

A theoretical reflection of celebrity endorsement in Nigeria

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Abstract

The use of celebrities such as movie stars, sports heroes, entertainers, music experts and all the likes as endorsers by marketers in promoting brand awareness, recognition, and preferences, has become the order of the day in advertising practices both in developed and developing economies. It therefore behooves on marketing professionals to design possible techniques to enhance its effective use by companies. This instigated the researchers to theoretically examine what celebrity endorsement is all about, celebrity-worship relationship and endorser effects, risks associated with the use of celebrity endorsement and celebrity endorsement selection criteria.

A critical review of extant literature revealed that celebrity endorsement makes advertisement more memorable and the company in the short-run generates high brand awareness as well as an increase in market share. There are certain risks associated with celebrity endorsement such as negative publicity, overshadowing, multiple endorsement, over-endorsement, extinction and cost implications. The study indicated that, successful celebrity endorsement is a combination of attributes such as trustworthiness, expertise, similarity, familiarity, likeability, and a match between the celebrity and the message (brand). To ensure the effective use of celebrity endorsement, the paper highlighted some strategic options.

1. Introduction

As competition to create consumer attention and interest in a product brand intensifies, it is critical that marketers develop better advertising appeal to get the consumer's attention, create his interest, arouse his desire, and instigate his purchase action of the brand. In achieving this purpose, marketers often engage individuals who have achieved some form of celebrity status to serve as spokespersons for their brands. According to Silvera and Austad (2004), a celebrity is a person who enjoys public recognition by a large share of a certain group of people and has distinctive characteristics, such as attractiveness, and trustworthiness. He has the ability to transfer his image to specific product that is being advertised. Marketers have taken this opportunity into account and use celebrity as an advertising tool to gain high brand awareness, recognition and preference. Breen (2003) states that celebrity endorsement is any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement.

Many marketers have realized the importance of celebrity endorsement as an advertising tool because it has an effect that influences the message (brand) the company is trying to send

from someone that the consumers feel a sense of similarity with. According to Erdogan, Baker and Tagg (2001), consumers tend to evaluate information from a communicator that has a similar goal, interest or lifestyle with them than someone else. Celebrity endorsement makes advertisement more memorable and the company in the short- run generates high brand awareness among a larger audience as well as an increase in market share (Dimed. and Joulyana, 2005). Companies use celebrity endorsement for very good reasons. It is believed that celebrity endorsement facilitates instant awareness and immediate action. Considering the huge amount of money companies are ready to pay for celebrity endorsement, it shows that many companies have had considerable success using famous names and faces as advertising strategy.

The trend in the usage of celebrity endorsement by marketers, has engineered the interest of the researchers to critically examine

- i. What celebrity endorsement is all about
- ii. Celebrity worship relationship and endorsement effects.
- iii. Risks associated with the use of celebrity endorsement.
- iv. Celebrity endorsement selection criteria.

2. Literature Review

Celebrity endorsement is an advertising strategy whereby companies use people of public recognition as spokespersons for their products. It is frequently used in recent times by companies in order to increase sales and perhaps extend their market share. According to Belch and Belch (2001), most of the celebrities that are hired by a company to pitch their products or services are popular people, movie stars, entertainers, athletes, or pop-stars, although occasionally a politician or some other well-known public figure may be used. For instance, Kanu Nvankwo leads the way, featuring in multi-category endorsements from peak milk to pepsi soft drink, to USAIDS/NACA anti-AIDS campaign among long list of other notable brands. Other high profile endorsers include Taribo West for money gram, Sunday Olise for western union money transfer, Banky W for etisalat, Pete Edochie, Jide Kosoko, and Saint Obi for Boska pain reliever, Tuface Idibia for airtel, D. Banj for virgin Nigeria Airlines, Kate Henshaw for Onga food, Stella Darnasus for Delta soap, Sunny Neji, Jim lyke, Ini Edo, and Uche Jumbo for glo.

