

BLACKPINK Endorsement Effect: Luxury Perfume Brand Image and Consumption Behavior of Chinese College Students

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Abstract: This study explores the impact of K-pop stars on the brand image of luxury perfumes, with a particular focus on how Chinese university students perceive and behave towards perfumes endorsed by BLACKPINK members. This study employs a combination of textual analysis and questionnaire surveys to analyze the advertisements of four luxury perfume brands - Celine, Dior, YSL, and Tamburins- endorsed by BLACKPINK members. Through a survey of 117 Chinese university students, the relationship between the brand image conveyed by the advertisements and the consumers' brand perception is examined. The results indicate a high consistency between the visual and textual elements of the advertisements (such as the presentation style and emotional tone of the endorsers) and the perceived brand image by consumers. Moreover, the study reveals the synergistic effect of visual and textual elements in advertisements, which not only enhances the efficiency of brand information transmission but also improves consumers' overall perception and emotional connection with the brand. This study not only demonstrates the powerful influence of K-pop star endorsements but also provides important strategic insights for luxury brands in choosing endorsers and designing advertising strategies. By leveraging celebrity influence effectively, brands can achieve marketing goals and deepen the connection between consumers and the brand. Future research could further explore the relationship between different endorsers and different types of products, and how this relationship influences brand loyalty and purchasing behavior among various consumer groups.

Keywords: luxury perfume, luxury brand image, consumption behavior

1. Introduction

1.1. The Historical Evolution of Luxury Perfume Endorsers

In the past few decades, luxury brands have mainly used European and American celebrities as spokespersons for their products. This choice is based on the strong influence and wide recognition of these Hollywood stars around the world. For example, Nylund's research shows that the

endorsement of Hollywood stars can significantly enhance the image of luxury brands and consumer brand loyalty, which is mainly due to their global popularity and high public recognition [1].

However, with the deepening development of globalization, luxury brands have undergone significant changes in their spokesperson strategies. In particular, the rise of the Asian market has prompted brands to adopt global idols from different backgrounds, such as K-pop stars and other Asian idols. Chen et al. pointed out that the endorsement of these Asian stars is not limited to traditional Korean beauty products, but their influence has expanded to global luxury brands, effectively improving the brand's international popularity and attracting the attention of global consumers [2].

1.2. Beyond the Endorsement of Korean Beauty Products

Traditionally, K-pop stars are closely related to the endorsement of Korean beauty products, but with the global popularity of K-pop culture, stars like BLACKPINK not only become the image of beauty products, but also endorse high-end fashion and luxury perfume. Cuomo et al. emphasized that modern consumers, especially young consumers, increasingly seek to resonate with the brand's culture and values, which prompted luxury brands to adopt more inclusive and diversified market strategies in the process of globalization [3].

1.3. Research Gap: K-pop Stars and Endorsers of Luxury Perfume

Although K-pop stars have an increasingly significant impact on global luxury brand perfume, research on Chinese college students, a specific consumer group, is relatively scarce. As one of the consumption forces in the luxury market, Chinese college students' consumption behavior and brand choice are affected by many factors, including their worship and following of K-pop stars. However, existing studies such as Choi&Rifon mainly focus on the fit between stars and brands and its impact on consumer brand attitudes and purchase intentions, but often ignore the impact of Chinese college students on the reaction and purchase behavior of spokesmen [4].

In addition, Suh and Lim&Choi mentioned that the role of K-pop stars as global brand ambassadors in different markets and their impact on brand strategies, however the research on how to shape brand image in different cultural and market backgrounds is not deep enough [5, 6]. Especially in China, college students have their own unique use habits of social media and acceptance of popular culture, which may affect their perception of the brand endorsed by K-pop stars and purchase decisions. Therefore, future research needs to pay more attention to how Chinese college students improve their sense of self-worth by imitating the behavior of K-pop stars they worship and explore how this imitation affects their loyalty to luxury brands and purchase behavior.

