

The impact of character branding through media: A case study of TV al-Hijrah's Ustaz celebrity programme

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Abstract

This study was conducted to see how character branding of religious individual whose known as Ustaz Celebrity relates to the programs aired on TVAlhijrah, in accordance with its concept as an Islamic station which broadcast one hundred percent Islamic-oriented content. This study was conducted based on qualitative findings involving in-depth "face to face" interview and also through telephone conversations, used as a research instrument. The researcher also conducted a survey in which the questionnaires are distributed to TVAlhijrah's viewers. Respondents are divided into several categories such as age, gender and education level. Data from respondents, used to measure the characteristics of an ustaz which suits the title of ustaz celebrity and how their celebrities characteristic be able to used helping TVAlhijrah broadcasting their Islamic content. Transcripts, coding and data analysis was conducted using qualitative analysis. The results of this study can be used in helping TV Alhijrah to find more people to become Ustaz Celebrity in the future. It can also be used as a guideline for all TV station to choose Ustaz Celebrity to be anchoring their programmes. Character branding strategy through Ustaz Celebrity will attract more viewers to tune into TV stations as an alternative electronic medium that is capable of providing Islamic content in accordance with the requirements of syariah (Syariah Compliance)

In recent trend of Television Content, Islamic Programme has been well-accepted by viewers. It is understood there are many forms of communication and electronic media such television has been switching their roles to become a source, medium and platform of the new era of expressing and delivering good deeds messages. Through verbal communication which refers to any forms of speaking terms, khutbah, tazkirah or any speech delivery we can watch many programme as what has been aired everyday in TV station such as TVAlHijrah, Astro Oasis, TV3 and TV9. The emergence of TV AlHijrah as the only Islamic TV in Malaysia has given viewers an alternative to opt for Islamic content. According to Sheikh Ali Mahfuz, good deeds communicators can generate people's mind to be

nearer to their Creator and practice good deeds in seeking prosperous life here and in the hereafter - Dr. Wan Hussein Azmi (1984:2).

In today's trend of television content, audience seeks a new trend and format of programme. Ustaz celebrity is a not a product placement. He is a product by himself. From a previous literature review, research has proven that product is more effective than the traditional TV commercial or campaign (Balasubramaniam, Karrh, & Patwardhan, 2006, Brennan, 2001; Hosea, 2007; Jin & Villegas, 2007; Patterson, 2006; Stratton, 1992). In studying how viewers or consumers respond to celebrity endorsement, McCracken (1989) felt the earlier theories of source attractiveness (McGuire, 1985) and source credibility (Hovland & Weiss, 1951) did not completely capture the factors by which endorsers are evaluated by human psyche. He argues that celebrity influence is "richer and more complicated than just attractive or credible individuals" (p.313). Celebrities have distinct personality and their own lifestyle, characteristic attached to them, all which affect how viewers are persuaded.

In determining on whether or not character branding of Ustaz Celebrity can help TV AlHijrah attract more viewers, there is always a question of individual characteristic of the ustaz. In The Source Attractiveness Model (McGuire, 1985) comes from social psychology research but has high relevance in communication and advertising applications as well. In fact, McGuire originally devised the model for it to be used in the study of personal communication (McCracken, 1989), and other researchers have recently discovered its value in the study of endorsement in advertising (Goldsmith, Lafferty, & Newell, 2000).

McGuire's theory says that the persuasive effectiveness of a message depends heavily on the attractiveness of the source. His research found that viewers perceive characteristic and cultural differences among sources of information. These differences led to profound variations in how appealing and therefore persuasive the sources were (McGuire, 1985).