When a company decides upon using celebrity endorsement, the main focus lies in exposing their brand (Kotler, Armstrong, Saunders and Wong, 2001). To be able to develop an effective campaign, a company has to select their endorser appropriate to different channels and media, such as source, message, and receiver (Till and Shimp, 1998). The brand can be seen as the message the company is trying to send to the audience. Moreover, the source which is intended to send this message in an endorsement strategy is the celebrity while the receiver of the message is the consumer. According to Erdogan and Baker (2004), there are several reasons why companies choose to use celebrity endorsement to a larger extent. Marketers seek to refresh the brand image, awareness and attention getting and also to add new dimensions to the brand image. According to Pringle (2004), identifying the best celebrity for promoting a brand, is one of the most important decisions considering how consumers will perceive the brand. There are less important decisions for a brand compared to the choice of celebrity such as what it is named, places where it is seen and sold and what kind of advertising campaign it runs. These considerations are taken into account and this is also the reason why many companies are ready to invest a huge amount of money in choosing and using a certain celebrity whose identity fits well with their brand.

However, celebrity endorsement strategy is not only the involvement between celebrity and the brand, the consumers are also integrated. Soderlund (2003) argues that celebrity endorsement is not profitable to be used in a long-run perspective if it is not maintaining relevance with the consumers. This is an issue for companies because consumers are easily adapting to another celebrity because sometime one cannot fully predict the life-span of a celebrity. This can affect the brand image and also the level of loyalty a consumer has towards a brand.

The basic questions marketers could ask themselves to make celebrity endorsement effective are-how famous is the celebrity? How well does the celebrity fits with the brand, which facets of the celebrity can best work for the brand profile? And how much of the celebrity endorsement can the brand finance? Many studies such as Dimed and Joulyana (2005), and Bielli (2003) show that the deeper the fit between the celebrity and the brand the more effective is the celebrity endorsement. Therefore Pringle (2004) advised that marketers should strive to create a close connection as possible between the celebrity and the brand so that the advertising objective-awareness, interest, desire, and action, as modeled by Strong (1991) can be achieved.

Marketers need to be aware that consumers perceive celebrities in different ways based on what personal characteristics them possess. When a celebrity is in a particular situation and promoting different products or services, the consumers tend to prefer a celebrity who is an expert and trustworthy within that situation. Moreover, the celebrity should preferably be likeable among the targeted consumers and have similar goals, and interest. These attribute in combination and a fit between the celebrity and the product could be the winning concept in a celebrity endorsement strategy.

Celebrity-worship relationships and endorser effects

For some time, companies use different sports andentertainment celebrities as effective and profitable tools to advertise their products, cashing in on the celebrities fame and success as well as drawing people to consider their brands. Research has shown that celebrity endorsement helps create a positive effect on the consumers brand avareness, brand trust (Agrawal and Kamakura 1995), brand preference (Kamins et al, 1989) and purchase intentions (Ohanian 1991). These endorser effects are attributed to the celebrities' influence and their ability to transfer their values onto the brands they endorse. The current literature focuses on three particular processes: source credibility, affect transfer and image congruity (Mittelstaedt, Riesz and Burns 2000) as key explanations for endorser effects. Source credibility states that when a communication source has particular expertise in a topic of interest, the expertise equips the source with authority and believability so that communication from the source will be regarded as trustworthy or credible.

Affect transfer refers to the lateral process through which celebrities improve brand awareness and brand familiarity. When a celebrity endorses a brand, the consumer will pay more attention to the endorsed brand thereby improving its awareness and attributing it with a positive image (Kahle and Homer 1985). This effect would likely be stronger among fans of the celebrity. Positive relationship with the celebrity also entices adolescents to pursue fan-tracking activities. Some even imitate the icons behavior. Thus. The psychological foundation for endorser effect may originate from the relations between consumer and celebrity. In a multiple product study in the Chinese context, Chan (2008) reports that celebrity appeal is the most commonly used appeal that surpasses even sexual appeal. Another way celebrities may successfully endorse a brand is through image congruity, that is, consumers may subscribe to the values the celebrity possesses (Mathur, Mathur, and Rangan 1997).

Football superstars such as Austin Okocha popularly known as Jay-Jay is known to be very committed to winning each game that he plays in and thrives to be a leader of his team. Such values inspire the public as well as football fans to regard Austin Okocha as a role model. Yet, from what basis does source credibility, source attractiveness and image congruity emerge? One probable source is the positive relations between consumers and the celebrity; without which, a celebrity may not be able to convince viewers to trust the endorsed brand. Similarly, without favorable consumer- celebrity relations; no positive values can be transferred onto the brand.