2. Manuscript Preparation

The method used by the authors is based on the Structure Event framework, which means that events are composed of structures. Without structures, there will be no events. The nature of events depends on structures. There are mainly two methods adopted. One is a text analysis of the posters of luxury brand perfume products that choose K-pop idols as their spokesmen, and the other is research on the data obtained from questionnaires among Chinese college students.

2.1. Text Analysis Sections

2.1.1. Text Selection

The purpose of this study is to analyze how BLACKPINK endorses luxury perfume advertising to convey brand value, attract target consumers, and strengthen the relationship between brands and

consumers by combining visual and text elements and spokesperson image. The qualitative content analysis method is used to systematically analyze various elements in advertisements through detailed coding. The research data source is the advertising posters of four luxury perfume brands endorsed by BLACKPINK members. These posters are from public brand advertising materials, ensuring the openness and accessibility of data.

2.1.2. Information Coding Methods and Analysis

Through the established information code, the data is familiarized, the data code is generated, the theme of the relationship between luxury perfume products and K-pop spokespersons is established, and the data of luxury perfume advertisements endorsed by four BLACKPINK members is extracted and analyzed. This part is a descriptive study of the event of brand choice spokesperson.

The codebook includes the following sections.

1. Spokespersons: analyze whether members appear individually or as a group, their facial expressions (e.g., sexy, mysterious, etc.).
2. Spokesperson's style and grooming: detail clothing (luxury, sexy, etc.), make-up (heavy or light), and accessories (whether high-end in line with the perfume brand).
3. Visual elements: Observe the use of colors (e.g., black and white, gold, etc.), and product presentation (details of the design of the perfume bottle and the way it interacts with the spokesperson, e.g., hand-held display or interactive spraying).
4. Text elements: analysis of brand information (brand name/logo display location and size), slogans (whether words related to BLACKPINK image or music works are used), specific information (flavor type description and targeted consumer groups).
5. Consumer target groups: infer the target groups implied by BLACKPINK's image and text information (such as young women K-pop fans).
6. Emotional tone and style of advertising: analyze the brand image communication related to BLACKPINK (such as youth, vitality, independence and self-confidence).

To ensure consistency and accuracy, coders need to provide detailed descriptions of each visual and textual element and be able to clearly understand and consistently apply the coding rules. For subjective judgments such as emotional expression or style recognition, coders need to provide sufficient examples or reference images to support their judgments. At the same time, they should take note of the elements that are emphasized or repeated in the advertisement and analyze whether they are the messages that the advertisement is trying to convey in particular.

2.2. Questionnaire Section

2.2.1. Research Subjects

As for the selection of the research subjects, since the research team members are all university students, in order to ensure a stable source of information and more objective feedback, the team chose university students in first-tier cities in China, such as Beijing, Jiangsu, Henan, Shandong and Liaoning, as the research subjects for this study. The questionnaire was distributed via the Internet due to the wide range of geographical locations of the subjects, and there was no restriction on the grade level and major of the subjects.

2.2.2. Questionnaire Design and Distribution

The questionnaire was designed by members of this team. The number of questionnaire questions is 28, and the questionnaire content is divided into three parts.

The questionnaires were distributed from April 11, 2024, to April 15, 2024, for a total of four days. Due to the wide geographical coverage of the selected research subjects, the team distributed the questionnaires online through the Internet, and after four days of distribution, 321 questionnaires were distributed and 117 valid questionnaires were collected, with a validity rate of 36%, obtaining 117 valid data.

2.3. Comparative Analysis Methods

Based on the university student group, the authors set questions on the influence of choosing spokespersons for luxury brand perfumes on students' consumption behavior, collected 117 valid questionnaires, and analyzed the trend and quantitative data based on the acquired data.

As Table 1 shows, in the fifth through tenth questions, the questionnaire asked whether or not they had purchased perfume, the factors and preferences for purchasing perfume, and whether or not they had purchased perfume products because of idol endorsements.

Table 1: Questionnaire data.

