Original Researcher Article

Celebrity Endorsement: Exploring the Effects of Celebrity Attractiveness & Credibility on Ad-Recall & Purchase Intention

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ABSTRACT

This research discusses the influence of credibility and physical attractiveness of celebrity endorsers towards advertisement (ad) recall and consumer purchase intention. This work employed a descriptive single cross-sectional research design and a probability simple random sampling technique. This work was conducted in Surat City with a sample of 178 women consumers. Structural equation modelling (SEM) was used to examine the interplay between these variables. From this work, consumers' purchase intention is significantly influenced by celebrity credibility (path coefficient = 0.734), in that trustworthiness and expertise have greater impacts on influencing purchasing decisions. On the other hand, only a weak positive effect is revealed by celebrity physical attractiveness towards purchase intention (path coefficient = 0.112) in that physical appeal does not significantly affect consumer decisions. Only minimal impacts by both physical attractiveness (0.151) and credibility (0.112) towards ad recall have been revealed in this work, to means that while physical appeal can attract consumer attention, memory is not significantly retained by an advert through this appeal. From this work, credibility is revealed to have an additional significance over physical attractiveness in influencing consumer decisions. As such, brands should invest in these endorsers who possess high credibility to influence consumer trustworthiness and purchase possibility. Though physical appeal can attract consumer attention in the short term, credibility is revealed to be the determining factor in purchasing decisions. Additionally, since only minimal impacts by these factors towards ad recall have been revealed, additional tactics in this respect should be used to influence increased recalls. This work provides helpful recommendations to advertisers in optimising celebrity endorsement strategies. Future work is recommended to examine this interplay between these factors, considering moderators in both consumer demographics and products, to establish this interplay.

Keywords: Celebrity Endorsement, Celebrity attractiveness, Celebrity credibility, Ad-recall and Purchase Intention

INTRODUCTION

Since the late 1800s, The practice of promoting products with the help of celebrities have been used. In India, the practice of celebrity endorsements in advertising began when sports personalities and Celebrities from Bollywood movies and television started to enter what had previously been just a field of models. (Laddha et al., 2024). Advertising is an effective way of communicating information to target consumers using attractive and popular figures in advertisements is a creative way of getting more attention and with this message can be remembered for a longer time (Lee & Andi, 2022). Many factors affect how consumers perceive the advertisement message and recall it. For this, the celebrity must have a strong personality and unique characteristics. With the survey of past studies, it has been found that many attributes such as trustworthiness, expertise, likeability, popularity, physical appearance, brand knowledge etc, of celebrity endorsers affect ad recall and purchase intention (Silvera & Austad, 2004) (Sufian et al., 2021). Among these features, the attractiveness and credibility of the celebrity have been found to have a strong relation with the intention to buy goods or services.(Hassan Fathelrahman Mansour & Mohammed Elzubier Diab, 2016) The focus of this research is on studying the relationship between attractiveness and credibility with ad recall and purchase intention.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Celebrity endorsement

Celebrity endorsement is an effective persuasion strategy (Kruglanski & Thompson, 1999). It is used by organizations for creating awareness of their products, and services by linking with celebrities or well-known personalities (Venkata Subbiah & Sathish, 2020). Consumers feel positive about a celebrity, who have characteristics such as expertise, celebrity/product fit, performance, familiarity, and likeability which increases their purchase intention. (Sufian et al., 2021) (kaur Ramanpreet, n.d.) (Awasthi & Choraria, 2015). The success of a message carried by an endorser is based on expertise and the believability of the celebrity (Putri & Roostika, 2022). According to (Jun et al., 2023) the celebrities' enabling, enticing, and enriching features can be used to increase brand awareness. Therefore, Celebrity endorsements enhance ad recall, attitude, and brand preference (Awasthi & Choraria, 2015).

