



The Use Of Celebrity Endorsement In Product Promotions: A Qualitative Appraisal

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ABSTRACT

Extant literature on the use of celebrity endorsement as an advertising technique is replete with arguments in favour and against. This qualitative study was therefore carried out to explore the opinions of experts on the practice with a view to arriving at a position that advertisers can rely upon in their decision making on the subject matter. After the extensive review of available literature on the practice, this study takes the position that celebrity advertising has the potential to help sellers actualize their product promotional goals with more ease and may actually result to enhanced product acceptance especially at the introductory stage of the life cycle of a product. The study also arrived at the conclusion that celebrity endorsement is not an alternative to excellent product quality, features and benefits. And that where an organization settles for celebrity endorsement as an advertising technique, it must ensure that there is: i) celebrity/product match ii) celebrity/audience match ii) celebrity credibility, attractiveness and expertise and iv) the celebrity of choice is not involved in multiple endorsements.

Keywords: Celebrity, Endorsement, Celebrity Endorsement

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Generally speaking, organizations embark on product promotions to create awareness for their product offerings, instigate trial purchase, possible brand adoption and retention. To achieve these promotional objectives, many organizations are observed to be into the use of celebrity endorsers or the practice of celebrity endorsement- an advertising technique which Kerin, Hartley and Rudelius (2009) posits, companies are adopting in the belief that it positively affects sales (Ding, Molchanov and Stork (2011) as cited in Advertising Age International (1997) where Pepsi Co. International was quoted to have attributed the 2% increase in the global market share of Pepsi as at then to using Spice Girls as brand endorsers also support the position of Kerin et.al on the subject matter). Tigershark Studios (2018) is however observed to consider Pepsi Co,s performance by using the advertising technique far below average as in his opinion celebrity endorsement possesses the potential to increase sales by between 20-40%, that is, in the US. On the issue of how impactful the advertising technique can be on sales, the Social Media Week (2015) as cited in Marketwatch seem to share the opinion of Pepsi Co as it put its transformational power over sales volume at 4%, implying that a benchmark figure of 3% is justifiable (Hashaw, 2019). With regards to the advertising technique, one notion that it is a recent phenomenon is arguable. This is because Wikipedia asserted that the technique has been in use in England as far back 1760 when Josiah Wedgewood & Sons used it to promote their pottery products through the use of Royal endorsements. Between then and now, that the adoption of the advertising technique in product promotions is gaining wider popularity is not in doubt as Elberse and Verleun (2012), Stephens and Rice (1998), Pringle and Billet (2005) and Crutch (2010) as cited in Knoll and Mathes (2016) stated that as many as 20-25% of all adverts currently incorporate the use of celebrity endorsers but with the rate of incorporation varying across nations as follows: USA (19-25%), UK (21%), India (24%) and Japan and Taiwan; 10% and 45% respectively.

From the forgoing, it is quite evident that opinions amongst scholars differ as to the level of change which the use of celebrity advertising can instigate in product patronage. For example while Knoll and Mathes (2016) agree that although as many as every fourth- fifth ad incorporate celebrity endorsement and that although celebrity endorsement affects consumer attitude towards an endorsed brand than a non-endorsed one, studies carried out in emerging markets like Nigeria and Ghana on the subject matter indicate that consumers would more likely interrogate price, utility, and value in place of celebrity endorsement in their purchase decisions (Ahmed, 2017). Additionally, BCG (2013) as cited in the same Ahmed credits the reputable research company with arriving at a finding involving 10,000 respondents that WOM and viral marketing are more effective in product promotions and that on the average only about 15% of the respondents spread across the US, China, Germany and Brazil trust the advertising technique.

These differences in opinions as to the capacity of celebrity advertising to positively influence the attitude of consumers towards celebrity endorsed products informed this qualitative study. The study reviewed the concept of celebrity advertising, its pros and cons resulting in worthwhile recommendations on how best it could be used by companies to achieve their intended product promotional goals.

