





From Rolex to Casio: Analyzing the Impact of Celebrity Mentions on Brand Perception

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Abstract. Many brands around the world use celebrity endorsement as part of their marketing strategy to take advantage of a celebrity's fame to promote a product. Usually, this strategy is linked to positive results. However, there are times when a celebrity may be involved in a scandal, producing negative associations for both the celebrity and the brand. Although there is several research on celebrity endorsement, it remains to be fully explored how it impacts consumers within specific contexts. At the beginning of 2023, Shakira made analog comparisons between Rolex and Casio, and Ferrari and Twingo in her song BZRP Music Session #53, without an agreement with these brands, generating millions of views on Spotify in less than a day and a stir on social networks. This work analyzes how the analog mention of the Casio brand in Shakira's song affects the perception and attitudes of Peruvian consumers, through semi-structured interviews, differentiated by their previous relationship with the Casio brand. The difference in impact between the two groups studied has been distinguished: the attitudes of Group 1, with little or no relationship with the brand, were negatively affected, while the attitudes of Group 2, with a previous relationship, were not affected.

Keywords: Celebrity endorsement, Consumer perception, Brand attitude, Social media impact

1 Introduction

In a market saturated with countless brands, companies resort to marketing strategies such as celebrity endorsements to capture the public's attention [1]. Celebrities are considered sources of attraction to an advertisement, and their association with a brand can increase its credibility [2]. However, the interaction between celebrity and brand can be complex, especially when spontaneous mentions arise in popular media, as was observed with singer Shakira in early 2023.

Shakira made analog comparisons between well-known brands, such as "You traded a Ferrari for a Twingo" and "You traded a Rolex for a Casio," in her song BZRP Music Session #53, which reached 14.4 million plays on Spotify in less than 24 hours. This generated significant buzz on social networks and a notable increase in mentions of these brands [3].

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Recent research has explored various aspects of celebrity endorsement, including credibility [4], the congruence between celebrity and brand [5], and ethical implications [7]. However, there remains a gap in understanding how spontaneous mentions of brands in popular songs affect consumer attitudes.

This study aims to fill this gap by investigating how the spontaneous mention of the Casio brand in Shakira's song BZRP Music Session #53 affects the perceptions and attitudes of Peruvian consumers, focusing on the variation of attitudes according to the degree of prior familiarity with the brand. Specifically, it seeks to answer the question: How does the spontaneous mention of a brand in a popular song influence consumer perception and attitude?

2 Theoretical Framework

2.1 Celebrity Endorsement

According to Erdogan (1999), celebrity endorsement began in the mid-19th century. However, its intensive use started in the late 1960s with the advent of television [8].

Celebrity endorsement has been one of the most important research topics in the field of marketing, with numerous studies exploring its various dimensions [9] [7]. Recent research has focused on how digital platforms and social media have transformed the dynamics of endorsement [6] [10]. Despite the number of studies, many do not define the meaning of celebrity endorsement. Those that do usually refer to the definition proposed by McCracken [11], who defines celebrity endorsement as any person who enjoys public recognition and uses that recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with the product in an advertisement. For Bergkvist & Zhou [12], this definition is outdated in today's advertising world, as it also applies to other media and not just advertisements. They also mention that it is limited to consumer goods when now there are various forms.

Bergkvist & Zhou [12] propose an updated definition of celebrity endorsement, which considers the expansion of the concept to different media and types of products. This theory is fundamental to our research as it provides a framework for understanding how mentions in popular songs can influence consumer perception. Additionally, Agarwal et al. [13] state that today, celebrity endorsement is an important element of brand marketing and has become a multi-billion dollar industry worldwide.

2.2 Celebrity Endorser

The concept of a celebrity endorser refers to successful individuals in their professions who use their recognition to promote brands [14]. This relationship is based on McCracken's [11] theory of meaning transfer, where the qualities of the endorser are transferred to the promoted product. When associated with a brand, the celebrity is called an "endorser" [15]. There are two main reasons why celebrities are used: they are seen as dynamic, attractive, and likable, and their fame draws attention to the product [6]. Therefore, this famous figure is associated with a brand or product and uses their skills, talent, and social image to promote a brand [16].

