attractiveness (likeability, familiarity, and resemblance), product match, and meaning transfer from the celebrity to the product. Research shows that certain celebrity qualities, such as knowledge, reliability, and product fit (Gupta et al., 2015; Roy, 2006), have little effect on consumer behaviour.

According to Dash and Sabat (2012), celebrities are a ubiquitous aspect of society globally, leaving a lasting influence on everyone they contact (Kurzman et al., 2007). Celebrities are more frequently used in promotional campaigns because they may elicit both emotional and behavioural responses than non-celebrity endorsers (Kanungo & Pang, 1973; Petty et al., 1983). For a celebrity to be influential, they must possess the credibility to draw attention, raise awareness of the endorsed product, and sway the targeted audience's choice to buy (Miciak & Shanklin, 1994; Ohanian, 1990). According to Bowman (2002),

celebrity endorsements boost the degree of product recall. Chan et al. (2013) discovered that starring a celebrity in a commercial raises company awareness.

The successful segmentation, targeting, and positioning (STP) of a product in a given market drives marketers' decisions about celebrity endorsements. As a result, customer demographic profiling is essential, or else the benefits of STP are lost. According to Subhash et al. (2015), a consumer's demographic profile can also reveal their attitude, such as whether they will support, neutralise, or oppose a policy put into place by the government or private industry. Before pursuing celebrity endorsements, much work must be put into profiling customers. So, the second theory we have is

H3 = Celebrity Endorsement impacts consumers' purchase decisions for FMCG products.

H4 = Gender moderates the relation between celebrity endorsement and purchase decision of FMCG products.

2.4. Emotional Appeal in FMCG Advertising

2.4.1. Emotional appeal as a persuasive tactic in advertising

Emotional appeal is a persuasive tactic in advertising that leverages human emotions to influence consumer behaviour and decision-making. This approach recognises that emotions significantly shape how people perceive products or brands and whether they buy them. Emotional appeal aims to connect the consumer and the brand or product. Advertisers establish a relatable and emotional connection with their audience by evoking specific emotions, such as happiness, nostalgia, fear, or empathy. Emotional ads are designed to resonate with viewers on a personal and often deeply emotional level (Diener et al., 1985). When consumers feel a strong emotional connection to an advertisement, they are likelier to remember it and develop a positive association with the brand. Ads that trigger empathy can be compelling. When viewers feel compassion toward the characters or situations in an ad, it can lead to a deeper emotional connection and a desire to support the brand behind the message. Emotional appeals often address fundamental human needs and desires, such as the desire for love, happiness, belonging, security, or

self-improvement. When a brand aligns with these basic desires, it can capture consumers' attention and interest. (Biener et al. 2004)

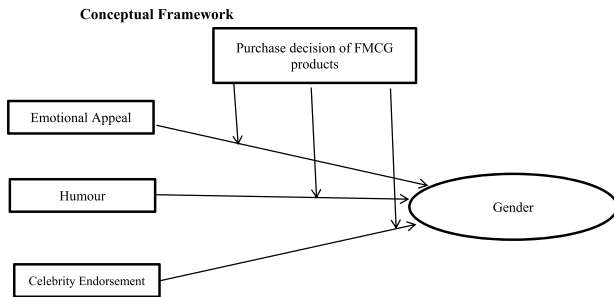
Emotional advertising can lead to brand loyalty and advocacy (Spielman, 1981), (Kaikati, 1987). Consumers with strong emotional connections with a brand are likelier to become loyal customers and advocates who recommend the product to others. In many cases, emotional appeal can overcome emotional barriers to purchasing. When consumers make buying decisions based on emotion, they may be more inclined to overlook price, features, or other practical considerations. Emotional appeals can set a brand apart from competitors. In markets where products are similar, the emotional bond established through advertising can differentiate one brand from another.

Storytelling is a common approach in emotional advertising. Brands use narratives to engage consumers, evoke emotions, and convey a message that resonates on a personal level. Emotional ads are often shared on social media and through word of mouth. When an ad emotionally moves viewers, they are likelier to share it with friends and family, leading to extended reach and brand exposure. Placing a product within an emotionally charged context can lead consumers to associate that product with the positive emotions portrayed in the ad. Ads that depict real-life scenarios and relatable situations can be particularly emotionally resonant. Consumers are more likely to connect with content that mirrors their own experiences. Emotions can have a powerful psychological impact on decision-making. Fear, for example, can drive the desire for security, while happiness can create a desire for products that promise joy. This led to the formulation of the hypotheses:

H5 = Emotional appeal impacts consumers' purchase decisions of FMCG products.