2.0 THE CONCEPT OF CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT/ ADVERTISING

A celebrity is defined as an individual who possesses public recognition and uses the recognition for the promotion of products (Jain and Roy, 2016 as cited in Kheder, 2018). Erdogan (1999), Wei and Lou (2013) as cited in Frimpong and Frimpong (2019) defined them as individuals who enjoy public recognition for their outstanding attributes such as unique skills and lifestyle and which separates them from the rest of the public....they are persons who have excelled in their fields of endeavour and may be sports persons, movie stars, academics, musicians and or comedians who are known to the public for their achievements in areas other than the products or services that they endorsed or are promoting.

On the other hand, to “endorse” implies that a well known person will transfer his own values to a product which implies that the product or brand will be linked to the celebrity (Kheder, 2018). In the opinion of the US Federal Trade Commission, the term means “any advertising (including verbal statements, demonstrations, or depictions of the name, signature, likeness or other identifying personal characteristics of an individual or the name or seal of an organization) which message consumers are likely to believe reflects the opinions, beliefs, findings or expertise of a party other than the sponsoring advertiser. The party whose opinions, beliefs, findings, or expertise the message appears to reflect will be called the endorser and may be an individual, group or institution” (UK Essays).

Celebrity endorsement is therefore an advertising tool which seeks to leverage on the fame quotient, acceptability, reliability, and audience base (influence pool) of a celebrity to positively influence brand perception, boost interest and drive sales (Adebayo, 2020). In the opinion of Business Dictionary, celebrity endorsement/advertising is a form of brand or advertising campaign that involves a well known person using their fame to help promote a product or service. Additionally, MarketBliss (2015) defined the term as “a form of advertising where celebrities use their fame to promote certain products”; while Hashaw, (2019), Francis & Yazdanifard, (2013), Adam & Hussain, (2017) credits it with being the favourite advertising technique of large corporations especially those into sensory products like cosmetics and fashion.

2.1 TYPES OF CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT

Celebrity endorsement takes different forms. Adam and Hussain for example identified the following types:

- Explicit (I endorse this product)
- Implicit (I use this product)
- Imperative (You should use this product)
- Co-presentational mode (only appearing with the product)

Knoll and Mathes are of the opinion that implicit endorsements have more positive impact on product sales than explicit endorsement.

On the type of celebrities to use, Hashaw distinguished between (1) Traditional celebrities and (2) Digital influencers. *Traditional celebrities* include actors and professional athletes. They are more expensive to use but often are most apt for established brands. *Digital influencers* are social media personalities such as established bloggers or vloggers (Hashaw was also of the opinion that though digital influencers may not have the name recognition of traditional stars, they may however be more influential amongst target demographic groups and are often most appropriate for new brands). The stage of a product in its life cycle should therefore be a basic consideration in choosing between traditional celebrities and digital influencers with the media habits of the target audience also playing a significant role in making a choice.

2.2 MYTHS ABOUT CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT

Research findings has it that in the history of advertising, celebrity endorsement has the potential of making the difference between brand recognition and anonymity as well as boosting the bottom line of companies by between 20-40% (UK Essays). In like manner research findings indicate that up to 25% of all TV commercials and 10% of all advertising commercial budgets go into celebrity advertising (Erdogan et al, 2001, Agrawal and Kamakura, 1995 as cited in Ding et al, 2011). Actually, if there are two similar or identical products, it is almost guaranteed that the brand with the more established or well known celebrity will be more successful with regards to both interest and sales performance (Ambrose et al, 2014 as cited in Wikipedia). These views represent in a nutshell the opinions of scholars about celebrity advertising – a position supported by various studies on the subject matter. Ngwu (2019) for example credits celebrity endorsement as being an advertising technique that brands promotions strategists consider essential in promotion mix decisions as the advertising tool has the potential to build brand trust, equity, loyalty and patronage. In like manner, Kaikati (1987) as cited in Adam and Hussain, were of the opinion that organizations that use celebrity advertising are likely to achieve with more ease the following product promotional objectives:

- The facilitation of brand identification
- Alteration of negative perception about a brand
- Repositioning an existing brand
- Positioning a new brand
- Positively impact consumers buying behaviour

Adebayo (2020) virtually agrees with the opinion expressed by Kaikati above when he credited the advertising technique with the capacity to:

- Drive sales and position brands
- Establish credibility for brands especially those that are in the introductory stages of their life cycle
- Earn the trust of consumers by connecting with the market through the influence, personality and popularity of the celebrity endorser

In the opinion of Frimpong and Frimpong, celebrity endorsement increases the likelihood of drawing audiences' attention as well as influencing consumer attitudes, purchase intentions and advert recall. Victor (2018) is also observed to support these myths about celebrity endorsement when he asserted that the advertising technique can be quite helpful in implanting an advert and product in the memory of individuals and that people are more likely to patronize a product when they see a familiar face on the ads of such products. Supporting these myths about celebrity endorsement, Chijioke (2019) posits that with the attention celebrities command, their use in product promotions can result to increase in brand visibility and credibility as well as market access thus helping a seller to keep ahead of competition. Ultimately, celebrity endorsement is not just aimed at boosting the image of a brand but at driving sales-

celebrity endorsement can be effective because consumers believe in celebrity figures and consequently support the brands they promote. Equally, an evaluation of celebrity branding also suggest that credible advertising messages coupled with the right endorser can build consumer loyalty for a brand (the Journal of Marketing Management (n.d) as cited in Wikipedia). MarketBliss (2015) provided what could be termed a summary of the myths about celebrity endorsement in advertising and they include:

- People like to see familiar faces on products
- People like to be like celebrities
- They open up new demographics
- The belief of getting high quality products
- High level of recall i.e. people easily remember the ad after seeing or hearing it

2.3 CHOOSING THE RIGHT CELEBRITY ENDORSER- HELPFUL MODELS

To attain desired promotional objectives when using celebrity advertising, advertisers need to exhibit utmost care in choosing the celebrity to use as therein lay the difference between a successful campaign and a failed one. Models which could be helpful in arriving at the right choice exist. Scholars are however of the opinion that certain pertinent issues need to be addressed that may enhance the workability of a particular model. Addressing the issue, Wikipedia stated that the advertiser should ensure that the celebrity meets one or more of the following criteria which most sellers want their product to be associated with:

- Audience- the celebrity must have the potential to connect with and reach the audience the brand is most compatible with
- Characteristics- the celebrity must fit the brand's characteristics so that they associate the right values with the brand
- Image- the advertiser must ascertain whether the image of the celebrity is one worthy of being associated with the brand
- Attractiveness- a positive attitude is associated with attractive people. The more attractive the celebrity is, the more likely the effectiveness of the campaign (this position negates the importance of *celebrity expertise especially for cerebral products*).
- Cost- most often, the price tag for getting a celebrity to endorse a product is quite high. The seller should be able to do a cost- benefit analysis before settling for one.
- Credibility- the credibility of the celebrity influences consumer perception of the endorsed product. Sellers must therefore use credible personalities to endorse their products.

With regards to the initial decision areas, Hashaw was of the opinion that the advertiser must provide answers to the following questions:

- Is associating with a celebrity the easiest way to building the brand?
- Should celebrity endorsement be the principal channel of brand communication?
- What are the merits and demerits of such endorsement?
- Is there a fit between the celebrity endorser and the product?
- Is the celebrity already endorsing other products?

In an earlier study on the subject matter, Roll (n.d) as cited in Amir, Hussain, Miciak and Shanklin (2016) and as cited in Kheder (2018), an advertiser need to ensure the following when choosing a celebrity endorser:

- There is celebrity/audience match
- There is celebrity/product match
- There is celebrity attractiveness/ expertise
- There is celebrity credibility

As decision support mechanisms to advertisers wishing to adopt the advertising technique after addressing these initial challenges, Kwanzu (n.d) and Adam and Hussain recommends a review of the following models:

The Source Credibility Model

The model posits that the effectiveness of a message is dependent on the trustworthiness and expertise of its source (Hovland, 1953 as cited in Kwanzu). The model assumes that since adverts are external stimuli intended to precipitate a behavioural change towards an advertised product, the source of the message must be credible, that is, the celebrity endorser must project an image of trustworthiness, persuasiveness, expertise and objectivity if the target audience must perceive the advertising message as truthful.