How people relate to celebrities

As consumers become familiar with celebrity figures as a result of increased media exposure, they form one-way, imaginative para-social relations with the celebrity. These relationships are real in the consumers' perceptions and constitute an important part of the consumers' subjective social experience. This phenomenon can be a powerful driver for the demand of luxurious brands in emerging markets (Zhou and Belk 2004). Indeed, the country's cohort of young adults who grew up during its years of robust economic growth is increasingly "global" and "materialistic" in their pursuit of brands (Hung, GU and Yim 2007). Compared with older cohorts, Generation Y individuals in China, especially those living in urban cities, are more individualistic, more embracing of western influence, and more inclined to pursue self-actualization rather than pure capitalistic "get rich" orientations in career aspirations. In addition, these individuals have greater tools and avenues of exposure to entertainment-based media, as they are much more embracing of new technology, especially the internet (Arora 2005).

Celebrity worship thus becomes more prevalent and profound, as celebrities represent idealized role models that consumers of this generation, deviating from the traditional career expectations of their parents, can more easily pursue and aspire to. Consumers form parasocial relations that correspond notably to a variety of specific actual social relations. Some viewers regard their favourite television performer as a friend. Others regard their favorite celebrity as a father figure, a big sister, or a lover. While the parasocial relations may serve a need fulfillment function, some researchers suggest that relationship importance can be assessed on a cost/reward basis. Since the celebrity is attractive and the relationship is under the fan's control, parasocial relations are high reward/low cost exchanges (Perse and Rubin 1989). Meanwhile, there is growing evidence that shows that parasocial relations involve not only calculative commitment but also affective commitment that stem from people's intense emotional involvement with the celebrity. As an Elvis Presley fan suggests, "I can feel him in my heart. I can see him in my dreams; I can see him on my wall in my posters, that's the stuff that's the real Elvis (Fraser and Brown 2002).

A celebrity is often regarded as a hero, a role model, or even a god-like figure to take on a dimension larger than life, allowing the fan to achieve a kind of higher existence (Kozinet 2001). Another Elvis fan, a devout Catholic, speaks with a religious fervor and suggests that "there is a distance between human beings and God. That is why we are close to Elvis. He is like a bridge between us and God" (Doss 1999) Belk, Wallendorf, and Sherry (1989) developed a list of sacredness properties that included sacrifice, commitment, ritual, and ecstasy. These properties illustrate how people dignify and ennoble the celebrities they revere. When people have strong feelings for and form an admiration relationship with a celebrity, the relations may take on a fantasy dimension so that the admirer may fantasize about meeting with the celebrity (e.g. going out drinking), becoming someone like he celebrity (e.g. becoming one's daughter). Or

even becoming the celebrity him/herself (Caughey 1984). These fantasies reflect a deeper identification with the celebrity's values and other characteristics and they promote important attitudinal and behavioral changes in the admirer (Boon and Lomore 2001). Andy Lau, who is among the most popular entertainer in China with an extensive network of fan clubs across the nation, has drawn many imitators, impersonators and self-proclaimed lovers.

Dimensions of celebrity worship

In recent studies, researchers are paying increased attention to what is now known as celebrity-worship, which is the act of giving reverence to a celebrity. McCutcheon, Lange and Houran (2002), have proposed multiple levels of the phenomenon. One commonly used scale, the Celebrity Attitude Scale, developed by McCutcheon et al, (2002) was validated in subsequent studies (Giles and Maltby 2004; Maltby et al 2002), the multiple dimensions of celebrity worship are traceable to different underlying motivations.

The first dimension underlying celebrity-worship is entertainment based motivation. This motivation represents the casual admiration that people hold towards the celebrity as well as the entertainment values a celebrity provides that gives pleasure to the public. Many consumers enjoy learning about the celebrity, discussing with others about the celebrity, and deriving satisfaction knowing the celebrity's life story and recent moves (McCutcheon et al, 2002). The second motivational dimension is characterized by intense attachment towards the celebrity. People who exhibit this motivation perceive that they are personally connected with the celebrity. They think constantly about the celebrity and associate parasocially with the celebrity. When the celebrity is successful (or in distress), they share his/her joy (or sadness). In short, the intense attachment bond "transmits" what the celebrity feels, encounters and experiences to the fans. This celebrity worship dimension falls between the extremes of a rational, distant relationship and an obsessive, compulsive bond that could advance to becoming pathological (McCutcheon et al, 2002).