H6 = Gender moderates the relation between emotional appeal and purchase decision of FMCG products.

Conceptual Framework



Research Methodology

The researchers randomly chose 20 FMCG retail outlets in Bangalore and approached the adult customers stepping out of the FMCG retail outlets after purchasing. The questionnaire was shared via Google Forms to gather data from the customers willing to respond and approached the convenience sampling technique. Out of the 194 samples approached, 150 responses qualified with complete data points. A 5-point Likert scale (1 for —strongly disagree to 5 for —strongly agree) was used to assess the constructs. 3 items were used to measure each construct, i.e. Humour, celebrity endorsement and emotional appeal, respectively.

This research scenario meticulously identified a comprehensive sample of 150 individuals, offering a diverse representation of the population under investigation. The sample pool was further categorised based on gender, revealing a distribution of 94 male participants and 56 female participants. This gender-balanced approach ensures a nuanced exploration of the research questions, considering potential variations and perspectives across genders. Notably, all respondents were carefully selected from age groups spanning 18 to 45 years, capturing a spectrum of life stages and experiences. This intentional age stratification enhances the study's ability to draw insightful conclusions, as it acknowledges the potential influence of age-related factors on the phenomena under scrutiny. Including respondents aged 18-25, 26-30, and 31-45 promotes a thorough examination of diverse perspectives within the specified age brackets, enriching the study's overall depth and validity.

Data Analysis and Results

The results of the hypothesis testing in this scenario bring intriguing insights into the factors influencing consumers' purchase decisions, particularly within the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector. The research utilised a comprehensive approach, employing statistical analyses to evaluate the reliability and significance of various factors. The Cronbach alpha test, with a commendable value of 0.789 across 12 items, affirmed the reliability of the questionnaire.

	Loading	Cronbach alpha
Celebrity Endorsement		
CE1	0.668	
CE2	0.688	
CE3	0.79	
Emotional Appeal		
EA1	0.832	
EA2	0.775	
EA3	0.722	
Humour		
HO1	0.773	
HO2	0.739	
HO3	0.631	
Purchase Decision		
P1	0.696	
P2	0.793	
P3	0.747	0.789

Table 1: Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and Cronbach alpha

The Celebrity Endorsement significantly impacts purchase decisions of FMCG products with a β value of 0.254 ($p < 0.05$). Gender as the moderator further strengthened this relationship, with a β value of 0.268 ($p < 0.00$). Transitioning to Emotional Appeal, without the moderator, a β value of 0.116 ($p < 0.005$) emphasises the impact of Emotional Appeal. With gender as the moderator, the β value improved to 0.505 ($p < 0.00$), underscoring the moderating role of gender in the relationship between Emotional Appeal and the dependent variable. These quantitative insights provide a robust foundation for understanding the reliability and nuanced significance of Celebrity Endorsement and Emotional

Appeal, shedding light on the complex interplay of these factors with and without the moderating effect of gender.

Shifting the focus to humour, prior to introducing gender as moderator, the β value stood at 0.117 ($p > 0.10$), indicating no impact of humour on advertisements. However, upon the inclusion of gender as the moderator, the β value increased to 0.136 ($p < 0.10$), thereby highlighting the moderating influence of gender in the correlation between humour and the dependent variable. This analysis suggests that while humour in isolation may not significantly impact consumers' purchase decisions, its interaction with gender influences the purchase decision-making process.

Conversely, the study identifies the other two variables, celebrity endorsements and emotional appeal, as significant contributors to consumer choices. The robust impact of these factors on purchase decisions is underscored by their strong relationship, providing valuable insights for marketers aiming to enhance their strategies in the FMCG sector.

The introduction of gender as a moderator in the equations adds a layer of complexity to the analysis, revealing that gender does play a role in shaping consumer preferences. The enhanced relationship between celebrity endorsements, emotional appeal, and purchase decisions, when moderated by gender, suggests that these factors may resonate differently among male and female consumers. This nuanced understanding of the moderating effect of gender contributes to a more comprehensive comprehension of the dynamics influencing consumer behaviour within the FMCG domain.