Question	Options	As a percentage	Number of persons
Whether or not they have purchased a perfume	be	68.4%	80
factors in the purchase of perfume	Preferring to admire perfumes endorsed by idols	18.8%	22
preferences for purchasing perfume	luxury brands	45.3%	53
Whether or not you bought the perfume because of the idol's endorsement	be	18.8%	22
	be	68.4	80

3. The Results of the Study

3.1. Text Analysis Results

3.1.1. The Personal Images of BLACKPINK Members Complement the Luxury Fragrance Brand Image

In the text analysis, this study uses the posters of four BLACKPINK members who endorse different brands of perfume products as the text analysis object, and analyzes the image of the spokesperson in the luxury brand perfume posters:

The poster of Lisa's endorsement of Celine Haute Parfumerie shows her luxurious and fashionable image in a high-end customized evening dress; The overall shape is simple and elegant; The face is covered by hair, showing a sense of unruly and mysteriousness.

In Jisoo's poster for Dior, Jisoo endorses MissDior with a generous and sexy image in the poster, which is in line with his sister and group pet in the BLACKPINK team. In addition, Jisoo's self-confidence and charm in the poster also convey a positive emotional tone, attracting consumers' attention and affection.

In the poster of Jenny's endorsement of Tamburins brand perfume, Jenny, wearing a white skirt, presents herself as a fashionable and confident woman. Her indifferent expression corresponds to the undefined beauty pursued by the Tamburins brand.

In the poster of Rose's endorsement of YSL brand perfume product "Free Water", Rose's body center of gravity shifted to the left, her hands and arms straightened, she touched the floor, dressed in a simple black dress and black stockings, her nails were also dyed black, and her smoky makeup with a cool expression presented a sexy and uninhibited feeling, with a sense of sophistication and mystery, creating an independent, confident and beautiful female image. It is very consistent with the independent self and the combination of hardness and softness of women represented by the Water of Freedom.

3.1.2. Luxury Brand Image and Spokesperson Image Deepen Each Other

Through the analysis of the product posters of four members of the BLACKPINK group who luxury brand perfume products to endorse products, the authors found that K-pop idol endorses luxury brand perfume products and impact on the perfume consumption of Chinese college fans.

Luxury brand perfume chooses K-pop as its spokesperson and compares the brand image with the spokesperson image to attract K-pop idol fans for consumption behavior and deepen brand image building. In the propaganda poster, K-pop idol spokespersons and luxury brand perfume products are placed in the main body of the poster to guide and emphasize the product image of luxury brand perfume products through actions or layout.

After analyzing the research, the authors found that the significance of the transfer effect and mechanism proposed by Tian, S., Tao, W., Hong, C., & Tsai, W. H. S. on celebrity-brand associations are similar, both describing the mutual influence between endorsers and luxury brands [7]. However, in terms of the impact of fan conversion on luxury brand fragrance products by BLACKPINK members, the authors found that the influence of fan conversion on the brand is greater than that of its endorsers (BLACKPINK members).

3.2. Results of the Questionnaire

3.2.1. The Relationship between Luxury Brand Image and Endorsement Choice

Based on the survey of domestic college students and the analysis of the endorsement of K-pop idol BLACKPINK portfolio members in luxury advertising, this paper discusses the impact of K-pop idol endorsement of luxury brand perfume products on the perfume consumption of domestic fans.

K-pop idols endorse luxury fragrance brands individually, comparing the brand image with the image of the endorser to attract K-pop idol fans to deepen the brand image and attract their fan base to consume.

According to the questionnaire research, the factors for college students to buy perfume can be listed as four. One is because college students have a certain amount of disposable living expenses, they can buy goods according to their personal preferences, and are less constrained; the second is that some college students are demanding for their personal image, and they want to enhance their personal image and temperament through perfume to improve their personal sophistication and popularity; the third is that college students can learn about perfume with more time and energy when they go from high school to university; the last point is the crowd psychology, which is the purchasing behavior within the group or the favorite idol using and endorsing a certain perfume to buy it. The last point is from the crowd psychology, group purchasing behavior or favorite idol using and endorsing a certain perfume to purchase.