The Source Attractiveness Model

This model of celebrity effectiveness in product endorsement which was propounded in 1985 states that celebrities who are physically attractive (attractiveness here include how likeable and admirable the celebrity is?; his activities, interests, opinions etc) have more positive impact on the brand they endorse and vice versa- an exception however is a study that reported that an income tax commercial using an un-attractive looking person was more effective (Cooper, 1974 as cited in Kwanzu). Another exception is the study by Busher and Till (1998) as cited in Kwanzu which reported that the expertise of a celebrity is more impactful than physical attractiveness.

The Product Match-Up Hypothesis

This model posits that there has to be an almost ideal match between the celebrity characteristics and that of the personality and features of the brand he is to endorse (Erdogan, 1999 as cited in Adam and Hussain). The hypothesis therefore assumes that adverts become more effective once there is a match between a company, brand or product endorser (Misra, 1990 as cited in Kwanzu). Where this is not the case, there is the likelihood that consumers will remember the celebrity more than the product offer. Good examples of product match-up are 1) A sports personality endorsing a product meant for sporting activities 2) A music star endorsing musical instruments and 3) A nobel prize winner in medicine endorsing a drug.

The Meaning Transfer Model

Celebrities are often used as instruments in transferring meanings to a product. The meanings they convey and confer on a product most often is a function of their gender, reputation, life style, and age and opinions and views (Erdogan, 1999 as cited in Kwanzu). The model focuses on the effects of a celebrity's personality, life style, class and age, gender and other demographic characteristics on products they endorse. Adam and Hussain credits McCracken (1986) with developing a 3 stage process that explains the model. In the 1st stage, the audience associates a set of meanings with the famous personality. In the 2nd stage, the set of meanings move from the celebrity to the brand or product and in the 3rd and final stage, the meaning of the product is actually transferred to the customers on the purchase and use of the product. The implication of the model is that anytime consumers encounter any kind of celebrity-endorsed product, they immediately correlate some definite meanings with the endorser and ultimately transfer it to the product (Adam and Hussain). *The model is assumed to have taken care of some of the shortcomings of the source credibility and source attractiveness models whom McCracken said disregarded individuated meanings and focused attention on a celebrity endorser's 'likeability', 'credibility' and 'attractiveness' without establishing the type of credibility or attractiveness (Kwanzu).*

The Elaboration Likelihood Model

The elaboration likelihood model (ELM) was developed by Petty and Cacioppo in 1980. The study examined the "source effects" in advertising. The outcome was that "product adverts that used celebrities received favourable attention from the target audience regardless of the strengths of the features of the product that was advertised". The study supported the view that the effects of ads are not just limited to the information they contain but also a function of the different appeals used in the ads with the most supporting evidence the use of celebrities and non-celebrities as appeals. (Wikipedia)

2.4 ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT IN ADVERTISING.

Innumerable arguments have been put forward by scholars in favour of the use of the advertising technique of celebrity endorsement. Generally speaking, there is the popular belief that seeing a famous and popular person endorse a product evokes emotions and can help implant the advert and the product in the memory of those exposed to the advert. Additionally, there is also the belief that products endorsed by celebrities are likely to be of high quality as their reputation is at stake. With regards to specific opinions on the subject matter, TigerShark Studios (2018) confers celebrity endorsement with the following merits:

- It confers credibility on the brand by fostering a sense of trust on it (this is especially true for new products)
- It results to assured attention of the target audience by breaking the clutter of adverts they are exposed to as both the brand and message are noticeable. This characteristic of the advertising technique assumes greater significance as research has it that the attention span of people have fallen from 12 seconds in 2000 to 8 seconds in 2015 (Microsoft as cited in TigerShark Studios)
- There is high degree of recall as people tend to commensurate the personalities of celebrities with that of the endorsed brands thereby increasing the recall value of the product.
- A celebrity's preference for a brand gives out a persuasive message resulting to *associative benefit*. And because both the celebrity and consumer are benefitting from the endorsement, product sales and consumer attachment to the product increase.
- There is also a *psychographic connect*. Celebrities are loved and adored by their fans and advertisers capitalize on this bond to sway fans towards their brands

Wikipedia also contain information on the subject and credits the advertising practice with the following benefits:

- Instant brand awareness
- Personality transfer
- Definition of, and refreshment of brand image
- Attraction of new customers
- Influences consumer purchase decision
- Facilitates brand positioning
- Lasting publicity

The views of frogDog Magazine (2013) on the subject though virtually similar to that of TigerShark and Wikipedia are worth mentioning. The magazine credits the advertising technique with the following advantages:

- Effective in building brand equity
- Helps people remember adverts
- Helps the advert to stand out from the surrounding clutter
- Imbues on consumers the belief that they share the same taste with superstars

UK Essays (n.d) provided an apt summary of what advertisers stand to gain by using celebrities to endorse their brands. The benefits it enumerated include:

- It creates a distinct personality for the endorsed brand
- It influences consumers' purchase intention
- It enhances message recall
- Celebrities make advertisements believable
- It can guarantee competitive differential advantage
- It can enhance brand equity
- It positively affects the attitude of consumers towards the endorsed brand
- It can confer in a relatively short time credibility on a brand

- Advertisers believe that consumers will buy products associated with whom they admire and respect
- The communicative ability of adverts are enhanced when celebrities are used; resulting in better assimilation by audiences
- Cultural road blocks can be overcome if the concerned celebrity has world wide appeal and reputation
- It stimulates emulative behavior and actions

Invariably, the use of celebrity endorsers creates “celebrity effects”, that is, the capacity of famous people to influence others.... celebrities with their star power can add glamour and credibility to brands resulting to preference and patronage (Hashaw, 2019)?.

2.4 ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE USE OF CELEBRITIES IN PRODUCT ADVERTISING

Even though abounding supportive empirical evidence exist as to the ability of celebrity advertising to positively influence purchase behaviour, some studies also saw it as another drain pipe on corporate financial resources steeped in herd mentality (Abdurrahman, Owusu, Soladoye & Kallmuthu, 2018 and Ahmed, 2017). For example, in a study conducted by Contemporary Ideas and Research in Marketing (n.d) and as cited in Ahmed, celebrity advertising was only able to result to purchase in 15% of the respondents, while 85% of the respondents credited it with only increasing confidence and preference. And yet in another study by BCG (2013) involving 10,000 respondents and as cited in Ahmed, WOM and viral marketing were observed to have commanded more trust in consumers as external stimuli than celebrity endorsement -the ratio of respondents’ trust on celebrity advertising was also established by BCG to vary amongst nations as follows: China (21%), Brazil (17%), USA (15%) and Germany (6%). The scenarios playing out here, Ahmed observes are traceable to a lot of factors including the focus of the study as well as the location of the study. He however observes that one common denominator is “herd mentality”, that is, we should adopt the advertising technique as our competitors are into it; forgetting that various market segments require different marketing mix approaches. And in his words, “celebrity endorsement cannot obscure the importance of good quality products and other good advertising techniques”. Adding to the prevailing criticisms of the advertising technique, Victor (2018) observed that celebrity endorsers are human beings and therefore are prone to making mistakes or committing blunders that may affect their reputation and invariably that of the product they endorsed (the image issues had by the golf legend – Tiger Woods- readily comes to mind). Adding his opinion to the debate, Kraft (2018) credited celebrity advertising with not only being very expensive but may result to a *vampire effect- this is a situation where a celebrity has more star value than the product being endorsed and without both having similar prominence in the advert, the celebrity endorser may end up overshadowing the endorsed product. And such a development can cut out brand recognition in the minds of consumers.*

With regards to the subject matter, Hashaw enumerated other risks associated with celebrity endorsement to include:

- A product will be impacted on negatively where consumers are not convinced of the sincerity of the celebrity endorser
 - Where there is no good match or fit between the celebrity and the endorsed brand
- Similarly, Erdogan (1990), as cited in Francis and Yazdanifard (2013) adds that where a celebrity is involved in multiple endorsements, as it is often the case, consumers are won’t to interpret the scenario to mean that the celebrity is motivated more by personal/ monetary gains and not that he is passionate about the endorsed products. Other shortcomings of the advertising technique as mentioned by Francis and Yazdanifard include;
- Where the popularity of the celebrity is short lived, it may affect consumer perception of the endorsed brand
 - Where the celebrity endorser is observed not to be consuming or using the endorsed brand, it may also affect consumer perception of the brand