	Standard β	R square	Adj R square	Change in R square	PH value	Significance
Model 1						
Humour	0.117	0.013	0.007	0.6116	0.158	NA
Humour x Gender	0.136	0.303	0.082	0.7178	0.064	90%
Model 2						
Celebrity Endorsement	0.254	0.064	0.058	0.5963	0.002	95%
Celebrity Endorsement x Gender	0.268	0.181	0.171	0.6691	0.00	99%
Model 3						
Emotional Appeal	0.116	0.034	0.027	0.6053	0.025	95%
Emotional Appeal x Gender	0.505	0.187	0.176	0.6681	0.00	'99%

Table 2: Results of hierarchical regression analysis

In light of our analysis, it is evident that the data does not provide sufficient grounds to accept Hypotheses 1 (H1). The results are characterised by insignificance and inconclusiveness, pointing towards statistically solid support for the proposed relationships. However, the situation differs for hypothesis 2 (H2), hypothesis 3 (H3), hypothesis 4(H4), hypothesis 5(H5) and Hypothesis 6 (H6), where the significance level alone is compelling enough to warrant its acceptance. As we navigate these findings, it is crucial to acknowledge the nuanced nature of these relationships explored and interpret the outcomes within the study's limitations and external factors.

In conclusion, this research not only refutes the assumed role of humour in FMCG purchase decisions but also sheds light on the pivotal influence of celebrity endorsements and emotional appeal. Moreover, by acknowledging the moderating effect of gender, marketers can tailor their strategies to better resonate with the diverse preferences of male and female consumers, thereby optimising their approach in the highly competitive FMCG market.

Discussion

Surveys were distributed to a diverse sample of consumers, capturing their preferences, perceptions, and attitudes towards humorous advertising in the FMCG sector (Silvio Waisbord et al., 2010). Additionally, statistical analyses were conducted to assess the correlation between humour and consumer purchase decisions. Upon analysing the collected data, we found that the β value with humour's impact on consumer purchase decisions was 0.117 with $p\text{-value} > 0.10$. This suggests that the relationship between humour and FMCG product purchase decisions was not statistically significant at the significance level of 90%. However, upon introducing gender as the moderator, the β value did improve to 0.136 ($p < 0.10$). In other words, no substantial evidence supports the idea that humour significantly influences consumers when purchasing FMCG products. However, gender moderates the relationship with consumers' decision to purchase FMCG products when allowed to interact with humour.

The findings challenge common marketing assumptions that humour is universally effective in influencing consumer behaviour. While humour has

proven to be a potent tool in various advertising contexts, its impact is less pronounced in the FMCG sector. This divergence may be attributed to the nature of FMCG products, which often cater to basic needs and necessities. In such cases, consumers might prioritise practical aspects such as price, quality, and brand reputation over the entertaining qualities of humorous advertisements (Slater et al., D. 2002).

Delving deeper into the statistical significance of the variables, the analysis brings forth compelling evidence regarding emotional appeal. The initial assessment indicates a β value of 0.116 ($p < 0.05$), affirming the noteworthy role that emotional appeal plays in influencing consumer purchase decisions for FMCG products. This finding underscores the importance of crafting marketing strategies that resonate with consumers emotionally, tapping into their sentiments and aspirations.

However, the intrigue intensifies when gender is introduced as a moderator in the equation. The subsequent analysis reveals a β value of 0.505 ($p < 0.00$), emphasising a profound shift in the impact of emotional appeal on consumer choices when viewed through the lens of gender. This signifies that the emotional appeal of FMCG products holds even greater sway over purchase decisions when considering different genders' unique perspectives and preferences. This nuanced understanding allows marketers to tailor their emotional appeals with a gender-specific focus, recognising that the emotional triggers that resonate with male and female consumers may vary significantly. Consequently, this insight provides a strategic advantage for marketers to craft targeted and more effective campaigns that align with the distinct emotional drivers of diverse consumer segments within the FMCG market.