3.2.2. The Influence of Perfume Product Consumption and BLACKPINK Idol Endorsement

As Figure 1 shows, the factors that affect the purchase of perfume, smell; Consistent with personal temperament; Prefer K-pop idol endorsement; Exquisite packaging; Among the five factors of others' recommendation, smell is the decisive factor, and the degree of recognition is more than 90% (111 people). Although the proportion of idol endorsement is only 18.8% (22 people), the number of people who buy idol endorsement products is also 18.8% (22 people). It can be concluded that although idol fans account for a relatively small proportion of the total number of people, they have a stronger ability to consume idol endorsement products. In this section, we take the viewpoint from the research of Wijanarko, B., & Fachrodji, A. that price is a factor that has a relatively minor impact on purchase decisions, and the authors did not include the price factor in the problem setting [8].

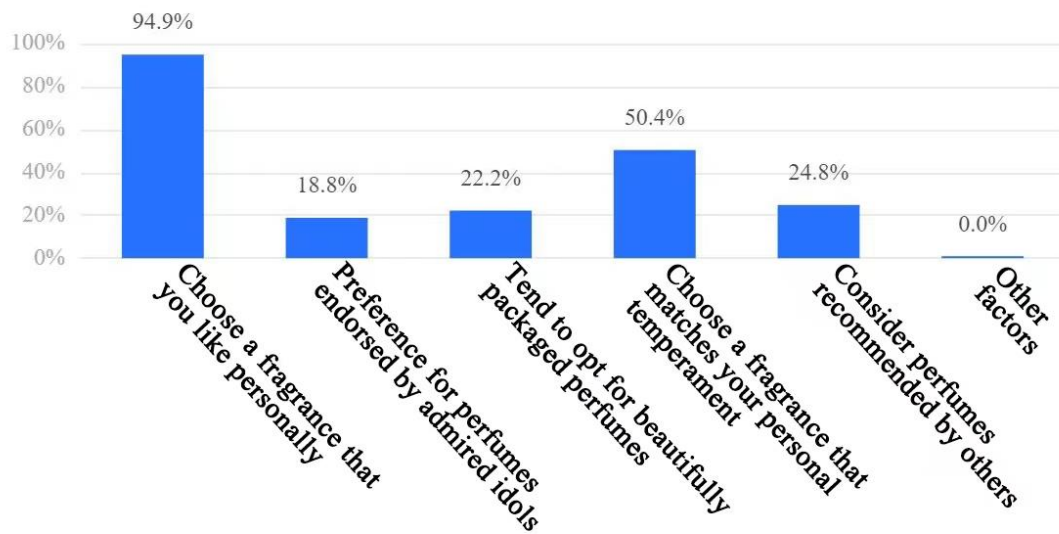


Figure 1: The factors influencing college students' purchase of perfume.

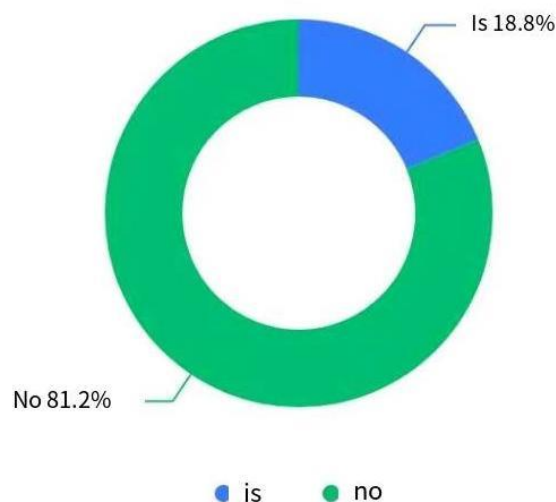


Figure 2: Influence of K-pop idols on college students' purchase of perfume.

In addition, the posters of BLACKPINK members endorsing luxury brand products were displayed to the subjects through a questionnaire survey. More than half of the subjects said that the temperament image of the spokesperson was consistent with the image created by their endorsement of perfume products (see Figure 2). Therefore, the authors believe that in terms of choosing spokespersons, the brand side tends to choose spokespersons who are consistent with the image of this perfume product, to better display and interpret the image of perfume, help consumers better understand the image created by perfume, and stimulate consumers' purchase desire.