However, the use of a celebrity for multiple brands is also debated. While some authors argue that it does not cause any negative effects, many others believe that the endorsement of multiple brands by a celebrity not only confuses consumers but also reduces the popularity and acceptability of a brand [14].

2.3 Negative Celebrity Endorsement

Celebrities can both enhance and damage a brand's reputation [17]. Studies show celebrity transgressions negatively affect consumers, but these effects can be moderated by various factors [18]. Consumer identification with the celebrity influences their tolerance towards negative behaviors [19].

Akturan [6] notes that people exhibit a "negativity bias" in moral conduct evaluations. He developed a model of dominant factors influencing consumer opinions: level of negativity, level of guilt, and admiration. Minor transgressions usually do not change consumer perceptions. The perception of guilt depends on the perceived responsibility, and admiration is linked to the celebrity's performance.

Brands often face issues with both sponsored and non-sponsored celebrities. Madonna's case with Pepsi in the 80s exemplifies this, where religious imagery in a commercial led to public backlash and Pepsi severing ties with her [20]. Negative associations can extend to the brand, leading brands to distance themselves from misbehaving celebrities. For instance, Tiger Woods faced backlash due to his extramarital affairs, causing sponsors to drop him [14]. Nike, however, continued their sponsorship, releasing an ad featuring Woods, which negatively impacted public perception [6].

Non-sponsored celebrity Cristiano Ronaldo's removal of Coca-Cola bottles during a press conference led to a \$4 billion market value loss for Coca-Cola [21]. Inconsistent behavior, like Ronaldo's past Coca-Cola and KFC promotions, can negatively impact public perception [22].

2.4 Mention of the Casio Brand in Shakira's Song

BZRP Music Session #53" by Argentine producer Bizarrap featuring Shakira was released on January 11, 2023. The song caused a stir on social media due to its lyrics, which were allegedly directed at her ex-partner Gerard Piqué. One of the most notable aspects was the mention of brands, including Casio: "You traded a Rolex for a Casio" [23]. Similarly, the line "You traded a Ferrari for a Twingo" also trended on Twitter minutes after the song's debut [24].

The phrase compares cars and watches, implying that a Ferrari is luxurious, expensive, and fast, while a Twingo is small, cheap, and slow. The same applies to watches, where a Rolex is high-end, expensive, and luxurious, while a Casio is relatively simple, casual, and inexpensive. In fact, many internet users identified more with Casio, having used the brand throughout their lives.

3 Methodology

For this research, the Casio brand was chosen due to its mention in Shakira's song BZRP Music Session #53, as the watch brands generated greater engagement on social media compared to car brands in Peru, and Casio received a negative comparison from the singer.

This study is based on the interpretative paradigm, which examines how subjects understand their reality, implying that the study is conducted from the participant's point of view [25]. According to this approach, the study is a qualitative investigation that uses both spoken and written language as data to analyze and describe, aiming to understand the explored reality in the selected sample [26].

The study design follows the phenomenological approach, which seeks to describe and understand the participants' lived experiences regarding a phenomenon, providing first-person information [27]. Therefore, the phenomenon will be studied directly by exploring the participants' conscious knowledge through focused interviews, encouraging each of them to share their experiences and feelings.

3.1 Procedure

To collect data, a sample of 20 participants was selected, divided into two groups of 10 each, of young Peruvians aged 20 to 25 and 26 to 30. Participants were selected through purposive sampling, seeking diversity in gender, socioeconomic level, and familiarity with the Casio brand. Semi-structured interview guides (Table 1) were used, designed to explore perceptions and attitudes towards the mention of Casio in Shakira's song.