There are three constructs used to measure the degree of attractiveness. They are "likability," "familiarity," and "similarity." Likability is defined as the affection for the source based on the source's physical appearance and behavior. Familiarity is the level of knowledge about the source as a result of past exposure. Similarity is the perceived resemblance between the source of the message and the viewer or receiver. The source attractive model states that the more a source is liked by, known by, and/or similar to the viewer, the more attractive and, as a result, persuasive the source will be to that particular viewer (McCracken, 1989; McGuire, 1985). Conversely, if a source has low attractiveness or is deemed unattractive, the level of persuasion is very low or even nonexistent. The independent variables are the three construct: likability, familiarity, and similarity;

the dependent variables in this theory are the degree of attitude change and persuasion. This research will measure how the characteristic factor will effect viewer's attitude towards these ustaz and made them as an icon which entitled them to be known as Ustaz Celebrity. Through in-depth interview and questionnaires, it help researcher to identify certain characteristic which contributes to the development of character branding of Ustaz Celebrities. Thus, it is important for TV Alhijrah in capturing viewer choice of content and programme selection.

TVALhijrah

TVALhijrah takes pride in being the innovator and pioneer in shaping the broadcasting of Islamic content by maintaining high standard of quality shows produced of its audience and also by utilizing the latest technology available in the broadcasting industry today. Broadcasting a fully Digital Ready Station, TV Al Hijrah is able to handle needs and demands of local Broadcasting Industry.

On 7th December 2010 : (First day of Islamic New Year 1432 Hijrah) TV Alhijrah makes it mark in the national historic books when it was officially broadcasted and launched by Malaysian Prime Minister Y.A.B. Dato Sri Najib Tun Abdul Razak. Setting the world alive through wisdom and edutainment with Tag line "SEGALANYA BERMULA DISINI"(EVERYTHING START HERE) During the speech he was quoted "We have to introduce he truth of Islam to the world, Islam has taken step way ahead from anybody else in the effort of fighting for world peace and harmony. This is an important effort, as many opposing groups used our religion as a propaganda to critics Islam, to relate Islam with terrorism until they succeed to influence certain group and creates *Islamophobia*."

"The situation becomes worst when all effort taken by Islamic society to deny this bad image and propaganda was ineffective and one of the reasons is our disability as a Muslim to empower the media."

Prime Minister has urged Islam society in this country to empower the media in order to deny the negative perception towards Islam instead introducing Islam as the right and beautiful way of life. He hopes that the emergence of TVALhijrah will help government effort as an Islamic country to change world's perception of Islam

Managed by Al Hijrah Media Corporation, the late Chief Executive Officer Dato Bukahri Che Muda, during a Fiqh Penyiaran Seminar, justified, that TV Alhijrah was formed, due to the higher percentage of Malay community (muslim) in Malaysia, 63 percent or 12.237 million, as compared to Chinese (27%) and Indian (10%). Viewer's percentage of TV Alhijrah has been rapidly increased by an average of 30% a year. Top rating programs has definitely set a new

look and branding of TVAlhijrah as the only Islamic TV Station in Malaysia.

How *Ustaz Celebrity* helps Branding programme in TV Alhijrah

From the increasing numbers of viewers in each programme in TV Alhijrah it definitely reflects the acceptance of Islamic concept in programming and how *Ustaz Celebrity* place a new era of branding in TV Alhijrah.

Table 2.1 : Programme list of Ustaz Celebrity (as at October 2014)

Programme Title	Ustaz Celebrity
1. Fiqh Akidah & Falsafah (Fiqh and Philosophy)	Ustaz Badli Shah Alaudin
2. Tasawuf Harian (Daily Tasawuf)	Ustaz Dr. Zulkifli Al- Bakri
3. Fiqh Syariah	Ustaz Harryanto Rizal Rukman
4. 30 Minit Bersama Ustaz Don (30 Minute with Ustaz Don)	Ustaz Don Daniyal
5. Reflections	Imam Shuaib Webb

TV ALHijrah has started its transmission in 1st December 2010, in 5 respective district including Klang Valley, Terengganu, Mersing, Sabah and Sarawak, with the young generation (GEN X) as the main target audience (age between 18-39). Since then, TV Alhijrah has set a target of airing 60% of local content, 30% inhouse programme and another 10% international content. Based on this, a team of Ustaz Celebrity is needed to fill in hundreds of hours of local content in various programme title, to meet viewers demand of Islamic content. This has been the scenario.

