

# The Impact of Celebrity Endorsements on Purchase Intention from the perspective of Emotional Contagion

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**Abstract -The purpose of this study is to understand the impact of celebrity endorsements on purchase intention and from the perspective of the Emotional Contagion.**

Since literature on celebrity endorsements show a positive impact on purchase intention, it is ideal to utilise a low-explored theory to test a different aspect of celebrity endorsements. The aim of the study was to understand the impact of the variables of pleasure emotion, arousal emotion, emotional trust and admiration derived from celebrity endorsements on purchase intention. The subjects for this study were equally split among males and females belonging to the Generation X.

Qualitative methodology was the preferred methodology and in-depth interviews were used to collect data and thematic analysis was applied to analyse the data.

The results indicated that while pleasure emotion, arousal emotion and admiration had a positive impact on the purchase intention, emotional trust remains subjective and inconclusive.

**Index Terms: Celebrity Endorsements, Purchase Intention, Emotional Contagion, Producer-Endorser Fit**

## 1: INTRODUCTION

From a marketing communication stance, it is important that companies outline strategies that allow the firm's products or services to have a competitive differential advantage. (Erdogan, 1999) Consumers are repeatedly being presented with images of celebrities today. The celebrities are not only endorsing numerous consumer products but are also presented in limelight on the covers of fashion and gossip magazines. These mediums aid in the acclimatisation of a celebrity. Celebrities have a distinctive position in the advertising market because of the established careers and the continuous attention they receive from the media. According to McCracken, a celebrity endorser is an individual who enjoys public recognition and utilises it to publicise a consumer good by featuring with it in an advertisement. (McCracken, 1989)

When celebrities are recruited to endorse brands, they are able to draw the spotlight towards the advertisement, stand out against the competing brands and can appeal to consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. Celebrities are also able to establish an identity for the product. (Cooper, 1984) Numerous companies also employ renowned celebrities to endorse their brands due to the popularity among consumers for celebrities endorsing the usage of products or brands and trends. The firms expect that this method would potentially

In the United Kingdom, a report on February 1st, 1996, in marketing suggested that advertisements that featured celebrities were key in achieving national headlines in the year 1995. On the other hand, Lane (1996) stated that approximately companies in the United States of America paid more than \$1 billion to athletes, but not all celebrity endorsers for licensing rights and endorsement deals. (Lane, 1996; Erdogan, 1999)

In Canada, 5% of their aggregate advertisements feature celebrities, 10% in the United States of America and United Kingdom, and 40% in Japan. (Schimmelpfenning and Hunt, 2019)

In comparison, India is also pairable with the above-mentioned countries. 24% of the aggregate advertisements published on television feature celebrities or people with fame. (TAM, 2020) From January till July 2019, the visibility of advertisements featuring celebrities was at a daily average time span of 274 hours. This showed an 31% increase in the volume of advertisements when compared to the same time period in 2017. Another report states that the top 20 celebrities in India have a combined brand value of 1.1 billion dollars. (Gupta and Jain, 2020)

The latest reports suggest that the newer generations are discovering brands through celebrity endorsements. 16% of consumers between the age group of 16-24, 16% of consumers between the age group of 25-34, 12% of consumers between the age group of 35-44, 8% of consumers between the age

group of 45-54 and 5% of consumers between the age group of 55-64 discover brands through the medium of celebrity endorsements. (Statista, 2017) Understanding this influence of celebrities on consumers, companies are increasing their investments in employing celebrities as their endorsers to persuade consumers to consume their products or services. (McNamara, 2009) In monetary terms, George Clooney receives 40 million dollars by endorsing Nespresso, Beyonce signed a 50 million multi-year deal to endorse Pepsi, and Taylor Swift received 26 million dollars to promote Coca-Cola and Cristiano Ronaldo received 1 billion dollars to endorse Nike. (Symonds, 2022) These monetary numbers lead to the belief that these endorsements must be gaining returns or profits which motivate companies to initiate large transactions and deals.

According to Brad Hunter, the CEO of iwalk 2.0, “If your product is of significant benefit to the celebrity, they will use it, and if you’re lucky, they will be captured by the media,” he adds. “The short-term benefits are increased sales. The long-term benefits are brand recognition and awareness that the product exists.” (Coleman, 2018)

Emotions of the consumer can be divided into numerous basic dimensions. The emotions proposed by Russell (1980) are Arousal, Pleasure and Dimension. These dimensions have been adjusted numerous times and previous literature proposes that the fundamental dimensions of arousal and pleasure are the ‘core emotion’ (Russell et al., 1989) and the dominant can be separated (Donovan et al., 1994) allowing the other two dimensions to represent the emotional response to external stimuli. (Ladhari, 2007) Cheng also demonstrated that arousal and pleasure were good substitutes for a context-led affective state while dominance was discovered to have a low predictive value in a similar context. The extent to which individuals are content, happy, good, pleased and satisfied is referred to as the Pleasure Dimension. (Cheng et al., 2009)

According to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, pleasure portrays itself as attractive and good when we are able to notice it, and everything else appears lucent in its light. This indicates why people chase pleasure and the reasons behind it. (Leonard, 2016)

This study believes that when celebrities endorse products in a warm, nice and friendly manner, consumers are more likely to purchase the endorsed

product. The consumers would feel a sense of contentment, satisfaction and happiness while or after viewing the endorsement which would enable them to purchase the product or service endorsed. Thus, the hypothesis for pleasure emotion is: Consumer pleasure emotion that was invoked due to celebrity endorsements increases purchase intention.