As with the merits of the technique, UK Essays citing numerous authors enumerated the challenges associated with the advertising technique to include:

- i. Consumer skepticism in the nature of consumers not actually believing that celebrity endorsers consume the products they endorse
- ii. Consumers attach less credibility to celebrities who endorse many products. Secondly, they might become confused by multiple product endorsements
- iii. Celebrities who get involved in acts that are damaging to their public image will have such transferred to the products they endorsed. Where a celebrity loses his/ her fame, it can affect consumers' perception about the product he/she endorsed.
- iv. When an endorsing celebrity is more popular than the endorsed product, "celebrity vamping" occurs resulting to the celebrity being the centre of attraction rather than the endorsed product
- v. A bad fit between the celebrity and the endorsed product may reduce the endorser's effectiveness in promoting a brand.

3.0 THEORITICAL FOUNDATION

The theoretical foundation for this study is the Social Influence Theory propounded by Kelmen in 1958. The central theme of the theory is that "an individual's attitudes, beliefs and subsequent actions and behaviours are influenced by referent others through the processes of compliance, identification and internalization" (Wikipedia). The theory posits that social influence brings about changes in attitudes and actions and that the changes may occur at different *levels* with the differences in *levels* a function of the differences through which individuals accept influence, that is, social influence. Social influence, the theory states, can for example result to *compliance*; which is a change in behavior but not necessarily attitude...this happens when an individual withholds or suppresses private thoughts due to social pressure and complies for the sake of a positive reward or avoidance of negative reward or aversion of punishment. Social influence can also result to *identification*; which is a process of change in attitude or behavior arising from the influence of someone who is admired or worthy of emulation, e.g. a celebrity...it is this aspect of social influence that marketers rely upon when using celebrities in advertising. *Internalization* occur when a set of norms established by people or groups that are influential in the eyes of an individual result to changes in behavior or attitude...the individual accepts the influence because the contents of the accepted influence is intrinsically rewarding.

4.0 EMPIRICAL REVIEW

The use of celebrity endorsement in product promotions is a subject matter that has attracted a lot of interest from scholars for reasons associated with its perceived effectiveness in instigating positive behavioural responses in consumption behaviour. The outcomes of the studies are also observed to be as varied as the study locations, approaches and themes.

Approaching the subject matter from the perspective of its economic value, a study in the US by Elberse as cited in TigerShark Studios arrived at the findings that 1) 20% of all adverts in the US feature a celebrity and 2) such endorsements across the board increase sales by between 20-40%. In a related study in India, Deshwal (2015) arrived at the following findings which are not as conclusive as that of Elberse and which are i) celebrity endorsements will likely be more effective when there is high level of congruence between the celebrity and the endorsed brand, ii) when a celebrity is not involved in multiple endorsements and iii) when the practice is integrated across the elements of the marketing mix. In yet another study in India, Radha and Jija (2013) made the followings findings: 1) at 53% positive response rate, celebrity endorsement result more to product recognition than actual purchase 2) slightly above 50% percent of the respondents attribute their decision to switch brands to celebrity endorsement and 3) product quality had the same predictive power on purchase intention as celebrity endorsement. Still in India and researching on its impact on sales, Jain (2011), arrived at the findings that not only does the advertising technique motivate people to buy, it is also effective in brand promotion and invariably building brand equity but less potent where a celebrity is involved in multiple endorsements. In a study carried out on the subject matter in China, Kwanzu arrived at the opinions that "there is no lack of