The last dimension of celebrity worship motivation is characterized by individuals who take the relationship to an extreme and form a pathological tie with the celebrity. This strong tie causes the followers to engage in extremes, doing practically anything, often going beyond normal judgment and reasoning to be with the celebrity (McCutcheon, et al, 2002). This level of celebrity worship may be closely linked to a psychological disorder known as Erotomania, described in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (American Psychiatric Association 1994). Hung, Chan and Tse (2010), propose that entertainment-based and intense attachment relational components are separate sub-constructs of celebrity-worship with their own magnitudes of high and low. They postulate that the entertainment-based component assesses the enjoyment or satisfaction level of a person who worships a celebrity whereas the intense attachment component assesses the strength of the bond between the follower and the celebrity. Using these two behavioral dimensions, they are able to capture more of the complexity of how consumers relate to celebrities. This is as depicted in the figure below, figure 1

Their study involves a survey of respondents' self-rated relationship with an entertainment (Andy Lau) and a sports celebrity (Yao Ming) using their translated and pretested version of the Celebrity-Attitude Scale. Respondents also rated their evaluation of brands endorsed by these celebrities (value-transfer) and their purchase intentions towards these brands. They postulate that consumer-celebrity relations are behavioral antecedents to endorser effects, thus they hypothesize that consumer celebrity relationships (measured by entertainment

and intense attachment components) are positively related to how consumers evaluate the endorsed brands and their purchase intent towards these brands.