## 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.1.1 CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS

Celebrities are proficient and talented individuals in their field of work who are fond of public recognition. (Spry et. al., 2011) A celebrity can be described as a sports person, entertainer, an actor or actress recognised by the public for their achievements in aspects excluding the products or services they endorse. Endorsements can be filmed or created by experts, celebrities or lay endorsers (Erdogan, 1999; Wei and Lu, 2013), which portrays an image of a correlation between the personality of the endorser and the endorsed brand. (Erdogan, Baker and Tagg, 2001; Keller, 2013) Brand Endorsements act as a channel of communication from the brand that accredits a celebrity to hold a position as the brand’s spokesperson in numerous methods to impart the required information to portray a brand (Patra and Datta, 2010) Celebrity endorsements also impact brand recognition, effectiveness of advertising, brand recall, purchase behaviour and purchase intention. (Hollensen and Schimmelpfenning, 2013; Spry et al 2011) This indicates that consumers can resonate with the products or services that feature celebrities thus enabling them to remember the aim of the message being communicated which can influence purchase intention in the short or long term. (Frimpong, O. K., Donkor G. & Frimpong, O. N., 2019)

#### 2.1.2 EMOTIONAL CONTAGION

Emotions are vital reactions to personal perceptions that are essentially experiential in identity but are also a social phenomenon that can be externally manifested and could be communicated through facial expressions, words, pictures, gestures, music and more. (Du et al., 2011) The portrayal of emotions could be largely expressed in interpersonal interactions and can present an impact on others. In other words people would be able to experience similar emotions like others and react to them. (Fan et al., 2017) Emotional Contagion can be defined as “a process in which a person or group influences the

emotions or behaviour of another person or group through the conscious or unconscious induction of emotion states and behavioural attitudes.” (Du et al., 2011) Individuals instinctively quickly and constantly imitate the facial expressions, postures, voice, movements and behaviour of others during interactions in a social environment and record others’ emotions continuously. This process is also referred to as Emotional Contagion. (Barsade et al., 2018)

Thus, this study aims to capture the impact of Celebrity Endorsements on Purchase Intention using this theory.

### 2.1.3 PLEASURE EMOTION

The extent to which individuals feel alert, stimulated, excited, awakened and positive in particular situations is known as the Arousal Dimension. (Russell, 1980)

In the instance of live streaming, the pleasure emotions acquired during live streaming refers to the extent to which an individual feels happy, joyful and satisfied while livestreaming and how this intensifies their purchase behaviour towards a product or service. (Monuwe et al., 2004)

In an instance of a retail environment, customers' eagerness to connect with the store's environment and, consequently, their intention to purchase a product or service can be increased by the stimulation of the retail environment (Barsade et al., 2018).

### 2.1.4 AROUSAL EMOTION

This study believes that when consumers are excited because of curiosity which is triggered by celebrity endorsements and the products they endorse triggers the arousal emotion. The arousal which is triggered by curiosity and excitement would affect the probability of purchase intention. Thus the hypothesis for pleasure emotion is: the consumer's pleasure emotion derived due to celebrity endorsements increases purchase intention.

and observed that the number of celebrity endorsements in South Korea were greater than the United States of America. (Paek, 2005) Other materials of research suggest that celebrity endorsements have direct effects on brand equity in India but not in Finland or the United States which confirms the widely accepted concept that Indians idolise their Cricketers and Bollywood actors (Jain, 2011). This idolisation may rise from a cultural aspect termed as power distance beliefs i.e. the level

of power disparity that individuals following a culture accept and expect. (Hofstede, 2001; Oyserman, 2006)

According to Winterich et al. (2018) power distance beliefs mediate the impact of celebrity endorsements on brand attitudes and advertising evaluations in a manner that the effect is larger between high power distance beliefs consumers. Regardless of the Power, Distance Beliefs, this seems to be an exhausting effect for durable goods wherein celebrities appear to be less influential on the advertising assessment. This could be caused due to a high involvement of consumers in the durable goods sector. (Winterich et al., 2018)

According to Hung (2014), consumers' aim is classified on the basis of their want to possess an accomplished and splashy lifestyle as portrayed in the media. (Hung, 2014) Hence, consumers wish to replicate their favourite celebrity, who guides them in engaging in activities that would promote and maintain their relations with their favoured celebrity. (Holt and Thompson, 2004; Rana and Arora, 2021). The segmentation of consumers on the basis of the influence of six factors of celebrity endorsements on purchase behaviour namely attractiveness, attachment, entertainment, multiple endorsement, meaning, transfer and cognitive association, (Holt and Thompson, 2004; Khale and Homer, 1985; McCracken, 1989; Ilicic and Webster, 2011; Mowen and Brown, 1981; Kurniawati, 2018; Till, 1998) led to the discovery of three segments or factors, namely, 'star power buyers,' 'indifferent to celebrity buyers' and 'fascinated buyers.' Arora (2022) observed that star power buyers were influenced by attractiveness and entertainment while attractiveness was a factor that only influenced fascinated by us and indifferent to celebrity buyers maintained a neutral position towards the factors. It was also observed that multiple endorsements, meaning transfer and attachment did not have any influence on the three segments. (Arora et al., 2022)

### 2.1.5 EMOTIONAL TRUST

The basis of affective trust is mutual interaction and attraction. It is heightened through consistent communication and exchange between people over time and exhibits apprehension for the welfare of trusted individuals. (Mian and Hattab, 2013) Emotional trust on the other hand is an emotion-based confidence established by a trusting organisation with the trusted organisation that portrays the concern for a third party's welfare and

considers the third party's intentions and purpose. This depends on good communication. (Chua et. al, 2008).