3.3. Comparison Results

Through the combination of qualitative content analysis and quantitative questionnaire survey, this study deeply discussed how the visual and text elements of BLACKPINK members' luxury perfume advertisements effectively convey specific brand information and affect the brand perception of target consumer groups. The analysis results show that there is a high degree of consistency between the key visual and text elements in advertising (such as the presentation style and emotional tone of the spokesperson) and the brand image perception expressed by consumers through questionnaire feedback. Specifically, the keywords conveyed by each member's poster highly overlap with the perception of the target consumer group - Chinese college students, which shows the accuracy and effectiveness of advertising content design.

Through the analysis of Lisa's posters, the authors found that the sexy, high-level and mysterious images she displayed were highly consistent with the keywords "sexy, mature, confident and beautiful" expressed by consumers through the questionnaire survey, indicating that the advertisement successfully conveyed the brand image it was intended to create. Similarly, Rose's posters are displayed in a sexy, casual and confident image, closely linked with consumers' perception of "confidence, beauty, sexiness and fashion", reflecting the effectiveness of advertising content and the accuracy of target positioning. For Jennie's advertisement, her fashionable, confident and independent image matches the keywords of "cute, beautiful, fashionable and sexy" fed back by consumers, which shows the success of advertisement in conveying the brand value of independence and fashion. last, Jisoo's poster shows the image of gentleness, elegance and self-confidence, which perfectly corresponds to consumers' perception of "loveliness, beauty, self-confidence, gentleness", highlighting the effect of advertising in expressing the softness and elegance of the brand.

In addition, this study reveals that the synergistic effect of visual and textual elements in advertisements not only enhances the efficiency of brand message communication, but also improves consumers' overall perception and emotional connection to the brand. In this way, brands can effectively utilize the influence of celebrities to achieve marketing objectives and deepen the connection between consumers and brands.

In conclusion, this study verifies the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement in modern advertising strategies, especially in the luxury market, where the careful selection of spokespersons and the precise matching of advertising elements have a decisive impact on shaping the brand image and attracting target consumers.

4. Discussion

Through research, there is a mutually reinforcing and shaping relationship between BLACKPINK members' endorsement of luxury perfume and product image, which has a significant impact on the consumption behavior of domestic college student fan groups.

4.1. Analysis of Causes

First of all, luxury brands choose BLACKPINK members as spokesmen, which itself reflects the brand's recognition of the global influence of K-pop culture. For brands, they can use their image and audience base to enhance the attractiveness of their products by cooperating with these icons with high visibility and fashion sense. Through sorting out and analyzing the questionnaires, we found that more than half of the subjects said that the image of BLACKPINK members was in line with the image of the perfume products they spoke for, so the image of BLACKPINK members as young, fashionable, confident and beautiful was very consistent with the positioning of brand perfume products. For example, Jenny is known as "Chanel on earth". Her high fashion sense complements the elegant image of the Chanel brand. This fit between the individual and the brand image not only strengthens the attraction of the brand in the target consumer group, but also brings new vitality to the brand.

Secondly, for BLACKPINK members, by endorsing luxury brands, they can strengthen their own international image and fashion status and enhance their popularity and influence in the public. This will help them to achieve more opportunities and success in their acting career. For example, Jenny is believed to have initiated the trend of K-pop idols becoming a luxury brand ambassador. thereafter, Other members of BLACKPINK have successively endorsed luxury brands, which is a symbol of honor in the K-pop circle. Endorsement cooperation usually brings rich income to BLACKPINK members, which is conducive to increasing their business value.

Finally, this partnership also has an impact on fan groups. BLACKPINK fans may have a good opinion of certain brands due to the endorsement of their idols, and even affect their consumption choices. This phenomenon is particularly obvious among Chinese college students, namely the subjects of this study. By sorting out the questionnaire, we found that 22 subjects would consider the endorsement of their favorite idol as their own consideration when buying perfume, and these 22 subjects had also purchased the perfume of K-pop idol endorsement. This coincidence just shows that the endorsement of idol will promote the purchase of this product by college student fans, their consumption behavior will be significantly affected by the idol endorsement brand. The authors made a simple analysis of this phenomenon, which mainly has the following reasons.