There are 2 main Television stations, name as Radio Television Malaysia (RTM) owned by the government of Malaysia, and private own stations, Media Prima Group that ménage TV3, TV7, TV8 and TV9, while a satellite TV, known as ASTRO, both are privately owned. Analysis of content on all TV stations as illustrate in figure 2.3:-

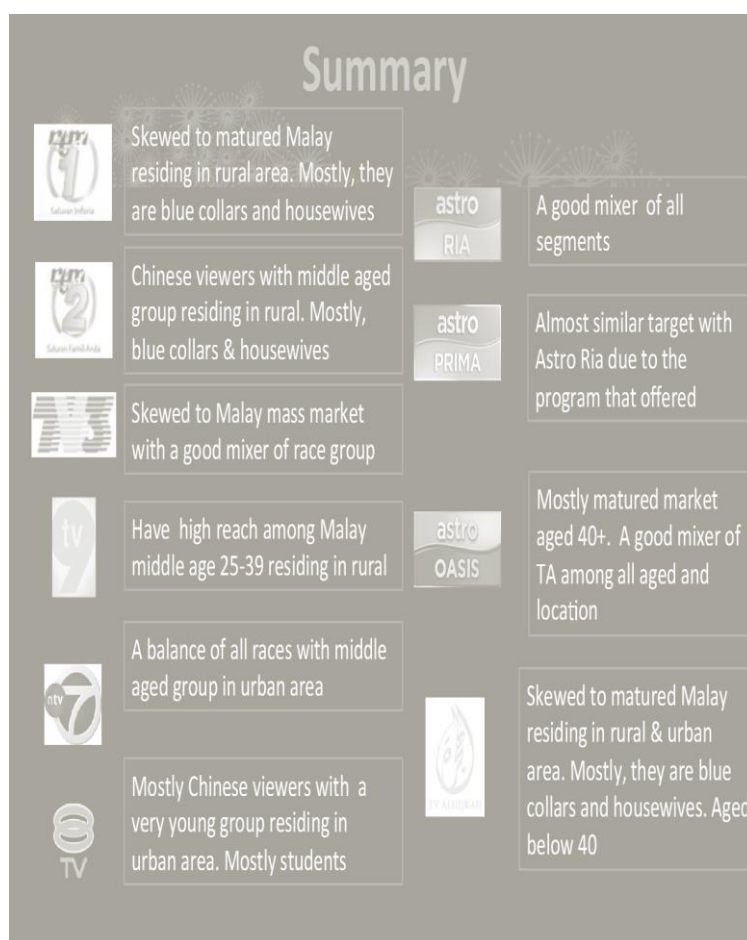


Figure 2.3: Overall TV stations and viewers in Malaysia – designated channels (source: ACNielsen)

TV Alhijrah has come out with one programme after another featuring various name of *Ustaz Celebrity* until they succeeded in creating their own branding. Ultimately, this has also helps TV Alhijrah, in a way, to build up their branding as what has been pinned by Ustaz Don through his programme, 30 minit bersama Ustaz Don, which has been the highest rating programme since. Followed by few branding programmes in many different categories including Talk Show, Magazine, Documentary, Drama, Zon Aulad and Islamic Entertainment.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Four primary research questions derived from the problem statement are:

- i. The idea of featuring *Ustaz Celebrity* in TVAlHijrah
- ii. What are the criteria of *Ustaz Celebrity*

- iii. Which characteristic regards as the strong character of an ustaz
- iv. How individual character of *Ustaz Celebrity* helps individual ustaz and TV AlHijrah in terms of branding.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This research aims to identify and analyze individual characteristic in building Character Branding of Ustaz Celebrity in TV Alhijrah. For the purpose of this research, researcher will apply the construct characteristic of likability, familiarity, and attractiveness of ustaz celebrity only in TV Alhijrah programmes.