This study believes that trust, confidence, curiosity from the excitement and concern for social welfare are an influencing factor to establish emotional trust. The establishment of emotional trust leads to a positive impact on purchase intention. Hence, the hypothesis for emotional trust is: Emotional trust achieved through a celebrity endorsement positively impacts purchase intention.

#### 2.1.6 ADMIRATION EMOTION

Positive psychology includes the aspect of admiration. It refers to the elevated level of respect for formidable others or role models (Becker and Luthar, 2007) and a positive emotional fondness that individuals experience when they come in contact with exceptional abilities or respectful behaviour. (Immordino-Yang et al., 2009). Previous literature on celebrity and leadership admiration portrays that admiration is an essential factor in alluring loyal fans and followers. According to Wohlfeil and Whelan (2012), admiration for celebrities leads the admirers to purchase the products or services endorsed by the celebrities, which in turn increases fans' fanaticism and obsession with celebrities. (Peng et al., 2020)

Admiration for brands results in an increase in purchase, consumer attitudes and behavioural intentions and larger engagement. (You and Robert, 2018) This study believes a positive attitude towards role models, leadership and respectful behaviour portrayed by them and their presence in an endorsement as a celebrity endorser increases the probability of purchase. Thus the hypothesis for admiration emotion is: Admiration towards a celebrity role model positively impacts purchase intention.

## 2.2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### 2.2.1 THE IMPACT OF POWER, DISTANCE AND BELIEF ON CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS

Usually, research revolving around endorsements refers to the United States (Derdenger, Li and Srinivasan, 2018) but there is an increasing interest towards other countries as well. (Aggrawal-Gupta and Dang, 2009; Choi, Lee and Kim, 2005; Mishra and Mishra, 2014) This divulges the cultural differences in the celebrity endorsements. Paek (2005) content analysed newspaper advertisements and the product's image as congruent and the attitudes toward the advertisement and brand were

positive. Thus, this demonstrates that a realistic relationship between the unfamiliar celebrity endorser and the brand can lead to a practical celebrity endorsement; in turn that advertisement is viewed as more believable in the eyes of millennial consumers.

Contrastingly, the "match-up" hypothesis promoted the development of favourable opinions of the commercial and brand. In particular, it was depicted that millennial consumers' perceptions of the commercial and brand were positive when they saw the image of the unknown celebrity and the image of the product as being consistent. This shows that a genuine connection between a brand and a celebrity endorser can result in an effective celebrity endorsement, which in turn makes the marketing more credible in the eyes of millennial customers

Yet, this study also found that irrespective of their attitudes, millennials are less likely to be persuaded to buy the promoted goods when they do not perceive a proper fit between the new celebrity endorser and the product. While there are various reasons why someone might or might not buy anything, attitude towards the advertisement or brand will unavoidably have an impact on consumption. In theory, this study suggested that an unexpected celebrity endorser has the power to sway millennials because both instances of an unfamiliar celebrity and product had noteworthy results. It was interesting to see that using a well-known celebrity endorsement elicited a desire to buy the promoted goods but did not help consumers form a favourable opinion of the company or advertisement. Even while the millennial respondents were undoubtedly acquainted with Paris Hilton, they didn't seem to have a favourable opinion of the Guess company or the advertisement. Many of these responses might be biased or already have opinions about her or this specific brand. In the end, having a popular and well-known celebrity is just as crucial as loving or being familiar with the promoted product. It appears that familiarity with or liking the brand and the celebrity both influence the development of favourable attitudes and consumer behaviour. (McCormick, 2016)

### 2.2.2 THE INFLUENCE OF MATCH-UP HYPOTHESIS ON MILLENNIAL ATTITUDES AND PURCHASE INTENTION

McCormick's study (2016) found that the "match-up" hypothesis aided in the formation of positive attitudes toward the advertisement and brand.

Specifically, it determined that when the millennial consumer views the image of the unfamiliar celebrity contrast, women may consider traits like charisma, perceived intelligence, etc. in addition to physical appearance when choosing female endorsers. They may even feel resentment towards highly attractive women because they are aware of how strongly men react to them, whereas highly competent but middle attractive women must put forth more effort to be noticed. (Liu and Brock, 2011)

### 2.2.3 DIFFERENCE IN PURCHASE INTENTION BASED ON GENDER

Women may think more logically when exposed to female endorsers in advertising. Whether the match-up is favourable or unfavourable, the conclusion that highly attractive female endorsers are crucial in influencing purchasing choices in China, this was also in line with findings from earlier studies (e.g., Baker and Churchill, 1977; Caballero et al., 1989; Liu et al., 2007). Males are more visually focused than females, therefore it is not unforeseen that the way someone looks is what draws their interest, no matter the match-up (Boothroyd et al., 2008). In contagion that includes: pleasure emotion, arousal emotion, emotional trust and admiration, and understand the effect of these variables derived through celebrity endorsements on purchase intention. In order to narrow down research to a demographic as well, the study would focus on the Generation Z perceptive which is also an unexplored variable in regard to this topic.