Table 1. Interview Guide

Category	Questions
Introductory Questions	1. Did you listen to the song "BZRP Music Session #53" by Shakira? 2. How did you find out about the song and the mention of brands in it?
General Perceptions	3. What was your initial reaction to hearing the comparison between Casio and Rolex in the song? 4. What words or images come to mind when you think of the Casio brand? 5. Do you think the mention of Casio was positive, negative, or neutral? Why?
Influence on Brand Image	6. Do you believe this mention has changed your perception of Casio in any way? 7. If you were previously a consumer of Casio products, will this mention influence your future purchasing decisions?

	8. If you are interested in buying a watch or a similar product, would you consider the Casio brand?
	9. If you were to buy a Casio watch, do you think your friends would associate it with Shakira's mention in the song? Why or why not?
Celebrity Endorsement	10. Generally, how much do the opinions or mentions of celebrities influence your views on products or brands?
	11. Can you think of other examples where celebrities have influenced the perception of a brand, either positively or negatively?
	12. Do you think the mention of Casio in the song increases the likelihood that you will remember the brand?
Social media and the "Shakira Effect"	13. Have you participated in or seen discussions or memes related to this mention on social media, especially on TikTok?
	14. Do you think social media amplified the perception of this mention, whether positively or negatively?
	15. Have you noticed friends or followers expressing disinterest in Casio products after the mention in the song?

To ensure rigor and scientific validity, techniques such as data triangulation, data saturation, and peer validation were employed. Triangulation was achieved by combining interviews with various complementary information sources.

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis, where recurring patterns and themes in the interview transcripts were identified and coded.

4 Results

After performing descriptive coding of the information collected in the interviews, four categories were identified from the analysis conducted. The objective was to understand how the analog mention of the Casio brand in Shakira's song BZRP Music Session #53 affects the attitudes of Peruvian consumers aged 20 to 25 and 26 to 30. The two groups studied were identified as Group 1 and Group 2, respectively.

4.1 Category 1: Knowledge about the Casio Brand after Listening to the Song

This category describes the participants' prior and subsequent knowledge after listening to the song.

Prior Knowledge. In Group 1, several participants did not recognize Casio as a watch brand before hearing the song and only associated it with calculators because they used them during their academic life (see Table 1). Despite this, they clarified their vague perception of the Casio brand, and some confirmed their initial perceptions.

Quotes from Participants:

- *"For the watch category, I didn't even know they sold watches. For another line, as I was saying about calculators, things you can find in these tech stores, it was one of the first brands that came to mind" (E2, P11).*
- *"That was my first calculator when I started university; they bought me that brand, and I had no idea they also made watches until the song came out" (E1, P6).*
- *"I didn't know the brand, I only associated it with calculators, I didn't know they also made watches" (E9, P4).*
- *"I didn't know Casio made watches; my only knowledge was the Casio calculator, nothing else" (E8, P3).*

Table 2. Knowledge of the Casio Brand Before and After Listening to the Song.

Group	Prior Knowledge (Calculators)	Subsequent Knowledge (Watches)
Group 1	80%	100%
Group 2	40%	50%

4.2 Category 2: Perceptions of Quality

Participants in both groups shared their perceptions of the quality of Casio products after being exposed to the song.

Quotes from Participants:

- *"I always thought Casio products were durable and reliable, especially their calculators. After the song, I also think their watches must be of similar quality" (E1, P3).*
- *"The mention in the song made me curious about their watches. I researched and found out they have good reviews for quality and durability" (E2, P7).*

4.3 Category 3: Impact on Purchase Intention

The song influenced the participants' intention to purchase Casio products.

Quotes from Participants:

- *"I never considered buying a Casio watch before, but after hearing the song, I am thinking of getting one" (E1, P4).*
- *"The comparison made me curious, and now I am interested in checking out Casio watches" (E2, P10).*

4.4 Category 4: Emotional Reactions

The song elicited various emotional reactions from the participants regarding the mention of Casio.

Quotes from Participants:

- *"I found it funny and clever how Shakira made the comparison. It definitely made me think more about Casio" (E1,P8).*
- *"It was surprising to hear a brand like Casio mentioned in a song, and it made me pay more attention to it" (E2,P12).*

Table 3. Emotional Reactions to the Song's Mention of Casio.