The following aims are expected to be achieved for this research:

- i- To identify characteristic of ustaz in which they are credible to be in the group of Ustaz Celebrity
- ii- To discover what are main individual character of Ustaz Celebrity chosen by viewers of TV AlHijrah
- iii- To identify branding values of Ustaz Celebrity that can be used by TVAlHijrah in selling their programme to advertisers
- iv- To suggest individual characteristic (preferences) of an ustaz as a guide to TV Alhijrah in recruiting new and fresh ustaz in the future

Literature reviews

As stated earlier, this research is to find how individual character of *Ustaz Celebrity* helps develop personal branding as well as corporate branding for TV Alhijrah. It is agreed that as an Islamic station, TVAlhijrah has made a solid platform for numbers of personalities and celebrities to grow and develop their skills and talent of becoming better in their respective field. In doing so, they need to have strong characteristic to be regarded as an *Ustaz Celebrity* where audience can put their trust, their believe and be attracted to his personality, his appearances, his delivery and communication skills. Through their individual characteristic like highly knowledgeable, vast experience in dakwah, approachable and easy to be with, these ustaz will be building their own character branding which in a way as a contribution to TVAlhijrah in their branding development as well.

People in the world of dakwah, or best known as ustaz, also has been defined as celebrities. They appear in public, present in big events, their lifestyle has been highlighted in magazines and tabloid, they become columnist, an ambassador and appear in almost every

TV station in Malaysia. To add to their celebrity title, these ustaz become popular and trending in every social media platform.

Expertise is defined as the extent to which a communicator is perceived to be source of valid assertions, Erdogan (2001). Expertise also been termed as authoritativeness, McCroskey (1966), competence, Whitehead (1968), expertness, Applbaum and Anatol (1972) or qualification, Berlo (1969). When a celebrity possesses a high level of expertise, he become more persuasive. An increase level of persuasion enables him to have greater ability to positively alter the audience attitude, Speck, Schuman and Thompson (1988). A number of researchers have used models in which Source Credibility, typically viewed as a function of trustworthiness and expertise; is the primary factor determining how influential the endoser will be (Lafferty and Goldsmith, 1999; Lafferty *et al.*, 2001; Ohanion, 1991). Specifically, audience perceptions of the celebrity's expertise makes the celebrity messages more powerful and meaningful. Again, highly knowledgeable characteristic as refers to expertise will determine audience degree of trust and respect of their favorite *Ustaz Celebrity*. Media influence the way in which celebrity is produced. Barry (2008) argued that many characteristics of the current British celebrity phenomenon began in 18th century. Turner (2004) coined the term "demotic turn" to describe the increasing mass production of ordinary celebrity through reality TV, websites and radio. Celebrities are most effective when their images closely match with TV station's requirements.

Theories of Celebrities Endorsement

Celebrity endorsement give a brand a touch of glamour and the hope that a famous face will provide added appeal and name recognition in a crowded market (Belch & Belch, 1995). In the battle for the mind, you get the customer excited by showing him a known face, and an effective demand is created. In short, it helps increase the recall value of the brand. According to Source Credibility Theory, acceptance of the message depends on "Expertness" and "Trustworthiness" of the source. Expertness is defined as the perceived ability of the source to make valid assertions.

Trustworthiness is defined as the perceived willingness of the source to make valid assertions. Audience acceptance increases with the expertness of the source and the ability of the audience to evaluate the product.

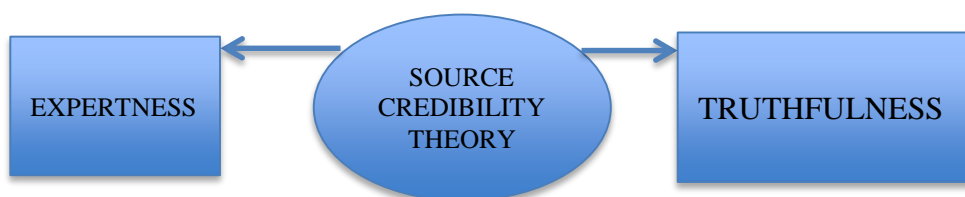


FIGURE 5.1: Source Credibility Theory

According to Source Credibility Theory, which is based on social psychological research, the acceptance of the message depends on familiarity, likeability and similarity. Familiarity is the audience's knowledge of the source through exposure; likeability is the affection for the source's physical appearance and behavior while similarity is the resemblance between source and receiver. This theory explains the message acceptance in two ways: Identification and Conditioning. Identification is when the receiver or the target audience of the communication begins to identify with the source attractiveness, and hence tends to accept his opinion, beliefs, habits attitudes, etc. Conditioning is when the attractiveness of the source is supposed to pass on to the brand after regular association of the source with the brand.