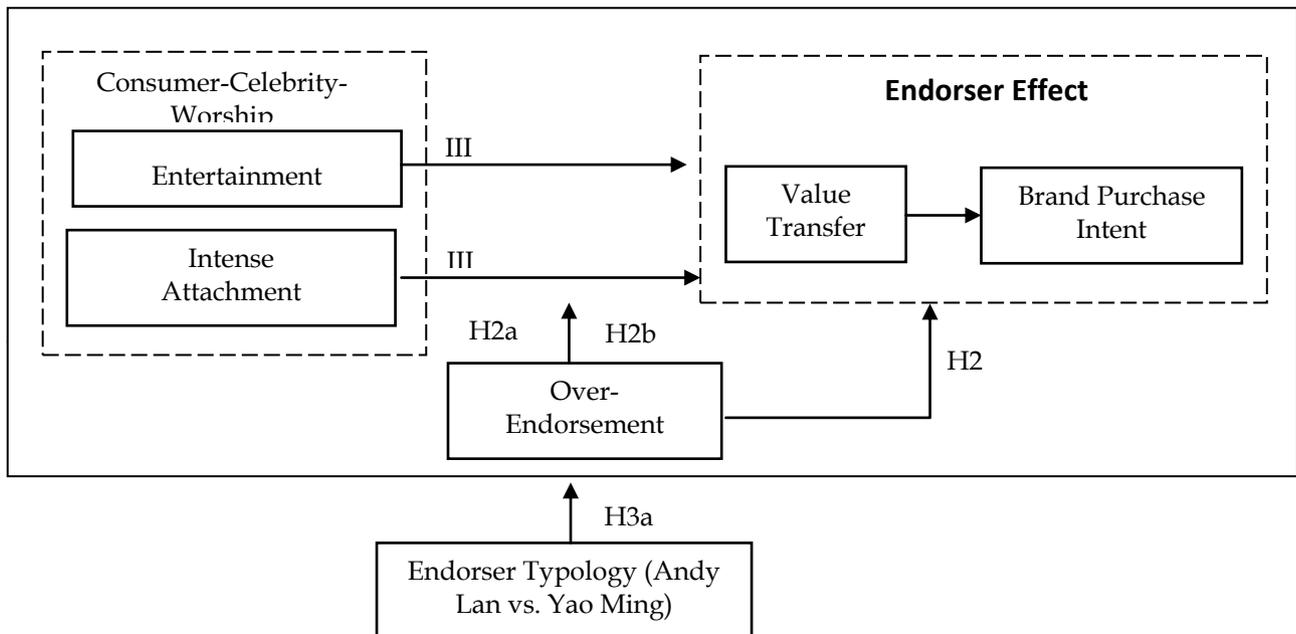


Figure 1; Celebrity Worship Relations

Risks associated with celebrity endorsement

According to Till (1998), despite well-publicized celebrity miscues such as Bill Clinton Sexual harassment, Mike Tyson's rape conviction, and Michael Jordan's gambling debt, the use of celebrity endorsers continues unabated. Although endorsers can be used for a variety of purposes such as getting attention and penetrating commercial clutter, the high cost of endorsements suggests that marketers expect to get far more value from the endorsement than simply the use of a clever executional device designed to attract consumer attention. Despite the popularity of celebrity pitchmen, many commercials using celebrity endorsers do not live up to advertisers' expectations (Liu, 2009). However, used appropriately, celebrity endorsers can serve a valuable role in developing brand equity and enhancing a brand's competitive position.

However, there are certain risks associated with the use of celebrity endorsement. A review of related literature revealed the following risks. One risk associated with the use of celebrity endorsers is the possibility of negative information or publicity regarding the celebrity. If the celebrity is strongly associated with the brand then the occurrence of negative publicity about the celebrity can spill over to the brand. Many companies have been badly affected by negative publicity from celebrity misdeeds, like celebrity endorsers involved in drug scandals, rape, and murder. The harm brought to the reputations of these companies may decrease the trustworthiness and credibility held by the consumer (Liu, 2009). Once a celebrity gets associated with negative information, the marketer has to consider various relations to be able to maintain a good position in the market and a similar level of brand recognition as the all. Till and Shimp (1998), suggested that negative publicity about a celebrity can be reduced or cancelled through consistent news story by the marketer making a disclaimer of the negative information. For instance the sex scandal between Geneve Nnaji and former Vice-President

Atiku Abubakar was disclaimed by makers of lux soap. More so, is the case of Tuface Idibia when his baby- mother issue came up, he was on the payroll of Guinness.

If a celebrity endorser is used, the risk of consumers focusing on the celebrity and not on the brand exists. To solve this, advertisers should use a celebrity endorser who will attract attention and enhance the sales message, yet not overshadow the brand. Overshadowing occurs when the celebrity endorser occurs in the presence of multiple other stimuli which all compete to form a link with the celebrity endorser: While the advertiser intends for an associative link to develop between the celebrity and the endorsed brand, overshadowing suggests that the celebrity endorser is most likely to build a link with the most dominating stimulus, which must not be the featured brand in the advertisement execution. Therefore, the celebrity and the brand should be the two strongest elements in the advertisement (Liu, 2009).

Another risk of using celebrity endorsees is that the credibility of the brand and the celebrity may suffer when the celebrity choose to endorse several different products simultaneously and becomes overexposed. Researchers found that the more products a celebrity endorses, the less credible he is seen by the consumer (Kaikati, 1987). The reason is that consumers may question whether the endorser really believes in and uses all the products he or she endorses or he is purely motivated by financial gains. Overexposure is a common occurrence between highly competing brands and highly recognized and well-liked endorsers. This disloyalty to a company could lead to lowered credibility and loss of trust in a brand. It can also make the consumers confused and unable to correctly recall which brands the celebrity stands for (Liu, 2009). For instance Z. B endorses both Arnatem and Enizor paracetamol. However, one has to be aware that multiple- endorsement does not have to imply that it is useless. Researchers have shown some potential positive effects like transfer of positive brand image, endorsing more brands allows the consumers to have additional opportunities to strengthen their bond with celebrity (I-Tung, 2010).

Advertisers sometimes use many different celebrities to endorse a brand or product. (One reason is that the advertiser use different celebrities to appeal to different market segments through different media and programs. Another reason is that the competition for celebrities could heat up just like competition for other resources. In that case, a company may sign up a celebrity to prevent another company from using that celebrity. For instance, Lillian Bach, and Stella Damascus were used at different times in promoting Delta soap.

Johansson and Sparredal (2002) as cited by Liu (2009) are of the opinion that a company's use of multiple endorsers could have some undesired results. Since each endorser has a unique image, a multiplicity of endorsers might blur the image of the brand. Even if these endorsers were used in different media or programs, because of segment overlap across media, multiple endorsers could still blur the brand image. The use of multiple endorsers may lead to the reduced effectiveness of this means of persuasion. This is true for endorsers as for any other means of persuasion. Overuse of a celebrity endorser may lead to declining popularity for advertising using celebrities.