2.2. Attractiveness of Celebrity

Many features of celebrities affect the intention of consumers to buy, among them Physical attractiveness is typically one of the most important factors considered by consumers (Chaiken, 1979). Consumers have a positive attitude towards celebrity's attractiveness it could be due to their elegance, classiness, notoriety and beauty. (Hani et al., 2018). It receives high social approval and acceptability (Azmi et al., 2022). According to (Ms. Shraddha Laddha et al.) Brand managers often choose attractive celebrities to create a strong impact on the audience. Celebrity endorsers' attributes build a strong brand attitude which leads to higher consumer purchase intention (Putri & Roostika, 2022). However, some studies also show that attractiveness can enhance initial interest, but it may not always translate to positive purchase intentions if the celebrity lacks credibility (Waldt DLR van der et al., 2007); (Lee & Andi, 2022).

2.3. Credibility of Celebrity

Credibility can be explained as trustworthiness and expertise of the celebrity and it has a strong relation with desire to buy. Consumers are more compelled to buy products endorsed by credible celebrities (Lee & Andi, 2022). Advertisements promoted by well-known personalities enhances attention, recall and stimulate positive attitude towards brands. Credibility of the endorser is important for emotional attachment and motivate consumers to purchase the brand.(Mateen Khan et al., 2019). Celebrity credibility depends on how much consumers perceive that an endorser is believable, trustworthy, and an expert in that field. (Mateen Khan et al., 2019). Credibility of the celebrity endorser in terms of trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness, has a significant positive effect on consumer purchase intention.(Mookda et al., 2020); (Azmi et al., 2022).

2.4. Ad Recall by consumers

Ad recall means for how long the message is remembered by the consumers. Celebrity endorsement helps in increasing recall value of the brand(Laddha et al., 2024)

2.5. Purchase Intentions

Purchase Intention is the direction or feeling to purchase goods or services (Venkata Subbiah & Sathish, 2020). It is an important variable of purchase behaviour (Putri & Roostika, 2022). The Marketers choose to advertise their products through celebrity endorsement, which gives them an advantage over other competitors because positive celebrity endorser attributes help in easily remember the message which results in the intention to buy. (Lafferty Barbara A. & Goldsmith Ronald E., 1999); (Azmi et al., 2022). According to (Choi & Rifon, 2012) in case of luxury brands, celebrity endorsement impacts the purchase intentions and has more significance with trustworthiness.

2.6. Theories on celebrity endorsement

After reviewing the previous research, it is discovered that two models are typically employed to study celebrity endorsement: the source credibility and source attractiveness models (Nyamakanga et al., 2019). As per the source credibility model the success of the advertisement message relies on the "expertness" and "trustworthiness" of the source. The possibility of change in attitude increases with high celebrity credibility (Goldberg & Hartwick, 1990). Expertness refers to the perceived capability of the celebrity to make accurate claims. Trustworthiness refers to the perceived willingness of the source to make accurate claims. The attractiveness model describes that the success of a message relies on the source's 'familiarity', 'likeability', 'similarity' and 'attractiveness' to the consumers. Familiarity is the knowledge of the source by exposure, likability as affection for the source due to the physical appearance and behaviour of the source, and similarity as an assumed similarity between the source and message receiver (Mccracken, 1989); (Roozen & Claeys, 2010).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sampling method

The current research applied a descriptive, cross-sectional research design to study consumer attitudes and responses in the given context. Probabilistic random sampling method was applied to represent the target market fairly without any bias.

Sample size

The data were gathered from 200 female participants with an age above 25 years in the city of Surat, where 178 valid responses were kept for analysis after screening. The selected sampling population of women over 25 years enabled the research to concentrate on a category with greater purchasing decision-making capabilities.

Data Collection and Analysis

To achieve data collection and analysis, various tools were employed. Google Forms facilitated the administration of surveys, while MS Excel was utilised in handling initial data. SPSS and SmartPLS4

programmes were used in advanced statistical and structural model analysis. The systematic method guaranteed methodological rigour and the reliability of findings in responding to the research aims.