### 2.2.4 IMPACT OF CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS ON PURCHASE INTENTIONS ON THE FOOD AND WINE INDUSTRY

For food and beverage products/brands, endorsement from celebrities has frequently been employed to elicit customer reactions and purchase intentions (Boyland et al., 2013; Zhou et al., 2019). Findings demonstrate how the endorsement of celebrities on social media affects consumers' intentions to buy and their willingness to spend more for wine and alcoholic beverages. In fact, their findings show that celebrity suggestions on social media increase consumers' propensity to buy and spend more for beer and wine, demonstrating the potency of this means of communication in influencing consumers' beverage spending habits. Contrastingly, the similarity that exists between the

celebrity and the beer is the more important factor in the development of credibility when it comes to the impact of endorsements from celebrities on beer purchase behaviour. One possible explanation is that beer drinkers believe that beer is an ordinary good that any celebrity might endorse as long as the celebrity is seen as consistent with the product. Interestingly, the celebrity's attractiveness appears to have a minimal impact on his or her trustworthiness while endorsing beer. However, our research indicates that the factor that has the greatest impact on a celebrity's reputation with customers is their wine knowledge. One rationale is that when customers consider buying wine, their perception of the endorser's expertise in the subject of wine makes them more likely to believe that they are reliable. (Calvo-Porrall et al., 2023) The underlying cause might be that wine is viewed as a high-risk purchase that involves social and functional concerns, and a professional's advice could help to mitigate such risks (Kamins, 1990; Erdogan, 1999). Similar to this, their results suggested that people view beer as a relatively safe buy due to the perceived absence of competence in the product category among celebrities. Additionally, according to research, customers do not base their wine purchases on how handsome wine promoters are. In fact, our research shows that celebrity appearance has little effect on the legitimacy of beer endorsements, but it has no effect on wine-buying behaviour. This finding is consistent with the match-up theory (Koernig and Boyd, 2009), which contends that endorsers who are physically appealing have a beneficial impact on consumer behaviour for goods and beverages that do not fit under this product category. (Calvo-Porrall et al., 2023)

### 2.2.5 IMPACT OF CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ADVERTISEMENTS

According to a research by MacInnis et al. (2002) product, sales increases with increase in advertising and these advertisements of an employee celebrities as spokespersons used to increase sales and better the reputation making it a popular strategy of marketing. Celebrities are able to attract the attention and interest of consumers in products and services. The reputation held by celebrities provides credibility to the endorsed products that are improving the brand recognition as well. The appeal of the celebrity allows the advertisement to be memorable and is able to positively influence

consumers specifically if the celebrity and the product attributes are able to align. The celebrities, popularity and experience with a product shapes the image of the product. Advertisements are able to transfer the messages about the attributes of the product to consumers and analyse if the celebrities' appeal changes the attitudes and behaviour of consumers towards the product. The style of filming also influences the appeal and attention which changes consumer behaviour. The study found that celebrity appeal, endorsement and effectiveness of the advertisement positively impacted purchase intention. Positive feelings about a celebrity increase the probability of purchase intention.

Previous studies related to celebrity endorsements utilise the source credibility model, source attractiveness model, match-up hypothesis and meaning transfer model to analyse the impact of celebrity endorsements on purchase intention. The source models indicate that the perception of expertise and trustworthiness instilled by and also impacts the effectiveness of the endorsement, while attractiveness influences the relationships by inclining people to the position that tendencies to words are attractive sources. The meaning transfer model suggests that the characteristics of a celebrity's personality and their lifestyle's image is transferred through an endorsement that saturates brands with aspirational values and symbolism. (McCracken, 1998) Lastly, the match up hypothesis suggests that the celebrity image should fit with the brand associations. (Thwaites et. al., 2012)

Literature also focuses on geographic specificities of celebrity endorsements on purchase intention, the food and beverage industry, gender-based athletes, advertisements and attitudes.

The previous studies lack the perception of consumer emotions influenced by celebrity endorsements and their effect on consumer purchase intention. Hence this study aims to use the theory of emotional purchase intention among Gen Z consumers.

### 3: METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007), research design refers to the 'procedures for collecting, analysing, interpreting and reporting data in research studies.' (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007)

This study used a qualitative methodology to collect and analyse data in order bridge the research gap and answer the research questions. The qualitative approach intends to learn the perspectives and opinions of individuals and groups using language and a prime method to do so is an in-depth interview. (Easterby-Smith et al., 2009) Qualitative data relies on subjective information that is imparted verbally and considers understanding behaviour from an individual's experience. (Robson, 1993)

The study also employs a deductive approach to test the hypotheses and draw a conclusion on the basis of the personal experiences described by the participants or consumers.

The application of a deductive approach would allow this study to gain specific insight into the influence of pleasure emotion, admiration emotion, arousal emotion and emotional trust instigated by celebrity endorsements on purchase intention. Since the study aims to delve into the aspect of emotions that would influence the perception of a celebrity resulting in an impact on purchase intention, qualitative research would allow in-depth context, diverse viewpoints, participant perspectives into the factors for liking and disliking a celebrity and their endorsements, participants purchase behaviour and more.

#### 3.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions were derived in a manner that would provide an insight into the objective of the research which is to determine relationship between Celebrity Endorsements and Purchase Intention but based on the variables presented in the Theory of Emotional Contagion.

1. To understand if pleasure emotion derived from celebrity endorsements has an impact on purchase intention among Gen Z consumers.
2. To understand if arousal emotion derived from celebrity endorsements has an impact on purchase intention among Gen Z consumers.
3. To interpret the impact of emotional trust derived from celebrity endorsements on and further broad themes. Irrelevant codes were omitted from the tabular representation of the codes, sub-themes and themes. (Appendix 5)
4. To discern the impact of admiration stemmed from celebrity endorsements on purchase intention among Gen Z consumers.

#### 3.6 Ethical Considerations

In regard to ethical considerations, an ethical form was completed before data collection that highlighted the topic, methodology and data privacy. Further, all participants were made aware that the study was voluntary and they were at liberty to omit questions, refuse to answer questions and refuse consent. They were also informed that the responses and demographics would be stored confidentially. The participants also completed and signed a consent form stating their consent to participate in the interview. (Appendix 4)

#### 4: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Applying thematic analysis to analyse the interviews, the prevailing themes were established. These themes were titled: authenticity, transparency and public image; endorser-product match; credence; communication and product association.