The statistical examination further illuminates the influence of celebrity endorsements on consumer decisions within the FMCG sector. Initial scrutiny reveals a noteworthy β value of 0.254 ($p < 0.05$), signifying a robust connection between celebrity endorsements and consumer choices. This underscores the considerable sway that endorsements by well-known figures hold in shaping perceptions and preferences, ultimately impacting purchasing behaviour for FMCG products

(Klaus et al., 2008). Introducing an additional layer of complexity, including gender as a moderator in the equation, exposes a β value of 0.268 ($p < 0.00$). This outcome indicates a substantial intensification of the relationship between celebrity endorsements, gender, and consumer purchase decisions. The statistically significant interaction implies that the impact of celebrity endorsements on FMCG purchase decisions is significantly elevated when considering the distinct perspectives and preferences of different genders (Kulkarni et al., 2005).

This nuanced insight reinforces the significance of celebrity endorsements and underscores the necessity for marketers to tailor their strategies based on gender-specific considerations. Marketers can leverage this understanding to strategically choose celebrities and design campaigns that resonate more profoundly with specific gender demographics, thereby enhancing the overall efficacy of their promotional efforts in the FMCG market.

Hypotheses	Particulars	Result
H ₁	Humour impacts consumers' decision to purchase FMCG products.	Not supported
H ₂	Humour impacts consumers' purchase decisions, and gender moderates the relationship between emotional appeal and the purchase decision of FMCG products.	Supported
H ₃	Celebrity endorsement impacts consumers' decision to purchase FMCG products.	Supported
H ₄	Celebrity Endorsement impacts consumer's purchase decisions, and gender moderates the relationship between celebrity endorsement and purchase decisions of FMCG products.	Supported
H ₅	Emotional appeal impacts consumer's purchase decision of FMCG products.	Supported

H ₆	Emotional appeal impacts consumers' purchase decisions, and gender moderates the relationship between humour and the purchase decision for FMCG products.	Supported
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Table 3: Summary of the results of the hypothesis testing

Conclusion

In conclusion, the comprehensive exploration of factors influencing consumer purchase decisions within the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector has yielded nuanced insights. The research investigated the roles of humour, celebrity endorsements, emotional appeal, and the moderating effect of gender. The findings shed light on the intricate interplay of these variables, providing valuable implications for marketers aiming to tailor their strategies effectively.

The unexpected result regarding the negligible impact of humour on FMCG purchase decisions, as evidenced by a low β value of 0.117, challenges conventional assumptions. This calls for re-evaluating the emphasis on humour in FMCG marketing, suggesting that alternative strategies may be more impactful (Thorson et al., 1993).

On the other hand, the pronounced significance of emotional appeal and celebrity endorsements underscores their substantial roles in influencing consumer choices. Emotional appeal emerged as a potent driver, with a β value of 0.116, and this influence was further intensified when gender was introduced as a moderator (β value = 0.505). These findings underscore the importance of tapping into consumers' emotions and tailoring strategies to align with gender-specific preferences.

Similarly, the research highlighted the pivotal role of celebrity endorsements, with an initial β value of 0.254. The subsequent introduction of gender as a moderator intensified this relationship, emphasising the need for marketers to consider the diverse perspectives and preferences of male and female consumers when leveraging celebrity endorsements. For marketers operating in the FMCG sector, the research findings suggest a need for a nuanced

approach to advertising. While humour may not be decisive in driving immediate purchase decisions, it could still be leveraged to create memorable and engaging campaigns that contribute to brand recall and positive associations. Marketers should consider incorporating a mix of strategies, balancing the practical and emotional aspects of their messaging to resonate effectively with their target audience (Thomson, 2006).

The overarching implication is that successful FMCG marketing requires a nuanced understanding of the dynamic factors influencing consumer behaviour. Marketers must recognise the varying impact of strategies such as humour, emotional appeal, and celebrity endorsements and acknowledge the moderating influence of gender.

Scope for Future Research

While this research provides valuable insights, it also opens avenues for further exploration in FMCG marketing across different cities in India. Future research could delve into the impact of cultural factors on consumer preferences within the FMCG sector. Cultural influences may shape the effectiveness of marketing strategies differently, necessitating a more granular understanding. With the increasing prevalence of online shopping and digital marketing, exploring the impact of digital platforms on FMCG purchase decisions is crucial. Understanding how humour, emotional appeal, and celebrity endorsements translate in the digital landscape can guide marketers in adapting to evolving consumer trends.

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