Research Objectives

This study aims to address the following research question: "How does celebrity endorsement influence female consumers towards jewellery products in Surat City?"

(1) To examine the impact of Celebrity endorser's attractiveness on ad recall.
(2) To examine the impact of Celebrity endorser's attractiveness on purchase intentions.
(3) To examine the impact of Celebrity endorser's credibility on ad recall.
(4) To examine the impact of Celebrity endorser's credibility on purchase intentions.

Variables

A five-point Likert scale was utilized to quantify the major variables of the research, i.e., Attractiveness of the

celebrity endorser, Credibility of the celebrity endorser, Ad Recall by consumers, and Consumers' Purchase Intention. The scale items were well chosen and translated from reliable measures in previous literature to ascertain validity as well as reliability. The particular Likert statements along with their sources are discussed in Table

Hypothesis

✓ H1. Celebrity endorser's attractiveness has a positive impact on ad recall.
✓ H2. Celebrity endorser's credibility has a positive impact on ad recall.
✓ H3. Celebrity endorser's attractiveness has a positive impact on consumer's purchase intention.
✓ H4. Celebrity endorser's credibility has a positive impact on consumer's purchase intention.
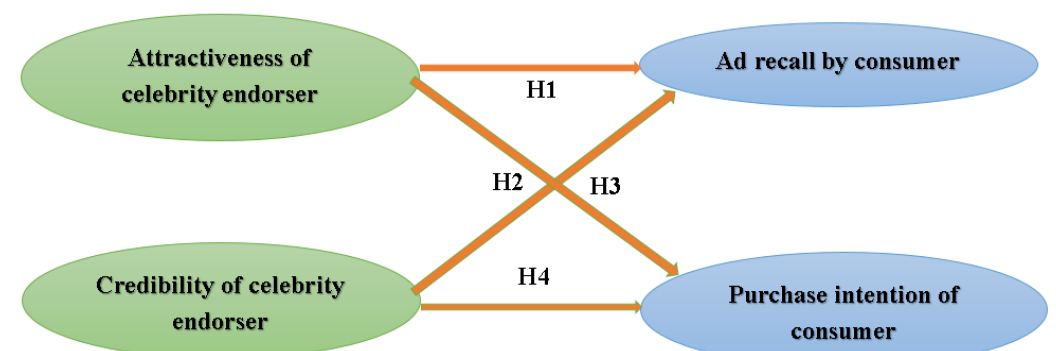
Figure 1: Conceptual Model

Table 1 Research methodology

Research Design	Descriptive Research Design – Cross-Sectional Design
Sampling Technique	Probabilistic random sampling technique
Sample Size	178 (Data collected from 200 females, out of which 22 found to be invalid)
Sampling Unit	Females (above 25 years)
Sampling Area	Surat City
Tools used	Google forms, MS Excel, SPSS and SmartPLS4 Software.

Table 2: Measurement of Variables and Source

Variables	Measurement items	Source/Reference
Attractiveness of celebrity endorsers	A1. Celebrities in jewellery ads are usually well-known faces.	(Mccracken, 1989)
	A2. Beautiful celebrities appear in jewellery ads.	(Bower & Landreth, 2001)
	A3. Attractive celebrities endorse beautiful jewellery designs.	(Kahle & Homer, 1985)
	A3. Sexy celebrities are endorsed in jewellery ads.	(Till & Busler, 2000);(Gupta et al., 2015); (Li & Sun, 2024)
	A4. Elegant celebrities appear in jewellery commercials.	(Solomon, 1983); (Li & Sun, 2024)
	A5. Celebrities that are endorsed in jewellery ads are classy.	(Erdogan, 1999)
Credibility of celebrity endorsers	C1. I believe that jewellery endorsed by celebrities are their favourite brands.	(Ohanian, 1990)
	C2. I trust celebrities endorsed in jewellery ads.	(Amos et al., 2008)
	C3. Celebrities are experts in jewellery.	(Silvera & Austad, 2004)
	C4. I trust jewellery brands that are endorsed by celebrities.	(Spry et al., 2011)
	Celebrities are experienced in Jewellery.	(Tripp et al., 1994)