##### 4.1 AUTHENTICITY, TRANSPARENCY AND PUBLIC IMAGE

The prevailing and common theme that emerged was authenticity, transparency and public image. Most participants preferred celebrities to be genuine, authentic, active towards social causes. The prominent factors that influenced authenticity, transparency and public image were the ability to trigger curiosity, experiencing pleasure or enjoyment, experiencing excitement, stimulation or alertness while watching an endorsement and the impact of negative image, trust, genuineness, respect and admiration purchase intention.

The ability to trigger curiosity not only impacted purchase intention but also increased attraction.

“Okay, so, oh, I think they themselves using those products would make me purchase it.” (Participant 4)

“Sometimes it is also about the campaign that a celebrity or you know, an actor or actress or a sports person is you know, supporting and when these come out to be like in full support, wherein the celebrities actually support these campaigns for a good cause, I think it makes a huge impact on the people there try to lend up more support towards these things.” (Participant 1)

“I think that seeing you know, Shah Rukh Khan, Amitabh Bachchan, Tom Cruise in advertisement will attract me to that advertisement or product way more than no some other commoner who would be you know, in that ad, I think celebrities would most

probably catch my attention and, you know, make sure that I was the entire ad.” (Participant 10)

The participants believed that they would be responsive towards an endorsement if it catered towards a meaningful social cause and is endorsed by

“It is more likely that the advertisement might come to my mind, or the celebrity might come to my mind and I would be like, while choosing a product between two or three products, I will be like okay, this is endorsed by my favourite celebrity, maybe I would be more inclined towards that.” (Participant 3)

Since the emotions of enjoyment, likeability and pleasure are dominant and directly impact purchase intention and preference over the competition, the hypothesis stating that pleasure emotion positively affects purchase intention is valid.

In respect to transparency, the belief stands that negative comments, information and rumours would damage the celebrity’s reputation, reduce trust and negatively impact purchase intention.

“Absolutely, because then you understand the basis of what they’re trying to sell or what they’re trying to do. If that itself is not, you know, 100% genuine or true or is negative, then you would definitely not want to buy the product?” (Participant 5)

“It does sometimes. I mean, if because, again, they’re all public figures. People look up to them. And if they some say they’re supposed to, somehow like people do expect them to do things right and in a certain way, and if they don’t do that, or this, say something which is not politically correct or it’s not going in the right way, then of course, people tend to have, like, you know, lose confidence in them, then that not only affects the public, I mean, celebrities’ credibility, but also the product like they are endorsing them.” (Participant 6)

On the contrary, it is also believed that if the endorsement is genuine, transparent and consistent an establishment of trust is generated, which also has a probability of impacting purchase decision.

“Um, so I feel like I could see a genuine connect with me in them, I felt like we shared interest, so it was a love for sports. Besides that, they as couple, there have been a couple on and off screen. So that genuineness could be really seen, it didn’t feel like you know, they were forced, or it was an endorsement. It felt like it was extremely natural and that was fun to watch.” (Participant 5)

“So I really liked this actor from in from Bollywood. His name is Shahid Kapoor. So he and his wife, I

mean, recently, they have started coming in a lot of advertisement together. And just because how their characters are and like how they present themselves in real life, or on Instagram or social media, I currently like I've started liking them a lot. And I feel like half the country, half the nation, they really enjoy how they present themselves in real life as well. So I think every advertisement that they are taking up or any product that they invest in, people really enjoy it, and they believe that it's worth it. And they showed like they really trust their words, basically.” (Participant 6)

for a girl yes, it would definitely you know, make an impact on you know him.” (Participant 1)

“So basically, in the middle, Parineeti Chopra was endorsing Kurkure, and she's known to have the strictest diet. So, you know, I felt like there was a disconnect of what she was like she was promoting a very fast-food item and I felt like there was a disconnect from what she actually eats versus what she was trying to.” (Participant 5)

Participants believe that if there is no resonance among the celebrities' brand image, their values, and product message or the product being endorsed, then the endorsement would have a negative impact on trust and genuineness which would negatively impact the purchase intention and the perception and brand image the celebrity has created.

On the contrary, responses also indicate that the admiration emotion towards a role model and the endorsement in the same field as their role model's profession has a positive impact on purchase intention. An establishment of trust, truth and genuineness is portrayed and felt which shapes the celebrity and the brand image.

“So, there is this new FinTech app called cred in India and it is endorsed by this amazing cricketer, Rahul Dravid himself was the captain of the Indian team and he you know, he is known for his, like, just being genuine, being truth, being honest and like, you know, he had never, you know, I don't know any products or services he endorsed and to you know, see him on screen after 14-15 years and like, I know a background of him that he's a genuine guy.” (Participant 3)

“This one instance when I saw Cristiano Ronaldo promoting his own brand CR7. So personally, I like his dedication has both ethic and his constant drive to improve himself. So when he introduced his own brand, it was something new like, like, like a celebrity that I admire, so, like, I trust his product, to

be honest. So I bought one of the things that he was advertising.” (Participant 9)

The participants believe that these celebrities are competent and influential in their field and hence they would endorse a genuine product that is actively being utilised in their profession.

In conclusion, the evidence indicates that an ideal fit between the endorser and the product positively impacts purchase intention and demonstrates trust, genuineness and credibility for a brand and a celebrity.