METHODOLOGY

This study involve a case study analysis to identify and understand how *Ustaz Celebrity* build their character branding in TV Alhijrah and evaluate how TV Alhijrah build up their own branding by allowing numbers of *Ustaz Celebrity* appears in their programme. For this purpose, an indepth face-to-face interview with Ustaz Wan Alias bin Che Wan Abdullah, Chief Operating Officer of TV AlHijrah, Encik Salehuddin Jurimi, Manager of Sales and Marketing TV Alhijrah and Cik Izyan Liyana Khairul Anuar, TV AlHijrah Branding Executive has been conducted based on a set of interview protocols.

Their statement of what is the elaboration of Islamic TV station, how they define the status of *Ustaz Celebrity*, the purpose of using *Ustaz Celebrity* in TVAlhijrah programmes, and the relationships between character branding and TV Programmes and their observation of viewers feedback will be recorded and analyzed in this study. Meanwhile, media statement, social media pages and you tube videos of Ustaz Badlishah, Ustaz Harryanto Rizal and Ustaz Don Daniyal will also be used as primary references to strengthen this case study. To make this study more convincing a set of questionnaires will be distributed to a random of women's viewers which represent the biggest group of viewers and followers of *Ustaz Celebrity* that appears in TVAlhijrah.

Population and Sample

Using survey, a number of 50 women respondents which will be selected randomly among TVAlhijrah's viewers will be used as references to this study. The idea of choosing viewers as a respondent

to this case study is to best help the researcher to understand further as their ideas, reaction and perspective are appropriate to be measured in this study.

The hardcopy survey was distributed among women in few category of ages, different type of working environment and a group of housewives as they represent the biggest percent of TVAlhijrah viewers who had impact in determining the character branding of *Ustaz Celebrity* in their own preferences. Respondent is asked to identify the main characteristic of 5 selected ustaz in which enable them to be given a celebrity status and attract more viewers to tune into TVAlhijrah's programmes.

Research Instrument

In depth interview will be another primary instrument for this case study. In depth interview is defined as a research technique that involves individual face-to-face interviews. A set of questions at will be distributed. It contains of personal data of respondent such age, profession and educational background. Respondent will also be given 5 listed names of ustaz celebrity in TVAlhijrah as their reference. Based on the name given, respondent will be asked to identify and evaluate main characteristic of *Ustaz Celebrity* in which helps their branding as well as TVAlhijrah's Branding. Among the selected characteristic of *Ustaz Celebrity* are knowledge, creativity, communication competency, personal character and dakwah experience.

Findings

Choice of Characteristic

From the questionnaire, respondent has come out with their own definition and choice of characteristic that should be incorporated with their favorite *Ustaz Celebrity*. Based on Table 4.11, Interesting Character has collected the highest percentage. Respondent, which is among the TV Alhijrah's viewers, has chosen *Ustaz Celebrity* interesting character as their favourite with 39%. This individual character branding of *Ustaz Celebrity* has gained trust and create an attractive phenomena as compared to other criteria such as, highly knowledgeable with 23%, communication skills 18%, delivery skills 15%, physical attraction 3%, and dakwah experience at 2%

Table 7.1
Characteristic Percentage Of Ustaz Celebrity

Characteristic	Percentage
1. Interesting Character	39
2. Highly Knowledgeable	23
3. Communication Skills	18
4. Delivery skills	15
5. Physical attraction	3
6. Dakwah Experience	2

Viewer's choice by Popularity

In the questionnaires, respondent were given 5 names to be chosen and categorized by popularity. List of 5 *Ustaz Celebrity*, includes; Ustaz Don Denial, sutras Badly Shah Aladdin, Ustaz Dry Sulkily Al-Bari, Ustaz Roslyn Mohammad and Ustaz Harryanto Rizal Rokman.