	C5. I saw a celebrity jewellery ad on traditional media channels.	(Kotler & Keller, 2012)
Ad recall by consumer	AD1. I saw the celebrity jewellery ad on social media.	(Jin & Phua, 2014)
	AD2. My favourite celebrity appeared in a jewellery ad.	(Knoll & Matthes, 2017)
	AD3. I remember at least one jewellery commercial.	(Hani et al., 2018)
	AD4. I remember a particular slogan of a jewellery celebrity ad.	(Keller, 2009)
Purchase intention of consumers	P1. I follow social media of a jewellery brand that is endorsed by a celebrity.	(Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017)
	P2. I am willing to buy a jewellery brand that is endorsed by a celebrity.	(Choi & Rifon, 2012)
	P3. Celebrity endorsers encourage my purchase decision.	(Kamins, 1990)
	P4. Celebrity jewellery brands are must-have.	(Seno & Lukas, 2007)
	P5. I am always aware of new collections of jewellery brands that were endorsed previously by celebrities.	(Till, 1998)

Table 3: Hypothesis and source

Hypothesis	Source
Hypothesis 1. Celebrity endorser's attractiveness has a positive impact on ad recall.	(Biswas et al., 2006); (Choi & Rifon, 2012); Patra, S.,& Datta, S. K. (2012). Celebrity selection & role of celebrities in creating brand awareness and brand preference–A literature review. Journal of Marketing & Communication, 8(2).
Hypothesis 2. Celebrity endorser's credibility has a positive impact on ad recall.	
Hypothesis 3. Celebrity endorser's attractiveness has a positive impact on consumer's purchase intention.	
Hypothesis 4. Celebrity endorser's credibility has a positive impact on consumer's purchase intention.	

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Construct Reliability and Validity
(Table 4 & 5) Reliability offers an indication that the construct (latent variables) is always being measured by its indicators. All constructs possess reliable internal consistency. All AVE > 0.5 establishes that at least half (at least 50%) variation in construct is explained by its indicators. All AVEs > 0.5 confirm good convergent validity.

Table 4: Construct Reliability

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Composite Reliability	Interpretation
AD Recall by Consumer	0.814	0.870	Good reliability
Attractiveness of Celebrity Endorser	0.893	0.917	Very good reliability
Credibility of Celebrity Endorser	0.888	0.918	Very good reliability
Purchase Intention of Consumer	0.909	0.933	Excellent reliability

Table 5: Construct Validity

Construct	AVE	Interpretation
AD Recall by Consumer	0.574	Acceptable
Attractiveness of Celebrity Endorser	0.650	Good
Credibility of Celebrity Endorser	0.691	Good
Purchase Intention of Consumer	0.735	Strong

Discriminant validity: It ensures that constructs are distinct from one another. We assess this using: HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio) and Fornell-Larcker Criterion.

The discriminant validity was evaluated using both the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the HTMT ratio. The HTMT test (Table 6) indicated that the majority of the construct relationships were below the suggested threshold of 0.85, which guarantees good discriminant validity. Only between Purchase Intention and Credibility (0.865) did the 0.90 threshold come close, meaning that there was more overlap but still within a tolerable limit. This was supported by the Fornell-Larcker findings (Table 7), which verified that the square roots of each construct's AVE: AD Recall (0.757), Attractiveness (0.806), Credibility (0.831), and Purchase Intention (0.858) were all higher than corresponding inter-construct correlations. While the inter-correlations between some constructs, i.e., Credibility and AD Recall (0.706) and Credibility and Purchase Intention (0.782), were fairly high, they were still lower than the corresponding square roots of AVE. In combination, these results establish that the constructs possess adequate discriminant validity, affirming the strength of the measurement model.