The favourable responses that have been engendered to a particular brand because of its association with a celebrity may weaken over time, particularly if the brand receives significant exposure without association with the celebrity (Liu, 2009). The celebrity may be very famous and successful in the beginning of the contractual term, but then become less successful or lose their fame. For example, an athlete who wins a gold medal in the Olympics may be a very good endorser for a particular brand. If the athlete gets injured or becomes less successful due to other circumstances and disappear from the spotlight, he or she might no longer be the endorser a

company would sought after. If the advertiser has signed a contract that last for many years, the advertiser is stuck with a celebrity who does not have the same fame and impact on the target segment that he or she used to have.

Another prominent risk associated with the use of celebrity endorsers is the cost implication. At some point in the decision to use celebrity endorsers, advertisers have to consider the cost effectiveness of the choice. The endorser who appears to have the highest potential, tend to be the most popular and therefore the most expensive to hire as endorser. The demand for entertainment and sports celebrities has increased and these individuals are sometimes very expensive to use as endorsers. In this situation, the advertiser must decide if a celebrity endorser is worth the investment. Rather than pursuing a popular endorser, advertisers can do well by looking for a less known, less expensive endorser who nicely matches, the message of the brand and appeals to the target segment (Dimed, and Joulyana, 2005, Liu, 2009; Hung et al, 2010).

Celebrity endorsement selection criteria

Celebrity endorsers have been found to produce more positive responses towards advertising and greater purchase intentions than a non-celebrity endorser. To understand how these celebrity endorsers are able to transfer their personality to products, it is important to understand what attitudes an endorser must exhibit to successfully influence a company or product image. American practitioners believed that, as baseline criteria for consideration, celebrities must be trustworthy, recognizable, and affordable, generate minimal controversy or risk, and be appropriately matched with target audiences (Liu, 2009).

1. Source attributes

Johansson and Sparredal (2002) as cited by Liu (2009) developed three basic categories of source attributes: credibility, attractiveness and power. Each category influences the recipient's attitude or behaviour through different processes referred to as internalization, identification and compliance.

a. **Source credibility:** Celebrities are generally viewed by consumers as credible sources of information about the product or firm they endorse. Source credibility can be defined as "a communicator's positive characteristics that affect the receiver's acceptance of a message". The source credibility model analyses the factor leading to the perceived credibility of the communicator. The model contends that the effectiveness of a message depends upon the perceived level of expertise and trustworthiness associated with an endorser or communicator (Belch and Belch, 2001). Information from a credible source influences beliefs, opinions, attitude and behaviour through a process known as internalization. This occurs when the receiver adopts the opinion of a credible source since customers believe information from this source is accurate. A highly credible source is particularly important when the message recipient have a negative position toward the product, service, brand or issue being promoted. The credible source is likely to inhibit counterarguments and reduced counter arguing should result in greater message acceptance and persuasion. For instance, Abel Ubeku and M.K.O. Abiola because of their celebrity status endorsed the Nigerian Airways, which was initially perceived as unreliable by the market, such endorsement alters the consumers' perception in favour of Nigerian Airways.

i. **Celebrity expertise:** Ohanian (1990), define expertise as "the extent to which a communicator is perceived to be a source of valid assertions. It refers to the perceived level of knowledge, experience, or skills possessed by an endorser". Celebrities with higher levels of expertise have been found to be more persuasive and can generate more intentions to buy the brand. For

instance, medical doctors have been found to generate consumer's awareness, interest, desire and action in advertising pharmaceutical products.

ii. **Celebrity trustworthiness:** According to Ohanian (1990), trustworthiness is the degree of confidence consumers place in a communicator's intent to convey the assertions he considers most valid. Favourable disposition, acceptance, psychological safety, and perceived supportive climate are as favourable consequences of trust. A highly trustworthy communicator produces an effective attitude change, while non-trusted communicators' impact proved immaterial. Perceived communicator trustworthiness has also been shown to produce a greater attitude change than perceived expertise. When a celebrity is perceived more trustworthy, the message will be more effective and the consumer will be more integrated.