Table 4.2

Overall Popularity Percentage

Category %	Ustaz Don Daniyal	Ustaz Badli Shah	Ustaz Dr. Zulkifli	Ustaz Roslan Mohammad	Ustaz Harryanto
Most Popular	76%	68%	24%	6%	28%
Popular	16%	20%	18%	14%	32%
Less Popular	8%	12%	58%	80%	40%

Based on Table 4.4, highest percentage for Ustaz Don Daniyal is at the Most popular category. Ustaz Don has collected a total of 76% of the respondent's choice in the popularity category. Highest percentage for Ustaz Badli Shah Alaudin also in the Most Popular category with a total of 68%. Highest percentage for Ustaz Dr. Zulkifli is in Less Popular category with a total of 58%. Highest percentage for Ustaz Roslan Mohamad is also in Less Popular category with a total of 80%. Highest percentage for Ustaz Harryanto Rizal Rukman also falls in the Less Popular category with a total of 40%

Overall Characteristic Preferences of Ustaz Celebrity

From the literature review, attractiveness, expertness and trustworthiness are important factor in building individual character which will establish popularity and to attract audience. Based on respondent preferences characteristic of an ustaz, highest individual

preferences character are: interesting character, good communication skills, delivery skills, personality appeal, easy to understand, good deed campaign, sharing knowledge, approachable/friendly, including knowledgeable. The 8 most important preferences character are the most acceptance individual character of any ustaz inside or outside TV programme to be accepted, trusted and be admired by viewers, audience and the mass.

Encik Sallehuddin, Human Resource Manager, stated that TVAlhijrah target audience is people between 15 to 39 of age. When it comes to branding an ustaz, the selected ustaz must be young and able to deliver the basic fundamental of Islam. *“The look and feel of the programme which is conducted by these ustaz also play an important role in branding. It has to be contemporary, young and can fit with this generation likes and dislikes,”* Encik Salehuddin quoted. *That’s why TVAlhijrah is using young ustaz as they represent the younger generation in which can attract youngsters easily as they are our primarily target audience. TVAlhijrah also have some ustaz which also can fit into a very urban oriented Muslim audience for example, businessman, professionals and young executive through our anchor ustaz like Ustaz Don through 30 minit bersama Ustaz Don programme and Imam Shuhaib Webb through the programme called Reflections.*

Another characteristic which also agreeable to be among the important character are high confident level, like to advice and dakwah experience. There are among the positives characteristic which also contribute to the likeness, acceptiveness and trustworthiness of viewers and audiences.

Today, it is not impossible when *Ustaz Celebrity* involves in a programme, giving a public talk, appear in any majlis ilmu, attending special ceramah and officiate event, there will be a big amount of people who will come, gather, watching and listening to their favorite ustaz. Instead, Ustaz Wan, Chief Executive Officer, also make a point, that TVAlhijrah also has an obligation in preventing these *Ustaz Celebrity* from becoming an icon who is excessively worshipped by their fans. So does these ustaz since they already know the limitations. During these 4 years, Ustaz Wan Alias stated that their rating at one point had reached 5.7 million in July 2014. At present, average viewers of TV Alhijrah is 2.2 million. When TVAlhijrah first started, they can only attract approximately 10 thousand viewers and it slowly increased to 50 thousand, to 100 hundred thousand and in 2012 it increased to 300%. In 2014, total viewers has increased to more than 60%.

The increasing data also can be studied through TVAlhijrah official Facebook page with the target group between the age of 18 to 24 years old. The page now has more than 879 thousand likes as compared to TV9 which only has 264 thousand likes and Astro Oasis about 34 thousand likes.