Table 6: HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio)

Construct Relationship	HTMT Value	Interpretation
Attractiveness ↔ AD Recall	0.492	Good discriminant validity
Credibility ↔ AD Recall	0.816	Acceptable (close to 0.85 threshold)
Credibility ↔ Attractiveness	0.472	Good discriminant validity

Purchase Intention ↔ AD Recall	**0.702**	Good discriminant validity
Purchase Intention ↔ Attractiveness	**0.467**	Good discriminant validity
Purchase Intention ↔ Credibility	**0.865**	**Slightly high (close to 0.90)**

Table 7 Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Construct	AD Recall	Attractiveness	Credibility	Purchase Intention
AD Recall	0.757			
Attractiveness	0.430	0.806		
Credibility	0.706	0.435	0.831	
Purchase Intention	0.610	0.431	0.782	0.858

Model Fit Evaluation: (Table 8) Model fit metrics assess how well the structural model represents the data.

1. SRMR (0.078) is within the acceptable threshold (< 0.08), meaning the model has a good fit.
2. d_ULS and d_G values are acceptable (lower values indicate better fit).
3. NFI (0.796) is near 0.90, which suggests moderate fit.

Table 8: Model Fit Evaluation

Fit Measure	Saturated Model	Estimated Model	Threshold	Interpretation
SRMR	0.078	0.078	< 0.08	**Acceptable Fit**
d_ULS	1.390	1.405	Lower is better	Acceptable
d_G	0.542	0.542	Lower is better	Acceptable
Chi-square	541.416	541.935	-	Descriptive only
NFI	0.796	0.796	Near to 0.90 preferred	**Slightly low**

Conclusion: Overall, the model has an acceptable fit.

Structural Equation Model:

Figure 2 represents a Structural Equation Model (SEM) produced using SmartPLS, which is based on Partial Least Squares-SEM (PLS-SEM). The structural equation model (SEM) in Figure 2 illustrates the link between purchase intention, advertisement (ad) recall, and both credibility and attractiveness of a celebrity endorser. All these links have been indicated by path coefficients to reflect the strength of these links. All the latent constructs have several observed indicators used to measure them, with factor loadings to indicate the strength of these indicators in representing these constructs. Model reliability and construct validity have been confirmed to be high by both the strength of the factor loadings and construct reliability scores.

Figure 2: Structural Equation Model
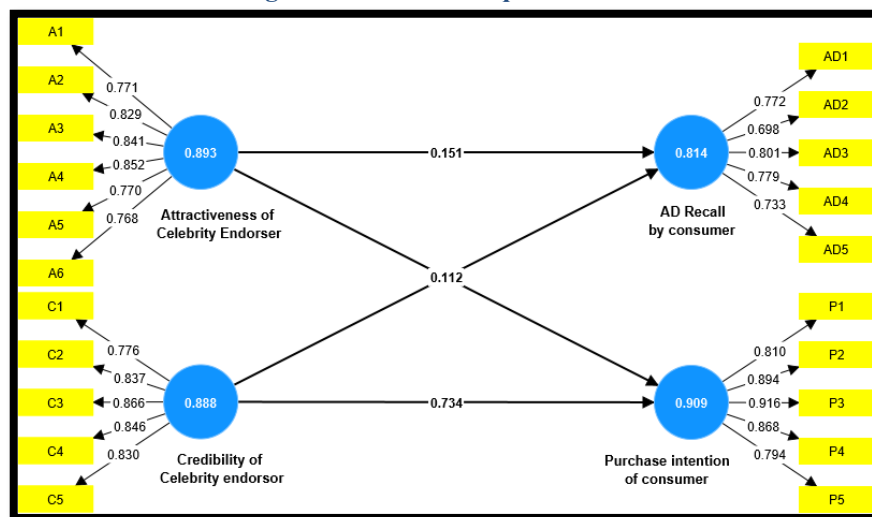
Result from Hypothesis Testing:

1. **Hypothesis 1: Celebrity endorser's attractiveness has a positive impact on ad recall:** The path coefficient between Attractiveness of Celebrity Endorser and Ad Recall by Consumer is 0.151. This coefficient is positive, indicating a weak but positive effect. If the coefficient is statistically significant, the hypothesis is supported; otherwise, it is rejected.