#### 4.3 CREDENCE

Credence in this context refers to truthfulness and genuineness portrayed by the celebrity in an endorsement.

The first established aspect is when consumers have instilled trust in the celebrity. They believe that the celebrity is truthful and genuine and hence have an A subtle and important thing discovered during thematic analysis was the importance of communication. Communication in this context refers to the content produced by the brands that contain celebrity endorsers to convince consumers to purchase the product. The study also discovers the criteria of content consumers are looking for from endorsements. A dominant mode of communication that was discovered among respondents was the usage of video-based communication to present the endorsement.

“I think more of a visual I don't like to, I don't like to, you know, just hear or see something that's written I like to, you know, see the celebrity I want to see the product that they are endorsing, I want to, you know, have a proper visual aspect of what the product or the celebrity is saying. I like to you know, see things before I you know, I take them, I purchase them I like to see what's happening. I think a visual method of communication would be way better.” (Participant 10)

“So, like I mentioned, I would definitely like for the endorsement to be like in a video format, where the celebrity is probably showing us that he uses the product in his day to day life, where he is actually holding the product in his hand rather than the celebrity just talking about it and that being a picture of the product on the screen, I would actually like the celebrity to use the use what we are talking about over here or to a show how he uses it in his daily life, because I would I think it just gives the people a feeling of oneness with the celebrity.” (Participant 8)



“I feel like these days social media has a very good interaction with your with celebrities, like celebrities should definitely use social media as their way of interacting with their fans[A1] or whoever whatever they're endorsing. It is more accessible and it reaches more people that way.” (Participant 2)

The point of genuine and authentic content was also raised by the participants Indicating that desire to consume trustworthy content.

“I think genuine and authentic communication or content.” (Participant 4)

Observations from the responses suggest various different forms of content are desired by consumers based on their consumption pattern, resonances to products and clarity.

#### 4.6 PRODUCT ASSOCIATION

Product association in this context refers to the ability of the consumers to resonate or relate with the product being endorsed by the celebrity. It focuses on the need factor of a consumer.

“I think for me personally, if I'm able to relate with that product, or with that advertisement to be particular, so like, if a certain kind of a problem is shown under advertisement that I am also facing, product should be congruent for efficient advertising. The determining factor of the match between the brand and the celebrity depends upon the degree of the perceived feet between a brand and the celebrity's image. (Erdogan, 1999)

This study also observed that participants were more likely to consider a product for purchase or purchase a product if the celebrity endorsed a product that matched their image. For instance, Ronaldo or Messi endorsing a football product is a perfect endorser-product fit due to his profession.

Overall, the credibility and genuineness of the celebrity also affected purchase intention. Consumers desired authentic celebrities who would support socially beneficial causes. While arousal, emotion like excitement and joy from viewing the consumers, favourite celebrity positively influenced purchase intention, negative alerts from toxic products like tobacco and cigarettes, subdued the purchase intention.

The authenticity, transparency and the admirable public image possessed by the celebrity, had a meaningful effect on the outcome of the endorsement. While enjoyment received from watching favoured brands and celebrities increase the probability of purchase intention individually and when compared to competitors, negative

information or negative publicity diminished the celebrities reputation and transparency, thus, reducing the trust consumers had in the celebrity. The effectiveness of matching the endorser with the product was another key team highlighted. In this research, a discrepancy between the end a source, public image and the products, goal and value reduced the probability of purchase intention. On the other hand respected and admired celebrities instilled the emotions of truthfulness and trust, which acted as a positive aspect to the celebrity's credibility and the purchase intention.

The consumers who perceive celebrities, genuine and trustworthy or more engaged with the endorsements from their favourite celebrity, that's rating, the celebrity ass, credible and distinguished. Lastly, consumers also perceived products from the viewpoint of their needs and how efficient the product endorsed was to satisfy their needs.

#### 5.2 MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

In accordance with the findings of this research, managers could prioritise the celebrities who have an authentic and genuine public image and have values that align with the brand. Managers could avoid choosing celebrities who have been involved in negative publicity in order for the endorsement to be widely accepted and efficient. Celebrity endorses who are admired as role models can be recruited as a spokesperson for the brand. This would positively impact, purchase intention and increase engagement. The decision makers should also ensure that the celebrities public image and the product being endorsed fits their reputation. Due to discovery of the transfer the celebrity's positive attitude onto the brand. On numerous occasions, celebrities are selected because they are regarded to have a strong association with the consumers. (Carlson and Donovan, 2013)

According to Miciak and Shanklin, when celebrities are more likeable, friendly and are easy to recognise, they are more effective. (Miciak and Shanklin, 1994)

Firms have a large influence over the constructed spokesperson due to them developing the characters. They are able to design characters that are synonymous to their brands and the target audience and ensure that the characters endorse one product. (Tom et al., 1992)

Constratingly, firms possess limited control over celebrity endorsers due to the pre-established public

image. Tom et al.'s study confirmed that celebrity endorsers were more effective than the constructed spokesperson. (Tom et al., 1992)

Increasing competitiveness for consumer awareness and new product generation has motivated marketers to utilise popular celebrities to aid product marketing. (Croft, Dean and Kitchen, 1996)

Consumers are turning to be educated, sophisticated, intelligent, and selective and hence convincing consumers is the final aim of advertising strategy. Due to the competition, advertisers face the difficulty of differentiating their advertisements from other firms.