Conclusion

Individual character branding is important for every ustaz to become *Ustaz Celebrity*. It is the ongoing process of an individual to establish their own name and brand to get recognition and impression from other people mostly station viewers. They must be strong in character, good attitude, good appearance, creative, impressive, likeable, able to gain viewers trust, knowledgeable and approachable. Data from 50 respondent shows that certain criteria are important in determining the individual branding of *Ustaz Celebrity*. *Ustaz Celebrity* gain trust when he uses his knowledge and communication skills in the right time and place. Viewers are attracted to *Ustaz Celebrity* based on their interesting character, positive attitude, creative in delivering message, good communications skills and approachable.

This criteria is important for them to build their own branding. As for TV Alhijrah, the station play an important role in giving these ustaz a proper platform and the right channel to share their religious knowledge and be able to be famous, become an icon and ultimately put themselves in their best position of becoming an *Ustaz Celebrity*. In other hand, credit will also go to TVAlhijrah as the only Islamic station which have numbers of *Ustaz Celebrity*, and with the increasing numbers and percentage of their viewers, *Ustaz Celebrity* does help the station in terms of branding and popularity.

Being regarded as a celebrity, an ustaz or religious figure are now become a brand to themselves. Similar as what is regard to celebrity endorsement, *Ustaz Celebrity* is endorsing themselves to become a popular and well known self-branding image. Most top ranking celebrities in the world like Oprah Winfrey, Donald Trump, Tiger Woods uses their personal/individual characteristic for brand endorsement. One of the main reasons for using celebrity endorsement is to create a better image for the product by transferring the symbolic meaning from the celebrity to the product (McCracken, 1989). Research has shown that the use of celebrities in advertisements and finally on purchase intentions (Menon, 2001; Pornpitakpan, 2003; Pringle and Binet, 2005; Roy, 2006)

Celebrity branding can takes several different forms, from a celebrity attending corporate functions or PR events, make special appearance in movie or shows, creating his own line of product or services or using his own name as a brand. In this study, *Ustaz Celebrity* is using their own name with the help of their individual characteristic and TV Alhijrah as the media platform to create their own personal branding.

Individual Characteristic for Ustaz Celebrities

There were given questionnaires to identify which characteristics that help the individual branding of Ustaz Celebrities who appear only in TV Alhijrah. From the data collection, they responded well to the 5 Ustaz Celebrities individual characteristic, which has been identified and regarded as the most important characteristic by respondent, viewers and TVAlhijrah.

Interesting Character

Interesting character as per describe by many viewers of TVAlhijrah and fans of *Ustaz Celebrity* including good image, good attitude, portraying akhlak of real Muslim, good voice, clear words, friendly face, full of honesty, able to create appropriate jokes, easy to be with, humble and approachable. It creates attractiveness and trustworthiness which also relates to likeability, familiarity and credibility. Within the context of celebrity, trustworthiness is defined as honesty, integrity and believability of an endorser as perceived by target audience. It's their degree of confidence in, and level of acceptance of.

These characteristic leads to the research that shows, personal character branding is very important. No matter what we might like to believe, people do not 'buy' things for rational reasons. They do so for emotional reasons. Even if they go out and make preferences, they will still refine this down to a few possibilities and make their decision emotionally, in which comes to the conclusion that the character branding that an individual portrays will creates emotional connection, and create trust among them. They want reassurance of trustworthiness from these ustaz.

Highly Knowledgeable

The second characteristics is highly knowledgeable. Today, viewers are more intelligent, they seek informative contemporary TV programmes with good values and can easily be associated with everyday's life. Highly knowledgeable as what respondent find most in Ustaz Dr. Zulkifli Al-Bakti and Ustaz Roslan Mohamed, relates to their expertise in every religious aspect, their level of knowledge, educational background, their academics qualification and involvement, research and career they are involve in. A celebrity selected in a self-endorsement must have an acceptable level of expertise to make an effective endorsement.

Communication and Delivery Skills

A celebrity endorser could lead to higher believability, a more favorable evaluation of the product advantage and a significant higher intention to purchase (Friedman and Friedman, 1979). A famous person can shape the perception of the brand by virtue of the inferences that consumers make based on the knowledge they have about the famous person (Assael, 1984; Atkins and Block, 1983; Kamins, 1990). Thus communication and delivery skills is another important characteristics of an ustaz to build their personal branding of becoming a celebrity. Their ability to communicate well with audience inside and outside TV programme is an important factor in the process of delivering speech and dakwah.