(1) Imitation mentality: Idols, especially pop culture stars that are popular with young people, have a great influence on their fans. When an idol endorses a certain brand or product, fans may buy the brand or product because they want to imitate the idol.

(2) Trust and reliability: Fans tend to trust their idols' recommendations and consider their choices to be reliable. If an idol publicly endorses a product, fans may believe that the product is trustworthy and buy it.

(3) Emotional connection: There is a strong emotional connection between fans and idols. Products or brands endorsed by idols can become an extension of the emotional connection between fans and idols, and by purchasing these products, fans feel some form of connection with their idols [9].

(4) Expression of social identity: Fans may also buy products endorsed by their idols to express their social identity and show others that they are fans of a particular idol or group [9].

(5) Loyalty: Fans' loyalty to an idol may translate into loyalty to a brand or product. Once fans start using a brand because of an idol's endorsement, they may continue to buy it even if the idol's endorsement contract ends.

(6) Competition between fan groups: Sometimes there may be a degree of competition within a fan group or between different fan groups to demonstrate their level of support for an idol. This may motivate fans to buy more endorsed products [10].

In summary, the endorsement cooperation between BLACKPINK embers and luxury perfume is a two-way mutually beneficial relationship. The brand uses the influence of idols to improve its

product image and market competitiveness, and provides a platform for idols to show their personal charm and fashion taste. This cooperation not only shapes the product image, but also deepens the consumers' cognition and emotional connection to the brand.

4.2. Recommendation

By analyzing the endorsement effect of BLACKPINK members, brands can better understand the target market and develop more effective product promotion plans. At the same time, it can also provide references for other brands to help them make more intelligent decisions when choosing spokesmen. Through the research, it is found that the image of the spokesperson plays a role in shaping and enhancing the brand image. Combined with this research, the following suggestions are made:

(1) Choosing a spokesperson who matches the brand's image

Brands should ensure that the spokesperson's public image, values and style are consistent with brands' desired message. For example, if the brand's positioning is youthful and energetic, it would be more appropriate to choose an energetic celebrity who is popular with young people as the spokesperson [11].

(2) Considering the audience base of the endorser

Endorsers should have fans or followers that match the brand's target market. Find out how influential and popular the spokesperson is in the target market and whether their fan base overlaps with the brand's target consumers.

(3) Advocate consistency

Brands should try to maintain a long-term relationship with the endorser so that the public can closely associate the endorser with the brand. Frequent changes in spokespersons may weaken this association and lead to brand confusion.

(4) Monitoring public opinion and feedback

Brands should keep an eye on how the public perceives and reacts to the spokesperson and how they interact with the brand. This helps the brand to adjust its marketing strategy in time to deal with any unfavorable situation that may arise.

(5) Creative use of advocates

Brands should go beyond traditional advertising and promotions and look for new ways to add value to brands, such as through social media interactions, participation in branded events, or limited-edition product collaborations, which will inspire fans to buy and be passionate.

5. Conclusion

Through the above study, the main conclusion that can be drawn is that the relationship between the spokesperson's image and the brand's image is mutually reinforcing, and that this kind of endorsement behavior motivates young fans to spend money.

The study has some limitations because of the objective conditions. The study only selected 117 college students from different regions of China as the respondents of the questionnaire survey, which is a small number of respondents and a single group, but the actual consumer groups are very broad and diverse. Moreover, the cultural differences of different regions may also lead to the bias of the results. The study only randomly selected college students from different regions of China, without regional refinement, and thus is not generalizable. In addition, consumer preferences and market trends may change over time, which requires the study to be updated to maintain relevance.

This research only explored the brand perfume endorsed by four members of BLACKPINK, and the respondents were only college students in China. Future research can further explore the relationship between different types of endorsers and different types of products, as well as the impact

on different consumer groups, and can also further explore the endorsement effect on different media platforms. With the continuous development of social media and digital marketing, future research can pay more attention to endorsement strategies on these emerging channels and their impact on brand image.

Authors Contribution

All the authors contributed equally and their names were listed in alphabetical order.

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