Since consumers do not pay much heed to advertisements, advertisers believe that one component of the advertisement should stand prominent, it being a celebrity in the form of a celebrity endorsement. (Ahmed et al., 2014)

Marketers are making use of digital media platforms and influencers to increase product awareness and branding due to technological breakthroughs. (Zhou et al., 2021) Marketers perceive digital influencers as leaders who have the power to voice their opinion on digital platforms and can create excitement among the consumers. (Uzunoglu and Kip, 2014)

Celebrities are a more powerful source of media than anonymous actors and models. They can deliver meanings and messages in a more powerful, vivid, and effective manner when compared to other mediums of advertising and marketing. Celebrities can "own" their meaning because of the reputation and image they have created for themselves repeatedly on a public platform. (McCracken, 1989)

### 3.3 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The study used non-probability judgemental sampling to identify the consumers and collect data. Non-probability sampling technique prohibits some the chance of selection to some units of the population.

Judgemental sampling also known as purposive sampling entails the selection of the population by the investigator which is in accordance with the desired representation of the population. (Yadav, Singh, Gupta, 2019)

The study included ten participants all of which were Indian by ethnicity and aged between eighteen to twenty-four years. The participants were equally divided in the category of sex: five being males and five being females.

While an ethnically diverse sample would have been preferable, due to time constraints and accessibility, these ten participants were deemed justifiable since the focus of the research was to collect data from the Generation Z.

A non-probability judgemental sampling allowed the researcher to consider and approach the Generation Z sample size engaged for this study. Thus the participants ranged from the age eighteen to twenty-four.

### 3.4 DATA COLLECTION

This study adopted a semi-structured in-depth interview format for the process of data collection. This data collection was conducted in the city of Newcastle upon Tyne and through Zoom.

In-depth interview is a qualitative research method that requires administering intensive interviews with a small number of respondents to understand perceptions on a specific program, idea or situation. In-depth interviews are beneficial when comprehensive information regarding an individual's behaviour and thought processes are desired. Interviews also provide additional factors or situations to the outcome data that's offering a broader perspective. (Boyce and Neale, 2006)

Individual interviews were administered for the ten participants in order to provide a safe and non-judgemental space for the participants to present their ideas and perspectives.

### 3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Since a qualitative methodology was used to collect data, thematic analysis was used to translate the individual perspectives into codes and further into dominant themes. The codes were highlighted from each interview and were grouped into sub-themes a famous celebrity. The portrayal of a celebrity being genuine towards a brand by using the products or towards a social cause by enthusiastically contributing towards the cause also instilled a perception of the celebrity being genuine in the participants. Curiosity being a determining factor of arousal emotion influencing purchase decision, participant responses suggest that not only does arousal emotion positively impact purchase intention but also leads to attractiveness towards the advertisement and celebrities. This backs the Arousal Dimension by Russell that the extent to which individuals feel alert, stimulated, excited, awakened and positive in particular situations is known as the Arousal Dimension. (Russell, 1980)

While these factors positively impact the purchase intention there were some endorsements that generated feelings of alertness, excitement and stimulation, but did not impact purchase intention in a positive manner. Advertisements that promote tobacco products are viewed as an endorsement that raised alertness and excitement due to the presence of famous and reputed Indian film celebrities, but due to the nature of the product, it inhibited purchase intention.

“So basically, the product was a tobacco product that was being advertised in India, on TV and, like bollywood, and that the three main actors of bollywood, they are all together. So they are the biggest three actors or no advertisement or movie ever as that. So it was really exciting for me to see all the three main actors on screen and I found it to be quite exciting. But yeah, I just loved doesn't mean that I like the product or anything.” (Participant 3)

“And I feel like there are big names who are involved in it like Shah Rukh Khan, Akshay Kumar, Ajay Devgan, and all of those people who have involved themselves with Vimal pan masala and I don't think like it's benefiting anyone.” (Participant 6)

This does indicate that the product endorsed should be appealing to the consumers and should align with their values in order to influence purchase intention. Experiencing pleasure and enjoyment from celebrity endorsements increases the probability of purchase intention. Not only do celebrity endorsements with famous and reputed celebrities increase excitement and enjoyment and allow resonance towards the product but also impact purchase intention in a positive manner and have an advantage over competitors.

“It solely depends on how much I liked the brand and how much I liked the celebrity like how Bvlgari is been endorsed by Anne Hathaway and Zendaya they are right now and both of them are one of my favourites and that definitely makes me want to own something from Bvlgari.” (Participant 2)

The factor of emotional trust is brought to light through this genuine and transparent celebrities and their endorsements. While it is unclear, if it would impact purchased intention, it is evident that consumers seem to have emotional trust with a celebrity who is genuine, real, natural and fun.

The variable of admiration depends upon the public image portrayed by the celebrity in real life, their endorsements variable of admiration depends upon

the image portrayed by the celebrity in real life and their endorsements and background.

According to a participant, her role model was an Indian actress named Priyanka Chopra and the admiration and respect possessed by the participant increased the probability of purchase intention.

“She's very authentic, and from the background that she has come from and where she is today and it's all her hard work and it just feels very good to see someone you can relate to a lot like, in terms of ethnicity and where she comes from and what kind of background, she's from. It's very easy to relate to someone like her.” (Participant 2)

When asked if any item from her endorsements were purchased: “Definitely, I think I've already purchased stuff and yeah.” (Participant 2)

Another participant mentioned Cristiano Ronaldo being their role model and on the question of a potential purchase they responded saying: “Oh, I have a few times. I have purchased some of his merchandise from his online store, CR7.” (Participant 9)

According to the theory, positive psychology includes the aspect of admiration. It refers to the elevated level of respect for formidable others or role models (Becker and Luthar, 2007) and a positive emotional fondness that individuals experience when they come in contact with exceptional abilities or respectful behaviour. (Immordino-Yang et al., 2009)

This can be observed from the responses presented by the participants. Based on the public image and admiration for the role models it can be concluded that admiration towards celebrity role models has a positive impact on purchase intention. Thus proving the hypothesis valid.