Through communication, they must know what to say, what to deliver, how to construct sentences, how to make people's believe in, which accent to use, what jokes is appropriate to be able to wins audience heart especially in an icebreaking sessions. Communication skills include verbal and non verbal. Instead of being a good and entertaining speaker, *Ustaz Celebrity* must also be able to use body gestures to get audience attention and create good ambience. Delivery skills relates closely on how good your communication skill is. These two skills, helps an ustaz to master his public speaking talents, he can also develop critical thinking and presentation skills that will serve him well in almost any situation. This skills will sharpen their ability to be engaged in broader and higher stage locally and internationally, thus gain more confident from audience.

Physical Attraction

Physical attraction can be defined as physical attractiveness, appeal and image. Scholars associates celebrities must have constancy and lasting appeal, they should have sustainability and the knack to maintain their image and career accordingly. People don't like individuals who try to project themselves as 'squeaky' clean. They like people who are 'real'. People who are able to risk being human in front of their domain are liked more for it. According to Montoya, there are four characteristic to being human: being related to, being fallible, being positive and being authentic. To create a strong impression, you need to express yourself in ways that are different from others in the same domain. Personal brands have to be seen-consistently and repeatedly. Until your personal brand is known, visibility is more than your ability.

Audience see those criteria in the *Ustaz Celebrity*. Ustaz Don for instance, become popular because he brings new dimension in his appearance. His physical attraction become more visible when audience start to admire his physical attraction. The way he dress up,

suitable attire for certain occasion, shades he wear, shoes he puts on, books he read and music he listen too, are all taken into consideration as a value added criteria as an icon and *Ustaz Celebrity*.

Dakwah Experience

Another factor of individual character branding of an *Ustaz Celebrity* is the experience. Experience will give them additional ability and credibility. Viewers will definitely honour those *Ustaz Celebrity* who has vast experience in performing speech or ceramah. Using their experience to answer Syariah matters, stating fact with only the truth, able to easily refers to a certain hadith, Quran Verses and Fatwa is the criteria in which people will put their trust on.

How ustaz celebrity title helps TVAlhijrah branding

Viewers or audience often aspire to live like and look like popular celebrities. They listen more to them especially to those who have strong characteristic and has ability to inspire. Celebrity serve as reference group and they are able to influence audience, therefore, a station, like TV Alhijrah should select a celebrity that not only gains the attention of their target audience, but also someone who viewers closely relates to and has a strong desire to emulate.

In doing so, TV Alhijrah has certain criteria in determining an ustaz to be featured in their programme. Their intention as mentioned earlier, is not to make them an *Ustaz Celebrity*, instead, individual character branding of the ustaz makes them popular, become a well known public figure and honoured by mass by giving them a celebrity title.

As a station who has these ustaz appear in most of their top rating programmes, like 30 minute bersama Ustaz Don, Cinta Ilmu and Madrasah Al Hijrah, TVAlhijrah has definitely, has benefitted in terms of popularity and station's branding as well, regards as a win-win situation

This case study research is to find how individual character of *Ustaz Celebrity* helps develop personal branding as well as corporate branding for TV Alhijrah. It is agreed that as an Islamic station, TVAlhijrah has made a solid platform for numbers of ustaz to build and develop their skills and talent of becoming better in their respective field. In doing so, they need to have strong characteristic to be regarded as an *Ustaz Celebrity* with the elements of trustworthiness, expertness and likeness. Audience can put their trust, their believe and be attracted to his knowledge, credibility, personality, appearances, communication and delivery skills.

By building their own individual character branding, *Ustaz Celebrity* will definitely helps to contribution to TVAlhijrah corporate

branding, building and development the station as the only Islamic Free To Air station in this country. TV Alhijrah has been very committed in shaping their image, creating good personality, showing a good character and appearance until they gain respect from audience and viewers. People started looking high at these ustaz, they put these ustaz in a high rank and become an icon, a celebrity who they really want to be closed with.

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