diversity in the patterns of celebrity endorsed adverts in the country, but that multiple endorsements are rampant thus lowering the effectiveness of the advertising approach,....however, the consumers in the country consider endorsements by celebrities in their fields of expertise more believable” (Jain and Kwanzu invariably arrived at the same opinion with regards to multiple endorsements). With research interest on how celebrity adverts impact on purchase intention for cosmetics by the female gender in Pakistan, Adam and Hussain arrived at the finding that the credibility of the celebrity endorser and his/her ability to positively transfer meaning impacts most on the purchase intention for cosmetics by females in Pakistan. In a study of retailing business in the US and Asia, Francis and Yazdanifard established that celebrity advertising is more effective in promoting sensory products such as wearing apparels and cosmetics rather than cerebral products such as books and computers- an outcome they attributed to the fact that consumers want to “feel and look” like the celebrity; hence his five sensory organs are stimulated by such adverts (the outcome of this study is observed to be in conflict with that of Adam & Hussain as in their findings, source credibility and not source attractiveness majorly influenced purchase decision for sensory products. However, the general opinion favours the findings of Francis & Yazdanifard). With Indonesia as location of study and focus on youth reaction to the use of celebrity endorsement by Adidas, Tielong and Lombo (2014), established that the attractiveness, trustworthiness and the expertise of such celebrities were major determinant variables but with the attractiveness of the celebrity the most determinant variable (this finding invariably confirms that of Francis and Yazdanifard, about sensory products). In Ghana, two different studies on the subject were carried out by Entsiful, Dawson- Ahmaoh and Mensah (2013) and Frimpong and Frimpong (2019). With students as research frame, Entsiful et.al arrived at the finding that though celebrity endorsement can play significant roles in creating brand awareness and influencing purchase decision, students still are attracted to products that they fancy even though they are not endorsed by celebrities. In their own study, Frimpong and Frimpong established the fact that celebrity endorsers who possessed higher doses of the attributes of attractiveness, trustworthiness and familiarity had the capacity to influence consumer purchase intention more. Focusing on its impact on customer loyalty with regards to smart phones among University students in Kenya, Onyancha (2016) found out that the advertising technique was more effective in influencing sales than in ensuring repeat purchase/ patronage. In consequence, Onyancha advised producers of such products to focus more on product features and benefits that enhance user experience. Ahmed (2017) seems to share similar opinions with Onyancha on the ability of celebrity advertising to result in repeat patronage. With Nigeria as the location of study, Ahmed arrived at the finding that Nigerians, in their purchase decision would rather be swayed more by price, utility and later quality than celebrity endorsement and that the Nigerian consumer would most probably stop buying a product if it did not meet with his/her expectations even though a celebrity has endorsed it. Chijioke (2019) arrived at similar opinion with Ahmed with regards to the subject matter in Nigeria. In her opinion,” brand ambassadors do not have the capacity to influence the buying behavior of consumers let alone ignite their loyalty to a product”. While acknowledging the fact that advertising messages delivered by celebrities can achieve higher attention and recall, Kotler and Keller (2009) however feel that celebrity advertising will be more effective where an endorser has high credibility or personify a key attribute of the product. Kerin, Hartley and Rudelius (2009) acknowledges the fact that using celebrity spokespersons to endorse products is becoming a very popular form of advertising as advertisers believe that their ads are more likely to influence sales. To them, though the likelihood of the belief becoming a reality exists, its potential shortcoming is that with time, the celebrity’s image may change and become inconsistent with that of the company or brand. And moreover, celebrities are expensive to engage.

From the fore goings, this study takes the position that product quality, features and benefits cannot be replaced by celebrity endorsement.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Organizations embark on advertising to inform, educate and persuade target markets to choose their products at the point-of -purchase as well as to reinforce existent positive behavioural tendencies to her product offerings. To attain these goals, organizations consider the use of Fhas it shortcomings, empirical

studies on the subject matter as reviewed in this study point to its effectiveness, but however under certain conditions (these conditions are addressed hereto in recommendations). This review accepts the above popular opinion of experts on the subject matter but add that excellent product quality, features and benefits cannot be sacrificed on the altar of celebrity endorsement

5.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

For organizations wishing to use celebrity endorsement as an advertising technique, this study recommends as follows:

- a) Determine your product class; that is, is it a sensory or cerebral product? This will enable whether to emphasize celebrity attractiveness or expertise
- b) Determine the stage in the product life cycle your product is. Celebrity endorsement is acknowledged to be most effective at the introductory stage of a product's life cycle.

Where an organization decides on celebrity advertising after these initial decision challenges, it must ensure that there is:

- Celebrity/ product match
- Celebrity/ audience match
- Celebrity credibility, attractiveness and expertise

In addition to the above, the celebrity of choice should not be involved in multiple endorsements and implicit endorsement should be emphasized upon.

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