#### 4.2 ENDORSER-PRODUCT MATCH

Endorser-product match believes that the amalgamation of celebrity in a source in respect to the products endorsed not only has an impact on purchase intention but also has an impact on trust, credibility and genuineness.

“I think it would also depend upon if the product is useful to me or not. If like for example, if a guy is being shown like his favourite actress, you know, selling doing an endorsement for a female product like tampons and pads, it will not make any difference to him or her, him probably but if it is like affection towards them which instils feelings of arousal.

“Okay, so when Ariana Grande launched her her beauty line, I was excited, I felt very good, because she's my favourite celebrity, my favourite singer.” (Participant 4)

“For me personally, I am a football player who have seen Messi endorse, like a football shoe. So it made me feel if it's good enough for him, it's good enough for me as well. And that said while like enjoyment does increase like likelihood of considering a product. It doesn't guarantee of purchase, but to be honest, if sports celebrity promotes like a campaign aligned with my belief, I would certainly engage or share it.” (Participant 9)

“So one, like I said, the example of my favourite basketball player, talking and starring in that particular video game advertisement actually made me want to play that video game even more, so to speak, and I definitely bought the future versions of that video game as well because I was just so happy to see somebody like, like Kobe Bryant star in a video game advertisement.” (Participant 8)

This provides an understanding that pre-installed trust in the celebrity, their brand image and profession makes the endorsement more effective and generates pleasure and arousal emotion in the consumers thus, increasing purchase intention and engagement.

While there is evidence that credence positively affects purchase intention, respondents also convey that false promotions of the product and the brand would reduce faith in the celebrity and the probability of future purchases. The belief is that the lack of effect or negative effects after usage of the product leads to questioning the genuineness and credibility of the celebrity and their future endorsements.

“Of course, like, if someone I really like has endorsed something, and I use it, and that has a negative effect on me, then definitely, I'll be like, I will lose faith in both the celebrity and brand, because the celebrity is endorsing that brand in full faith thinking like, it is the responsibility of the celebrity while they're endorsing something so important, like something that a person would purchase.” (Participant 2)

“Yes, I think it was one of the hair products. I don't remember the brand yet. But it was, I think I was in India and was by Katrina Kaif for someone. And I used that shampoo, and it did my hair so bad and after we heard a lot of reviews that the shampoo was not good and so yeah, definitely after that, I don't

think I've ever purchased anything endorsed by.” (Participant 2)

#### 4.4 COMMUNICATION

okay, then I think that would be more relatable for me and you know, then I can be on the same margin and then judge whether I need this product or service.” (Participant 3)

“I would say I would judge the product on the basis of its criteria and connection to the celebrity. Yes, if I am able to give, you know, if it's like often used to me, then yes, I would, and also about how much genuine it is like if you know this connection that I was talking with? If it is there, yes, I would definitely, you know, try it out at least once and then, you know, decide that, oh, this is good for me not good for me.” (Participant 1)

In the context of this study, it is observed that the participants evaluate the product on the basis of their resonance with the product and their need for the product. The purchase of the endorsed product depends upon their need for the product or service and if it intrigues them.

### 5: CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

#### 5.1 KEY FINDINGS

This research found aspects that proved the hypothesis to be valid. The research discovered that pleasure, emotion, arousal, emotion and admiration can positively impact purchase intention while emotional trust is dependent on consumers preference for specific celebrities and is unclear whether an establishment of emotional trust would positively impact purchase intention. Through the study, the following observations and conclusions can be made: the study believes that emotional trust is dependent on consumers' specific liking towards a specific celebrity which defines genuine and truthfulness which differs from person to person.

The theory of pleasure emotion is consistent with the findings that consumers experience pleasure, happiness, excitement and content while or after watching celebrity endorsements. This also positively affects the purchase intention. Thus, proving the hypothesis sound. More specifically, the pleasure emotion's impact is more efficient when consumers have an affinity towards the celebrity.

The findings of arousal emotion align with the theory that the emotions of happiness, joy, satisfaction, excitement, alert, and stimulation have

an effect on purchasing intention provided the celebrities or famous or a reputed or make a constant effort to show the genuineness of the product.

Lastly, admiration is based on the level of respect for the celebrity or the role model, which acts as an attracting factor for loyal fans. According to the study, admiration has a positive impact on purchase, intention, provided consumers are able to view a genuine connection with a celebrity and the goal of the endorsement.

The endorser product match correlates with the match of hypothesis that states that information conveyed by a celebrity endorser and a message of a affinity for video endorsements in this study, managers could utilise video endorsements in order to engage the audience with the product. The decision makers should also recruit credible spokespersons for the brand who also have an expertise in the field. For instance, few participants in the study mention the affinity to purchase sports gear endorsed by sportspersons. Lastly, managers should also focus on market research in order to understand the consumers' needs and usage in order to increase the resonance with the endorsed product.

### 5.3 STUDY LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The research was unable to focus on the impact of fear, caution and sadness and its impact on purchase intention from a celebrity endorsement viewpoint.

Since all the consumers were of an Indian ethnicity, future studies could adopt diverse ethnicities or a different ethnicity to understand the geographic difference in the impact of celebrity endorsements on purchase intention and the role of emotional contagion. The study also focuses on the viewpoint of the Generation Z and hence future research could focus on the Millennials or the Generation Alpha.

Since thematic analysis was used to code and analyse the data, a difference in perception could occur among numerous other individuals.

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