2. **Hypothesis 2: Celebrity endorser's credibility has a positive impact on ad recall:** The path coefficient between Credibility of Celebrity Endorser and Ad Recall by Consumer is 0.112. This positive coefficient suggests a minor effect. If the coefficient is statistically significant, the hypothesis is supported; otherwise, it is rejected.

3. **Hypothesis 3: Celebrity endorser's attractiveness has a positive impact on**

consumer's purchase intention: The path coefficient between Attractiveness of Celebrity Endorser and Purchase Intention of Consumer is 0.112. The coefficient is positive but weak, suggesting a minor impact. The hypothesis is supported only if the coefficient is statistically significant.

4. **Hypothesis 4: Celebrity endorser's credibility has a positive impact on consumer's purchase intention**: The path coefficient between Credibility of Celebrity Endorser and Purchase Intention of Consumer is 0.734. This is a strong positive relationship, suggesting that credibility significantly influences purchase intention. If statistically significant, this hypothesis is strongly supported.

DISCUSSION

The trustworthiness and expertise of an endorser have most impact upon purchase intention (0.734) in that consumers prefer to be influenced by an endorser who is trustworthy and an expert in his or her area. Physical appeal has minimal impact upon purchase intention (0.112) in that physical appeal does not have an appreciable influence upon consumer purchasing decisions. Attractiveness (0.151) and credibility (0.112) have minimal impact upon ad recall in that an endorsement by an endorser does not have an appreciable influence upon consumers' memory about an advertisement. On balance, trustworthiness is greater in significance than physical appeal in affecting consumer purchasing decisions.

CONCLUSION

The results indicate that consumer purchase intentions can be swayed by a celebrity endorser's credibility to a greater extent than by his or her physical appeal. Whereas both have an effect upon consumer recall of an advertisement, this is relatively minimal. The results point to an attractive celebrity being able to draw attention among consumers, while credibility is an influential determinant upon purchase decisions.

Strategic Implications:

The study provides clear strategic implications for brand communication and endorsement practices. Credibility of endorsers should be prioritized, as it strongly influences consumers' purchase intentions and builds trust. Attractiveness, while useful for capturing initial attention, is less effective in sustaining persuasion compared to credibility. Since both attractiveness and credibility contribute only modestly to advertising recall, brands should adopt complementary strategies such as compelling storytelling, message reinforcement, and repeated exposure to enhance retention. Overall, focusing on credible endorsers supported by recall-enhancing techniques can significantly improve the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. By integrating these insights, businesses can optimize their celebrity endorsement strategies to achieve greater marketing effectiveness.

Future Research

Further studies should examine the moderating effects of other variables, such as product type or consumer demographics, on the relationships between endorser characteristics and consumer behaviour.

Author contributions
- ✓ B: Written the original draft, Ideation of Methodology & literature review, A: Conceptualisation, Supervision, Design the questionnaire and revisions, Data analysis, Data Collection, Visualization & Mapping.
- ✓ All the authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Availability of data and materials

The information that underlies the findings in the present study is of a primary nature, collected through an online survey with a structured questionnaire. The survey response was received from 178 women. As it is private and confidential in nature, it cannot be presented in the public domain.

Declarations

This paper is the authors' original work, which has not been previously published elsewhere. The paper is not currently being considered for publication elsewhere.

Consent for publication

Not applicable

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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