Reaction	Group 1	Group 2
Positive	70%	60 %
Neutral	20%	30%
Negative	10%	10%

5 Discussion and Conclusions

The development of this research is based on previous studies that assert a positive relationship between celebrity endorsement and consumer behavior [4] [28]. However, despite the number of studies conducted, Wang and Tingchi [9] argue that the impact of celebrity endorsement on consumers in specific scenarios needs further exploration.

This study confirmed that the mention of Casio in Shakira's song BZRP Music Session #53 negatively affected the attitudes of Group 1. However, it also served as a source of information about the brand's watch category, while the attitudes of Group 2 were not affected.

Impact on Group 1

The comparison between Rolex and Casio by the celebrity led Group 1 participants to view Casio as accessible and cheap. Nevertheless, the widespread dissemination also expanded their knowledge about Casio, recognizing it as a watch brand, as previously, participants only associated it with calculators used during their academic life. The mention increased brand recall, making Casio one of the first brands they think of when talking about watches or mentioning the song. This reflects how celebrity endorsement works, where a celebrity acts as a spokesperson, extending their personality and popularity to the brand [29].

The mention of Casio in the song negatively affected the attitudes of Group 1 participants, with some expressing rejection and questioning the brand, associating it with

a lower socioeconomic status, which influenced their reluctance to display the brand on social media and their hesitation to purchase due to fear of criticism. This demonstrates that while a celebrity can enhance a brand's image, they can also damage it [17].

Impact on Group 2

In contrast, Group 2 showed strong loyalty towards Casio, with the mention in the song not significantly affecting their perception or attitudes. Prior familiarity with the brand, product durability, and positive memories associated with using Casio watches in the past were key factors in their continued willingness to consume and purchase Casio products.

The findings of this research underscore the dual impact of Casio's mention in Shakira's song "BZRP Music Session #53" on the two groups studied, revealing nuanced shifts in consumer perception and brand awareness. For Group 1, the mention elicited a negative impact on their attitudes towards Casio, marked by increased skepticism and associations with lower socioeconomic status. Despite this initial negative perception, the song served as an informative medium for this group, broadening their awareness and understanding of Casio's diverse range of watch offerings. This dichotomy suggests a complex interaction between media exposure and consumer perception, where initial negative connotations can coexist with increased product knowledge.

Conversely, Group 2, which demonstrated a strong pre-existing loyalty to the Casio brand, did not exhibit a significant change in their attitudes following the song's mention. Their steadfast loyalty was attributed to prior positive experiences with Casio products, which buffered them against potential negative impacts from the song's mention. This group's unwavering support highlights the importance of brand loyalty and prior customer satisfaction in mitigating adverse publicity effects.

The contrasting responses between the two groups indicate that while negative endorsements can introduce challenges for brand perception, they also present opportunities for enhancing brand visibility and consumer education. For Casio, the increased awareness among Group 1, a younger target audience, is particularly valuable, suggesting that even negative publicity can serve as a catalyst for market expansion. This phenomenon underscores the intricate dynamics of consumer behavior and the multifaceted impact of media on brand perception.

Overall, the study illuminates the importance of understanding audience segmentation in the context of brand endorsements, whether positive or negative. It highlights that consumer reactions are not monolithic, and that brand perception is influenced by a complex interplay of factors including pre-existing attitudes, media portrayal, and individual consumer experiences. These insights can inform strategic marketing and communication efforts, enabling brands to navigate the challenges of public perception and leverage opportunities for broader market engagement.

It is important to note that this study has some limitations. Firstly, the selection of participants did not consider socioeconomic status, which could result in variations in findings since a participant's socioeconomic level might influence brand choices. Future research could focus on specific socioeconomic levels and examine results in those

cases. Secondly, comparisons with findings from other studies focusing on the impact of musical associations on brand perception were not possible.

Future research could focus on specific socioeconomic levels to examine how perceptions of the Casio brand vary across different socioeconomic segments. Additionally, exploring the impact of brand mentions in song lyrics in various cultural contexts would provide valuable insights.

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