b. **Source Attractiveness:** Attractiveness is the second category of source attributes, attractiveness encompasses similarity, familiarity and likability. Similarity is the supposed resemblance between the source and the receiver; familiarity arises through knowledge of the source via repeated exposure. Likability occurs from affection for the source due to the physical appearance, behaviour or other personal characteristics (Ohanian, 1990). Source attractiveness leads to persuasion through a process of identification, whereby the receiver is motivated to seek some type of relationship with the source and thus adopts similar beliefs, attitudes, preferences, or behaviour (Liu, 2009). Advertisers have chosen celebrity endorsers on the basis of endorsers' physical attractiveness to gain from the dual effects of celebrity status and physical appeal. There is no doubt that attractive celebrity endorsers enhance attitudes towards advertising and brands, but whether celebrities are able to create repeat purchases intentions is less clear.

c. **Source Power:** The third and the final source attribute is source power. This occurs when a source has the ability to administer rewards or punishments. As a result of the power, an endorser may be able to induce another person to respond to the request or position the source is advocating. As a source characteristic, power is very difficult to apply in advertising. This attribute is most commonly used for spokespersons in personal selling (Salomon, 2002).

2. Match-up Hypothesis/Product Fit

Amos et al (2008) as cited by Liu (2009), comment that the celebrity/product fit, also called the "match-up hypothesis", refers to the harmony of the match between the celebrity endorser and the product being endorsed. Advertisers must match the product or company's image, the characteristics of the target market, and the personality of the celebrity, to establish effective messages. The determinant of the match between celebrity and brand depends on the degree of perceived "fit" between brand and celebrity image. Messages conveyed by the celebrity image and the product message should be congruent for effective communication. Special attention should also be paid to employ celebrities who have a direct connection with the endorsed product and who are perceived to be experts by the target audiences. If there is no congruency, then the audience remembers the celebrity and not the product. If the product is not appropriately matched to the endorser, as specified by the match-up hypothesis, then the meaning of the message that is transferred to the consumer may not be effective (Silvera and Austad, 2004).

Wheeler (2003) suggests that before picking an endorser, marketers must consider which traits are most important to the brand. (1) Ensure that the celebrity has qualities that fit the image suitable for the organization. (2) Find someone with a logical connection to the organization, someone who is familiar with the target group or constituency. (3) Choose someone who has a story and can tell it well. Not all celebrities can communicate a meaningful and compelling

story. Good communicators make the most powerful spokespeople. (4) Consider the long-term value of the celebrity, weight the desire to pick someone who is “hot” against the celebrity’s staying power.

3. Conclusion and Recommendations

There is a growing popularity of celebrity endorsement by marketers across the globe. Marketers spend great sums of money to have celebrities promoting their products with the expectation that consumers, will react positively to the celebrity’s association with the brand. A number of studies have explored how consumers relate to celebrities that they adore focusing on the nature of celebrity-worship behaviours and investigating the imaginative parasocial bonds people develop with icons. Consumers may say to themselves “if she uses it, it must be good” and if I use it, I will be like her”. The consumers relationship with a celebrity is driven by entertainment and fun, intense attachment, and pathological urge. Since celebrity endorsement has been widely recognized as advertising strategy by companies and marketers, it is therefore imperative to enhance the effectiveness of its usage to achieve the desired result. As a result, the following should be taken into consideration for effective use of celebrity endorsement.

- (i) Celebrity’ endorsements will be inure effective when used consistently over time to increase the strength of the link between the celebrity and the endorsed brand;
- (ii) When using a celebrity endorser, keep the advertisement execution simple, clean, and free of irrelevant design elements;
- (iii) When selecting a celebrity endorser, choose a celebrity who is not already strongly associated with another product or service;
- (iv) When selecting a celebrity endorser, consider carefully the “fit”, “congruence”, or “belongingness” of the celebrity arid brand;
- (v) Test potential brand-celebrity combinations to ensure that the impression and image of the celebrity is positive for the target audience;
- (vi) Celebrity endorsers can be used to effectively reinforce and/or create an image for a product or service;
- (vii) Celebrity endorsements will be more effective for less familiar brands;
- (viii) Celebrity endorser will be more effective for brands for which consumers have limited knowledge/facts;
- (ix) increased value from a celebrity endorser comes from utilizing the celebrity across the marketing mix, not just in advertising; and
- (x) Caution in choice of celebrity endorser is warranted given the potential risk of tarnishing the brand’s image.

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